



MUSICA

Special Issue 1/2026

STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS BABEȘ-BOLYAI MUSICA



**Special Issue 1/2026
JULY**

ISSN (print): 1844-4369;
ISSN (online): 2065-9628; ISSN-L: 1844-4369
©2026 STUDIA UBB MUSICA
Published by Babeș-Bolyai University
<https://studia.reviste.ubbcluj.ro/index.php/subbmusica>

REFEREES:

Univ. Prof. Dr. Gabriel BANCUI, "Gh. Dima" National Music Academy, Cluj-Napoca, Romania
Univ. Prof. Dr. Habil. Adrian BORZA, "Gh. Dima" National Music Academy, Cluj-Napoca, Romania
Univ. Prof. Dr. Habil. Stela DRĂGULIN, Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania
Univ. Prof. Dr. Habil. Ildikó FERENCZINÉ ÁCS, University of Nyíregyháza, College of Music, Hungary
Univ. Prof. Dr. Habil. Nicolae GHEORGHÎĂ, National University of Music, Bucharest, Vice-Rector for Research and International Affairs, Director of Centre for Nineteenth-Century Music Studies (CNCMS), Romania
Univ. Prof. Dr. Olguţa LUPU, National University of Music, Bucharest, Romania
Univ. Prof. Dr. Habil. Noémi MACZELKA DLA, Pianist; University of Szeged, Former Head of the Arts Institute and the Department of Music Education, "Juhász Gyula" Faculty of Education, Hungary
Univ. Prof. Dr. Mirela MERCEAN ȚÂRC, University of Oradea, Faculty of Arts, Department of Music, Oradea, Romania
College Prof. Dr. Péter ORDASI, Former: University of Debrecen, Faculty of Music, Hungary
Univ. Prof. Dr. Habil. Lucian Emil ROŞCA, West University of Timişoara, Faculty of Music and Theater, Department of Music, Timişoara, Romania
Univ. Prof. Dr. Habil. Mădălina Dana RUCSANDA, Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania
Univ. Prof. Dr.; Dr. H. C. Valentina SANDU-DEDIU, National University of Music, Bucharest, Romania
Dr. Habil. Elena Maria ŞORBAN, Scientific Researcher grade I, „Gh. Dima” National Music Academy, Cluj-Napoca, Romania
Acad. Univ. Prof. Dr. Péter TÓTH, DLA, University of Szeged, Vice Dean of the Bartók Béla Faculty of Musical Arts, Hungary; Member of the Hungarian Academy of Arts - Head of the Music Department – Budapest, Hungary
Acad. Univ. Prof. Dr. Habil. Judit VÁRADI, University of Debrecen, Faculty of Music, Hungary; Public Member of the Hungarian Academy of Science – Budapest, Hungary

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:

Univ. Prof. Dr. Habil. Gabriela COCA, Babeş-Bolyai University,
Reformed Theology and Music Department, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

PERMANENT EDITORIAL BOARD:

Associate Prof. Dr. Éva PÉTER, Babeş-Bolyai University,
Reformed Theology and Music Department, Cluj-Napoca, Romania
Associate Prof. Dr. Miklós FEKETE, Babeş-Bolyai University,
Reformed Theology and Music Department, Cluj-Napoca, Romania
Lecturer Prof. Dr. Noémi MIKLÓS, Babeş-Bolyai University,
Reformed Theology and Music Department, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Studia UBB Musica is the Review of the Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca,
Faculty of Reformed Theology and Music, Music Department. Romania
Dean: Univ. Prof. Dr. Habil. Olga LUKÁCS

Front cover:

BASCHENIS, Evaristo: Still-life with Instruments, 1667-77
Oil on canvas, 108 x 153 cm. Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice
Source:

[Web Gallery of Art, searchable fine arts image database](#)

Beginning with 2017, *Studia UBB Musica* has been selected for coverage in Clarivate Analytics products and services.

Studia UBB Musica will be indexed and abstracted in *Emerging Sources Citation Index*.

**YEAR
MONTH
ISSUE**

**(LXXI) 2026
JULY
Special Issue 1**

PUBLISHED ONLINE: 2026-07-15
PUBLISHED PRINT: 2026-07-30
ISSUE DOI: 10.24193/subbmusica.2026.spiss1

S T U D I A UNIVERSITATIS BABEŞ-BOLYAI MUSICA

Special Issue 1

Musical Performance

SUMAR – SOMMAIRE – CONTENTS – INHALT

MUSICAL PERFORMANCE

OLEKSANDRA BERESTOVSKA, VOLODYMYR LEBED, Features
of the Communicative Interaction Composer – Conductor – Performer
as Exemplified by the Artistic Practice of Jean-Denis Michat 7

LIUBOV MANDZIUK, LESIA PIVTORATSKA, LIUDMYLA AVDYMYRETS,
NATALIA KOVAL, The Uniqueness of Synthesis Academic Singing and
Folk Instrumental Bandura Tradition in The Context of European
Performance Practices..... 27

POLINA KHARCHENKO, GVANTSA GHVINJILIA, MA YAZHUO,
LIU JIANZHI, TAN QIAN, From Score to Performance: A Semiotic Analysis
of Communicative Strategies in Musical Culture 41

NATALIYA BYELIK-ZOLOTAROVA, OLENA BATOVSKA, NATALYA ZOLOTARYOVA, YULIIA IVANOVA, OLENA ZAVERUKHA, TETIANA SUKHOMLINOVA, Innovative Approaches in the Performance of a Musician: Theory and Practice	59
ANA SZILAGYI, The Role of Hearing and Listening in the Performer of Classical Music	83
GANNA KONDRATENKO, YANA KYRYLENKO, OLENA IVANENKO, VIRA SYNIEOK, KOSTIANTYN KALIIEVSKYI, INNA TKACHENKO, Performance Projects of Arts Students as a Factor in Shaping National Consciousness	95
CRISTINA RADU, Exploring Learning and Unlearning (III): Mental Training for Professional Singers	121
TETIANA KRYLOVA, VERONIKA PIESHKOVA, VILENA ZHOLDAKOVA, IHOR MOKRENKO, TETIANA RUSOVA, Emotional Expression in Performing Arts: A Psychological and Musician Analysis	145
ANCA PREDA-ULITA, Structural Awareness as Shared Interpretive Competence in Duo Performance	173
VITALII ZAIETS, OKSANA ZAIETS, OLEKSANDR BENZIUK, YULIIA ZAIETS, Auditory–Motor Thinking as an Intentional Structure of Musical Performance: Phenomenological and Semiotic Dimensions	185
INVITATION FOR PUBLISHING	197

FEATURES OF THE COMMUNICATIVE INTERACTION COMPOSER – CONDUCTOR – PERFORMER AS EXEMPLIFIED BY THE ARTISTIC PRACTICE OF JEAN-DENIS MICHAT

OLEKSANDRA BERESTOVSKA¹, VOLODYMYR LEBED²

SUMMARY. The present study examines the communicative dimensions of the artistic activity of the contemporary French saxophonist Jean-Denis Michat. The musician is a highly accomplished performer on various members of the saxophone family who, in his compositional practice, actively integrates established academic traditions of earlier stylistic epochs with elements derived from jazz and popular culture. Such an approach not only reveals the extensive expressive and technical potential of the saxophone family – including the use of unconventional playing techniques – but also contributes to the enrichment of the original repertoire written for these instruments. Continuing the traditions of collective music-making associated with saxophone ensembles, J.-D. Michat also appears in the role of conductor, directing a large saxophone ensemble and shaping its artistic profile. In addition to expanding the ensemble's repertoire through arrangements of works that have acquired the status of canonical compositions, the musician – drawing upon his own performing experience and detailed knowledge of the technical and timbral possibilities of each member of the saxophone family – creates original compositions specifically conceived for this instrumental formation. From this perspective, the article investigates J.-D. Michat's artistic practice in terms of communicative interaction, encompassing the interrelated functions of Composer – Conductor – Performer, whose mutual interrelation forms a unified artistic and interpretative process.

Keywords: communication; non-verbal interaction; academic performance practice; Jean-Denis Michat; conductor; composer; saxophone; large saxophone ensemble; saxophone orchestra; saxophone choir; repertoire; contemporary music

¹ *PhD in Musical Art, Deputy Director for Research of the Educational and Scientific Institute, Lecturer at the Department of Orchestral Instruments, Dnipro Academy of Music, Lyvarna str. 10, Dnipro, Ukraine. E-mail: alexandrab417@gmail.com*

² *PhD in Musical Art, Head of the Department of Orchestral Instruments, Dnipro Academy of Music, Lyvarna str. 10, Dnipro, Ukraine. E-mail: lebedvolodymyr@dk.dp.ua*



Introduction

Collective music-making has constituted a widespread form of leisure since the Middle Ages. But the ensemble formats that are now regarded as traditional gradually took shape and crystallized during the period of the Classical composers. Although the popularity of canonical chamber formations – such as the string quartet, the piano trio, and the woodwind or brass quintet – has by no means diminished, contemporary composers, in their ongoing search for new sonic possibilities, increasingly combine unconventional instruments within ensemble settings. The invention, in the mid-nineteenth century, of the saxophone family – distinguished by its rich timbral palette, flexible dynamic range, and a wide variety of articulatory and technical possibilities – significantly stimulated the emergence of ensembles and even orchestras consisting exclusively of instruments from this family. Academic musical culture, which initially received the saxophone with a certain degree of caution, ultimately encouraged performers to form large ensembles composed solely of representatives of this instrumental group. The initiative for such formations most often came from prominent representatives of the saxophone performing tradition.

The creative profile of J.-D. Michat, regarded today as an important figure of contemporary academic saxophone performance and a composer of original works for the saxophone family, has repeatedly attracted the attention of the scholarly community. The distinctive synthesis of established examples of the Western classical tradition with extended performance techniques has been received with considerable interest not only among performers but also among musicologists, who perceive these works as vivid manifestations of the interaction between tradition and modernity. As a multifaceted artistic figure, his creative activity extends far beyond the composition and performance of works for solo instrument. In his pedagogical work, J.-D. Michat has established various saxophone ensembles for which he composes original works, prepares arrangements of canonical repertoire from the world's classical heritage, and frequently appears in the role of conductor or ensemble leader directing the ensemble from within. Despite the growing recognition of J.-D. Michat as both performer and composer, his artistic activity has not yet been examined as a specific form of communicative practice within the triadic relationship Composer – Conductor – Performer, whose internal interaction shapes a distinctive model of contemporary musical creativity.

The aim of this study is to identify and analyze the distinctive features of communication within the triadic relationship Composer – Conductor – Performer, in a situation where all participants of the communicative act are embodied in a single artistic figure, as exemplified by the contemporary musician J.-D. Michat.

The achievement of this objective requires the completion of several research tasks, namely:

- to identify the historical preconditions that contributed to the formation of collective performance practices, as exemplified by large saxophone ensembles;
- to analyze the creative activity of J.-D. Michat in the context of the integration of the communicative roles Composer – Conductor – Performer;
- to elucidate the specific influence of each component of the communicative triad on the professional practice of the composer, arranger, conductor, and performer;
- to characterize the distinctive features of communication between J.-D. Michat, in his role as conductor, and a large saxophone ensemble.

Review of literature on the topic

The rapid development of the academic saxophone tradition, particularly within the sphere of academic saxophone performance, has encouraged scholars to turn increasingly to the study of the distinctive features of this instrumental family from a variety of analytical perspectives. The French school, in particular, has served as a paradigmatic model in the formation of the academic saxophone tradition, while also functioning as a pedagogical and artistic laboratory for the exploration of new performance techniques, a tendency reflected in the study of Liliia Maksymenko (2012)³ and Andriy Yaskiv (2025)⁴. The ensemble-specific characteristics of performance, particularly in the original works of J.-D. Michat, have been examined in a number of research papers by Ukrainian and international scholars, including Pavlo Barabashchuk (2023)⁵,

³ Maksymenko, Liliia. "Frantsuzska saksofonova shkola: dyskurs rozvytku ta suchasnyi stan" (French saxophone school: developments and the modern condition). In *The Scientific Issues of Ternopil National Pedagogical Volodymyr Hnatiuk University. Specialization: Art Studies*, vol. 1, 2012, pp. 59-65.

⁴ Yaskiv, Andriy. "Metodychni zasady hry na saksofoni Zh.-D. Misha ta Zh. Venturi (na prykladi posibnyka "Suchasnyi saksofon")" (Methodological principles of saxophone performance by Jean-Denis Michat and Gérald Venturi (based on the manual "Le saxophone contemporain")). In *Bulletin of the Lviv University. Series of Arts Studies*, vol. 27, 2025, pp. 208-219. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.30970/vas.27.2025.208-219>

⁵ Barabashchuk, Pavlo. *Kamerno-instrumentalni ansambl za uchastiu saksofona: kompozytorska tvorchist ta vykonavska praktyka (Chamber-instrumental ensemble with the participation of the saxophone: composer's work and performance practice)* (DMA Dissertation), Ukrainian National Tchaikovsky Academy of Music, 2023, 113 p.

2024⁶), Dmytro and Liliia Maksymenko (2023)⁷, Stanislav Nidzelskyi (2025)⁸, Zhongbei Ma and Preeyanun Promsukkul (2025)⁹. Substantial scholarly contributions addressing the issue of communication in musical art include the monograph by Olena Berehova (2013)¹⁰ as well as studies devoted to the specific communicative aspects of the conductor's professional activity by Oleksandra Berestovska¹¹ (2025). In addition, valuable materials for the present article are video recordings that document the professional activity of J.-D. Michat as conductor with the large saxophone ensemble of the Conservatoire de Lyon, Artisanat Furieux, particularly the concert performances presented in the video promotion materials (2013)¹², video recording of the concert performance of Felix Mendelssohn's *Symphony for Strings No. 5* (2013)¹³, *Fête de la musique*

⁶ Barabashchuk, Pavlo. "Ansambleva spetsyfika vykonannia kontsertu dlia saksofona «Shams» Zhana-Deni Misha (na prykladi vykonavskoi interpretatsii Tomasa Kurtsa z orkestrom saksofoniv)" (Features of the ensemble performance of the concerto for saxophone Shams by Jean-Denis Michat: the case of Thomas Kurtz's performance with an orchestra saxophones). In *Art Research of Ukraine*, vol. 23, 2023, pp. 238-246. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31500/2309-8155.23.2023.299281>

⁷ Maksymenko, Dmytro; Maksymenko, Liliia. "Internatsionalnyi orkestr saksofoniv - yak odna iz form zaklyku do myru na prykladi odnoimennoho tvorcu Zh.-D. Misha" (The international saxophone orchestra – as one of the forms of call for peace on the example of the work of the same name by J.-D. Michat). In *International scientific conference Development of culture and art in the war and post-war periods*, 2023, pp. 19-22. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30525/978-9934-26-341-5-4>

⁸ Nidzelskyi, Stanislav. "«Zaklyk do myru» Zhana-Deni Misha dlia ansamblu saksofoniv: folklorni vidlunnia u suchasnomu muzychnomu dyskursi" («Call for peace» by Jean-Denis Michat for saxophone ensemble: folklore echoes in contemporary musical discourse). In *Current Issues of the Humanities*, vol. 85 (2), 2025, pp. 119-126. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24919/2308-4863/85-2-18>

⁹ Ma, Zhongbei; Promsukkul, Preeyanun. Cross-Cultural Fusion in Contemporary Saxophone Music: A Study of Middle Eastern-Arabic Elements in Jean Denis Michat's 'Shams'. In *Revista Electrónica de LEEME*, vol. 55, 2025, pp. 261-282. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.58262/LEEME.55.0016>

¹⁰ Berehova, Olena. *Intehratyvni protsesy v muzychnii kulturi KhKh-KhKhI stolit (Integrative processes in musical culture of the 20th-21st centuries)*, Institute for Cultural Research of the National Academy of Arts of Ukraine, 2013, 232 p.

¹¹ Berestovska, Oleksandra. *Diialnist operno-symfonichnoho dyryhenta: komunikatsiini aspekty (The work of an opera and symphony conductor: communication aspects)* (PhD Dissertation), Municipal Higher Education Institution "Dnipro Academy of Music" of the Dnipropetrovsk Regional Council", 2025, 281 p.

¹² *Artisanat Furieux / Promotion 2013*. Classe de saxophones du Conservatoire de Lyon (direction artistique: Jean-Denis Michat), 2013. URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xq8XLoFySdc&list=PLdUp34nANI0xmQej4FD_4ezDjl4LSEfCC&index=7

¹³ Mendelssohn, Felix. *Symphonie pour cordes n° 5 (arr. N. Gascon)*. Artisanat Furieux: ensemble de saxophones du Conservatoire de Lyon (direction: Jean-Denis Michat), 2013. URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9O7bFPHCVI0&list=RD9O7bFPHCVI0&start_radio=1

(2021)¹⁴, *Les 30 ans* (2025)¹⁵.

Despite the scholarly attention devoted to the compositional output of J.-D. Michat and to works written for large saxophone ensembles, a noticeable gap remains in the study of the communicative interaction Composer – Conductor – Performer, a model that is particularly relevant to twenty-first-century musical practice. In the artistic activity of J.-D. Michat, these roles are embodied within a single creative figure, where each component of the triad exerts a reciprocal influence on the others.

Materials and methods

In order to achieve the stated aim and address the research objectives, the following methods were employed:

- the method of historical reconstruction was applied in order to recreate the historical process of the formation of ensemble performance practices and the development of communicative relationships between Composer – Conductor, Composer – Conductor – Performer, and Conductor – Performer;
- the communicative-interpretative method provided the theoretical basis for substantiating the mutual influence of the communicative links within the triad Composer – Conductor – Performer, as illustrated through the creative activity of J.-D. Michat;
- the comparative method made it possible to trace changes in the communicative channels employed by J.-D. Michat, depending on the cultural-historical context, the evolutionary transformation of the conductor's role, and the significance of the performing ensemble in relation to the repertoire being interpreted;
- the analytical-performance approach facilitated the examination and interpretation of the non-verbal communicative means employed by J.-D. Michat, in his role as conductor, in interaction with a large saxophone ensemble in order to achieve a coherent and artistically convincing interpretation.

¹⁴ Bach, Johann Sebastian. *Concerto Brandenbourgeois no. 3, BWV 1048* (arr. J.-D. Michat). Ensemble de saxophones du Conservatoire de Lyon "L'Artisanat Furieux", "La fête de la musique", 2021. URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vjZK-HgO5Rs>

¹⁵ "Artisanat Furieux": *Classe de saxophone PPES*. "Les 30 ans" (solist – Claude Delangle, direction – Jean-Denis Mchat), Conservatoire de Lyon, 13.12.2025. URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XHp_-kA2SbA&list=RDH8MMIFTSJfU&index=3

Source base of the study

The research is based on publicly available video recordings of concert performances by the large saxophone ensemble of the Conservatoire de Lyon conducted by J.-D. Michat.

Results and Discussion

Communication in music represents a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. According to the widely known Shannon–Weaver model, any act of communication includes several essential components: the information source, the transmitter, the communication channel, the receiver, and the destination. Within this framework, the traditional communicative chain in musical practice may be described in terms of the following components: Composer – Performer – Listener. O. Berehova observes: “Thus, the composer encodes their creative concept in musical signs and symbols; the performer decodes these notational signs and re-encodes them into the language of musical sounds; the listener perceives the sonic version of the work and attempts to decode the composer’s creative intention.”¹⁶ The intermediate component – the Performer – may be expanded, particularly in situations involving a collective body of performers, such as an orchestra or a choir.¹⁷ In such cases, the conductor becomes a crucial component of the communicative process, acting as the embodied mediator of the musical work, the interpreter of the composer’s intention, and the figure who first transmits the encoded musical information to the performing ensemble and subsequently to the audience.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the communicative relationship Composer – Conductor – Performer (including the musical ensemble) was often embodied in a single figure – the court Kapellmeister. Heinrich Christoph Koch notes that “the position of Kapellmeister is entrusted to a musician appointed to compose musical works specifically for the court, to select and prepare other artistic works for performance, and to supervise

¹⁶ Berehova, Olena. *Intehratyvni protsesy v muzychnii kulturi KhKh-KhKhI stolit (Integrative processes in musical culture of the 20th-21st centuries)*, Institute for Cultural Research of the National Academy of Arts of Ukraine, 2013, 232 p.

¹⁷ Berestovska, Oleksandra. *Diiialnist operno-symfonichnoho dryrhenta: komunikatsiini aspekty (The work of an opera and symphony conductor: communication aspects)* (PhD Dissertation), Municipal Higher Education Institution “Dnipro Academy of Music” of the Dnipropetrovsk Regional Council”, 2025, p. 103.

the entire musical activity during its execution.”¹⁸ Contemporary musical practice increasingly tends toward the differentiation of communicative roles. Initial musical education, however, traditionally remains grounded in the acquisition of performing skills. At later stages of professional development, distinct representatives of specialized artistic domains emerge: composers engaged primarily in creative work, conductors of various professional orientations, and performers, each occupying a specific position within the communicative chain outlined above. Nevertheless, the history of music demonstrates that combinations of conducting and compositional practice are by no means uncommon. Such figures include Richard Wagner, Gustav Mahler, Wilhelm Furtwängler, Leonard Bernstein, and others, whose artistic practice exemplifies the integration of multiple communicative roles within a single creative personality.

The abandonment of the tradition of conducting one's own works may be explained by a number of factors. Among the most significant is the difficulty of separating the identity of the composer – who constantly compares the performance with their own artistic conception – from that of the leader of the musical ensemble, whose task is to work effectively with the performers in order to achieve a convincing interpretation. This issue is addressed by the conductor of the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, Esa-Pekka Salonen, who observes: “...when you rehearse your own works you hear music which is basically very close to something you dreamed of, but it is not necessarily exactly the same. So you start thinking whether the problem is in the playing or in your conducting; whether the problem is your instrumentation or whether you were not able to convey your ideas in musical notation. Then you actually forget about the rehearsals and start thinking about other things.”¹⁹ Nevertheless, in the twenty-first century there are notable exceptions, particularly in cases where the leader of an ensemble or orchestra simultaneously acts as composer, conductor, and even as a direct performing member of the musical collective.

Instances of combining the communicative roles of conductor and performer are characteristic of ensembles and orchestras formed from timbrally homogeneous instrumental groups, as well as within historically informed performance practice, which involves a return not only to historical instruments but also to period-specific principles of directing musical ensembles. Particular attention should be given to ensembles and orchestras whose members belong to the same instrumental family – for example, saxophones.

¹⁸ Koch, Heinrich Christoph. *Musikalisches Lexikon*, Frankfurt am Main, 1802, p. 826.

¹⁹ Duffie B. *Conductor / Composer Esa-Pekka Salonen*. Recording of a conversation from January 16, 1988, Chicago. URL: <https://www.bruceduffie.com/salonen.html>

Despite the relatively recent emergence of these instruments, they have rapidly gained popularity across a wide range of musical styles, including the sphere of academic musical practice. One of the principal reasons for this lies in their remarkably broad range of timbral and expressive possibilities: "Despite the challenges in mastering pitch, the saxophone can mimic the expressiveness of string instruments and the warm timbre of the human voice. In an ensemble, it can produce the powerful sound of brass instruments while also possessing the softness and delicacy of woodwinds. Its capabilities in both solo and ensemble settings allow it to excel in bands and orchestras, showcasing a unique sound, especially when playing alongside other saxophone members."²⁰ Considering that, at the time of the creation of the saxophone family, the structure of the traditional symphony orchestra had already largely taken shape, the inventor Adolphe Sax deliberately designed an entire family of instruments capable of supporting ensemble performance. The Paris Conservatoire was among the first institutions to recognize the considerable potential of these newly created instruments. Since that time, the French academic school of saxophone performance has remained a paradigmatic model within the development of the instrument's classical tradition.²¹²²

Among the various methods of developing and refining performing mastery, collective performance occupies a particularly significant place. The possibility of forming large saxophone ensembles and orchestras represents an effective mechanism for the development of the communicative skills and competencies essential for a saxophonist's professional activity. The first attempts to establish such ensembles were initiated by Adolphe Sax as early as the late nineteenth century. The idea of creating saxophone ensembles was subsequently continued by Marcel Mule, whose ensemble gradually "developed into an independent chamber concert group. At the initial stage, the ensemble's repertoire consisted primarily of arrangements of works representing various stylistic periods – from the Baroque to Romanticism –

²⁰ Ma, Zhongbei; Promsukkul, Preeyanun. Cross-Cultural Fusion in Contemporary Saxophone Music: A Study of Middle Eastern-Arabic Elements in Jean Denis Michat's 'Shams'. In *Revista Electrónica de LEEME*, vol. 55, 2025, p. 262. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.58262/LEEME.55.0016>

²¹ Maksymenko, Liliia. "Frantsuzska saksofonova shkola: dyskurs rozvytku ta suchasnyi stan" (French saxophone school: developments and the modern condition). In *The Scientific Issues of Ternopil National Pedagogical Volodymyr Hnatiuk University. Specialization: Art Studies*, vol. 1, 2012, pp. 59-65.

²² Yaskiv, Andriy. "Metodychni zasady hry na saksofoni Zh.-D. Misha ta Zh. Venturi (na prykladi posibnyka "Suchasnyi saksofon")" (Methodological principles of saxophone performance by Jean-Denis Michat and Gérald Venturi (based on the manual "Le saxophone contemporain")). In *Bulletin of the Lviv University. Series of Arts Studies*, vol. 27, 2025, pp. 208-219. In Ukrainian. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.30970/lvas.27.2025.208-219>

transcribed by Mule himself.”²³ The first saxophone orchestra was established in Bordeaux by the distinguished French pedagogue and performer Jean-Marie Londeix. This ensemble consisted of representatives of the entire saxophone family and included twelve performers. Such an instrumental configuration – ranging from sopranino to subcontrabass saxophone – subsequently became the traditional model for the saxophone orchestra, also commonly referred to as a saxophone choir. Today, large ensembles composed exclusively of instruments from the saxophone family exist in numerous conservatories and music academies across the United States, Europe, and Asia, reflecting the continuing development of academic saxophone performance within diverse centers of professional musical education.

Given the relatively recent development of the saxophone tradition, compositions written specifically for representatives of this instrumental family have absorbed stylistic tendencies associated with Romanticism, Expressionism, and Modernism. The instrument’s rich timbral resonance, wide palette of articulations, subtle dynamic gradations, and the extensive range of extended performance techniques have attracted composers and stimulated the creation of works that highlight the full expressive potential of the saxophone. Among the musicians who combine adherence to academic traditions with an active exploration of the instrument’s extended technical resources is the young representative of the French school, J.-D. Michat. As a professional virtuoso saxophonist, he prepares arrangements of works from the Baroque and Classical periods while also composing original pieces based on classical compositional principles, into which he actively integrates extended performance techniques.

J.-D. Michat developed as a performer during his studies at the Paris Conservatoire, where a student in the saxophone class of the internationally renowned musician, Professor Claude Delangle. He actively tours internationally, performing both works accompanied by orchestra and chamber repertoire with piano. J.-D. Michat is also regarded as a prominent representative and advocate of the style known as *à la française*, a tradition characterized by “a close connection with vocal technique, since the foundation of wind performance lies in the imitation of the human voice, the emulation of vocal practice, and a particular attention to the timbre of sound, which constantly remains in a phase of exploration, development, and refinement.”²⁴ Possessing a rich timbral palette together with considerable dynamic and articulatory flexibility, the

²³ Maksymenko, Liliia. “Frantsuzska saksofonova shkola: dyskurs rozvytku ta suchasnyi stan” (French saxophone school: developments and the modern condition). In *The Scientific Issues of Ternopil National Pedagogical Volodymyr Hnatiuk University. Specialization: Art Studies*, vol. 1, 2012, p. 61.

²⁴ Idem, p. 64.

musician frequently participates in the premiere performances of contemporary works. In this way, a direct communicative interaction emerges with modern composers, for whom the full expressive potential of the saxophone is revealed more fully. Such collaboration within the Composer – Performer relationship makes it possible to minimize the communicative noise that often accompanies the interpretation of works by deceased composers, allowing for a more immediate and precise realization of the author's artistic intention.

J.-D. Michat also transmits his performing experience through his pedagogical activity as Professor of Saxophone at the Conservatoire de Lyon. In addition to his teaching duties, he regularly appears as a guest-lecturer and performer and serves as a jury member in leading international saxophone competitions. Within the framework of his pedagogical work, the musician establishes saxophone ensembles of various instrumental configurations, providing students not only with opportunities to develop their performing skills but also to become acquainted with the specific communicative dynamics that arise within an ensemble environment. In view of that the repertoire available for saxophone choirs remains comparatively more limited than that for ensembles of strings or other wind instruments, J.-D. Michat "... developed a sharp work of transcriptions to impose the saxophone as a new instrument of 'Classical culture'."²⁵ Considering the musician's fascination with works of earlier stylistic epochs, as well as with the technical and expressive capabilities of the saxophone, J.-D. Michat has produced numerous arrangements of well-known compositions spanning the period from the Baroque to Romanticism. In this context, special attention should be paid to the distinctive interactional model, Arranger – Performer, the combination of which within a single artistic figure facilitates the careful selection of repertoire for transcription with full consideration of the instrument's performing potential. Arrangements created by professional performers for a particular instrument or instrumental family – a practice especially widespread among wind instrumentalists – take into account not only timbral compatibility but also the specific nuances and characteristics of each instrument. This includes, among other aspects, fingering combinations, intonational characteristics, register-related timbral variations, dynamic capacity, the palette of articulations, as well as various technical and instrument-specific aspects. In such cases, the resulting arrangement tends to remain as close as possible to the original composition while also ensuring a technically comfortable performance.

In addition to possessing a high level of organizational ability – essential for the formation of ensembles and for encouraging performers to engage in collective music-making – J.-D. Michat also appears in the roles

²⁵ Michat, Jean-Denis. Official website. URL: <https://www.jdmichat.com/bio>

of artistic director and conductor. It should be noted that, depending on the work being performed, the means by which the saxophone ensemble is directed may vary. An analysis of video recordings of the saxophone orchestra published on the official YouTube channel of J.-D. Michat²⁶ reveals several recurring strategies in his direction of the ensemble. As has already been noted, the artist demonstrates a clear affinity for the traditions of academic musical culture, while at the same time allowing for the integration of jazz and improvisational elements within his performing practice. When performing works belonging to earlier cultural-historical epochs, J.-D. Michat, both as performer and as artistic director of the ensemble, adheres to traditions of the respective historical period. At the same time, the analysis indicates that the interaction models employed by the musician vary depending on the work being performed, reflecting – much like in the historical evolution of musical practice – the gradual transformation of the conductor's role itself.

Among the communicative models employed by J.-D. Michat as conductor is the interaction with the ensemble from within the collective itself, that is, while simultaneously acting as a performing participant. Such interaction – primarily auditory in nature – can be traced back to early examples of ensemble practice. For instance, in earlier musical traditions the cantor would often perform their part more prominently than the others, thereby assisting the ensemble in maintaining coordination. Later, with the development of orchestral practice, similar communicative functions were assumed by the performer of the basso continuo part or by the first violin during the Baroque and Classical periods. With the gradual departure from the monodic tradition and the increasing complexity of ensemble textures, purely auditory communication from the ensemble leader was no longer sufficient as the sole means of coordination and therefore required reinforcement through additional channels. Historically, the visual channel of communication emerged as the most effective. Given the practical difficulty of combining instrumental performance with the execution of explicit metric conducting patterns, musicians increasingly relied on visual cues – gestures, bodily movements, and facial expressions. It should also be noted that, unlike the seventeenth–nineteenth centuries, when gestural movements were often exaggerated due to the limited rehearsal time and the comparatively lower level of professional training among performers, contemporary musicians predominantly employ symbolic gestures that unite performers through shared breathing, indicate entrances, and coordinate dialogic musical exchanges. It is precisely this multimodal communication – a combination of auditory and visual channels – that

²⁶ Michat, Jean-Denis. Official YouTube channel.
<https://www.youtube.com/@jdsample7678/featured>

J.-D. Michat employs when integrating performance with the act of conducting. This can be observed in several performances of his arrangement for saxophone orchestra of J. S. Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G major*, BWV 1048. Considering that the recordings selected for comparison differ in their dates of production and involve different performers, it can be concluded that J.-D. Michat deliberately adheres to this communicative model, consciously incorporating historically established channels of musical communication.

Taking into account the specificities of saxophone performance – where both hands remain occupied during playing and therefore cannot be used for conventional conducting gestures – J.-D. Michat employs alternative means of direction. These include movements of the instrument itself, the use of body posture, coordinated breathing, facial expression, and direct eye contact with the performers. It should be noted that, for wind instrumentalists, the use of additional bodily movements during performance is relatively common and often contributes to a more vivid interaction within the Performer – Audience relationship. In order to avoid unnecessary “noise” in the communicative channel caused by excessive gestures, however, J.-D. Michat largely refrains from pronounced movements of both the instrument and the torso during performance, introducing them only at moments that require clear coordination of the large saxophone ensemble. Such gestures are typically employed at structurally significant points, including the beginning and the end of a phrase, moments of collective breathing – particularly important for wind performers – as well as during dynamic and tempo changes, antiphonal exchanges between instrumental groups, and similar situations requiring coordinated ensemble interaction.

The contemporary practice of combining the roles of Conductor – Performer within a single artistic figure, particularly in large wind ensembles, remains relatively rare, in contrast to its more frequent occurrence in chamber orchestras, vocal ensembles, wind quintets, Baroque orchestras, and similar formations. Such a mode of interaction requires an expanded range of professional competencies, as it demands from the performer not only a thorough command of their own part but also a comprehensive knowledge of the entire score, together with the ability to maintain effective communication with the ensemble. Particular emphasis must therefore be placed on the precision and expressive clarity of non-verbal means of communication, whose full and continuous use is often limited by the practical conditions of performance.

In the course of analyzing the creative activity of J.-D. Michat as the leader of a saxophone ensemble, several instances were identified in which the musician assumed the position of conductor standing separately at the conducting podium. His conducting repertoire includes a number of works that have secured a place among canonical works of the academic repertoire. For instance, an examination of the arrangement of J. S. Bach's *Passacaglia*

and *Fugue in C minor*, BWV 582 (arr. N. Gascon)²⁷, demonstrates that, although the musician occupies the role of conductor, he employs rather restrained non-verbal means in his communication with the ensemble. His conducting practice combines clear, restrained beat patterns with musically expressive gestures, accompanied by almost constant eye contact with the performers and by coordinated breathing – an element that constitutes an especially important component of effective ensemble interaction.

J.-D. Michat has also introduced works of the Romantic period into the repertoire of the large saxophone ensemble, including F. Mendelssohn's *String Symphony No. 5 in B-flat major* (arr. N. Gascon). Particular attention should be given to the refinement of the conductor's musically expressive gestures, which correspond closely to the character of the performed work while deliberately avoiding exaggerated expressive movements. As a result, the audience is able to concentrate fully on the musical performance itself, without the communicative "noise" that may arise from excessive attention to the conductor's physical presence. An especially noteworthy feature of this recording is J.-D. Michat's use of the conducting baton. Considering that Felix Mendelssohn played a key role in restoring the tradition of using this distinctive conducting attribute – intended to enhance the visual component of communication within the Conductor – Ensemble relationship – it may be interpreted as a symbolic gesture through which Maestro J.-D. Michat pays tribute to the composer-conductor.

During the performance of M. Ravel's *Le Tombeau de Couperin*²⁸, J.-D. Michat gives clear preference to expressive gestural language in his communication within the Conductor – Ensemble relationship. This approach appears fully justified by the impressionistic character of the work. Through his conducting gestures, the musician visually articulates the dynamic flexibility, textural richness, and the broad flow of sound inherent in the composition. Particular attention should also be drawn to the metaphorical dimension of the conductor's gestures, as discussed by.²⁹ It may be hypothesized that such gestural responsiveness is related to mechanisms often discussed in connection with mirror-neuron processes. This may explain why such gestures

²⁷ *Artisanat Furieux / Promotion 2013*. Classe de saxophones du Conservatoire de Lyon (direction artistique: Jean-Denis Michat), 2013. URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xq8XL0FySdc&list=PLdUp34nANl0xmQej4FD_4ezDjl4LSEfCC&index=7, 1:20

²⁸ *"Artisanat Furieux": Classe de saxophone PPES*. "Les 30 ans" (solist – Claude Delangle, direction – Jean-Denis Mchat), Conservatoire de Lyon, 13.12.2025. URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XHp_-kA2SbA&list=RDH8MMIFTSJfU&index=3, 0:37 – 2:00

²⁹ Bräm, Turing; Boyes Bräm, Penny. "Der Versuch einer Klassifizierung der Ausdrucksgesten des Dirigenten". In Fähndrich, Walter (Hg.), *Improvisation III*, 1998, ss. 220-248. In German.

quickly elicit a corresponding response among the performers. This phenomenon becomes particularly evident in the way the members of the large saxophone ensemble gradually mirror the gestures of J.-D. Michat, creating what appears to be a deliberately coordinated visual effect. In reality, however, this reflects inherent mechanisms of human perception, which contribute to the visual embodiment of the auditory message being transmitted.

During performances of A. Piazzolla's³⁰ most well-known works arranged for saxophone ensemble – namely *Escualo*, *Ave Maria*, *Fugata*, *Oblivion*, and *Libertango* – communication within the Conductor – Ensemble relationship is largely based on clear metric conducting patterns complemented by occasional metaphorical gestures, while interaction with the soloist is maintained primarily through direct eye contact. In these performances, J.-D. Michat clearly differentiates the functional roles of the ensemble. At certain moments, the fifteen members of the group assume the role of a rhythmic–harmonic accompaniment, allowing the soprano saxophone soloist to emerge prominently. At other points, however, the ensemble appears to enter into a form of musical dialogue – a quasi-competitive one – with the soloist, functioning as a fully active participant in the unfolding musical action.

Up to this point, the analysis has focused primarily on works by composers from different cultural-historical periods, in which particular attention was drawn to the arranger's understanding of the specific characteristics of the saxophone family in order to achieve a "natural" ensemble sound despite the unconventional instrumentation. It is therefore necessary to consider another important dimension of the French musician's creative activity – his work as a composer. J.-D. Michat's compositional work was quickly recognized within the community of saxophonists. His works were not only welcomed as valuable additions to the repertoire but were also incorporated into the programmes of leading saxophone competitions as original compositions of a high artistic and technical standard. Given that he has composed a substantial number of works for the saxophone, a particularly close interaction can be observed within the communicative relationship Composer – Performer. As a professional saxophonist with a high level of technical mastery, J.-D. Michat possesses a thorough understanding of the expressive and technical capabilities of instruments within this family and clearly differentiates the stages involved in mastering them. Consequently, J.-D. Michat as composer is able to receive immediate feedback on his compositions. He frequently

³⁰ "Artisanat Furieux": Classe de saxophone PPES. "Les 30 ans" (solist – Claude Delangle, direction – Jean-Denis Mchat), Conservatoire de Lyon, 13.12.2025.

URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XHp_-kA2SbA&list=RDH8MMIFTSJfU&index=3, 6:51 – 12:00.

performs his own works not only as a distinguished soloist but also as their conductor.

The combination of the communicative roles Composer – Conductor entails several advantages, most notably those related to the precision of interpretation. At the same time, in order to minimize potential communicative “noise” when other conductors subsequently work with the score, the composer seeks to provide the most accurate and detailed notational guidance possible.

Within the Composer – Conductor relationship, the primary medium of communication is the musical score, which functions as the principal medium through which compositional intention is encoded. It must be taken into account that this process of encoding is constrained by the relatively strict conventions of musical notation, which may already introduce certain forms of “noise” into the communicative channel. In order to reduce such ambiguities, J.-D. Michat often accompanies his works with an introductory commentary and supplements the score with a series of explanatory notes – authorial remarks that may concern aspects of sound production, character, or expressive intention. At this stage it should be noted that the notated material itself contains a relatively low degree of communicative ambiguity. This is largely due to J.-D. Michat’s profound knowledge of the instrument’s technical characteristics, its dynamic gradations, and the timbral properties associated with different registers – an expertise that stems directly from his high level of performing mastery as a saxophonist.

J.-D. Michat has composed a number of works for large saxophone ensemble, including *Massive Haka*, *Pasta Concerto*, *Shams*, *Psychose*, *Malala*, *Game in Gap*, *Call for Peace*, *Suite Française*. Among the characteristic features shared by all of the aforementioned compositions are pictorial imagery, vivid programmatic expression, and elements of sound imitation. The specific features of the musical language of these works, as well as their musicological analysis, have been examined in the studies of P. Barabashchuk^{31, 32},

³¹ Barabashchuk, Pavlo. “Ansambleva spetsyfika vykonannia kontsertu dlia saksofona «Shams» Zhana-Deni Misha (na prykladi vykonavskoi interpretatsii Tomasa Kurtsa z orkestrom saksofoniv)” (Features of the ensemble performance of the concerto for saxophone *Shams* by Jean-Denis Michat: the case of Thomas Kurtz’s performance with an orchestra saxophones). In *Art Research of Ukraine*, vol. 23, 2023, pp. 238-246. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31500/2309-8155.23.2023.299281>

³² Barabashchuk, Pavlo. *Kamerno-instrumentalni ansambl za uchastiu saksofona: kompozytorska tvorchist ta vykonavska praktyka (Chamber-instrumental ensemble with the participation of the saxophone: composer's work and performance practice)* (DMA Dissertation), Ukrainian National Tchaikovsky Academy of Music, 2023, 113 p.

L. & D. Maksymenko^{33, 34}, S. Nidzelskyi³⁵, Z. Ma & P. Promsukkul³⁶. In certain cases, the compositions written by J.-D. Michat can be interpreted as artistic responses to geopolitical developments, major international cultural events, or as reinterpretations of classical traditions. Combining the communicative roles Composer – Conductor, the musician often relinquishes, in concert performance, the conventional role of the conductor as interpretative authority, instead assuming a more functional role as a rhythmic coordinator of the ensemble. This approach may be explained by the complexity of the musical language and by the frequent metric changes of these works. In such situations, the leader of the large saxophone ensemble assumes primarily the role of coordinating the performance. Accordingly, the non-verbal means of communication employed are largely limited to conducting patterns and preparatory gestures (upbeats), while metaphorical gestures may occasionally be introduced when required to facilitate the ensemble execution of extended performance techniques. It should also be noted that this transformation of the conductor's role corresponds with broader tendencies in contemporary musical practice, which increasingly seek to engage the audience in a more active and participatory relationship with the performance.

Conclusions

Collective performance, like any other form of musical activity, cannot be realized without taking into account the specific features of communicative interaction. The analysis of J.-D. Michat's artistic practice as an internationally

³³ Maksymenko, Liliia. "Frantsuzska saksofonova shkola: dyskurs rozvytku ta suchasnyi stan" (French saxophone school: developments and the modern condition). In *The Scientific Issues of Ternopil National Pedagogical Volodymyr Hnatiuk University. Specialization: Art Studies*, vol. 1, 2012, pp. 59-65.

³⁴ Maksymenko, Dmytro; Maksymenko, Liliia. "Internatsionalnyi orkestr saksofoniv - yak odna iz form zaklyku do myru na prykladi odnoimennoho tvoru Zh.-D. Misha" (The international saxophone orchestra – as one of the forms of call for peace on the example of the work of the same name by J.-D. Michat). In *International scientific conference Development of culture and art in the war and post-war periods*, 2023, pp. 19-22. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30525/978-9934-26-341-5-4>

³⁵ Nidzelskyi, Stanislav. "«Zaklyk do myru» Zhana-Deni Misha dlia ansamblu saksofoniv: folklorni vidlunnia u suchasnomu muzychnomu dyskursi" («Call for peace» by Jean-Denis Michat for saxophone ensemble: folklore echoes in contemporary musical discourse). In *Current Issues of the Humanities*, vol. 85 (2), 2025, pp. 119-126. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24919/2308-4863/85-2-18>

³⁶ Ma, Zhongbei; Promsukkul, Preeyanun. Cross-Cultural Fusion in Contemporary Saxophone Music: A Study of Middle Eastern-Arabic Elements in Jean Denis Michat's 'Shams'. In *Revista Electrónica de LEEME*, vol. 55, 2025, pp. 261-282. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.58262/LEEME.55.0016>

recognized representative of the academic saxophone tradition reveals a distinctive integration of several important communicative roles – Composer – Conductor – Performer. The sphere of communicative relationships within his artistic practice exerts a significant influence on the unique character of saxophone ensemble performance. As a performer, a leading composer, and a skillful arranger, J.-D. Michat demonstrates the full expressive potential of the saxophone family. His awareness of historical performance traditions is reflected not only in his arrangements of works for large saxophone ensemble but also in the models of ensemble direction he employs. The musician's restrained manual conducting technique is effectively complemented by a range of non-verbal communicative means, which find resonance in the ensemble and contribute to the coherent realization of interpretation. Thus, the artistic personality of J.-D. Michat has shaped a distinctive communicative unity of multiple roles whose interaction facilitates a fuller artistic realization, repertoire enrichment, and broader promotion of the large academic saxophone ensemble within the context of contemporary musical practice.

REFERENCES

- “Artisanat Furieux”*: Classe de saxophone PPES. “Les 30 ans” (solist – Claude Delangle, direction – Jean-Denis Michat), Conservatoire de Lyon, 13.12.2025.
URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XHp_-kA2SbA&list=RDH8MMIFTSJfU&index=3 (accessed 17.01.2026).
- Artisanat Furieux / Promotion 2013*. Classe de saxophones du Conservatoire de Lyon (direction artistique: Jean-Denis Michat), 2013. URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xq8XLoFySdc&list=PLdUp34nANI0xmJ4FD_4ezDj4LSEfCC&index=7 (accessed 16.01.2026).
- Bach, Johann Sebastian. *Concerto Brandenbourgeois no. 3, BWV 1048 (arr. J.-D. Michat)*. Ensemble de saxophones du Conservatoire de Lyon “L'Artisanat Furieux”, “La fête de la musique”, 2021. URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vjZK-HgO5Rs> (accessed 18.12.2025).
- Barabashchuk, Pavlo. “Ansambleva spetsyfika vykonannia kontsertu dlia saksofona «Shams» Zhana-Deni Misha (na prykladi vykonavskoi interpretatsii Tomasa Kurtsa z orkestrom saksofoniv)” (Features of the ensemble performance of the concerto for saxophone Shams by Jean-Denis Michat: the case of Thomas Kurtz's performance with an orchestra saxophones). In *Art Research of Ukraine*, vol. 23, 2023, pp. 238-246.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31500/2309-8155.23.2023.299281>

- Barabashchuk, Pavlo. *Kamerno-instrumentalniy ansambl za uchastiu saksofona: kompozytorska tvorchist ta vykonavska praktyka (Chamber-instrumental ensemble with the participation of the saxophone: composer's work and performance practice)* (DMA Dissertation), Ukrainian National Tchaikovsky Academy of Music, 2023, 113 p. In Ukrainian.
- Berehova, Olena. *Intehratyvni protsesy v muzychnii kulturi KhKh-KhKhI stolit (Integrative processes in musical culture of the 20th-21st centuries)*, Institute for Cultural Research of the National Academy of Arts of Ukraine, 2013, 232 p. In Ukrainian.
- Berestovska, Oleksandra. *Diialnist operno-symfonichnoho dyryhenta: komunikatsiini aspekty (The work of an opera and symphony conductor: communication aspects)* (PhD Dissertation), Municipal Higher Education Institution "Dnipro Academy of Music" of the Dnipropetrovsk Regional Council", 2025, 281 p. In Ukrainian.
- Bräm, Turing; Boyes Bräm, Penny. "Der Versuch einer Klassifizierung der Ausdrucksgesten des Dirigenten". In Fähndrich, Walter (Hg.), *Improvisation III*, 1998, ss. 220-248. In German.
- Duffie B. *Conductor / Composer Esa-Pekka Salonen*. Recording of a conversation from January 16, 1988, Chicago. URL: <https://www.bruceduffie.com/salonen.html> (accessed 26.07.2025).
- Koch, Heinrich Christoph. *Musikalisches Lexikon*, Frankfurt am Main, 1802, 918 p.
- Ma, Zhongbei; Promsukkul, Preeyanun. Cross-Cultural Fusion in Contemporary Saxophone Music: A Study of Middle Eastern-Arabic Elements in Jean Denis Michat's 'Shams'. In *Revista Electrónica de LEEME*, vol. 55, 2025, pp. 261-282. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.58262/LEEME.55.0016>
- Maksymenko, Dmytro; Maksymenko, Liliia. "Internatsionalnyi orkestr saksofoniv - yak odna iz form zaklyku do myru na prykladi odnoimennoho tvorcu Zh.-D. Misha" (The international saxophone orchestra – as one of the forms of call for peace on the example of the work of the same name by J.-D. Michat). In *International scientific conference Development of culture and art in the war and post-war periods*, 2023, pp. 19-22. In Ukrainian. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30525/978-9934-26-341-5-4>
- Maksymenko, Liliia. "Frantsuzska saksofonova shkola: dyskurs rozvytku ta suchasnyi stan" (French saxophone school: developments and the modern condition). In *The Scientific Issues of Ternopil National Pedagogical Volodymyr Hnatiuk University. Specialization: Art Studies*, vol. 1, 2012, pp. 59-65. In Ukrainian.
- Mendelssohn, Felix. *Symphonie pour cordes n° 5 (arr. N. Gascon)*. Artisanat Furieux: ensemble de saxophones du Conservatoire de Lyon (direction: Jean-Denis Michat), 2013. URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9O7bFPHCvI0&list=RD9O7bFPHCvI0&start_radio=1 (accessed 19.12.2025).
- Michat, Jean-Denis. Official website. URL: <https://www.jdmichat.com/bio> (accessed 16.10.2025).
- Michat, Jean-Denis. Official YouTube channel. <https://www.youtube.com/@jdsample7678/featured> (accessed 16.10.2025).

