Towards an affective dimension of phenomenal authenticity: from sympathy to empathy in the interpretative gesture in art music

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Introduction

Since the 1940s, research into the historicity of works in the Western classical music repertoire – specifically their instrumental composition and original performance conditions – has revolutionised performers' practice. Moreover, it appears that a genuine paradigm shift has taken place, brought about by a change in the conceptual framework that governs all aspects of musicians' practice. As Thomas Kuhn explains in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, and thus in the context of scientific activity, the paradigm represents the very foundation that guides the entire range of practices within a scientific community; this is what we propose to identify in the case of the history of musical performance. However, as Kuhn further writes, 'identifying common paradigms is not the same as identifying common rules[1]', but rather amounts to identifying practices or sets of practices and common evaluative standards, sometimes through 'resemblance or conformity[2]'. Methodologically speaking, this therefore involves paying particular attention to empirically observable similarities, the interplay of which then makes it possible to trace back to a general model. This does not consist of an explicit 'complete set of rules[3]', but rather of a more fluid entity, perceived through 'intuition[4]', the defining characteristic of which is that it exhibits a certain 'coherence[5]', which implies that, in our case—which requires application to the sphere of interpretation—aesthetic paradigms are always, at least in part, porous; and that whilst interpreters operating within the same paradigm share certain practices and presuppositions, owing to the very nature of artistic expression and its resolutely individual dimension despite everything, there

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[1] KUHN, Thomas, *La structure des révolutions scientifiques* (1962), traduit par Laure Meyer, Paris, Flammarion, 2018, 352 pages, pages 85-86.

[2] *Ibid*., page 89.

[3] *Ibid*.

[4] *Ibid*.

[5] *Ibid*.

remains, in fact, considerable variability between their artistic gestures. Thus, it seems possible for us to identify two key paradigms in understanding this decisive shift. Firstly, a post-Romantic paradigm, which, through developments in instrumental technique, actualises the ambitions inherent in the very birth of the concept of musical performance—as embodied by the Romantic movement—making the performer the very embodiment of the musician. This paradigm revolved around a primary principle, which was both necessary and sufficient: 'to sound', which amounts to linking interpretative choices to their effects on the listeners' perception. Nevertheless, certain variables appear to come into play in the application of this principle, in particular the analogy between musical discourse and the functioning of a living organism, which consequently implies the promotion of a powerful ideal: naturalness. However, as the empirical performance of pre-Baroque and Baroque works on their original instruments resulted in an aesthetic radically different from that of post-Romantic interpretations, the reversal of post-Romantic principles was driven by the realisation that the composer's work must constitute an end in itself, and could no longer be reduced to a mere means to an end. The establishment of this paradigm, which is now contemporary, had a decisive impact on the concept of authenticity, imbuing it with a dual dimension: whilst the subjectivity at work in any post-Romantic interpretation was, above all, that of the performer, this implied that the prevailing authenticity was, in a sense, phenomenal, for it had to be perceived, in terms of aesthetic reception, as emanating from the performer's own mind; whereas, from now on, another aspect of authenticity—a form of fidelity to the composer's text—takes precedence over the expression of the performer's subjectivity, reducing the latter to a variable that is certainly necessary, but not sufficient. However, this new precision, this demand for fidelity to the composer's score, seems to have closed off the composer's work by fixing the musical discourse. And this appears to have repercussions for a crucial concept at the heart of the interpretative act: otherness. Indeed, every performer finds themselves engaged in a difficult confrontation: on the one hand, with the composer's work, which they are now required to regard as an end in itself; and on the other hand, with the audience, who will receive their interpretation, and in relation to whose perception they must consider every interpretative choice. Thus, we see that, firstly, any ethics of interpretation seems to be defined in negative terms: the performer's expression of subjectivity is left entirely free, provided that they do not propose interpretative choices deemed impossible in the light of a historical and musicological study of the composer's work. However, this seems to open the door to a form of disengagement, since, with musical notation now subject to a new form of fixity and the composer's work being more closed off, the commitment to the element of division inherent in interpretation appears to be avoidable. For, indeed, any interpretation seems to imply a division and a reduction of the work to a sketch, which, admittedly, may – and must – be coherent in itself, but cannot claim to be exhaustive, and necessarily runs the risk not merely of failure, but – within a contemporary paradigm also characterised by a search for truth – of being labelled an error. How, then, can we avoid the possibility of this disengagement? What must we set against it, and what values must be mobilised to reaffirm this commitment inherent in the act of interpretation?

