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INTERACTIVE COOPERATION BETWEEN MUSICIAN AND LISTENERS DURING THE PROCESS OF CONCERT ARTISTIC COMMUNICATION

The article examines some aspects of interaction between musician and public under conditions of modern concert communicative situation. The characteristic of kinds of the performance contact with listeners is given, the ontogenesis of interaction between artist and public is considered, theoretically being transformed into the listeners' co-authorship. Various ways of attraction of public's attention, influence on this process of such factors as charisma of performer and his image are studied. Analogues with oratorical skill are disclosed, an important role of autosuggestion for persuasiveness of the stage performance and the confidence of performer in his own strengths.

Keywords: autosuggestion, interactivity, concert artistic communication, listeners' co-authorship, types of performer-listener contact, charisma.

During the musical communication an important condition for artistic and aesthetic work is interaction between performer and listeners. Listener is a final goal of composition created by composer and played on the stage. But public is not a passive witness of what is going on onstage, consumer of musical values. Coming on the stage, performer feels the energy of audience, among which expectations of miracle, festival of creative work prevails. The task of a performing artist is to meet these expectations, to establish a contact with the audience, in order that listeners can completely perceive music.

The pianist Polina Osetinskaya describes this feeling of spiritual unity with listeners: "At that moment you exchange with huge energetic wave with people, who are sitting in the auditorium. And with composer, and with the God, and with the piano, and with myself. And when all these energies meet in one point, in other words, in you, this is absolutely magic feeling" [7, p. 330].

Therefore, spiritual energy of the "auditorium", elevated atmosphere of concert are important pre-conditions of success of performing artist. Signs of sympathy, words of encouragement inspire and support it. This process of interaction between musician and public is developed like along the spiral: public express satisfaction, and performer feels more confident due to which the quality of his play raises, and the audience takes it much more enthusiastically etc.

However, this spiral can be developed also negatively. The increased attention of public to the inexperienced performer can cause excessive excitement and nervousness: he cannot gather up courage, concentrate his attention on the music, he plays. As a result, the communication with public loses, because of which a musician feels himself much more

tremulously. According to B. Yavorskii, performer has to be ready to “the listener’s energy, which is to be mastered” [3, p. 116].

In order to establish a contact with the audience, a performing artist takes upon himself a function of the auditorium’s “director”, being sensitive to the public. The most important task of the performer consists in that to provide listener with that emotional lift, inspiration, which the composer felt, creating his composition, and the performing artists feels, when playing it. If a musician succeeded therein, then three streams of activity, that is composer’s, performer’s and listener’s, are united in a single whole. True listener’s co-authorship is born.

V. Grigoriev in his book “Performer and Stage” distinguishes two fundamental types of performer’s contact with listener, widely spread in the artistic practice. The first type is conditionally denoted as “crowd-pleasing”, which consists in the use of techniques on interaction with the audience in order to “rule over” it, to lead it on the “hero - crowd” principle. Meanwhile, there is temptation to indulge vision of public, using such expressive means, which have more superficial influence on listeners, - aiming at “easy” success.

The second method of communication with listener is similar to meditation, sacred action. Here performing artist is in the environment of “public solitude”, that allowing him to the extent possible to focus his attention on underlying artistic meanings of the composition being performed and render them to the audience.

K. Stanislavski at appropriate time has developed the theory of “glass wall” like separating a stage from the auditorium. According to his theory, communication shall be on the scene, between the actors themselves, but not with public. Many outstanding musicians-performers agree with Stanislavski’s opinion. Thus, the pianist V. Merzhanov, for example, insisted: “I am opposed to the “contact” with listeners or something like that. Vice versa, I try not to pay any attention to public, in other words, it has to “disappear” for me. And therein lies a mysterious part, mysterious sense of our profession. You shall enter the stage of the auditorium, where are 2000 people, and feel yourself “alone” with music. Only under this condition - in case of complete concentration - true achievements are possible” [11, p. 45].

Under this approach an emotional and mental communication with public is created, but it carries out indirectly. In appearance such a performer looks quite modestly, he is focused to the maximum on the composition being played. In order to attract attention of the

audience, he has to look for efficient and light expressive means in the music interpretation itself. However, such a type of communication under the conditions of modern culture is less urgent, a higher level of preparedness of listener is required therefor.