- Nidzelskyi, Stanislav. “«Zaklyk do myru» Zhana-Deni Misha dlia ansamblu saksofoniv: folklorni vidlunnia u suchasnomu muzychnomu dyskursi” («Call for peace» by Jean-Denis Michat for saxophone ensemble: folklore echoes in contemporary musical discourse). In *Current Issues of the Humanities*, vol. 85 (2), 2025, pp. 119-126. In Ukrainian. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24919/2308-4863/85-2-18>
- Yaskiv, Andriy. “Metodychni zasady hry na saksofoni Zh.-D. Misha ta Zh. Venturi (na prykladi posibnyka “Suchasnyi saksofon”)” (Methodological principles of saxophone performance by Jean-Denis Michat and Gérald Venturi (based on the manual “Le saxophone contemporain”)). In *Bulletin of the Lviv University. Series of Arts Studies*, vol. 27, 2025, pp. 208-219. In Ukrainian. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.30970/vas.27.2025.208-219>

THE UNIQUENESS OF SYNTHESIS ACADEMIC SINGING AND FOLK INSTRUMENTAL BANDURA TRADITION IN THE CONTEXT OF EUROPEAN PERFORMANCE PRACTICES

LIUBOV MANDZIUK¹ , LESIA PIVTORATSKA² ,
LIUDMYLA AVDYMIRETS³ , NATALIA KOVAL⁴ 

SUMMARY. The article studies vocal and instrumental bandura performance as a unique artistic phenomenon based on an organic synthesis of academic singing and folk instrumental timbre. The authors conduct a comparative analysis of the Ukrainian model of performance with pan-European practices, which made it possible to identify the specifics of the domestic vocal and bandura monoensemble. interaction of the voice with the chromatinized bandura. The parity of vocal and instrumental training of a modern performer is emphasized. It is proved that this synthesis is an effective strategy for integrating the Ukrainian national sound into the European cultural space. The features of the uniqueness of the model studied have been identified, including systemic institutionalization, an organic combination of two performing practices and aesthetic convergence of folk authenticity with the principles of academic vocals. The article focuses on the viability of bandura art as a dynamic tool of cultural resistance and self-presentation of Ukraine in the world.

Keywords: Ukrainian musical art, academic singing, folk bandura tradition, vocal and instrumental synthesis, chamber ensemble, academic educational system

¹ Honored Artist of Ukraine, PhD in Art Studies, Associate Professor of the Department of Folk Instruments of Ukraine, Honorary Professor of the Kharkiv I. P. Kotlyarevsky National University of Arts. E-mail: lubov.mandziuks@gmail.com

² PhD, Lecturer at the Department of Music Theory at the Kharkiv I. P. Kotlyarevsky National University of Arts. E-mail: lesya.gerasimenko1602@gmail.com

³ Lecturer at the Department of Ukrainian Folk Instruments of Ukraine at the Kharkiv I. P. Kotlyarevsky National University of Arts. E-mail: lu.avdimirets@gmail.com

⁴ Honored Artist of Ukraine, Senior Lecturer at the Department of Ukrainian Folk Instruments of Ukraine at the Kharkiv I. P. Kotlyarevsky National University of Arts. E-mail: asportivki33@gmail.com



Introduction

Bandura vocal and instrumental performance is a unique attribute of the national culture and a symbol of the ethno-musical identity of the Ukrainian nation. The phenomenon of ensemble and cappella performance on the bandura has no direct analogues in world practice. This process transformed traditional performance, which was reflected in the unification of the technical parameters of the bandura, the creation of a scientifically grounded methodological base and the formation of an extensive network of professional training. The result of such changes was the emergence of a self-sufficient repertoire that meets the high standards of academicism. At the same time, these changes are not radical: academic education is based on folk traditions. Although the technical parameters of the bandura and its repertoire have been standardized, the traditional melos remains an inviolable primary source of creativity.

Despite the long history of institutionalization of bandura in the academic environment, the issues of vocal and instrumental synthesis of academic singing and folk instrumental tradition remain insufficiently understood in the plane of modern European performing practices. At the center of the proposed study is the unique phenomenon of combining the academic vocal school and bandura performance, which was formed in Ukrainian musical art as a result of the long-term professionalization of folklore forms.

The purpose of the article is to comprehensively analyze the specifics of the synthesis of academic vocal art and folk instrumental bandura tradition in the context of modern domestic and pan-European performing trends. Achieving this goal involves solving a number of tasks: to conduct a comparative analysis of European vocal and instrumental practices and Ukrainian bandura performance; to determine the functional role of academic vocal in the system bandura art; to investigate the historical determinants of the formation of academic vocal and instrumental synthesis within the bandura monoensemble; to identify the specifics of the interaction of academic vocal technique with the acoustic nature of the bandura scale; to outline the features of the uniqueness of the Ukrainian model of the synthesis under study.

The scientific novelty of the proposed study lies in the fact that for the first time in musicological discourse, the synthesis of academic vocals and bandura performance is considered as an independent model of artistic convergence, which has no equivalents in European musical culture.

Literature Review

The analysis of scientific research on the synthesis of academic vocals and bandura performance allows us to identify the following key areas: *genesis and academization of bandura performance* (works by M. Berezutska (2018)⁵, N. Morozevych (2001)⁶, T. Sliusarenko (2018)⁷, I. Panasiuk (2012)⁸; *academic vocal school in the European cultural and artistic context* (research by N. Govorukhina (2022)⁹, O. Aleksandrova and N. Govorukhina (2023)¹⁰; *formation of professional competencies of bandura players* (research by L. Mandzyuk (2008)¹¹, S. Vyshnevskaya (2011)¹²); ways of integrating bandura art into the European space through professional education and concert and performing skills (monograph by I. Lisnyak (2019)¹³).

Despite the thoroughness of the considered research, some aspects that determine the relevance of the proposed article remain out of the attention of scientists, namely: the lack of a holistic model of the synthesis of bandura

⁵ Berezutska, Maryna. "Repertuar suchasnoho ansamblu bandurystiv: syntez narodnoho i akademichnoho" [Modern bandura ensemble repertoire: synthesis of folk and academic]. *Ethnology Notebooks*, No 2 (140), 2018, pp. 502–306.

⁶ Morozevych, Nina. "Narodno-profesiyni syntez u suchasnomu bandurnomu mystetstvi (na prykladi Pershoi sonaty M. Dremlyuhy)" [Folk-professional Synthesis in Modern Bandura Art (on the Example of the First Sonata by M. Dremlyuha)]. *Scientific Herald of Chaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine*, vol. 18, no. 7, 2001, pp. 70–83.

⁷ Sliusarienko, Tetiana. "Bandurne mystetstvo v ukrainskomu kulturnomu prostori (na prykladi bandurnoho vykonavstva Slobidskoho rehionu XX – poch. XXI st.)" [Bandura Art in the Ukrainian Cultural Space: The Case of Bandura Performance in the Slobidskyi Region, 20th – Early 21st Century]. Kharkiv: Pravo, 2018.

⁸ Panasiuk, Ivan. "Formuvannia ukrainskoi profesiino-akademichnoi bandurnoi shkoly u sotsiokulturnomu konteksti" [Formation of the Ukrainian Professional-Academic Bandura School in the Sociocultural Context]. *The Scientific Issues of Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University. Series: Art History*, no. 2, 2012, pp. 59–64.

⁹ Govorukhina, Natalia. "The principles of interpretation of the poetic primary source in ballads by F. Schubert, S. Moniuszhko, H. Wolf on Goethe's text Kennst du das Land". *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai Musica*, LXVII, Special Issue 1, 2022, p. 103-113.

¹⁰ Aleksandrova, Oksana; Govorukhina, Natalia. "The variant method of composition in the vocal works by Franz Liszt". *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai Musica*, LXVIII, Special Issue 2, 2023, p. 289 – 302.

¹¹ Mandziuk, Liubov. "Spivohra u konteksti harmoniinoho rozvytku vykonavtsia-bandurysta" [Sing-playing in the context of harmonic development of the bandura performer]. *Problems of modernity: culture, art, pedagogy*, no. 11, pp. 356–363.

¹² Vyshnevskaya, Svitlana. "Evoliutsiia fenomenu spivu v bandurnii vykonavskii tradytsii" [Evolution of the Phenomenon of Singing in the Bandura Performance Tradition]. Abstract of PhD diss., Lviv National Music Academy named after M. V. Lysenko, 2011.

¹³ Lisniak, Iryna. "Akademichne bandurne mystetstvo Ukrainy kintsia XX – pochatku XXI stolittia" [Academic Bandura Art of Ukraine in the Late 20th–Early 21st Century]. Institute of Art Studies, Folklore and Ethnology named after M. T. Rytsky, NAS of Ukraine, 2019.

performance and academic vocals as a single artistic system with specific features of internal interaction; timbral and technological features of the interaction of academic vocal technique with the acoustic nature of bandura sound; lack of comparative parallels with European ones vocal and instrumental forms; The phenomenon of “academic nationality”, which is a consequence of their interpenetration, requires theoretical justification.

Methodology

The methodology of the article is based on an integrated approach that covers the analysis of the evolution and current state of vocal and bandura convergence. To solve the tasks, the following general scientific and special musicological methods were used: *historical method* (used to consider the evolution of bandura art from kobzarism to modernity, as well as to comprehend the historical conditions for the formation of professional music education); **source study method** (aimed at studying musicological works on the unification of instruments, development of the educational system and formation of bandura repertoire); **comparative method** (used to compare the Ukrainian model of vocal and instrumental synthesis with pan-European performing practices); **system-structural method** (used to consider the vocal-bandura monoensemble as an integral artistic system, where academic singing and bandura accompaniment interact on the basis of functional equality and unity); *art analysis* (aimed at studying the specifics of timbral synthesis and performing interpretation of the classical repertoire accompanied by bandura).

Results and Discussion

European Vocal and Instrumental Practices and Ukrainian Bandura Performance

The phenomenon of modern bandura performance is based on an organic synthesis of instrumental and vocal principles. The specifics of this genre dictate the need for the formation of binary competence in the performer: virtuoso mastery of the instrument and academic vocal technique. Therefore, the professionalization of the bandura player is impossible without a deep mastery of vocal technique, because despite the significant evolution of the bandura design and the expansion of its technical capabilities, its functional dominant remains unchanged - it is the creation of a harmonic and timbral basis for the vocal part.

No other culture demonstrates such an organic and professional combination of academic vocals and folk instruments as the Ukrainian bandura tradition. In the European musical space, there are certain analogues of the combination of instrumental playing and singing, but they do not have a systematic character and differ significantly from Ukrainian bandura performance in the type of vocalization, which by its nature is far from academic singing. In the Portuguese and French guitar tradition of urban romance and author's song, the folklore or pop manner of sound formation dominates, where the priority is everyday expression, rather than academic voice production. The art of Scandinavian folk performers (in particular, masters of nickelharpa and traditional violin) represents a purely ethnic type of vocal that develops within the framework of folk, rather than professional musical culture.

Academic Vocals in the Context of Bandura Performance

The evolution of singing in the bandura performing tradition includes the transition from amateur folk art to academic performance with a professional vocal school and the development of instrumental forms without singing, but with the preservation of vocal essence. S. Vyshnevskaya, studying the phenomenon of singing in bandura art, emphasizes that its defining feature is the vocal nature¹⁴. Therefore, in the academic sphere, the bandura is considered not just as an accompaniment, but as part of a single vocal and instrumental nature.

The concept of "bandura vocals" introduced by N. V. Morozovich¹⁵ is indicative, which specifies the specifics of the bandura player's performing style. The scientist claims that the vocal aspect of artistry is manifested even in instrumental sound. In the field of performing practice, the outlined definition is specified by the observation of I. Lisnyak, who proves that vocals are often used as an instrumental timbre in bandura playing. This is especially true in modern compositions, where the voice performs the function of a "character" or an element of instrumental texture, which requires academic accuracy of intonation and flexibility of *bel canto*¹⁶.

¹⁴ Vyshnevskaya, Svitlana. "Evolutsiia fenomenu spivu v bandurnii vykonavskii tradytsii" [Evolution of the Phenomenon of Singing in the Bandura Performance Tradition]. Abstract of PhD diss., Lviv National Music Academy named after M. V. Lysenko, 2011.

¹⁵ Morozovich, Nina. "Narodno-profesiyni syntez u suchasnomu bandurnomu mystetstvi (na prykladi Pershoi sonaty M. Dremlyuha)" [Folk-professional Synthesis in Modern Bandura Art (on the Example of the First Sonata by M. Dremlyuha)]. *Scientific Herald of Chaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine*, vol. 18, no. 7, 2001, pp. 70–83.

¹⁶ Lisniak, Iryna. "Akademichne bandurne mystetstvo Ukrainy kintsia XX – pochatku XXI stolittia" [Academic Bandura Art of Ukraine in the Late 20th–Early 21st Century]. Institute of Art Studies, Folklore and Ethnology named after M. T. Rytsky, NAS of Ukraine, 2019, p. 171.

T. Madysheva and L. Derkach note that “an important characteristic of the Kharkiv vocal school at all stages of its development is openness, readiness to assimilate the experience of other Ukrainian and world schools”¹⁷. Academic singing in Ukraine is a live broadcast of European performing practices (Italian, French), which in the process of development were integrated into Ukrainian culture and created the basis for unique synthetic genres. This explains the process professionalization of bandura performance, according to which the folk tradition organically adapted the principles of academic vocals. It is because of the openness of the Ukrainian academic environment and integration processes that the choice of academic manner has become not just an aesthetic preference, but an integral professional component of modern bandura performance. This is confirmed by the fact that bandura performers often consciously receive additional education of opera or chamber singers, striving for perfection in voice mastery (for example, L. Posikira, L. Avdymirets, K. Soboleva, Y. Svyrydok-Six harmoniously combine the “epic-improvisational layer” of the folk tradition with the “principles of opera artistry”).

I. Panasyuk emphasizes that academic vocals “were not at the origins” of bandura playing. Folk tradition was formed on the basis of kobzar art. The founders of the academic school were musicians brought up in the system of conservatory education. A vivid example is the activity of Volodymyr Kabachko. It was he, having a professional vocal education, who began to teach bandura and created a trio of bandura players – “a unique vocal and instrumental ensemble at that time”¹⁸.

Nowadays, in bandura performance, academic vocals are a means of integrating the folk instrument into the world classical context. Evidence of this is the institutionalization of choice through education: thorough training of bandura players in the vocal classes of leading opera singers. I. Lisnyak argues that the academic sphere of bandura culture is a kind of mediator between two trends (*between authenticity and mass culture*): centripetal (preservation of national uniqueness, authenticity) and centrifugal (globalization, European academic standards, postmodern world). This synthesis is a way to “inscribe” the national code into the European system of professionalism. According to the researcher, “the existence of the academic branch of bandura art is objectively determined by the realities of the current stage of development

¹⁷ Madysheva, Taisiia; Derkach, Larysa. “Kharkiv vocal school: on the path of continuity”. *Aspects of historical musicology*. XXXI, 2023. P. 159.

¹⁸ Panasiuk, Ivan. “Formuvannia ukrainskoi profesiino-akademichnoi bandurnoi shkoly u sotsiokulturnomu konteksti” [Formation of the Ukrainian Professional-Academic Bandura School in the Sociocultural Context]. *The Scientific Issues of Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University. Series: Art History*, no. 2, 2012, p. 61.

of Ukrainian cultural history, more broadly, European culture, of which Ukrainian is a part, and the world as a whole”¹⁹.

It should be noted that the synthesis of academic vocals and folk instrumental bandura art appears not just as a harmonious combination of various performing areas, but as a process of objectification of the artist's artistic energy, which researchers interpret as “a manifestation of the will of the performer through the expression of the strength of his temperament and spiritual influence on the listener”.²⁰ In this context, the conscious mastery of academic singing by a bandura player becomes a volitional act aimed at strengthening the spiritual impact on the audience and expanding the emotional palette of traditional instruments.

Historical Conditions for the Formation of Academic Bandura Vocal and Instrumental Synthesis of Bandura Monoensemble

The final crystallization of the professional foundations of Ukrainian academic bandura art falls on the second half of the twentieth century. It is significant that the formation of an academic model of vocal and instrumental thinking in a bandura monoensemble is due to the synthesis of traditional kobzar performance and modernization of the instrument during the twentieth century. The determining factors of this process were the transformation of the performing function of the bandura (from epic-narrative to concert-stage), the transition from individual to factory production of instruments, the involvement of the principles of European chamber music, the activities of professional performers and ensembles, the establishment of new artistic and technical principles.

In his article, I. Panasiuk considers the transition from folk kobzarism to academic performance as a process of creating a new instrumental and educational tradition. The author emphasizes that professional and academic performance was formed in the conditions of “almost destruction of traditional, authentic kobzarism”²¹. Therefore, academic school appears not so much as

¹⁹ Lisniak, Iryna. “Akademichne bandurne mystetstvo Ukrainy kintsia XX – pochatku XXI stolittia” [Academic Bandura Art of Ukraine in the Late 20th–Early 21st Century]. Institute of Art Studies, Folklore and Ethnology named after M. T. Rylsky, NAS of Ukraine, 2019, p. 22.

²⁰ Chernyavska, Marianna; Ivanova, Iryna; Timofeyeva, Kira; Syriatska, Tetiana & Mits, Oksana. “Artistic energy of the performers in the mirror of their repertoire preferences”. *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai Musica*, Volume 68 (LXVIII), Special Issue no. 2, 2023, p. 165-179.

²¹ Panasiuk, Ivan. “Formuvannia ukrainskoi profesiino-akademichnoi bandurnoi shkoly u sotsiokulturnomu konteksti” [Formation of the Ukrainian Professional-Academic Bandura School in the Sociocultural Context]. *The Scientific Issues of Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University. Series: Art History*, no. 2, 2012, p. 60.

a synthesis with the folk tradition, but as a new form that arose due to systematic vocational education and technical improvement of the tool.

Therefore, the key prerequisites for the formation of academic vocal and instrumental synthesis are:

- kobzar tradition of singing with instrumental accompaniment;
- reconstruction of the bandura at the beginning of the twentieth century (the appearance of the chromatic model, the expansion of the range of the instrument, the increase in the number of strings, etc.);
- institutionalization of performing practice (formation of leading performing schools (Kharkiv, Kyiv, Lviv);
- professionalization (the emergence of the first professional collectives; quantitative and qualitative evolution of the repertoire);
- introduction of professional vocal training (combination of instrumental performing skills with mastering academic singing techniques, professional voice production, expansion of the capabilities of performers);
- academization of bandura performance (creation of an original solo repertoire, development of a dynamic and timbre palette); use of forms and genres that go beyond traditional performance).

I. Lisnyak aptly notes that “the bandura’s entry into academic musical culture at the turn of the XIX-XX centuries. became an integral part of the objective pan-European historical and cultural process of the formation of national musical cultures (including Ukrainian), which covered not only the nineteenth century”²².

At the origins of professional academic bandura were Hnat Martynovych Khotkevych (1887-1937), Volodymyr Andreevich Kabachok (1892-1957), Mark Moiseevich Gelis (1903-1976), Ivanov Perekop Gavrilovich (1924-1973), Andriy Matveyevich Bobyr (1915-1994), Andriy Fedorovich Omelchenko (1926-1981), Serhiy Vasilyevich Bashtan (1927-2017), Vasyl Yavtukhovych Gerasymenko (1927-2015) and others.

According to I. Lisniak, “the development of bandura vocal and instrumental performance and instrumental performance in previous years, at the same time the complication of the educational repertoire in both of these branches of bandura performance, logically led to a corresponding differentiation of bandura education since the 1990s – the division of students into bandura singers and instrumentalist bandura players, which in turn

²² Lisniak, Iryna. “*Akademichne bandurne mystetstvo Ukrainy kintsia XX – pochatku XXI stolittia*” [Academic Bandura Art of Ukraine in the Late 20th–Early 21st Century]. Institute of Art Studies, Folklore and Ethnology named after M. T. Rylsky, NAS of Ukraine, 2019, pp. 22-23.

contributed to the improvement of the professional performing skills of bandura artists. Curricula of bandura students, for example, in Kyiv, Donetsk, Dnipropetrovsk music academies, are compiled taking into account the division into bandura vocalists and bandura instrumentalists. However, the acquisition of vocal works remains mandatory for all students of 1-3 years, since mastering the basics of professional singing is a necessary skill for working in a special class, with a cappella, an ensemble of bandura players..."²³. It should be noted that at the Kharkiv National University of Arts. I. P. Kotlyarevsky's vocals and playing the instrument have always been on the basis of parity: during the entrance tests and the educational process, all applicants master the art of singing as an integral part of professional development and creative activity, with the obligatory consideration of their natural psychophysiological features.

Therefore, the uniqueness of Ukrainian bandura art lies not only in the synthesis of the folk instrumental tradition with academic vocals, but also in the systematic and institutional orderliness of this combination, which significantly distinguishes it from its European counterparts. A modern academic bandura higher school provides for the study of a wide range of compulsory disciplines that form the versatility of a bandura performer, in particular: vocal, small-form ensemble, cappella, vocal methodology, choral studies and arrangement. This was due to the unification and improvement of the instrument, the formation of a system of professional music education, the creation of teaching methods, and the emergence of a new repertoire.

In the context of understanding the parity of vocal and instrumental training of a bandura player, L. Mandzyuk emphasizes that "consistent pedagogical and practical performance work on one piece in vocal and specialty classes is extremely important"²⁴. The scientist emphasizes the equal distribution of study time and the identity of the stages of work in both classes. The parity of vocals and playing the instrument appears as a key marker of the versatility of the bandura player, which in the process of "singing" is formed not as a combination of a vocalist and an instrumentalist, but as an integral creative unit, capable of synthesizing two types of activity for the sake of a full-fledged artistic embodiment of a musical image. At the same time, T. Sliusarenko's opinion regarding the concept of "universality of instrumentalism" of a modern bandura player is correct, which gives grounds

²³ Lisniak, Iryna. *"Akademichne bandurne mystetstvo Ukrainy kintsia XX – pochatku XXI stolittia"* [Academic Bandura Art of Ukraine in the Late 20th–Early 21st Century]. Institute of Art Studies, Folklore and Ethnology named after M. T. Rylsky, NAS of Ukraine, 2019, p. 68.

²⁴ Mandziuk, Lubov. "Spivohra u konteksti harmoniinoho rozvytku vykonavtsia-bandurysta" [Sing-playing in the context of harmonic development of the bandura performer]. *Problems of modernity: culture, art, pedagogy*, no. 11, p. 362.

to present the bandura as a “full-fledged European instrument”. “The activities of a modern concert bandura player, who represents universal instrumentalism, are part of the national culture. It reflects the Ukrainian “picture of the world” and has deep historical roots”²⁵.

The formation of this model of performing universalism is a natural result of the century-long development of the academic bandura school, which took place contrary to the tragic pages of Ukrainian history. The evolution of this artistic phenomenon was inextricably linked with overcoming the consequences of systemic repressions, famines and the Second World War, which are considered in scientific discourse as acts of genocide aimed at leveling Ukrainian identity and physical destruction of the national intellectual and creative elite, in particular representatives of the Kharkiv music center. In the modern realities of martial law, the creative activity of Kharkiv artists is transformed into a strategy of cultural self-presentation and resistance, which testifies to the continuity of tradition²⁶. Modern bandura performance in Kharkiv not only preserves the academic achievements of the last century but also determines the viability of the domestic vocal and instrumental synthesis to the world. a static artifact of the past, but as a dynamic tool in the system of pan-European performance.

The specifics of the interaction of academic vocal technique and bandura sound nature

The combination of academic singing and bandura sound is a complex artistic synthesis that has certain acoustic, technical and psychophysiological features.

The chromaticization of the bandura, which took place in the process of its academicization in the twentieth century, actually became a technical prerequisite for the development of academic singing. The expansion of the harmonic and modulation capabilities of the instrument made it possible to adapt complex vocal genres to bandura accompaniment. As a result, the approach to the formation of the vocal repertoire of the bandura player has radically changed, leading to a rethinking of the role of vocals as a determining factor in the performance interpretation of the bandura player.

²⁵ Sliusarienko, Tetiana. “*Bandurne mystetstvo v ukrainskomu kulturnomu prostori (na prikladi bandurnoho vykonavstva Slobidskoho rehionu XX – poch. XXI st.)*” [Bandura Art in the Ukrainian Cultural Space: The Case of Bandura Performance in the Slobidskyi Region, 20th – Early 21st Century]. Kharkiv: Pravo, 2018. P. 148.

²⁶ Chernyavska, Marianna; Savchenko, Hanna & Borysenko, Mariya. “Situativeness generated by war: Artistic reaction of Kharkiv musicians to the military aggression and its consequences”. *Art, Design & Communication in Higher Education*, Special Issue: “Exploring Situativeness in Partnership with ELIA, Part 1”, 24:1, pp. 77–94.

It is known that the Kharkiv vocal school, which influenced the formation of many bandura players, is based on the traditions of the Italian *bel canto*. This brought the requirements for perfect technical skill, cantilena and high vocal culture to bandura performance.

The improvement of the bandura, in particular the introduction of the mechanism of tonal adjustment by I. Sklyar, provided the possibility of performing works in all 24 keys. Thanks to the system of switches, the performer had the opportunity to choose the key that best corresponds to his range and tessitura. This expanded the repertoire boundaries of bandura performance, allowing the integration of works that were previously technically inaccessible for bandura accompaniment, in particular opera arias, classical romances, chamber vocal works by world composers, as well as samples of jazz, blues, pop music, etc. Note that the technical complexity, for example, of opera arias, requires high vocal and instrumental skills from the bandura player. The combination of virtuoso playing and academic singing (especially operatic artistry) is extremely challenging. Since this process involves a high level of coordination of the functioning of the vocal apparatus and the motor skills of the performer, any excessive muscle tension during the game can negatively affect the quality of vocal sound. This requires a high level of intellectualization and self-control from the performer, where psychophysiological skill allows, for example, to maintain the smoothness of vocalization and the purity of intonation.

One of the challenges for the bandura player is the acoustic dissonance between the instrument's tempered tuning and voice. The singing voice by its nature gravitates towards a "pure tuning", while the modern academic bandura has a uniformly tempered tuning. Instrumental accompaniment can "disrupt" natural intonation, which requires exceptional auditory control from the performer to maintain vocal clarity.

It is significant that the vocal and instrumental components in the process of "singing" act as a single system that increases the overall artistic expressiveness. I. M. Lisnyak points out that academic performance clearly distinguishes between academic and non-academic (folklore) vocal styles. This requires the performer to consciously choose a vocal technique (for example, *the bel canto technique*), which would be consistent with the timbre palette and acoustic characteristics of the instrument²⁷.

Therefore, the specificity of the interaction of vocals and bandura in academic art is a complex synthesis, in which the chromitized bandura is the acoustic foundation for the embodiment of complex academic vocal forms,

²⁷ Lisniak, Iryna. "Akademichne bandurne mystetstvo Ukrainy kintsia XX – pochatku XXI stolittia" [Academic Bandura Art of Ukraine in the Late 20th–Early 21st Century]. Institute of Art Studies, Folklore and Ethnology named after M. T. Rytsky, NAS of Ukraine, 2019.

and the psychophysiological specificity of the “co-play” requires the artist to have special coordination of breathing, hearing and muscular concentration of actions.

Features of the uniqueness of Ukrainian vocal and instrumental performance

Generalization of the above provisions gives grounds to assert that the synthesis of Ukrainian academic singing and bandura sound forms an original artistic and performing phenomenon, within which the following unique features are outlined:

- *systemic nature* – support at the state level, professional education, educational programs, repertoire, concert and stage practice;
- *two-component nature* – an organic combination of two equivalent performing practices – academic vocals and bandura playing;
- *institutionalization* – integration of folk instrumental creativity into the system of social institutions (education, science, professional art, etc.);
- *aesthetic paradox* – there is a counter movement of two fundamental artistic paradigms: the bandura, as a carrier of the ethno-national code, “rises” into the academic space, at the same time the academic vocal carries out an “existential reduction” to the naturalness of folklore, adapting complex technique, stylistics, artistry to the peculiarities of the timbre palette of the bandura sound. Therefore, the professionalism of the academic school and folk authenticity harmoniously resonate without loss of professional quality.

Conclusions

Vocal and instrumental bandura performance is a complex artistic phenomenon, which is based on a holistic synthesis of vocal and instrumental components. The combination of academic singing and national bandura authenticity is a unique phenomenon that has no direct analogues in the modern European cultural space. In contrast to episodic attempts to combine folklore elements with academic practices in other cultures, the Ukrainian model is characterized by deep institutionalization and organic unity of two aesthetic systems – academicism and nationality. The analysis allows us to identify the key aspects of this synthesis: 1. Strategic integration. According to I. Lisnyak, this synthesis is a conscious strategy for Ukrainian culture to reach the pan-European level through the mastery of the language of the academic tradition by bandura while preserving national identity. 2. Professional

maturity. The academization of singing is a necessary component that ensures the intellectualization of national art and allows the folk instrument to fully function within the framework of European professional performance. 3. Triad of identity. The model is based on the synergy of the European vocal school, national instrumental authenticity and the academization of folklore, which presents Ukrainian art as a competitive world product.

Therefore, the Ukrainian experience of vocal and instrumental convergence is an illustrative model of cultural interaction that can significantly expand the modern European performing paradigm. Further professional training of specialists in this area is the key not only to the preservation of the unique cultural heritage, but also to its successful integration into the global musical context.

REFERENCES

- Aleksandrova, Oksana; Govorukhina, Natalia. "The variant method of composition in the vocal works by Franz Liszt". *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai Musica*, LXVIII, Special Issue 2, 2023, p. 289–302.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.24193/subbmusica.2023.spiss2.18>
- Berezutska, Maryna. "Repertuar suchasnoho ansamblu bandurystiv: syntez narodnoho i akademichnoho" [Modern bandura ensemble repertoire: synthesis of folk and academic]. *Ethnology Notebooks*, No 2 (140), 2018, pp. 502–306.
<https://doi.org/10.15407/nz2018.02.502>
- Chernyavska, Marianna; Ivanova, Iryna; Timofeyeva, Kira; Syriatska, Tetiana & Mits, Oksana. "Artistic energy of the performers in the mirror of their repertoire preferences". *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai Musica*, Volume 68 (LXVIII), Special Issue no. 2, 2023, p. 165-179.
DOI: 10.24193/subbmusica.2023.spiss2.10
- Chernyavska, Marianna; Savchenko, Hanna & Borysenko, Mariya. "Situativeness generated by war: Artistic reaction of Kharkiv musicians to the military aggression and its consequences". *Art, Design & Communication in Higher Education*, Special Issue: "Exploring Situativeness in Partnership with ELIA, Part 1", 24:1, pp. 77–94, https://doi.org/10.1386/adch_00109_1
- Govorukhina, Natalia. "The principles of interpretation of the poetic primary source in ballads by F. Schubert, S. Moniuszko, H. Wolf on Goethe's text Kennst du das Land". *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai Musica*, LXVII, Special Issue 1, 2022, p. 103–113. <http://dx.doi.org/10.24193/subbmusica.2022.spiss1.07>
- Lisniak, Iryna. "Akademichne bandurne mystetstvo Ukrainy kintsia XX – pochatku XXI stolittia" [Academic Bandura Art of Ukraine in the Late 20th–Early 21st Century]. Institute of Art Studies, Folklore and Ethnology named after M. T. Rylsky, NAS of Ukraine, 2019.

- Madysheva, Taisiia; Derkach, Larysa. "Kharkiv vocal school: on the path of continuity". *Aspects of historical musicology*. XXXI, 2023, pp. 133–166.
DOI:10.34064/khnum2-31.06.
- Mandziuk, Liubov. "Spivohra u konteksti harmoniinoho rozvytku vykonavtsia-bandurysta" [Sing-playing in the context of harmonic development of the bandura performer]. *Problems of modernity: culture, art, pedagogy*, no. 11, pp. 356–363.
- Morozevych, Nina. "Narodno-profesiinyi syntez u suchasnomu bandurnomu mystetstvi (na prykladi Pershoi sonaty M. Dremlyuhy)" [Folk-professional Synthesis in Modern Bandura Art (on the Example of the First Sonata by M. Dremlyuha)]. *Scientific Herald of Chaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine*, vol. 18, no. 7, 2001, pp. 70–83.
- Panasiuk, Ivan. "Formuvannia ukrainskoi profesiino-akademichnoi bandurnoi shkoly u sotsiokulturnomu konteksti" [Formation of the Ukrainian Professional-Academic Bandura School in the Sociocultural Context]. *The Scientific Issues of Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University. Series: Art History*, no. 2, 2012, pp. 59–64.
http://nbuv.gov.ua/UJRN/NZTNPUm_2012_2_12
- Sliusarienko, Tetiana. "Bandurne mystetstvo v ukrainskomu kulturnomu prostori (na prykladi bandurnoho vykonavstva Slobidskoho rehionu XX – poch. XXI st.)" [Bandura Art in the Ukrainian Cultural Space: The Case of Bandura Performance in the Slobidskyi Region, 20th – Early 21st Century]. Kharkiv: Pravo, 2018.
- Vyshnevskaya, Svitlana. "Evoliutsiia fenomenu spivu v bandurnii vykonavskii tradytsii" [Evolution of the Phenomenon of Singing in the Bandura Performance Tradition]. Abstract of PhD diss., Lviv National Music Academy named after M. V. Lysenko, 2011.

FROM SCORE TO PERFORMANCE: A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF COMMUNICATIVE STRATEGIES IN MUSICAL CULTURE

POLINA KHARCHENKO¹, GVANTSA GHVINJILIA², MA YAZHUO³,
LIU JIANZHI⁴, TAN QIAN⁵

SUMMARY. This article examines the transition from score to performance in contemporary musical culture from a semiotic and communicative perspective. The musical work is interpreted as an open communicative system in which textual, performative, and perceptual levels interact. The study concentrates on the mechanisms that convert a notated musical text into a performative event and a meaningful artistic experience. The theoretical framework amalgamates musical semiotics, performance studies, hermeneutics, and embodied cognition. The mask is examined as a cultural and semiotic intermediary among composer, performer, and listener, serving as a mechanism for interpretation, role formation, and communicative transformation. The proposed model combines semiotic and performative approaches to demonstrate that performance operates as an active process of meaning production rather than reproduction of the score. The transition from notation to performance is thus conceptualized as a dynamic act of co-creation, in which musical meaning emerges through interaction, embodiment, and cultural coding.

Keywords: musical semiotics; performance; mask; communicative model; interpretation; embodiment

¹ PhD in Pedagogy, Associate Professor, Senior Researcher, Academic Secretary of the Theory and History of Arts Department, National Academy of Arts of Ukraine, Kyiv, Ukraine. E-mail: phhp57@gmail.com

² Doctor of Art Studies, Associate Professor, Chair of the Dissertation Council, V. Sarajishvili Tbilisi State Conservatoire, Tbilisi, Georgia. E-mail: gvantsa.ghvinjilia@tsc.edu.ge

³ Postgraduate student, Department of History of Ukrainian Music and Musical Folklore, National Music Academy of Ukraine, Kyiv, Ukraine.

⁴ Postgraduate student, Department of Theory and History of Culture, National Music Academy of Ukraine, Kyiv, Ukraine. E-mail: 876113273@qq.com

⁵ Postgraduate student, Department of History of Ukrainian Music and Musical Folklore, National Music Academy of Ukraine, Kyiv, Ukraine. E-mail: tanjzj8@gmail.com



Introduction

Contemporary musical culture is undergoing intense processes of transformation associated with the consolidation of performative practices and new forms of artistic communication. Music increasingly transcends the traditional understanding of the score as a fixed text that presupposes performance and is, therefore, realized through interpretative practice. Under present conditions, the nature of such interpretation acquires not only a processual dimension but also corporeal and interactive qualities. This shift towards action, event, and gesture constitutes not merely an aesthetic phenomenon but also a distinctive marker of changing modes of thought and evolving conceptions of music as a form of intercultural communication. The transition from score to performance thus encompasses at least several analytical levels, including semiotic, hermeneutic (interpretative), communicative, and anthropological. Within this framework, the musical work is conceived not as a closed text but as a dynamic sign that unfolds its semantic structure through the interaction of composer, performer, and listener. Such an approach fundamentally alters the very logic of musical experience: the listener is no longer a passive observer but becomes involved in the communicative play and participates as a co-creator of the event.⁶

The relevance of the study is determined by the necessity to conceptualize the performative turn in contemporary art, which increasingly extends into the musical sphere. Postmodern sensibility not only establishes musical performance as an aesthetic form but also transforms it into a mode of semiotic dialogue. Consequently, the roles of all participants in communication are being redefined: the composer appears as the initiator of a sign system, the performer as its interpreter and co-creator, and the audience, in turn, as an active agent of interpretation. In this context, music – emerges as one of the most fertile grounds for the implementation of contemporary communicative strategies. It is precisely here that the transition from the fixed score to the event becomes most clearly articulated: from structure to process, from text to a living gesture. At this stage, it is appropriate to turn to practical examples that convincingly demonstrate the performative nature of musical art. In the works of John Cage, Helmut Lachenmann, Sofia Gubaidulina, as well as Ukrainian composers Valentyn Sylvestrov, Alla Zahaikevych, and Bohdan Sehin, performance is understood as a form of communication that integrates sonic, corporeal, and spatial experience. Their compositions generate situations in which the score becomes merely a point of departure for an open-ended semiotic interaction.

⁶ Kharchenko et al., "Technologies as a Mediator between Creator and Audience in Postmodern Art Practices," *BRAIN*, 2023.

It is symptomatic that performative principles are increasingly realized in film music as well, which today extends far beyond an illustrative function. In the works of Hans Zimmer, Max Richter, and Jóhann Jóhannsson, music becomes an autonomous communicative layer, capable not only of accompanying but also of commenting on the visual image and entering into a polyphonic dialogue with it. Such an approach indicates a shift in emphasis from “music as background” to “music as event”, within which corporeality and affectivity emerge as modes of experience structured by cultural codes.

On the theoretical level, it is essential to refer to the concepts developed by Eero Tarasti, Lawrence Kramer, Philip Auslander, Erika Fischer-Lichte, and Marc Leman⁷, which represent the Western European tradition of musical semiotics and performativity. Their approaches integrate the analysis of the musical sign with the performer’s corporeality and communicative action. At the same time, the Eastern European humanities tradition – most notably, the ideas of Yuri Lotman⁸, enriches this discussion by foregrounding the textual organization of culture and the contextual mechanisms through which meanings are transmitted. Ukrainian cultural studies, represented by the works of Hanna Chmil, Ihor Yudkin, Oksana Karpenko and Maria Kochetkova⁹ further develops this line of inquiry by integrating semiotic, intermedial, and phenomenological perspectives, with particular attention to corporeality, temporality, and action as key means of artistic meaning-making.

Within the framework of this study, particular attention is given to the phenomenon of the mask, which emerges as a distinctive cultural code capable of integrating performative theatricality with semiotic mediation between the composer’s text, the interpreter, and the audience. The mask operates not merely as a means of transformation but also as a signifier of multiple identities, thereby creating a space for play, distance, and multilayered communication.

⁷ Eero Tarasti, *Signs of Music: A Guide to Musical Semiotics* (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2002); Lawrence Kramer, *Interpreting Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); Philip Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture* (London: Routledge, 2022); Erika Fischer-Lichte, *The Transformative Power of Performance: A New Aesthetics* (London: Routledge, 2008); Marc Leman, *Embodied Music Cognition and Mediation Technology* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008).

⁸ Yuri Lotman, *A Semiotic Theory of Culture* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1990); Yuri Lotman, *Culture and Explosion* (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2009).

⁹ Hanna Chmil et al., “Homo Villicus in the Cinema Environment: Justifiability and Limits of the Index,” *Convergences: Journal of Research and Arts Education* vol. 17, no. 33 (2024): 123–142; Ihor Yudkin, *Fenomenolohiia kultury yak metodolohiia interpretatsii* (Kyiv: Instytut kulturolohii NAM Ukrainy, 2020); Oksana Karpenko, *Performativity and Intertextuality in Contemporary Music Culture* (Kyiv: Kyiv National University of Culture and Arts, 2021); Maria Kochetkova, *Musical Performance as Communication: Interpretation and Embodiment* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022).

The study aims to elucidate the patterns that govern the functioning of semiotic and communicative strategies during the transition from score to performance, while also defining the performer's role as a central figure in the construction of contemporary musical meaning. In light of this, the methodological framework of the article is conceived as an organic combination of semiotic, performative, hermeneutic, phenomenological, and cultural studies approaches. An attempt to comprehensively conceptualize musical performance as a communicative space, wherein sign-based, corporeal, and cultural codes interact, has shaped the overall structure of the article. Within this framework, particular emphasis is placed on identifying the role of the mask as a mechanism for mediating between the composer, the performer, and the listener. In recent decades, the issues of musical-text semiotics, communication, and performativity have increasingly come to constitute one of the central areas of inquiry within European humanities discourse.

State of Scholarly Development of the Problem and the Source Base of the Study

Contemporary scholarship tends to approach the musical work not as a closed and self-sufficient form but rather as an open-ended process of interaction unfolding between the author, the performer, and the listener. Accordingly, critical attention is directed not only to the internal organization of the sonic text but also to the conditions of its perception, the corporeality of the performer's gesture, the communicative space generated in the act of artistic exchange, and the broader socio-cultural context within which musical action is situated. One of the key conceptual categories that enable these dimensions to be articulated within an integrated analytical framework is the mask – a phenomenon that simultaneously fulfils semiotic, theatrical, and cultural functions, thereby allowing music to be interpreted as a system of multilayered roles, shifting identities, and ongoing transformations of meaning.

Within the Western European scholarly tradition, semiotic and performative approaches to music emerged at the intersection of linguistics, the philosophy of language, and aesthetics. A decisive turning point in this development was the work of Eero Tarasti, who formulated the concept of existential semiotics. In *Signs of Music: A Guide to Musical Semiotics* (Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 2002), the scholar emphasizes that “*Musical signs can be studied throughout their history as well as musical semiotics with its own background*”¹⁰. This statement affirms the autonomy of musical semiotics as a distinct scientific framework.

¹⁰ Tarasti, Eero. *Signs of Music: A Guide to Musical Semiotics*. Mouton de Gruyter, 2002, p. 14.

In another study, *Semiotics of Classical Music. How Mozart, Brahms and Wagner Talk to Us*, Tarasti proposes a four-component structural model that can be applied “to linear and temporal texts, such as music and musical performance”¹¹. The Finnish musicologist notes that this model originates as a development and modification of the “semiotic square” elaborated by the Paris School under the leadership of A.J. Greimas. The central premise of this theoretical paradigm lies in the possibility of conceptualizing mechanisms of meaning not as fixed entities, but rather as relational structures, and of making these structures explicit across all forms of discourse – from language to music, or even fashion. Moreover, Tarasti’s model is grounded in the Hegelian understanding of two modes of being – being-in-itself and being-for-itself – as well as in Kantian philosophy, according to which being-in-itself (*an sich*) denotes the inner qualities of an object that remain inaccessible to human cognition.

At the same time, as E. Tarasti observes, when *an sich* enters a social context, its essence is transformed into being-for-itself (*für sich*) and is determined precisely through this social dimension¹². To Hegel’s distinction between being-in-itself and being-for-itself, the Finnish musicologist adds another crucial component – namely, the perspective of the subject itself, or the personal “I,” referred to in French as *Moi*. This makes it possible to introduce two additional modes of being: *an-mir sein* (being in-myself) and *für-mich sein* (being for-myself).

In addition to *Moi*, E. Tarasti introduces the concept of *Soi*, which likewise refers to the “I,” yet one that is formed under the influence of society. *Soi* also operates on two levels: first, it denotes the concrete embodiment of values and norms through social institutions (being-for-oneself); second, it refers to the abstract ideas that a society considers significant – such as beauty, patriotism, or harmony (being-in-oneself). Both *Moi* and *Soi* constitute integral components of our inner subjectivity. Tarasti aptly notes that social norms exert influence upon us precisely because we have internalized them ourselves. Thus, what is dictated by society (*Soi*) may affect, or even subordinate, the personal self (*Moi*).

On the basis of the components *Moi* and *Soi*, E. Tarasti proposes to distinguish four states, or levels, of the subject’s being within the model: 1) *Moi1* refers to our corporeal and physical existence, characterized by energy, desires, and a chaotic nature. 2) *Moi2* denotes the personality shaped through habits, upbringing, and communication. 3) *Soi2* (or *Moi3*) corresponds to a

¹¹ Tarasti, Eero. *Semiotics of Classical Music: How Mozart, Brahms and Wagner Talk to Us*. De Gruyter Mouton, 2012, p. 138.

¹² Idem, p. 135.

personality fully subordinated to social norms and rules. Finally, 4) Soi1 (or Moi4) signifies the general values and ideals of society, such as morality, culture, or tradition¹³.

Such an approach makes it possible to conceive of music not as an encoded object, but rather as a space of communicative events. As E. Tarasti writes: "In every musical text, discourse or expression, we have these four aspects: (1) Concrete physical material appearing as musical gestures and musical desires, more or less chaotic wave-like formations of the kinetic energy of music. (2) Musical 'actors' or persons, which are the more stable anthropomorphic entities, like musical motifs and themes; these have clear-cut profiles and constitute units of musical narration. (3) In music we have social norms, manifesting in (a) rhetorical figures, (b) topics, i.e. style features internalized from musical or non-musical social fields, and (c) genres, the social frameworks necessary for musical communication. (4) Every musical unit has an aesthetic aspect of content, being the values or ideas which the music conveys or signifies"¹⁴.

Thus, E. Tarasti's model may be interpreted as a pathway from score to performance in the following manner: the composer formulates a certain idea and embodies it in the work's textual structure, which the performer decodes and animates through sounding realization. The listener, by entering the field of musical interaction, completes the semantic construction, returns it to a transcendental dimension, and thereby forms a renewed perspective on music, culture, and the self. E. Tarasti's concept describes four aspects of the musical text – from physical sonority to philosophical and aesthetic meanings such as irony, tragic expressivity, or sublimity, which reveal the deeper significance of music as different modes of its being. At the same time, the model demonstrates the dynamics through which musical meaning unfolds between the compositional idea, the textual articulation, the act of performance, and the listener's perception.

This process may be conceptualized as a three-level structure:

(1) the upper, transcendental (noematic) level – the realm of ideas, values, cultural archetypes, and genre-based structures that provide music with semantic intentionality and generate the meaning potential of the musical text;

(2) the immanent (sign-based) level – the structure of the text itself, with its own system of signs, themes, rhetorical figures, harmonies, and rhythmic-intonational complexes, etc., where ideas acquire material form; and

¹³ Tarasti, Eero. *Semiotics of Classical Music: How Mozart, Brahms and Wagner Talk to Us*. De Gruyter Mouton, 2012, pp. 136-137.

¹⁴ idem, pp. 137-138.

(3) the existential level – the realm of the subject (composer, performer, listener/spectator), namely the sphere of interpretation, gesture, and affect, through which the text is actualized in performance or in reception.

E. Tarasti aptly notes that the trajectory of meaning moves from the upper level of ideas and concepts through the sign-based structure of the text toward its actualization in performance and reception. At the same time, a reverse movement also takes place – from the listener's lived experience toward a renewed interpretation of the ideational level. Thus, combining E. Tarasti's model with the three-level scheme makes it possible to conceptualize music as an integral process of meaning-making in which the composer, the performer, and the listener participate on different levels. Within such a framework, music appears not merely as a text, but as a "living organism" in which all levels remain in constant interaction and communicative motion.

Within a model of musical communication that unfolds from the composer's conception through performative realization and the listener's reception, a pivotal role is played by the mechanism of mediation – that is, the direct transmission of meanings between the participants in this process. One of the most universal and flexible instruments of such mediation is the phenomenon of the mask. It should be noted, however, that within this context the mask is understood not merely as a stage attribute or theatrical make-up, but primarily as a semiotic mechanism that enables the encoding, transmission, and interpretation of musical meanings between the composer, the performer, and the listener.

Within this framework, the phenomenon of the mask in music may be approached from several analytical perspectives. In the communicative chain "score – performance – reception," three principal levels of the mask's functioning can be distinguished, each corresponding to a particular participant in the communicative process and to a specific stage in the actualization of meaning in music. The first level is the composer's mask (textual/stylistic), which encompasses genre codes, stylistic topoi, and rhetorical figures – in other words, all those elements that construct a "stylistic mask".¹⁵ The composer's mask also includes tempo indications, affective markings, orchestral and timbral effects, and characteristic textural types, which, even prior to the act of performance, establish a certain frame of interaction between composer and performer and orient the interpretative trajectory of the work.

¹⁵ Tarasti, Eero. *Musical Semiotics Revisited*. Springer, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-91938-5>

The second level, the performer's mask, is realized as a mask of interpretation and manifests itself through articulation, phrasing, dynamics, timbre, pedaling, the performer's corporeal kinetics, and stage behavior. It is at this level that the sign-based structure of the score becomes enlivened in sounding realization as a corporeal – affective gesture, whereby music emerges as an event. Accordingly, the mask of interpretation functions as a crucial link between the textual structure and its acoustic embodiment.

The third level is the cultural-perceptual one, at which the mask of reception becomes apparent as a system of genre-based expectations, the decoding of cultural codes, and interpretative strategies through which the listener perceives music as an event. What is decisive in this process is not merely the "recognition" of music, but also the active construction of its meaning through the involvement of one's intellectual and emotional experience. It is precisely here that a sonic occurrence is transformed into a musical-semantic experience.

The phenomenon of the mask within the "score – performance – reception" chain may also be interpreted in light of the three-level structure of E. Tarasti's model. At the transcendental level, the mask functions as a repository of meanings, cultural orientations, and philosophical-aesthetic conceptions of music¹⁶. In this respect, differences emerge between Western and Eastern, particularly Chinese, worldview traditions. In Chinese cultural thought, musical concepts are most often associated either with moral self-cultivation in accordance with Confucian ethics or understood as a form of ritual communication with ancestors within Daoist practices. Such an understanding of the mask exists prior to the act of listening and predetermines the direction of interpretation.

At the sign-based level, the phenomenon of the mask operates as an interpretative programme that facilitates meaning-making for both the performer and the listener. For the performer, it becomes an instrument that makes it possible to "read" the semiotic texture of the work within the cultural code to which it belongs. This, in turn, enables the performer to construct an interpretation that is semiotically grounded. Thus, the rhetorical figures of Baroque music function as semantic signs that the performer decodes through appropriate agogics, tempo, phrasing, and dynamics. In this sense, the mask appears as a tool of decoding. For example, within the Western tradition, the musical-rhetorical figure of anabasis employs ascending musical motion, which may be decoded as a sign of hope, ascent, or spiritual striving, depending on the stylistic mask "assumed" by the performer or listener.

¹⁶ Tarasti, Eero, ed. *Musical Semiotics Today: New Perspectives*. International Semiotics Institute, 2020.

In Beijing opera (jingju), the phenomenon of the mask is presented in an explicitly visual form and possesses its own color-based system, which immediately enables recognition of a character type. Through the semantics of color, the listener/viewer already knows how to interpret a given operatic figure: red signifies loyalty and bravery, white indicates treachery and cunning, while black conveys straightforwardness and strength. The recipient instantly reads the character's role through a visual code that activates expectations and semantic associations. In this case, the mask exists not only as a visible stage element, but also within the spectator's consciousness as a cultural "programme" that supports the comprehension and interpretation of the event.