Post-Romantic sympathy

It seems that Post-Romanticism—which, in this context, stands in perfect continuity with the conditions that enabled the very emergence of the concept of musical interpretation—sets in motion, within the performer's subjectivity, the feeling of sympathy as an affective principle that emotionally guides the interpretative act. As this is an emotion rooted in human nature—since it consists in the projection of one's subjective inner self onto others—this affective principle thus aligns with a set of values that conceptually underpin the Romantic and subsequently post-Romantic practice of interpretation. For indeed, the post-Romantic model of musical declamation is based on the analogy between the form of musical discourse and the functioning of an organism, that is to say, a natural living body. Breathing and the modulation of speech must therefore, in a sense, move in accordance with the movements of a living body. This forms part of a broader framework aimed at naturalising music, underpinned by a conception of musical discourse as serving a figurative representational purpose. Similarly, sympathy emerges as a perfectly natural feeling, as the ability to experience it universally appears to be truly innate. This projection of one's own emotions onto others in such a situation is, in fact, a preconscious act. Sympathy thus emerges as a form of emotional transference. As Jean-Claude Monod explains in 'Empathy and Sympathy: From Husserl to Scheler, and Back', published in 2023 in *Alter*, Theodor Lipps identified a form of projection, known as *Einfühlung* as a form of 'internal imitation[6]': I place myself in the position I assume to be that of another, whilst imagining how I would act if I were in that position. And so, this amounts to considering this situation – which is certainly external – but in the light of the contents of our mind, of the unique connections that operate within it, and which are in fact unique to it, and can only be our own. This would seem to imply that, as the process takes place intuitively —or, as we might say, preconsciously—the reappropriation of content that was initially external is not the subject of intentional recognition. Monod thus echoes Max Scheler, who distinguished between understanding and empathy, for 'in the act of understanding, we do not experience (*erleben*) in any way what is understood[7]' – although Scheler rejects Lipps's thesis that sympathy involves a fusional projection, sympathy being an intentional act that immediately grasps another's feeling as it is, without being a mere mechanical contagion or an analogy between oneself and another.

Nevertheless, is it a contradiction that the intuitive projection of the self towards the other—which sympathy presupposes and which, as Lipps explains (though Scheler would disagree), constitutes the very driving force of sympathy—prevents it from initiating an initial form of

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[6] MONOD, Jean-Claude, « Empathie et sympathie : de Husserl à Scheler, et retour », *Alter* [En ligne], 31 | 2023. §8 URL : http://journals.openedition.org/alter/2647 ; DOI : https://doi.org/10.4000/16kxs

[7] SCHELER, Max, *Die deutsche Philosophie der Gegenwart*, in *Gesammelte Werke, t. 7*, Bern & Munich, Francke Verlag, 1973, Vorwort zur ersten Auflage, page 22, quoted in MONOD, Jean-Claude, « Empathie et sympathie : de Husserl à Scheler, et retour », *Alter* [En ligne], 31 | 2023. URL : http://journals.openedition.org/alter/2647 ; DOI : https://doi.org/10.4000/16kxs

