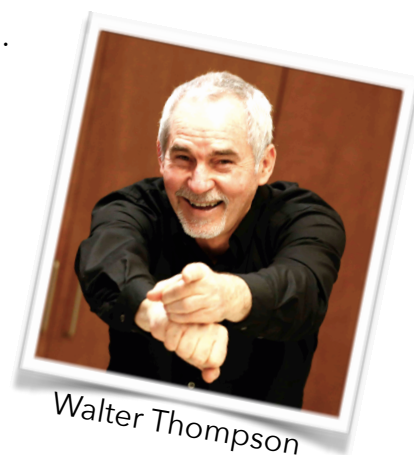


About Soundpainting

What is Soundpainting

Soundpainting is a **universal, multidisciplinary sign language** for real-time composition, and can be performed by musicians, dancers, actors, and visual artists.

Currently (2023), the language consists of more than 1500 gestures that are available to the Soundpainter (the conductor and composer directing the performers) to indicate to the performing artists **who** needs to do something, **what** type of material is required, **how** and **when** something has to be performed. The group's responses in turn influence the conductor's reactions, leading to a **structured improvisation** in real time.



Walter Thompson

The history

The language of Soundpainting was invented in **1974** by the New York composer **Walter Thompson**.

Initially, it was based on a few signs born out of Thompson's need to communicate quickly and directly with his orchestra during their performances.

Over the years, the language has expanded and developed, acquiring structure and precise rules. Other artists have contributed to its development by adding new signs to the vocabulary, making it a **multidisciplinary language** suitable for directing instrumental and vocal music, movements, monologues and dialogues, visual arts, electronics, and stage organization.

Currently, there are thousands of signs that have not yet been fully organized and catalogued in a dictionary.

As of now, Thompson has published the basic signs in **four books** that introduce **the first two levels** of the language. The first book deals with the basic signs, the second with some of the advanced signs, the third with the most important signs for theater and dance disciplines, and the fourth with those for visual arts.

Thompson and his team regularly offer the opportunity to obtain a Soundpainter certification after passing a test, in order to maintain a high quality of language use and its signs.

Soundpainting for me

What is Soundpainting for me

Soundpainting is a language that is unique in its comprehensiveness and effectiveness, **allowing for easy communication of music and expressive arts**. It is commonly associated with contemporary music genres, but it can also be used to create tonal music with classical, jazz, and pop styles, rhythms, and harmonies.

In fact, this sign language can be used to communicate practically any musical and creative idea.

Personally, I enjoy creating music that can be appreciated for its catchiness, clear and simple structures, and captivating soundscapes.

What does composing in real-time mean

A real-time composition is the musical and creative result of the **conductor's** collaboration with the **group** of artists involved in the process. There are essentially two types of live composition.

The first, more creative type, requires the conductor to be open and responsive to what the group produces. The soundpainter then shapes the material they receive from the performers in a way that respects their **creative flow**. In other words, the conductor starts with a musical idea expressed by the group and allows it to be developed and worked out through the continuous contribution of the performers.

The second type of live composing requires the conductor to compose through **rigid commands** without paying too much attention to what the group produces. The soundpainter moves on to create something that is more predictable from their perspective.

In both cases, the sound result is unique and unrepeatable, the direct result of the unknown that every creative moment brings and the alchemy between the ideas of the performers and the leader.

„Develop what the group expresses, listening, smooth transitions“
„Strict commands, unconditional conduct“