The final level is the existential one, where the mask enters its most dynamic phase. It is precisely here that it responds, adapts, and is modified in real time "here and now," depending on how the music itself is presented – its dynamics, timbral coloring, and even the performer's stage behavior – as well as on the context in which music is perceived during a concert, a ceremony, or an online broadcast. In Eastern traditions, particularly within a Confucian framework, even the strongest emotions tend to be expressed with restraint, since the listener's "mask" is oriented toward maintaining inner balance and harmony¹⁷.

Thus, the phenomenon of the mask may be understood as a mediating instrument within the semiotic structure of music, which integrates transcendental, immanent (sign-based), and existential levels in accordance with E. Tarasti's model. The mask functions as a mediator that enables the movement of meaning from the composer's intention to interpretation and reception, as well as the reverse movement in the form of new semantic constructions shaped through the listener's experience.

Alongside this line of inquiry, Lawrence Kramer, in his work *Interpreting Music* (2011), advances a hermeneutic conception of music as a "text in action". For Kramer, interpretation is not an auxiliary procedure, but an intrinsic component of the work's very structure: musical meaning is not transmitted but generated in the process of performance. He broadens the notion of the musical text by incorporating extra-musical factors that function as cultural codes and social roles, grounded in the listener's individual experience. Kramer's scholarship has provided a foundation for the development of contemporary interpretative studies within Western European musicology¹⁸.

¹⁷ Klein, Michael, and Robert Cogan, eds. *Musical Semiotics in Growth: Essays in Honor of Eero Tarasti*. Indiana University Press, 2017.

¹⁸ Kramer, Lawrence. *Interpreting Music*. University of California Press, 2011.

A crucial component of this discourse is provided by the performative aesthetics of Erika Fischer-Lichte. In *The Transformative Power of Performance: A New Aesthetics* (London/New York: Routledge, 2008), she writes: “The peculiar mode of experience that a performance provokes – blurring distinctions between artist and audience, body and mind, art and life – is here framed as the breeding ground for a new way of understanding performing arts, and through them even wider social and cultural processes”¹⁹.

This statement is fundamental for understanding musical performance, as it foregrounds the reciprocal transformation of communicative subjects, in which performer and listener exchange positions, and the action itself becomes the site where meaning emerges.

The problem of performative authenticity in the age of media is examined in detail by Philip Auslander (*Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*, 2022). For Auslander, “liveness” is not a biological attribute but a communicative strategy that can arise even within digital environments. In this sense, the mask becomes a metaphor for the mediatized performer: it conceals physical distance while simultaneously producing an illusion of presence²⁰.

Within the framework of cognitive theory, Marc Leman (*Embodied Music Cognition and Mediation Technology*, 2011) conceptualizes music as a form of embodied cognition (embodied listening)²¹. The performer’s body is not merely an instrument but also a mode of thinking. It follows that musical action is always two-layered: semiotic (the transmission of meaning) and corporeal (the experiencing of meaning). On a broader cultural level, these ideas are further developed by Nicholas Cook *Music as Creative Practice* (2018) and Clarke, Eric F., and Nicholas Cook, eds. *Empirical Musicology: Aims, Methods, Prospects* (2004), who analyze music as a social process in which the boundary between production and reception becomes provisional. In this context, performance may be understood as a “language without a text” that exists only in the moment of communication²².

Thus, within the Western European tradition, a multi-vector model of musical semiotics has emerged – one that moves from the analytical description of textual structures toward the investigation of performative experience.

¹⁹ Fischer-Lichte, Erika. *The Transformative Power of Performance: A New Aesthetics*. Routledge, 2008, p. 11.

²⁰ Auslander, Philip. *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*. 2nd ed., Routledge, 2022.

²¹ Leman, Marc. *Embodied Music Cognition and Mediation Technology*. MIT Press, 2008.

²² Cook, Nicholas. *Music as Creative Practice*. Oxford University Press, 2018; Clarke, Eric F., and Nicholas Cook, eds. *Empirical Musicology: Aims, Methods, Prospects*. Oxford University Press, 2004.

Within the Eastern European tradition, considerable scholarly attention has likewise been devoted to such aspects of the topic as textual structure, cultural memory, and the phenomenon of the mask, with a particular emphasis on the semiotics of culture understood as an integral system. In his works "Text and Audience Structure" (1990) and *Semiotic Theory of Culture* (1990), Yuri Lotman laid the foundations for conceptualizing art as a mechanism of communication²³. In his view, music constitutes a "text of culture", in which every sign is capable of recoding and interpretation. Subsequent studies further elaborated and deepened the notion of the "cultural code", a key category for understanding artistic communication. In musical terms, this implies that a work is invariably perceived through the listener's system of expectations and habitual patterns of interpretation. Although these studies were primarily concerned with literature and the visual arts, they nonetheless provided a methodological foundation for later attempts to analyze music as a semiotic structure²⁴.

A new stage within the Eastern European tradition systematized approaches to the analysis of musical communication, defining performance as a "dual system of signs", namely a representational one (which fixes the text) and a communicative one (which generates action). The mask thus becomes a means of transformation, an instrument of play, and a way of overcoming the boundary between the personal and the collective, between authenticity and role. Within Ukrainian humanities, the issues of musical semiotics, performativity, and communicative strategies have been actively developed since the late 1990s. One of the leading theorists in this field is Ihor Yudkin, who, in his works *Meaning and Structure of the Musical Work and Interpretation as Communication*, substantiated a model of musical interaction as a multi-level system of relationships between the author, the performer, and the audience²⁵.

Oksana Karpenko, in her books *Music as a Space of Communication and Performativity of Contemporary Art*, analyses the transition from the notated text to the living event of sounding. She conceptualizes musical action as a form of intermedial interaction in which sound, movement, image, and space converge. In her interpretation, the mask functions as a metaphor for the performer's role, through which one "enters" the musical space by transforming one's own corporeal identity²⁶.

²³ Lotman, Yuri M. *A Semiotic Theory of Culture*. I.B. Tauris, 1990; Lotman, Yuri M. "Text and Audience Structure". *Universe of the Mind*. I.B. Tauris, 1990.

²⁴ Lotman, Yuri M. *Culture and Explosion*. Mouton de Gruyter, 2009.

²⁵ Yudkin, Ihor. *Fenomenolohiia kultury yak metodolohiia interpretatsii*. Instytut kulturolohii NAM Ukrainy, 2020.

²⁶ Karpenko, Oksana. *Performativity and Intertextuality in Contemporary Music Culture*. Kyiv National University of Culture and Arts, 2021.

The studies of Maria Kochetkova *Musical Performance as Communication: Interpretation and Embodiment* (2022) further develop the theme of corporeality in the performative process. They demonstrate that semiotic analysis cannot be confined to the text alone: it is necessary to take into account the performer's position as a carrier of cultural memory. In their scholarship, the mask acquires an additional meaning – as a metaphor of identity that is continuously modified through interaction with the listener²⁷.

In contemporary Ukrainian compositional practice, the phenomenon of the mask is realized through the theatricalization of sound and performative strategies. In the works of Alla Zahaikevych, Valentyn Sylvestrov, and Yevhen Stankovych, one can observe a tendency towards the creation of a “musical character” – a sonic mask that simultaneously embodies both the composer and the performer. For instance, in Zahaikevych's works for electronics and live performance, the mask becomes apparent through the distribution of roles between acoustic and digital sound; in Sylvestrov's music, it is manifested in the use of quotation as a means of “masking” one's own voice through another stylistic idiom.

The performativity of film music deserves particular attention, as in contemporary culture it extends far beyond its traditional functional role. Music in cinema increasingly appears not as a “background accompaniment” but as an active agent of communication that interacts with the image, the spatial dimension, and the spectator's body²⁸. In the works of Valentyn Sylvestrov (Kyiv Frescoes, Melody) and Myroslav Skoryk (Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors), as well as in the recent multimedia projects of Alla Zahaikevych (VJ Peremoga, Within Sound), music functions as a performative event capable of initiating emotional and cognitive resonance in the viewer. The performativity of film music is manifested in the ability of the musical gesture to transform the meaning of the visual sequence and to generate new temporal and spatial dimensions. In this sense, film music approaches live performance, since its perception invariably involves processes of corporeal empathy and the listener's “inner conducting.” In cinema music “plays” not only within the film but also within the spectator, producing an effect of double action – both aesthetic and performative. This type of music demonstrates that performance may exist even without a stage: in the very act of listening, which becomes a space of communication between image, sound, and consciousness.

²⁷ Kochetkova, Maria. *Musical Performance as Communication: Interpretation and Embodiment*. De Gruyter, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110783454>

²⁸ Kharchenko, Polina. “Interaction of Visual and Musical Components in the Structure of Contemporary Screen Works.” *Integratiyn de las Ciencias Fundamentales y Aplicadas en el Paradigma de la Sociedad Post-Industrial*. Vol. 3, 24 Apr. 2020, Barcelona, Spain, pp. 116–117. <https://doi.org/10.36074/24.04.2020.v3>

Thus, a comparative consideration of Western, Eastern European, and Ukrainian approaches demonstrates that the concept of the mask constitutes a universal analytical instrument for examining musical communication. Within the Western tradition, it is closely related to the categories of role, identity, and performativity; within the Eastern European framework, it resonates with the notions of the cultural code and the theatrical gesture; while within Ukrainian scholarship, it is associated with the figure of the interpreter as a mediator between text and action. The mask functions as a distinctive “transitional sign” between the world of the score and the world of performance, enabling the transformation of meanings.

Thus, the analysis of the current state of research and the existing scholarly contribution to the chosen topic allows us to conclude that contemporary music studies are shifting from a static model of the text toward a dynamic model of action. Within this new paradigm, the mask becomes a key to understanding the performative process as a communicative act in which semiotic, corporeal, and cultural levels converge. Below, several practical case studies of semiotic analysis are presented in relation to the issues addressed in this article.

The score as an open text

The idea of the open text in compositional practices of the second half of the twentieth century emerged as an opposition to rigidly determined notation. It was embodied in Earle Brown's December 1952, where the score appears as a graphic field that merely outlines possible trajectories of sound rather than fixing a result. In *Sonic Meditations* (1971–1974), Pauline Oliveros abandons traditional notation and proposes verbal instructions orientated toward the process of deep listening. The score becomes a medium of communication that does not transmit sound but creates the conditions for its shared experience. In Alla Zahaikevych's electroacoustic works, open structure is often realized through a flexible interaction between instrument and electronics, in which the performer independently constructs timbral and temporal dynamics. In such cases, the score is not a completed text but a semiotic matrix that is activated in the act of performance.

The fact that the musical score becomes merely a point of departure for an open-ended semiotic interaction is highly characteristic of multimedia and eco-music, relatively recent directions in contemporary musical practice. At the same time, multimedia and eco-music (sometimes these practices can be interconnected) exemplify the performative turn in contemporary music culture, in which the focus shifts from the musical work as a closed,

composed object to performance as a spatial, temporal, and environmental event. Such practices undermine the notion of a fixed, hierarchical authorial center, replacing it with a decentralized model of shared creative agency. As Gvantsa Ghvinjilia states, using the example of eco-music and multimedia works by Georgian post-avant-garde composer Eka Chabashvili, in her numerous multimedia and eco-music genres, music increasingly functions as a communicative process rather than a one-directional act of transmission from composer to listener. Among the most profound examples that can be named are the multimedia composition with elements of eco-music *The Symphony-Exhibition Khma (Voice)* and the eco-music project *Let's Listen to Caves*, where the audience is involved as co-performers and even co-composers, thereby demonstrating that musical meaning is not simply conveyed but actively co-created through participatory engagement. Within this framework, the listener can be redefined as a co-author whose actions, perceptual choices, and ecological awareness actively shape the unfolding musical event, providing a concrete realization of theoretical models that emphasize participation, embodiment, and shared meaning-making in contemporary musical practice. Thus, when the traditional stereotypes of the "stage ecosystem" and the relationship between the composer, the performer, and the spectator are changed, it shows an evident example of an open-ended semiotic interaction (Ghvinjilia, Gvantsa, 2025, p. 216).²⁹

The mask as a strategy of communication. Theatricality and performativity.

The phenomenon of the mask in music manifests itself through ironic distancing, theatricalization, or the simulation of style. In Mauricio Kagel's *Match* (1964), performers engage in an "instrumental dialogue" in which gesture and facial expression become equivalent to musical events, while the "mask of play" exposes the social nature of musical interaction. In Georges Aperghis's *Récitations for voice* (1978), vocal articulation becomes a mask of language: the performer utters sounds devoid of semantic meaning, producing an effect of communicative failure. In Volodymyr Runchak's chamber works, the communicative strategy is constructed as an interaction between performer-characters who embody social roles through musical and plastic gestures.

²⁹ Ghvinjilia, Gvantsa. "The Evolution of Music and Musician Students' Views on Ethical Dilemmas Related to Transhumanistic Music." *Rast Musicology Journal*, vol. 13, no. 2, 2025, pp. 201–237. <https://doi.org/10.12975/rastmd.20251326>

In Alvin Lucier's *I Am Sitting in a Room* (1969), theatricality emerges not through action, but through an acoustic process of self-reflection – the space “performs itself.” It becomes a “theatre of listening,” in which each echo functions as a sign of acoustic transformation. The phenomenon of the mask in relation to theatricality is particularly vividly manifested in Boris Alvarado's work *Raven*, where the use of costumes and masks by the vocalists reinforces the semiotic dimension of communication. Black-and-white capes and bird-like masks with beaks create a double image of the performer – between the human and the symbolic – which corresponds to the concept of the mask as a mediator between compositional intention, performance, and reception. Such a visual code shifts the musical act into the sphere of the ritual sign, in which the “raven” appears as an archetype of transformation and a liminal state between life and death, silence and sound, fully consistent with the semiotic strategies of contemporary music.

The works discussed demonstrate that contemporary music functions as a multi-layered communicative system. The score becomes an open text, the performer becomes a mask of interpretation, performance becomes a theatre of action, and the listener becomes an active decoder of meanings. All links within the “score – performance – reception” chain form a shared space in which communication is transformed from a process of transmitting information into a process of co-creating meaning. It is precisely this shift – from fixed structure to action, from text to event – that defines a contemporary understanding of music as a dynamic system of meanings in which semiotic, corporeal, and cultural codes interact.

Conclusions

The analysis conducted allows us to argue that the transition from score to performance in contemporary musical culture should be described not as a linear “reproduction of the text”, but as a dynamic process of semiotic mediation involving at least three levels: the compositional, the performative, and the receptive. Within this model, the score appears not as a closed structure but as an open matrix of potential meanings that are realized through performative action and the listener's experience. E. Tarasti's model and the associated three-level scheme (the transcendental, sign-based, and existential dimensions) have proven to be a productive instrument for describing the movement of meaning within a musical work – from the ideational conception to the performative event and its interpretation by the listener.

Thus, the principal outcome of the study is the conceptualization of musical work as an open communicative system in which semiotic, performative, and cultural codes interact. The score is understood as a potential text that acquires ontological completeness only in the act of performance; the performer is approached as the bearer of a mask of interpretation, which both structures and problematizes meaning; and the listener is positioned as an active interpretant who transforms a sonic event into lived experience. The proposed integration of E. Tarasti's model, performance studies, and the analysis of the phenomenon of the mask makes it possible to outline the transition from score to performance as a process of co-creating meaning, in which music emerges not only as an art of sound but also as a form of cultural thinking and intersubjective dialogue. A promising direction for further research lies in extending this model to digital, networked, and immersive formats of performance, where the mechanisms of the mask, the open score, and participatory listening acquire new, media-conditioned configurations.

REFERENCES

- Auslander, Philip. *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*. 2nd ed., Routledge, 2022.
- Clarke, Eric F., and Nicholas Cook, eds. *Empirical Musicology: Aims, Methods, Prospects*. Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Chmil, H., N. Korablova, O. Bezruchko, and N. Zhukova. "Homo Villicus in the Cinema Environment: Justifiability and Limits of the Index." *Convergences: Journal of Research and Arts Education*, vol. 17, no. 33, pp. 123–142. <https://doi.org/10.53681/c1514225187514391s33.235>
- Cook, Nicholas. *Music as Creative Practice*. Oxford University Press, 2018.
- Fischer-Lichte, Erika. *Performing Arts in Transition: Moving Between Media*. Routledge, 2021.
- Fischer-Lichte, Erika. *The Transformative Power of Performance: A New Aesthetics*. Routledge, 2008.
- Ghvinjilia, Gvantsa. "The Evolution of Music and Musician Students' Views on Ethical Dilemmas Related to Transhumanistic Music." *Rast Musicology Journal*, vol. 13, no. 2, 2025, pp. 201–237. <https://doi.org/10.12975/rastmd.20251326>
- Karpenko, Oksana. *Performativity and Intertextuality in Contemporary Music Culture*. Kyiv National University of Culture and Arts, 2021.

- Kharchenko, Polina, Asmati Chibalashvili, Igor Savchuk, Viktor Sydorenko, and Ivetta Khasanova. "Technologies as a Mediator between Creator and Audience in Postmodern Art Practices." *BRAIN. Broad Research in Artificial Intelligence and Neuroscience*, vol. 14, no. 1, 2023, pp. 500–514. <https://doi.org/10.18662/brain/14.1/432>
- Kharchenko, Polina. "Interaction of Visual and Musical Components in the Structure of Contemporary Screen Works." *Integratiyn de las Ciencias Fundamentales y Aplicadas en el Paradigma de la Sociedad Post-Industrial*. Vol. 3, 24 Apr. 2020, Barcelona, Spain, pp. 116–117. <https://doi.org/10.36074/24.04.2020.v3>
- Klein, Michael, and Robert Cogan, eds. *Musical Semiotics in Growth: Essays in Honor of Eero Tarasti*. Indiana University Press, 2017.
- Kochetkova, Maria. *Musical Performance as Communication: Interpretation and Embodiment*. De Gruyter, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110783454>
- Kramer, Lawrence. *Interpreting Music*. University of California Press, 2011.
- Leman, Marc. *Embodied Music Cognition and Mediation Technology*. MIT Press, 2008.
- Lotman, Yuri M. *A Semiotic Theory of Culture*. I.B. Tauris, 1990.
- Lotman, Yuri M. *Culture and Explosion*. Mouton de Gruyter, 2009.
- Lotman, Yuri M. "Text and Audience Structure." *Universe of the Mind*. I.B. Tauris, 1990.
- Tarasti, Eero. *Signs of Music: A Guide to Musical Semiotics*. Mouton de Gruyter, 2002.
- Tarasti, Eero. *Semiotics of Classical Music: How Mozart, Brahms and Wagner Talk to Us*. De Gruyter Mouton, 2012. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781614511410>
- Tarasti, Eero. *Musical Semiotics Revisited*. Springer, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-91938-5>
- Tarasti, Eero, ed. *Musical Semiotics Today: New Perspectives*. International Semiotics Institute, 2020.
- Yudkin, Ihor. *Fenomenolohiia kultury yak metodolohiia interpretatsii*. Instytut kulturolohii NAM Ukrainy, 2020.

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES IN THE PERFORMANCE OF A MUSICIAN: THEORY AND PRACTICE

NATALIYA BYELIK-ZOLOTAROVA¹, OLENA BATOVSKA²,
NATALYA ZOLOTARYOVA³, YULIIA IVANOVA⁴,
OLENA ZAVERUKHA⁵, TETIANA SUKHOMLINOVA⁶

SUMMARY. The current needs in the modernization of the system of performing interpretation and the search for mechanisms for its optimization necessitate a review of approaches to the professional activity of musicians. The creation of favorable conditions for the development of the performers' creative potential and the multifaceted realization of their unique talent is of particular relevance. The aim of the study is to reveal and substantiate the content, significance and effectiveness of the application of innovative approaches to the creation of performing interpretation of a musical work. The study employed both practical (monitoring of the interpretation of a musical work) and theoretical (analysis, comparison, synthesis) methods. The study established that a mixed system of performing interpretation the most progressive, optimal and oriented towards the individuality of the music performer, as it combines the principles

¹ PhD in Art Studies, Professor, Head of the Department of Choral and Opera-Symphonic Conducting, Faculty of Performance and Musicology, Kharkiv I. P. Kotlyarevsky National University of Arts, Kharkiv, Ukraine; Email: nata.llyia28@yahoo.com

² Doctor of Sciences in Art Criticism, Professor of the Department of Choral and Opera-Symphonic Conducting, Faculty of Performance and Musicology, Kharkiv I. P. Kotlyarevsky National University of Arts, Kharkiv, Ukraine; Email: batolena2@gmail.com

³ PhD in Art Studies, Associate Professor of Special Piano Department, Performance and Musicology Faculty, Kharkiv I.P. Kotlyarevsky National University of Arts, Kharkiv, Ukraine; Email: natalya.zolotaryova12@meta.ua

⁴ PhD in Art Studies, Associate Professor of the Department of Choral and Opera-Symphonic Conducting, Faculty of Performance and Musicology, Kharkiv I. P. Kotlyarevsky National University of Arts; Email: ijulia65@gmail.com

⁵ PhD in Art Studies, Associate Professor, Head of the Department of Academic and Pop Vocal, Faculty of Musical Art and Choreography, Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University, Kyiv, Ukraine; Email: olena.zaverukha28@kubg.edu.ua

⁶ PhD in Art Studies, Associate Professor of the Department of Academic and Pop Vocal, Faculty of Musical Art and Choreography, Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University, Kyiv, Ukraine; Email: tetiana.sukhomlinova11@kubg.edu.ua



of several approaches — traditional academic and innovative. It provides for a full multifaceted implementation of approaches that contribute to the successful performing interpretation: interdisciplinary synthesis and the mechanism of creative interaction of the pianist, soloists, and choral group, knowledge of the achievements of various performing schools in the world, application of conditions for improvisation and implementation of non-standard solutions during a performance on stage. The key components of optimizing the professional activity of performers were identified: auditory experience and research of musical primary sources; ensemble music-making practice; genre and stylistic diversity of the repertoire. The prospects for studying this problem are determined by the openness of the performing interpretation processes to innovative principles and their commitment to preserving and implementing the fundamental principles of the classical academic tradition of performance.

Keywords: musical work; performing interpretation; genre; style; semantics; texture

1. Introduction

Musical performance of the twenty-first century is looking for the most effective ways to optimize the processes of renewal and enrichment of approaches to creating performing interpretation in various fields. For the successful resolution of such issues in the field of piano and choral performance, such aspects as the motivation of performing musicians to realize their unique creative potential through a creative approach to interpretation in the course of rehearsal work and during a concert performance are of great importance. These facts have determined the relevance of researching innovative approaches to creating performing interpretation.

In the context of modern culture and art, there are a number of problems that scholars are trying to find solutions to. One of them is directly related to the achievement of a perfect ensemble among musicians of instrumental and choral groups. It is necessary to establish and highlight the key methodological aspects of creating a harmonious, balanced and coherent sound of all elements of the texture. These include individual timbre lines, each having its own unique manner of performance.⁷ An important problem of modern concert and performance practice is the process of reproducing the uniqueness of a

⁷ Svitylo, Svitlana. "Preparation of lectures on musical arts in the class of vocal ensemble." In *National Academy of Managerial Staff of Culture and Arts Herald*, 3, 2021, pp. 180-184. <https://doi.org/10.32461/2226-3209.3.2021.244480>, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/357287489>

certain genre. Musicians are focused on finding and choosing the most optimal type of interpretation for deep communication with the authors of the works. In this context, the fact that the genre basis of music combines two large-scale principles: a spectrum of functions and a structure (archetype).⁸

The basic aspects of the characteristics of a professional music performer include personality and its traits, professional skills, cognitive and psychological factors of professional identity, learning experience, social competence, and interpersonal relationships. All these components are deeply interconnected and are formed in the context of certain objective conditions.⁹ The importance of addressing the specifics of the performance of musical works is emphasized. In particular, the problem of interpretation arises as a phenomenon of culture in general and unique creativity belonging to the personality of artists. It is considered as a complex artistic phenomenon, the components of which are: the creative activity of an individual professional; the process of highlighting the concept of a work; the study of the features of the historical period to which it belongs; rendering of the performers' worldview.¹⁰ In the context of the above-mentioned factor, the problem of the specifics of the creative activity of musicians becomes relevant. Its goal is the creation of a composition through interpretation. Being unique, the performance of different artists includes such aspects as: creative-search, interpretative, and performing-embodiment orientations.¹¹ This, in turn, contributes to solving another problem – the formation of an artistically independent performing version of a musical work. Its foundation is the process of performing music and its analysis, which makes it possible to highlight the characteristic structural and stylistic features of the composition.¹²

The problem of accumulating the most important resource of pianists is also significant. This is a unique creative phenomenon called the artistic

⁸ Shapovalova, Liubov V., Serhaniuk, Liudmyla I., Nikolaievska Yuliia V. Kopeliuk, Oleh O. "Genre in the Music Communication System and the Artist's Mission." In *Linguistics and Culture Review*, 5 (S4), 2021, pp. 218-233. <https://doi.org/10.21744/lingcure.v5nS4.1575>

⁹ Concina, Eleonora. "Effective Music Teachers and Effective Music Teaching Today: A Systematic Review." In *Education Sciences*, 13(2), 2023, 107, <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13020107>

¹⁰ Kotlyarevska, Olena I. *The Variational Potential of Musical Works: The Cultural Aspect of Interpretation*. PhD in Arts. Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine, Kyiv, 1996. http://www.irbis-nbuv.gov.ua/cgi-bin/irbis_nbuv/cgiirbis_64.exe

¹¹ Moskalenko, Viktor. "On the Specifics of Musical Interpretation." In *Kyiv Musicology: Collection of Articles, National Music Academy of Ukraine named after P. I. Tchaikovsky*, 2, 1999, pp. 4–15.

¹² Moskalenko, Viktor. "On the Creative Mechanisms of Musical Interpretation." In *Lectures on Musical Interpretation*. Academy of Ukraine named after P.I. Tchaikovsky, Kyiv, 2013, pp. 154-180. <https://knmau.com.ua/wp-content/uploads/V.-Moskalenko-Lektsiyi-z-muzichnoyi-interpretatsiyi-Navchalnij-posibnik.pdf>.

energy of interpreters. According to the researchers' conclusions, it is based on the pianist's repertoire preferences, which reflects the originality of his or her performing style.¹³ This statement is also true for choral conductors. However, the problem of implementing innovative approaches to the formation of performing interpretation in the fields of piano and choral art still needs research. Its comprehensive solution became the foundation of this article.

The novelty of the study is identified innovative principles of performing interpretation as an effective and multi-component system. Several aspects responsible for the quality of performing interpretation in the field of piano and choral art are hypotheses of the success of their application in practice. This is the modernization and systematic nature of the processes of creating interpretations based on interdisciplinary synthesis, where the principles of the traditional academic approach to rehearsal work and concert performances are combined with innovative ones.

The aim of the research is to reveal and substantiate the content, significance and effectiveness of innovative approaches to creating a performing interpretation of a musical work.

The aim involves the fulfilment of the following *research objectives*:

- Explore the spectrum of interactive approaches to the performing interpretation as a holistic complex system;
- Identify its key blocks and analyze the content and significance of each of them;
- Reveal the characteristics of interactive approaches to performing interpretation;
- Identify the most progressive direction of creating performing interpretation and its components.

2. Literature Review

The issues of performing interpretation are considered by scholars from different perspectives. One of its key categories is the individual style of performing works. It consists of such components as: dialectical, ontological, and musical-functional aspects of the realization of the interpreter's creative ideas. Shaping style reflects the first of the mentioned aspects. The second

¹³ Chernyavska, Marianna, Ivanova, Iryna, Timofeyeva, Kira, Syriatska, Tetiana, Mits, Oksana. "Artistic Energy of the Performers in the Mirror of Their Repertoire Preferences." In *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai Musica*, 68(Special Issue 2), 2023, pp. 165-179.
<https://doi.org/10.24193/subbmusica.2023.spiss2.10>,
<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/373066571>

aspect involves an individual approach and a separate study of the composer's and performer's means of expression. The last aspect symbolizes the specifics of the performer's reading of the author's idea encrypted in the musical text, which is associated with the imperceptible fact of deep interaction between the composer and the interpreter.¹⁴ In particular, the types of texture of musical works are of particular importance for the interpreter, because they are a roadmap for both the structure and the dramatic content of the compositions.

The analysis of the named resource of musical expressiveness by performers helps them to discover a unique concept of works for themselves, but also to form the process of interpretation as a deeply artistic phenomenon capable of presenting the author's idea in the most vivid way.¹⁵ In such conditions, an "authentic performance strategy" arises. Its foundation is a clear reference point to the details of the composer's text, which may belong to different stylistic eras and schools. The "protective" approach to the author's complex of interpretation techniques retains its strength due to its synthesis with the tendencies of academic orientation in the field of performance practice of the last third of the 20th century.¹⁶ It is also worth paying attention to the fact that musical performance is a unique translation of a certain musical and intonation model, which is accompanied by a semantic setting. It, in turn, concentrates in itself generalized auditory and muscular-motor representations recorded in memory, which reflect the creative perception of music and convey its original interpretative version.¹⁷

In a broad sense, performing interpretation is a complex artistic phenomenon consisting of a number of semantic aspects of the content of the composition and the features of its transmission. The perception of the aforementioned fact forms such a universal concept as the performer's "communicative strategy". Its role is not only to reveal the author's concepts and find the means of their implementation in sounds, but also to create the environment where communication takes place between the interpreter and the audience. The multi-vector nature of the concept of interpretation, where

¹⁴ Katrych, O. "Stylistic Aspects of Musical Performance Interpretation." In *Scientific Bulletin of the P. I. Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine*, 5, 2000, pp. 59–65.

¹⁵ Moskalenko, Viktor. "On the Artistic Function of Texture in Music." In *Scientific Bulletin of the P. Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine, Musicology: From the 20th to the 21st Century*, 7, 2000, pp. 56–65.

¹⁶ Nikolaievska, Yuliia V. "The Authentic Performing Strategy and its Modern Transformations." In *Baroque's Art in Performance Projections, Aspects of Historical Musicology*, 10, 2017, pp. 180–198. https://aspekty.kh.ua/vypusk10/aspekty_10_13_%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%B0%D0%B5%D0%B2%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B0%D1%8F.pdf

¹⁷ Moskalenko Viktor. Lectures on musical interpretation. Study guide. National Music Academy of Ukraine named after P.I. Tchaikovsky, Kyiv, 2013. <https://knmau.com.ua/wp-content/uploads/V.-Moskalenko-Lektsiyi-z-muzichnoyi-interpretatsiyi-Navchalnij-posibnik.pdf>

the composer's, performing, receptive and hermeneutic strategies acquire significance, serves as the foundation of the concept of homo interpretatus.¹⁸

In its context, there are also "the personality of the performer", "artistic energy", which have a unique composition and are inextricably linked with each other.¹⁹ This reveals the specifics of interpretation, its semantics, because certain features of artistic psychotypes determine the nature of accentuation in relation to the genre, style, and conceptual components of a musical work.²⁰ In general, the performance process represents the interaction of such important elements of true art as creativity and continuous learning of creativity, its improvement.²¹ Besides, it integrates the subject of interpretation (musicians-performers), its object (musical work), performance and its result (perception of music by performers and the audience).

The greatest space for creative experiments and the formation of an individual style of the performer is opened by the sphere of the variable potential of works, including dynamics, tempo, articulation, phrasing, agogics, and the figurative sphere.²² A similar opportunity is provided by the fact of creating a musical composition based on the texts of writers. While interpreting it, the performer brings his or her own creative mark to various episodes of such a work, demonstrating a new reading of the author's concept.²³ A diverse repertoire, in terms of stylistic directions and genres in the practice of modern performers, also contributes to the active use of innovative means of performing interpretation. These include: the principle of expanding the genre-stylistic range, the principle of enriching the technical means of presenting musical

¹⁸ Nikolaievska, Yuliia V. "A Communicative Strategy as an Important Issue in Interpretology." In *Problems of Interaction between Art, Pedagogy, and Theory and Practice of Education: Collection of Scientific Articles*, 46, 2017, pp. 94–110.

¹⁹ Shapovalova, Liudmyla. "Performative Reflection as an Object of Interpretology." In *Problems of Interaction of Art, Pedagogy, Theory and Practice of Education*, 20, 2007, pp. 218–229.

²⁰ Syriatska, Tetyana O. *Performative interpretation in terms of the psychology of the musician-artist's personality*: PhD in Arts. Kharkiv State University of Arts named after I.P. Kotlyarevsky, Kharkiv, 2008.

²¹ Sumarokova, V. "Composer's Creativity as an Object of a Performing Musicology." In *Kyiv Musicology: Collection of Articles, National Music Academy of Ukraine named after P. I. Tchaikovsky*, 7, 2001, pp. 171–179. http://www.irbis-nbuv.gov.ua/cgi-bin/irbis_nbuv/cgiirbis_64.exe?I21DBN=LINK&P21DBN=UJRN&Z21ID=&S21REF=10&S21CNR=20&S21STN=1&S21FMT=ASP_meta&C21COM=S&S21P03=FILE=&S21STR=Nvnmau_2014_110_5

²² Tkach, Yulia. "Specifics of Conducting Interpretation in Choral Performance." 2012. <https://parafia.org.ua/biblioteka/kultura/spetsyfika-dyryhentskoji-interpretatsiji-u-horovomu-vykonavstvi/>

²³ Govorukhina, Nataliya. "The Principles of Interpretation of the Poetic Primary Source in Ballads by F. Schubert, S. Moniuszhko, H. Wolf on Goethe's Text «Kennst du das Land»." In *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai*, 67(Special Issue 1), 2022, pp. 103-113. <https://doi.org/10.24193/subbmusica.2022.spiss1.07>

material, the principle of shaping the timbre texture of the works being performed, the principle of pronouncing the literary text in the context of the choral score.²⁴

According to the authors of the study, the named components of the performing activity of musicians of the 21st century are the most important components of the trend of innovative enrichment of interpretation. This trend is aimed at high-quality multifaceted implementation of the capabilities of both the technical and emotional apparatus of performers, in particular, pianists, choral conductors, which contributes to the preservation of the best traditions of musical art and the progress of world culture in general. So, the strategy of innovative updates of the process of performing interpretation is a complex multifaceted phenomenon. This prompts the authors of this study to reveal its content, significance and effectiveness in the field of choral and piano performance.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Research design

In the study, performing interpretation is considered as a complex system that combines a number of components. Each of them is of key importance for the realization of the work through its rendering to the audience. This study consists of four consecutive stages. *The first stage* of the study involved establishing the key aspects of the innovative model of performing interpretation. These aspects were identified as the most important components for the successful realization of the professional and creative potential of performers. *The second stage* was a comparative analysis of traditional and innovative methods of rehearsal preparation and transmission of music by interpreters on stage. *At the third stage*, generalizations were made of all the obtained results regarding the content, role, and significance of the resources of the innovative approach to the performing interpretation as a complex single system that has unlimited prospects for world musical culture in general. *At the fourth stage*, the authors proposed one of the versions of the stage performance of The Fantasy (Fantasia) C minor for Piano, Vocal Soloists, Mixed Chorus, and Orchestra, Op. 80 by Ludwig van Beethoven in the context of an innovative approach to its interpretation.

²⁴ Batovska, Olena, Byelik-Zolotaryova, Nataliya, Ivanova, Juliia. "Modern Global Trends in the Development of Choral Performance." In *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai Musica*, 68(2), 2023, pp. 235-256. <https://doi.org/10.24193/subbmusica.2023.2.17>

3.2. Research sample

The object of the study is a wide range of innovative approaches to concert performance of musical works in the current context. The most important principles of the traditional academic direction of performance interpretation were also considered. Stage versions of the performance of one of the most large-scale works – Fantasy (Fantasia) C minor for Piano, Vocal Soloists, Mixed Chorus, and Orchestra, Op. 80 by Ludwig van Beethoven – by pianists of different cultures, stylistic directions, and philosophical views on the author's idea and methods of its translation were reviewed. These include: Yu. Novikov, P. Aimard, E. Rodriguez, H. Grimaud, L. Andsnes, K. Bezuidenhout, B. Chamayou.

3.3. Methods and materials

The study used practical and theoretical methods of studying the problem. Revealing of the characteristic features of the interpretation of music through listening to the performance of artists in the form of a recording was of key importance among the practical methods. Theoretical methods include: analysis, comparison, synthesis. The key components of the modern system of performing interpretation were highlighted with the help of analysis. Their content and significance were revealed by using comparison. The synthesis method contributed to the demonstration of innovative approaches to the realization of the professional and creative potential of performers as a holistic panorama.

4. Results

The results of the study show that performing interpretation consists of the following stages:

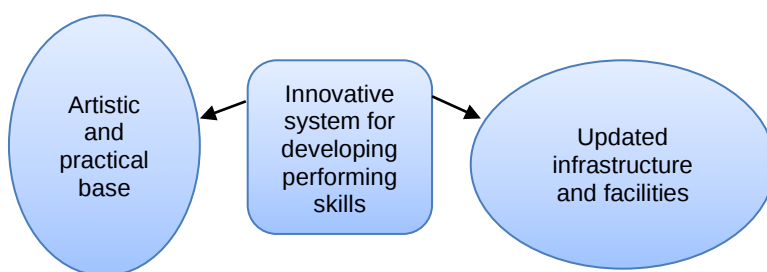
- compiling a concert programme;
- conducting a conceptual analysis of selected studies by the performer to form a concert version of his or her interpretation;
- a rehearsal process to embody the performing interpretation into sound artistic images;
- performing implementation – a stage version of the interpretation of the work.

An innovative approach to the performing interpretation is based on the synthesis of two blocks that complement each other. These are the artistic and practical base as well as infrastructure and facilities (Figure 1).

The artistic and practical base of an innovative approach to the multifaceted realization of the potential of musicians is their active participation in cultural and educational events of various content. Among them, the organization of performances and master classes should be noted.

In addition, communications with various social groups and the implementation of projects significant for society are built based on the use of musical art resources. The infrastructure and facilities aspect consists in developing the most effective ways of conducting rehearsal work and concert performances of professional musicians in the field of piano and choral performance against the background of the extraordinary growth of technological capabilities for creating a stage environment, notation, editing, and broadcasting of musical works. It also includes the use of multimedia resources in order to obtain a wide panorama of the qualitative characteristics of the sound of music and optimize the process of mastering the repertoire as a whole.

Figure 1



Innovative learning system and its basic blocks

Source: created by the authors

The use of innovative technologies in synthesis with the system of academic methods of skill development brings dynamics and a sense of a new format of activity to the process of realizing the creative potential of professional pianists and choir conductors. They set up a creative, exciting and comfortable environment for rehearsal and concert activities. At the same time, the role and significance of the classical principles of professional activity of both a pianist and a choir conductor become even more significant. Their presence not only gives a feeling of a direct connection with the tradition of the academic school, but also emphasizes its flexibility, the ability to be updated due to enrichment with modern means of presenting musical works. Among them, it is necessary to point out the expansion of the genre and style palette of the repertoire, the testing of various means of intonation, the

construction of individual phrases and compositional themes, the approach to performance as a complex phenomenon, where the technical arsenal of the interpreter, his or her socio-psychological and acting abilities are synthesized.

As for innovative techniques of interpretation, pianists actively use digital pianos and samplers, interactive performances based on computer programmes and MIDI controllers, prepared piano, and extended techniques (Table 1). Innovations in piano performance are new approaches to playing that arise under the influence of technology, changing aesthetic tastes, and a rethinking of the pianists' role. They expand the boundaries of traditional techniques and the sound palette of the instrument. So, the practice of performance gradually becomes more voluminous, enriched with various techniques, synthesizing the development of the performer's devices and the full multifaceted realization of his or her psycho-emotional nature through a wide palette of shades of the instrument's sound.

Table 1

Name of innovative means of performance	Content and principles of operation of innovative means of performance
Digital Pianos and Samplers	Modern digital pianos not only simulate acoustic sound, but also enables experimenting with different timbres, apply effects, and record your own performances. Thanks to sampling technology, pianists can reproduce the sounds of any instrument, which makes them almost universal.
Interactive Performances	The use of computer programmes and MIDI controllers allows pianists to interact with visualizations and electronic sounds in real time. This turns a solo performance into a multimedia performance, where music is complemented by light and video sequences.
Prepared Piano	This approach popularized by composer John Cage involves placing various objects (rubber bands, nails, coins) on or between the strings of the instrument. This changes its timbre, allowing for unusual, percussive, and exotic sounds that make the piano sound like an entire orchestra.
Using Advanced Techniques	Pianists experiment with unconventional ways of playing, such as: playing inside the piano, striking the strings, plucking, stroking to create new sound effects, clusters (playing groups of adjacent notes simultaneously, often with the palms or forearms), improvisation, and interaction (modern pianists often move away from a rigidly fixed score, integrating elements of improvisation, which makes each performance unique, and actively collaborate with performers from other genres, from jazz to electronic music, creating hybrid art forms).

Updated techniques for interpreting works for piano

Innovations in choral performance are new approaches to the interpretation, singing techniques, and presentation of music by a choir. These changes arise under the influence of technological progress and changing aesthetic and cultural paradigms. They open up new opportunities for the choirmaster, choir artists, and listeners, expanding the boundaries of traditional choral art (Table 2).

Table 2

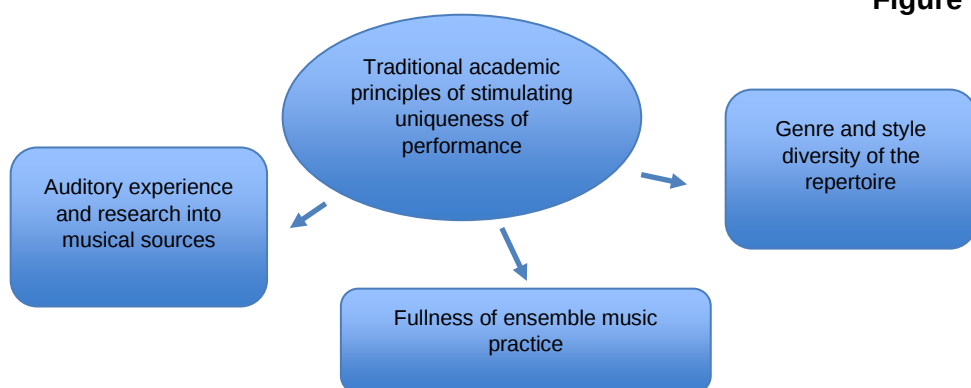
Name of innovative means of performance	Content and principles of operation of innovative means of performance
Electronic amplification and sound processing	Using microphones for each singer or group enables controlling the balance, dynamics, and timbre of the choir. Audio processing software (DAW) makes it possible to apply effects such as reverb or delay, which creates new sound spaces. This is especially true for modern music, where academic and electronic elements are combined.
Visualization of the content of musical works	Video projections, lighting effects and interactive installations are used during the concert, turning the performance into a multimedia show. This helps to create a deeper emotional connection with the audience and visualize the musical content.
Experiments with space	Choirs are increasingly performing in unconventional locations (factories, train stations, galleries), taking advantage of the acoustic features of the space. Choir members can be located not only on stage, but also throughout the room, which creates the effect of "sound immersion" for the listeners.
Integration with other types of art	Choir groups collaborate with pianists, dancers, actors, video artists and poets, creating synthetic performances. This expands the expressive capabilities of the choir, making it part of a creative performance. Video clips, installations, happenings are created.
Experiments with the capabilities of the human voice	Sound effects: whispers, clicks, growls, whistles, which make the sound more diverse; use of vocal improvisation: moving away from a rigidly fixed score, which gives the performance an element of unpredictability

Innovative techniques in the field of choral performance

Innovations in piano and choral performance allow modern musicians to be not just interpreters, but true co-creators who rethink the traditional instrument and expand its capabilities. This process allows them to remain relevant in the modern cultural space, where the boundaries between genres and types of art are becoming increasingly blurred. Besides, the aforementioned strategy for forming a performing interpretation promotes communication with professional musicians from other cities and countries, as well as participation in online competitions and festivals.

It should be noted that a number of traditional academic principles for stimulating the uniqueness of interpretations are distinguished by their effectiveness (Figure 2). Searching, listening and analyzing different versions of the performance of a certain work, studying the era to which it belongs, contribute to the performer finding the interpretation option that is closest to its authentic sound. In turn, ensemble practice in various contexts helps to develop such professional qualities as rapid adaptation to creative situations and circumstances. It leads the performer to find a collective whose aesthetics are close to him or her and where he or her can realize his or her own artistic ideas. The variety of genres and stylistic directions also stimulates the development of performing skills at the highest level.

Figure 2



Traditional academic principles for encouraging uniqueness of performance

Source: created by the authors

Among the traditional academic resources of performing practice, one should mention such aspects as an individual approach to the quality of sound, the construction of the dramaturgy of the work, the logic of the sequence of its sections, climax zones, the transmission of a general dynamic plan, within which creative experiments regarding dynamics are possible. The field of choral performance involves the implementation of a number of approaches that play a key role in the process of performing interpretation. This is the improvement of the conductor's manual technique and various types of singing aimed at training the vocal apparatus, the accumulation of experience in the means of interpreting works, the development of unique timbres of choir artists, and ensemble singing skills.

In general, the renewal of the principles of modern performance of musical works is based on a number of principles. This is a synthesis of various subject areas; the mechanism of creative interaction between a pianist and a choir, a conductor and soloists; the perception of the achievements of various performing schools in the world; the study of the spectrum of unique sound direction effects that accompany concert activities; the use of improvisation, the search for non-standard solutions in a particular situation.

The importance of the synthesis of various subject areas is determined by the fact that it contributes to the in-depth high-quality mastering of the complex technical arsenal of top-level performers, the awareness and multifaceted disclosure of the artistic idea of the original source, the formation of an ensemble feeling, and the implementation of innovative approaches to interpretation. So, a choirmaster achieves perfect knowledge of the score due to professional piano performance skills. These skills are developed in piano classes and reading choral scores, which allows finding gestural expressions of musical images during the interpretation of a choral work, which contributes to the full multifaceted rendering of the composers' concepts.

We emphasize that the cooperation of a conductor and a pianist concertmaster requires the latter to respond to the conductor's ideas, including innovative ones, through the study of the basics of conducting in higher education institutions, the study of the main principles of choir management practice. This allows the pianist to easily and quickly read the artistic intentions of the choirmasters and to be in a harmoniously coordinated ensemble with them in terms of the expression of climaxes, tempo, and dynamics. It should also be noted that pianists participate in a choir during their studies, which develops their valuable skills of singing in an ensemble, a sense of its diverse timbre palette, and the ability to hold their part. Moreover, such practice opens up opportunities for them to build the skills of drawing and characteristic features of touch when interacting with the keyboard, to translate polyphonic works even deeper and brighter. The integration of various subject areas into a single space is one of the most important parts of the innovative system of piano and choral performance.

The practice of creative interaction between pianists, choir conductors and singers provides an effective solution to several essential issues. The former is related to the process of improving the specific professional skills of a performer of a certain direction. This distinguishes the nature of his or her activity from the methods of work of musicians of another specialty. It is a well-known fact that the hands are the key technical resource of both pianists and conductors. However, the process of interpretation requires the pianist to master certain exercises that contribute to the activation of each finger, hand, and its flexibility on both hands. At the same time, the conductor needs

freedom of expression through full mastery of the gesture system. The plane for working with sound for a pianist is materially tangible (keyboard), while for a conductor it is imaginary.

The content of a musical work, its images, the nature of their disclosure directly affect the quality of the pianist's interaction with the instrument in terms of dynamics, speed, specifics of strokes and texture plan. Here, a significant role is played by the relationship between the weight inherent in the hands and the level of mobility of both the hand itself and the forearm and shoulder. At the same time, the strength of the fingers is concentrated on their weight, in the activity of the blow and preparation for it. For the most effective contact with the keyboard, the pianist must take into account the tempo set by the author of the piece being performed. As it accelerates, the hand movements shorten and become more measured. This contributes to the auditory sensation of flight during the presentation of sound complexes that differ in individual internal content. To realize creative ideas and concepts proposed by composers, the pianist must find a shape of the fingers that allows flexible use of the mechanisms of their opening and, conversely, their collection. The hand connects the fingers with other parts of the pianist's apparatus; it must be flexible to ensure performance at various tempos.

In the practice of conducting, the hand is quite often independent. It ensures the performance of music at a fast pace, increases the overall dynamics of the sound, and even contributes to the relief display of solo episodes of a choral composition. Besides, the hand can contribute to smooth sound control in conducting. If it is necessary to soften the blow, or, conversely, express it as brightly as possible, the hand enters into interaction with the hand as a whole. In this case, the forearms are activated, which helps to more clearly perform the timing, as well as give the gestures a unique shade that contributes to the transmission of the artistic idea. The shoulder performs a supporting function in relation to the work of the conductor's hands, providing flexible transitions between movements of different amplitude. The technical arsenal, more broadly – the performing skill of pianists – is reflected in the nature of playing the instrument, and conductors – in the specifics of gestures.

The second issue is responsible for the gradual emergence of artistic mutual influence of different directions of musical art. Synchronicity, balance of sound and, at the same time, expressiveness of each part are formed, the ability to move to a more subdued performance in the case when the performer's musical material becomes the background of the main theme. Being part of a large number of musicians, a pianist or choir conductor has the opportunity to master a significant arsenal of means of interpretation, principles of its creation in genre, style, and dramaturgical aspects. In this context, individual direction for each concert performance finds its reflection.

It involves a number of gestures among both choirmasters and pianists. These can be classical methods of rendering a musical idea: showing the culminating rise by playing *crescendo* on the piano and expanding the amplitude of the conductor's gestures, fixing the *forte* dynamics by relying on the pianist's keyboard and various points in the practice of choir conductors.

However, when updating the means of musical language, entering the world arena of various composer schools, and modernizing the repertoire of creative groups, a bright palette of interpretation techniques appears that require an individual approach to their realization on stage. In such cases, a pianist, choir conductor, or singer finds a unique creative solution that contributes to the expressive display of the author's concept. In this way, an individual creative project arises. Here, joint rehearsal work and concert performances are practiced, because it suggests how to create a harmonious ensemble in the above conditions. The advantages of a mixed strategy for a performing interpretation – based on classical and modern technological principles – are in several of its qualities. In particular, this is a significant amount of information about a particular work or repertoire in general, the opportunity to virtually feel like a performer performing a concert, and at the same time perceive a unique long-standing spectrum of academic traditions.