Grigoriev characterizes the first type of communication with public as a “meeting”, the second one as a meditation or praying. Many performers consider only one of the described types of contact as acceptable. But still it is impossible to estimate objectively any of these models of communication with the audience as the best and the only correct. In many ways it depends on artistic task, which performing artist sets himself at in every individual case, from the repertoire being performed, from what kind of listeners came to the concert, and what is most important - from the creative individuality of performer. Thus, J. Heifetz noted that “when Kreisler enters the stage with a smile, plays the first notes, then the public is in his pocket; and he shall spend at least 15 minutes in order to convince listeners that he is right!” [3, p. 122].

However, very often performers use both methods of contact with listeners. Thus, during the “encore” the first method, that is open type of contact, prevails; also it is quite often applied at the beginning of the concert program, when performer did not reach yet the required level of concentration. Public also need time for “warming up”, introduction into the process of joint creative work, as well as in order to adapt in some measure to the play of performing artist.

If we refer to the earlier epochs, then, for example, in stage plays of the Middle Ages the relationship between performing artist and public was immediately associated with the *content* of what was played. Serious characters had no contact with the audience during the stage play. However, when a laughable character came upon the stage or *comic situation* was played out, then direct contact appeared between actors and audience: actors could immediately talk to spectators, who, in turn, responded to the actors, and the stage play was transformed into *a game*, where all present people took part in. Therefore, interactive communication occurs.

It follows therefrom that the ratio of the external and internal in the actor's game depended on stylistics of stage play as well as on the content of role. Moreover, *style, content and form* of a piece of music define what kind of contact will be with listeners.

The presence of interaction with the audience, counter reaction of listeners is the most important indicator of the success of performance on the stage. L. Kogan mentioned about

this: “When after the concert you come to artistic room and feel, that on the stage there was a contact with public, invisible, but the contact, so, of course, you experience a sensation of big creative satisfaction and pleasure. <...> Unfortunately, it also happens that <...> with every measure of music played, you feel, that public move and move away from you. <...> It can be noticed immediately after the first-second minute of the play. You feel, that there is some alienation” [8, p. 221].

In order to attract public’s attention there are definite techniques. Listeners need clear guide for action: what moment you should switch your attention, when you should start to applause. This is determined not only by the tradition itself of the European classical concert, but established by the structure of a piece of music, phrasing, by intonations, by pauses.

A good performer never forgets about that fact, that pauses have own artistic significance. In certain moments silence and immobility have the strongest impact on public. It is not by chance that in memory of people passed away or of some tragic events people hold “a moment of silence”, since precisely at that moment they recognize desiderium and misery. In a piece of music, general pause is analogue to “a moment of silence”. Due to *silence* great tension and intensity of emotions occur rather than as a result of some actions. In order to create tension during the pause you should not consider the stop in movement as relaxation, apathy. At the same time, you need to keep distance and be calm, not to bustle. But it is not apathy, but exclusion of foreign emotions, unnecessary fidgets.

Ways of attraction of the listener’s attention in the performance art in many instances are similar to those used by orators in their speeches. In oratorical skill there are certain rules, regularity of positioning stresses and pauses in oral speech, rising and falling tones, depending on the fact, whether orator develops his idea or concludes it (oratory, rhetorical colours).

In parallel to the rules of logical accentuation on especially important in sense relation words or *musical lexical units*, semantic supports are also important in *musical phrases*, which are not always marked semantically - with accents or sforzando, but are the most important mobile performance expressive means (agogics, dynamics, articulation, etc.).

Sometimes words and their meaning in literal sense are less important than their pronouncing in speech. Change of voice intonation assigns a new specific meaning, and often, even if a conversation partner does not understand the meaning of a word (for

example, if it is a foreigner or a little child), due to the expressiveness he will understand their meaning.

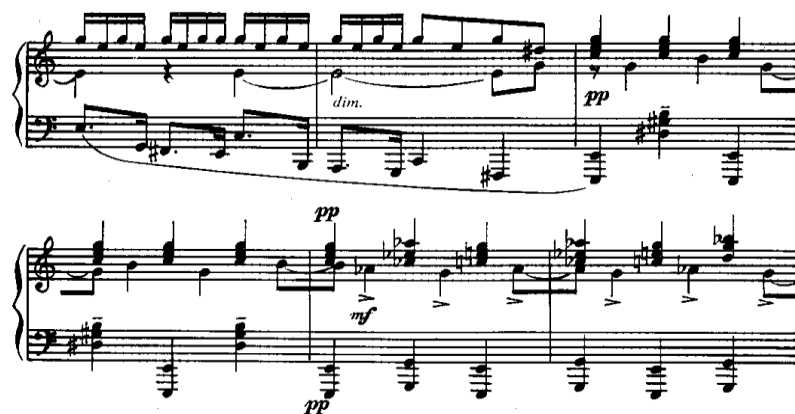
Voice intensity, its strength this is not only loudness, but also a stress level, emotional charge in speech. Often the audience listen to human more attentively, who speaks quietly, not loudly. Excessive loudness and unnecessary haste in speech demonstrates fear to tire, to be not heard.

