

## COGNITIVE, EMOTIONAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF MUSICIAN-PERFORMER'S THINKING

VITALII ZAIETS<sup>1</sup>, OKSANA ZAIETS<sup>2</sup>,  
OLEKSANDR BENZIUK<sup>3</sup>, OLEKSANDR LIHOTSKYI<sup>4</sup>

**SUMMARY.** The way of thinking of a performing musician is a complex and multifaceted process that combines rational, intuitive, and emotional aspects. It not only ensures the effectiveness of performing activities, but also determines the artistic depth and individuality of the interpretation of a musical work. Understanding the specifics of performing thinking is important for the formation of a musician's professional skills as it is carried out through mental processes, interaction with musical material, interpretation of the composer's idea and emotional and aesthetic connection with the listening audience. The relevance of the study is based on the need for a comprehensive understanding of these aspects in the context of modern performing practice, which allows not only to deepen the theoretical understanding of the specifics of performing thinking, but also to develop practical recommendations for improving the professional skills of musicians.

**Keywords:** thinking, cognitive processes, methodology, psychology of creativity

### Introduction

It is advisable to reveal the essence of the thinking of a performing musician through the analysis of cognitive processes that underlie his/her mental activity and have a multispectral nature due to the specifics of musical and performing art. The multispectrality of music as a holistic phenomenon covers

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<sup>1</sup> *PhD in Arts, Associate professor, Department of Bayan and Accordion, Ukrainian National Tchaikovsky Academy of Music, Kyiv, Ukraine. Email: zaetsa@ukr.net*

<sup>2</sup> *Senior lecturer, Municipal Institution of Higher Education of the Kyiv Regional Council "P. Chubynsky Academy of Arts", Kyiv, Ukraine. Email: oksanazaets@ukr.net*

<sup>3</sup> *PhD in Cultural Studies, Associate professor, Department of Bayan and Accordion, Ukrainian National Tchaikovsky Academy of Music, Kyiv, Ukraine. Email: benzyuk@ukr.net*

<sup>4</sup> *PhD student, Department of Theory and History of Musical Performance, Ukrainian National Tchaikovsky Academy of Music, Kyiv, Ukraine. Email: ligotskij8093@gmail.com*



an interrelated complex of components, in particular: the author's intention; musical notation of musical material; psychological aspects of composers' intentions; the personality of the performer as an interpreter and co-creator of the composer's concept; disclosure of the content of a musical work through the prism of individual performing style, experience and professional competencies; real acoustic embodiment of the music piece and feedback from the audience.

Undoubtedly, the key role in the implementation of these factors belongs to the specific professional technological thinking, which covers the conscious intellectual and emotional activity of the performer, as well as his/her mastery of the optimal complex of means of instrumental expression that serve as the foundation for the implementation of creative ideas.

The unique multidimensionality of musical and performing thinking, which functions in conditions of increased psychophysiological capacity during a concert performance in a clearly defined time frame, necessitates the analysis of the integrated interaction of its key components.

A detailed consideration of these parameters, as well as their organic interinfluences, interconnections and interdependencies in the process of artistically expedient functioning, shows that in the hierarchy of professional activities, the performing art of a musician can be attributed to the most difficult professions that require a high level of concentration, adaptability and instant decision-making.

## **Literature Review**

The relevance of the study is based on the fact that music as a multidimensional semantic phenomenon not only reflects reality, but also serves as a means of its comprehension and creative transformation. In the context of modern sociocultural changes, it acquires the importance of a powerful cognitive tool that contributes both to the knowledge of the world and to the self-disclosure of the individual, which emphasizes its fundamental role in human existence. Therefore, the problem of thinking of a musician-performer is the subject of research by many scientists who consider it through the prism of different approaches – musicology as well as psychological, philosophical and pedagogical aspects.

