
Preface

Musical performance is probably the most complex field of music. It comprises the study of a composition, understanding its expression in terms of rationales stemming from analysis, emotion, and gesture, and then its transformation into physical, i.e. acoustical and embodied reality. Performance communicates its contents and does so in the rhetorical shaping of abstract score data. It comprises a creative interpretation that turns formulaic facts into dramatic movements of human cognition.

Performance is complex, but not necessarily more difficult than its ingredients, such as compositional sophistication or music theory. Its critical quality is the balanced combination of those rationales, shaping strategies, and instrumental virtuosity. Combining these components in a creative way turns out to be a mix of knowledge and mastery, which is everything but straightforward and more resembles the cooking of a delicate recipe than a rational procedure.

Therefore, a comprehensive treatise of musical performance is a difficult business that cannot be achieved as a simple sum of its constituents, but must focus on the interplay of all named aspects of music. Moreover, including analytical tools and case studies turns this project into a demanding enterprise that deals with detailed construction modes and experimental setups of concrete performances—all the more since this book is the first one aiming at such comprehensive coverage of the topic. The extension of the matter reaches from musicological and philosophical aspects studied for example by Daniel Gottlob Türk or Theodor Wiesengrund Adorno [21], to empirical and scientific performance research that germinated with Johann Hohlfeld's *Fantasiermaschine* and was brought to a first florescence with the support of modern computer technology by Johan Sundberg and collaborators at the Kungliga Tekniska Högskolan (KTH) Stockholm [132].

In view of this delicate situation, we are happy that this book could be written with the ideal background and testbed of a course delivered to music performance students, who inevitably want to approach the subject from their concrete situation when performing a musical composition and shaping musical expression under realistic conditions. It is especially this context that

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