Interpretation is an artistic phenomenon that synthesizes objectivity and uniqueness. Objectivity is in the traditions of respectful attitude to the composers' concept, their original text. Uniqueness renders the individual style of the performer. The example of the performance of Fantasy (Fantasia) C minor for Piano, Vocal Soloists, Mixed Chorus, and Orchestra, Op. 80 by Ludwig van Beethoven demonstrates this fact: each of the musicians reflected the synthesis of the author's idea, its spirit and musical text in line with his or her own unique perception of the work, and the listeners. The pianist Yu. Novikov in this work synthesizes the tenderness inherent in individual episodes and the declaration of drama filled with extraordinary inner strength. The features of meditation are reflected in the interpretation of music by Pierre-Laurent Aimard. Eliane Rodriguez in her performance raises an expressive appeal to the audience through the display of the deeply dramatic context of the Fantasy. Hélène Grimaud demonstrates the skill of operating with dynamics, tempos, and showing contrasting pictures of a single plot. Leif Ove Andsnes in the Fantasy combines features of the classicist style, due to the ease of performing fast passages, and the brightest tendencies of romanticism, thanks to the relief display of a wide palette of human feelings. Christian Bezeidenhout conveys features of philosophical reflection, narration in the Fantasy. Bertrand Chamayou shows contrasting juxtapositions of images, emotional shades of the Fantasy.

In the performance version of N. Harnoncourt (1929–2016), the phenomenon of synthesizing the stylistic features of classicism and romanticism is traced, which is manifested, on the one hand, through the transparency of the texture and lightness, the display of each of the timbre groups, spectacular tutti, while on the other – through emotional lyrics.

Esa-Pekka Salonen (born 1958) gives the work an individual dramatic plot thanks to the functional interpretation of timbre. Salonen approaches the work as a complex theatrical performance. This is manifested in the individualization of each group of instruments (timbre series), which has its own “role” or plot line. Such freedom of performance results in a genre shift, when the work becomes similar to a rhapsody. All lines of choral, orchestral and piano texture act as components of a single system, deeply united with each other. Olinyk V. (born 1974) demonstrates each of the stages of the disclosure of L. Beethoven’s idea in the Fantasy through structural dramaturgy, a certain sequence of climaxes. His performance style also translates into a holistic monolithic space in which the orchestral, choral and piano components are synthesized. The work is perceived as a “monolithic space”. The orchestra and choir do not simply coexist, but merge into a single whole.

Pablo Heras-Casado (born 1977) focuses on such aspects of the work as the vastness and depth of the concept, themes, and images. It is noteworthy that in the process of performing L. Beethoven’s Fantasy, the conductor conveys a number of features inherent in the composer’s creative work. These are dynamism, lightness, and liveliness, which are manifested not only in individual timbre lines, but also in the general textural plan.

Harnoncourt N. (conductor) and P. Aimard (pianist) vividly convey both the classicist features of this work (clarity, clarity of each timbre line, transparency of texture, lightness of sound, which change with the saturation of the pages that broadcast the triumph of light forces), and the artistic principles of the following romanticism (rich and expressive figurative-psychological palette, a wide scale of dynamic shades, concentration on episodes of lyricism and silence). Regarding the interpretation of the choral part of L. Beethoven’s Fantasy, N. Harnoncourt adheres to the principle of a relief display of solo parts (in the form of an expressive melodic and thematic interplay between male and female voices) and a union where the variety of timbre colors is preserved. In this regard, P. Aimard supports the conductor’s position, as he brilliantly conveys the brightness of the solo piano sound and its inseparability from the orchestral and choral texture in episodes where all parts (piano, choir, orchestra) act as a monolith.

Salonen E. (conductor) and H. Grimaud (pianist) reveal a wealth of dynamic shades to the listeners. The style of their performance is close to rhapsody. Lyrical episodes of L. Beethoven’s Fantasy resemble islands of meditation.

Oliinyk V. (conductor) and Yu. Novikov (pianist) conveys drama, which is the sphere opened by the composer in the most versatile way. They reveal the various stages of its formation during the sounding of the work from latent anxiety to the final triumph. In this regard, the pianist and conductor, who directs the orchestral and choral parts of the performance, act as artistic like-minded people, which contributes to the birth of a bright individual interpretation of the famous work. In a harmonious tandem, Casado P. (conductor) and K. Bezeidenhout (piano) were able to show the emotional (more broadly, pathetic) world of L. Beethoven's music in a multifaceted way.

The uniqueness of the performance provides a wide scope for testing and multifaceted implementation of innovative projects. One of the options for implementing innovative trends in the process of performing L. Beethoven's Fantasy is to create an environment that reflects the content of the poetic text of the composition. This goal can be achieved by using a number of methods of an innovative approach to interpretation. These include a multimedia series that represents the concept of the authors of the text and music; conducting the performance of the participants in the performance in conditions that most vividly convey the mood of the text and music.

5. Discussion

The positive results of the use of innovative technologies, in particular mobile applications, in the process of developing performing skills are confirmed by Acevedo and Mendoza.²⁵ They emphasize the fact of creating comfortable conditions for musicians' rehearsal work on their basis. The conductor and chorus master most fully and multilaterally reveals the concept of the work being interpreted, thanks to the combination of such levels as ideological, analytical, and creative - performing. Such a synthesis contributes to the study and knowledge of the composer's artistic idea, as well as its expressive conveyance to the listeners.²⁶ In a broader sense, contemporary conductor-choral performance is a complex phenomenon. It combines the spheres of a historical approach to the study of works, theoretical analysis of their genre-structural and stylistic features, as well as actual performance

²⁵ Acevedo, Miguel, Mendoza, Jorge. "Music Software with a Machine Learning-Based Feedback System as an Alternative for Initial Piano Study in Children." In *Inteligencia Artificial Revista Iberoamericana de Inteligencia Artificial*, 27(73), 2024, pp. 92-110.
<https://doi.org/10.4114/intartif.vol27iss73pp92-110>

²⁶ Byelik-Zolotarova, Nataliya. "Two Choruses on H. Skovoroda's Poems" by Vitalii Kyreiko: Conductor's Concept." In *Culture of Ukraine*, 78, 2022, pp. 79-86.
<https://doi.org/10.31516/2410-5325.078.10>

practice, which involves a unique reading of the primary source by the interpreter.²⁷

According to modern scholars, the process of studying such a creative phenomenon as musical performance is a combination of a number of algorithms, each playing a significant role in preparing a concert version of the interpretation. These include emotional and aesthetic programme; content field programme; textural plan of the performance of the work, which serves as the foundation of the artist's performances. Emotional and aesthetic programme is an analysis of emotional impressions and their aesthetic evaluations. The content field programme of the work provides a number of principles for its reflection in the dramatic plan of the works and the translation of the genre and style features of the composition. Both programmes help the performer to build a textural plan of the stage version of the work.²⁸

An innovative approach to the means of interpretation forms such large-scale categories of the work as its genre, style, sound character through a unique manner of presenting musical material, as well as dramaturgy (form creation).²⁹ The performer's deep disclosure of the encrypted content of music samples with the help of innovative resources also plays a significant role. The spectrum of proto-intonational situations, which serve as the foundation of the musician's artistic imagination and the formation of the textual basis of compositions, represents the subtext of the work and contributes to finding unique options for its interpretation.³⁰

²⁷ Byelik-Zolotarova, Nataliia. "Choral Performance Art as a Category of a Modern Choral Studies." In *Kharkiv I. P. Kotlyarevsky National University of Arts. Aspects of Historical Musicology*, XXXI, 2023, pp. 184–206. http://www.irbis-nbuv.gov.ua/cgi-bin/irbis_nbu/cgiirbis_64.exe?I21DBN=LINK&P21DBN=UJRN&Z21ID=&S21REF=10&S21CNR=20&S21STN=1&S21FMT=ASP_meta&C21COM=S&2_S21P03=FILA=&2_S21STR=asismy_2023_31_10

²⁸ Vecher, Dmytro. *Performative Analysis of a Musical Work: Theoretical and Practical-Methodological Aspects (based on the example of a pianist-interpreter)*. PhD in Art History. National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine; M.T. Rylsky Institute of Art Studies, Folklore and Ethnology, Kyiv, 2007.

²⁹ Shilin, Gao. " "Winter" by I. Shamo – I. Franko, Performed by the Kharkiv Philharmonic Chamber Choir Conducted by V. Palkin." In *IV All-Ukrainian Scientific and Practical Conference "Conducting and Choral Education: Synthesis of Theory and Practice"*. Planeta-Print LLC, Kharkiv, 2020, pp. 14–17. <https://repo.num.kharkiv.ua/server/api/core/bitstreams/8afa80f8-dfba-4615-9de0-8ca5ead0fd9d/content>; Shilin, Gao. "The Specifics of Performing a Cappella Choral Opera (based on the example of I. Shamo's "Yatran Games")." In *Choral Conducting Education: Synthesis Of Theory And Practice Materials Of The VI International Scientific And Practical Conference*. Kharkiv I.P. Kotlyarevsky National University of Arts, Kharkiv, 2019, pp. 60–62. <https://repo.num.kharkiv.ua/items/36be48f3-ae06-4361-9828-d0fe8280dd28>

³⁰ Moskalenko, Viktor. "Musical Work." In *Lectures on Musical Interpretation*. Academy of Ukraine named after P.I. Tchaikovsky, Kyiv, 2013, pp. 107-132. <https://knmau.com.ua/wp-content/uploads/V.-Moskalenko-Lektsiyi-z-muzichnoyi-interpretatsiyi-Navchalnij-posibnik.pdf>

Innovative technologies contribute to the creation of comfortable conditions for performing interpretation. It is necessary to pay attention to the fact that their resources produce a creative approach in the process of rehearsal work on musical works. Our study shows that this occurs on the basis of motivation through a creative environment, in the context of which the musicians' desire to achieve the full realization of their ideas through performance arises. This involves, at its first stage, the emergence of musicians' motivation for performances in front of an audience, the desire to convey the concepts of composers of different times, stylistic directions, and philosophical views to humanity. At the second stage, all the necessary information regarding the content of the works and the features of their interpretation in a concert is mastered.

At the third stage, the performer develops his or her individual strategy regarding such aspects as interpretation technique, artistic expressiveness, interaction with other musicians and listeners.³¹ Highlighting of the principles of the creative practice of contemporary conductors is no less essential for the successful formation of performing interpretation by choirmasters. It consists of a number of mechanisms for translating the concept of works, which act as a kind of metaphor. The leader of the collective shows a certain artistic image of the composition or its character with the help of some change in the traditional meaning of a number of gestures. However, this approach helps to more clearly reveal the deep meaning, subtext of the author's idea, becomes its semantics.³² It should be noted that the work-principle and the work-given directly interact in the process of interpretation. This enriches them, provides prospects for the emergence of a wide range of performance options and helps to confirm the identity of this musical work to itself.³³

An innovative approach to performance interpretation also consists in such a principle as the performer's ability to work in different genre areas, which gives his or her creative work uniqueness.³⁴ The preservation of

³¹ Kosinska, Natalia. "Analysis of the Results of Experimental Research of Stage Culture Formation of Future Teachers of Music Art in the Vocal Training Process." In *EUREKA: Social and Humanities*, 1(1), 2020, pp. 56-61. <https://doi.org/10.21303/2504-5571.2020.001141>

³² Meissl, Katharina, Sambre, Paul, Feyaerts, Kurt. "Mapping Musical Dynamics in Space. A Qualitative Analysis of Conductors' Movements in Orchestra Rehearsals." In *Frontiers in Communication*, 7, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2022.986733>

³³ Moskalenko, Viktor. "Musical Thinking." In *Lectures on Musical Interpretation*. Academy of Ukraine named after P.I. Tchaikovsky, Kyiv, 2013, pp. 60-89 <https://knmau.com.ua/wp-content/uploads/V.-Moskalenko-Lektsiyi-z-muzichnoyi-interpretatsiyi-Navchalnij-posibnik.pdf>.

³⁴ Syatetsky, Kornel. "Creative and Performing Activity of Opera Singer Alexander Gromysh in the Cantata and Oratorio Cycle." In *Grail of Science*, 7, 2021, pp. 313-316. <https://doi.org/10.36074/grail-of-science.27.08.2021.062>

artistic traditions in the context of innovative approaches to modern piano and choral performance is of paramount importance. Such an approach allows for the fruitful development and integration of classical traditions into modern performance practice. As evidenced by the discoveries of specialists in the field of musical art, innovative principles of performance interpretation are gaining popularity and distribution in the modern world. They have prospects for more active application in the practice of musicians of various directions. This is emphasized by the authors of this study, as according to its results, music performers discovered for themselves the advantages of turning to innovative resources in the course of rehearsal work. Therefore, the obtained results correspond to the hypotheses of the study, which predict the effectiveness of introducing aspects of dynamization of rehearsal work and concert performances into musical performance practice. At the same time, they indicate the appropriateness of expanding the general arsenal of knowledge and skills, interdisciplinary synthesis, and creating conditions for the realization of the unique abilities of the individual in the field of pianism and choral performance.

5.1. Limitations

It should be noted that this study has limitations. They are determined by the authors' appeal to one of the works of world classical music. This is Fantasy (Fantasia) C minor for Piano, Vocal Soloists, Mixed Chorus, and Orchestra, Op. 80 by Ludwig van Beethoven. It is appropriate to monitor the effectiveness of the use of resources of an innovative approach to performing interpretation in relation to compositions of different styles and genres, composition of musicians, and historical period.

5.2. Recommendations

The authors of the study recommend organizing tracking and analysis of the realization of innovative principles of performing interpretation in the field of orchestral performance in general and individual instruments, in particular, string, wind, and percussion instruments.

6. Conclusions

The results of the study show that the system of an interactive approach to the performing interpretation is a complex multifaceted phenomenon. Its leading blocks – artistic, artistic and practical, as well as infrastructure and

facilities – have their own unique content and significance. It was found that the modern system of the formation of performing interpretation is becoming flexible, universal. The most effective is the mixed system of preparing a concert version of musical works. It combines the principles of several approaches – traditional academic and modern engineering technological. Elements of an innovative approach to the performing interpretation among pianists are: digital pianos and samplers, interactive performances, prepared piano, the use of advanced techniques. Conductors use such a range of innovative means as: electronic amplification and sound processing, visualization of the content of musical works, experiments with space, integration with other types of art, experiments with the capabilities of the human voice.

The mixed system of forming a performing interpretation has become the most progressive, optimal and focused on the individuality of the music performer. It involves the full multifaceted implementation of a number of approaches that contribute to the successful realization of the performer's individual ideas, both in the field of pianism and choral art. These include: interdisciplinary synthesis and the mechanism of creative interaction of the pianist, soloists, and choral collective, knowledge of the achievements of various performing schools of the world, unique effects of advanced audio and video directing that accompany the concert activities of pianists, conductors, and the choir led by them, the use of conditions for improvisation and the implementation of non-standard solutions during a performance on stage. This also manifests itself in the methods of neuroactivation of the complex system of performer's resources.

The main components of the optimization of the processes of making a stage version of musical works were identified: auditory experience and research of musical primary sources; the volume of the practice of ensemble music making; genre and stylistic diversity of the repertoire.

The academic novelty of the study is the identification of innovative approaches to the creation of a concert version of musical works as a complex holistic system. The key components of this system, their content and role in the context of the realization of their concepts by performers were established. The practical significance of the study is that its results can become the foundation for the modernization of the processes of musicians' rehearsal work. This is possible through the use of various software tools and multimedia resources, which will create conditions that motivate performers in the context of searching for original solutions. The prospects of the study are the influence of interactive principles of a performing interpretation on positive indicators of the psychological state of music performers. They also influence the motivation to create their own compositions, arrange folklore and famous melodies from

classical or pop music, as well as the formation and development of a unique performance style.

REFERENCES

- Acevedo, Miguel, Mendoza, Jorge. "Music Software with a Machine Learning-Based Feedback System as an Alternative for Initial Piano Study in Children." In *Inteligencia Artificial Revista Iberoamericana de Inteligencia Artificial*, 27(73), 2024, pp. 92-110. <https://doi.org/10.4114/intartif.vol27iss73pp92-110>
- Batovska, Olena, Byelik-Zolotaryova, Nataliya, Ivanova, Juliia. "Modern Global Trends in the Development of Choral Performance." In *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai Musica*, 68(2), 2023, pp. 235-256. <https://doi.org/10.24193/subbmusica.2023.2.17>
- Byelik-Zolotarova, Nataliia. "Choral Performance Art as a Category of a Modern Choral Studies." In *Kharkiv I. P. Kotlyarevsky National University of Arts. Aspects of Historical Musicology*, XXXI, 2023, pp. 184–206. http://www.irbis-nbuv.gov.ua/cgi-bin/irbis_nbuv/cgiirbis_64.exe?I21DBN=LINK&P21DBN=UJRN&Z21ID=&S21REF=10&S21CNR=20&S21STN=1&S21FMT=ASP_meta&C21COM=S&2_S21P03=FILA=&2_S21STR=asismy_2023_31_10
- Byelik-Zolotarova, Nataliya. "Two Choruses on H. Skovoroda's Poems" by Vitalii Kyreiko: Conductor's Concept." In *Culture of Ukraine*, 78, 2022, pp. 79–86. <https://doi.org/10.31516/2410-5325.078.10>
- Chernyavska, Marianna, Ivanova, Iryna, Timofeyeva, Kira, Syriatska, Tetiana, Mits, Oksana. "Artistic Energy of the Performers in the Mirror of Their Repertoire Preferences." In *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai Musica*, 68(Special Issue 2), 2023, pp. 165-179. <https://doi.org/10.24193/subbmusica.2023.spiss2.10>, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/373066571>
- Concina, Eleonora. "Effective Music Teachers and Effective Music Teaching Today: A Systematic Review." In *Education Sciences*, 13(2), 2023, 107 <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13020107>
- Govorukhina, Nataliya. "The Principles of Interpretation of the Poetic Primary Source in Ballads by F. Schubert, S. Moniuszhko, H. Wolf on Goethe's Text «Kennst du das Land»." In *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai*, 67(Special Issue 1), 2022, pp. 103-113. <https://doi.org/10.24193/subbmusica.2022.spiss1.07>
- Katrych, O. "Stylistic Aspects of Musical Performance Interpretation." In *Scientific Bulletin of the P. I. Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine*, 5, 2000, pp. 59–65.
- Kosinska, Natalia. "Analysis of the Results of Experimental Research of Stage Culture Formation of Future Teachers of Music Art in the Vocal Training Process." In *EUREKA: Social and Humanities*, 1(1), 2020, pp. 56-61. <https://doi.org/10.21303/2504-5571.2020.001141>

- Kotlyarevska, Olena I. *The Variational Potential of Musical Works: The Cultural Aspect of Interpretation*. PhD in Arts. Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine, Kyiv, 1996.
http://www.irbis-nbuv.gov.ua/cgi-bin/irbis_nbuv/cgiirbis_64.exe
- Meissl, Katharina, Sambre, Paul, Feyaerts, Kurt. "Mapping Musical Dynamics in Space. A Qualitative Analysis of Conductors' Movements in Orchestra Rehearsals." In *Frontiers in Communication*, 7, 2022.
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2022.986733>
- Moskalenko Viktor. Lectures on musical interpretation. Study guide. National Music Academy of Ukraine named after P.I. Tchaikovsky, Kyiv, 2013.
<https://knmau.com.ua/wp-content/uploads/V.-Moskalenko-Lektsiyi-z-muzichnoyi-interpretatsiyi-Navchalnij-posibnik.pdf>
- Moskalenko, Viktor. "Musical Thinking." In *Lectures on Musical Interpretation*. Academy of Ukraine named after P.I. Tchaikovsky, Kyiv, 2013, pp. 60-89
<https://knmau.com.ua/wp-content/uploads/V.-Moskalenko-Lektsiyi-z-muzichnoyi-interpretatsiyi-Navchalnij-posibnik.pdf>
- Moskalenko, Viktor. "Musical Work." In *Lectures on Musical Interpretation*. Academy of Ukraine named after P.I. Tchaikovsky, Kyiv, 2013, pp. 107-132.
<https://knmau.com.ua/wp-content/uploads/V.-Moskalenko-Lektsiyi-z-muzichnoyi-interpretatsiyi-Navchalnij-posibnik.pdf>
- Moskalenko, Viktor. "On the Artistic Function of Texture in Music." In *Scientific Bulletin of the P. Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine, Musicology: From the 20th to the 21st Century*, 7, 2000, pp. 56–65.
- Moskalenko, Viktor. "On the Creative Mechanisms of Musical Interpretation." In *Lectures on Musical Interpretation*. Academy of Ukraine named after P.I. Tchaikovsky, Kyiv, 2013, pp. 154-180.
<https://knmau.com.ua/wp-content/uploads/V.-Moskalenko-Lektsiyi-z-muzichnoyi-interpretatsiyi-Navchalnij-posibnik.pdf>
- Moskalenko, Viktor. "On the Specifics of Musical Interpretation." In *Kyiv Musicology: Collection of Articles, National Music Academy of Ukraine named after P. I. Tchaikovsky*, 2, 1999, pp. 4–15.
- Nikolaievska, Yuliia V. "A Communicative Strategy as an Important Issue in Interpretology. In *Problems of Interaction between Art, Pedagogy, and Theory and Practice of Education: Collection of Scientific Articles*, 46, 2017, pp. 94–110.
- Nikolaievska, Yuliia V. "The Authentic Performing Strategy and its Modern Transformations." In *Baroque's Art in Performance Projections, Aspects of Historical Musicology*, 10, 2017, pp. 180–198.
https://aspekty.kh.ua/vypusk10/aspekty_10_13_%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%B0%D0%B5%D0%B2%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B0%D1%8F.pdf
- Shapovalova, Liubov V., Serhaniuk, Liudmyla I., Nikolaievska Yuliia V. Kopeliuk, Oleh O. "Genre in the Music Communication System and the Artist's Mission." In *Linguistics and Culture Review*, 5 (S4), 2021, pp. 218-233.
<https://doi.org/10.21744/lingcure.v5nS4.1575>

- Shapovalova, Liudmyla. "Performative Reflection as an Object of Interpretology." In *Problems of Interaction of Art, Pedagogy, Theory and Practice of Education*, 20, 2007, pp. 218–229.
- Shilin, Gao. "'Winter' by I. Shamo – I. Franko, Performed by the Kharkiv Philharmonic Chamber Choir Conducted by V. Palkin." In *IV All-Ukrainian Scientific and Practical Conference "Conducting and Choral Education: Synthesis of Theory and Practice."* Planeta-Print LLC, Kharkiv, 2020, pp. 14–17.
<https://repo.num.kharkiv.ua/server/api/core/bitstreams/8afa80f8-dfba-4615-9de0-8ca5ead0fd9d/content>
- Shilin, Gao. "The Specifics of Performing a Cappella Choral Opera (based on the example of I. Shamo's "Yatran Games")." In *Choral Conducting Education: Synthesis of Theory and Practice Materials of the VI. International Scientific and Practical Conference*. Kharkiv I.P. Kotlyarevsky National University of Arts, Kharkiv, 2019, pp. 60–62. <https://repo.num.kharkiv.ua/items/36be48f3-ae06-4361-9828-d0fe8280dd28>
- Sumarokova, V. "Composer's Creativity as an Object of a Performing Musicology." In *Kyiv Musicology: Collection of Articles, National Music Academy of Ukraine named after P. I. Tchaikovsky*, 7, 2001, pp. 171–179.
http://www.irbis-nbuv.gov.ua/cgi-bin/irbis_nbuv/cgiirbis_64.exe?I21DBN=LINK&P21DBN=UJRN&Z21ID=&S21REF=10&S21CNR=20&S21STN=1&S21FMT=ASP_meta&C21COM=S&2_S21P03=FILA=&2_S21STR=Nvnmau_2014_110_5
- Svitylo, Svitlana. "Preparation of lectures on musical arts in the class of vocal ensemble." In *National Academy of Managerial Staff of Culture and Arts Herald*, 3, 2021, pp. 180-184.
<https://doi.org/10.32461/2226-3209.3.2021.244480>
<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/357287489>
- Syatetsky, Kornel. "Creative and Performing Activity of Opera Singer Alexander Gromysh in the Cantata and Oratorio Cycle." In *Grail of Science*, 7, 2021, pp. 313-316. <https://doi.org/10.36074/grail-of-science.27.08.2021.062>
- Syriatska, Tetyana O. *Performative interpretation in terms of the psychology of the musician-artist's personality*: PhD in Arts. Kharkiv State University of Arts named after I.P. Kotlyarevsky, Kharkiv, 2008.
- Tkach, Yulia. "Specifics of Conducting Interpretation in Choral Performance." 2012. <https://parafia.org.ua/biblioteka/kultura/spetsyfika-dyryhentskoji-interpretatsiji-u-horovomu-vykonavstvi/>
- Večer, Dmytro. *Performative Analysis of a Musical Work: Theoretical and Practical-Methodological Aspects (based on the example of a pianist-interpreter)*. PhD in Art History. National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine; M.T. Rylsky Institute of Art Studies, Folklore and Ethnology, Kyiv, 2007.

THE ROLE OF HEARING AND LISTENING IN THE PERFORMER OF CLASSICAL MUSIC

ANA SZILAGYI¹ 

SUMMARY. The paper aims to highlight the role of hearing and listening in the performance of classical music, an aspect that the interpreter must be aware of. Being busy with the visual aspect (if the piece is played with score) or stressed playing by heart, besides mastering technical difficulties, the interpreter partially neglects hearing, the essence of music. The interpreter has to deal with the listening by an audience. For this, he / she must know some acoustic and cognitive laws, how the hearing generally works, and how to convey a message through the performance. Moreover, he / she has to hear in advance, in his inner hearing the sounds he / she are going to play. During the play, the interpreter has also to listen to what he / she is playing or singing, and rectify or increase the sound quality, if it is not satisfactory.

Keywords: musical hearing, listening, psychoacoustics, inner hearing, music cognition

1. Introduction

The essence of the music is the hearing and the listening. About the ‘inner hearing’ of composers and conductors, as well as listening to music by an audience, has been written. However, the role of the hearing and listening by the interpreter has not been much considered. Performers are too busy with the visual part of the score and the motor one, to face technical challenges, often forgetting that music is a form of communication between people through the sense of hearing.

This paper aims to make performers and pedagogues aware of hearing the music inside, in their brains, and listening to it while playing, both in order to increase the sound quality and expressiveness.

¹ Senior Lecturer, PhD, Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania. E-mail: ana.szilagyi@unitbv.ro



The performer is a mediator between the composer and the audience: he must imagine the sonority that the composer intended and had projected through the score, to convey it through his / her instrument or voice to the audience.

In order to imagine the sonority, one must train the musical hearing. Musical hearing is "the aptitude of perceiving the sense of sound succession, consciously memorizing and rendering such successions".² As Nedelcuț et Al. wrote, "Developing musical hearing is a goal for professional musicians, as the ability governs the entire pallet of musical theoretical subjects".³ In the music universities, academies and conservatories there are hearing training and other theoretical disciplines, which are studied. Theoretical disciplines as harmony, counterpoint, forms analysis, acoustics contribute to rational hearing, where other centers of the brains are required, besides the hearing one.

In this paper we will consider the classical vocal and instrumental music only, which is notated in the score, covering the baroque until the music of the second half of the 20th century in Western Europe, excluding the musical experiments.

We will speak about the training of musical hearing that includes the technical hearing, i.e. if the pedal is well used at piano, the bow does not make a gash at string instruments etc. To this we recommend to interpreters to pay attention to the acoustic phenomena, as echo, resonance, oscillations of a string or of a low sound at the piano or organ.

We will add the way of music hearing and of processing the music information by the interpreter and by the listener.

Finally, we will stress the inner hearing in the performer, which implies the hearing in advance of what is written in the score and then playing it, fact possible after a lot of experience of guided listening to classical music. Imagining the sound before playing it, will bring much expressiveness and will increase the quality of the sound. Listening to what and how the interpreter has played by him- / herself is important too, to observe if the auditory result corresponds with the image created in the inner hearing. If not, he / she will try again, until becoming content. This is possible in daily practice or in the rehearsals.

² Sava, Iosif; Vartolomei, Luminița, *Dicționar de muzică (Music Dictionary)*, Editura științifică și enciclopedică, București, 1979, p. 17.

³ Nedelcuț, Nelida; Constantin Rîpă; Lucian Ghișă, "Procedee de dezvoltare a auzului muzical prin exerciții mediate de TIC / Methods of Developing Musical Hearing through ICT-mediated Exercises". În *Tehnologii informatice și de comunicație în domeniul muzical*, p. 35.

2. Hearing

2.1 Training of Musical Hearing

The hearing is trained in the universities of music, music academies, conservatories and schools of music. In the most cases singular pitches and lengths are to be recognized. The training is based on the piano, rarely on others instruments and this only in a higher degree at music universities. As Mário Cardoso et al. wrote, dictates, solfeggio, stereotypical melodies that are used as hearing training have a little artistic value.⁴ The authors propose a multidimensional model of auditory education for learning and recognizing musical elements (rhythmic-metrical, melodic-harmonic, expressive, stylistic, instrumental), in order to increase the artistic quality of the performers. For the authors this “contributes to the development of the auditory sensitivity, fundamental in the building of a conscious and comprehensive execution of the musical discourse”.⁵ Thus, the tones are heard in relation to the previous and the next ones, not isolated. Here one speaks about musical structures, as motives or phrases.

Both, hearing of isolated tones as well as of phrases, can be trained, as Altenmüller writes: through auditory training neuronal networks change⁶. In an advanced state, by the professional musicians, besides the auditory sense, other centers of the cortex were activated, leading to associations.⁷

2.2 Training in Technical Hearing

The technical hearing in the performance refers to the capacity to hear those elements, which disturb the musical discourse, as unintentional noises. This kind of hearing is expected from sound engineers. They have to adjust the sound to the hall, to fit the sound dosages, to take the echo and the resonance into account.

About the training in technical-acoustical hearing by the interpreter has not been much written. This can be obviously heard by listeners and by sound engineers, but less by the interpreters. Performers are advised to evaluate their own playing / singing in technical-acoustical terms. They could hear, for example, if the piano pedal is adequately used in correlation with the hall. The string players could pay attention to avoid the scratch on

⁴ Cardoso, Mário; Morgado, Elsa; Silva, Levi, “Os efeitos de uma proposta didática de Educação Auditiva na performance musical / The effects of didactic proposal of Hearing Education in musical performance”. In *Per Musi. Belo Horizont: UFMG*, 2018, p. 2.

⁵ Ibidem, p. 7.

⁶ Altenmüller, Eckart, *Vom Neandertal in die Philharmonie*. Springer-Verlag, Berlin, 2018, p. 167.

⁷ Pitiș, Ana; Ioana Minei, *Tratat de artă pianistică [Treatise of Piano Art]*, 2nd edition (1st edition - Editura Muzicală, București, 1982). Grafoart, București, 2025, p. 85.

the string. For all instruments the loud sounds have to be rounded, not harsh. Dem Urmă wrote that the attack and the release of the sound are perceived by the ear as noises: the sudden is the attack of the performer, the more intense is the noise⁸. By singing, the high tones have to be not constricted. Every instrument / voice has technical means for avoiding unintentional noises. It is essential, firstly, to hear what problem there is, and secondly, to use the special means in order to solve it.

Acoustical elements could be also helpful. Thus, the echo can be heard especially by the organists, who play in churches and can help them to do an appropriate registration, as well as to wait between one section of the piece, which ends, and the new one, which starts. The release of a sound could be heard by all instruments, even if the room or hall has no echo, in order to know when to begin other section or movement.

2.3 Psiho-acoustics and Musical Aspects

Dem. Urmă wrote that the laws of the expressiveness are stronger than the laws of acoustics⁹. The interpreter brings an expressive dimension to the objectivity of the sounds. The impression of the audience is that he / she brings life to the physical sounds. He / she has to communicate with the audience, which has to be emotionally impressed. The interpreter transcends the physical-acoustic side of the instrument: "...what the auditory apparatus «delivers» to the conscience is something more than a simple transformation of what it receives."¹⁰ The performer brings more intensity and color to the intrinsic intensity and timbre of the instrument (parameters which are not exactly notated in the score). This appears as expressiveness, the sound being humanized, having warmth. In this sense, Ana Pitiș and Ioana Minei wrote that the score notation refers only to the objective, acoustic sounds, lifeless. Further the two authors argued that audio and mental operations have to be implicated in the performance act. As a result, the sounds become an own good of the hearing and of the human brain: "In this activity – that apparently the interpreter made only with the hearing – several zones of the cortex participate, which give «something besides» to the sounds, confer them any psychological dimensions."¹¹

⁸ Urmă, Dem., *Acustică și Muzică [Acoustics and Music]*, 2nd edition (1st edition - Editura științifică și enciclopedică, București, 1982). Grafoart, București, 2022, p. 343.

⁹ Ibidem, p. 361.

¹⁰ Ibidem.

¹¹ Pitiș, Ana; Ioana Minei, *Teoria comportamentului pianistic [The Theory of the Pianistic Behavior]*, 2nd edition (1st edition – Editura Sfântul Gheorghe-Vechi, București, 1997). Grafoart, București, 2023, p. 16.

For conveying meaning and coherence to the music the constitutive elements of a piece have to be fragmented or grouped in unities by the interpreter, because “not the sounds, but their organization in significant units (...) impact the listener”.¹²

The notes represent frequencies that have to be different regarding the intensity, according to the content of the natural harmonics of the spectrum, where the frequencies have different intensities. Knowing that a high sound has less harmonics compared with a low one, it is recommended to be played with more intensity, in order to have a balance between the registers.

Like the pitches, the lengths are treated in relation to each other. They depend on the musical context. Thus, they become relatives. One speaks here about their qualitative, not about their quantitative aspect. As Victor Giuleanu wrote: “In music, the *absolute* (objective) *measurement* of the lengths, as in physics – i.e. through unities of solar time (minutes and seconds) – constitutes an exception, because the relative (subjective) *measurement* is characteristic for the works of art, which allows that the act of interpretation is not mechanical, but permanently a creative act – intimately connected with the emotional content of these works, with the sensitivity, taste and personality of the artist.”¹³

Referring to the intensity, the interpreter will make few differences between the sounds, between the previous and the next sound, even if they are notated in the same nuance (for example soft, in *piano*). Pitiș and Minei observed that thus the ear makes more timbre difference than intensity difference between the sounds: the higher a tone is, the more brilliant it appears.¹⁴ In this way timbre is related to frequency and intensity.

Timbre depends on the characteristics of the instrument (number and intensity of harmonics, formants), but in the same time has to be created by the performer through technical means. As the author wrote in an article, “the instrumentalist has not to reduce the play on the physical qualities of the instrument, but to create an expressive and emotional timbre with help of technical means.”¹⁵ Timbre is one of the elements, which varies from interpreter to interpreter through the presence and combinations of the harmonics, even if they play the same piece in the same velocity (tempo) and with the same intensity. It depends on breath pressure, the position of lips in combination with the keys by wind instruments, velocity of bowing, place

¹² Szilágyi, Ana, “La pensée musicale dans l'interprétation et son rôle dans l'exécution expressive”. In *Bulletin of the Transilvania University of Braşov*, Series VIII: Performing Arts, Vol. 16 (65), No. 2, 2023, p. 147.

¹³ Giuleanu, Victor, *Tratat de teoria muzicii*. Editura Muzicală, Bucureşti, 1986, p. 73.

¹⁴ Pitiș, 2025, p. 92.

¹⁵ Szilágyi, Ana, “Timbre in the Musical Performance as a Result of Audio-Mental Operations”. In *Global Journal of Human Social Science*, Volume XXI, Issue XIII, 2001, p. 15.

and the quantity of the bow as well as vibrato by string instruments (pitch oscillation, which can varies in amplitude and velocity, named vibrato), touché by piano through the velocity and the height one attacks the key from, the position of the tongue by brass instruments.

2.4 Music cognition and musical meaning

Hearing is a complex process that includes audio and mental operations. The acoustic signal will be processed and transformed by the brain into information, which will be added to the other information saved in the memory. This information can be musical or extra-musical, the last one depending on the associations people do. It is important for an interpreter to know how the brain processes the music and strive to create something that goes beyond what has been heard.

Referring strictly to music, the performer has to organize the tones after music rules to bring order and coherence in the musical discourse. Thus, he / she will find a musical meaning reading the musical text: he / she will see the phrases and will delimit them, observing the melodic harmonic or rhythmical climax. The climax could be stressed, for example using a ritardando or a specific articulation, besides the dynamics. Regarding the form, it is important to see the similarities or differences of the phrases, changing the timbre in the different ones.

Comparing music with the language, they are phonetic similarities. Both have the same parameters: pitch, timbre, velocity (tempo), and loudness. The musical meaning is more subjective. It depends on music experience, culture and live experiences of the listeners, but also of the performer. Regarding the music meaning from the view of embodied cognitive sciences, "our brain decodes what we are hearing into processable patterns – and we simultaneously and unconsciously conceptualize it in terms of metaphors drawn from previous bodily experiences with the world"¹⁶.

It is generally accepted that music arouses emotions in the listeners. This is supposed to be because of the association of music with the nonverbal language. Nonverbal language communicates emotions. "Neuropsychological research indicates that certain aspects of music (e.g., timbre) share the same neural resources as speech, whereas others (e.g., tonality) draw on resources that are unique to music. Thus, we argue that musicians communicate to listeners via their performances of music by using emotion-specific patterns of acoustic cues derived from vocal expression of emotion"¹⁷.

¹⁶ Merlino, Julio, "A cognitive concept of musical meaning". In *Percepta*, 7(2), 2020, p.76.

¹⁷ Juslin, Patrik, "Communication of Emotions in Vocal Expression and Music Performance: Different Channels, Same Code?". In *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol. 129, No. 5, 2003, p. 774.

The main emotions are joy, anger, fright etc. These are related in vocal expression and music performance to certain parameters or combination of parameters. "For example, speech rate/ tempo and voice intensity / sound level were typically increased in anger and happiness, whereas they were decreased in sadness and tenderness".¹⁸

2.5 Inner Hearing of the notated music

The inner hearing implies the ability of the performer to first hear what he sees in the score and then to play it. Before concretizing the viewed sign in sound, the performer ideally hears the sound. This gives to his / her play expression, that 'plus' which transcends the physical, mechanic instrument, even the piano. It is known that piano cannot make different intensities, to hold a tone for a long time or to influence the intensity and the pitch of a sound in its lengths. Using the inner hearing and hearing in advance the sounds enriched (with intensity and timbre that are not fully notated in the score), instruments would sound animated and even the piano would sound less mechanically. This presupposes more than simple hearing. It is mental work, based on musical knowledge and experience of the performer of classical music. Ana Pitiş and Ioana Minei, piano teachers, put in center of their interpretation theory the 'audio-mental operations'. These operations take place in the brain of the performer during the performance. They are based on pitch and length ratios, which, in their understanding, evolved by the human being, because "of the existence of certain constant number ratios between the acoustic phenomena of the environment".¹⁹ Therefore, the interpreter should consider the relation between musical elements (pitches or durations) and be aware that only the relations between the sounds make sense. For this, the interpreter has to know the mechanisms of classical music, being familiar with music theory, harmony, counterpoint, musical forms, in order, for example, to phrase or to stress the most important note in a phrase through intensity or little tempo oscillations. Doing always few differences in intensity and timing, the interpreted music could tell something or impress the audience, avoiding the mechanicity. In the same time, the sound quality and the expressiveness increase.

Similarly, Outi Immonen et al. wrote about 'inner hearing', which is "the capacity to imagine in one's mind how the piece of music sounds, how you can hear it".²⁰ The difference between these authors and Pitiş and Minei is

¹⁸ Ibidem, p. 789.

¹⁹ Pitiş 2025, p. 64.

²⁰ Immonen, Outi; Ruokonen, Inkeri; Ruismäki, Heikki, "Elements of Mental Training in Music". In *Procedia. Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 45, 2012, p. 591.

that these authors promote the mental training without instrument, a non-physical training, while the two authors promotes the use of the inner hearing during the concrete playing.

In the last decades many authors have spoken about creating a sound image through sound imagination. This means a mental work, similar to “audio-mental operations” of Pitiş and Minei²¹. Other authors named this “auditory imagery”, which is “the use of mentally creating a vivid aural image of the music in question, the ability to clearly imagine the sound of the music being rehearsed. This pertains not only to pitch and rhythm, but infinite details of dynamics and timbre, articulation, vibrato, expression and style etc.”²²

3. Listening

The organization of the musical discourse is common for the performer and for the listener. Both are accustomed to classical music, with certain melodic, harmonic, rhythmic, formal patterns. This can be achieved through listening to a lot of music (chamber, symphonic, vocal). Listening to classical music from childhood means to be familiar with this kind of music.

Krasimira Georgeva Fileva-Ruseva wrote about the development of “musical auditory notions”, pointing out the role of memory. Musical auditory notions are “a musical ability, which allows storing sound impressions from varied musical (melodic and metro-rhythmic) sequences in the memory pool”.²³ During the piano lessons, the author recommends the pedagogues to train the memory of the students. Thus, listening to a new music work has to be added to the information that has been stored in memory of the student. Based on listening or playing a piece, the student would be able to “recreate mentally the textural elements, within the work, with the articulation characteristics (marks, timbre nuances), with which we have perceived them”.²⁴

The interpreter must listen to much music paying attention to musical aspects, more rationally than emotionally. Thus, the interpreter can listen to what he has played and adjust the intensity, the color of the sound, as well as to relate the sounds to each other, considering their frequency, intensity, length, tempo. Pitiş and Minei named this activity of listening during the playing

²¹ The *Treatise of piano art* was first published in 1982 by Editura Muzicală in Bucharest.

²² Steenstrup, Kristian, Haumann, Niels Trusbak; Kleber, Boris; Camarasa, Carles; Vuust Peter; Petersen, Bjørn, “Imagine, Sing, Play-Combined Mental, Vocal and Physical Practice Improves Musical Performance”. In *frontiers in Psychology*, Vol. 12, 2021, p. 2.

²³ Georgieva Fileva-Ruseva, Krasimira, “Increasing the quality and enhancing musical auditory notions through professional training in piano”. In *International Journal of Literature and Arts*, Special Issue: Musical Theory, Psychology and Pedagogy, Vol. 2, No.(5-1), 2014, p. 26.

²⁴ Ibidem.

“control hearing”, “which – related with other centers on the cerebral cortex –, appreciates the level of the performance, the degree of the result corresponding to the sound ideal created by the interpreter; thus, he contributes to an eventual correction on the occasion of a new execution”.²⁵ We should mention that the ‘control hearing’ refers to the external sound result, while the ‘inner hearing’ refers to the created sound image, before playing it.

Ivan Bacchi also proposes an active listening and an autoanalysis of the actions proper to the trumpet, as breath, the control of the emission, of the general tension, compressing of the air, attack etc.²⁶ The author points out the importance of a good listening capacity, analyzing a previous event and programming the next one.²⁷

4. Conclusions

This paper has tried to make performers aware of the role of hearing and listening in the performance of classical music. More ways of hearing were discussed (musical hearing, technical hearing), which has to be trained, in order to achieve the ‘inner hearing’, namely the capacity of hearing in advance what is written in the score and then playing it. This will bring expressivity to the play and will improve the sound quality.

The interpreter has not to limit the standard auditory lessons during his / her study of music, but continues to develop the technical hearing, being sensitive to hearing the unintentional sounds, as noises that disturb the musical discourse. Moreover, the tones must be heard in relation to each other, delimited or grouped (it depends on the texture) to make sense for the interpreter. If this occurs, it will also make sense for the audience.

Besides training, knowledge is required. The performer applies the disciplines he / she has learned during the study, such as music theory (harmony, counterpoint, history of music, forms, acoustics) and music cognition, to understand how the brain processes the musical sound. Thus, the relation between psychoacoustics and music was here discussed, as well as the musical meaning.

Music listening goes hand-to-hand with auditory training and knowledge described above. A conscious listening (recommended with the score) of more musical genres stores musical cues in the memory of the performer and makes him / her able to listen to oneself playing, evaluating its quality.

²⁵ Pitiş, Minei, 2023, p. 22.

²⁶ Bacchi, Ivan, “Workshop OPEN LAB. Percezione, problem solving e musica: per una metodologia della consapevolezza”. In *Atti del I Convegno Nazionale ANDA 2024*, pp. 246, 247.

²⁷ Ibidem, p. 252.

As a result, understanding the musical text would simplify the learning of the piece, including the learning by heart, and would direct the attention to the musical aspect and not to fight with the technical difficulties.

Finally, the conscious hearing and listening in the performer have the role to improve the sonority, to bring expressivity, to define the style of the piece, to give life and color, and to convey a message to the audience.

REFERENCES

- Altenmüller, Eckart, *Vom Neandertal in die Philharmonie*. Springer-Verlag, Berlin, 2018.
- Bacchi, Ivan, "Workshop OPEN LAB. Percezione, problem solving e musica: per una metodologia della consapevolezza". In *Atti del I Convegno Nazionale ANDA*, 2024, pp. 246-259.
- Cardoso, Mário; Morgado, Elsa; Silva, Levi, "Os efeitos de uma proposta didática de Educação Auditiva na performance musical / The effects of didactic proposal of Hearing Education in musical performance". In *Per Musi. Belo Horizont: UFMG*, 2018, pp. 1-18.
- Georgieva Fileva-Ruseva, Krasimira, "Increasing the quality and enhancing musical auditory notions through professional training in piano". In *International Journal of Literature and Arts*, Special Issue: *Musical Theory, Psychology and Pedagogy*, Vol. 2, No. 5-1, 2014, pp. 25-32.
- Giuleanu, Victor, *Tratat de teoria muzicii [A Treatise on Music Theory]*. Editura Muzicală, București, 1986.
- Immonen, Outi; Ruokonen, Inkeri; Ruismäki, Heikki, "Elements of Mental Training in Music". In *Procedia. Social and Behavioral Sciences* 45, 2012, pp. 588-594.
- Juslin, Patrik, "Communication of Emotions in Vocal Expression and Music Performance: Different Channels, Same Code?". In *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol. 129, No. 5, 2003, pp. 770-814.
- Merlino, Julio, "A cognitive concept of musical meaning". In *Percepta*, 7(2), 2020, pp. 67-77.
- Nedelcuț, Nelida; Constantin Rîpă; Lucian Ghișă, "Procedee de dezvoltare a auzului muzical prin exerciții mediate de TIC/Methods of Developing Musical Hearing through ICT-mediated Exercises". In *Tehnologii informatice și de comunicație în domeniul muzical*, pp. 33-40.
- Pitiș, Ana; Ioana Minei, *Teoria comportamentului pianistic [The Theory of the Pianistic Behavior]*, 2nd edition (1st edition – Editura Sfântul Gheorghe-Vechi, București, 1997). Grafoart, București, 2023.
- Pitiș, Ana; Ioana Minei, *Tratat de artă pianistică [Treatise of Piano Art]*, 2nd edition (1st edition - Editura Muzicală, București, 1982). Grafoart, București, 2025.
- Sava, Iosif; Vartolomei, Luminița, *Dicționar de muzică (Music Dictionary)*, Editura științifică și enciclopedică, București, 1979.

- Steenstrup, Kristian; Haumann, Niels Trusbak; Kleber, Boris; Camarasa, Carles; Vuust Peter; Petersen, Bjørn, "Imagine, Sing, Play- Combined Mental, Vocal and Physical Practice Improves Musical Performance". In *frontiers in Psychology*, Vol. 12, 2021, pp.1-17.
- Szilagyi, Ana, "La pensée musicale dans l'interprétation et son rôle dans l'exécution expressive". In *Bulletin of the Transilvania University of Braşov*, Series VIII: Performing Arts, Vol. 16 (65), No. 2, 2023, pp. 135-148.
- Szilagyi, Ana, "Timbre in the Musical Performance as a Result of Audio-Mental Operations". In *Global Journal of Human Social Science*, Volume XXI, Issue XIII, 2001, pp. 15-18.
- Urmă, Dem, *Acustică şi Muzică [Acoustics and Music]*, 2nd edition (1st edition - Editura ştiinţifică şi enciclopedică, Bucureşti, 1982). Grafoart, Bucureşti, 2022.

PERFORMANCE PROJECTS OF ARTS STUDENTS AS A FACTOR IN SHAPING NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS

GANNA KONDRATENKO¹, YANA KYRYLENKO²,
OLENA IVANENKO³, VIRA SYNIEOK⁴,
KOSTIANTYN KALIEVSKYI⁵, INNA TKACHENKO⁶

SUMMARY. The study of the mechanisms underlying the development of national consciousness is of great importance for cultural promotion, as it fosters personal identification with the nation and its traditions. This study aimed to assess the benefits of artistic and choreographic projects for the development of national consciousness among students pursuing higher education in the arts. The study utilised correlation analysis, the Student's t-test, a Likert scale, and expert assessment of students' perceptions of vocal and choreographic projects. The authors identified factors that influence the formation of national consciousness in vocal projects (repertoire, intonation, arrangement, symbolic elements, interpretation). In choreographic projects, these factors include movement, rhythm, imagery, symbolism and synchronisation. It was found that the trends in the perception of elements of national consciousness

¹ PhD in Pedagogical Sciences, Associate Professor, Dean of the Faculty of Musical Arts and Choreography, Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University, Kyiv, Ukraine;
E-mail: hanna.kondratenko19@kubg.edu.ua

² PhD in Arts, Associate Professor of the Department of Academic and Pop Vocal, Deputy Dean for Scientific Work and International Activities, Faculty of Musical Art and Choreography, Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University, Kyiv, Ukraine;
E-mail: kyrylenko.yana0707@gmail.com

³ PhD in Pedagogical Sciences, Associate Professor of the Department of Musicology and Music Education, Faculty of Musical Art and Choreography, Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University, Kyiv, Ukraine; E-mail: olenaK.educ@gmail.com

⁴ Honored Artist of Ukraine, Head of the Choreography Department, Faculty of Musical Art and Choreography, Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University, Kyiv, Ukraine;
E-mail: vira.synieok08@kubg.edu.ua

⁵ Senior Lecturer of the Choreography Department, Faculty of Musical Art and Choreography, Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University, Kyiv, Ukraine;
E-mail: kostiantyn.kalievskiy30@kubg.edu.ua

⁶ Lecturer of the Department of Musicology and Music Education, Deputy Dean on Academic Affairs, Faculty of Musical Art and Choreography, Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University, Kyiv, Ukraine; E-mail: inna.tkachenko18@kubg.edu.ua



in vocal projects include the melodic basis of the composition, an emphasis on ornamentation, and the choice of performance interpretation. For the choreographic projects, these indicators are the emotionality of the staging, selected movements, and the stage image. The students' performances of the traditional composition "Oi u luzi chervona kalyna" (4.3 points) and the contemporary piece "Shum" (4.2 points) demonstrated the advantages of the folk compositions in conveying elements of national consciousness. In choreographic projects, the highest level was demonstrated in the creation of the modern jazz dance improvisation with ethnic elements "Rodynni oberih" (4.5 points), due to the high level of choreographic plasticity. Understanding the criteria for expressing national consciousness in artistic projects contributes to the popularisation of art and intercultural development.

