

Valentina Sandu-Dediu

Some Points of View on Performance Style

It is precisely the difficulty of defining the performance style that justifies the lack of any consistent commentary on the performance theory in modern musicology. I tried to find some critical perspectives on this topic; therefore, in the first part of my essay I will present four authors (two Americans, a German and a Romanian) who approached differently the performance issues. Joachim Kaiser wrote a book that examines the various interpretations that twentieth-century pianists have brought to their performances of Beethoven's sonatas (1975). Then there is Edward Cone's book, *The Composer's Voice* (1974) which sets out from the idea that, as music is a language, we must answer the question: who is speaking? More than forty years ago, Romanian music critic Alfred Hoffman wrote two essays titled *The Style of the Performer* and *Various Performances of Franz Liszt's Concerto No. 1*. Romanian music criticism has not shown any particular interest in defining specific tools to evaluate performances and perhaps for this reason it has not succeeded in achieving an authoritative voice or issuing authentic value judgements, and it is rare that a critic attempts to go deeper than the surface level and get to the heart of a particular performance. Last but not least, Richard Taruskin has opened up the debate on historical performance, evoking his own experiences (in essays written in 1982 and 1995) and launching questions: What does authenticity in performance ultimately mean? What does it mean to respect the composer's intentions?

The subject of comparing performances is specific to music criticism. From the examples given in the second part of my essay we shall gain an idea of the type of tools an 'informed' listener employs when commenting on a performance (of Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony, Ludwig van Beethoven's Quartet opus 59 no. 1, *Images* by Claude Debussy). Finally, a more analytical approach tries to read differently the George Enescu's Third Sonata for Piano and Violin 'in the Romanian folk style'.

Vlad Văidean

(Re)discovering Chopin

The present paper was awarded with the first prize at The National Musicology Competition of the "Dinu Lipatti" Festival. Following the requirements of the contest (the comparison between three different interpretations of the same piece - Frédéric Chopin's *Walz op. 69 no. 2*, played by Alfred Cortot, Dinu Lipatti and Arthur Rubinstein), the author gradually came to observe a broader perspective. First of all, the interpretations painted three different "personas" of Chopin: the romantic, the classic and the aristocrat, the latter being the perfect melting pot of the first two. Then, the chronological order of these interpretations made way for an assumption of a possible evolutionary chronology of the emotional aspect in playing Chopin. Above all, the presence of a crystal clear objectiveness of the subjective side in interpretation turned out as an indisputable element. This leaves us without the possibility to decide about a hierarchy of value among the three pianists, or to pinpoint the special and

objective character of the ideal Chopin player. Finally, the same objective subjectiveness is decided to be the single existing element able to “excuse” the insufficiency of every remark, in the mirror illusions of the composer-performer-audience-reviewer relations.

Sonia Neagoe

National Flavour, Joy of the Waltz, Untamed Romanticism

This short essay describes in a subjective manner three performances of Chopin’s Waltz op. 69 no. 2. The challenge was to compare valuable insights of three of the most known and appreciated pianists and specialists in Chopin’s music: Arthur Rubinstein, Alfred Cortot and Dinu Lipatti. The paper starts with some facts about the context of the Waltz, about shape and structure, it provides the analysis method (according to Dinu Ciocan), it highlights the specific connection of the performers with this music. A short portrait of each unique perspective, using a personalized analysis sketch, combining stylistic, esthetic and semantic elements, represents the goal of the author.