recognition of the other[8]? In this instance, recognition of the other as being analogous to oneself, at least in terms of their constitution. In other words, feeling sympathy for another person therefore presupposes that they are my equal. For Edith Stein, on the other hand, as Claire Balletti explains in *A Phenomenological Study of Intersubjective Processes in Hypnotherapy*, a thesis defended in 2021, 'empathy is the act by which a subject aims at and grasps another's lived experience. It is an act that is original insofar as it is a present lived experience, but not original in terms of its content[9]'. Having said that, of course, Balletti explains that for Stein, obviously, 'the lived experience grasped through empathy possesses a character of originality for another', which implies that whilst this lived experience I am trying to grasp must be the subject of a process of acquisition, it is, of course, felt as one's own by the person whose experience I am seeking to grasp. And so, this means for us that it seems necessary to go beyond sympathy – a form of recognition of the other which, despite everything, does not seem sufficient – and to acknowledge that, whilst I may share feelings of the same nature and form with others, the preconscious links that operate between the mind's preconceptions cannot be the same in others. Empathy therefore implies a form of confrontation and, above all, a conscious process of cognitive understanding that results from it. However, how might we conceive of this empathy in the context of musical interpretation, which involves a sense of otherness in relation to a composer who has often been dead for years, or even centuries?

Thus, the interpretative act within the post-Romantic paradigm is understood as a projection of the content inherent in the performer's subjectivity towards the content of the composer's original text. But in doing so, the score establishes itself as a medium—the form of musical discourse—which, as the formalist Hugo Riemann explained, is embodied in strictly objective variables, namely the harmonic, tonal or rhythmic elements of the discourse, which here appear to be intended to serve an expressive content, for it is indeed this that is meant to be expressed, and which de facto constitutes the meaning of the musical discourse, which has its source in the performer's power of imagination. Two consequences thus seem to follow. Firstly, the openness of the musical work, which in this instance is unambiguously that proposed by the performer, in the tradition of the nineteenth-century Romantic era which established the performer as the very embodiment of the figure of the musician—who, as Umberto Eco explains in *The Open Work*, is defined by the diversity of interpretations that a work presupposes, 'no work of art [is] truly "closed[10]"', since each one 'comprises, beyond a defined appearance, an infinity of possible

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[8] For, according to Lipps, sympathy implies a kind of fusion between myself and the other with whom I am in sympathy, to the extent that there is, at this stage, only a single 'I', as Edith Stein summarises it. For Lipps, the recognition of the irremediable separation between myself and the other with whom I have entered into sympathy can only occur after I have ceased to be in sympathy with him or her.

[9] BALLETTI, Claire, *Étude phénoménologique des processus intersubjectifs en hypnothérapie. Sciences du Vivant* [q-bio]. 2021. ⟨dumas-03270832⟩, page 23.

[10] ECO, Umberto, *L'œuvre ouverte* (1962), traduit par Chantal Roux de Bézieux et André Boucourechliev, Paris, Points, 2015, 320 pages, page 43.

“readings[11]”’. This openness, ‘the very condition of aesthetic enjoyment[12]’, is thus greatly reinforced. However, the negative consequence is, conversely, the denial of recognition of the fundamental otherness inherent in the relationship between the composer and his work: if the composition serves as a medium for an expression that lies outside itself and whose content constitutes the work proper, then the composition can no longer be recognised as an end in itself. Furthermore, the projection of the self not only onto the work as a medium, but also onto another subjectivity—that of the composer—without recognising it as being entirely distinct from the self, also constitutes a case of identification. Identification with a composer, such as Leonard Bernstein’s identification with Gustav Mahler, for example—here, notably through the identification of experiences deemed to be shared in hindsight—thus appears to pose a significant problem: if Bernstein considers himself to share a common lived experience with Mahler, this is, firstly, a process that took place well after the composer’s death; and secondly, it must be immediately noted that lived experience—that is to say, a subjectively perceived continuity arising from the combination of elements of various kinds—encompasses a set of idiosyncratic and intermittent experiences. As Thierry Hoquet explains in his introduction to the concept of ‘Life’, as part of a collection published in France by Flammarion, lived experience can only be the source of understanding, which deprives it of any explanation. However, the only means that seems to allow for this understanding is identification, which, in Bernstein’s case, requires a form of projection. Moreover, as Lipps explains, the experience of sympathy involves sharing an experience alongside the other person with whom I feel sympathy; this presupposes that, for the duration of the experience, I do not acknowledge the separation—however irreducible—that exists between myself and them. The problem with this projection is that it amounts to a shift whereby one recognises the other as one’s equal, whilst their subjectivity is unique, their lived experience consists of elements inaccessible to anyone other than themselves, and, in this instance, of contextual elements experienced by Mahler but not by Bernstein. We do not say this to devalue, in aesthetic terms, Bernstein’s interpretations of Mahler’s music, but it seems to us that we must recognise that this identification—as a projection born of the ambition to continue oneself preconsciously rather than to seek explicitly to step outside oneself—raises certain questions—which, of course, cannot be resolved. One might contrast this, for example, with Claudio Arrau, who believed it necessary to step outside oneself: interpretation involves bringing one’s own preconceptions to light, and bringing one’s own emotional projections to light, whatever their nature and scope.

