

The Method in musical interpretation

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Abstract: *The method in musical interpretation is a way to achieve and materialize the musician's interpretative approach. Moreover the method allows the suppression of doubts and ignorance while enhances the study's efficiency. The method involves both the interpretative approach- as a process of internalization and deepening of the semantics belonging to the musical text, as well as the sound materialization- finding the proper way to express the result of identifying the encoded meaning among the music score. When learning through the method, the goal is made aware and the means are being synchronized to it. The performer's method involves the rational use of the basic principles of interpretation, adjusted to the repertoire's diversity. In addition, the teacher's method involves flexibility and grace in coordinating the student's learning process. The role of the teacher is to guide the constant evolution of the student through understanding and motivation.*

Key-words: *belief, method, general and specific interpretive coordinates, belief, method, general and specific interpretive coordinates*

1. Argument

The key concepts from which I start are BELIEF and METHOD in musical interpretation. Musical interpretation is an artistic field that, in order to be explored at its highest levels, needs first of all an artistic BELIEF on which to base its interpretive approach and rather a METHOD through which to understand the interpretive conception.

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The interpretive act is a phenomenon in itself, for which the performer invests all his energy out of the desire to express the meanings of musical creations. BELIEF is just the argument, but the realization must be based on a METHOD. Method in interpretation and method in teaching are those paths that we consciously draw to reach the desired goal.

2. Dissertation

The method is a conscious factor of recognition; it is a materialization of the interpretive approach. I was concerned about the difference between the interpreter's method (individual course) and the teacher's method (disciple's direction).

Olivier Reboul discusses the problem of learning in a book regarding the philosophy of interpretation: "Learning, in all fields, presupposes a motivation (that is, everything that derives from the artistic creed) and an effective practice that man does by method. The method is a school of the economy of means" (Reboul 1980, 56). The difference between trial learning and method learning consists primarily in the fact that method learning is aware of the goal, the model. The conscious goal allows us to control every attempt, to save groping and thus reduce mistakes. The method allows the suppression of risks and the efficiency of the study.

The method should not be confused with coercion. It is not good to force our beliefs on others. In art, truth can be expressed in countless ways, and the goal of methodical learning is actually to discover "learning how to learn". The role of the teacher is to be a guide of progressive evolution, through understanding and motivation.

In this sense, the method approached by an interpreter in study and the teaching method differ in the sense that the interpreter's relationship with his inner Master is direct, while in teaching the teacher, based on his experience, makes the disciple discover his own inner Master.

The performer's method involves using the basic principles of musical performance, adapted to the diversity of the repertoire. The teaching method also involves grace and flexibility in coordinating the student's learning process.

The artistic creed, reflected in the didactic plan, highlights the importance of development regarding the artistic image in the preliminaries of learning, the

discovery of the organization of the meanings, structure and proportions of the musical text. Nowadays, many theorists and practitioners recommend memorizing the text as quickly as possible, because it involves paying attention to all the elements of musical language contained in it and their awareness. Mental play – studying without a piano is recommended by Chuan Chang in an extensive treatment of piano practice, following a method by Yvonne Combe (Debussy's student).² It distinguishes five kinds of basic methods of memorization: hand memory, audio – tactile; memorizing music, its elements: melody, rhythm, expression, emotions; visual, photographic memory; keyboard memory associated with mental singing; theoretical memory.

In my opinion, in the interpretive approach, the theoretical memory would be the one that offers perspective, the sense of form – so necessary, then the memorization of the elements belonging to language, which coagulate in meanings. Of great importance in my opinion is the audio-tactile memorization, which offers safety on the instrument, giving the whole body the opportunity to participate, to "sing". In concert performance, the close connection between touch and hearing is of great importance, especially for the feedback received in both ways. But, in fact, all these "memories" are associative, the result of educating each one being, in the end, an effective mutual empowerment.

