

PERFORMANCE STYLE AS COMPREHENSIVE ARTISTIC METHOD IN THE FIELD OF MUSIC

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SUMMARY. The possibility of a review of this topic consists in the disclosure of a specific performing and instrumental awareness of the notion of style, namely, in the methodological direction of this definition as factor of the intellectual and practical perspectives for the interpretation of musical pieces. The theme of the style is complex in understanding of the problems of musical and performing arts. It is not about the stylistic features of a particular personality of the composer or an era in which this personality worked and was spiritually raised, but more about the principles of their definition. Our attempts to understand the notion of performing style are intended to help define it as carrier of a specific artistic thinking, which is objectively shaped and technologically and conceptually functioning.

Keywords: style, individuality, thinking of musician-performer, performing arts, composer's creativity.

Introduction

The achievements of previous attainments regarding the concept and understanding of the category of style require practitioners and scholars to draw some conclusions into the interpretation and awareness of the semantic significance that cannot be determined immediately.

The theme deserves attention as constantly relevant in connection with the fact that the style, above all, is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, which means the variability of its functioning depending on those personal

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and socio-historical circumstances that a person perceives, feels, understands and under the influence of their effectiveness itself changes and is formed. Naturally, such processes enrich the architectonics of interpretive considerations of the musician-performer.

The meaningful disclosure of understanding the performer's style and performing style aims to continue the affinity in the development of previous scientific research achievements in this direction, namely, in the development of new perspectives on the above-mentioned concepts and processes. Only by "reaching the style" does the musician-performer transform music into poetics and acquire an autonomous structural-compositional experience that can be regarded as a holistic artistic method.

Literature Review

Scientific generalizations of B. Asafiev reflect the evolution of the formation of semantic intonation as the most important method for the analysis of comparisons of means of musical expression both in historical aspect and in performing reproduction.

While analyzing the phenomena of artistic culture, B. Asafiev² formulates the concept – *style-era*, *style-present*, *style of the future*. This is evidence that when talking about style in general, as well as style specifically, we must consider other approaches than the traditional ones. Thus, one can assume consideration (such assumptions were made by many scholars: M. Davydov³, R. Komurdzhi⁴, A. Kudryashov⁵, O. Markova⁶, O. Sokol⁷ and others) of this question from the point of view that style and styling are, above all, a person; and this explains, for example, the way of sound reproduction of figurative artistic intentions of every outstanding person both in composition and in the performance, which have their own individually new ontogenetic

² Asafiev, Boris. *Selected Works: 5 v.* Moscow: SSSR Academy of Sciences, (Vols. 5), 1957, 388 p.

³ Davydov, Mykola. *Theoretical foundations of formation of performance skills of an accordionist.* Kyiv, Musical Ukraine, 2004, 240 p.

⁴ Komurdzhi, Rustem. *The problem of the correlation of musical style and performing interpretation.* Scientific Forum: Philology, Art and Cultural Studies: Proceedings of the 2nd International Scientific and Practical Conference (Vols. 2). Moscow, Ed. "MTSNO", pp. 5-9.

⁵ Kudryashov, Andrei. *Performing interpretation of a musical work in the historical and stylistic evolution.* Candidate's thesis, Moscow, 1994, 233 p.

⁶ Markova, Olena. *Questions of the theory of performance: Materials for the theory of performance theory for masters and graduate students.* Odessa: Astroprint, 2002, 128 p.

⁷ Sokol, Oleksandr. *Performing remarks, image and musical style.* Odessa: The Seaman, 2007, 276 p.

expressions that are naturally always based on previous impressions and their artistic transformations.

This aspect necessitates a comprehensive examination of the performing style based on theoretical, performance-practical, scientific-pedagogical, and theoretical-principled investigations by B. Asafiev, his followers, and numerous other outstanding performers, theorists, and educators.