What is more, the post-Romantic practice of interpretation thus appears to come up against its paradigmatic limits, even when the intentions expressed tend to take the form of empathy. The case of Alfred Cortot is particularly telling. Indeed, although Cortot believed that

> It is evident that the composer’s nationality, the era, his individual character, his level of education, the events of his life, the circles in which he moved, and even his reading, having all

[11] *Ibid*.

[12] *Ibid*., page 59.

> influenced his creative process, a special approach tailored to each work will be indispensable for the performer who seeks to bring it to life.[13]

And whilst the challenge is thus to reconstruct an environment to which we have absolutely no access, this nevertheless seems to remain a form of proto-empathy. Clearly, there is an awareness here that the environment in which the composer developed, and in which he worked to produce his work, can no longer be the same as it is today. However, Cortot remains at a level—admittedly an advanced one—of post-Romantic sympathy. And this is for a practical reason: for Cortot, the expression of the performer's subjectivity remains paramount, in the face of a work still regarded as a medium. As his pupil Pnina Salzman explains, in Cortot's view, 'if there was an instruction […], it could be deleted and rewritten. It was shameful to do everything that was written[14]'.

Recognising the composer: an act of empathy

For interpretation does indeed seem to presuppose a dual otherness, which in turn presupposes a dual recognition: that of two quite distinct subjectivities. It is perhaps worth clarifying here that by 'recognition' we should perhaps mean an awareness that all otherness must be regarded as an end in itself, and cannot be regarded as a means to an end. These two forms of otherness are, of course, the composer's work – what part of the composer is actually present in the work? We do not have the answer, and we never will – and then there is the audience. Recognition of the former therefore obviously entails regarding it as an end in itself, which implies that whilst the performer shares an obvious condition with the composer, he remains nonetheless a separate being, whose experience, due to its idiosyncratic nature, cannot be experienced by anyone other than himself. And so, in performance, projection seems to be nothing more than the act of placing one's own conceptual and aesthetic articulations within the framework provided by the text, which, in effect, amounts to treating the text as a means to an end. The challenge, it would seem, is now to maintain this unassailable barrier: the realisation that another person's lived experience is unique to them and will remain so forever, and the recognition that they, like me, are a subjectivity of the same nature. Perhaps we should distinguish further here between this 'nature' – which effectively amounts to saying that we are of the same species and share common characteristics – and our psychological constitution. Here comes into play a process that seems to us to be decisive in any interpretative act: the shift from sympathy to empathy. The latter consists precisely in stepping outside oneself, having first brought one's preconceptions to light, and, above all, the links and relationships they maintain amongst themselves within the experience and actions that constitute it – the interweaving of these links thus forming the foundation of every action – so that one may

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[13] Quoted in NISHIMURA, Yukio, « Écrivain "classique" contre pianiste "romantique" », Bulletin des Amis d'André Gide, Vol. 54, No.211/212, Automne 2021, pages 109-138, URL : https://www.jstor.org/stable/27089357

[14] SALZMAN, Pnina, *Interview with Inbar Rothschild* (2006), quoted dans ROTHSCHILD, Inbar, *In Search of Poetic Understanding* (2023), 305 pages.

then, through a conscious act of the intellect, that is to say through cognition, reconstruct the links of a different nature between preconceptions whose content is different within the subjectivity of others.