Keywords: artistic environment; project-based activities; musical arts; choreographic arts; performance; national consciousness; national identity

1. Introduction

The development of national consciousness depends on understanding its value and identity through conscious perception. A focus on performance projects allows for the perception of the national-cultural aspect, which influences the formation of responsibility, cultural development and self-awareness.⁷ The implementation of artistic projects influences the understanding of cultural values and activates creative identity, which determines the relevance of the research.

Artistic projects embody educational and artistic practices that foster the expression of creative ideas. Artistic projects are realised through the development of professional, creative and communicative competences, built upon theoretical knowledge.⁸ Performing arts projects may encompass musical, theatrical, choreographic and visual arts disciplines. Students' artistic activity is reflected in the refinement of technical skills and artistic practices, creative development, the formation of national and cultural consciousness, and the analysis thereof.⁹

⁷ Giese, Julia, Keightley, Emily. "Dancing through Time: A Methodological Exploration of Embodied Memories." In *Memory Studies*, 17(2), 2024, pp. 444-457.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1750698022112661>

⁸ Polishchuk, Liudmyla, Pylypiv, Viktoriia, Korolenko, Ievgeniia, Kunderevych, Olena, Kuzmenko, Taras, Hotsalyuk, Alla. "The State of Ukrainian Arts and Culture: Current Difficulties." In *International Journal on Culture, History, and Religion*, 7, 2025, pp. 1-18.
<https://doi.org/10.63931/ijchr.v7iSI1.106>

⁹ Radomska, Violetta, Ponkalo, Solomiia, Makar, Mariia. "Design of a Ukrainian Patriotic Stamp to Identify the State in the Context of Globalisation." In *Art and Design*, 2(8), 2025, pp. 54-64. <https://doi.org/10.30857/2617-0272.2025.2.5>

The realisation of students' creative ideas also plays a socio-cultural role, primarily through the study of the cultural and historical aspects of artistic project creation.¹⁰ The development of national consciousness occurs through an appreciation of the cultural value of projects.¹¹ It influences the formation of critical thinking and individual ethical priorities. When creating artistic projects, the use of national motifs helps to disseminate cultural heritage whilst preserving its distinctiveness. Therefore, national consciousness reflects a coherent system of ideas and views that influence personal self-identification and the upholding of national values.¹²

The current aim of arts education is to develop future professionals who possess well-developed axiological and value-based skills. Art helps students to model historical experience, which influences the development of cognitive and emotional aspects. This fosters reflective thinking, which influences the reinterpretation of cultural elements for a conscious perception of cultural narratives.¹³ Undertaking art projects on national themes contributes to the structuring of meaning, an understanding of symbolic elements, and the need for their preservation within the cultural landscape.

However, the education system is geared towards meeting contemporary standards, which does not foster an understanding of national characteristics. The focus on international standards leads to the standardisation of educational provision and greater flexibility for integration into the global educational landscape.¹⁴ This affects the formal perception of national elements and their value. The development of national consciousness

¹⁰ Guo, Andi, Zhang, Xiao, Hagins, Marshall, Liederbach, Marijeanne, Hodges, Paul. W. "Professional Dancers' Beliefs and Conceptualisations of Their Posture and Movement: A Qualitative Research Study." In *PLoS One*, 21(2), 2026, e0339568. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0339568>

¹¹ Maidugu, Umar A., Isah, Adamu T. "Islamic Education and its Value: A Vital Means for the Formation National Character." In *Bulletin of Islamic Research*, 2(4), 2024, pp. 725-744. <https://yayasanpendidikantafsirhadis.com/index.php/bir/article/view/165>

¹² Kalpokas, Ignas. "Work of Art in the Age of Its AI Reproduction." In *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 51(8), 2025, pp. 1268-1286. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01914537231184490>

¹³ Grájeda, Alberto, Córdova, Pamela, Córdova, Juan P., Laguna-Tapia, Andres, Burgos, Johnny, Rodríguez, Luis, Arandia, Martin, Sanjinés, Alberto. "Embracing Artificial Intelligence in the Arts Classroom: Understanding Student Perceptions and Emotional Reactions to AI Tools." In *Cogent Education*, 11(1), 2024, 2378271. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2024.2378271>; Samaniego, Mariela, Usca, Nancy, Salguero, Jose, Quevedo, William. "Creative Thinking in Art and Design Education: A Systematic Review." In *Education Sciences*, 14(2), 2024, 192. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci14020192>

¹⁴ Siliutina, Iryna, Tytar, Olena, Barbash, Marina, Petrenko, Nataliia, Yepyk, Larysa. "Cultural Preservation and Digital Heritage: Challenges and Opportunities." *Amazonia Investiga*, 13(75), 2024, pp. 262-273. <https://doi.org/10.34069/AI/2024.75.03.22>

must take place through an in-depth study of cultural and historical processes, which cannot be confined to the educational framework.¹⁵

A theoretical review of academic research has revealed that studies of scientific consciousness have predominantly focused on philosophical and pedagogical research, yet remain underexplored within the context of arts education. The studies conducted have focused more on analysing the general characteristics of arts education, which does not place sufficient emphasis on national identity or on the potential to disseminate national traditions through this aspect. Among the gaps, one can also highlight the lack of interdisciplinary research that combines vocal and choreographic projects to examine the formation of national identity in a single study. Taking into account a systematic understanding of cultural and historical characteristics when creating artistic projects will help broaden our understanding of national identity.

The novelty of this study lies in identifying the criteria that influence the expression of national identity through the artistic sphere (vocal ensemble projects). This will help unlock students' potential in disseminating national traditions across the cultural landscape.

Research hypothesis: an understanding of the criteria for the formation of national consciousness in vocal and choreographic projects influences students' conscious desire to promote national art, whilst maintaining respect for the cultural and historical traditions of the people.

This study aims to assess the benefits of artistic and choreographic projects for the development of national identity among students pursuing higher education in the arts.

The tasks set were as follows:

- to define the concept of national consciousness among students of higher arts education in vocal projects;
- to evaluate performance practices in choreography as a means of expressing national memory;
- to conduct a comparative analysis of elements of national identity in vocal and dance projects;
- to determine the role of students' self-expression in the development of national identity, taking into account how the musical compositions "Oy u luzi chervona kalyna" and "Shum" are performed. Also, to analyse dance projects, in particular "Kozachok" and the contemporary modern jazz dance with ethnic elements "Rodynniy oberih".

¹⁵ Korostelina, Karina V., Zakharchenko, Artem, Rohalov, Olexii, Molotsiian, Valeriia, Fursenko, Maryna, Zakharchenko, Olena, Bakhtiarova, Ksenia. "Dynamics of National Identity Narratives in Ukraine." In *National Identities*, 28(1), 2026, pp. 1-25. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14608944.2025.2473699>

2. The Concept of National Consciousness in Vocal Projects

National consciousness can be expressed in the musical sphere through the interpretation of melodies, lyrics and the aesthetic elements of vocal performance. The repertoire, which incorporates folk elements, plays a significant role in the conceptual representation of aspects of national consciousness. The nature of the performance allows the intended image of a musical work to be conveyed through dynamics, musical accents and performance pacing. An example of reflecting ethnic consciousness in music is the Ukrainian opera, which emphasises cultural and historical semantic nuances.¹⁶

The performance of opera music involves the expression of ethnic emotions, historical memories and cultural identity through arrangement and the reinterpretation of musical singing. National traditions are manifested through the use of authentic music combined with contemporary compositional strategies.¹⁷ The authors agree with this view; however, the criteria for operatic performance that facilitate the reflection of national elements remain insufficiently studied. In contrast to the previous study, Astalosh shows that musical nationalism is manifested through compositional creativity, drawing on elements of self-expression and a patriotic mindset.¹⁸ The performer should creatively reinterpret the text to account for each country's distinctive characteristics, mindset, and traditions.

The quality of a vocal performance depends on the depth of understanding of national issues and on the consideration of the piece's philosophical and emotional elements.¹⁹ Intercultural musical interaction is geared towards a meaningful understanding of cultural identity and the exploration of music's social significance. The formation of national identity occurs through a philosophical perception of music that takes into account its emotional and ethical components in reflective performance.²⁰ However,

¹⁶ Shchitova, Svetlana, Martynyuk, Valentyna B. "Modern Ukrainian Opera: Varieties of Genres." In *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai. Musica*, 68(1), 2023, pp. 57-67. <https://www.cceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=1147799>

¹⁷ idem

¹⁸ Astalosh, Gabriella. "The Concept of Musical Nationalism in Compositional Creativity: A Theoretical Aspect." In *Culture and Arts in the Modern World*, 24, 2023, pp. 79-89. <https://doi.org/10.31866/2410-1915.24.2023.287663>

¹⁹ Astalosh, Gabriella. "The Concept of Musical Nationalism in Compositional Creativity: A Theoretical Aspect." In *Culture and Arts in the Modern World*, 24, 2023, pp. 79-89. <https://doi.org/10.31866/2410-1915.24.2023.287663>

²⁰ Fraser, T. "Cultivation of Global Consciousness through Intercultural Music Engagement." In *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, 28(3), 2025, e70022. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajsp.70022>

Fraser's study does not specify how to foster a philosophical appreciation of music, nor does it identify the factors that influence its development.²¹ Muminov investigated the reflection of national consciousness in classical music as a complex combination of melodic modes, poetic cycles, and instrumental and vocal components.²² The ethnographic orientation of music contributes to a harmonious and profound performance, reflecting an aesthetic and national worldview.²³ However, the study did not examine the specific ways in which students express national consciousness through established performance methods.

Based on an analysis of the relevant literature, factors influencing the development of national consciousness in vocal projects were identified. The significance of these criteria was assessed using the correlation method (Formula 1):

$$K_i = \frac{r_i}{\sum_j^n r_i}, \quad (1)$$

r_i – a correlation coefficient that indicates the relationship between a specific indicator and the composite score.

The use of the correlation method enabled the determination of each indicator's contribution to the overall assessment (Table 1).

Table 1

Indicators of national consciousness	r_i	$\sum_j^n r_i$	K_i
Repertoire choices	0,95	4,52	0,21
Intonational patterns	0,88	4,52	0,19
Musical arrangements	0,85	4,52	0,18
Symbolic elements	0,91	4,52	0,20
Interpretative choices	0,93	4,52	0,21

Indicators of the development of musical identity within vocal projects

Source: developed by the authors

²¹ Ibid

²² Muminov, Muxsim. "Transmission of Shashmaqom Repertoire in Contemporary Master-Student Relationships." In *European Review of Contemporary Arts and Humanities*, 1(5), 2025, pp. 60-64. <https://claritaslumen.org/index.php/ercah/article/view/36>

²³ Ibid

Repertoire and interpretative choices have virtually the same influence on the development of national consciousness. Generally speaking, musical compositions reflect the specific characteristics of their composition, spiritual and historical values, and the social influence of the people, which are manifested in their melodiousness, tonal structure, and the timbre of the performance. Traditional, national and classical compositions most often reflect the cultural significance of a particular period, which influences the development of professional self-identification.

The quality of a performance of a particular composition depends on how it is interpreted; therefore, these factors are interrelated. Since the style of performance influences the portrayal of the composition's content and its meaning, it also affects the deeper perception of national elements. The chosen tempo and phrasing can either emphasise the national significance of a musical work or diminish it. This process influences the articulation of the rhythmic beat, the fluidity of the performance, the depth of the singing, and the drama, all of which are linked to national ideas. Through interpretation, it is possible to emphasise certain national themes by employing melodic phrases, characteristic modal structures and elements of phrasing.

Interpretative choices highlight national nuances through the rhythm of performance and emotional expression. For example, performing Mykola Lysenko's compositions with an academic approach diminishes the piece's national significance; paying attention to intonation, on the other hand, serves to express national ideology. Choosing interpretative approaches enables a deeper understanding of the composition, taking into account the search for ways to convey musical intonation, cultural significance and symbolism. However, understanding how national consciousness is expressed in Mykola Lysenko's compositions requires identifying the modes of intonation and the key characteristics that influence their comprehension.

The presence of symbolic elements influences the development of national consciousness not only through auditory reproduction but also through the cultural models they represent. Symbolism can manifest itself through intonational patterns, timbral allusions, and specific musical genres, reflecting historical significance and national character. Symbolism is also evident in quotations, which contribute to national identification on a subconscious level. Figurative symbolism in music manifests through intonation and the combination of verbal and nonverbal expression, contributing to the contemporary perception of national forms.

Intonation patterns influence the way music is perceived, as well as its emotional and cultural orientation. In shaping national consciousness, intonation patterns can influence duration, the rendering of undulating phrases, and the symbiosis of drama and lyricism. Intonation patterns

contribute to the development of national consciousness, as they reflect the emotional and mental characteristics of each country. This is manifested through melodic turns, rhythm and modal structures, which shape the emotional and evocative perception of a particular composition. Intonation conveys musical moods that can be identified with national culture (heroism, drama, lyricism, etc.). The emphasis on intonational patterns allows the performer to perceive the stylistic characteristics of songs and link them to cultural features.

When performing, one may utilise modal-harmonic structures, interval patterns, melodic elements, recitatives and so on. For example, in the compositions of Borys Lyatoshynsky, intonation is conveyed through the transformation of folk elements. Intonation helps to form an emotional connection with a particular culture. However, for students to express elements of national consciousness, it is necessary to analyse folk elements and how they are transformed, to create a new sound and promote national culture.

The process of arranging music also influences the development of musical identity, as it allows melodies of various styles to be adapted to reflect national traditions. The arrangement highlights the music's distinctive timbre and authentic qualities. Musical and instrumental combinations influence the development of critical thinking and the ability to perceive the national content of music. These criteria influence the reflection of cultural colour in music, taking into account the nature of artistic forms, dramaturgy and authenticity, and are reflected in national identity.

3. Performance Practices in Choreography for Manifesting National Memory

Choreography reflects not only the art of movement but also embodies cultural and national elements. The expression of national identity in choreographic projects is also achieved through a thoughtful combination of rhythmic and symbolic elements that convey inherent dramatic imagery. Chandnasaro's study notes that the reflection of cultural traditions in contemporary dance projects is possible through their in-depth analysis.²⁴ Emphasis must be placed on artistic ingenuity and the synergy of choreographic elements to ensure dynamic changes. However, attention must be paid to indicators of national identity that should be taken into account in the analysis.

²⁴ Chandnasaro, Dharakorn. "Revolutionizing Dance: Advanced Choreographic Trends of the 21st Century." In *Journal of Urban Culture Research*, 30, 2025, pp. 51-61. <https://doi.org/10.14456/jucr.2025.4>

Usdan's study noted that choreographic elements in ballet contribute to the development of national consciousness by reflecting national motifs.²⁵ Choreographic technique reflects the principles of social collectivism and national identity through its structural elements. This is particularly prevalent in Cuban ballet technique. To expand on this research, attention should be paid to the potential application of Cuban ballet technique in contemporary choreography to promote national culture. Bazela et al. examine aspects of dance improvisation.²⁶ The reflection of national elements in choreography is linked to improvisation and to the combination of ballet choreography with innovations in dance.

The transmission of a characteristic dance strategy occurs through the combination of various artistic genres (e.g., visual arts, theatre), which influences the realisation of social transformations.²⁷ However, the criteria that specifically facilitate improvisation and the preservation of national traditions remain insufficiently studied. Wang and Phanlukthao note that cultural traditions can be passed on through the performance of circle dances, which embody the depth of national culture.²⁸ The dance reflects a fusion of Tibetan and Qiang traditions, conveying the social, historical, and aesthetic functions of a distinct people and thereby broadening national consciousness.²⁹ However, the potential for applying circle dancing in contemporary choreographic interpretation remains unexplored.

Based on a synthesis of the analysed works, characteristic indicators of the influence on national consciousness were identified, which are expressed through choreographic projects. During the analysis, attention was paid to the characteristics of movement that ensure the reproduction of cultural and national meanings. The significance of the established indicators was also demonstrated using the correlation method in accordance with Formula 1 (Table 2).

²⁵ Usdan, Dora. *Choreographing National Identity: The Role of Movement and Biopower in Countries of Real Socialism* (Doctoral dissertation). University of Michigan, 2024. <https://backend.production.deepblue-documents.lib.umich.edu/server/api/core/bitstreams/9bb75759-dc9f-43e7-b3ec-7bc1f6a0efb2/content>

²⁶ Bazela, Dmytro, Pavliuk, Tetiana, Babych, Olha, Batiieva, Nataliya, Kyzim, Petro. "Contemporary Global Trends in the Development of Choreographic Art at the Beginning of the 21st Century." In *SPORT TK-Revista EuroAmericana de Ciencias del Deporte*, 11, 2022, 60. <https://digitum.um.es/server/api/core/bitstreams/bd8b4cc5-d32b-4caf-a39f-080d0470b1f5/content>

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ Wang, Mingquan, Phanlukthao, Peera. "Developing Cultural Identity and Practice in the Context of Teaching Chinese Indigenous Dance." In *International Online Journal of Education & Teaching*, 11(1), 2024, pp. 1-9. <https://iojet.org/index.php/IOJET/article/view/2046>

²⁹ Ibid

Table 2

Indicator of national consciousness	r_i	$\sum_j^n r_i$	K_i
Kinetic criterion	0,96	4,61	0,21
Rhythmic criterion	0,93	4,61	0,20
Figurative criterion	0,95	4,61	0,21
Symbolic criterion	0,87	4,61	0,19
Synchronous criterion	0,90	4,61	0,20

**Key indicators of the impact on national consciousness
within the context of choreographic projects**

Source: developed by the authors

The kinetic criterion is the most significant indicator of the formation of national consciousness. This is linked to the selection of characteristic movements, turns, jumps and body language that make up the dance vocabulary. An individual approach to selecting movements influences the expression of national ideas and the possibility of combining contemporary and authentic elements in dance. The influence of the figurative criterion on the formation of national identity is possible through dancers' ability to portray pre-determined narratives through dance. The process involves recreating stage characters through dance, reflecting historical figures. The rhythmic aspect is also linked to the dancers' individual skills, which influence the synchronisation of their movements. The coordination of dance movements with the music helps to emphasise national themes for the audience's appreciation.

The synchronous criterion is of great importance for the spatial representation of dance movements. Group choreography influences the ability to create choreographic patterns that reflect symbolic elements of national consciousness. The symbolic criterion takes into account the combination of movements, costumes and chosen colours, which is linked to the formation of associations and the use of national symbolism. These indicators influence the depth of choreographic projects, ensuring a meaningful perception of elements of national identity.

4. A Comparative Analysis of Elements of National Consciousness in Vocal and Choreographic Artistic Projects

The distinctive features identified that influence the development of national consciousness in vocal and choreographic projects reflect the individual characteristics of different cultures. In vocal projects, these include repertoire and interpretative choices, symbolic elements, intonation patterns and musical arrangements; in choreographic projects, they include movement, imagery, rhythm, synchronisation and symbolic criteria. The perception of national identity is shaped by historical and cultural heritage, the representation of symbols, and ideological concepts. A comparative analysis of various types of artistic projects was carried out by identifying generalised criteria. This analysis enabled a more detailed examination of the cognitive significance of music and dance in the reproduction of identity within the national and cultural sphere. The identified elements reflect strategies for fostering national consciousness in artistic projects. The findings were obtained through an analysis of 300 vocal and choreographic projects, which helped objectively identify common and distinctive features.

When selecting compositions, 65% were traditional vocal and dance projects, and 35% were improvised contemporary works incorporating traditional elements. The analysis took into account the characteristics of intonation, the modal structures used, and the methods of performance interpretation. The selection of compositions was based on diversity, thereby avoiding an emphasis on any single performance style, whilst seeking out compositions characterised by a high level of cultural expression associated with specific national traditions. Content analysis helped identify the components of the formation of national consciousness among students through vocal and choreographic projects, accounting for the expression of national consciousness, specific images, and stylistic elements that reflect history and culture. This is significant for the reflection of national consciousness in projects that combine vocal and choreographic elements (Table 3).

Table 3

Areas of comparison	Vocal projects	Choreographic projects
Elements of identity	Musical text, intonation	Movement elements, plasticity
Modes of transmission	Verbal	Non-verbal
Forms of expression	Arrangements, artistic approach	Stage adaptation, original approach
Emotional expression	Sound, word	Choreographic image, physical expression
Trends in the perception of elements of national consciousness	The melodic basis of the composition The choice of performance interpretation An emphasis on ornamentation	The emotional impact of the choreographic production Bringing national heritage to life through movement Visual perception through the stage image

**Detailed components of the perception of national ideas
through vocal and choreographic projects**

Source: developed by the authors

The common features reflected in vocal and choreographic projects help to highlight cultural heritage, whilst allowing for its adaptation in contemporary projects. Taking into account elements of identity, modes of transmission, forms of manifestation and emotional expression influences the development of national consciousness, which is manifested through creative elements.

The chosen strategies enable the historical aspects of musical imagery to be brought to the fore, manifesting in music through intonation and performance techniques; in choreography, through movement vocabulary and plasticity. The greatest differences lie in how artistic information is perceived, which influences the ability to convey imagery in musical works through performance techniques that emphasise specific intonations. Dance imagery is created through visualisation as a result of the development of bodily memory.

Trends in the perception of elements of national consciousness in vocal and choreographic projects have different effects. National identity in music is shaped by cognitive perception and the meanings embedded in musical works. In dance, national elements are perceived through emotions and the costumes used in choreographic productions. The cognitive perception of national elements in a musical work occurs through an understanding of

the ideas embedded in folk compositions or through the stylisation of national motifs in contemporary musical works. This allows one to perceive historical experience through the symbolism and language of a particular culture. The emotional conveyance of national ideas in dance is expressed through physical expression, which is perceived more meaningfully through group interaction and additional visualisation via costumes. In contemporary vocal projects, the recreation of national ideas is possible through ethno-rock and fusion; in dance, through modern dance and stage forms of national dances, which provide a distinct artistic expression for visual and auditory perception.

5. The Role of Students' Self-Expression in the Development of National Identity (Using Specific Works as Examples)

Students can develop an understanding of the strategies involved in formulating a national strategy through thoughtful engagement with the subject, enabling them to create individual projects. The expression of national ideas through students' self-expression is linked to their established worldview, emotional experience and reinterpretation of existing works. Self-expression influences perceptions of national identity through reflection on project-based activities. The performance of music and dance on stage depends not only on technical skill but also on innate temperament and on how cultural values are conveyed. The quality of self-expression in artistic projects influences the level of their interpretation through the perception of cultural stance. The reproduction of nationally oriented art is made possible through self-expression, which ensures the preservation of cultural values, traditions, the people's spirituality, and linguistic elements.

The study by Nalyvaiko and Nalyvaiko notes that cultural awareness in artistic projects arises through self-expression.³⁰ Students' individual approach influences their ability to express their own thoughts and ideas, which in turn influences creativity and a deeper understanding of artistic and national aspects.³¹ Popandopulo et al. note that students' self-expression in art projects influences the development of aesthetic sensibility and ensures the transmission of spiritual and moral values.³² Creative thinking influences an unconventional approach to interpreting vocal and choreographic

³⁰ Nalyvaiko, Nataliia, Nalyvaiko, Oleksii. "Development of Students Cultural Awareness and Self-Expression in Chinese Institutions of Higher Education." In *Scientific Notes of the Pedagogical Department*, 52, 2023, pp. 96-101. <https://doi.org/10.26565/2074-8167-2023-52-11>

³¹ Ibid

³² Popandopulo, Mikhail, Aubakirova, Saltanat, Iskakova, Zauresh, Zhumasheva, Laura, Kozhamzharova, Maira. "Artistic Culture as a Foundation for the Spiritual and Cognitive Development of Students." In *Acta Psychologica*, 257, 2025, 105098. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2025.105098>

projects, which in turn contributes to the harmonious integration of traditional and contemporary artistic strategies.³³ The studies reflect the importance of students' self-expression.

Still, there is a lack of emphasis on the variety of artistic projects and specific indicators of how national traditions are expressed. The expression of individuality in artistic projects facilitates the articulation of one's own feelings, views and emotions whilst fostering an understanding of the underlying artistic concepts. Through students' individuality, an understanding of national priorities is formed, taking into account the values of a particular society.³⁴ However, it is also necessary to determine whether the education system influences the development of students' national identity. Raza's study notes that the use of an interdisciplinary approach in the creation of artistic projects influences cognitive, emotional and social development.³⁵ A critical analysis of musical compositions facilitates exploration of national contexts and offers opportunities to reflect on them creatively.³⁶ However, the lack of examples of specific artistic projects makes it impossible to determine how students realise means of self-expression and manifest national identity.

The students were asked to carry out two artistic projects each, which involved performing traditional songs (and dances) as well as contemporary pieces arranged in a traditional style to reflect national traditions. The involvement of 50 students studying arts subjects (25 students – vocal performance, 25 students – choreography) made it possible to assess the level of national consciousness among the students. The evaluation criteria were pre-defined aspects for comparing vocal and choreographic projects (elements of identity, modes of expression, forms of manifestation, emotional expression).

The quality of the representation of national identity for each criterion was assessed using a Likert scale, which involved assigning scores ranging from the lowest (1 point) to the highest (5 points). The vocal projects were realised through the performance of the folk song "Oi u luzi chervona kalyna" and the contemporary song "Shum" (by the band Go_A) (Figure 1). Choreographic projects – the folk dance "Kozachok" and the modern jazz

³³ Ibid

³⁴ Samiya, Rahem. "Education through the Cultural Dimension: Integration of Knowledge with Traditions and Arts." In *Studies in Education Sciences*, 6(3), 2025, pp. e18432-e18432. <https://doi.org/10.54019/sesv6n3-009>

³⁵ Raza, Ali. "Art and Education: Fostering Creativity and Critical Thinking in Humanity." In *Journal of Religion and Society*, 1(1), 2023, pp. 13-25. <https://www.islamicreligious.com/index.php/Journal/article/view/19>

³⁶ Ibid

dance with ethnic elements “Rodynni oberih” (Figure 2). The projects were assessed by 10 lecturers, allowing an evaluation of students’ perceptions of national consciousness and its reflection in the vocal and choreographic projects. The results were compared using Student’s t-test (Table 4).³⁷

Table 4

Areas of comparison	Vocal projects			Choreography projects		
	«Oi u luzi chervona kalyna»	«Shum»	*Student’s t-test (critical value $t = 3.182$)	«Kozachok»	Contemporary modern jazz dance with ethnic elements «Rodynni oberih»	*Student’s t-test (critical value $t = 3.182$)
Elements of identity	4,5	4,4	0,05	4,3	4,7	0,06
Modes of transmission	4,3	4,1	0,07	4,3	4,2	0,03
Forms of expression	4,1	4,2	0,05	4,2	4,7	0,07
Emotional expression	4,4	3,9	0,09	4,1	4,5	0,05
Average value	4,3	4,2	0,07	4,2	4,5	0,05

The quality of conveying elements of national consciousness in musical works and dances

The exceeding of the critical value of the Student’s criterion ($t = 3.182$) indicates the absence of statistical significance between the methods of national expression in vocal and choreographic projects.

Source: developed by the authors

The expression of national identity at a higher level in the vocal projects was achieved through the performance of the traditional composition “Oy u luzi chervona kalyna” (4.5 points). During the performance, symbolic elements were preserved, which helped to convey the ideas of freedom and national revival. The high standard achieved was aided by the emotional intensity of the performance, which ensured the creation of dynamic nuances

³⁷ Chan, Suk H. G., Lee, Wing H. H., Tang, Binglin M., Chen, Ziyi. “Legacy of Culture Heritage Building Revitalization: Place Attachment and Culture Identity.” In *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, 2024, 1314223. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1314223>

and the regulation of tempo. Ukrainian vocabulary was also retained, contributing to a holistic perception of the musical imagery. The performance of the composition “Shum” was characterised by a high degree of improvisation, achieved through changes in rhythm and the inclusion of distinctive exclamations. During the vocal performance of a contemporary composition incorporating traditional elements, less emphasis was placed on emotional expression, which affected the depth of the improvisation.

Figure 1



PERFORMANCE PROJECTS OF ARTS STUDENTS AS A FACTOR IN SHAPING NATIONAL
CONSCIOUSNESS



Musical notation for the following compositions: a) the song “Oy u luzi chervona kalyna”; b) the composition “Shum”.

Source: Musescore³⁸

National identity was most clearly expressed in the choreographic projects through the performance of the modern jazz dance “Rodynniy oberih”, which incorporated ethnic elements (4.5 points). The results obtained were linked to adherence to expressive choreography, which helped convey themes of family, generational historical memory, and folk traditions. Contemporary dance elements were incorporated through fluid movements, emotional expression, and undulating motions. During the dance, working with levels was incorporated to achieve greater expressiveness. National elements were incorporated through elements from the “Rodynniy oberih” dance, evident in the hand positions and turns. This highlighted the dance’s contrast, the depth of the performance, and its ability to capture the audience’s attention.

Attention was paid to modern transitions and tempo control. During the performance of the “Kozachok” dance, boldness was evident, but there was also a lack of emotional expression. The students were able to incorporate quick movements and jumps, but the dance lacked lightness.

³⁸ Musescore. 2026. <https://musescore.com/>

In traditional dance, national elements were expressed more through costumes than through dance movements and the accompanying music. A comparison of traditional and improvisational methods for implementing vocal ($t=0.07$) and choreographic ($t=0.05$) projects to express elements of national identity revealed no significant difference. This is because the calculated values did not exceed the critical value $t = 3.182$.

Figure 2



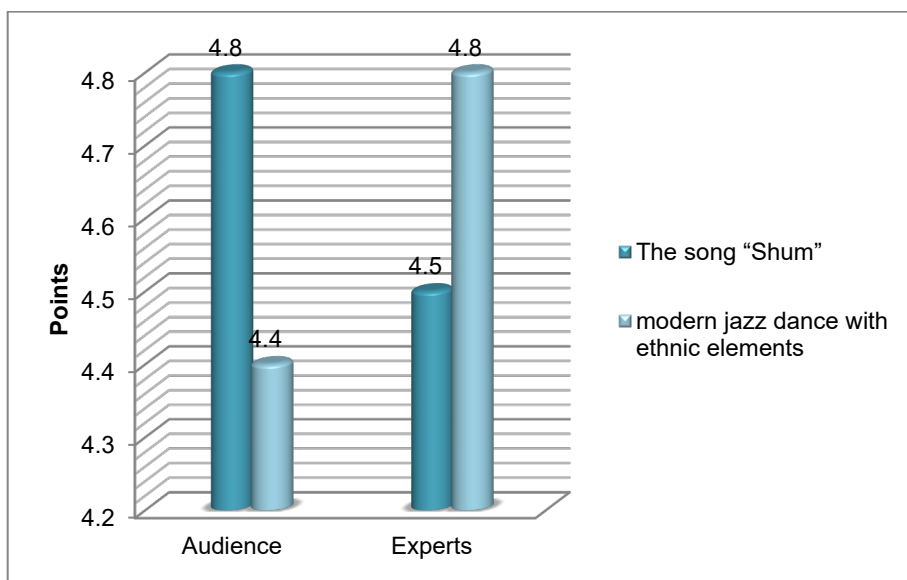
Choreographic movements: a) the “Kozachok” dance; b) the contemporary modern jazz dance with ethnic elements “Rodynniy oberih”

Source: Vseosvita³⁹

³⁹ Vseosvita. 2026. <https://vseosvita.ua/>

The assessment of the audience's and the expert panel's perceptions of individual vocal and choreographic methods of national self-expression is shown in Figure 3. The expert panel consisted of 10 teachers, whilst the audience comprised 120 students from other disciplines. The assessment was carried out whilst listening to recordings of the respondents' performances, which allowed the use of Google Forms to award scores from 1 to 5 for the artistic projects performed. Individual forms of national self-expression were realised through the performance of the song "Shum" (vocals) and a modern jazz dance with ethnic elements entitled "Rodynni oberih".

Figure 3



Assessment of the audience's and expert panel's perceptions of individual vocal and choreographic forms of national self-expression.

Source: developed by the authors

Experts and the audience rated the expression of national identity through individual artistic projects quite highly. The perception of national identity was conveyed through rhythmic patterns and selected movement patterns. The choice of associative elements helped to reflect cultural identity. Emotionality served to intensify additional experiences, which helped to focus attention on national themes.

6. Discussion and Conclusions

The study by Zhang and Su notes that music contributes to cultural and historical development through its analysis.⁴⁰ The combination of traditional and popular music enriches the cultural context, promotes musical diversity and fosters national identity.⁴¹ Artificial intelligence technologies can be utilised in music education to promote the popularity of traditional music. This provides an opportunity to enhance national musical literacy.⁴² The spread of Cantonese opera facilitates the development of cultural identity among young people. National themes are conveyed through singing, acrobatic elements and costumes.

The singing is characterised by the use of the Cantonese dialect and a combination of natural timbre with falsetto, which influences the emotional resonance.⁴³ The studies examined the general influence of music on the development of national consciousness. Our work focuses on a more detailed exploration of the concept of national consciousness in vocal projects. It was thus established that the development of national consciousness in music is influenced by the repertoire ($K_i=0.21$), interpretative features ($K_i=0.21$), symbolic elements ($K_i=0.20$), intonation patterns ($K_i=0.19$), and methods of musical arrangement ($K_i=0.21$). These indicators help enhance the cultural and historical significance of music, ensuring its association with specific countries.

Nazarbaevna and Saliyevna highlighted that amateur choreography influences dancers' self-expression and the development of psychological, pedagogical and creative skills.⁴⁴ The combined development of these skills shapes perceptions of factors related to national identity, enabling the reproduction of corresponding choreographic movements. Buck-Pavlick noted that the development of national consciousness and self-awareness is

⁴⁰ Zhang, Feifei, Su, Yimiao. "Crossing the Border: Cultural Identity and Historical Integration of National Music and Popular Music." *Herança - Revista de História, Patrimônio e Cultura*, 6(1), 2023, pp. 8–21. <https://doi.org/10.52152/heranca.v6i1.770>

⁴¹ Ibid

⁴² Qiushi, Mao. "Research on the Improvement Method of Music Education Level under the Background of AI Technology." In *Mobile Information Systems*, 2022(1), 2022, 7616619. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2022/7616619>

⁴³ Leung, Bo Wah. "Transmission of Cantonese opera in school music education: a survey of Hong Kong and Guangdong music teachers for policy review." In *Arts Education Policy Review*, 125(2), 2024, 108–123. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10632913.2021.1992325>

⁴⁴ Nazarbaevna, Qolqanatova A., Saliyevna, Yuldasheva Z. "Specific Features and Challenges of Teaching Amateur Choreography to Students." In *American Journal of Social Science*, 3(10), 2025, pp. 95-103. <https://advancedscienti.com/index.php/AJSS/article/view/3182>

possible through a detailed analysis of the dance production, taking into account the refinement of all movements and the selection of musical accompaniment.⁴⁵ A critical analysis of dance enables one to consciously emphasise certain aspects of dance, develop emotional skills and foster social awareness.

The study by Xiao and Zhang examines dance as a tool for conveying the philosophical and aesthetic values of different cultures.⁴⁶ Dance movements reflect a three-dimensional structure that mirrors the process of movement planning and the transition into kinetic and spatial dimensions. Such movements enable the perception of cultural traditions. For example, in Eastern dance, upper-body movements influence the expression of earthly orientation. In Western dance, upper-body movements facilitate the search for meaning. The specific ways in which choreographic movements influence the formation of national identity have been studied more extensively than the influence of music in existing research. However, the connection to national identity arises through students' self-expression, rather than through an analysis of the individual indicators that underpin choreographic projects. Our study found that the manifestation of national consciousness in choreographic projects is possible through the consideration of the movement criterion ($K_i=0.21$), the figurative criterion ($K_i=0.11$), rhythmic ($K_i=0.20$), synchronous ($K_i=0.20$) and symbolic ($K_i=0.19$) criteria.

Our study examined in detail the elements of national consciousness in vocal and choreographic projects, contributing to the understanding of national ideas. It has been established that the elements of identity for expressing national consciousness in vocal projects are musical text and intonation; in choreographic projects, they are movement elements and plasticity. In vocal projects, the expression of national ideas is possible through forms of arrangement and the author's approach; in choreographic projects, through stage adaptation and the artist's creative approach; in emotional expression, through sound and words (vocal projects); and through choreographic imagery and physical expression (choreographic projects). The emphasis on these aspects allows national ideas to be perceived through the compositions' poetic nature, the choice of performance interpretation, and the focus on ornamentation. In choreographic projects,

⁴⁵ Buck-Pavlick, Helen. "Empowering Metacognition Through Dance Writing and Collaborative Dance Making." In *Journal of Dance Education*, 24(2), 2024, pp. 125–135. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15290824.2022.2051041>

⁴⁶ Xiao, Qirou, Zhang, Qiaoyun. "Spatial Consciousness in Chinese and Western Dance: Perspectives from Ceramic Imagery." In *Philosophies*, 11(2), 2026, 23. <https://doi.org/10.3390/philosophies11020023>

the perception of elements of national consciousness occurs through the emotionality of choreographic productions, the activation of national experience through movement, and visual perception through the stage image.

It has been found that students' self-expression positively impacts the development of national identity, as it influences the expression of new ways of conveying cultural values. The students' vocal performance of the folk song "Oi u luzi chervona kalyna" most accurately conveyed elements of national consciousness through the performance's authenticity (4.5 points), thereby conveying ideas of national revival and freedom. In the choreographic projects, national themes were most effectively conveyed in the modern jazz dance with ethnic elements "Rodynni oberih" (4.5 points), owing to the depth of the movements and the performance's dramatic quality. The perception of individual vocal and choreographic approaches to the realisation of performance projects reflected a high level of expression of national identity, which was appreciated by both the audience and the expert panel. The primary means of expression were emotional and associative elements, which contributed to the creation of distinct musical and choreographic images.

The findings confirm the study's hypothesis that students promote national traditions through artistic projects, in line with the criteria for the formation of national consciousness. The practical significance of the article lies in the need to adapt the curriculum for artistic disciplines to enable the expression of national identity through an understanding of its key indicators in vocal and choreographic projects. The value of the findings also lies in fostering national consciousness among younger generations and in their potential to promote Ukrainian culture. The results of the work can be utilised in the teaching process, thereby improving educational programmes and encouraging students to promote national traditions by developing national consciousness. The research findings can be used by students when preparing for competitions and concert performances that emphasise the promotion of national culture.

REFERENCES

- Astalosh, Gabriella. "The Concept of Musical Nationalism in Compositional Creativity: A Theoretical Aspect." In *Culture and Arts in the Modern World*, 24, 2023, pp. 79–89. <https://doi.org/10.31866/2410-1915.24.2023.287663>
- Bazela, Dmytro, Pavliuk, Tetiana, Babych, Olha, Batieieva, Nataliya, Kyzim, Petro. "Contemporary Global Trends in the Development of Choreographic Art at the Beginning of the 21st Century." In *SPORT TK-Revista EuroAmericana de Ciencias del Deporte*, 11, 2022, 60. <https://digitum.um.es/server/api/core/bitstreams/bd8b4cc5-d32b-4caf-a39f-080d0470b1f5/content>
- Buck-Pavlick, Helen. "Empowering Metacognition Through Dance Writing and Collaborative Dance Making." In *Journal of Dance Education*, 24(2), 2024, pp. 125–135. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15290824.2022.2051041>
- Chan, Suk H. G., Lee, Wing H. H., Tang, Binglin M., Chen, Ziyi. "Legacy of Culture Heritage Building Revitalization: Place Attachment and Culture Identity." In *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, 2024, 1314223. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1314223>
- Chandnasaro, Dharakorn. "Revolutionizing Dance: Advanced Choreographic Trends of the 21st Century." In *Journal of Urban Culture Research*, 30, 2025, pp. 51-61. <https://doi.org/10.14456/jucr.2025.4>
- Fraser, T. "Cultivation of Global Consciousness through Intercultural Music Engagement." In *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, 28(3), 2025, e70022. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajsp.70022>
- Giese, Julia, Keightley, Emily. "Dancing through Time: A Methodological Exploration of Embodied Memories." In *Memory Studies*, 17(2), 2024, pp. 444-457. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1750698022112661>
- Grájeda, Alberto, Córdova, Pamela, Córdova, Juan P., Laguna-Tapia, Andres, Burgos, Johnny, Rodríguez, Luis, Arandia, Martin, Sanjinés, Alberto. "Embracing Artificial Intelligence in the Arts Classroom: Understanding Student Perceptions and Emotional Reactions to AI Tools." In *Cogent Education*, 11(1), 2024, 2378271. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2024.2378271>
- Guo, Andi, Zhang, Xiao, Hagins, Marshall, Liederbach, Marijeanne, Hodges, Paul. W. "Professional Dancers' Beliefs and Conceptualisations of Their Posture and Movement: A Qualitative Research Study." In *PLoS One*, 21(2), 2026, e0339568. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0339568>
- Kalpokas, Ignas. "Work of Art in the Age of Its AI Reproduction." In *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 51(8), 2025, pp. 1268-1286. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01914537231184490>

- Korostelina, Karina V., Zakharchenko, Artem, Rohalov, Olexii, Molotsiian, Valeriia, Fursenko, Maryna, Zakharchenko, Olena, Bakhtiarova, Ksenia. "Dynamics of National Identity Narratives in Ukraine." In *National Identities*, 28(1), 2026, pp. 1-25. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14608944.2025.2473699>
- Leung, Bo Wah. "Transmission of Cantonese opera in school music education: a survey of Hong Kong and Guangdong music teachers for policy review." In *Arts Education Policy Review*, 125(2), 2024, 108–123. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10632913.2021.1992325>
- Maidugu, Umar A., Isah, Adamu T. "Islamic Education and its Value: A Vital Means for the Formation National Character." In *Bulletin of Islamic Research*, 2(4), 2024, pp. 725-744. <https://yayasanpendidikantafsirhadis.com/index.php/bir/article/view/165>
- Muminov, Muxsim. "Transmission of Shashmaqom Repertoire in Contemporary Master-Student Relationships." In *European Review of Contemporary Arts and Humanities*, 1(5), 2025, pp. 60-64. <https://claritaslumen.org/index.php/ercan/article/view/36>
- Muscore. 2026. <https://muscore.com/>
- Nalyvaiko, Nataliia, Nalyvaiko, Oleksii. "Development of Students Cultural Awareness and Self-Expression in Chinese Institutions of Higher Education." In *Scientific Notes of the Pedagogical Department*, 52, 2023, pp. 96-101. <https://doi.org/10.26565/2074-8167-2023-52-11>
- Nazarbaevna, Qolqanatova A., Saliyevna, Yuldasheva Z. "Specific Features and Challenges of Teaching Amateur Choreography to Students." In *American Journal of Social Science*, 3(10), 2025, pp. 95-103. <https://advancedscienti.com/index.php/AJSS/article/view/3182>
- Polishchuk, Liudmyla, Pylypiv, Viktoriia, Korolenko, Ievgeniia, Kunderevych, Olena, Kuzmenko, Taras, Hotsalyuk, Alla. "The State of Ukrainian Arts and Culture: Current Difficulties." In *International Journal on Culture, History, and Religion*, 7, 2025, pp. 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.63931/ijchr.v7iS1.106>
- Popandopulo, Mikhail, Aubakirova, Saltanat, Iskakova, Zauresh, Zhumasheva, Laura, Kozhamzharova, Maira. "Artistic Culture as a Foundation for the Spiritual and Cognitive Development of Students." In *Acta Psychologica*, 257, 2025, 105098. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2025.105098>
- Qiusi, Mao. "Research on the Improvement Method of Music Education Level under the Background of AI Technology." In *Mobile Information Systems*, 2022(1), 2022, 7616619. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2022/7616619>
- Radomska, Violetta, Ponkalo, Solomiia, Makar, Mariia. "Design of a Ukrainian Patriotic Stamp to Identify the State in the Context of Globalisation." In *Art and Design*, 2(8), 2025, pp. 54-64. <https://doi.org/10.30857/2617-0272.2025.2.5>
- Raza, Ali. "Art and Education: Fostering Creativity and Critical Thinking in Humanity." In *Journal of Religion and Society*, 1(1), 2023, pp. 13-25. <https://www.islamicreligious.com/index.php/Journal/article/view/19>
- Samaniego, Mariela, Usca, Nancy, Salguero, Jose, Quevedo, William. "Creative Thinking in Art and Design Education: A Systematic Review." In *Education Sciences*, 14(2), 2024, 192. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci14020192>

- Samiya, Rahem. "Education through the Cultural Dimension: Integration of Knowledge with Traditions and Arts." In *Studies in Education Sciences*, 6(3), 2025, pp. e18432-e18432. <https://doi.org/10.54019/sesv6n3-009>
- Shchitova, Svetlana, Martynyuk, Valentyna B. "Modern Ukrainian Opera: Varieties of Genres." In *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai. Musica*, 68(1), 2023, pp. 57-67. <https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=1147799>
- Siliutina, Iryna, Tytar, Olena, Barbash, Marina, Petrenko, Nataliia, Yepyk, Larysa. "Cultural Preservation and Digital Heritage: Challenges and Opportunities." *Amazonia Investiga*, 13(75), 2024, pp. 262-273. <https://doi.org/10.34069/AI/2024.75.03.22>
- Usdan, Dora. *Choreographing National Identity: The Role of Movement and Biopower in Countries of Real Socialism* (Doctoral dissertation). University of Michigan, 2024. <https://backend.production.deepblue-documents.lib.umich.edu/server/api/core/bitstreams/9bb75759-dc9f-43e7-b3ec-7bc1f6a0efb2/content>
- Vseosvita. 2026. <https://vseosvita.ua/>
- Wang, Mingquan, Phanlukthao, Peera. "Developing Cultural Identity and Practice in the Context of Teaching Chinese Indigenous Dance." In *International Online Journal of Education & Teaching*, 11(1), 2024, pp. 1-9. <https://iojet.org/index.php/IOJET/article/view/2046>
- Xiao, Qirou, Zhang, Qiaoyun. "Spatial Consciousness in Chinese and Western Dance: Perspectives from Ceramic Imagery." In *Philosophies*, 11(2), 2026, 23. <https://doi.org/10.3390/philosophies11020023>
- Zhang, Feifei, Su, Yimiao. "Crossing the Border: Cultural Identity and Historical Integration of National Music and Popular Music." *Herança - Revista de História, Patrimônio e Cultura*, 6(1), 2023, pp. 8-21. <https://doi.org/10.52152/heranca.v6i1.770>

EXPLORING LEARNING AND UNLEARNING (III): MENTAL TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONAL SINGERS

CRISTINA RADU¹

SUMMARY. Mental training has become an essential component of high-level performance across domains such as clinical psychology, neuroscience, elite sports, corporate leadership, and performing arts. Opera performance requires the integration of multiple cognitive emotional and physical processes. Professional singers must simultaneously manage vocal technique, musical interpretation, stage movement and dramatic characterization while performing in front of an audience. The cognitive demands of musical performance include complex memory processes, attention control, and rapid decision-making. Opera singers require an integrated model of mental preparation that extends beyond vocal technique. In my previous articles from the series “*Exploring learning and unlearning in singing*” (“Breath”, 2023 and “Effective Study Methods for the Individual Practice of Professional Singers”, 2025) I followed the elaborate process of training an opera singer from the dynamic perspective “Learning - Unlearning - Relearning” (LUR). Each article aims to create a theoretical basis, developed both from my own experience as a professional singer and teacher, correlated with research and studies recently published on the topics addressed. The purpose of these articles is to discuss the essential processes that a professional singer faces in his preparation for a lyrical career, and to permanently maintain a balance between theoretical and practical aspects, as is the study of singing. This article proposes a structured mental training curriculum for cognitive, emotional and artistic performance optimization, specifically designed for professional singers. The article is organized around three core phases of artistic activity: preparation and study, performance under evaluative pressure, and post-performance psychological recalibration. Drawing on research in performance psychology, self-regulated learning, neuroplasticity, mental imagery, and self-determination theory, the article integrates theoretical frameworks with concrete exercises applicable to daily vocal practice and stage performance. Special attention is given to multidimensional musical memory, meta-attentional flexibility, emotional

¹ Opera Singer, Associate Professor PhD, Faculty of Music, Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania. E-mail: cristina.radu@unitbv.ro



regulation and resilience in critical incidents in long-term artistic careers. The paper concludes with a discussion of “unlearning” maladaptive cognitive habits that limit artistic authenticity and vocal freedom.

Keywords: mental training, learning, unlearning, opera singers, performance psychology, music performance anxiety, self-regulation, mental imagery, resilience

Opera singing represents one of the most demanding forms of musical performance requiring a high level of technical mastery, expressive interpretation and psychology resilience. Unlike many other instrumental disciplines, opera singers rely on the human voice, which is highly sensitive to physiological and psychological states. As a result, factors such as concentration, emotional regulation and self-confidence, can significantly influence vocal performance.

Opera performance involves a unique combination of psychological and physiological demands. Unlike many other musical activities, opera singers must integrate vocal technique with dramatic interpretation while performing live under intense pressure. Responding to multiple demands, opera singers must manage several complex cognitive processes: memorization of musical scores and lyrics; multilingual pronunciation; coordination with orchestra and conductor; interpretation of dramatic roles; real-time adaptation to stage conditions. These processes require strong working memory, attention and mental flexibility.

Opera performance involves deep emotional expression. Singers must embody dramatic characters while maintaining vocal control and technical precision. This requires abilities such as emotional awareness, emotional regulation, and psychological resilience. Performers must be able to experience and communicate strong emotions without allowing these emotions to interfere with vocal technique

In recent decades, researchers in music psychology and performance science have increasingly focused on the role of mental training in enhancing artistic performance. Mental training refers to a set of psychological strategies designed to improve cognitive, emotional and behavioral aspects of performance. These strategies include techniques such as mental imagery, goal settings, attention control, emotional regulation, and anxiety management.

In my previous article “*Effective Study Methods for the Individual Practice of Professional Singers*” I have already mentioned² some of important tasks in the mental training of professional singers, such as awareness, mental representations, breathing techniques for managing stress, nervousness and stage fright; and cultivating resilience and determination. Mental training is so complex and ramified that an article can only outline the directions for approaching this topic, which has been extensively studied both in psychology studies and in other fields, from performance sports to neuroscience.