Analogous processes take place in the process of music performance. If orator or musician are successful in assuring people to quiet down in order to be heard, so therewith he will demonstrate to some extent possibilities to possess the public's attention. Therefore, relation between low voice (slow fingering) and dominance is bilateral in some degree.

Orator can suddenly intensify voice level in order to emphasize words of especial importance, that also attracts the listeners' attention. Performing artist uses analogous expressive dynamic techniques. For example, bright, explosive culminations assign to the performance integrity and completeness. Even if the public's attention was lost at some time, by means of strong culmination this situation can be corrected, since there is a feeling, that previous musical material was a kind of preparation to this "explosion".

The second example, sharp sudden sonority attenuation has a similar impact on listeners, this is a kind of "low" culmination. Another example is a fragment of similar "low" culmination in the middle part of Sergei Prokofiev's Piano Sonata No. 7:

S. Prokofiev. Sonata No. 7 (p.)



At the same time, the slower a piece of music sounds, the stronger emotion shall be put therein, the more concentration of attention it requires. At such moments performer is "electrified", exacted as a stretched string. D. Blagoi writes: "Dynamical force is not always directly proportional emotional tension. Often, in case of primary decay, the sound narrows

and thereby acquires an ever-increasing "density," significance, and meaning: its mass turns out to be concentrated on a smaller part of space" [1, p. 139].

Such factors as charisma of performer and his image are of a great importance for the attraction of public's attention.

Fundamental property of *charisma* is self-confidence" [6]. When human is sure of success of oncoming show, then probability, that he will demonstrate everything he can, is higher.

The need for confident stage behaviour was noted by many outstanding musicians. Thus, V. Gorovits wrote: "When I am on the stage, I am a King, I know, I can do ten times more, than people around" [3, p. 96].

N. Gogol, explaining the essence of similar stage general condition, in the letter to the actor M. Shchepkin wrote: "Now You have that high calmness, you have never had before. Now You can reign in the role" [in the same place].

Analogous idea can be found in F. Chopin: "Believe, that you play well, and you will play better!" [in the same place].

To achieve similar self-confidence one can use *autosuggestion* method [9].

Autosuggestion is applied mainly during autogenic training and promotes prolongation of anxious feeling and fight against vicious habits. The founder of this method of autosuggestion is considered to be E. Coué (1857-1926), who laid down the foundation for the "technology" of this specific type of activity. The methodology of voluntary autosuggestion developed by him consisted in "putting" in himself twice a day a certain verbal formula, namely, a program of necessary internal transformations. In other words, it was necessary to infix on own in own mind thoughts and wishes, feelings and images. Improvement of the effectiveness of autosuggestion was promoted by the conditions as follows:

- a) a total absence of any efforts over oneself during the trainings aimed at the autosuggestion;
- b) complete exclusion of will participation and consolidation of role of imagination;
- c) maximum concreteness of formulas, affirmatively spoken in the present tense from the first-person perspective; quite frequent and their conscious repetition.

From own performer's experience the author of the work came to the conclusion, that if some time prior to the important show you start to say to oneself aloud, in confident voice,

several times a day: “I will play well, I will perform excellent”, then gradually assurance, that everything will be this way, will appear. At the same time fear of any failures, mistakes during the speech is significantly reduced. And if they occur, then it does not reduce the self-assurance and does not influence the quality of performance in whole.

Several levels of perception are peculiar for the actor’s image. The first is appearance, mode of dress, hairdo; women’s makeup. For actor an attractive appearance is of a great importance. According to the outstanding pianist of the modern age D. Pollak, if actor looks good, this is a half of success.

Unusual appearance which differs an actor from others can also make him famous, even if it can draw a mixed reaction among the public. Another example is a pianist Yuja Wang (China), famous for her brave, rememberable mode of dressing.

The second stage of the image perception is stage behaviour of artist, his manner to behave before a live audience, manner of walking, performance gestures and mimics (kinesics). Both these elements of look in outstanding performing artists are interrelated between each other and are natural expression of their inner world.

Artist’s performance starts not with the first attacks, but with his entrance upon the stage as an important element of artistic look. Thus, quickness and confidence of walking, firmness in the eyes, concentration of will were peculiar for E. Gilels. V. Sofronitskii was notable for inner concentration, emphasized calmness upon the entrance.