We cannot know whether it is this shift from sympathy to empathy that truly lies at the heart of the re-evaluation – initiated by the 'Baroque scholars', and first and foremost by the early works of Nikolaus Harnoncourt – of the work as something that must imperatively be regarded as an end in itself. However, if we set aside the factual history of musical interpretation, let us nevertheless consider that this shift towards empathy remains decisive in any interpretation – and, it seems to us, not only in music. For every interpretation thus appears to presuppose this recognition of the other. The corollary problem that nevertheless arises, this time in practice, this reconsideration of the composer's work as an end in itself, is the closure of the composer's work, through the conception of a work now understood as a self-contained whole, and the emergence of a new fixity in the determination of meaning within the musical discourse, the source of which nevertheless remains the performer's subjectivity.

Expressed affects and guiding affects

Thus, perhaps we can identify yet another distinction between two forms of affect at the heart of the interpretative act: on the one hand, expressed affects, and on the other, guiding affects. Both indeed seem to play a decisive role both in the performers' creative process and in attesting to the success—obviously aesthetic, but perhaps now also ethical—of the performance. Firstly, the case of expressed emotions. These constitute the very heart of the performer's work; that is to say, through the effective recognition of the two forms of otherness at play in the performance, its aesthetic success. This success is thus achieved if the performer both presents a performance which, in its creative process, has genuinely acknowledged the composer, and enables the audience to recognise the content of the expression as conceived within the performer's subjectivity. Aesthetic success thus emerges as a form of adequacy. A central requirement therefore emerges. Indeed, the performer must first empathise with the composer – through their work – and with the audience, both in order to recognise the composer's work as an end in itself and to consider how, through what practical means, the emotional content of their interpretative choices – which constitutes the meaning of the musical discourse – will actually be perceived by the audience in the way that the performer themselves experiences it.

Let us therefore examine the perhaps even more complex case of guiding affects. To begin with, why 'guiding'? Because this refers to the totality of preconscious links operating between preconceptions within the interpreter's own subjectivity. As we have already stated, without becoming aware of them, the consequence of their existence may ultimately be the treatment of the work as a means, in the two ways we have previously identified: namely, treating the work as a formal medium, or through the projection of the self into the subjectivity of another, which is identification. The very existence of guiding affects – which the contemporary paradigm leading to

the view of the work as an end in itself seems to have fully brought to light – is undoubtedly, in some way, at the root of this new scientific approach that has become ingrained in the practice of performers, alongside the new 'closure' of the composer's work. Indeed, bringing them to light seems to imply a form of verification, for either the interpretation – provided it does not distort the original work – that is to say, if it contains no propositions that could not have been expressed at the time the work was created—and thus in the composer's state of mind at that time—may be regarded as valid; or, more importantly, if this is not the case, it is judged within this more contemporary conceptual framework to be quite simply false. However, these guiding affects, by their very nature —that of being emotional—do not seem capable of being eliminated. Moreover, it seems that any attempt to eliminate such affects runs counter to the very principle of musical interpretation, which remains a form of artistic expression! Thus, whilst awareness of such affects seems essential, it is precisely their sifting through the sieve of the composer's work—which is effectively recognised—that allows it to be regarded as an end in itself, and therefore, ultimately and above all, as a work of art; this, in turn, enables the existence of that which will constitute the meaning destined to fill the entities that will carry it by structuring the composer's original text: the expressed affects. For it seems that the delicate balance of the commitment inherent in performance is at stake here. Indeed, performance appears to be a process of semantic determination[15], which consists of endowing with meaning propositions intentionally identified within the composer's text; and this identification arises both objectively from consideration of the form of musical delivery specific to the context of the composition, and subjectively from the recognition of otherness in relation to the composer, marked by an awareness of the guiding emotions. However, if interpretation is a work of art, it is, of course, by virtue of its expressive nature, which presupposes that the performer expresses content originating from within themselves through the meaning they give to their musical discourse.