Discussion

Referring to encyclopedic data, we find the following – “Style (lat. Stilus, here as a stick for writing):

1. In ancient times and the Middle Ages, it refers to writing instruments.
2. In literature and art, it denotes the unity of content and the figurative, systematic artistic form that developed under specific socio-historical conditions and is characteristic of different historical periods and epochs in the development of literature and art. In a narrow sense, style is an individual manner, unique, and distinctive ideological and artistic characteristics of an artist's creativity.
3. In language, it refers to a set of means and techniques, the choice of which is determined by the content, nature, and purpose of expression.
4. A way, method, or approach to work.
5. A characteristic manner of behavior, speech, dress, etc.
6. Old style and new style in chronology...”⁸

The “stick for writing” is, in our opinion, an instrument (a modern writing pen) for fixing certain phenomena, which then (in its analysis, comprehension and synthesis) created the concept of style. Thus, it is an awareness of certain accumulation of human life, a lot of certain experience, which required the fixation “stick to the letter”.

Perhaps the emergence of the concept of style has fixed a written basis, which means that the means of fixation and their applications, their origin, owes generalization of specific historical origins of various human activities, their development, awareness as reflected in the concept of style and was fixed in writing.

It is known that recognizing a separate author or authors of the formation of this concept is impossible although the scientific-historical orientation here is undoubtedly necessary. There are certain hypotheses regarding each graphically recorded speech-linguistic concept. It creates the

⁸ Dictionary of Foreign Words / [Edited by O. S. Melnychuk]. 2nd edition, Kyiv: Main Editorial Office of the Ukrainian Soviet Encyclopedia, 1985, p. 28.

appropriate conditions for style, genesis, formation and further development. In our view, one can confidently assert that it was the historical transformations that formed the concept of style, and not vice versa.

The performer does not exist in isolation (the style of perception and execution undoubtedly depends on them). The character of their interpretation is significantly influenced by many external factors: the performance practices of other musicians, established performance traditions, artistic principles of the performing school to which they belong, their sense of their time and era, and others. This means that performance traditions, artistic principles, their understanding, and the ability to sense their time and era form the basis of the purposefulness of musical realization. The traditions of performing, the artistic principles of their understanding, the ability to feel their time, their era – form the basis of the purposefulness of musical-performing incarnation. Only the correlation of all these factors and their relation to the executable creates conditions for the emergence of such an interpretation that is able to persuade and capture the modern listener. Nevertheless, the tasks of the performer do not end only with the encouragement of the listener, they are unlimited in all spheres of influence on a person.

These thoughts cannot be ignored because they are the most stylistic ones in practical, scientific and pedagogical experience. Following the tradition of theoretical considerations, style should be filled with the following thoughts: “... one cannot consider historical processes in music while limiting oneself to judgments of individual work, styles and composers. There is a need for a strict understanding of the fate of phenomena and the effects must not be transferred to misunderstanding of listeners and a work being not successful”⁹.

Consideration of the topic allows predicting its vision as specific outstanding issues, namely: “... unprepared listener perceives a work clearly and passionately and more than the listener-critic, composer-listener, critic-composer”¹⁰.

The objective orientation of the topic is in the search for the laws synthesized in the means of musical expression, which through their awareness can find the possibility of identifying specific phenomena of the specificity of musical and performing arts in general theoretical artistic quest. Executive insight is purely individual. Therefore, the artist must clearly define his own point of view regarding the interpretation of the musical composition and convince the listener.

⁹ Asafiev, Boris. *Selected Works: 5 v.* Moscow: SSSR Academy of Sciences, (Vols. 5), 1957, p. 224.

¹⁰ Idem

Natural talents, experience of the artist suggest him/her to find a combination of objective and subjective principles in the interpretation.

Awareness of the concept of style can be considered from various angles and from various perspectives of human activity and influences on it (physiology, psychology, education, character, etc. – to the infinity of types of life surrounding reality). Thus, genetic skills of a person are the preconditions for his/her existence, and this determines his/her personal style, which transforms and develops in the temporal space.

If we look at the historical understanding of the concept of style, then at the present time it is impossible to ascertain it as something permanent and eternal because the style has the features of improvisational variation both in the reproducing person's media and in time, which affects the understanding of intonational-stylistic changes and requirements regarding the styles of the composer, artist and preferences of the listener regarding artists.