For visually sensitive students, visual memory helps to form the sound image, but cannot replace it, and then it must pass into the auditory sphere. For them the additional graphic signs added by the teacher are very useful, highlighting and contouring by graphic signs as suggestive of the intentions already existing in the score, but "insufficient" for those who fail to penetrate a deeper level of expression.

I adopted in interpretation and teaching that "intonation" of sounds required by Master Sergiu Celibidache, which really gives that energy needed by the performer, like a singer, to highlight the expressiveness of the intervals. Thus, the chaining of intervals has life, the "pulsating" sound transmits the sound flow to the listener. The inner organization of the musical discourse then proves to be well conceived when the music can carry us on its wings precisely through the well-ordered pulsating energy. The relationship we have with the Universe itself through pulse, time and emphasis in music is interestingly exposed by Tobias Mattay in his book. The auditory command for such sounds is undoubtedly more

² Chuan C. Chang – *Fundamentals of Piano Practice*, Library of Congress Control Number 2007907498, on line: <http://www.pianopractice.org/>

consciously performed and the performer takes care of the quality of the sounds emitted. Therefore sonority is actually the sensitive material of music. The sonority is perceived as the “packaging” of the musical meaning, but this "packaging" is very important to attract the listener to the concert hall and for the pleasure of the interpretive act itself. Because the sound imprint of each musician is given by SONORITY, the disciple must be instilled with the desire to refine the formation of sounds according to the sonorities he wants to obtain, to diversify them according to the expressive requirements of the score.

Particular attention will be paid to the exercises that can be done in this regard. I consider it important that the preliminary exercises prepare the performer's physical apparatus so that it reacts effectively to the finest requirements of hearing and the desire to materialize the inner musical image. I recommend to the instrumentalists stereotypical exercises such as: ranges, arpeggios, chords, but in different dynamics, with clear intentions, to pay attention to the test and to allow awareness of how changes occur, the body's reaction speed, etc. I even recommend improvisations on these elements, for the development of sound imagination and perception of body sensations. The exercises I propose are just the workshop necessary to diversify the means of expression of each. These must be related to the musical image in all its complexity, when a score is approached.

Then, the attitude in interpretation is important. Just as a speaker consciously “builds” his speech to impress the audience, the performer must lucidly construct, in the study, the sound edifice, in the most appropriate and efficient ways (Sandu-Dediu 2010, 268). But after that, as Dinu Lipatti advised his disciples: “we will have to add to the concrete casing of carefulness towards the text all those things that a house needs to be finished: the passion of our heart, spontaneity, freedom, diversity of feelings etc...”.

It is very important how we look at the teacher-student relationship and understand what he needs to discover through us. The method by which we attract disciples is to find ways in which young people can be educated without destroying their ability to perceive, themselves, the artistic truth. With their own beliefs, they can transmit their music in a much more convincing and “fresh” way. The path I propose in interpretation is: awareness of the coordinates present in the musical text and those specific to their realization.

My author book *General Coordinates and Specific Coordinates of Musical Interpretation*, printed at the West University Publishing House, Timișoara,

2011 is a reflection of my searches on the path of initiation into music. I have divided the discovered coordinates into general and specific coordinates.

3. Conclusions

The general coordinates of a musical interpretation, its objective frameworks, are included in the musical score and consist of the interweaving of the elements of musical language. They are the ones through which the "code" of the spiritual message is engraved in the score. Correct decoding involves framing those parameters that lead to the formation of a sound image in accordance with the composer's desire and carrying the meanings with which he loaded them.

The specific coordinates of a musical interpretation bring together the aspects related to the effective sound contouring of the musical image (as a synthesis of the musical language elements) and the aspects related to the preparation and shaping the effective, specific interpretation – instrument, voice or chamber ensembles.

Awareness of all these coordinates and their integration into the actual interpretation is a method that ensures the effectiveness of the study to achieve the proposed goal: an interpretation that matches the requirements of the composer, but at the same time full of the uniqueness of the performer, which expresses the deep meaning of the interpreted work. Thus, the musical belief is expressed, with the help of the method, in and through the living act of the original, unique musical interpretation.

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