How, however, might one attempt to understand the inevitable interaction between guiding affects and expressed affects? This interaction would thus be embodied in the affective hue that necessarily characterises what we have termed 'phenomenal authenticity', from which derives the meaning of the musical discourse specific to the performer's gesture. Firstly, every expressed affect stems from a guiding affect. The guiding affect thus appears to be necessarily primary, whereas the expressed affect may either be primary – in which case the guiding affect, having passed through the filter of the process of empathy, remains unchanged – or it may be the result of an affective transformation, the consequence of which is perceptible in the musical form itself. Secondly, one must undoubtedly assume the possibility of retrospective reflection, that is to say, tracing back from the expressed affects to the guiding affects, in order to bring about a modification of the interpretation as it is formed within the performer's subjectivity. Listening to oneself—but to oneself whilst playing, not mere introspection, which is not retrospective—thus appears to be a privileged means of achieving this. Some performers are in the habit of recording themselves whilst playing – this was the case with Monique de la Bruchollerie, for example. For others, one simply

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[15] As I said in my research memoire, defended in June 2026 at Sorbonne-Université, and called *From One Aesthetic Paradigm to Another: Towards a Dual Dimension of Authenticity? The Case of the Interpretation of Art Music.*

needs to learn to listen to oneself playing, as Vladimir Sofronitsky put it in an interview given in 1945 to Alexandre Vitsinsky. Thus, by intentionally seeking to step outside one's own interpretative choices, the perception of the affects expressed – during rehearsal, wherever that may take place, or whilst listening to a recording of oneself, for example – could itself prove to be a means by which the performer becomes aware of their guiding affects.

A twofold recognition: the transition to aesthetic reception

So, a few concluding remarks. Firstly, recognising a composer's work is a matter of empathy. This involves regarding another person as my equal, yet as having an experience that is not my own, and which must be the subject of a conscious process of emotional reconstruction – whereby empathy may enable me to feel an emotion, although I cannot guarantee that it is exactly the same in nature as that of the person towards whom I am exercising empathy. This recognition is therefore not a deference owed to the past as a matter of principle, as if tradition were a principle justifying such deference. Furthermore, the demand inherent in the process of sifting through the composer's work for its own sake can only be conceived as a tangent, a horizon towards which to strive, and which cannot be fully realised. Moreover, such fulfilment would undoubtedly be meaningless, since this process of raising awareness does not appear as a limitation on the principle of expressing the content that constitutes the performer's work, but rather as a direction for that freedom. The underlying problem is therefore that of the movement that follows, for this process of raising awareness of the guiding affects does, in fact, initially appear to impose itself as a form of verification. However, whilst the risk of equating the accuracy of interpretative choices with the immanent content of the score may lead to the construction of a normative requirement aimed at subsuming interpretation within the realm of truth, viewing the filter of affective recognition through empathy as a horizon that can never be fully realised allows us to distinguish between validity and truth: whilst an interpretative choice may appear to contradict the content of the composer's text—and thus be deemed false—any other interpretative choice must be regarded as valid, according to the regime of truth, and must therefore be assessed solely in terms of strictly aesthetic success – the characteristics of which, as they interact with one another, seem necessarily to leave room for value judgements that are not epistemic. Such judgements are not those of a detached spectator, they arise from an affective experience of the performance, and are inseparable from it. That said, anyone who writes about interpretative practice in music places themselves within a normative framework. Are they fully aware of it? Certainly not, and so I cannot spell out all the biases that lead me to make certain judgements, which constitute the endeavour that is this article. Nevertheless, it seems to me personally that research into the historicity of works can be regarded as a step forward, inherent in the contemporary history of musical interpretation. Through them, we gain a better understanding of the works, which in turn enables us to better recognise which interpretations are invalid, so as to better guide interpretative choices towards interpretations that will constitute works which we can receive in an aesthetically just manner, because they stem

