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Who's got the hottest paradigm?

Performance studies under scrutiny

Manuel Bärtsch

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Performance studies belong to the thematically very broad fields of enquiry, getting one's way around is sometimes difficult even for insiders. This article provides an outline of the field by presenting a few emblematic contributions to the research on piano music. The sharp distinction of this approach lies mostly in paradigmatic positions, the meaning of which will be questioned. The author proposes a hybrid orientation model fuelled with these contributions; an analysis of two interpretations of the "Arietta" from Beethoven's op. 111 will help appraise the potential of such a perspective.

From means to end

On instrumental interpretation

Bernard Sève

→ 9

Research on musical interpretation is a vast field encompassing such a wide array of questions that it one runs the risk of getting lost. This confusion is almost inevitable, as the very concept around which these studies are centred is itself obscure: what does one mean by interpretation? In music, who is the interpreter and who the one being interpreted? Philosopher Bernard Sève, who dedicated several books on these fundamental questions, offers an explanation.

Corporeal knowledge of music

Embodiment as method for (historical) performance studies

Kai Köpp

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In parallel with the history of musical works, the historical study of performance deals with factors that lead to the sound form ('Gestalt') of music. Moreover empirical approaches of sound/performance studies will be broadened through historical sources (e.g. explanatory texts, piano rolls,

recorded documents). Embodiment requires a practical musical expertise and allows for a translation of text information into sound as well as the reenactment of interpretation decisions. Under controlled conditions intentional decisions can be distinguished from random or failed elements.

Empty voices

Pre- and postlingual processes of transformation – the first decades of experimental voices after 1945

Dorothea Schürch

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After 1945 voice is rediscovered as material, and above all the empty voice, or the voice beyond language, is subjected to compositional and performative experiments. The research project of the Swiss National Fund 'Écoute élargie – "empty voices" and "objets sonores" in post-1945 music' at the Music University in Bern focusses on the beginnings of this development, looks for the traces of phonation and articulation in the sound of these voices and analyses the various artistic and technical production processes. In her research on empty voices the author also incorporates her experiences as a singer, performer and improviser.

Sound elicitation, or how to build untamed listening

Interview with Gilles Aubry

Marc Haas

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Gilles Aubry, an experimental musician based in Berlin, is working toward a PhD blending ethnological research and artistic sound work at the University of Bern. As an interpreter-researcher, his work quite specifically addresses the notion of listening, that he attempts to raise to the level of the political, aesthetic and philosophical challenges of our time. Marc Haas met him in order to talk about audible frontiers, on how to make a city resonate and on a critical way of listening that would go beyond the boundaries of science.

Castle Dürande renovated

Othmar Schoeck's opera in a new interpretation

Mario Venzago und Francesco Micieli

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Othmar Schoeck's opera *Das Schloss Dürande* ('Castle Dürande'), suspected of enacting National Socialist ideology, has never been brought to the stage after 1943. In May 2018 it will be again at the Bern Theatre in an restored version approximating the presumed original intentions of the work, and, in September 2016, extracts of it will be presented and debated during a symposium in Brunnen. Can this key work of twentieth-century Swiss music history be 'decontaminated' enough so that it can again be subject to discussion and a part of the repertoire again? Two of the ambassadors for this new version, namely writer Francesco Micieli, who recomposed the libretto in the form of an "artistic laboratory", and conductor Mario Venzago, responsible for the musical adjustment of the new text, express themselves regarding the project and the work of reinterpretation of the historical material.

Archiving wind

Karl Burri's instrument collection

Myrielle Schnewlin

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The history of musical interpretation cannot be cut off from a history of instruments. And no history without archive: only the instruments, in preserved or reconstituted form, allow for the sounds of the past to be reawakened. Karl Burri's private collection of historical wind instruments formed the basis for many research projects at the Music University in Basel. This archive is now becoming a museum, a sonorous collection that Myrielle Schnewlin has visited for us right before its opening in 2017.

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