Mental training represents a multidisciplinary field spanning clinical psychology, cognitive neuroscience, elite sports, organizational leadership, and performing arts. Interventions such as attentional control training, mindfulness-based stress reduction, cognitive-behavioral restructuring and imagery rehearsal have demonstrated concrete benefits in performance optimization, anxiety reduction and resilience enhancement.

In clinical psychology and psychotherapy, mental training is used in the treatment of anxiety and depression, resilience development, cognitive-behavioral therapy, mindfulness, and emotional regulation.

In the field of neuroscience and medical recovery, mental training is used in stroke rehabilitation programs, cognitive recovery, and neuroplasticity stimulation. Recent developments in neuroscience have provided important insights into how mental training affects brain function³. One key concept is neuroplasticity, which refers to the brain’s ability to reorganize neural connections in response to experience and training. Mental practice and visualization activate neural networks similar to those involved in physical performance.

In elite sport, systematic mental preparation is considered as crucial as physical conditioning, as documented in *Foundations of Sport and Exercise Psychology*. Professional teams in leagues such as NBA integrate sport psychologists into their performance systems, for increasing concentration, controlling emotions and anxiety, mental visualization of performance, managing competitive pressure.

Mental training is also used in the military and special forces for extreme stress control, quick decision making, and psychological resilience.

In the corporate sector, organizations such as Google have implemented structured mindfulness programs to enhance focus, creativity, and stress

² Radu, Cristina, *Exploring Learning and Unlearning (II): Effective Study Methods for the Individual Practice of Professional Singers*, Studia Universitatis Babes-Bolyai Musica, 70(1), 2025, see “Mind Training & Stress Management”

³ In neuroscience, studies on neuroplasticity (like “*Neuroplasticity: Changes in grey matter induced by training*” Draganski, B., et al., 2004) demonstrate structural brain changes following sustained mental and motor training.

management. Mental training helps make decisions under pressure in business, increase productivity, develop emotional intelligence, and prevent burnout.

In the field of education, mind training aims to improve memory, concentration techniques, accelerated learning, and managing emotions in exams. Numerous studies target the impact of cognitive training on academic performance.

In music performance research, increasing attention has been paid to music performance anxiety⁴, attentional focus, and self-regulated learning⁵. Yet, within vocal pedagogy, mental training is often addressed fragmentarily rather than as a coherent curriculum.

This article proposes a comprehensive, structured mental training framework for professional opera singers, aligned with three fundamental phases of artistic activity:

- study and preparation;
- stage performance and evaluative contexts;
- post-performance recalibration and career longevity.

This paper will aim to define in a succinct synthesis, the various directions and perspectives of mental training, with practical application in the life of a professional opera singer. The structure of the information resonates with the pedagogical paradigm “Learning – Unlearning – Relearning,” emphasizing continuous cognitive flexibility and artistic evolution.

1. Mental Training in Study and Preparation

This chapter addresses practical aspects related to mental planning and time management; but also procedures related to body-mind-voice integration during individual study; phrasing, structure and interpretative intention; meta-concentration and cognitive self-regulation; multidimensional musical memory; advanced mental representation (mental imagery).

1.1. Practical aspects related to mental planning for vocal study and self-regulation

- Self-regulation, place an important role in musical learning and performance. Self-regulation refers to the ability to monitor and control one's thoughts, emotions and behaviors in pursuit, a specific goal in music, education. For opera singers' self-regulation is particularly

⁴ Kenny, Dianna, *The psychology of music performance anxiety*. Oxford University Press, 2011.

⁵ McPherson, G. E., & Zimmerman, B. J., *Self-regulation of musical learning*, 2011.

important because vocal training requires long-term development and careful management of vocal health. Self-regulated learning involves processes such as planning, practice sessions, monitoring, progress, evaluating performance outcomes, adjusting strategies when difficulties arise. Highly successful musicians are able to maintain focus during practice, set realistic goals, and use feedback effectively to improve performance. According to Garry McPherson and Barry Zimmerman⁶ self-regulated learning involves three cyclical phases: forethought, performance control, and self-reflection. Such structuring reduces diffuse repetition and enhances neural consolidation. Advanced musicians display higher metacognitive awareness and goal specificity compared to novices.

- Planning the time dedicated to study (Time Management), as well as clear objectives for each individual musical score, in a structured set of objectives. This can include long-term goals (career, repertoire); daily training goals; performance goals (concert, competition).
- Reducing external interference in mental concentration during study
- Flexible training, using techniques such as “random start practice”, “reverse practice”, “emotional mapping”, “silent singing”, visualization and performance simulation.
- Another essential principle in mental training is alternating between “practice mode” and “performance mode”: practice (analysis and corrections) and then play non-stop (like in a concert).
- Self-monitoring and self-evaluation by regularly listening to personal recordings during individual study/or rehearsals with accompaniment, can lead to more accuracy of the emission (intonation), improvement of melodic-rhythmic correctness, clarity of articulation and correctness of diction, or more effective realization of interpretative intentions. However, there is a danger that through repeated auditions we get used to much to our own voice and even to our own mistakes (in sound emission etc.). That is why external control by a teacher or a college, who can give more objective feedback, is periodically necessary. The goal is to develop a critical and analytical sense, but also to notice the positive things achieved, for a balance in perception and also to maintain optimal motivation for work.
- Finding anchors and support points when you reach an impasse during your studies or when you face a vocal impasse. Advice from a good singing teacher can help a lot even for a singer who is already launched in his career. Also, collaborative learning with other singers can

⁶ McPherson, G. E., & Zimmerman, B. J., *Self-regulation of musical learning*, 2011.

bring multiple benefits. Collaborative learning⁷ allows singers to listen to each other, collaborate and solve complicated problems together, improve their understanding of the subject, exchange information, give each other feedback⁸ regularly, and develop a sense of collaboration, responsibility, and mutual support.

- International exposure through vocal master classes and interactions with various artists, is very effective in keeping alive the curiosity and desire to explore and experiment with new vocal techniques, new perspectives in interpretation. Also to identify artistic values and the technical and interpretative rigors of today's artistic world.
- A good balance between practice and mental-training: unlike regular practice, where intense physical repetition prevails, elite musicians use 30–40% mental practice and 60–70% physical practice in their study. This reduces physical fatigue, improves emotional control, increases memory accuracy, and refines their interpretation. In the last few days before the concert, they recommend reducing physical training and increasing mental training, because the technique is already stable, and the brain needs consolidation, not mechanical repetition.
- A flexible memory: Before the recital, the musician should be able to go through the piece completely in his mind; start the piece from any point; play the entire piece without stopping.
- Preventing artistic burnout: dosing effort in study and artistic practice, from micro-perspective (dosing effort within the musical phrase or within an aria) to macro-perspective (dosing energy within a recital/performance).

Exercises

For beginners, short daily routines (5–10 min) in which can be alternate strictly vocal study with various tasks such as text analysis or translation, then increase the time allocated, to practice long-term concentration.

For more advanced singers, a work session could look like this:

Phase 1 – Forethought

- Define a technical micro-goal (for example: stabilizing passaggio coordination).

⁷ Simion, Anca, *Transferability In Music Education: From Practice Routines To Performance-Based Learning and Evaluation Across Disciplines*, STUDIA UBB MUSICA, LXX, 2, 2025, p.187-188.

⁸ "This instant and continuous feedback in rehearsals is critical for their progress; enables [singers] to make modifications in real time, resulting in faster development and a deeper grasp of the content." (Simion, A, *op.cit.*, p.188)

- Define an expressive goal (for example: clarifying dramatic intention of one phrase).
- Visualize successful execution.

Phase 2 – Performance control

- Alternate between isolated technical work and contextual musical integration.
- Apply distributed attention: respiration, alignment, resonance, articulation.

Phase 3 – Reflection

- Identify the effective elements who led to the successful completion of the proposed tasks
- Identify two aspects requiring recalibration.
- Formulate next-session priority.

1.2. Integration of Body-Mind-Voice

Opera singing requires precise neuromuscular coordination, autonomic regulation, and emotional expressivity. The opera singer must develop multitasking skills: sound control and synchronization of the various physical and mental parameters that work simultaneously in singing (from breathing control and sound emission, to stage movement and complex interpretative mental strategies or effort dosing).

- Respiratory regulation influences relaxation and emotional stability.
- Self-exploration and a high degree of awareness⁹ in listening the subtle body signals or spotting mental blockages.
- Sleep discipline used, especially to achieve performance in memorization or to improve mental concentration during study, and also mandatory on the nights before important performances.
- Using somatic training methods for musicians, known for their benefits, such as reducing body tension and anxiety, like Alexander Technique (the method developed by F.M. Alexander, used worldwide for over

⁹ "Awareness and mindfulness is needed in individual practice, monitoring bodily sensations and recognizing markers that indicate possible vocal excesses or technical errors, which can damage the vocal instrument over time. These markers can be pain or tension felt in the throat; any discomfort in the larynx; vocal fatigue; hoarseness; tightness in the cervical area/ shoulders/ lips/ jaw/ or tongue; overventilation; abundant secretions that "parasitize" the sound; hissing voice; capretto (trembling voice)". (Radu Cristina, *Exploring Learning and Unlearning (II): Effective Study Methods for the Individual Practice of Professional Singers*, Studia Universitatis Babes-Bolyai Musica, 70(1), 2025, p..137)

100 years and taught today in major conservatories) or Dyspokinesia (a postural and movement therapy developed specifically for musicians, designed by G.O. van de Klashorst).

1.3. Phrasing, structure and interpretive intention

The opera singer assimilates a role from multiple perspectives: musical, text (libretto), acting. His study involves extensive documentation, but also:

- Advanced methods of analysis of musical and literary text, structure of the work;
- Hierarchy of musical information (primary vs. secondary) – decisions with direct impact on phrasing and interpretation;
- Explicit interpretative decisions (what, why, how);
- Subjective control of time (mental rubato, internal breathing);
- Long-term emotional coherence (arias, lieder, roles);
- Synchronization of information in the act of singing: text with rhythm and melody (in tempo) + stage movement and acting intentions (director's instructions).

1.4. Meta-attention and Cognitive Flexibility

Professional singers must alternate, in their practice, between micro-focus (intonation accuracy, diction precision) and macro-structure (dramatic arc, harmonic direction), building bridges between knowledge and practice. This attentional flexibility parallel's executive function shifting studied in cognitive psychology. Metacognitive strategies include the cultivation of attention and focus of the mind in the learning processes, to obtain high-performance results. Aspects to integrate into the mental training of singers:

- Identified the optimal moments for internal focus versus external focus: Gabriele Wulf in "*Attentional focus and motor learning: a review of 15 years*" conclude that external focus produces better performance than internal focus. Although her study is dedicated to movement and sport training, the article makes important contributions regarding external versus internal focus of attention, which can also be used in the practice of singing athletes (opera singers). When you focus on the body (internal focus) you consciously interfere with automatic processes; but when you focus on the result (external focus), the motor system seems to self-regulate more effectively. For beginner singers, internal focus (on the processes of vocal emission, correct

postures, mouth opening, tongue position, lips, etc.) is very useful, but for a more advanced singer, who has already formed correct singing reflexes, the attention is more on the result of singing, his focus is more external.

- Switching focus (zoom in / zoom out): from technical detail to expressive intention; constantly keeping in mind the attention to detail (decomposition and resolution of difficult musical passages) correlated with the overall picture of the phrase as a whole or the macro-structure of the work to which each phrase/section relates.
- The ability to identify and apply in the score various melodic-rhythmic patterns. According to Dunlosky et al, “the application of knowledge in different situations is indicative of its versatility, which is defined by its ability to be retrieved from the original learning context and utilized in a variety of settings”¹⁰.
- Maintaining attention under stress and fatigue (long rehearsals, tournaments).
- Recognizing internal distractions (self-criticism, anticipation of error).

Zoom Exercise (repeated alternation enhances neural adaptability and reduces rigidity):

- Sing focusing exclusively on articulation clarity.
- Repeat focusing solely on emotional narrative.
- Integrate both layers.

1.5. Multidimensional Musical Memory

Opera is the most complex artistic genre that brings together all the arts: music, literature, painting, dance, acting. Given the complexity of the genre, the opera singer is forced to exercise his memory in multiple ways. Singers must memorize large amounts of musical and textual material often in multiple languages and reproduce this information accurately during performance. They also must memorize stage movement, posture, gestures and relationships with other characters - everything related to acting. In his book, *Musical excellence* (2004)¹¹, Aaron Williamon identifies multiple memory systems in musical performance:

¹⁰ Dunlosky, John, Katherine A. Rawson, Elizabeth J. Marsh, Mitchell J. Nathan, and Daniel T. Willingham, *Improving Students' Learning With Effective Learning Techniques: Promising Directions From Cognitive and Educational Psychology*, Psychological Science in the Public Interest 14, no. 1 (2013)

¹¹ Williamon, Aaron, *Musical excellence. Strategies and Techniques to Enhance Performance*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

- Structural memory (form and architecture)
- Harmonic-functional memory
- Semantic-textual memory (meaning, subtext, dramatic arc)
- Motor memory (conscious, not automatic pilot)

An extremely interesting aspect, confirmed by functional imaging studies¹² is that mental rehearsal activates motor planning regions comparable to physical practice. Mental training for singers uses these types of memory, as well as anti-blackout strategies, such as:

- Backward chaining memorization.
- Identify harmonic anchor points.
- Silent mental rehearsal before sleep.

To consolidate memory, a piece can be learned in different mental representations: through internal hearing (the musician hears entirety piece in his mind, without playing it); through structural mapping (instead of memorizing only sequences or musical phrases, singer creates an architectural map of the piece, analysis of the form); through motor imagery (kinesthetic simulation: mental representation of the complete sensations during the performance of the piece, breathing, movements of the musical phrase) and, finally, through interpretive simulation (the singer imagines the concert hall, the audience, the psychological pressure, the moment of entering the stage... then mentally “sings” the piece in concert conditions, creating a neurological familiarity with the interpretive situation). Thus, top professional musicians use 4-5 memory systems simultaneously: motor, auditory, visual (score), structural and emotional. A piece memorized in different cognitive systems has more chances of being accessed: if one system fails on stage, the others can take over.

1.6. Mental Imagery and Artistic Imagination

Advanced mental imagery is often underexploited in singers' practice. Mental imagery is related to the process of visualization and imagination training; it is one of the most effective mental training techniques. In music performance research, mental imaginary refers to the ability to create sensory experiences in the mind, without external stimuli. In the context of musical performance, we can study a lot with our imagination: we can involve hearing the music internally, visually using stage movements, imagining vocal sensations, mentally repeating musical phrases.

¹² Lotzer, Martin; Scheler, Gabriela; H-RM Tan; Braun, Christoph; Birbaumer, N, *The musician's brain: Functional imaging of amateurs and professionals during performance and imagery*, Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience, 15(3), 2003.

In addition to developing improvisational and creative skills¹³, mental imagery can increase motor precision and can also anticipate and reduce the intensity in moments when the singer's stress and anxiety can increase significantly (exposure on stage during concerts, various accidents or unforeseen situations that may occur during performances). It may be achieved by:

- Hearing clearly inside a representation of the ideal sound, before the vocal emission (inner hearing).
- Kinesthetic visualization (the bodily sensation of the phrase).
- Mental simulations of the concert or an Opera performance (complete script, including unpredictable).
- Mental rehearsal without voice (to protect the voice after intensive sessions of study).
- Detailed visualization of an opera character (exercises to visualize the character in the smallest details related to his physical appearance, movement, gestures and facial expressions, as well as psychological characteristics and also imagining optimal vocality).
- Using mental images¹⁴ is an invaluable aid in representing one's own voice and sound emission (speed and direction of sound, plasticity of the air column, resonance space).
- Imagination training: The analytical process described above (under the section "Phrasing, structure and interpretative intention") is only half the way to discover the world of music, or of an operatic role. I have detailed this elaborate process of documentation and analysis in my previous article¹⁵. The other part of the study, much more exciting and complex, is to recreate the whole, with your imagination, visualizing and making precious connections. Mental rehearsal can improve memory,

¹³ "Improvisation and creativity activities foster creative thinking and problem-solving abilities, which are transferable to various fields of study and life." (Simion, A, *op.cit*, p.187)

¹⁴ The "images" or mental representations that the singer works with in vocal emission are the "visual" (imaginary) support both for representation or dramatic actions and the meaning of the text (reflected in singing through the colors of the voice, in the expressiveness of the articulation of words, of breathing and dynamics of the phrase), as well as for the process of plastic emission of the sounds. Since the voice is an "invisible" instrument, the bodily sensations and the imagination of the singer projected into breathing and in the emission of the sound are among his only concrete means of work. Among the mental images in singing technique I would name: the visualization of the continuity of sound energy and the spectrum of harmonics of a voice, the malleability of the forms through which the air column can be modeled in the emission of different vowels (Radu, Cristina, *O viziune modernă asupra formării cântărețului de operă* (A modern perspective on opera singer training) Ed. Muzicală, București, 2017, p.262-263)

¹⁵ Radu, C., *Exploring Learning and Unlearning (II): Effective Study Methods for the Individual Practice of Professional Singers*, *op.cit*, p.135-137.

technical accuracy, and expressive interpretation. Imagination gives real depth to your study. You have to reconstruct the structure and meaning of a musical work with your imagination, test multiple possibilities, configure different modes of interpretation. In imagination training we generally use procedures such as visualization, mental imagery, transferability¹⁶, metaphorical teaching¹⁷, contextual integration¹⁸.

Exercise of full scenic performance simulation

- Visualize entrance, conductor interaction, acoustic environment.
- Imagine the costume, the stage movement and interaction with other characters.
- Imagine unexpected disruptions.
- Mentally rehearse recovery.

2. Mental Skills in Singing Performance

Mental training for participating as a soloist in an opera or concert performance focuses on aspects related to emotional management, performance psychology, mental and physical endurance, maintaining attention and recovering in an optimal time after possible critical situations, as well as specific rituals that prepare the singer for the day of the performance.

2.1. Emotional management and performance psychology

One of the most widely studied psychological phenomena in music performance is Music Performances Anxiety (MPA). MPA is defined as a specific form of anxiety associated with artistic performance, characterized by symptoms: cognitive (feelings of tension, intrusive negative thoughts, fear, worry, catastrophic thoughts, depressive or panic states, reduced concentration),

¹⁶ "Transfer is the process of adapting one's knowledge and abilities to new environments, which is a key goal of education". (Simion, Anca, *op.cit*, p.179)

¹⁷ "In the context of education, metaphorical teaching can be defined as the process of elucidating complex or abstract concepts through the utilization of relatable images, narratives, or analogies." (Simion, A, *op.cit*, p.179)

¹⁸ "The concept of *contextual integration* in education can be defined as the process of teaching content by establishing connections with real-world examples, students' experiences, or other subjects. To illustrate this point, in the context of science education, students could be encouraged to compose poems about nature in language arts or calculate plant growth rates in maths. The objective is to design experiential learning opportunities that facilitate the establishment of connections between subjects, thereby ensuring that the educational content is firmly rooted in real-life scenarios." (Simion, A, *op.cit*, p.180)

physiological (increased heart rate (tachycardia), muscle tension, dry mouth, breathing irregularities, tremor, sweating, stomach pain), or behavioral (avoidance, social phobia, nervousness, decreased motor control). For singers, these symptoms can directly affect vocal production, because singing requires precise coordination of respiratory, laryngeal and articulatory systems. Numerous musicians who have achieved international lyrical careers have spoken in interviews¹⁹ or autobiographical books about stage fright and its potentially destructive force. In managing stage fright, it is necessary for a singer to recognize and normalize stage fright symptoms, to differentiate between anxiety as a paralyzing emotion and the opportunity for “activation” by transforming anxiety into functional energy. The Yerkes-Dodson law²⁰ describes an inverted-U relationship between arousal and performance. Moderate activation enhances focus; excessive anxiety impairs coordination.

In her book, *The Psychology of Music Performance Anxiety*, Dianna T. Kenny²¹ synthesizes evidence supporting cognitive-behavioral interventions and exposure-based strategies for musicians. Successful performers have developed strategies for regulating emotional responses during performance. These strategies often involve cognitive techniques that help performance maintain focus and composure under pressure. Mental training techniques, such as relaxation exercise, cognitive restructuring, and visualization, have been

¹⁹ The Romanian tenor with the most performances at the Metropolitan Opera in New York, Vasile Moldoveanu, honestly stated in an interview: “Knowing that I am excessively emotional, and having left Romania with weakened nerves [during the communist regime], in the career that I have managed to build, self-control has played a very important role. Emotion is constructive only if it does not have destructive repercussions on the psyche, lowering you below your maximum level, your artistic achievement.” (Diaconescu, Ioana, *Vasile Moldoveanu un tenor român pe patru continente. Pasiune și credință*, Editura Muzicală, București 2011, p.44)

²⁰ The Yerkes–Dodson law is a principle in psychology that states that performance on a task depends on the level of psychological or physiological activation (excitement, stress, arousal). The relationship between the two variables has the shape of an inverted U-curve: too low activation leads to poor performance; moderate activation leads to optimal performance; and too high activation to decreasing performance (too strong stimuli cause stress reactions that slow down learning). The concept was formulated by American psychologists Robert M. Yerkes and John Dillingham Dodson in a study published in 1908 “*The relation of strength of stimulus to rapidity of habit formation*”, 1908), in which the two investigated how the intensity of stimuli influences learning in animals. Their final conclusion was that performance is maximal at moderate levels of activation.

²¹ Dianna Kenny's book “*The Psychology of Music Performance Anxiety*” (Oxford University Press, 2011) is divided into 10 chapters: 1. Phenomenology of music performance anxiety; 2. Conceptual framework; 3. The anxiety disorders; 4. Defining music performance anxiety; 5. Epidemiology of music performance anxiety; 6. Theoretical contributions to understanding music performance anxiety; 7. Treatment; 8. Severe music performance anxiety: phenomenology and theorizing; 9. Common themes in the lives of performing musicians; 10. Prevention and pedagogy.

shown to reduce performance anxiety and improve performance, confidence among musicians.

Performance psychology is an interdisciplinary field that studies the psychological factors that influence optimal performance in evaluation or competition situations. The field analyzes how cognitive, emotional and behavioral processes influence results in contexts such as: sports, music and performing arts, education, high-pressure professional activities (medicine, aviation). The main goal is to understand and optimize human performance in pressure situations. In Music Psychology, the field studies aspects such as: Music Performance Anxiety, mental preparation for concerts, memorization and execution under pressure.

In addition to cognitive demands, Opera singers must also manage intense, emotional experiences: Opera performance often involves dramatic storytelling, and the expression of powerful emotions – and at the same time singers must maintain technical control of breathing foundation and resonance. This dual requirement creates a unique psychological challenge: performers must express emotions authentically without allowing those emotions to disrupt vocal control.

A cognitive reframing exercise: instead of “I am anxious,” reframe as: “This activation prepares my body for optimal performance.”

2.2. Pre-Performance Rituals

Pre-Performance Rituals are habits that can lead to performance, through constant practice. Consistent rituals enhance perceived control and reduce uncertainty; they can reinforce neural predictability. I talked about this in more detail in my book²². They consist in small habits such:

- organizing the preparation time for a show (with the understanding of the need to alternate study with breaks related to the “assimilation period”²³);
- establishing the clear schedule of the performance day;
- physical rituals (related to rest, nutrition and training on the day of the competition/ concert, as well as the assumption of silence).

²² Radu, Cristina, *O viziune modernă asupra formării cântărețului de operă*, op.cit., p. 319-322.

²³ “The body, mind, muscles, need a break after a sustained effort, to process and assimilate information. Just as during the night while we sleep, the brain defragments all the information received during the day, selects, sorts and sends each one to its “little house” - similarly, such a process is necessary after our mind and body have studied the new repertoire, worked out down to the smallest details, for several weeks. A period of a few days of break is precisely optimal to let this repertoire be assimilated more deeply. It is also a moment of *refresh* after which all the details will fit better into the *puzzle*.” (Radu, op.cit, p.319)

Psychic preparation rituals (remembering the motivation that gives meaning to the artistic act, activating the resources of calm and lucidity, the moment of concentration²⁴ preceding entering the stage, visualization and breathing control).

Exercise: Five-Minute Protocol before entering the stage

- Regulated breathing.
- Visualization of first successful phrase.
- Brief affirmation ("Centered and flexible").
- Physical anchor gesture.

2.3. Endurance and Attention in Long Performances

Mental endurance and stage flexibility are two key aspects for professionals. Opera requires sustained cognitive endurance. Mental fatigue compromises pitch accuracy and expressive nuance. To sustain endurance and focus a singer must:

- Calculate dosages of effort during a long performance (this depends on a good knowledge of the opera, but also on knowledge of one's own physical and mental capabilities)
- Do micro-resets between acts (hydration, diaphragmatic breathing, brief grounding) maintain performance stability. The goal is to maintain quality under cumulative stress and physical endurance throughout a long opera performance.

2.4. Critical Incident Recovery

Stage performance includes unpredictable variables. Critical situations can occur at any time during a live performance: from vocal technique errors to forgetting the text (words) or events that can distract your focus (another soloist forgets a key line; a decor element or a stage props is missing, etc.).

²⁴ "I believe that it is useful that before entering the stage (in a concert/show/contest/audition) each artist has a moment of concentration within themselves. A moment in which to deepen and slow down the breathing rhythm, to sing in their mind the entire piece they will begin with (imagining all the sensations of breathing support and the setting of the sound, but also the details of mimicry and stage acting, as if they were singing the piece in front of the audience) and especially to create an optimal inner state to enter the stage: with a positive, confident, secure, elegant feeling and especially with... joy! Joy restores the release, disperses the negative emotions of the artist and the adverse ones of the audience or jury. A bright face, with a dignified and casual attitude will be a good business-card when entering the stage for any artist. And it is good not to forget, even in the most stressful moments, *why* they do music, art, this job... because it brings us and those we share it with, joy." (Radu, *op.cit.*, p. 321)

The goal of mental training is to recover as quickly as possible from the critical incident and to go forward by refocusing your attention, or by vocal recalibration (after various emission errors), or by retrieving landmarks from memory (after losing the text).

In real time, on stage, recovery after the incident is done by:

- Instant acknowledgment.
- Prolonged exhalation (if there is time).
- Refocusing attention through structural re-anchoring in score.
- Real-time, panic-free decisions for rapid recovery.
- Sometimes even through controlled improvisation within stylistic limits.

Procedures used as mental training to prevent critical situations in the performance:

- Visualization (previewing possible situations).
- Practicing with deliberate mistakes and recovering in the next musical measure.
- Mental openness to adapt to non-ideal conditions that may occur in performances or artistic tours (poor acoustics of the hall, conflicts with conductor/stage colleagues; lack of props or various stage accidents).
- Concern for the dosage of effort intensity during the performance.

2.5. Flow state

Another important concept in performance psychology is *the flow state*²⁵ which refers to a state of deep concentration and complete absorption in an activity.

Flow is characterized by intense focus, loss of self-consciousness, a sense of control, enjoyment of the activity. The flow state is associated with optimal, performance conditions, and high level of artistic expression.

For opera singers, entering flow can be described as a state that could allow them to fully embody characters while maintaining technical vocal stability. Entering the state of “flow” is trained through a short protocol, sometimes called the Focus-Breath-Intention loop²⁶. The goal is to quickly shift from excessive cognitive control to intuitive execution, which allows performance to become natural and expressive.

²⁵ Concept formulated by Hungarian psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi in the book “Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience” (1990)

²⁶ In practical procedures in elite conservatories such as the Royal College of Music, London.

Mental training can help performers increase the likelihood of experiencing flow by improving concentration, reducing anxiety, and promoting confidence.

3. Post-Performance Recalibration

In the training of an artist, the emphasis is generally placed on his mental training in order to achieve a high degree of professionalism in his career. However, it is also important to follow the processes after the end of a concert or a show. Aspects such as: getting out of character after the end of the show, when identification with a role in an opera performance is very intense; separating personal identity from the result; a balanced relationship with criticism and feedback; cultivating internal motivation and a mentality oriented towards continuous artistic growth and development.

3.1. Psychological de-roling

The opera singer spends a lot of time understanding a new role. This process is extremely detailed and meticulously documented by a singer, especially when it comes to transposing it into a character that comes from a completely different culture. Such as, for example, the challenge of embodying the role of the Japanese geisha Cio-Cio-San, in the opera “Madama Butterfly” by G. Puccini, for a soprano coming from a Western culture.

But it is equally difficult sometime to exit, at the end of a performance, from a high-intensity role that you have interpreted. Emotionally intense roles may prolong sympathetic activation. Failure to de-role may contribute to insomnia or emotional dysregulation.

Italian soprano Renata Scotto confesses in an interview, about the tragic ending of a performance of “Madama Butterfly”, after Cio-Cio-San commits suicide: “it is a great emotional ordeal. I found it very difficult actually getting up at the end to take the curtain call. I remember once at the Metropolitan Opera I felt completely unable to get up. Rudolf Bing, who loved that opera so much – he thought I was really dead because I just could not get up. So he came and helped me to get up. “Are you OK?” he asked me. “Yes, I’m OK now – but I wasn’t OK five seconds ago” – because you don’t leave the character when the curtain comes down! I would have preferred not to go out for applause and just go home, because you have something that stays inside for at least 30 minutes.”²⁷

²⁷ Tolansky, Jon, *Singers on Singing: Signature Role series – Renata Scotto discusses Madama Butterfly*, Interview with Italian soprano Renata Scotto, Hampsong Foundation, May 2018.

Exiting a role, especially one of great emotional intensity, is an act of psychic hygiene that the professional singer goes through, more or less consciously, after a performance, as he removes his makeup and takes off his stage costumes. However, there is no fixed limit that marks the exit from the role, with some singers experiencing insomnia and states of emotional arousal long after the curtain falls.

3.2. Identity & Balanced relationship with criticism and feedback

Separating self-worth from outcome prevents identity fusion with performance result. It is necessary for the opera singer to develop a balanced relationship with criticism and feedback. This aspect can be difficult to control, because the singer's instrument (voice) is not detached from the body and the personality of the performer. It coincides with his own body and his own physical and psychological abilities. Any criticism is received directly and personally by the singer, and only training of the artist's discernment can balance his perception, in order to receive feedback in a constructive way.

3.3. Growth Mindset and Professional Longevity

Learning is a fundamental psychological need of every human being. For an artist, it is necessary to maintain a "lifelong work in progress" mentality and, regardless of the success achieved on stage, to constantly return to training and study. In order to create a solid internal motivation in this regard, the singer must anchor himself in deep values, which give meaning and purpose to his actions. A singer's motivation to continue studying and developing is fueled by the passion for singing, the desire to overcome certain limits, the desire to assert himself, the desire to communicate a message, the desire to evolve, to share in communion with the audience the values in which he believes, the desire to educate²⁸.

Artistic longevity requires embracing continuous evolution rather than outcome fixation.

In an interview²⁹, the famous Italian conductor Nelo Santi stated: "I was fortunate to learn from my own mistakes in life and to understand that my natural talent and even the memory with which I was endowed can become obstacles to my artistic development. If we rely only on them, we soon become improvisers and charlatans. Native talent must always be seconded and

²⁸ Radu, op.cit, p. 231.

²⁹ Paulo Isotta, Nello Santi: Il mio Verdi lontano dall'Italia, Corriere della Sera, 18/10/2001

doubled by study. Thanks to this unity between talent and study, I can be sure of myself when I am on the concert podium and I can, in turn, inspire security to the orchestra and calm to the soloists.”

Unlearning Tasks

The LUR model³⁰, Learning (acquiring knowledge) - Unlearning (eliminating old paradigms or wrong methods) - Relearning (updating knowledge) is considered essential for lifelong learning. This model enables learning in a completely holistic way, exposing individuals to new techniques, activities, and skills³¹.

But in the modern environment (technology, organizations, education, art performances), the problem is not only the accumulation of information, but also the abandonment of outdated ones. People develop stereotypes, erroneous beliefs, rigid mental models over time. Unlearning is important for adapting to change, for correcting cognitive biases, for updating.

Unlearning does not mean just “forgetting”, but the conscious abandonment of old mental models, revising existing assumptions, restructuring existing knowledge and replacing outdated knowledge with new ones. Unlearning involves several cognitive processes:

- Reflective thinking (Critical analysis of existing beliefs).
- Cognitive restructuring (Modification of mental structures).
- Memory reconsolidation (When memories are reactivated, they can be modified).
- Interference learning (New information can replace or inhibit old information).

In singers’ practice, relearning is often generated by constructing new knowledge from the own experience. This step incorporating what has been acquired from the unlearning process³².

Scientific literature shows that mental training contributes to the learning-unlearning process through processes like: neuroplasticity³³ (the brain can rewrite neural connections); mental rehearsal³⁴ (mental practice modifies cognitive representations; mental rehearsal of the score helps with

³⁰ Menya-Olando, R. A. & Mawang, L., *Learning, Relearning And Unlearning*. In E. O. Adu, B. I. Omodan, C. T. Tsotetsi, & B. Damoah (Eds.), *Pedagogical strategies for 21st-century classrooms* (pp. 106-113)

³¹ Menya-Olando, R. A. & Mawang, L., *op.cit*, p.107.

³² Menya-Olando, R. A. & Mawang, L., *op.cit*, p.109.

³³ Slagter, H. A., Davidson, R. J., & Lutz, A., *Mental training as a tool in the neuroscientific study of brain and cognitive plasticity*, *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, 5, Article 17, 2011.

³⁴ Driskell, J., Copper, C., & Moran, A., *Does mental practice enhance performance?* *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 79(4), 1994.

music memorization and artistic performance³⁵); extinction learning³⁶ (unlearning automatic responses); cognitive restructuring³⁷ (changing beliefs and mental schemas).

Research shows that unlearning is often more difficult than learning³⁸, because people are attached to their own beliefs and tend to accept only information that confirms existing beliefs. The human brain prefers automatism and low energy consumption (predictability); changing beliefs can create cognitive dissonance.

Few practical advices adapted to singers' mental training:

- Too much control can lead to tension and rigidity. Instead, is preferable a good concentration and constant contact with the body, by supporting the breath and correctly adapting the muscle engagement (in different vocal registers)
- Instead of the common tendency to minimize or maximize the technical difficulty of a passage, it is better to practice a realistic assessment, to outline the structure of a role, being aware of difficult passages and insist on resolving them.
- Artists often struggle with the tendency to give up when things get too technically difficult, but proficiency develops over time, overcoming the moments when you feel like you don't like it anymore and don't want to continue. Constant study with modern methods (see interleaving/flow) can lead to new solutions, which gives them confidence and unlocks their energy and passion for art again.
- Unlearn the habit of constantly resorting to the technical or interpretive solutions of others. Most of the time we are tempted to do research through comparative auditions, to look for references and technical or interpretive solutions in established singers, which is partly good for our documentation, but sometimes leads to a lack of creativity and authenticity. But each artist is different in terms of physical and psychological structure, vocal peculiarities. It is preferable to look for the most suitable solutions for our voice, rather than copying external models indiscriminately.

³⁵ Bernardi, N., Schories, A., Jabusch, H., Colombo, B., & Altenmüller, E., *Mental practice in music memorization: An ecological-empirical study*, Music Perception: an interdisciplinary journal 30 (3), 2013

³⁶ Beltrani, Amanda, *Getting Rid of a Behavior You Don't Like*, Palo Alto University, Business of Practice.

³⁷ Ackerman, E., Nortje, A., *Cognitive Restructuring: The Power of Reframing Thoughts*, Positive Psychology, 2025.

³⁸ Qazi, Naila, *Why Unlearning Is Harder Than Learning*, Change Management Practitioner Canada.

- Eliminate habits that weaken performance or divert concentration, such as sleep deprivation, lack of organization of time, lack of precise goals, or of clear targets for each objective, disorder in breath control or sound emission.
- Unlock your mind flexibility. There are no fixed and definitive solutions. Singers are exposed to a constantly changing artistic environment, different artistic visions (of conductors, directors or other singers) and also to their own daily body changes. They must accept the reality that, under the apparent daily normality, in fact, day by day, the body ages and gradually loses its energy, flexibility and lightness. Subjected to various stressors, the voice responds differently every day. Singers must be open-minded, alert, assume and adapt innovative solutions to maintain their career at certain times.
- In the search for psychological balance, it is necessary for artists to assume a growth mindset versus destructive perfectionism: to set healthy limits for perfectionism. Performance is not an end in itself, but a path of discipline and deepening for those who do something with passion. Using discoveries and in-depth research from Performance Science, which provides a broader view of mental training and optimized study methods, can lead to increased performance.

Conclusions

Opera singers faced unique cognitive, emotional, and physiological challenges that require more than technical vocal training. Similar to elite athletes, opera singers must develop also psychological skills that support consistent high-level performance. These skills include: concentration, emotional regulation, performance confidence, mental imagery, stress management, and cognitive flexibility.

Mental training helps singers not only improve performance quality but also cope with the psychological challenges associated with professional music careers. Basic practices have shown promising results in improving both performance quality and physiological well-being. And through this, mental training can have a major impact on vocal health and longevity.

In this article I presented the theoretical foundations of mental training in the context of opera singing, integrating concepts from psychology, neuroscience, music pedagogy, and performance science. I have structured the information in three chapters, following the progressive stages in which singers are involved in their practice (Study and preparation; Stage performance and evaluative contexts; Post-performance recalibration) and I have suggested some practical

exercises. As in each paper in this series, at the end of this article, I reviewed the principles underlying the “Learning – Unlearning – Relearning” (LUR) process and the specific aspects as reflected in Mental Training.

Integrating mental training into vocal pedagogy may become an essential component of professional singer training. At elite conservatories like the Juilliard School and the Royal College of Music³⁹, mental training for musicians has become a formal component of professional training. The integration of these methods into current pedagogical practice in Romania, but also into the individual study of musicians, could bring important benefits in artistic performance.

Performers make mistakes on stage, but how they react after it, how they recover and how they continue – makes the difference as professionals. The international careers of elite artists, as well as the pedagogical practice in the world’s great music conservatories, the techniques of preparing young people for international competitions, as well as the latest scientific research in Performance Science – all claim that mental study has significant benefits in optimizing stress response, recovering from errors, increasing focus and performance.

For those who embark on the path of singing, the learning process is an ongoing process that lasts a lifetime and brings both artistic skills and self-knowledge.

REFERENCES

- Ackerman, E., Nortje, A., *Cognitive Restructuring: The Power of Reframing Thoughts, Positive Psychology*, 25.11.2025, Link: <https://positivepsychology.com/cbt-cognitive-restructuring-cognitive-distortions/> accessed: January 2026
- Beltrani, Amanda, *Getting Rid of a Behavior You Don't Like*, Palo Alto University, Business of Practice Blog, Link: <https://paloalto.edu/resources/business-of-practice-blog/behavior-you-dont-like> - accessed March 2026
- Bernardi, N., Schories, A., Jabusch, H., Colombo, B., & Altenmüller, E., *Mental practice in music memorization: An ecological-empirical study*, *Music Perception: an interdisciplinary journal* 30 (3), 2013, p.275-290, DOI: 10.1525/mp.2012.30.3.275

³⁹ At the Royal College of Music there is even a Performance Science program (Master of Science in Performance Science + link: <https://www.rcm.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/msc/>) that scientifically studies artistic performance. It proposes an interdisciplinary working model, combining: cognitive psychology, neuroscience, biomechanics, musical pedagogy. Common techniques used in the program: focus control, attention switching, flow induction, practice design, stress inoculation training. A key concept is “Peak Performance State” (flow): the moment when execution becomes automatic, without excessive cognitive control.

- Diaconescu, Ioana, *Vasile Moldoveanu un tenor român pe patru continente. Pasiune și credință* (Vasile Moldoveanu: A Romanian Tenor on Four Continents. Passion and Faith), Editura Muzicală, București 2011.
- Driskell, J., Copper, C., & Moran, A., *Does mental practice enhance performance?* Journal of Applied Psychology, 79(4), 1994, p. 481–492, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.79.4.481>
- Dunlosky, John, Katherine A. Rawson, Elizabeth J. Marsh, Mitchell J. Nathan, and Daniel T. Willingham, *Improving Students' Learning With Effective Learning Techniques: Promising Directions From Cognitive and Educational Psychology*, Psychological Science in the Public Interest 14, no. 1 (2013) p. 4–58. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1529100612453266>.
- Isotta, Paulo, Nello Santi: Il mio Verdi lontano dall'Italia, Corriere della Sera, 18/10/2001.
- Kenny, Dianna T., *The Psychology of Music Performance Anxiety*, Oxford University Press, 2011, DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199586141.001.0001
- Lotzer, Martin; Scheler, Gabriela; H-RM Tan; Braun, Christoph; Birbaumer, N, *The musician's brain: Functional imaging of amateurs and professionals during performance and imagery*, Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience, 15(3), 2003, p. 401–413, DOI: 10.1016/j.neuroimage.2003.07.018
- McPherson, Garry. E., & Zimmerman, Barry J., *Self-regulation of musical learning. A Social Cognitive Perspective on Developing Performance Skills*, In R. Colwell & P. Webster (Eds.), *MENC handbook of research on music learning*, 2011, p.130-175, DOI: 10.1093/acprof:osobl/9780199754397.003.0004
- Menya-Olando, R. A. & Mawang, L., *Learning, Relearning And Unlearning*. In E. O. Adu, B. I. Omodan, C. T. Tsotetsi, & B. Damoah (Eds.), *Pedagogical strategies for 21st-century classrooms* (pp. 106-113), ERRCD Forum, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.38140/obp1-2024-15>
- Qazi, Naila, *Why Unlearning Is Harder Than Learning*, Change Management Practitioner Canada, 26.01.2026, Link: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-unlearning-harder-than-learning-naila-qazi-gkimc/> accessed: February 2026
- Radu, Cristina, *O viziune modernă asupra formării cântărețului de operă* (A modern perspective on training the opera singer). Ed. Muzicală, București, 2017.
- Radu-Giurgiu, Cristina, *Exploring Learning And Unlearning In Singing Technique (Breath)*, Studia UBB Musica, LXVIII, Special Issue 2, 2023 (p. 181 – 196) DOI: 10.24193/subbmusica.2023.spiss2.11.
- Radu, Cristina, *Exploring Learning and Unlearning (II): Effective Study Methods for the Individual Practice of Professional Singers*, Studia Universitatis Babes-Bolyai Musica, 70(1), 2025, p. 127–147, DOI: 10.24193/subbmusica.2025.1.08
- Simion, Anca, *Transferability in Music Education: From Practice Routines To Performance-Based Learning And Evaluation Across Disciplines*, STUDIA UBB MUSICA, LXX, 2, 2025 (p. 177 – 194), DOI: 10.24193/subbmusica.2025.2.09
- Slagter, H. A., Davidson, R. J., & Lutz, A., *Mental training as a tool in the neuroscientific study of brain and cognitive plasticity*, Frontiers in Human Neuroscience, 5, Article 17, 2011, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnhum.2011.00017>

- Tolansky, Jon, *Singers on Singing: Signature Role series – Renata Scotto discusses Madama Butterfly* – Interview with Italian soprano Renata Scotto, published on the internet site Hampsong Foundation, May 2018;
Link: <https://hampsongfoundation.org/resource/singers-on-singing-renata-scotto-discusses-madama-butterfly/> (link accessed in February 2026)
- Williamon, Aaron, *Musical excellence. Strategies and Techniques to Enhance Performance*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. ISBN: 0198525354
- Wulf, Gabriele, *Attentional focus and motor learning: a review of 15 years*, *International Review of sport and Exercise psychology*, 6(1), 2013, p. 77-104, DOI: 10.1080/1750984X.2012.723728
- Yerkes, Robert M.; Dodson, John Dillingham, *The Relation of Strength of Stimulus to Rapidity of Habit-Formation*, *Journal of Comparative Neurology and Psychology*, 1908, Vol. 18, nr. 5, p. 459–482. DOI: 10.1002/cne.920180503
- Zaiets, Vitalii, Oksana; Benziuk, Oleksandr; Lihotsky, Oleksandr, *Cognitive, Emotional and Methodological Aspects of Musician-Performer's Thinking*, *Studia UBB Musica, LXX*, 1, 2025 (p. 239 – 248) DOI 10.24193/subbmusica.2025.1.15

EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION IN PERFORMING ARTS: A PSYCHOLOGICAL AND MUSICIAN ANALYSIS

TETIANA KRYLOVA¹, VERONIKA PIESHKOVA²,
VILENA ZHOLDAKOVA³, IHOR MOKRENKO⁴,
TETIANA RUSOVA⁵

SUMMARY. Emotional expressiveness in musical performance remains a key, but insufficiently researched component of professional training of musicians, because it is it that determines the artistic persuasiveness of interpretation and the depth of communication between the performer and the listener. The relevance of the topic is due to the need for modern music pedagogy in methods that combine the technical, psychological and artistic components of the performance process. The aim of the study is to identify the internal techniques of student performers and to clarify their influence on the formation of emotional expressiveness in the process of preparing a musical work. The methodology is based on qualitative empirical approaches: semi-structured interviews, diary entries, in-depth interviews and content analysis with elements of quantitative generalization. The study showed that internal techniques form a complex system, which includes visualization, metaphorical, associative, bodily-motor and concentration practices, which provide the performer with the ability to form an emotionally holistic and artistically convincing image of the work. It was found that students use various interpretive strategies - figurative-visual, structural-logical, technical-analytical and combined, which determine the individual style of working with musical material. The results showed that emotional expressiveness

¹ Senior Lecturer, Department of Singing and Choral Conducting, Faculty of Singing and Jazz Art, R. Glier Kyiv Municipal Academy of Music, Kyiv, Ukraine; Email: krylova1958@ujis.in.ua

² Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Associate Professor of the Department of Music History, R. Glier Kyiv Municipal Academy of Music, Kyiv, Ukraine; Email: veronika_peshova@ukr.net

³ Candidate of Art Criticism, Associate Professor of the Department of Performing Disciplines No. 1, Faculty of Performing Arts and Musicology, R. Glier Kyiv Municipal Academy of Music, Kyiv, Ukraine; Email: vilena-violin@ukr.net

⁴ Honored Artist of Ukraine, Associate Professor of the Department of Singing and Choral Conducting, Faculty of Singing and Jazz Arts, R. Glier Kyiv Municipal Academy of Music, Kyiv, Ukraine; Email: vasenkaa@gmail.com

⁵ Associate Professor of the Department of Singing and Choral Conducting, Faculty of Singing and Jazz Art, R. Glier Kyiv Municipal Academy of Music, Kyiv, Ukraine; Email: tetanarusova@gmail.com



arises as an integrative product of the interaction of emotional, cognitive and motor processes, and various internal techniques play the role of “mediators” between intention and sound. The practical significance lies in the possibility of using the obtained conclusions to build modern pedagogical models aimed at developing emotional interpretation, improving performing skills and expanding individual creative strategies of students. The study creates a basis for further interdisciplinary studies aimed at combining psychological mechanisms, musicological analysis and digital methods for assessing performing expression.

Keywords: emotional expressiveness; musical performance; interpretive strategies; internal techniques; bodily-motor mechanisms; musical expression; musical pedagogy, psychology of performance, interpretative strategy, performative expression, artistic embodiment, musical semantics, emotional dramaturgy, communicative function, affective dynamics, semiotics of expressiveness

Introduction

Emotional expressiveness in performing arts remains one of the most complex, multidimensional and at the same time the least formalized categories of musical pedagogy and music psychology. Despite the considerable interest in the phenomenon of musical emotionality, the questions of how exactly the performer forms the emotional image of a work, what mechanisms underlie interpretative decisions and why different musicians realize the emotional potential of the same composition in different ways still remain open. Modern music education is faced with the problem of the gap between technical training and the development of artistic and emotional interpretation. Students often master the instrument well, but experience difficulties in forming their own expressive manner, which complicates their development as creative, convincing performers. That is why the study of internal techniques, mechanisms of interpretative strategies and factors that determine emotional expression acquires particular relevance and practical significance. A review of scientific sources shows that the issue of emotional expressiveness is studied at the intersection of several scientific directions. In the psychology of music, attention is focused on the nature of musical emotions, their perceptual mechanisms and multilevel models of emotional experience^{6, 7}.

⁶ Juslin, Patrik, “Major theories of emotion causation and their applicability to music: The case for multi-level approaches”, *Music Perception*, vol. 42, no. 5, 2025, pp. 421–466.
<https://doi.org/10.1525/mp.2025.2396878>

⁷ Singh, Manvir, and Samuel Mehr, “Universality, domain-specificity and development of psychological responses to music”, *Nature Reviews Psychology*, vol. 2, 2023, pp. 333–346.
<https://doi.org/10.1038/s44159-023-00182-z>

Musicological studies analyze the structural parameters of music - tempo, dynamics, timbre, articulation and intonational logic as means of forming emotional content^{8, 9}. At the same time, interdisciplinary works consider the influence of motor skills, corporeality and gestural plasticity on the perception and reproduction of emotions in music^{10, 11}. A separate direction is formed by modern digital studios, which analyze algorithmic recognition of musical emotions, parametric modeling of expressiveness, and automated tools for evaluating expression^{12, 13, 14, 15}. Such a wide scientific palette testifies to a deep interest in the phenomenon of musical expression, but at the same time reveals a number of unresolved contradictions and gaps.

Despite a significant number of works, the issue of individual internal techniques of performers - those invisible mental, imaginative and emotional-regulatory mechanisms that determine the nature of interpretation and distinguish one performer from another - remains insufficiently researched. Existing studies mostly focus on the structure of the musical text or on objectively measured performance parameters, while the internal processes of the performer - his visualization, metaphorical thinking, bodily sensations, individual emotional logic - remain fragmentarily described. In addition, there is a noticeable lack of

⁸ Frank, Joshua, Peter M. C. Harrison, Barry Ross and Carina Venter, "Exploring the variability of musical-emotional expression over historical time", *Empirical Musicology Review*, vol. 18, no. 2, 2024, pp. 117–132. <https://doi.org/10.18061/emr.v18i2.8711>

⁹ Anderson, Cameron, Jamie Ling and Michael Schutz, "Beyond the notes: Clarifying the role of expressivity in conveying musical emotion", *Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology*, vol. 0, no. 0, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17470218251372335>

¹⁰ Di Stefano, Nicola, Daniela Lo Presti, Luigi Raiano, Carlo Massaroni, Chiara Romano, Emiliano Schena, Marc Leman and Domenico Formica, "Expressivity attributed to music affects the smoothness of bowing movements in violinists", *Scientific Reports*, vol. 14, 2024, 22267. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-024-73593-4>

¹¹ Turner, Craig, Robin Mailly, Fabien Dal Maso and Felipe Verdugo, "Impact of expressive intentions on upper-body kinematics in two expert pianists", *Frontiers in Psychology*, vol. 15, 2025, 1504456. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1504456>

¹² Chowdhury, Shreyan, and Gerhard Widmer, "On perceived emotion in expressive piano performance: Further experimental evidence for the relevance of mid-level perceptual features", *arXiv:2107.13231*, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2107.13231>

¹³ Chowdhury, Shreyan, and Gerhard Widmer, "Decoding and visualising intended emotion in an expressive piano performance", *arXiv:2303.01875*, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2303.01875>

¹⁴ Chowdhury, Shreyan, and Gerhard Widmer, "Expressivity-aware music performance retrieval using mid-level perceptual features and emotion word embeddings", In *FIRE '23: Proceedings of the 15th Annual Meeting of the Forum for Information Retrieval Evaluation*, 2024, pp. 73–77. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3632754.3632761>

¹⁵ Bontempi, Pierluigi, Sergio Canazza and Antonio Rodà, "Research in Computational Expressive Music Performance and Popular Music Production: A Potential Field of Application?", *Multimodal Technologies and Interaction*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2023, p. 15. <https://doi.org/10.3390/mti7020015>

research that comprehensively describes the interaction of emotional, cognitive and technical-motor components in student performers, especially in the process of real preparation of a musical work. It is this “blank spot” that has led to the need for a purposeful empirical study of internal performance techniques and interpretative strategies.