from the freedom of an artist, namely the performer. Such an ethic of interpretation thus lies in the intentional orientation of the performer's work, and not in any content one might expect to find in their work. The crux of the matter is that the actual existence of phenomenal authenticity now demands an awareness of one's affects, yet the very structure of the affect prevents this from being fully realised. However, it should be noted here that there is no perspective on the subject that is entirely free from emotion, from which the interpreter could take in all of them.

We must therefore undoubtedly focus here on the aesthetic reception of musical interpretation. In *No Fear of the Dark*, Hartmut Rosa once again drew upon his most fundamental theory: resonance, which he analysed in 2019 in a book specifically devoted to the subject, this time applying it to the experience of listening to music – in this instance, heavy metal. For Rosa, resonance is in fact a mode of relationship through which we enter the world. Rosa distinguishes four distinct manifestations, four instances of resonance. He first lists a social dimension of resonance, consisting of our intersubjective bond with others; then a material dimension, embodied in our relationship with objects to which we have a special connection; and an individual dimension, that of the subject's resonance with themselves, in which they regard themselves as their own alter ego whilst engaging in an inner dialogue. And finally, Rosa identifies music with the fourth dimension of resonance: that of the world and nature. However, the psychosomatic satisfaction derived from perfect rhythm or from the sensation of the sonic fullness of a consonance must not, above all, be confused with resonance, for resonance consists in the actual experience of a deep vibration, which makes us aware of the analogy between musical discourse and the way in which we experience ourselves in the world. Music therefore lives within itself just as we live. Yet, as Rosa explains, resonance is not something we can simply call upon. 'You cannot produce resonance on demand,' says Rosa. What this means is that the reason musicians can disappoint us is the very same reason we resonate with their work. But let us take this a step further by hypothesising that resonance brings about an affective transformation through listening. In this case, because it touches upon the link between emotional experience and the formation of preconceptions, which intertwine to formulate initial judgements. Conversely, then, to listen is to make oneself receptive to this otherness that moves us, without merely sympathising with the musical discourse that constitutes the performer's work. One can no doubt assume that resonance is impossible without an empathetic approach, because the empathy involved in aesthetic reception requires one to set aside the confusion that may arise during the listening process between the projection of one's preconceptions about the form of the composer's work and the reception of the interpretative choices. Listening to music demands an extremely strong commitment, as it entails a gesture of full and complete acceptance of that otherness which remains beyond our reach through mere sympathy, and thus opening oneself up to something that is beyond our control. What is at stake here is the transition between the expression and transmission of phenomenal authenticity, and thus the interaction between two empathising subjects.

The risk for the performer in confining authenticity solely to accuracy with regard to the content of the score is, in essence, to undermine the otherness at the heart of the interpretative act,

thereby producing a performance that is 'smooth[16]' – in the sense that it fails to draw upon a phenomenal authenticity arising from an act of empathy. Conversely, however, this does indeed seem to imply that the institutions of classical music in the broadest sense – that is to say, both critics and the public, both of whom are, incidentally, equated by Danto with the art world – must renounce the practice of treating the aesthetic experience of musical performance as one of consumption and standardisation; such an experience, on the contrary, presupposes confrontation and division. Indeed, interpretation is an act of semantic determination, and therefore falls under the principle of decision. The moment of interpretation effectively imposes a form of pause.

16 An aesthetic property which is the subject of a chapter in my memoire.