The study of thinking, in particular interpretive thinking in musical performance, is based on an interdisciplinary approach which includes the analysis of a wide range of aspects of this problem. Such studies go beyond musicology, involving methodologies of psychology, ethics, aesthetics, and philosophy, which contributes to a deeper understanding of the specifics of performing thinking and its impact on the creative process. A significant contribution to the development of this direction was made by such researchers as M.

Davydov<sup>5</sup>, D. Johnson<sup>6</sup>, V. Samitov<sup>7</sup>, M. Krausz<sup>8</sup>, V. Moskalenko<sup>9</sup>, I. Pyaskovsky<sup>10</sup>, V. Zaiets<sup>11</sup>, O. Markova<sup>12</sup> and others.

Despite the significant scientific interest in this topic, a number of issues remain insufficiently disclosed. In particular, the methodological foundations of performing thinking, the peculiarities of its emotional and intellectual balance, as well as the influence of socio-cultural transformations on the mechanisms of the creative process require further study.

## Discussion

The thinking of a musician-performer can be considered in two aspects: as universal thinking and as technological thinking which is realized through specific performing means of expression. Both processes are inseparable from each other because the goal of the performer is to reveal the meaning of the musical work embedded in the composer's means of musical expression. However, in order to realize their unity, a separate analysis of each one is necessary.

The thinking of a musician-performer, like any person, is closely related to the situational environment, but it goes to a deeper level due to the need to operate with specific categories. This thinking is aimed at solving problems related to the means of composer's and performing speech. A musician analyzes, interprets, and embodies an artistic idea through the prism of musical language, which requires from him/her not only technical skills, but also creative, associative thinking. In this way, the artist's mindset combines emotional receptivity, intuition, and a rational approach to understanding a musical text, making it a unique and multifaceted process.

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<sup>5</sup> Davydov, Mykola. *Theoretical foundations of formation of performance skills of an accordionist*. Kyiv, Musical Ukraine, 2004, 240 p.

<sup>6</sup> Johnson, Daniel C. *Holistic musical thinking: a pedagogical model for hands-on and heart - felt musical engagement*. Series: Routledge new directions in music education series. New York, NY: Routledge, 2024, 118 p.

<sup>7</sup> Samitov, Viktor. *Theoretical foundations of professional thinking of a performing musician as a criterion of professional skill*. Lutsk, Volyn regional printing house, 2011, 272 p.

<sup>8</sup> Krausz, Michael (ed.). *The Interpretation of music: philosophical essays*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993, 288 p.

<sup>9</sup> Moskalenko, Viktor. *The creative aspect of musical interpretation (to the problem of analysis)*. Kyiv, Muzinform, 1994, 157 p.

<sup>10</sup> Pyaskovskiy, Igor. *The logic of musical thinking*. Kyiv, Musical Ukraine, 1986, 180 p.

<sup>11</sup> Zaiets, Vitalii. *Performance style as comprehensive artistic method in the field of music*. Studia UBB Musica, LXVIII, 2, Cluj-Napoca, 2023, p. 287-295.

<sup>12</sup> Markova, Olena. *Questions of the theory of performance: materials for the theory of performance theory for master and graduate students*. Odessa: Astroprint, 2002, 128 p.

Thinking as a general concept is the ability of a person to carry out mental operations aimed at evaluating and comprehending various phenomena. This applies to both the outside world – perception and analysis of the environment, as well as the internal – reflection, introspection of one’s own feelings and emotions. Thinking allows a person not only to observe reality, but also to interpret it, find connections between phenomena, form ideas and draw conclusions. Thus, it is a key tool for knowing oneself and the world, which makes it a fundamental component of human existence. At the same time, mental processes acquire specific features depending on the field of human activity. In musical and performing arts, they have a special sensual and intellectual character. Here “... the combination of the composer’s and performer’s aspects of musical thinking with the realization of a specific sound constitutes the specificity of performing thinking, unlike, for example, the formal analytical approach, which differentiates and synthesizes various means of musical expression only in the mind”<sup>13</sup>.