In view of the above, the purpose of this work is to identify the structure and features of the internal techniques of student performers, characterize their influence on the formation of emotional expressiveness and clarify the patterns of individual interpretive strategies in the process of preparing a musical work. To achieve the goal, the following tasks were defined: to describe existing approaches to the study of emotional expression in modern research; to identify key types of internal techniques based on empirical data; to analyze the interpretive strategies of students of various instrumental specialties; to summarize the results obtained in the context of modern musicological and psychological concepts and to determine the prospects for further scientific studies.

Literature review

Modern scientific approaches to the study of emotional expressiveness in the performing arts are based on an interdisciplinary combination of music psychology, neuroscience, musicology, movement ergonomics, and digital analytics. A number of works reveal the multilevel nature of emotions manifested in performance: the theory of multilevel models^{16, 17}, composer-performer mechanisms of emotional transfer¹⁸, and universal patterns of musical sensuality^{19, 20}. Considerable attention has been paid to musicological parameters that shape the emotional drama of a work: structural-semiotic models²¹, the role of timbre and atmosphere²², as well as specific means of

¹⁶ Juslin, Patrik, 2025.

¹⁷ Singh, Manvir, and Samuel Mehr, 2023.

¹⁸ Varga, Peter, and Brian Parkinson, “Mechanisms of musical emotion transfer: Insights from 22 composers and the musicological and psychological literature”, *Journal of New Music Research*, vol. 53, no. 5, 2025, pp. 383–398.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09298215.2025.2481852>

¹⁹ Wiafe, Abigail, Sami Sieranoja, Abedin Bhuiyan and Pasi Fränti, “Emotional response to music: The Emotify+ dataset”, *EURASIP Journal on Audio, Speech, and Music Processing*, vol. 2025, no. 31, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13636-025-00419-0>

²⁰ Wu, Hongwei, Danni Wang and Linshu Zhou, “Tunes that move us: The impact of music-induced emotions on prosocial decision-making”, *Frontiers in Psychology*, vol. 15, 2025, 1453808. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1453808>

²¹ Frank, Joshua, Peter M. C. Harrison, Barry Ross and Carina Venter, 2024.

²² Di Stefano, Nicola, Daniela Lo Presti, Luigi Raiano, Carlo Massaroni, Chiara Romano, Emiliano Schena, Marc Leman and Domenico Formica, 2024.

musical expression - dynamics, tempo, agogy, and articulation^{23, 24}. Wheeler et al.²⁵ emphasize that the level of DNA methylation is associated with structural changes in the brain.

Research confirms that emotional expressiveness is the result of a combination of cognitive analysis, internal interpretive techniques, and motor plasticity of the performer; in particular, work with kinematic monitoring shows the relationship between emotional attitudes and the fluidity of performing movements^{26, 27}. In parallel, there is growing interest in digital and experimental methods of performance analysis - algorithmic detection of emotions^{28, 29, 30}, computational models of expression^{31, 32}, visualization of emotional characteristics of music and behavioral responses of listeners^{33, 34}. Another body of research emphasizes the bodily-motor nature of musical experience and the multimodality of musical communication^{35, 36, 37}, as well

²³ Anderson, Cameron, Jamie Ling and Michael Schutz, 2025.

²⁴ Kawamura, S., Z. Liu, T. Murakami, K. I. Watanabe, M. Hasegawa, K. Ushiwata, and H. Yoshida, "Deep neural network simulates tempos estimated by five wind instrumentalists from playing sheet music", *Transactions of the Japanese Society of Kansei Engineering*, vol. 23, no. 2, 2024, pp. 141–151. <https://doi.org/10.5057/jjske.TJSKE-D-23-00042>

²⁵ Wheeler, Emily, David Q. Stoye, Simon R. Cox, Joanna M. Wardlaw, Amanda J. Drake, Mark E. Bastin and James P. Boardman, "DNA methylation and brain structure and function across the life course: A systematic review", *Neuroscience & Biobehavioral Reviews*, vol. 113, 2020, pp. 133–156. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neubiorev.2020.03.007>

²⁶ Di Stefano, Nicola, Daniela Lo Presti, Luigi Raiano, Carlo Massaroni, Chiara Romano, Emiliano Schena, Marc Leman and Domenico Formica, 2024.

²⁷ Turner, Craig, Robin Mailly, Fabien Dal Maso and Felipe Verdugo, 2025.

²⁸ Chowdhury, Shreyan, and Gerhard Widmer, 2021.

²⁹ Chowdhury, Shreyan, and Gerhard Widmer, 2023.

³⁰ Chowdhury, Shreyan, and Gerhard Widmer, 2024.

³¹ Bontempi, Pierluigi, Sergio Canazza and Antonio Rodà, 2023.

³² Ma, Jiajia, "Emotional expression and analysis in music performance based on edge computing", *Mobile Information Systems*, vol. 2022, 2022, 4856977. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2022/4856977>

³³ Kim, Aimee Jeehae, "Differential Effects of Musical Expression of Emotions and Psychological Distress on Subjective Appraisals and Emotional Responses to Music", *Behavioral Sciences*, vol. 13, no. 6, 2023, p. 491. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs13060491>

³⁴ Izbicki, Paul, Cathleen Delaney, Emily Gettes, Emily Gustafson, Arianna Meyer, Madison Norman, and Elizabeth L. Stegemöller, "Preferred music listening does not affect cognitive inhibition in young and older adults", *Psychomusicology: Music, Mind, and Brain*, vol. 33, no. (1-4), 2023, pp. 48–56.

³⁵ Kosma, Maria, Nick Erickson and Ashlynn Gremillion, "The embodied nature of physical theater: artistic expression, emotions, interactions", *Research in Dance Education*, 2024, pp. 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14647893.2024.2331128>

³⁶ Kosma, Maria, Nick Erickson and Ashlynn Gremillion, 2024.

³⁷ Mitchell, Helen, Diana Blom and Peter Long, "We hear with our eyes!" Unlocking tacit knowledge about multisensory music performing", *International Journal of Music Education*, vol. 0, no. 0, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02557614241264900>

as methods for teaching students emotionally expressive interpretation^{38, 39}. Taken together, these works demonstrate that emotional expressiveness in music appears as a complex integrative system in which psychological, motor, structural, and technological factors interact to determine the individual nature of performance and to create space for further research in the field of musical expression.

An important direction of modern science focuses on comparing productive and perceptual mechanisms of emotional expressiveness. The works of Micallef Grimaud and Eerola⁴⁰ show differences between how performers encode emotional meanings into musical parameters and how listeners recognize them, emphasizing the ambiguity of emotional semantics. Based on such a point of view, the association between neural activities and behavioral patterns during the process of listening to music has been explored⁴¹, which demonstrates that cognitive, emotional, and motor systems interact in a complex manner. The other body of works is technological in nature: emotion recognition algorithms in sound, models of the tempo and dynamics of instrumental performance, intelligent performing expression analysis^{42, 43, 44}. The studies point to the necessity to develop the correct mathematical models that would be able to trace minute changes in the performance style that have not been observed by the conventional musicological technique in the past.

Researchers also pay attention to the impact of musical aesthetic experience on the psychological state of the performer and the listener. The results show that music is able to change inhibitory reactions⁴⁵, to evoke different levels of emotional response depending on individual sensitivity and

³⁸ Piličiauskaitė, Lolita Jolanta, and Giedrė Gabnytė Bizevičienė, "Learning creative interpretation in the music classroom: The possibilities of the emotional expression method", *Creativity Studies*, vol. 18, no. 2, 2025, pp. 635–649. <https://doi.org/10.3846/cs.2025.22736>

³⁹ Li, Hanxi, "Musical expression in music performance and its enhancement pathway", *Frontiers in Art Research*, vol. 5, no. 13, 2023, pp. 87–92. <https://doi.org/10.25236/FAR.2023.051316>

⁴⁰ Micallef Grimaud, Annaliese, and Tuomas Eerola, "Emotional expression through musical cues: A comparison of production and perception approaches", *PLOS ONE*, vol. 17, no. 12, 2022, e0279605. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0279605>

⁴¹ Salvo, Joseph, Ania Holubecki and Rodrigo M Braga, "Correspondence between functional connectivity and task-related activity patterns within the individual", *Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences*, vol. 40, 2021, pp. 178–188. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cobeha.2021.05.003>

⁴² Chowdhury, Shreyan, and Gerhard Widmer, 2023.

⁴³ Chowdhury, Shreyan, and Gerhard Widmer, 2024.

⁴⁴ Kawamura, S., Z. Liu, T. Murakami, K. I. Watanabe, M. Hasegawa, K. Ushiwata, and H. Yoshida, 2024.

⁴⁵ Izicki, Paul, Cathleen Delaney, Emily Gettes, Emily Gustafson, Arianna Meyer, Madison Norman, and Elizabeth L. Stegemöller,

previous experience⁴⁶, and to influence socio-behavioral decisions⁴⁷. In the context of performance education, scholars emphasize methods for forming creative interpretation and developing emotional expression in students, emphasizing the importance of emotional techniques in the educational process^{48, 49}. Works in the field of stage corporeality and multimodal expression^{50, 51} demonstrate that visual, kinetic and spatial aspects of performance play no less a role than purely aural characteristics. Given the general trend towards digitalization, the authors also observe the active development of computational methods for describing performing expression, particularly in the field of popular music, where expressiveness modeling is becoming an applied issue⁵².

Summarizing the analyzed works, it can be noted that modern research covers a wide range of issues: from neurophysiological reactions and machine learning algorithms to musicological analysis and the psychology of creative interpretation. At the same time, two key aspects remain insufficiently revealed in previous studies: the systematicity of performers' internal techniques as a factor of emotional expression and the relationship between students' individual interpretive strategies and the structural elements of a musical work. These gaps determine the need for more in-depth empirical research aimed at integrating psychological, technical, and musicological parameters of the performance process.

Methods

The study of emotional expressiveness in performing activities was conducted at the P. I. Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine and included student performers of various instrumental specialties (violin, flute, trombone, piano, cello, bassoon). To obtain reliable data, qualitative empirical methods were used, in particular semi-structured interviews, diary entries and in-depth interviews, which allowed recording interpretive decisions, internal techniques, emotional states and thinking strategies of participants in the process of preparing a musical work. The main materials of the study were individual performing diaries, which were filled out over a period of 14 days, and interview transcripts, on the basis of which further analysis was carried out. The content analysis method was used to classify and generalize

⁴⁶ Kim, Aimee Jeehae, 2023.

⁴⁷ Wu, Hongwei, Danni Wang and Linshu Zhou, 2025.

⁴⁸ Piličiauskaitė, Lolita Jolanta, and Giedrė Gabnytė Bizevičienė, 2025.

⁴⁹ Li, Hanxi, 2023.

⁵⁰ Kosma, Maria, Nick Erickson and Ashlynn Gremillion, 2024.

⁵¹ Mitchell, Helen, Diana Blom and Peter Long, 2024.

⁵² Bontempi, Pierluigi, Sergio Canazza and Antonio Rodà, 2023.

the data, which made it possible to identify typical groups of internal techniques and determine the patterns of interpretive strategies. To quantify the internal techniques, an item-by-item count of 26 individual instances of their use recorded in the participants' diaries over a 14-day period was performed. Each technique description was considered as a unit of analysis, after which all instances were grouped into four main categories: visualization, metaphorical and associative, bodily-motor, and concentration. The full set of primary data is presented in Appendix A, and the final distribution of techniques is presented in Appendix B. These data formed the basis for constructing Figure 2, which shows the proportional contribution of each category of internal techniques. Elements of comparative analysis were used to compare the approaches of performers of different instrumental groups, and quantitative generalization (in the form of counting the frequency of application of techniques) provided structuring of the material and identification of the most common performing practices. Such a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches allowed for a comprehensive characterization of the mechanisms of formation of emotional expression and individual interpretative strategies of student performers.

Results

The theoretical foundations of emotional expressiveness in performing arts are formed at the intersection of two scientific planes - psychological and musicological, each of which offers its own vision of the nature of emotions in the process of performing and perceiving music. In the psychological tradition, emotional expressiveness is considered as a multilevel phenomenon, including cognitive, affective and regulatory mechanisms through which the performer interprets musical material and transforms the internal state into an artistically significant result. Modern research emphasizes the importance of multilevel models of emotions, because the reaction to music is realized not at one, but at several interconnected levels - from physiological changes to reflective comprehension⁵³. This is why expressiveness of emotions in performance seems to be the product of the intricate combination of experiences, interpretative choice and motivational variables which condition the selection of performance strategies.

Musicological approaches, on the other hand, focus on those elements of the musical fabric that allow the performer to materialize the emotional content of the work. Expressiveness is interpreted not only as a result of the musician's emotional state, but also as a purposeful use of musical language tools —

⁵³ Juslin, Patrik, 2025.

tempo, dynamics, phrasing, timbre, articulation, agogics — that are capable of creating emotional tensions, contrasts, and drama⁵⁴. In this context, it is important that emotionality is not identified with impulsiveness or spontaneity; on the contrary, numerous works demonstrate that expressiveness is often based on rational decisions by the performer who analyzes the style, genre, semantics, and historical context of the music⁵⁵. Therefore, musicological analysis allows us to consider emotional expressiveness as the result of an intellectual elaboration of the structure of the work, where emotion is a reflection of the logic of the composition and its cultural code.

An important component of modern approaches is the recognition of the role of performing gesture, corporeality and synesthetic perception, which form additional channels of emotional communication. Research proves that expressiveness of movements, motor plasticity and microkinetics of performance significantly affect both the quality of sound production and the perception of artistic content by listeners⁵⁶. In this context, emotional expressiveness is considered as a bodily rooted process, where muscle tension, breathing, balance and micromovements form semantic markers of performance. Such a bodily-kinetic perspective does not contradict psychological models, but deepens them, demonstrating that emotions in performance do not exist separately from the physical process of playing.

The complexity of the phenomenon is also confirmed by empirical studies of expressiveness in real performance. For example, experiments on the analysis of timbre, smoothness of movements and their connection with interpretive intention prove that performers constantly modify their technique according to emotional setting, while such changes can be measured by objective instrumental methods⁵⁷. It means that emotional expressiveness is functional and quantifiable, it is not an absolutely subjective category. It is actualized in certain acoustic and kinematic parameters, therefore interdisciplinary analysis is possible - between psychology and neuroscience and digital acoustics.

Therefore, the theory of emotional expressiveness of performing arts covers a vast scope of methods: on the one hand, there are multilevel psychological models describing the mechanisms of experiencing and managing emotions, and on the other hand, there are musicological theories that understand expressiveness as an organized manner in which musical content is organized. The unity of these methods gives us an opportunity to view

⁵⁴ Anderson, Cameron, Jamie Ling and Michael Schutz, 2025.

⁵⁵ Frank, Joshua, Peter M. C. Harrison, Barry Ross and Carina Venter, 2024.

⁵⁶ Turner, Craig, Robin Mailly, Fabien Dal Maso and Felipe Verdugo, 2025.

⁵⁷ Di Stefano, Nicola, Daniela Lo Presti, Luigi Raiano, Carlo Massaroni, Chiara Romano, Emiliano Schena, Marc Leman and Domenico Formica, 2024.

emotional expressiveness as a system phenomenon that integrates both the inner conditions of the performer, interpretative choices, technical possibilities and artistic outlook of the piece. The integrative viewpoint of this kind creates the opportunities of learning more about the mechanisms of the artistic communication in performing practice and provides the ground to do the experimental and theoretical research further.

The purposeful use of the musical language, or a set of means, which enable the performer to reproduce the text of the piece, yet also to create its interior psychological logic, is the expression of emotional expressiveness in performing arts. Modern scholars have found that tempo, dynamics, articulation, phrasing, timbre, and agogics are not secondary technical parameters: they are the foundation of the level of tension, contrasts, and emotional transitions in the musical narrative between the performer and the listener^{58,59}. These aspects interact with each other to create emotional dramaturgy – the dynamics of developing feelings and significances to maintain the listener in an inner artistic conversation with the composition.

Tempo forms the rhythm of the music in time, affects the impression of either relaxation, tension, energy or meditateness. Dynamics accentuates the differences, creates tension release and climax, articulation provides the musical phrase with rest and emotional coloration of the nature of sound production. Phrasing forms semantic blocks, which the performer puts emphasis on as the most important. Microrhythmic changes, called agogy makes it livelier, breathing of music, which makes it more natural in intonation of speech. The sound color is the Timbre that most of the time becomes the focal point of the emotional image of the work⁶⁰. All these elements do serve different functions alone, yet their combination produces a complete dramatic curve the emotional path of listeners in the process of hearing music.

That is why it is worth trying to investigate the important parameters of musicology in a systematized manner. The information is presented in Table 1 which is a summary of the contribution of each piece in the emotional expressiveness and drama of a piece.

⁵⁸ Frank, Joshua, Peter M. C. Harrison, Barry Ross and Carina Venter, 2024.

⁵⁹ Anderson, Cameron, Jamie Ling and Michael Schutz, 2025.

⁶⁰ Di Stefano, Nicola, Daniela Lo Presti, Luigi Raiano, Carlo Massaroni, Chiara Romano, Emiliano Schena, Marc Leman and Domenico Formica, 2024.

EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION IN PERFORMING ARTS:
A PSYCHOLOGICAL AND MUSICIAN ANALYSIS

Table 1

Component	Musicological characteristic	Role in creating emotional drama	Examples of emotional impact
Tempo	The speed of the music; steady or variable tempo	Creates the overall character of the work, affects the level of energy and emotional tension	Slow tempo - calm, longing; fast - anxiety, excitement
Dynamics	Volume change (p–f), dynamic contrasts	Forms climaxes, build-ups, and declines of emotions; creates dramatic peaks	Gradual crescendo - a gradual increase in emotion; decrescendo - a gradual decrease
Phrasing	Logical division of musical material	It highlights semantic blocks, ensures consistency and logic of emotional development	Long phrases - fluency; short ones - restlessness, discontinuity
Agogica	Microtempo changes, rubato, ritardando, accelerando	“Revives” the musical fabric, gives a feeling of naturalness, dynamic emotionality	Rubato - individualization, expressiveness; ritardando - waiting
Timbre	The sound color of an instrument or voice	Creates an emotional image, provides associativity and sensory brightness	Dark timbre - drama; light - lightness, tenderness
Articulation	Character of sound production (legato, staccato, tenuto)	Gives relief, emphasizes emotional accents and the nature of movement	Legato - lyricism; staccato - energy, irony

**Musicological components of emotional expressiveness and
their role in creating emotional drama**

Source: the table was created by the author based on^{61, 62, 63}

The generalization of the most important musicological elements proves the fact that the emotional expressiveness is not a chance or purely intuitive feature of performance. It is founded on the ordered application of the musical language, with each of the parameters constituting a distinct level of emotional influence. Tempo provides the dynamic structure, dynamics the emotional impulses,

⁶¹ Frank, Joshua, Peter M. C. Harrison, Barry Ross and Carina Venter, 2024.

⁶² Anderson, Cameron, Jamie Ling and Michael Schutz, 2025.

⁶³ Di Stefano, Nicola, Daniela Lo Presti, Luigi Raiano, Carlo Massaroni, Chiara Romano, Emiliano Schena, Marc Leman and Domenico Formica, 2024.

articulation and phrasing provide the musical text with content, agogics imparts life to it and timbre provides the last sensual dimension. These elements form a whole dramaturgy when interacting, and it is this, which forms the foundation of profound artistic communication between the performer and the listener.

The inner mechanism of emotional expressiveness is psychological, and it is the inner mechanism of the music performer, with the help of which the music becomes an individual, with its emotional power and persuasiveness of art. Scientific research of recent years shows that the emotionality of performance is not limited to feeling or intuition: it is the result of a complex internal interaction of cognitive interpretations, technical-operational decisions and emotional-regulatory processes^{64, 65}. The performer creates an emotional image of the work not only by reproducing the musical text, but also through deep mental processing of musical information, through bodily-motor actions and through reflective work with their own emotions. It is important to emphasize that these components operate in constant interaction, forming a psychological model that largely determines the artistry of the performance.

The cognitive component encompasses the processes of musical perception, analysis of the structure of the work, style, genre expectations, and semantics. This is what allows the performer to understand the logic of emotional drama and build an interpretation based on knowledge, not just intuition. The operational component is associated with the technical implementation of the idea - the ability to transform emotional intentions into specific means of performance: changing dynamics, nuance, choosing articulation, controlling agogics. The emotional-regulatory component provides control over one's own emotional state, the ability to enter the emotional image of the work, maintain stability, or, conversely, allow emotions to influence the interpretation. Such mechanisms become the basis for creating a deep performing contact with music, and therefore - for artistic persuasiveness.

The interaction of the three components that form the psychological model of emotional expressiveness is presented in Figure 1. The SmartArt structure reflects the movement of information and emotions in the performance process: from intellectual analysis to technical implementation, and from there to emotional authenticity.

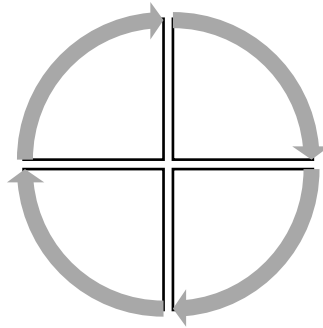
The analysis of the three main psychological components shows that emotional expressiveness is a complex system, where each element performs a separate but indispensable function. The cognitive component gives us intellectual perception of music and its logic of emotion; the operational component gives us the opportunity to put our thoughts into music, the emotional-regulatory

⁶⁴ Juslin, Patrik, 2025.

⁶⁵ Singh, Manvir, and Samuel Mehr, 2023.

component provides a vital relationship between the performer and the piece and gives its genuineness and artistic conviction. The performance of emotionality on a whole forms a holistic model in interaction where the quality of interpretation, the level of perception of music among the listeners is established.

Figure 1



Psychological components of emotional expressiveness in interaction

Source: the figure was created by the author based on^{66, 67, 68}

Emotional reaction of a performer to a musical piece and structural characteristics on such a piece can never be separated. Scientific studies confirm that the musical elements - melodic lines, harmonic patterns, rhythmic impulses, colors of the timbre and opposing dynamic positions may produce certain emotional states in the performer, which, in turn, affect the interpretation of the work^{69, 70}. It is a one-way affair: the performer not simply reacts to the musical framework, but also triggers his own emotional sensation to support or re-conceptualize the purpose of the composer. In such a way the interpretative approach turns out to be a communication between the text and the inner world of the musician.

It should be taken into account that the structural characteristics of music have the ability to stimulate varying degrees of emotional activation. To illustrate, a sudden harmonious contrast, or increase in density of the texture, tend to arouse more emotionality on the other hand the monotonous or minimalist music material also helps to stabilize emotions or even detach oneself. However, the emotions experienced by the performer do not always coincide with the emotional semantics of the work. In such situations, the musician is forced to either adjust

⁶⁶ Juslin, Patrik, 2025.

⁶⁷ Singh, Manvir, and Samuel Mehr, 2023.

⁶⁸ Anderson, Cameron, Jamie Ling and Michael Schutz, 2025.

⁶⁹ Singh, Manvir, and Samuel Mehr, 2023.

⁷⁰ Micallef Grimaud, Annaliese, and Tuomas Eerola, 2022.

his state to the composition or adapt the interpretation in such a way as to avoid emotional dissonance. That is why studying the relationship between the emotional experience of the performer and the musical structure is key to understanding the mechanisms of creating an artistically convincing performance.

Table 2 summarizes the main types of musical structures, typical emotional responses of performers, and the ways in which these emotions influence interpretive strategy.

Table 2

Structural element of the work	Typical emotional reactions of the performer	Possible interpretive influence	An example of emotional-performance adaptation
Melodic development (rise, fall, climax)	Inspiration, tension, anticipation, excitement	Formation of culminating accents, expansion of phrases, increased expressiveness	Strengthening the timbre color in the climax zone
Harmonic changes (modulations, dissonances, resolutions)	Anxiety, anticipation, excitement, relief	Accentuating dramatic moments, changing dynamics, agogics	Ritardando before harmonic resolution
Rhythmic organization (syncopé, pulsation, irregularity)	Excitement, mobility, internal tension	Distinctive changes in articulation, contrast in the movement of phrases	Energetic staccato on syncopated sections
Timbre color (instrumental colors)	Nostalgia, warmth, drama, a sense of space	Choosing a soft or hard sound extraction style	Using gentle legato in a soft timbre zone
Texture density (density or transparency)	Overload, lightness, inner focus	Dynamics variability, pedal control, tempo change	Easy pedaling in transparent textured episodes
Dynamic contrasts (p–f transitions)	Activation, shock, emotional aggravation	Building a dramatic arc, changing the nature of the movement	A sharp transition to forte to express climactic affect

The relationship of the performer's emotions with musical structure and the impact on the interpretive strategy

Source: the table was created by the author based on^{71, 72, 73, 74}

⁷¹ Singh, Manvir, and Samuel Mehr, 2023.

⁷² Anderson, Cameron, Jamie Ling and Michael Schutz, 2025.

⁷³ Di Stefano, Nicola, Daniela Lo Presti, Luigi Raiano, Carlo Massaroni, Chiara Romano, Emiliano Schena, Marc Leman and Domenico Formica, 2024.

⁷⁴ Micallef Grimaud, Annaliese, and Tuomas Eerola, 2022.

The presented analysis demonstrates that the emotional reactions of the performer and the musical structure of the work are in constant interaction. Performing emotions can enhance the composer's dramaturgy, or, conversely, enter into contradiction with it, which encourages the musician to search for new interpretative solutions. The internal states of the performer are dynamic: they depend on technical training, attention, experience, as well as on the psychological attitude to a particular work. It is this interaction that creates the uniqueness of each performance, because the interpretative strategy becomes the result of a combination of the structure of the work and the subjective emotional position of the performer.

Internal techniques used by musicians during the preparation of a performance are an important psychological mechanism for enhancing emotional expression. They do not only assist the performer in getting adjusted to the semantic and emotional image of the music, but provide a distinctive interpretative approach that defines artistic uniqueness of an artist. On the basis of diaries and in-depth interviews, it was discovered that musicians take an active part in visualization, metaphorization, body-motor strategies, concentration environments as well as emotional provocation means. These methods are a form of in-house self-control because the performer is able to stabilize the emotional state, display the drama of the work as well as enhance personal engagement with the music. Such methods were confirmed by modern studies as ones that can be useful in enhancing performance expressiveness, since internal techniques allow the musician to leave behind the mechanical reproduction of musical text to conscious, emotionally colored performance that the audience can relate to^{75, 76}. Study members were observed to find internal methods serving as a mediator between emotional intention and technical execution, which enabled them to gain a better insight into their intention and develop an attitude-specific execution plan.

The data for this study were collected as part of an empirical project conducted at the Tchaikovsky National Academy of Music of Ukraine. The study covered one educational institution, but included several different instrumental departments: strings, winds, piano performance, and chamber music. A total of 8 participants were involved – student performers, represented by different instrumental specialties: violin, flute, trombone, piano, cello, bassoon. Thus, the data provided a variety of performance approaches and emotional and technical strategies.

Data collection was carried out in three stages. *Initial semi-structured interview*. It was conducted to determine the participants' preliminary understanding of the concepts of "performance expression", "emotional dramaturgy", "interpretation".

⁷⁵ Juslin, Patrik, 2025.

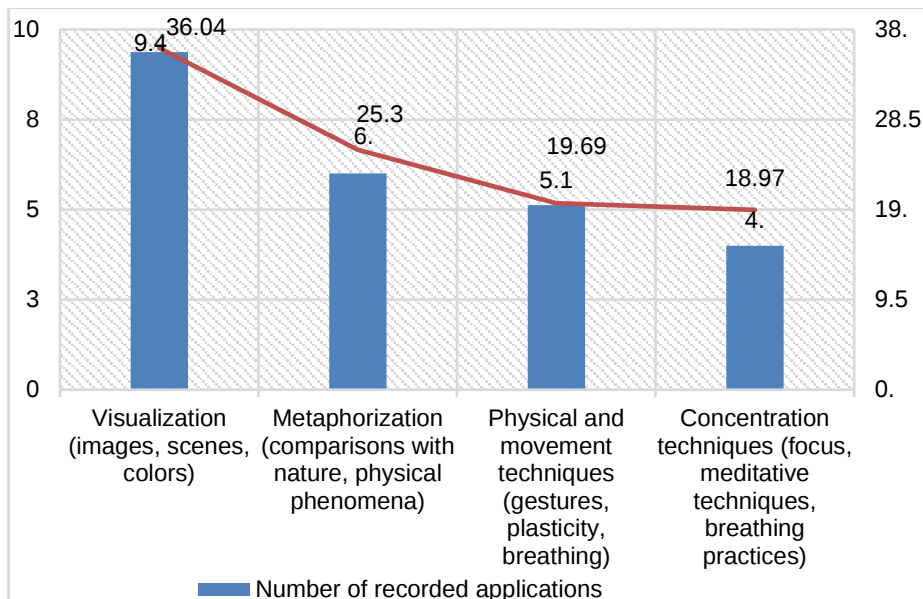
⁷⁶ Turner, Craig, Robin Mailly, Fabien Dal Maso and Felipe Verdugo, 2025.

At this stage, personal ideas and expectations were recorded. *Individual performer's diary*, which was filled out over 14 days. In the diary, participants described technical difficulties, their own emotions, the emotion of the work, internal techniques that they used to achieve the desired emotional expressiveness and interpretative decisions. The diaries became the main source of data on internal techniques. *In-depth interview*, conducted on the basis of the diary. Its purpose was to clarify the meaning of the described techniques, assess their effectiveness, and determine the logic of choice.

As a result, four main groups of internal techniques were identified: visualization, metaphorical and associative, bodily-kinesthetic, concentration, and regulatory. For further quantitative generalization, a sample of 26 recorded *individual techniques* was created, which were classified by frequency of use.

Figure 2 shows the distribution of the techniques used, presented as numerical data for further graphical analysis. The numerical values for constructing the diagram were obtained by classifying and counting 26 empirical units recorded in the performers' diaries. Detailed primary records are given in Appendix A, and a generalized frequency table is given in Appendix B. It is these data that were used to form the percentage values and absolute frequencies presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2



Frequency of use of internal techniques by performers (empirical data)

Source: the figure was created by the author

The presented data show that most often performers resort to visualization techniques (36.04%), which indicates their effectiveness in forming a holistic emotional image of the work and enhancing interpretative depth. The use of metaphorization and body-movements has an average frequency of use (25.30% and 19.69, respectively) which may be confirmed by the fact that these two techniques are auxiliary as they are used to tune the performer to proper emotion state. The minimum percentage of concentration techniques is explained (18.97), although stable usage underlines the necessity of the performers to the psycho-emotional regulation and concentration in the process of interpreting the complicated works.

It has been analyzed that the internal methods of performers create a multi-level system that is actively involved in the creation of emotional manifestation. The most widespread are the visualization practices that enable the establishment of a whole emotional field of the work and get immersed in the artistic image. Metaphorization gives music additional semantic depth, allowing the performer to tie it to their own experience. Bodily-motor techniques contribute to the naturalness of performance and the regulation of physical tension, which affects the quality of sound. Concentration methods provide psycho-emotional stability and concentration necessary for the implementation of complex works. The combination of these techniques creates a unique interpretative field for each performer. That is why internal techniques can be considered a key resource for the formation of performing identity and emotional communication with the listener.

Individual interpretive strategies of student performers are formed at the intersection of their technical level, professional experience, emotional sensitivity and personal style of working with a musical work. The process of preparation for performance involves the selection of semantic accents, means of emotional expressiveness and internal techniques that allow the musician to create his own artistic vision of the composition. Analysis of performers' diaries and interviews shows that students' interpretive decisions are systemic, although very individual: some musicians focus on the structural logic of the work, others on their own experiences or technical effects that form the desired emotional result^{77, 78}. That is why the study of interpretive strategies allows us to understand how students interpret a musical text, how they adapt it to their own performing style and what psychological and technical mechanisms they activate in this process.

Based on the empirical data obtained, the most characteristic interpretative approaches that students used when working with selected works were summarized. A detailed classification and main patterns are presented in Table 3.

⁷⁷ Anderson, Cameron, Jamie Ling and Michael Schutz, 2025.

⁷⁸ Turner, Craig, Robin Mailly, Fabien Dal Maso and Felipe Verdugo, 2025.

Table 3

Instrument / performer	Basic interpretive strategy	Typical techniques and means	Emotional and artistic accents
Violin (1)	Structurally logical	Accented phrasing, tempo control, and heightened climaxes	Voltage - discharge, a clear contrast
Flute	Figurative-visual	Visualization of "air flow", smooth legato phrases	Lightness, transparency, "breathing music"
Trombone	Physical and motor skills	Use of bodily impulses, rhythmic plasticity	Stability, confidence, clarity of intonation
Piano	Emotional-metaphorical	Metaphors of color and movement, agogica rubato	Fluidity, richness of nuance, drama
Cello (1)	Combined	Searching for timbre depth, changing dynamics	Nostalgia, internal dialogue
Violin (2)	Analytical and technical	Articulation work, accented agogics	Virtuosity, clarity, emotional composure
Bassoon	Associative-metaphorical	Color synesthesia, imaginary dialogue images	Irony, playfulness, intimacy
Cello (2)	Intonation-expressive	Timbre detailing, working with vibrato changes	Flowing emotional waves, lyrics

**Individual interpretive strategies of student performers
and their key characteristics**

Source: the table was created by the author based on^{79, 80, 81, 82}

The analysis of individual interpretive strategies demonstrated that student performers build their own artistic trajectory based on different approaches – structural, emotional, technical, associative and combined. Despite the significant difference between instrumental schools and personal styles, several patterns can be traced: performers give priority to either the emotional image or the technical organization of the work; most students combine several strategies; emotional expression is formed through a combination of internal techniques and musical means; the most successful interpretations are based on the

⁷⁹ Singh, Manvir, and Samuel Mehr, 2023.

⁸⁰ Anderson, Cameron, Jamie Ling and Michael Schutz, 2025.

⁸¹ Turner, Craig, Robin Mailly, Fabien Dal Maso and Felipe Verdugo, 2025.

⁸² Micallef Grimaud, Annaliese, and Tuomas Eerola, 2022.

conscious interaction of the structure of the work and their own emotional experience. This confirms that interpretation is a creative process, where technique and emotion appear as complementary components.

The practical development of emotional expressiveness requires a systematic approach from both performers and teachers, so the key task is to create a learning environment that combines technical accuracy, artistic freedom and psychological support. First of all, performers are encouraged to actively work with internal techniques – visualization, metaphorization, body movements and concentration methods, as they contribute to a deeper understanding of the emotional content of the work and the formation of authentic interpretation. In their turn, teachers are to stimulate the students to consciously manipulate the emotional drama of the work, to invite them to consider the intonation lines, the contours of the musical phrases, dynamic solutions and choices to use, to agogic development, to understand the influence of the structural elements of music on experiences and decisions to make.

It is also important to integrate into the educational process a systematic analysis of one's own emotions during performance, using individual diaries, video recordings or post-session reflection. This allows performers not only to be aware of changes in their own emotional states, but also to correlate them with technical difficulties, the structure of the piece and changes in performance skills. Work with body awareness deserves special attention: controlling breathing, balance, muscle tension and motor freedom contributes to greater confidence and naturalness in interpretation. Teachers are recommended to use physical warm-up practices, conscious movement or short meditative techniques as part of the preparation for classes, as they help performers reach a state of creative concentration more quickly.

No less important is the creation of conditions for the development of the student's individual style. Performers should experiment with musical material - changing tempo, dynamics, agogics, timbre and articulation, in order to find the most accurate embodiment of their own vision of the work. Teachers should support this search by explaining the limits of stylistic freedom and possible historically based interpretation options. This approach forms the performer's ability to make conscious artistic decisions, and not simply reproduce the text by inertia. The guidance is also related to the creation of auditory imagination: it is recommended to listen to various interpretations of the same piece, to compare the performance styles and to compare their own music to have a comprehensive internal picture of music.

Another suggestion is to constantly train psychological resilience and control of emotions. The performers should learn to strike a balance between emotional expressiveness and professionalism since emotional expressiveness may interfere with the technical precision and excessive control stifles the artistic

expression. Mindfulness methods, breathing exercises, and brief reflections can help teachers to become less anxious and more focused. All these practices are aimed at the creation of a fully-grown performing personality, capable of a perfect combination of technical mastery with honest, persuasive emotionality.

Finally, the evolution of the emotional expressiveness and interpretive ability is the elaborate process that demands serious consideration of the emotional, technical and psychological aspects of the performance practice. The combination of internal techniques, an analytical approach to musical structure, purposeful work on bodily freedom and systematic pedagogical support creates optimal conditions for the formation of expressive, emotionally rich and professionally mature musical performance.

Discussion

The obtained results of the study demonstrate that the emotional expressiveness of student performers is formed through a combination of internal techniques, individual interpretive strategies and the structural logic of the musical work, which is consistent with a number of modern concepts, but at the same time reveals certain discrepancies with individual approaches in the scientific literature. In particular, the dominance of visualization techniques recorded in the sample confirms the assumption about the importance of figurative thinking in the process of forming performing expression, which is in line with research on synesthetic and multimodal mechanisms of musical interpretation^{83, 84}. At the same time, such results partially contradict the authors who emphasize primarily structural analytics and cognitive processing of music as the basis of artistry^{85, 86}, because in our study the role of rational analysis was less dominant compared to figurative and bodily practices.

Comparing individual strategies of students with data from other researchers allows us to make an assumption that the balance between cognitive and emotional-intuitive approaches depends on the level of training and psychological sensitivity of the performer. In contrast to studies that emphasize the universality of certain psychological mechanisms of emotional response^{87, 88}, our results indicate significant variability of individual models, which may indicate that universal patterns of emotionality are combined with individual aesthetic and

⁸³ Kosma, Maria, Nick Erickson and Ashlynn Gremillion, 2024.

⁸⁴ Mitchell, Helen, Diana Blom and Peter Long, 2024.

⁸⁵ Frank, Joshua, Peter M. C. Harrison, Barry Ross and Carina Venter, 2024.

⁸⁶ Anderson, Cameron, Jamie Ling and Michael Schutz, 2025.

⁸⁷ Juslin, Patrik, 2025.

⁸⁸ Singh, Manvir, and Samuel Mehr, 2023.

technical preferences of performers. This conclusion resonates with the position of Varga and Parkinson⁸⁹, who argue that the mechanisms of musical emotional influence combine general perceptual patterns and authorial-performative specificity.

We should also compare our information on body-motor techniques with the data on works that indicate the importance of motor skills on emotional expressiveness^{90, 91}. Our observations confirm these findings: students who actively worked with body plasticity demonstrated a more expressive and stable interpretive line. However, contrary to the biased assumption that motor skills are a key determinant of expressiveness, in our sample they turned out to be only part of a more complex system in which emotional regulation and image tuning play an equally significant role. This suggests that bodyness is effective only when integrated with cognitive and emotional components, which is consistent with interdisciplinary models of multilevel emotional processes⁹².

Some differences between our study and works devoted to algorithmic analysis of musical expression^{93, 94} are that such studies focus on objectively measured parameters - dynamics, tempo, acoustic characteristics. Instead, our study demonstrates that an important source of emotional expressiveness are subjective internal techniques that are not always amenable to instrumental measurement. Accordingly, the question arises about the limits of automated analysis of musical expression, since algorithmic models cannot yet fully reflect the internal artistic process of the performer.

The interpretation of the obtained results also allows us to point out the limitations of the study: a relatively small sample of participants, limited by the same conditions of the educational environment, as well as the qualitative nature of the data, which does not allow for broad quantitative generalizations. Despite this, the results support the hypothesis that emotional expression is formed as a result of the interaction of internal techniques, the structural logic of the work and the emotional-cognitive mechanisms of the performer. The practical application of the obtained conclusions lies in the possibility of developing pedagogical models that take into account not only technical training, but also the internal psychological work of the performer.

Summarizing the discussion, it can be stated that the results of our study are mostly consistent with modern concepts of multicomponent emotional

⁸⁹ Varga, Peter, and Brian Parkinson, 2025.

⁹⁰ Di Stefano, Nicola, Daniela Lo Presti, Luigi Raiano, Carlo Massaroni, Chiara Romano, Emiliano Schena, Marc Leman and Domenico Formica, 2024.

⁹¹ Turner, Craig, Robin Mailly, Fabien Dal Maso and Felipe Verdugo, 2025.

⁹² Juslin, Patrik, 2025.

⁹³ Chowdhury, Shreyan, and Gerhard Widmer, 2023.

⁹⁴ Bontempi, Pierluigi, Sergio Canazza and Antonio Rodà, 2023.

expressiveness, but at the same time deepen them, emphasizing the role of internal techniques as a little-studied, but key link in the performance process. Further studies are necessary to expand the sample, apply instrumental analysis of movements and acoustic characteristics, as well as to investigate in more depth the interaction between subjective techniques and objective parameters of musical expression.

Conclusion

The conducted research demonstrated that the emotional expressiveness of student performers is formed not only through work with musical text, but primarily through the active involvement of internal techniques that determine the individual trajectory of interpretation and provide a deeper contact with the artistic essence of the work. It was expected that the leading factors of expressiveness would be musical-structural parameters, however, the results showed a greater importance of visualization, metaphorical and bodily-motor mechanisms, which emphasizes the novelty of the obtained data and expands the understanding of the nature of performing interpretation. The practical significance lies in the fact that the systematic use of such techniques can be integrated into the educational process as an effective tool for the development of emotional expressiveness, contributing to the formation of a conscious, stylistically balanced and artistically convincing interpretation. However, the study has certain limitations related to the small sample size, the qualitative nature of the materials, and the homogeneity of the educational environment, which does not allow for broad generalizations to be made about other performing schools. Prospects for further studies lie in expanding the sample, including instrumental methods of movement and sound analysis, as well as in an interdisciplinary comparison of internal techniques with objective indicators of performing expressiveness. In this context, the study of the interaction of subjective emotional strategies with digital technologies of performance analysis is particularly relevant, which can create a basis for innovative methods of training musicians and a deeper understanding of the emotional nature of performing art.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, Cameron, Jamie Ling and Michael Schutz, "Beyond the notes: Clarifying the role of expressivity in conveying musical emotion", *Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology*, vol. 0, no. 0, 2025.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/17470218251372335>

- Bontempi, Pierluigi, Sergio Canazza and Antonio Rodà, "Research in Computational Expressive Music Performance and Popular Music Production: A Potential Field of Application?", *Multimodal Technologies and Interaction*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2023, p. 15. <https://doi.org/10.3390/mti7020015>
- Chowdhury, Shreyan, and Gerhard Widmer, "On perceived emotion in expressive piano performance: Further experimental evidence for the relevance of mid-level perceptual features", *arXiv:2107.13231*, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2107.13231>
- Chowdhury, Shreyan, and Gerhard Widmer, "Decoding and visualising intended emotion in an expressive piano performance", *arXiv:2303.01875*, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2303.01875>
- Chowdhury, Shreyan, and Gerhard Widmer, "Expressivity-aware music performance retrieval using mid-level perceptual features and emotion word embeddings", In *FIRE '23: Proceedings of the 15th Annual Meeting of the Forum for Information Retrieval Evaluation*, 2024, pp. 73–77. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3632754.3632761>
- Di Stefano, Nicola, Daniela Lo Presti, Luigi Raiano, Carlo Massaroni, Chiara Romano, Emiliano Schena, Marc Leman and Domenico Formica, "Expressivity attributed to music affects the smoothness of bowing movements in violinists", *Scientific Reports*, vol. 14, 2024, 22267. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-024-73593-4>
- Frank, Joshua, Peter M. C. Harrison, Barry Ross and Carina Venter, "Exploring the variability of musical-emotional expression over historical time", *Empirical Musicology Review*, vol. 18, no. 2, 2024, pp. 117–132. <https://doi.org/10.18061/emr.v18i2.8711>
- Izbicki, Paul, Cathleen Delaney, Emily Gettes, Emily Gustafson, Arianna Meyer, Madison Norman, and Elizabeth L. Stegemöller, "Preferred music listening does not affect cognitive inhibition in young and older adults", *Psychomusicology: Music, Mind, and Brain*, vol. 33, no. (1-4), 2023, pp. 48–56. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pmu0000300>
- Juslin, Patrik, "Major theories of emotion causation and their applicability to music: The case for multi-level approaches", *Music Perception*, vol. 42, no. 5, 2025, pp. 421–466. <https://doi.org/10.1525/mp.2025.2396878>
- Kawamura, S., Z. Liu, T. Murakami, K. I. Watanabe, M. Hasegawa, K. Ushiwata, and H. Yoshida, "Deep neural network simulates tempos estimated by five wind instrumentalists from playing sheet music", *Transactions of the Japanese Society of Kansei Engineering*, vol. 23, no. 2, 2024, pp. 141–151. <https://doi.org/10.5057/jjske.TJSKE-D-23-00042>
- Kim, Aimee Jeehae, "Differential Effects of Musical Expression of Emotions and Psychological Distress on Subjective Appraisals and Emotional Responses to Music", *Behavioral Sciences*, vol. 13, no. 6, 2023, p. 491. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs13060491>
- Kosma, Maria, Nick Erickson and Ashlynn Gremillion, "The embodied nature of physical theater: artistic expression, emotions, interactions", *Research in Dance Education*, 2024, pp. 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14647893.2024.2331128>

- Li, Hanxi, "Musical expression in music performance and its enhancement pathway", *Frontiers in Art Research*, vol. 5, no. 13, 2023, pp. 87–92.
<https://doi.org/10.25236/FAR.2023.051316>
- Ma, Jiajia, "Emotional expression and analysis in music performance based on edge computing", *Mobile Information Systems*, vol. 2022, 2022, 4856977.
<https://doi.org/10.1155/2022/4856977>
- Micallef Grimaud, Annaliese, and Tuomas Eerola, "Emotional expression through musical cues: A comparison of production and perception approaches", *PLOS ONE*, vol. 17, no. 12, 2022, e0279605.
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0279605>
- Mitchell, Helen, Diana Blom and Peter Long, "We hear with our eyes!"Unlocking tacit knowledge about multisensory music performing", *International Journal of Music Education*, vol. 0, no. 0, 2024.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/02557614241264900>
- Piličiauskaitė, Lolita Jolanta, and Giedrė Gabnytė Bizevičienė, "Learning creative interpretation in the music classroom: The possibilities of the emotional expression method", *Creativity Studies*, vol. 18, no. 2, 2025, pp. 635–649.
<https://doi.org/10.3846/cs.2025.22736>
- Salvo, Joseph, Ania Holubecki and Rodrigo M Braga, "Correspondence between functional connectivity and task-related activity patterns within the individual", *Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences*, vol. 40, 2021, pp. 178–188.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cobeha.2021.05.003>
- Singh, Manvir, and Samuel Mehr, "Universality, domain-specificity and development of psychological responses to music", *Nature Reviews Psychology*, vol. 2, 2023, pp. 333–346. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s44159-023-00182-z>
- Turner, Craig, Robin Mailly, Fabien Dal Maso and Felipe Verdugo, "Impact of expressive intentions on upper-body kinematics in two expert pianists", *Frontiers in Psychology*, vol. 15, 2025, 1504456.
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1504456>
- Varga, Peter, and Brian Parkinson, "Mechanisms of musical emotion transfer: Insights from 22 composers and the musicological and psychological literature", *Journal of New Music Research*, vol. 53, no. 5, 2025, pp. 383–398.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09298215.2025.2481852>
- Wheater, Emily, David Q. Stoye, Simon R. Cox, Joanna M. Wardlaw, Amanda J. Drake, Mark E. Bastin and James P. Boardman, "DNA methylation and brain structure and function across the life course: A systematic review", *Neuroscience & Biobehavioral Reviews*, vol. 113, 2020, pp. 133–156.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neubiorev.2020.03.007>
- Wiafe, Abigail, Sami Sieranoja, Abedin Bhuiyan and Pasi Fränti, "Emotional response to music: The Emotify+ dataset", *EURASIP Journal on Audio, Speech, and Music Processing*, vol. 2025, no. 31, 2025.
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s13636-025-00419-0>
- Wu, Hongwei, Danni Wang and Linshu Zhou, "Tunes that move us: The impact of music-induced emotions on prosocial decision-making", *Frontiers in Psychology*, vol. 15, 2025, 1453808. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1453808>

EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION IN PERFORMING ARTS:
A PSYCHOLOGICAL AND MUSICIAN ANALYSIS

Appendix A

Primary empirical data on the use of internal techniques by performers

No.	Artist code	Tool	Description of the recorded technique	Equipment category
1	V01	Violin	Imaginary visual image of a "scene-landscape" for the climax	Visualization
2	F01	Flute	"Airflow" image, smooth light color	Visualization
3	P01	Piano	Inner image of the color palette of the phrase	Visualization
4	VC01	Cello	Visualization of "internal dialogue" in a slow-motion episode	Visualization
5	TR01	Trombone	The representation of stage space as a form of sound support	Visualization
6	FGT01	Bassoon	The image of "spiral movement" in a quick episode	Visualization
7	V02	Violin	Imaginary image of the road - direction of phrasing	Visualization
8	VC02	Cello	"Fog" visualization for soft timbre coloration	Visualization
9	P01	Piano	Stage visualization of character movement	Visualization
10	F01	Flute	Metaphor "light glass", transparent texture	Metaphorization
11	TR01	Trombone	The metaphor of "heavy bronze" for sound attack	Metaphorization
12	FGT01	Bassoon	Association with a dialogue between two characters	Metaphorization
13	V01	Violin	The metaphor of the movement of a "spring" in a rhythmic episode	Metaphorization
14	P01	Piano	The metaphorical image of "water" changing its timbre	Metaphorization

No.	Artist code	Tool	Description of the recorded technique	Equipment category
15	VC02	Cello	The association of "warm light" in lyrical phrases	Metaphorization
16	TR01	Trombone	Body momentum of parallel body movement	Physical and motor skills
17	V02	Violin	Plastic wrist movements for sound alignment	Physical and motor skills
18	VC01	Cello	Rhythmic micromovements of the body for phrasing	Physical and motor skills
19	F01	Flute	Breathing waves for phrase alignment	Physical and motor skills
20	FGT01	Bassoon	Rhythmic feeling of "step pulse"	Physical and motor skills
21	P01	Piano	Concentration on the focus point before the passage	Concentration
22	VC02	Cello	Micro-meditation before performing a difficult part	Concentration
23	F01	Flute	Conscious breathing to enter the initial image	Concentration
24	TR01	Trombone	Mental fixation of the "reference point" for the sound attack	Concentration
25	VC01	Cello	A short practice of inner calm	Concentration
26	V02	Violin	Focus on internal rhythm before a fast episode	Concentration

Source: Collected from individual performance diaries (14 days) and in-depth interviews with participants (N = 8). Each position in the table reflects a separate recorded case of the use of internal technique during the preparation of a musical work. The total number of units of analysis is 26

Appendix B

Final distribution of internal technicians

Technician category	Number of cases (N)	Share (%)
Visualization	9	36.04%
Metaphorization and associations	6	25.30%
Physical and motor techniques	5	19.69%
Concentration techniques	4	18.97%
Together	26	100%

Source: the table was created by the author

STRUCTURAL AWARENESS AS SHARED INTERPRETIVE COMPETENCE IN DUO PERFORMANCE

ANCA PREDA-ULITA¹ 

SUMMARY. This study examines structural awareness as a shared interpretive competence in duo performance. Rather than treating analysis as an individual cognitive tool, it frames structural awareness as a relational process emerging through coordination between performers. Duo performance is approached as an interpretive system in which form is negotiated in real time, shaping phrasing, agogics, articulation, and expressive timing. Selected examples (violin–piano, clarinet–piano, voice–piano) show how shared structural reference points guide interpretive decisions and support advanced chamber-music practice.

