



MASTER SNORER

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Master Snorer is a fictional character corresponding to a nickname for the starring of a series of short stories published in Spanish Sociedad Española de Acústica under the name of *Maestro Roncador* in 2014. Master Snorer is a lecturer who educates Architecture students in the art of hear-ing in detail their environments, what improves, at a great extent, their professional abilities. Master Snorer's life is explained through a series of stories corresponding to different moments in his life, and it is offered a sample from those stories as an application of ear-training in University studies in Architecture and Engineering.

1. The first short story

The first story deals with walking in the city when blindfolded, training the ability of recognising different places in the city, depending on different sounds listened at different places, as a natural integration between human perception and technical data.

It is my turn today

And Master said:

"You cannot make me do that"

The Master was not accustomed to receive commands or specific indications that might affect his authority, but he really appreciated how brave a blind student was, he who told him:

"You don't dare go walking as a blind man for 24 hours, do you?", he told him in a voice in G1 as the fundamental frequency.

"So I can see that it is my turn today!", he thought.

"Master, you cannot force others to make things that you don't dare", the young man told him.

"But it happens that I can not afford that of wasting time", he answered in a bad mood. "Apart from that, who will go along us?".

"You won't waste your time, and you know it", the young man answered and he continued: "if you dare now to come with me to the city, your daughter is ready to come along us".

The Master saw that he had really planned it and that they agreed to work together in that plan.

His daughter was waiting in the corridor. She entered with an open smile, put two patches on his eyes and then a pair of dark glasses with a thick frame, so his vision was completely cancelled. She told him:

"Instead of bandaging you, as a Guinea pig in an experiment that might not be good and could obstruct your ears, I have thought of this solution, even you don't believe in it; I spent a lot of time looking for the spare parts of it".

"She is very intelligent", the Master thought, beginning to enjoy the situation, "And I can see that they have been spending time thinking in it".

They left out of the center, and walked some meters towards the parking area. He began to listen to that pavement.

They sat down it on the rear seats of this woman's car, the Headmaster, saying: "How lucky are you, today you are the student."

The Master, only when hearing the Headmaster's voice, was so happy as being the main character of the experience, and he asked: "And who will be my guide?".

The doors of the vehicle closed. The student was next to him and near the mother and daughter.

A serious voice coming from its left side told him: "If you want, I will be the following one". He allowed some seconds of silence to happen and added: "although I don't believe that you trust my cane too much".

"Don't worry!", the Headmaster said; she knew the reason of this question. "I will go along you while my daughter goes along with the boy".

"Thank you for going with the boy", the blind man said. "But I am already 22 years old. "As I am", the young girl thought, although for his comments she had thought that he was older. When they were in the city, both couples really affected the visual landscape, since the pedestrians were not indifferent. The four ones went walking very close to each other.

"Can you observe the *tunnel effect*?", the young man said.

"Which effect do you mean?", the Master replied.

"It is the effect that takes place when you pass before the gate of a house that has an open wide internal lounge facing the street. Hence, it takes the sounds of the street and it returns these sounds but as a reverberation", and she added: Can you hear it, as I passed before a house with the doors closed, can you?"

The young man was leading forwards and backwards to his blind guider, forcing the Master and the Headmaster to do the same, and then he said:

"Now we pass before a gate that returns back to us a reverberated sound. Do you notice it? Do you hear the difference?"

"Yes, indeed", the Master said. "But in occasions it seems that we pass in front of a small tunnel". "Each gate resonates different", the student said. "But in occasions these shades of sound are difficult to be appreciated, since the existent sounds are changing and the volume of so high noises of the street also mask the phenomenon".

"I notice it, indeed". The Master added: "the noises of the street are reflected on the façades of the buildings, and therefore it is necessary to focus attention on that moment, instead of its reflection, what we receive, that it is the resonance of the gate".

"Some of these *tunnel effect* phenomena are very singular, for this reason I often think that this building should be important", the young man said.

The three stayed thinking in silence, until he continued: "Come on, I should have told you that I would recognize the sound of the Center if you transferred it to this street, but I would surely make a mistake".

The other ones thought that they certainly were walking as blind. The capacity of this student's recognition was impressive. The Master asked him about what he was learning, since for him it seemed evident that it was happening just the opposite. The young man said as a conclusion:

"Some people don't hear the world, neither the air, nor the fire, nor water, nor life. This is because they only can see them, but they don't know anything about how much the sounds communicate to us and how much they enrich us".

The three thought that a new Master was born.