Since social changes are constantly making adjustments and directly affecting a person’s mental activity, the problems associated with the thinking of a musician-performer never lose their relevance. This is not limited to technical aspects such as solving problems of sound perspective or navigating the complex structures of a musical text. At higher levels of development, music turns into a semantic phenomenon that becomes adequate to other manifestations of human consciousness. “It becomes a reflection and realization of reality, which a person not only cognizes, but also creatively embodies and transforms”<sup>14</sup>.

Thus, music appears as a powerful tool of the world cognition and oneself, which makes it an integral part of human existence.

Thinking processes are reflected and recorded in various signs and conceptual systems, each of which has its own specifics. Among them, we can conditionally distinguish:

1. Musical notation graphic systems (symbols), which provide information transmission and implementation through sound and visual representation.
2. Visual systems: painting, architecture, graphics, etc., which embody ideas and emotions through visual images, shape, color, and composition.
3. Intonation and sound systems: the logic of the deployment of melodic structures, functional harmony, texture, timbre, and other elements of musical language that convey feelings and ideas through sound.
4. Visual and sound systems: conducting, ballet, opera, where visual and sound elements are combined to create a holistic artistic impression.

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<sup>13</sup> Davydov, Mykola. *Theoretical foundations of formation of performance skills of an accordionist*. Kyiv, Musical Ukraine, 2004, p. 36.

<sup>14</sup> Asafiev, Boris. *Selected Works: 5 v.* Moscow: SSSR Academy of Sciences, (Vols. 5), 1957, p. 181.

Each of these systems is unique in the embodiment of intellectual and emotional information aimed at perceiving a person through his/her receptors. They allow complex ideas, emotions, and feelings to be conveyed using different languages of art, making them indispensable means of communication and creativity.

The object of thinking is formed under the influence of two key sources:

1. External – this is everything that surrounds a person and attracts his/her attention, namely, external motivation that stimulates mental activity.
2. Internal – physiological and psychological needs of the individual, which determines the individual vector of thinking.

The unity of these two factors – intellectual-emotional (mental) and emotional-intellectual (sensual) – creates an integral complex of human mental activity. This interaction allows not only to perceive and analyze the world around us, but also to form a personal position, which is the basis of creativity, self-realization, and development.

Depending on the type of mental composition of a person, his/her thinking can be mainly rational or emotional. In some cases, character dominates, in others temperament. Balancing between these two components reflects the personal qualities of the individual, which, in turn, shape his/her thought processes and determine the nature of the creative thinking of the musician-performer. Motivation of thinking determined a complex of factors, among which aesthetic (artistic ideals and tastes), moral and psychological (values, beliefs, emotional state) and physiological (physical condition, vitality of the body) aspects play a key role.

It is known that in the daily activities of a person, motivations and needs can change spontaneously, regardless of their conscious intentions or decisions. This phenomenon is associated with the deep features of the psyche, which constantly reacts to internal and external factors. Such changes make us pay attention to the importance of the triune relationship between **Present**, **Past** and **Future**, which forms the basis of our experiences, shapes our decisions, influences aspirations and determines the emotional state.

*Past* influences our motivations today through accumulated experiences, habits and experiences. *Present* becomes a field for the realization of these motivations, and *future* as source of new goals and expectations can change our priorities. This dynamic process highlights the complexity of the human psyche and its ability to adapt to new conditions while remaining influenced by the past and focusing on the future.

The creative vocation of a musician-performer is always manifested through a positive emotional tone. The origin of emotions can be traced on two main levels: **perception and reflection of the existing reality** and **effective transformative (creative) activity**. In addition, there is a third source of

emotions – **physiological**, when sensations arise as a result of changes in the body, such as pain or a feeling of “muscular joy” (*pleasant sensations*) during physical activity and development. However, attention should be focused on the first two levels as they form the emotional world of the individual under normal physiological conditions.