Keywords: analysis, structural awareness, duo performance, phrasing, gesture

1. Introduction

Chamber music performance, and particularly duo performance, represents a privileged context in which musical structure is not only perceived and understood individually, but continuously negotiated and shared between performers. Unlike solo performance, where interpretive decisions are primarily shaped by an individual performer's internalized structural understanding, duo performance involves a constant process of mutual adjustment, anticipation, and coordination. In this context, musical structure functions as a common reference framework that guides interpretive choices and enables expressive coherence between distinct musical voices.

¹ Assoc. prof. PhD, Faculty of Music, Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania. E-mail: anca.preda@unitbv.ro



Despite the centrality of chamber music in professional performance practice, theoretical approaches have often privileged analytical perspectives that focus either on the musical work as an autonomous object or on the performer as an individual interpreter. Such approaches tend to overlook the relational dimension of interpretation, particularly the ways in which structural understanding is co-constructed in real time during ensemble performance. This gap becomes especially evident in duo formations, where the absence of a mediating ensemble hierarchy places increased responsibility on each performer's capacity to engage actively with both the musical structure and the interpretive intentions of the partner.

The present study addresses this gap by proposing the concept of structural awareness as a form of shared interpretive competence in duo performance. Structural awareness is understood here not merely as the ability to analyze formal or harmonic relationships, but as an embodied and dynamic awareness of structural processes that inform interpretive decision-making during performance. In duo contexts, this awareness acquires a relational character, emerging through interaction, listening, and reciprocal responsiveness.

By focusing on duo performance—particularly in configurations such as violin–piano, clarinet–piano, and voice–piano—this article aims to explore how shared structural awareness facilitates interpretive coordination and expressive unity. The study argues that recognizing structural awareness as a shared competence offers a more nuanced understanding of chamber music interpretation and provides a conceptual framework capable of bridging analytical knowledge and performative practice.

2. Structural Awareness: Conceptual Clarifications

The notion of structural awareness occupies an intermediate position between analytical knowledge and interpretive action, referring to a performer's capacity to perceive, internalize, and respond to structural relationships during performance. Unlike formal analysis, which operates retrospectively and often outside the temporal constraints of musical execution, structural awareness is inherently processual, unfolding in real time and shaping interpretive decisions as they occur. As such, it cannot be reduced to the conscious application of analytical models, nor can it be fully explained through purely intuitive accounts of musical interpretation.²

² Cook, Nicholas. *Beyond the Score: Music as Performance*. Oxford University Press, 2013.

In music theory and analysis, structure has traditionally been approached as an abstract system of hierarchical relationships, articulated through formal, harmonic, or voice-leading models. From this perspective, structure is primarily understood as an object of analytical inquiry, external to performance itself. While such approaches have proven invaluable for understanding the internal coherence of musical works, they tend to overlook the ways in which structural relationships are actively engaged by performers in the act of interpretation.³

Structural awareness, as proposed in this study, designates a form of embodied knowledge through which performers relate structural relationships to expressive timing, phrasing, articulation, and dynamic shaping. It involves an anticipatory dimension, allowing performers to project large-scale formal trajectories while simultaneously responding to local musical events.⁴ Such perspectives resonate with contemporary approaches that seek to integrate analytical understanding with practical musical engagement, emphasizing the interdisciplinary interaction between analytical tools, technological resources, and performance practice.⁵

Importantly, structural awareness differs from structural knowledge in that it presupposes integration rather than accumulation. A performer may possess extensive analytical knowledge of a work's structure without necessarily being able to activate this knowledge effectively in performance. Structural awareness, by contrast, implies the internalization of structural relationships to the extent that they inform interpretive action implicitly, without interrupting the flow of performance.⁶

In the context of ensemble performance, and particularly duo performance, structural awareness acquires an additional relational dimension. Here, awareness is not confined to an individual performer's internal representation of structure but is shaped through interaction with another musical agent. The performers' respective understandings of form, hierarchy, and expressive direction must converge sufficiently to allow coordinated interpretive decisions. Structural awareness thus becomes a shared resource, enabling performers to align their phrasing strategies, negotiate agogic flexibility, and maintain coherence across formal boundaries.⁷

³ Rink, John, ed. *Musical Performance: A Guide to Understanding*. Cambridge University Press, 2002.

⁴ Davidson, Jane W., ed. *The Music Practitioner*. Routledge, 2004.

⁵ Belibou, Alexandra. "Integrating Computerized Musical Education into an Interdisciplinary Paradigm; Proposal of Applications Using Sibelius Software." *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai Musica*, vol. 63, no. 2, 2018.

⁶ Clarke, Eric F. *Ways of Listening: An Ecological Approach to the Perception of Musical Meaning*. OUP, 2005, pp. 88–105.

⁷ Sloboda, John A. *The Musical Mind*. Clarendon Press, 1985, pp. 122–140.

By conceptualizing structural awareness as a dynamic and shared interpretive competence, this study seeks to bridge the gap between analytical discourse and performance practice. Rather than opposing analysis and interpretation, the proposed framework emphasizes their interdependence, while acknowledging the specificity of performative contexts in which structural understanding is enacted collaboratively and in real time.

3. The Duo as an Interpretive System

Duo performance represents a unique microcosm of chamber music in which musical interpretation emerges not only from individual understanding but also from the dynamic interplay between two performers. In this context, each performer's structural awareness must interact with that of the partner, creating a continuous negotiation of musical form, phrasing, and expressive intent. Unlike larger ensembles, duo configurations lack hierarchical leadership, requiring performers to establish a shared interpretive framework through attentive listening, anticipation, and real-time adjustment.

The collaborative nature of duo performance means that structural relationships are constantly re-evaluated and co-constructed. For instance, in a violin–piano duo, the violinist must align melodic phrasing with harmonic progressions in the piano part, while simultaneously projecting their interpretive decisions in a way that complements the pianist's articulation and dynamic shaping.⁸ Similarly, in voice–piano duos, the singer's phrasing and breathing patterns interact directly with the pianist's harmonic pacing and textural emphasis, demanding an acute sensitivity to timing, tension, and release. In clarinet–piano duos, considerations of tone color, blend, and legato articulation further illustrate how structural awareness becomes a shared interpretive resource, influencing choices from small-scale gestures to large-scale formal decisions.⁹

Drawing on examples from my own recital experience in duo formats, I have observed that effective coordination relies on several interdependent factors: mutual anticipatory listening, flexible adaptation of phrasing to accommodate expressive nuances, and continuous communication of structural understanding through musical gesture. These processes can be observed in works ranging from classical repertoire, such as Mozart's Violin Sonatas, to

⁸ Ginsborg, Jane, and Dawn Bennett. "Developing Familiarity in a New Duo: Rehearsal Talk and Performance Cues." *Frontiers in Psychology*, vol. 12, 2021.

⁹ Goodman, Elaine. "Ensemble Performance." *Musical Performance: A Guide to Understanding*, edited by John Rink, Cambridge Univ. Press, 2002, pp. 153–167.

modern pieces requiring more complex interplay of rhythm and timbre.¹⁰ For instance, in performing a Beethoven violin–piano sonata, the alignment of cadential gestures across both parts illustrates the necessity of shared structural awareness in achieving musical cohesion. Likewise, in performing contemporary clarinet–piano duos, precise negotiation of temporal and harmonic tensions highlights the performers' joint responsibility for maintaining interpretive integrity.

Beyond technical coordination, duo performance fosters a form of interpretive dialogue in which each performer's expressive choices inform and are informed by the partner's structural understanding. The resulting synergy is not merely additive; rather, it creates emergent interpretive possibilities that neither performer could achieve in isolation. This phenomenon underscores the argument that structural awareness in duo performance functions as a relational competence, integrating analytical insight, embodied musicality, and collaborative responsiveness.

By framing duo performance as an interpretive system, this study emphasizes the necessity of approaching structural awareness as a shared and dynamic construct. Such a perspective illuminates the mechanisms by which performers negotiate musical meaning in real time and offers practical insights for the preparation, rehearsal, and execution of chamber music repertoire. The duo thus serves as both a laboratory and a model for understanding the relational dimensions of musical interpretation in chamber settings.

4. Structural Awareness and Interpretive Coordination in Duo Performance

If structural awareness is initially defined as an individual analytical competence, within chamber music it becomes fundamentally relational. In duo performance, structure is not simply recognized; it is enacted through interaction. Interpretive meaning emerges through coordination rather than unilateral projection. The structural conception held by each performer must be articulated, confronted, and recalibrated in rehearsal before it can function cohesively in performance.

¹⁰ Bishop, Laura, and Werner Goebel. "Pianists' Use of Nonverbal Audio and Visual Cues During Duet Performance." *Musicae Scientiae*, vol. 19, no. 1, 2015, pp. 84–110.

4.1. From Individual Structural Hypothesis to Shared Formal Vision

Each performer approaches rehearsal with an implicit structural hypothesis: a hierarchy of tensions, a projected distribution of climaxes, a sense of tonal direction, and a preferred pacing of formal processes. In solo contexts, this internal architecture may remain uncontested. In duo settings, however, it is necessarily subjected to dialogue. Nicholas Cook emphasizes that performance should be understood as collaborative construction rather than reproduction. Within such a framework, interpretive coordination extends beyond rhythmic simultaneity. It requires alignment concerning formal segmentation, points of structural articulation, proportional balance, and long-range direction.

In violin–piano repertoire, structural negotiation frequently arises at the intersection between melodic projection and harmonic articulation. A violinist may shape extended phrases through bow control and vibrato intensity, privileging linear continuity, while the pianist foregrounds harmonic rhythm as structural determinant. If these perspectives remain unintegrated, structural hierarchy becomes unstable. When consciously aligned, melodic and harmonic logics reinforce one another, clarifying architectural coherence.

Structural awareness therefore operates as a shared analytical framework that mediates interpretive decisions.

4.2. Micro-Timing as Structural Communication

Performance research demonstrates that expressive timing deviations contribute directly to the perception of musical structure. In duo contexts, such micro-timing becomes both expressive device and communicative mechanism. Subtle temporal adjustments—slight suspension before harmonic arrival, calibrated *accelerando* toward sectional contrast, or coordinated *rubato* at climactic points—function as structural signals rather than decorative gestures. Their effectiveness depends on mutual anticipation and shared structural hierarchy. Performance, as Cook further argues, constructs musical meaning through relational processes rather than fixed textual reproduction. Structural articulation is therefore distributed across performers; it is not embedded exclusively in the score but realized through coordinated temporal shaping.

4.3. Voice–Piano Repertoire (linear continuity)

In three Ravel songs, phrasing is integrated across voice and piano lines to emphasize formal symmetry. The singers adopt subtle tempo rubato when the piano articulates harmonic inflections, ensuring phrase arch shapes remain aligned. Thus, performers negotiate phrasing cues in real time to preserve the piece's formal blueprint.¹¹

4.4. Duo Performance as Dynamic Cognitive System

From a cognitive perspective, ensemble coordination relies on continuous perceptual monitoring and adaptive response. Tempo, articulation, dynamic contour, and timbral balance are recalibrated in real time through reciprocal listening. Within this process, structural awareness ceases to function as a static analytical model. During rehearsal, negotiation may be explicit and verbal; in performance, it becomes embodied knowledge enacted through gesture, breath, and temporal elasticity. Shared interpretive competence is therefore not the sum of two individual understandings. It constitutes a higher-order organizational process in which structural knowledge is collectively enacted.

5. Repertoire-Based Applications: Structural Awareness in Practice

Theoretical reflection gains legitimacy only when tested against repertoire. Structural awareness in duo performance is not an abstract analytical exercise; it manifests concretely in phrasing, tempo relationships, dynamic architecture, and proportional balance. The following repertoire illustrates how structural cognition becomes performative action.

5.1. Mozart: Transparency and Proportional Clarity

In Mozart's violin sonatas, structural awareness depends on clarity of formal articulation and equilibrium between partners. Unlike later Romantic repertoire, these works require restraint in tempo flexibility and precision in harmonic pacing. Nicholas Cook's argument that performance constitutes an active construction of structure rather than passive reproduction is particularly relevant here.¹² In Mozart, performers must project formal symmetry—

¹¹ Gritten, Anthony, and Elaine King, editors. *Music and Gesture*. Ashgate, 2006.

¹² Cook, Nicholas. "Music as Performance." *The Cultural Study of Music: A Critical Introduction*, edited by Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert, and Richard Middleton, Routledge, 2003, pp. 204–214.

exposition balance, mid-point articulation, and recapitulation return—without exaggeration. Excessive rubato obscures structural clarity; insufficient differentiation risks monotony. The piano writing often carries primary thematic material, especially in earlier sonatas. Consequently, structural hierarchy must be negotiated carefully to avoid melodic dominance from the violin at the expense of harmonic logic. Cadential preparation, phrase closure, and dynamic tapering must align across both instruments.

5.2. Schubert: Long-Range Harmonic Direction

Schubert's sonatinas introduce a different structural challenge: extended lyricism supported by subtle harmonic shifts. Here, structure is less articulated through sharp contrasts and more through tonal migration and modal coloration. Eric Clarke's research on perception suggests that listeners interpret expressive timing as a cue for structural segmentation. In Schubert, slight temporal elasticity at harmonic inflection points can clarify tonal reorientation. However, such elasticity must remain coordinated. If one performer anticipates harmonic arrival while the other sustains linear continuity, structural coherence dissolves. Structural awareness in Schubert therefore demands shared long-range planning. Climaxes often emerge through cumulative harmonic intensification rather than overt thematic development. Performers must calculate dynamic gradation across entire sections, not merely within individual phrases.

5.3. Franck and Ravel: Cyclic Integration and Textural Density

Franck's Violin Sonata introduces cyclic form as a unifying structural principle. The recurrence and transformation of thematic material require performers to maintain motivic memory across movements. Thematic recall in the final movement must be projected not merely as repetition but as structural culmination. Tempo relationships between movements should be proportionally conceived, preserving architectural coherence. Ravel, by contrast, introduces rhythmic asymmetry and textural stratification. Structural awareness must encompass timbral balance and metric tension. Micro-timing coordination, as discussed in ensemble performance research, becomes crucial in maintaining clarity within complex rhythmic overlays.¹³ In both works, structural perception extends beyond harmonic analysis. It integrates motivic transformation, registral distribution, and textural hierarchy.

¹³ Davidson, Jane W., and James M. M. Good. "Social and Musical Co-Ordination Between Members of a String Quartet: An Exploratory Study." *Psychology of Music*, vol. 30, no. 2, 2002, pp. 186–201.

5.4. Interpretive Risk and Structural Integrity

A recurrent tension in advanced duo performance concerns expressive freedom versus structural integrity. Romantic repertoire encourages flexibility; classical repertoire demands restraint. However, this distinction is not stylistic alone - it is structural. Jane Davidson's work on ensemble coordination demonstrates that performers continuously recalibrate expressive gestures in response to each other. Structural awareness functions as the regulating framework within which expressive deviation remains intelligible. When structural hierarchy is internalized collectively, interpretive risk becomes possible without fragmentation. Without such shared cognition, freedom results in instability.

6. Conclusion: Structural Awareness as a Performative Epistemology

In duo performance, structural awareness functions not merely as an individual cognitive skill, but as a shared interpretive resource that underpins musical cohesion and expressive coherence. The analyses presented—from Mozart's balanced sonatas to Schubert's extended lyricism, and from Franck's cyclic integration to Ravel's textural complexity—demonstrate that interpretive decisions are inseparable from the performers' mutual understanding of structural hierarchy.

Shared structural awareness mediates phrasing, tempo flexibility, dynamic shaping, and climactic distribution. It allows performers to reconcile potentially divergent perspectives on melodic prominence and harmonic pacing, transforming rehearsal negotiation into a coherent performative output. Micro-timing, breath control, and proportional emphasis serve as communicative signals that encode structural intent in real time, making performance an embodied, relational process rather than a mere realization of the score.

This framework positions duo performance as a dynamic epistemic system, where musical meaning emerges collectively. The performer's analytic insight—whether applied to melodic contour, motivic recurrence, or harmonic function—is enacted through negotiation, coordination, and anticipatory adjustment. Consequently, structural awareness transcends traditional notions of individual cognition and becomes a performative epistemology: a way of knowing that is inseparable from the act of making music together.

From a pedagogical perspective, understanding duo performance through this lens emphasizes rehearsal strategies that cultivate shared comprehension of form, encourages reflective dialogue on interpretive priorities, and strengthens sensitivity to temporal, harmonic, and expressive interdependencies. Importantly, these insights extend beyond the studied repertoire, offering a generalizable model for chamber music performance and ensemble teaching.

Finally, conceptualizing structural awareness as performative invites further research. Empirical studies could investigate how performers negotiate structural perception across varied instrumentation, repertoire complexity, or ensemble size. The integration of cognitive, analytical, and expressive dimensions offers fertile ground for advancing both theory and practice in chamber music, with duo performance providing an ideal locus for such exploration.

REFERENCES

- Belibou, Alexandra. "Integrating Computerized Musical Education into an Interdisciplinary Paradigm; Proposal of Applications Using Sibelius Software." *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai Musica*, vol. 63, no. 2, 2018
- Bishop, Laura, and Werner Goebel. "Pianists' Use of Nonverbal Audio and Visual Cues During Duet Performance." *Musicae Scientiae*, vol. 19, no. 1, 2015
- Clarke, Eric F. *Ways of Listening: An Ecological Approach to the Perception of Musical Meaning*. Oxford Univ. Press, 2005
- Cook, Nicholas. *Beyond the Score: Music as Performance*. Oxford Univ. Press, 2013
- Cook, Nicholas. "Music as Performance." *The Cultural Study of Music: A Critical Introduction*, edited by Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert, and Richard Middleton, Routledge, 2003
- Davidson, Jane W., editor. *The Music Practitioner: Research for the Music Performer, Teacher and Listener*. Routledge, 2004
- Davidson, Jane W., and James M. M. Good. "Social and Musical Co-Ordination Between Members of a String Quartet: An Exploratory Study." *Psychology of Music*, vol. 30, no. 2, 2002
- Ginsborg, Jane, Alexandra F. Lemieux, and Roger Chaffin. "Developing Familiarity in a New Duo: Rehearsal Talk and Performance Cues." *Frontiers in Psychology*, vol. 12, 2021
- Goodman, Elaine. "Ensemble Performance." *Musical Performance: A Guide to Understanding*, edited by John Rink, Cambridge Univ. Press, 2002

STRUCTURAL AWARENESS AS SHARED INTERPRETIVE COMPETENCE
IN DUO PERFORMANCE

- Gritten, Anthony, and Elaine King, eds. *Music and Gesture*. Ashgate, 2006
- Rink, John, ed. *Musical Performance: A Guide to Understanding*. Cambridge Univ. Press, 2002
- Rink, John. "Analysis and (or?) Performance." *Musical Performance: A Guide to Understanding*, edited by John Rink, Cambridge Univ. Press, 2002
- Sloboda, John A. *The Musical Mind: The Cognitive Psychology of Music*. Clarendon Press, 1985

AUDITORY–MOTOR THINKING AS AN INTENTIONAL STRUCTURE OF MUSICAL PERFORMANCE: PHENOMENOLOGICAL AND SEMIOTIC DIMENSIONS

VITALII ZAIETS¹, OKSANA ZAIETS²,
OLEKSANDR BENZIUK³, YULIIA ZAIETS⁴

SUMMARY. The article substantiates the concept of auditory–motor thinking as a key artistic–cognitive structure of musical performance. Drawing on the phenomenological tradition of analyzing embodied consciousness and the temporality of musical action, it proposes a distinction between sensorimotor integration as the physiological precondition of performance and auditory–motor thinking as an intentionally organized process of shaping artistic meaning. It is demonstrated that musical performance cannot be reduced to the coordination of auditory and motor responses; rather, it emerges as an integral act of performative consciousness in which auditory projection, motor structuring, and expressive regulation are unified within a single temporal perspective.

Keywords: auditory–motor thinking, musical performance, intentionality, interpretation

¹ PhD in Arts, Associate professor, Department of Bayan and Accordion, Ukrainian National Tchaikovsky Academy of Music, 1-3/11 of Arkhitektor Horodetskyi street, Kyiv, Ukraine, 01001. E-mail: zaetsa@ukr.net

² Senior lecturer, Municipal Institution of Higher Education of the Kyiv Regional Council “P. Chubynsky Academy of Arts”, 15 Ivan Mazepy Street, Kyiv, Ukraine, 01601. E-mail: oksanazaets@ukr.net

³ PhD in Cultural Studies, Associate professor, Department of Bayan and Accordion, Ukrainian National Tchaikovsky Academy of Music, 1-3/11 of Arkhitektor Horodetskyi street, Kyiv, Ukraine, 01001. Email: benzyuk@ukr.net

⁴ Violinist; Concertmaster of the Konsibern Youth Symphony Orchestra (Bern); Violin student, Lucerne School of Music, Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Werftrasse 4, Lucerne, Switzerland, 6002. Email: yuliiazaiets196@gmail.com



Introduction

The problem of the interrelationship between auditory imagery and motor realization has long occupied a significant place in the theory and methodology of musical performance. In different historical periods, musicological thought has emphasized either the primacy of inner hearing as the foundation of an interpretative concept or the decisive role of technical mastery in shaping artistic expression. From early treatises on performance practice to contemporary reflections on artistic interpretation, the unity of hearing and movement has been implicitly recognized as a fundamental condition of professional musical performance.

In the twentieth century, the development of performance theory and music pedagogy increasingly drew attention to the internal mechanisms ensuring coherence between artistic intention and technical execution. Concepts such as inner hearing, musical imagery, kinesthetic control, and the interpretative gesture became central to discussions of performance training. At the same time, interdisciplinary research in cognitive science and the psychology of music introduced the notion of sensorimotor integration, describing the coordination between perception and movement as a complex regulatory system underlying musical action.

Despite this substantial contribution, the theoretical discourse remains fragmented. Within musicology and performance studies, auditory imagery is traditionally positioned as an interpretative-aesthetic construct, whereas motor mechanisms are predominantly examined through the prism of technical and virtuoso parameters. Conversely, in cognitive research, sensorimotor mechanisms are often described at the psychophysiological level without sufficient consideration of their artistic and methodological dimensions. As a result, the conceptual unity of auditory and motor processes in professional musical performance has yet to receive a comprehensive and structurally coherent interpretation within the framework of art studies discourse.

The concept of auditory–motor thinking offers a productive perspective for overcoming this fragmentation. Rather than viewing hearing and movement as parallel or hierarchically subordinated functions, auditory–motor thinking may be understood as an integrated mode of artistic cognition in which inner auditory representation, motor coordination, and expressive intention form a dynamic whole. There is therefore a need for a systematic theoretical clarification of auditory–motor thinking in the context of professional musical performance. Such clarification aims at a holistic account of the structural organization of artistic action, in which auditory anticipation, motor planning, and expressive realization are inextricably interconnected.

The aim of this study is to conceptualize auditory–motor thinking as a systemic artistic–cognitive mechanism of performance activity and to substantiate its interaction with processes of sensorimotor coordination within the methodological framework of music performance theory.

Literature Review

The relevance of the study of auditory–motor thinking is due to the growing interest in embodied–cognitive mechanisms of musical performance within the framework of contemporary interdisciplinary scholarship. In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, performance art has increasingly been conceptualized not only as an aesthetic phenomenon but as a complex cognitive system integrating perceptual, motor, emotional, and intellectual processes. In this context, the problem of interaction between hearing and movement acquires particular significance, as it determines the specificity of musical performance activity as an embodied form of thinking.

Research on auditory–motor interaction has been actively developing within the field of cognitive neuroscience of music. The works of R. Zatorre, V. Penhune, and J. Chen demonstrate the existence of close functional connections between auditory and motor regions of the cerebral cortex, emphasizing that even passive listening to music activates motor structures⁵. In the study by R. Zatorre and A. Halpern, the role of auditory imagery in the formation of internal musical representations is substantiated, providing a theoretical foundation for the subsequent conceptualization of the phenomenon of audiation⁶. The concept of audiation was developed by E. Gordon, who defined it as the ability to hear and comprehend music internally, in the absence of physical sound, emphasizing the cognitive dimension of musical perception⁷.

In parallel, within the psychology of music, a research direction emerged that focuses on sensorimotor coordination and rhythmic synchronization. The works of A. Patel⁸ and M. Leman⁹ emphasize the role of embodiment in

⁵ Zatorre, Robert J., Joyce L. Chen, and Virginia B. Penhune. "When the Brain Plays Music: Auditory–Motor Interactions in Music Perception and Production." *Nature Reviews Neuroscience* 8, no. 7, 2007, pp. 547–558.

⁶ Zatorre, Robert J., and Andrea R. Halpern. "Mental Imaging of Musical Sounds." *Cerebral Cortex* 3, no. 1, 1993, pp. 29–38.

⁷ Gordon, Edwin E. *Roots of Music Learning Theory and Audiation*. Chicago: GIA Publications, 2011.

⁸ Patel, Aniruddh D. "The Evolutionary Neuroscience of Musical Beat Perception." *Frontiers in Systems Neuroscience* 8, no. 57, 2014. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnsys.2014.00057>

⁹ Leman, Marc. *Embodied Music Cognition and Mediation Technology*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007.

processes of musical understanding, considering movement as an integral component of musical cognition. The theory of *embodied music cognition*¹⁰, developed by M. Leman, has become an important methodological foundation for integrating perceptual and motor aspects into a unified model of musical experience.

Within art studies and performance discourse, the problem of the musician's thinking has been examined through the prism of interpretation, creative intention, and artistic meaning-making. A significant contribution to the study of performative thinking has been made by M. Davydov¹¹, D. Johnson¹², V. Samitov¹³, V. Moskalenko¹⁴, I. Pyaskovsky¹⁵, V. Zaiets¹⁶, O. Markova¹⁷, as well as M. Krausz¹⁸, who analyzed the nature of interpretation as a cognitive act.

These works emphasize the intellectual–emotional balance, interpretative strategies, and artistic reflection of the performer. At the same time, the motor component has predominantly been regarded as a technical precondition for the realization of an interpretative concept rather than as an integral element of the thinking process itself.

Despite the substantial body of existing research, contemporary scholarly literature demonstrates a certain fragmentation in the interpretation of auditory and motor processes. Neuroscientific studies primarily focus on mechanisms of integration and functional connectivity; psychological research emphasizes mental representations and sensorimotor coordination, whereas musicological scholarship concentrates on interpretative aspects of performance. However, a holistic conceptualization of auditory–motor thinking as an integrative

¹⁰ Leman, Marc. *The Expressive Moment: How Interaction with Music Engenders Meaning*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2016.

¹¹ Davydov, Mykola. *Theoretical foundations of formation of performance skills of an accordionist*. Kyiv, Musical Ukraine, 2004, 240 p.

¹² 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.

¹³ 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.

¹⁴ Moskalenko, Viktor. *The creative aspect of musical interpretation (to the problem of analysis)*. Kyiv, Muzinform, 1994, 157 p.

¹⁵ Pyaskovskiy, Igor. *The logic of musical thinking*. Kyiv, Musical Ukraine, 1986, 180 p.

¹⁶ Zaiets, Vitalii. "The Way of Thinking in the Context of the Specificity of the Music Performance." In *Horizonty umenia 7: Zborník príspevkov z medzinárodnej vedeckej konferencie*, 16, Banská Bystrica: Akadémia umení v Banskej Bystrici, 2020, pp. 160-172.

¹⁷ Markova, Olena. *Questions of the theory of performance: materials for the theory of performance theory for master's and graduate students*. Odessa: Astroprint, 2002, 128 p.

¹⁸ Krausz, Michael (ed.). *The Interpretation of music: philosophical essays*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993, 288 p.

artistic-cognitive mechanism operating in real time within performance activity remains insufficiently developed.

Thus, there is a need for a theoretical synthesis of these heterogeneous approaches and for the formulation of a concept of auditory–motor thinking that integrates neurophysiological, psychological, and musicological dimensions. Such an approach will enable a deeper understanding of the cognitive foundations of musical performance, refine the methodological principles of performance pedagogy, and expand current perspectives on the embodied nature of musical cognition.

Discussion

The introduction of the concept of *auditory–motor thinking* into scholarly discourse is undertaken as an attempt to conceptualize an integrative type of professional mental activity characteristic of the performing musician. This concept does not claim terminological novelty within the broader field of the psychology of thinking; rather, it is proposed as an analytical category intended for the systematic examination of the interaction between auditory representations, motor actions, and cognitive processes within the immediate process of musical performance.

In the present study, *auditory–motor thinking* is defined as an integrative form of performance consciousness in which auditory projection, motor planning, and expressive regulation are unified within a single intentionally directed act that ensures the anticipation, formation, and artistic organization of musical sound in time. Such an understanding makes it possible to regard auditory–motority not merely as a mechanism of coordination, but as a structural principle of the performer’s artistic thinking, in which technical action and interpretative intention emerge as aspects of a unified process.

In contemporary musicology and research on musical cognition, various concepts are employed to describe the interdependence of auditory and motor processes, including *auditory–motor integration*, *auditory–motor imagery*, *audiation*, as well as terms reflecting neurophysiological and cognitive aspects of interaction, such as *auditory–motor interactions*, *auditory–motor entrainment*, *auditory–motor synchronization*, and *auditory–motor coupling*. Each of these approaches highlights a particular dimension of the relationship between sound and movement: integration emphasizes functional and neurophysiological mechanisms; imagery concerns the mental simulation of movements and sounds; audiation refers to the capacity to internally hear music; auditory–motor networks describe the structural organization of interactions between auditory and motor systems, whereas synchronization characterizes their temporal coordination during performance.

However, none of these terms adequately reflect a holistic process in which auditory and motor components function as a single intentionally organized structure of performance consciousness in real time. In contrast to related concepts, *auditory–motor thinking* delineates the integrated interaction of hearing and movement as a mechanism of artistic meaning-making that enables the simultaneous anticipation, planning, and interpretative modelling of musical material.

This can be explained by the fact that thinking integrates all human mental processes in accordance with the nature of activity, thereby making it possible to distinguish aspects of analytical activity and to investigate the regularities of its functioning.

Auditory–motor thinking may be considered in both functional and categorical dimensions. In the functional sense, it is associated with the regulation of performance actions – the planning, coordination, and control of sound production based on established auditory representations. However, such an understanding remains only partial.

In the present study, auditory–motor thinking is interpreted in a broader, categorical sense as a specific type of artistic-cognitive organization of performance activity. It is not reducible to a set of coordination mechanisms; rather, it emerges as an integral system in which auditory projections, motor structures, and interpretative intentions interact in real time.

Within this framework, hearing and motor activity do not function as autonomous subsystems that sequentially implement a previously formed artistic conception. Instead, they operate as interpenetrating components of a unified process in which artistic meaning is formed through bodily organized action. It is precisely this interaction that determines the specificity of professional performance thinking as a form of embodied creative activity.

Within the context of the proposed concept, a methodological dilemma arises: can auditory representation be considered primary in relation to motor action, or does movement function as the initiating mechanism in the formation of the sonic image? Traditional models of performance often assume a hierarchical structure in which artistic intention precedes technical realization. However, such a linear scheme fails to reflect the dynamics of the real performance process.

Hearing and movement do not exist in a causal sequence. Rather, they interact within a single intentional field in which sonic anticipation and bodily action emerge within a shared temporal horizon. Sound does not precede movement as an abstract plan, just as movement is not an autonomous physiological reaction. Both dimensions are co-constituted in the process of the artistic unfolding of music.

Thus, the question of “what comes first?” appears to be the result of an analytical fragmentation of a unified process. In actual performance practice, auditory–motor thinking functions as a synchronous and projective structure in which anticipation, motor planning, and interpretative intention constitute mutually conditioned aspects of a holistic artistic act.

Within the structure of auditory–motor thinking, inner hearing performs the function of a “reference standard” against which the actual sonic outcomes of performance actions are compared. Research demonstrates that well-developed inner hearing enables musicians to learn new repertoire effectively even in the absence of external sound, compensating for the lack of auditory feedback. This phenomenon directly correlates with the concept of audiation developed by E. Gordon, which in music pedagogy emphasizes the capacity to internally hear and cognitively process musical sound in the absence of external stimuli¹⁹. Audiation represents a form of musical thinking grounded in auditory imagery; however, unlike auditory–motor thinking, it does not consider motor structure and embodied intentionality as constitutive components of performance.

A phenomenological perspective makes it possible to achieve a deeper understanding of the processes underlying musical performance. Within the phenomenology of perception, perception and movement are not regarded as separate faculties, but rather as aspects of a purposeful life experience, as emphasized by M. Merleau-Ponty²⁰. Movement is always oriented toward projected meaning: it is not merely a physiological reaction, but an embodied awareness of intention. Musical performance cannot be reduced either to the precision of movement or to auditory control alone; rather, it constitutes an intentional act in which sound is anticipated, shaped, and embodied in time, thereby acquiring artistic significance.

From this perspective, auditory–motor thinking denotes a higher level of artistic-cognitive organization. It is neither simply the coordination of hearing and movement nor merely an internal auditory representation. Instead, it represents a living organization of performance consciousness in which auditory projection, motor structure, and expressive regulation are unified within a single intentional act. Through this unity, the musician does not merely reproduce sonic material but endows it with artistic meaning and interpretative depth.

¹⁹ Gordon, Edwin E. *Roots of Music Learning Theory and Audiation*. Chicago: GIA Publications, 2011.

²⁰ Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. *Phenomenology of Perception*. Translated by Colin Smith. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962.

Whereas auditory–motor integration ensures technical accuracy, auditory–motor thinking operates at the level of semantic and expressive formation of music. The performer anticipates sound even before producing it and shapes it through movements that embody inner intentionality.

Sensorimotor mechanisms constitute a necessary condition of performance, yet they do not exhaust its artistic ontology. Auditory–motor thinking transforms embodied coordination into a fully developed interpretative action in which technique, hearing, and artistic intention are organically integrated within the process of musical performance.

The conceptual distinction between auditory–motor integration and auditory–motor thinking becomes particularly evident considering the phenomenological category of temporality, the notion of artistic gesture, and the semiotic understanding of musical meaning.

According to M. Merleau-Ponty, lived time is not a sequence of isolated moments, but rather a dynamic horizon in which retention (recent past), primal impression (the present), and protention (the anticipated) form a continuous intentional structure²¹. It is precisely within this temporal field that musical performance unfolds.

From this perspective, auditory–motor thinking possesses not a reactive but a projective character. The performer does not merely coordinate actions with the sounding material but projects an acoustic future. Motor actions are guided by pre-reflective auditory anticipation, which determines phrasing, articulation, and the expressive artistic-intonational contour even prior to the physical realization of sound.

Thus, whereas auditory–motor integration regulates synchrony and the accuracy of coordination, auditory–motor thinking organizes the temporal directedness of musical action. It structures the unfolding of musical material in time rather than merely ensuring its technical coherence.

The concept of the artistic gesture developed by R. Hatten²² proposes a mediating category between hearing and movement. Gesture cannot be reduced to a biomechanical act; rather, it constitutes a meaningful, temporally shaped action that embodies expressive intention. Whereas auditory–motor integration explains how movement corresponds to sound, the notion of artistic gesture explains how movement becomes meaningful – a perspective examined in detail in the work of R. Godøy and M. Leman²³.

²¹ Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 32.

²² Hatten, Robert S. *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes: Passion, Sorrow, and Joy*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004.

²³ Godøy, Rolf Inge, and Marc Leman, eds. *Musical Gestures: Sound, Movement, and Meaning*. New York: Routledge, 2010.

In this sense, auditory–motor thinking manifests itself through gesture. Gestures emerge as a visible trace of an internal auditory projection. The performer's bodily movements are not secondary to sound production; rather, they function as an expressive medium within which artistic meaning crystallizes. Thus, gesture acts as a mediator between auditory anticipation and acoustic realization, transforming physiological coordination into artistic form.

A semiotic perspective further deepens this differentiation. According to J. Nattiez²⁴, musical meaning is formed within three interrelated dimensions: the poietic (production), the neutral (material trace), and the esthetic (perception). Performance belongs to the poietic dimension as it is precisely through performance that the process of meaning formation is organized²⁵.

Auditory–motor integration functions predominantly at the neutral level – as a mechanism ensuring the execution of performance. By contrast, auditory–motor thinking belongs to the poietic level: it structures interpretative intention and determines the way the musical text is embodied in time.

Similarly, the theory of musical gestures developed by R. Hatten demonstrates that expressive movement possesses semiotic value, as gesture represents stylistic, rhetorical, and emotional codes. Accordingly, auditory–motor thinking is not merely a mechanism of coordination but a semiotic construction that organizes the embodiment of musical signs within performance action.

By integrating the phenomenon of temporality, the category of gesture, and the semiotic dimension, auditory–motor thinking emerges as a concept that transcends reductionist sensorimotor explanations. It designates the moment at which embodied coordination is transformed into artistic meaning. From this perspective, musical performance is not a chain of sensorimotor events but a temporally organized, gesture-mediated, and semiotically structured act of consciousness.

In this context, the introduction of the concept of auditory–motor thinking makes it possible to overcome the traditional dualism between the “spiritual” (interpretation, artistic image) and the “bodily” (technique, movement) in musical performance. These dimensions appear not as autonomous spheres but as aspects of a unified process in which artistic intention is realized through integrated auditory–motor structures. Technique ceases to function merely as an instrumental prerequisite for interpretation and instead becomes a mode of its embodiment; correspondingly, interpretation is not externally added to performance but is formed within the organization of auditory–motor action.

²⁴ Nattiez, Jean-Jacques. *Music and Discourse: Toward a Semiology of Music*. Translated by Carolyn Abbate. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.

²⁵ Nattiez, *Music and Discourse*, 10-12.

From this follows the explanatory potential of the concept regarding the phenomenon of performance interpretation. Artistic interpretation does not emerge as a superstructure imposed upon the technical realization of the notated text, but as a qualitative characteristic of auditory–motor thinking itself. It is manifested in the musician's capacity to discover individual auditory–motor solutions – in phrasing, dynamic modelling, articulatory organization, and timbral regulation – that confer expressivity, coherence, and uniqueness upon performance.

Thus, auditory–motor thinking functions as the category that allows performance to be understood as a process in which artistic meaning is not superimposed upon technique but arises within it.

The proposed concept of auditory–motor thinking makes it possible to reconsider the performance process beyond reduction to sensorimotor coordination or internal auditory imagery. Its heuristic value lies in enabling the description of musical performance as an intentionally structured activity in which auditory anticipation does not precede movement as an abstract plan but is formed together with bodily action within a shared temporal horizon. In contrast to models focused primarily on neurofunctional mechanisms of auditory–motor interaction, auditory–motor thinking reveals performance as a process of artistic meaning-making, in which gesture acts as a mediator between potential sound and its material realization. Such a perspective allows the integration of findings from cognitive music science with phenomenological descriptions of performance experience and the semiotics of musical meaning, thereby forming a discipline-related analytical framework for the study of professional musical performance.

The proposed concept of auditory–motor thinking also opens new possibilities for further research across various domains of musicology and performance studies. It may be applied to the analysis of interpretative strategies in diverse instrumental and vocal practices, to investigations of the corporeality of musical gesture, and to pedagogical models concerned with the formation of professional performance mastery. From an interdisciplinary perspective, the concept establishes a shared analytical field for dialogue between cognitive music science, the phenomenology of experience, and the semiotics of musical meaning. In this way, auditory–motor thinking emerges not only as a descriptive category but also as a heuristic instrument for further theoretical and applied reflection on musical performance.

Conclusions

1. Sensorimotor integration constitutes a necessary but not sufficient condition of musical performance: it ensures the physiological coordination of action but does not exhaust its artistic ontology.
2. Auditory–motor thinking is defined as a higher level of organization of performance consciousness within which auditory projection, motor action, and expressive regulation are integrated into a single intentional act.
3. In the phenomenological dimension, auditory–motor thinking functions as the temporal horizon of musical action, ensuring the anticipation, formation, and articulation of the sonic outcome.
4. The introduction of this category makes it possible to overcome the dualism of “technique versus interpretation,” representing them as aspects of a unified process of embodied artistic meaning-making.
5. Artistic interpretation emerges as a qualitative characteristic of auditory–motor thinking and is realized through the musician’s capacity to discover individual auditory–motor solutions that confer expressivity, coherence, and stylistic uniqueness upon performance.
6. The proposed concept may serve as a theoretical foundation for further interdisciplinary research on musical performance within the contexts of phenomenology, cognitive science, and performance pedagogy.

REFERENCES

- Davydov, Mykola. *Theoretical foundations of formation of performance skills of an accordionist*. Kyiv, Musical Ukraine, 2004, 240 p.
- Godøy, Rolf Inge, and Marc Leman, eds. *Musical Gestures: Sound, Movement, and Meaning*. New York: Routledge, 2010.
- Gordon, Edwin E. *Roots of Music Learning Theory and Audiation*. Chicago: GIA Publications, 2011.
- Hatten, Robert S. *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes: Passion, Sorrow, and Joy*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004.
- 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.
- Krausz, Michael (ed.). *The Interpretation of music: philosophical essays*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993, 288 p.

- Leman, Marc. *Embodied Music Cognition and Mediation Technology*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007.
- Leman, Marc. *The Expressive Moment: How Interaction with Music Engenders Meaning*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2016.
- 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.
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. *Phenomenology of Perception*. Translated by Colin Smith. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962.
- Moskalenko, Viktor. *The creative aspect of musical interpretation (to the problem of analysis)*. Kyiv, Muzinform, 1994, 157 p.
- Nattiez, Jean-Jacques. *Music and Discourse: Toward a Semiology of Music*. Translated by Carolyn Abbate. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.
- Patel, Aniruddh D. "The Evolutionary Neuroscience of Musical Beat Perception." *Frontiers in Systems Neuroscience* 8, no. 57, 2014.
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fnsys.2014.00057>
- Pyaskovskiy, Igor. *The logic of musical thinking*. Kyiv, Musical Ukraine, 1986, 180 p.
- 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.
- Zaiets, Vitalii, Zaiets, Oksana. *Modifying processuality of emotions of a musician-performer*. *Studia UBB Musica*, LXVIII, Special Issue 2, Cluj-Napoca, 2023, pp. 197-206.
- Zaiets, Vitalii. "The Way of Thinking in the Context of the Specificity of the Music Performance." In *Horizonty umenia 7: Zborník príspevkov z medzinárodnej vedeckej konferencie*, 16, Banská Bystrica: Akadémia umení v Banskej Bystrici, 2020, pp. 160-172.
- Zatorre, Robert J., and Andrea R. Halpern. "Mental Imaging of Musical Sounds." *Cerebral Cortex* 3, no. 1, 1993, pp. 29-38.
- Zatorre, Robert J., Joyce L. Chen, and Virginia B. Penhune. "When the Brain Plays Music: Auditory-Motor Interactions in Music Perception and Production." *Nature Reviews Neuroscience* 8, no. 7, 2007, pp. 547-558.

INVITATION FOR PUBLISHING

INVITATION FOR PUBLISHING

Starting in March 2008, we launched the release of a new series of musicology magazines under the name of “**Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai**”, with the title of “**MUSICA**”. If anyone is interested in publishing with us, we gladly accept your collaboration by editing your studies in an elegant and qualitative form.

The magazine is published twice a year:

- For **the first number of the year** the deadline for the receiving of the studies is: **15th of March.**
- For **the second number of the year** we accept the studies up to: **15th of September.**

We accept articles in **English (United States)**. We can receive the studies in an electronic form sent to the following e-mail address:

gabriela.coca.66@gmail.com

We are interested in any papers related to MUSIC.

All the authors are responsible for submitting manuscript in comprehensible English (United States) and ensuring scientific accuracy.

**ONLY ONE study from an author is accepted for publication
in a journal issue!**

*

The maximum size of papers submitted for publication **may not exceed 25000 characters** (include spaces, textboxes, headers, footnotes, endnotes and musical examples)!

Authors must complete the **Declaration of Authenticity** and send it to the editor together with the study. The form for this declaration can be downloaded from the website.

Authors must pre-register on the [ORCID](#) website and submit their system-generated [ORCID](#) unique number with the study for publication: [ORCID](#).

Due to the musical examples that are inserted in the studies, the authors are asked to apply in their studies the format types:

THE STANDARD FORMAT OF THE STUDIES:

PAGE SETUP:

Margins: Top = 4.8 cm; Bottom = 4.8 cm; Left = 4 cm; Right = 4 cm.

Orientation: Portrait

Paper size: A4

Layout: From Edge: Header = 4.8 cm, Footer: 4.6 cm;

Tick the boxes: *Different odd and even and Different first page!*

FONT:

ARIAL, the size of the letters = 11;

PARAGRAPH:

Align text: Justify.

First Line Indentation: Left, 1.25 cm.

Line spacing: Single

Spacing Before Lines: **0 pt**; Spacing After Lines: **0 pt**.

STYLES: Normal.

TITLE OF THE PAPER:

Font: ARIAL, MACROS, BOLD, the size of the letters = 12; Align text: Center

NAME OF THE AUTHOR:

The author's name is placed under the title:

Font: ARIAL, MACROS, BOLD, the size of the letters = 11; Align text: Center

The order of the name: first name then surname.

Name of several authors are separated by a comma.

FOOTNOTES: the size of the letter = 9; Align text: Justify; Line spacing: Single

Spacing Before Lines: **0 pt**; Spacing After Lines: **0 pt**.

!!! Important: The titles that are quoted into the footnotes will have their translation into English put in **round brackets in Italic the (*Translated Title*)**

- Hanging: 0.35 cm

Studia UBB Musica uses the **MLA Citation System**. See: MLA Formatting Guide

[MLA Format: Everything You Need to Know Here](#)

BIBLIOGRAPHY, called: REFERENCES

- The size of the letters in the list of references: 10.

!!! Important: The titles of the books (or papers, web pages links) that are quoted into the footnotes must be noted in the list of references as well!

TABLES: will be numbered in Arabic (for example: **Table 1**) - written above the table on the top right. They are written using Font: ARIAL, BOLD, the size of the letters = 11, Alignment: right

On bottom of the tables:

- The title of the table: centered, on bottom of the table, the size of the letters: 10

- The content of the table: size of the letters: 10

MUSICAL EXAMPLES: will be numbered in Arabic (for example: **E.g. 1**) - written above the example on the top right. They are written using Font: ARIAL, BOLD, the size of the letters = 11; Alignment: right.

On bottom of the example:

- The origin of the musical example (Composer, Work, and Measures Number taken from the score) is mentioned: on bottom of the example, with the size of the letters: 10, ARIAL, BOLD; Alignment: Center

FIGURES and PICTURES: the quality of the figures / pictures, the Xerox copies or the scanned drawings must be very high quality.

- The Figures and Pictures will be numbered in Arabic (for example: **Figure 1** or **Picture 1**) - written above the example on the top right. They are written using Font: ARIAL, BOLD, the size of the letters = 11, Alignment: right.

On bottom of the figures and pictures:

- Under each illustration, there must be an explication of the figure / picture attached with the size of the letters: 10, ARIAL, BOLD; Alignment: center.

*

Each study must be preceded by a SUMMARY into English of 10-15 lines:

- Indent full text of summary in the left side: 1.25 cm

FONT: ARIAL, the size of the letters = 10.

*

Each study must be containing under the summary 3-6 KEYWORDS extracted from the study.

- Indent in the left side: 1.25 cm

FONT: ARIAL, the size of the letters = 10.

*

Each study must include, next to the name of the author on the footnote there must be mentioned the name and the address of the institution where he/she is hired, the profession (the didactic rank), the contact e-mail address of the author, and his/her ORCID number.

*

Each study must contain a short AUTOBIOGRAPHY of the author (ONLY 10-15 LINES), placed after the REFERENCES at the end of the paper.

The autobiography should be formulated as a cursive text, in the 3rd person singular.

- The size of the letter: 10.

In this short autobiography, the author can link to a personal web page, where readers can find more information about himself and his work. This excludes Facebook pages. We recommend institutional pages, or a profile page on www.academia.edu.

We ask authors to upload their CVs to the ORCID website.

*

We ask authors to visit the journal's website

([Information For Authors | Studia Universitatis Babes-Bolyai Musica](#)), complete the Declaration of Authenticity and First Publication, as well as the Declaration regarding the use of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process. These documents must be attached to the manuscript submitted for review.