This is the manifestation of the selectivity of the phenomena and their components and elements inherent in this epoch, namely, the concrete person and mankind as a whole, and therefore, the art that concentrates and embodies these signs and acts by specific means.

Style as a meaningful concept needs to be understood in the context of concrete performances based on the disclosure of the theoretical and practical vision of interpretative considerations from the point of view of their psychophysiological origin as the psycho-physiological aspects of musical performance are based on the above-mentioned conditional categories. It is precisely through the examination of interpretational intentions that we should uncover more significant elements that will enable us to programmatically and comprehensively consider interpretation as the result of human mental processes.

If we apply these considerations to musicology, we can think that: "Clearly, the selection of music (and "intonational accumulations") in the collective auditory memory' occurs in a different way than professionals, music technologists, and music-aesthetic "judges", who are often shortsighted or simply self-serving in their judgments, believe"¹¹.

This means that the concept of style should carry unique spiritual canons of both the past and the future. In other words, the process of renewal cannot exist outside the processes of the past.

¹¹ Asafiev, Boris. *Selected Works: 5 v.* Moscow: SSSR Academy of Sciences, (Vols. 5), 1957, p. 224.

The attempts we have defined to understand the concept of style are intended to contribute to its definition as a carrier of subject-image functions in functioning artistic phenomena.

Style, regardless of which aspect it is considered (broad or narrow), manifests itself in the relationship between specific means of artistic expression and their realization in any form of art. For example, in painting, it is the interplay of colorfulness, spatial volume, and purposeful specificity, while in poetry, it is the unlimited number of word combinations aimed at revealing the stylistic worldview of a specific artist.

Considering the above characteristics of the concept of style, it is possible to identify their qualitative general and semantic definitions and purposes, reflecting the features of this particular era. Variable processes are known to occur in all vital areas, which, due to the assimilation of socio-productive and ethical-aesthetic relations in the broad sense, touch upon various manifestations of human activity – artistic, literary, philosophical, etc.

Interpretation of musical pieces should not be limited only to the ability of masterful possession of the expressive means of expression and only those embodied by the performer in the ways of the implementation of his/her own thought as such an interpretation will be generated by the performance “from the keyboard”, which may lead to the loss of stylistic peculiarities of the artistic concept of a musical work, in particular, and features of the stylistic character of both the composer and the artist.

Consideration of the style of musical performance can be considered from at least two points of view: in the broad sense, as a result of the development of performing arts in relation to specific historical conditions, and in the narrow sense, – the individual manners inherent in the artist’s personality in its ideological and artistic orientation and self-determination. However, if you do not abstract these two aspects apart, then you can abstract on their specific features.

A broad understanding of style does not exist outside the style of individuals because they generate a certain historical experience and develop it according to their own worldview.

The stylishness of the performance in the narrow sense is the repetition of the performer’s expressive means and techniques in reproducing similar elements of the structure of the shape of the musical work with exemplary skills without which styling will not exist.

An integral part of the notion of performance style is the impeccable possession of the whole system of tools and techniques that make up the broad concept of instrumental technology of intonational semantic speech, in particular, micro and macro intonation, linear articulation, texture-phonical, contrapuncture, logical, dialogical, rhythmmodynamic, timbre, agogic,

polyrhythmic, polymetric, etc., which are united in the complex of means: agogy, articulation, dashed technique, timbre expression¹².

If we consider the performer's individual style, then the presence of aesthetic data in it, of course, is based on certain theoretical skills and technological skills that are specific to a specific person. On the other hand, the stylistic qualities of performance are manifested in objective combinations of factors that correspond to professional-aesthetic criteria regarding the mastery of the complete range of performance skills, which include several fundamental mobile performance tools of expressiveness and their combinations (agogics, articulation, dynamics, stroke technique, timbral expression). The mutual application of these components of musical-performance expressiveness aims at a more objective understanding of the concept of style.

The analysis of these factors and concepts should be closely contextualized with the psychophysiological characteristics of the musician-performer.