The process of cognition of reality is carried out with the help of two interconnected systems: **sensory** and **conceptual**. The sensory system provides the primary perception of information through the senses, while the conceptual system transforms the received data into abstract concepts using language and logical operations. Thanks to analytical and synthetic processes of thinking, there is a transition from specific sensory images to generalized concepts, which allows for deeper comprehension and structuring of information.

The specificity of each type of activity is determined by the dominance of certain perceptual receptors. For example, for an artist, sight is the main thing, for a sculptor – tactile sensations, and for a composer – intraauditory representations. It is worth noting that each of these receptors has unique emotionogenic characteristics and their various sensory and semantic manifestations become active elements of the emotional spectrum in the musician’s performing activity.

The presence of certain receptors, for example, visual, is inherent in all types of art. However, the emotional content of these receptors manifests itself in different ways. For the artist, vision is a determining factor in the process of creating content, form, colorfulness, volume, as well as in the analysis and synthesis of images. For a musician, the visual factor performs an associative and figurative function or serves as an intermediary for translating musical notation into the sensory-emotional sphere, and also provides visual contact with the listener. For the sculptor, the visual component plays a leading role, but it is closely combined with muscular-tactile sensations where vision acts as the center of perception and touch complements it by performing a peripheral function. For the composer, vision becomes a means for the most complete embodiment of sound ideas and the concept of a musical work in a musical text. The visual component plays a similar role in poetic creativity, where it helps to embody verbal images. In ballet, sight and hearing act in synthesis, but the main part falls on visual perception.

Thus, the specifics of emotional thinking in various artistic fields depend on the participation of certain combinations of receptors of the first signaling system. This is what determines the uniqueness of each type of activity. Visual, auditory, tactile, and other receptors form the emotional spectrum which is the basis of the creative process. This emphasizes the importance of an individual approach to the study of each type of art and awareness of the key role of emotions in the formation of artistic experience.

Therefore, it can be argued that the peculiarity of a particular type of activity is determined by the specifics of emotional thinking, which, in turn, depends on the participation of certain combinations of receptors of the first human signaling system.

It is known that the methodology of performing musical thinking cannot be considered in isolation from the specifics of the subject of activity that it provides. Musical and performing art depends not only on the direct musical and performing action, but also on a whole complex of essential artistic factors: the psychology of composer's creativity, knowledge of the historical heritage of art, the culture of listening perception, the psychology of self-regulation (needs, motivations), etc. Thus, the optimal mental and emotional broad spectrum of human thinking finds its brightest concentration in musical and performing activities, which require adequate and multifaceted methodological support.

This problem is complex because as in any scientific field, it manifests itself through methodological trends that significantly influence the further development of research. In this context, the structural and functional analysis of musical and performing art acquires a new meaning: a) as a methodological approach to the theoretical understanding of the processes of understanding artistic phenomena, which is important not only in the field of music, but also in general scientific research; b) as a tool for disclosing the basic provisions of the methodology of executive activity; (c) as a synthesis of the sensual-emotional and mental-intellectual aspects of thinking, where the first one is dominant as it is naturally primary one.

The thinking of a person, in particular of an artist, is always aimed at specific phenomena that cause emotional or intellectual resonance. This means that thought processes concentrate on needs that arise at different levels: physiological, emotional, aesthetic and artistic-figurative. As these needs are closely related to the psyche, their solution requires appropriate methodological approaches that consider both individual and universal aspects.

One of the key problems is the combination of the limitless variability of human manifestations with stable methodological principles. Universal methodological principles that could meet the needs of any creative subject are important, but their implementation must be flexible to take into account the individuality of the artist. The creative process is inherently dynamic and therefore, the methodology cannot be too static. At the same time, if the performer adheres to traditional canons, methodological approaches may remain relatively stable.

Creative activity is always associated with thinking, even in states that may seem passive (for example, through associative and figurative processes). Logical operations, intuition and emotional intelligence are integral components

of creativity. Therefore, the methodology of musical-performing thinking should be comprehensive and integrate scientific, philosophical and psychological aspects to ensure the harmonious development of the artist as a creative person.