2. The second short story

The second story emphasizes the importance of the wave sound as a wave exerting power upon masses from the point of view of mechanics. Beyond of being considered a mere anecdote, it shows in an effective way how powerful is sound as a source of vibration, no matter if human sight can not always perceive it or if considered infinitesimal, as from the point of view of mechanics it shows a hidden skill: the potential power of moving tridimensional heavy objects in space.

The Bowl

And the Master said:

“These three vases contain gravel, sand and powder or marble, respectively, so that when you join their contents they should fill this bowl exactly without overflowing”.

“That is very easy”, a student said in burlesque tone.

The student took the powder or marble and poured it in the bowl, later he threw the sand, and finally the gravel, which overflowed and fell outside of the bowl.

The Master stopped him speaking, and, separating the sand and pebbles with a sieve, he commented: “You have not thought well. Notice that the small things prevent you from placing the big things”.

A second student, much stronger, poured the gravel in the first place, then the sand, and lastly the powder or marble, and it also overflowed and fell outside of the bowl.

The Master stopped him speaking again, and sifted it again, saying: “You have not thought well. Certainly we should place the big suitcases first in the boot of a vehicle. Then the medium ones, and finally the small handbags, filling the holes. But this is not a vehicle”.

The Master placed the bowl on one of the speakers at the stage and repeated the process using the vibrations of the sounds of music. He began pouring the gravel, later the sand and then the powder or marble, while the bowl was vibrating.

At the end, the students observed that the bowl had been filled perfectly until the edge with the three ingredients, without overflowing.

The Master asked them: “Do you think that something else could fit?”

The students nodded.

And the Master sifted the marbles again and scolded them smoothly that time (as he behaves this way, he is the Master) and he told them: “We can always fill it more with our emotions”.

The students didn't understand that statement, but the brilliant student took the initiative and the music changed, and crying for the emotion that the new symphony had provoked in her, she repeated the process.

The students observed astonished that now the gravel, the sand, and the powder or marble fit, and even now with the tears falling from the brilliant student's face.

And the Master said: “When we believe that everything is already full, we should know that we still have left a hole to fill, and you can fill that hole with love”.

And so as to finish we have:

3. The third story

The fish tank

And the Master wrote:

Memoirs 15. The fish tank.

Spread in the sofa, I listen to the silence of the night, broken by voices at home. My old wall clock just stroke eleven.

The fish begin with their conversations with me, stirring the little pebbles at the bottom of the fish tank. I sometimes think that if my students could reincarnate, they would do it as fish, silent, as me. I will explain it better.

Those soft cracks are now the sound messages of those silent souls, eager for something to eat and to talk to me. I get up and with a light "click", I turn off the light of that lamp that was humming above me, but that allows me to read my favourite book.

I rotate myself and in the darkness of the room, I observe the fish tank, glooming. I come closer, in secret, hesitating if my presence will be noticed by those beings even if I could walk in jumps.

But if I want to wake up to them there is of no use to create vibrations in the wooden pavement. I ignore if they are able to perceive them. I arrive in front of the fish tank and again a phototropism reaches me, it is as contemplating fire: you can see and listen to it.

Those fish know that their voices arrive to the bottom of my consciousness. They insist moving the smooth pebbles making noises, one to each other and with the glass at the bottom.

I think that they notice my presence because all start to push with the mouth, maintaining a continuous soft purring. They arrive to the sound climax.

I still wait for some seconds, now enjoying this concert they are ready for, and finally I pour their trait in the surface. The concert ceases almost immediately.

An absent-minded player continues with its last sounds, but almost all of them are silent and begin with other sounds and splashes as they are in search of food.

Meanwhile, that solitary musician appears, it is the one who has kept free room for the left-overs that slowly go down from the surface.

Two minutes later, all the fish return to the bottom, but they don't repeat the concert any more, as they were doing at the beginning.

I am also tired and I believe that we all should rest. I turn off the light of the fish tank.

I believe that the vibration of the switch is the symbol that they have learnt to begin with a period of rest. They face the stream of water and I disappear this time, yes, leaving silence behind me.

The Master closed the notebook and returned to his room while he was thinking:

“If my students could reincarnate as fish, I wonder if the one at the bottom would be either the burlesque student or the brilliant student...”

And with this question in mind he fell asleep forever.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, *Master Snorer* acoustic short stories are useful to transmit concepts from natural observation in life so as to introduce students to some principles from Acoustics in a simple way, a good starting point for any lesson at University when the tiny details of the environment are not perceived as being important, when not all the concepts are easy to be understood and there is a lack of motivation for the learning of technical data or phenomena when disciplines such as Architecture or Engineering are considered as fields of knowledge independent and separated from daily life.

REFERENCES

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