First and foremost, the musician-performer is interested in the personal understanding of the stylistic peculiarities of the musical-performance process, which, through the prism of interpretational exploration and, conversely, through their contradictions, exerts a unique influence on the comprehension of divergent styles as the ability to interpret them broadly. Thus, a perspective is formed for preserving stylistic traditions and their awareness, and based on this, an individual style is developed, despite possible non-essential contradictions between the artist's previous and subsequent artistic achievements.

Thus, the complex application of these factors of the performing embodiment of the composer's plan provides the basis for the scientific definition of the concept of the performance style.

Our views on style can be seen as the result of such approaches in time development, namely, as the discovery of the new aspects. These possibilities are realized through the intonational and semantic awareness-mastering-embodiment of the musical work by the musician-performer. Thus, considering the style as a phenomenon of a specific historical objective origin requires its consideration in an objectively specific and intonational-logical embodiment.

The analysis of the specificity of musical performance style should take into account the following: the musician-performer's approach to interpreting musical works should not be limited solely to their mastery of the tools of musical-performance expressiveness and their own methods of implementing

¹² Davydov, Mykola. *Theoretical foundations of formation of performance skills of an accordionist*. Kyiv, Musical Ukraine, 2004, 240 p.

their creative intentions (personal performance style). Such an interpretation can lead to a loss of the stylistic peculiarities of the artistic concept of the musical work, including the composer's stylistic expressiveness in general.

This perspective does not imply that the performer cannot use their own personal professional skills. However, it obliges them to make more careful and rational decisions in specific circumstances, regardless of their personal inclinations. In our opinion, in the objectivity of interpretational impulses, the performer's manner and the composer's style should have common roots in embodying the concept of the musical work.

The most comprehensive exploration of the meaningful essence of this issue (from our perspective) is found in the research and conclusions of B. Asafiev. Analyzing phenomena of artistic culture in general (which encompass various art forms, genres, and epochs), the author arrives at conclusions that acknowledge and persuade us that there can exist a "style of an era", a "contemporary style," and a "style of the future": "Thus, the music of a composer, growing out of the intonations of previous epochs, becomes an object of intonation for professional performers and broad social strata of listeners, nourishing music and the entire spiritual culture of future generations of humanity. This process continues until the vital content of the intonations of this music is exhausted, partially transitioning in a different figurative form into the creative work of new eras"¹³.

As we can see, the style of a musician-performer is an incredibly comprehensive concept and can be considered from many perspectives, which undoubtedly holds interest primarily for performers, theorists, composers, and other categories of artists in the realm of artistic creativity.

Conclusions

1. The concept of style generalizes the development of a specific concrete phenomenon that exists all the time and has its development in the present.

2. Stylistic features of musical and performing arts are based on certain positions of musicology, in which the theoretical idea of specialists is directed not only to the performance specificity, but also to the deep indexation of these phenomena. Thus, if the performer considers professional knowledge as a theorist, then the theorist must also penetrate the spiritual world and the specifics of performing musical speech. In this respect, understanding the

¹³ Asafiev, Boris. *Selected Works: 5 v.* Moscow: SSSR Academy of Sciences, (Vols. 5), 1957, p. 222.

concept of style in its historically traditional interpretation can not be equated with the understanding of objective thinking. Therefore, it is necessary to give an appropriate assessment and to predict the originality of the vision of these concepts.

3. The musician-performer's attitude towards everything they perceive, as well as their own personal and creative justification for what they aim to create in the future, determines the characteristics of the creative and stylistic direction of a specific performer's personality.

4. A highly skilled performer cannot merely be an individual; otherwise, they will remain as such. Natural talent, combined with extensive professional training, provides them with the opportunity to become a performer-creator who embodies (not always consciously or directly, but through affinity) their own performance style.

5. Style does not exist outside of a particular person. The distribution of styles for the baroque, classic, romantic, avant-garde, etc. – all this is a tradition and the inability to distract from anachronisms. Anachronisms, which continued the previous heritage, as continuity, also represent a certain style. Thus, there is no need for superfluous reasoning about traditional synonyms because there is a continuity of their interpretation.

6. Undoubtedly, the performing style is not possible outside of a creative person because all the activity is special in its manifestations.

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