Thus, the methodology of music and performing arts should be a dynamic system that combines stable principles with individual approaches, providing depth, awareness, and efficiency of the creative process.

Creative activity is multifaceted, and each aspect of it affects the formation of the thinking of a musician-performer. All specific activities are realized through the personality of the artist. It is in the interaction of “personality – activity” and “activity – personality” that the search for creative solutions takes place. Thus, the methodological understanding of performing art is not only a theoretical task, but also a practical necessity for each performer.

The process of cognition, which underlies creative activity, includes stages such as hypothesis, probabilistic forecasting, mental operations, and the formation of conclusions. The effectiveness of this process depends on several factors, including giftedness, education, professional skills, ability to analyze and purposefulness. The versatility of mental activity is closely related to the peculiarities of the human nervous system as it is the ratio of the basic qualities of the nervous system and social interaction that form the phenomenon of a logically thinking personality. This constitutes the physiological and psychological aspect of mental activity.

Considering the process of forming the logical thinking of the performer, it is necessary to take into account the age (and not only) features of perception, awareness, reproduction and productivity of mental actions. The formation of a musician-performer is a long process: by mastering the first skills of the performance on the instrument, the personality forms a special attitude to art, which manifests itself both in new emotional experiences and in their awareness. This awareness can occur both intuitively and inertially as well as through analytical comprehension, which depends on the level of development of intelligence.

The thinking of a musician-performer is unique and depends on his/her talent, education, practical experience, moral, ethical, and aesthetic views, temperament and character. The authors of the studies may have different views on this issue, but it is this contradiction that stimulates the further development of the topic by contributing to a deeper understanding of the nature of creative thinking.



## Conclusions

Thus, the methodological approach to the study of performing arts is a multifaceted and complex process that covers not only the empirical understanding of creative practices, but also the conceptual study of the patterns of interpretive activity. Taking into account the complex nature of musical and performing art, the specificity of the thinking of a performing musician is formed at the intersection of theoretical analysis, practical experience and cognitive and operational mechanisms, which necessitates the expansion of methodological tools in this area.

Performing thinking is not a static category; it changes dynamically under the influence of the cultural and historical context, personal qualities of the performer and the characteristics of the creative process. Its structure includes a wide range of cognitive, emotional, and psychophysical factors that determine the specifics of the interpretive process. An important aspect is that performing activity combines predictable and unpredictable actions in which artistic logic is built in accordance with the author's concept of the music work, as well as the individual reading of the musical text by the performer.

Methodological support of performing thinking requires the integration of both general patterns of the creative process and a deep understanding of the individual characteristics of the musician. The analysis of this phenomenon should be based on a multidimensional approach including a synthesis of humanities, psychological and art studies. Consideration of these factors contributes to the expansion of traditional ideas about musical performance and opens up new prospects for the development of performing skills.

The effectiveness of performing thinking is determined largely by the ability of the musician not only to deeply comprehend the musical material, but also to actively use innovative approaches to its interpretation. At the center of such thinking is the ability to combine an analytical approach with creative experimentation, which allows one to feel and realize the potential of each piece of music. Modern trends in the development of media culture and digital technologies significantly affect the nature of music and performing arts, which poses new challenges for performers and requires constant adaptation of methodological foundations for the analysis of this process. In this context, an interdisciplinary approach becomes particularly important as it allows for the integration of knowledge from different fields of science by providing a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the nature of performing thinking and art.

Therefore, the scientific understanding of the phenomenon of performing thinking is not only relevant, but also necessary for the further development of both performance practice and music science in general. Awareness of

the relationship between theoretical analysis, creative searches and practical embodiment of a musical text allows one to expand the boundaries of the interpretive capabilities of the performer, contributes to the improvement of his/her professional skills and stimulates the development of new methodological approaches in musical performance.

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