According to V. Delson’s observations, “ultimate artistic freedom, dynamism and easiness in movements - here is the first impression from the entrance upon the stage of quickly walking, thin and nervous Richter. This impression is confirmed during the process of performance [4, p. 44].

As late as in the XIX-th century, when the publicity of instrumental music performance art was visibly intensified, performing artists had already used various theatricalized methods to activate public’s perception, intensification of contact therewith. They were used both by ordinary performers and great artists such as N. Paganini and F. List.

Artist’s *appearance* depends not only on his *inner world*, but also on those compositions, which he is going to play on the stage. Genre, style of composition, character, epoch of its creation oblige the performer to behave on the stage in an appropriate way - this

is manifested in the entrance upon the stage, in onstage dress and in behaviour during the play.

Of course, in classical music image does not play such an important role as in art or global pop industry. Nevertheless, in modern academic musical art this notion is more often included into the structure of creation of artistic images as an element of adaptation for the stage (dressing) and is an important component in conquest of sympathy, which means, correspondingly, conquest of success among public.

Moreover, a direct relation between a number of listeners and their emotional response to what is going on the stage is of considerable importance. The larger an audience is, the easier it is for an individual listener to get into the performance.

Difference between the visiting music concert and listening to audio recording consists in that listeners at the concert feel themselves to be involved in a particular social event.

To explain many phenomena, taking place during the concert, one can use the same terms, by means of which various grouped events and group work are usually described in social psychology. It is known that upon *group perception* emotional responses are strengthened. “Precisely in scores of people, when an idea of own individuality is faded in a great measure in everyone, emotions are burst into flame with the greatest lightness and strength” [10, p. 59-60].

In such a case, affective state, occurring in a listener under the impression from the *play* of musician-artist, is contagious. It captures the entire public. Precisely *contagion* of emotions is the basis for mass vivid impressions. There is a chain reaction: emotions, which public experience, have a reserve impact on performer. Therefore, energetic informational circle is closed during the process of musical *artistic communication*.

As it is mentioned by I. Ergiev, “main intended function of artistic performer’s interpretation is creation of a *new one* in the art with a high degree of aesthetic usefulness, more specifically, performer’s *contagious suggestive, cathartic* impact on public [5, p. 66].

Cough in the auditorium during the concert is also “contagious”. The American psychologist J. Pennebaker has developed “coughgramme” in the form of scheme of audience hall, where it was marked on what particular places and how often people coughed. As a result of this investigation it was proved that:

1. the frequency of coughing is directly proportional to a number of people in the group;

2. cough often occurs as a response to the hacking cough of people around.

According to James Pennebaker, “the infection of coughing associated with the fact that listener, having heard coughing, focuses his attention on his throat. This, in turn, causes feelings, which, as a rule, precede coughing. One more possible reason of responsive coughing can be lifting of certain social restrictions (“if someone can, so I can too”).

As part of the study, it has been found that with increased attention (when there is something very interesting on the stage) spectators cough more rarely. Therefore, frequency of coughing in the auditorium is inversely proportional to the level of interest of public.

The extreme example of demonstration of this interest, emotional response to music is “trembling”. According to A. Goldstein “trembling” is a “light shiver, chill or tickling, usually, fleeting and located in the nape” [2, p. 116].

The English psychologist J. Sloboda, having undertaken a study of musical elements, causing emotional response, interrogated eighty-three listeners on their response to music. Over 80% of respondents felt feverish on their backs (“goose bumps” effect), a wish to laugh, cry, globus sensation”. Moreover, tears were oftener caused by melodic appoggiatura (suspended notes); trembling, mostly, was caused by sudden harmonic turns, syncope and music attacks were followed by cardiac acceleration.

These data generally support the theoretical approach to the study of emotions, based on the study of processes aimed to justify and fall short of expectations. According to the theory of “optimal uncertainty” [2, p. 130], if musical material is completely predictable, then it will be boring for listeners. In its turn, absolutely unpredictable set of soundings can cause boredom or even anxiety. Consequently, performer has to look for optimal balance between certainty and unpredictability, when listeners enjoy listening the music.

This unpredictability, performance spontaneity can occur due to the playing creative element and creative latitude associated therewith.

Therefore, as a result of the analysis of performer-listener communication, performer’s techniques aimed at seizing the public’s attention, listeners’ (group) perception of music under the conditions of modern concert situation we certify unquestionable importance of interactive cooperation between musician-performer with listener, proper use of both types of communication according to V. Grigoriev (both an “open” communication - “meeting” and turning in upon oneself - “meditation” or “praying”), depending on style and genre of compositions being performed.

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