

der Schauplatz jedoch nicht mehr Arkadien, sondern nur mehr ein domestiziertes Abbild davon gleich einem Gärtchen hinter der Villa. Und während hundert Jahre zuvor Daphne und Orpheus in einem von den antiken und gegenwärtigen Schauplätzen der Tragödie und der Komödie gleichweit entfernten Tracien selbstverständlich singen konnten, ist die Pastorale um die Wende zum 18. Jahrhundert nur mehr Ausgangspunkt und nicht mehr Ziel einer Neuorientierung der Opernästhetik. Die Hirten und Nymphen haben ihr Terrain in der Oper jedoch nicht den heroischen Figuren der Opera seria mit ihren historischen Stoffen überlassen. Okkupiert haben es vielmehr jene Venezianer, die in ihren Landhäusern das von den Vorfahren erwirtschaftete genossen, die diese Landschaft urbar gemacht hatten, und deren Villeggiatura als Schäferspiel vielfach nur mehr eine Karikatur Arkadiens war.

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Mozart's ›Haydn‹ Quartets, ›Ausführung‹, and the Aesthetics of Nuance*

Heinrich Christoph Koch, in his *Musikalisches Lexikon* of 1802 defines the word ›Ausführung‹ in two ways.¹ In the first sense of his definition, ›Ausführung‹ is the portion of the act of composition in which the good composer, with the help of skill and taste, elaborates the ideas emerging from ›Begeisterung‹ and set forth in ›Anlage‹. It is part of the process in which a composition moves from the composer's imagination to paper. In the second

* An earlier (and much longer) version of this essay appears as Chapter Three (›Execution and Expression‹) in my PhD dissertation *Echoes of Expression: Text, Performance, and History in Mozart's Viennese Instrumental Music*, Cornell University 2005. I would like to thank Christian Meyer (Würzburg) for his help with the musical examples. Work on this essay was completed in mid-2005. Secondary literature published since is not reflected here.

1 Heinrich Christoph Koch, *Musikalisches Lexikon*, Frankfurt a.M. 1802, reprint Kassel 2000, p. 187 to 194. Wiebke Thormählen's paper ›The Cultural Politics of the Virtuoso Gesture in Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 29‹ presented at the international conference ›Music and Gesture‹ at the University of East Anglia in August 2003 first made me aware of this quality of Koch's definition. Koch's compositional theories are set out more thoroughly in his *Introductory Essay in Composition: The Mechanical Rules of Melody*, Sections 3 and 4, transl. by Nancy Kovaleff Baker, New Haven 1983; see in particular chapter four, ›The Arrangement of Larger Compositions‹, p. 165–248. See also Nicole Schwindt-Gross, *Drama und Diskurs: Zur Beziehung zwischen Satztechnik und motivischem Prozess am Beispiel der durchbrochenen Arbeit in den Streichquartetten Mozarts und Haydns*, Laaber 1989, particularly p. 75–106, for more on Koch's intellectual context. For the history of the concepts ›composition‹ and ›performance‹, with an extensive bibliography, see John Butt, ›Negotiating Between Work, Composer and Performer: Rewriting the Story of Notational Progress‹, in: id., *Playing with History: The Historical Approach to Musical Performance*, Cambridge 2002, p. 96–124.

sense, ›Ausführung‹ is the act of making music sound, the practice for which Koch's generation of musicians in German-speaking lands also often used the rhetorical term ›Vortrag‹. Koch's ›Ausführung‹, then, unites the rhetoric of composition with the rhetoric of performance, by bringing both ›text‹ and ›act‹ under one umbrella.² This is a critical detail, for those who write the history of musical composition in the late Enlightenment often stop with the examination of the compositional act itself.³ With the exception of those works meant to be received as improvisatory or fantastic, the role of performance in the wider practice of composition, and with it the musical work's first interactions with the world around it, gets short shrift. In this essay I would like to use Koch's double definition to explore the grey area around the somewhat arbitrary border between ›creation‹ and ›reception‹.

18th-century German writers on music treated performance with kid gloves. Their justification of instrumental music, in the face of the many criticisms voiced against it, depended on a consensus that wordless music was a palimpsest of the spoken oration. An overly nuanced and therefore overly individual performance could threaten to disrupt the seamless journey of affect – or the structures behind affect – from notated sign to receiver via performance. In his well-known comparison of the performance of instrumental music and oratory (in his *Versuch* of 1752), Johann Joachim Quantz notes Vortrag's inherent unpredictability: »ein Stück« he writes, »[welches] entweder von einem oder dem anderen gesungen, oder gespielt wird,« can produce »immer eine verschiedene Wirkung«⁴. »An der guten Ausführung« thunders Leopold Mozart in his *Violinschule* of 1756, »ist alles gelegen«. Like for Quantz, for him notation does not translate automatically into performance. Along with many of his contemporaries, he assumes that the player should experience the affects that are the contents of the piece. He also stresses that attention to details of dynamics and articulation is a mark of good performance; as not all of these are amenable to notation, knowledge of their use is best gained through »gesunde Beurtheilungskraft durch eine lange Erfahrunß erlernt«⁵. For both writers, although they admit that there are as many potential performances as there are performers, good performance always reveals something that is already in the music. The implication is that each piece has one meaning, and that notation – and then performance – should transmit this meaning.

The idea that instrumental music must have a specific semantic content was part of German reception to the writings of French philosophers like Charles Batteux, who argued that the highest forms of art were those that imitated nature.⁶ Such theories tend to see language as a neutral bearer of content. In the 1770s, however, new ideas about human language emerged as part of debates about language's origins; I would like to argue here that these might have been of consequence for the aesthetics of musical performance. Johann

2 Cf. Richard Taruskin, *Text and Act: Essays on Music and Performance*, Oxford 1995.

3 The essays in *The String Quartets of Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven: Studies of the Autograph Manuscripts*, ed. by Christoph Wolff, Cambridge, MA 1980, are exemplary studies of this kind.

4 Johann Jochim Quantz, *Versuch einer Anweisung, die Flöte traversière zu spielen*, Berlin 1752, reprint Leipzig 1983, p. 101.

5 Leopold Mozart, *Versuch einer gründlichen Violinschule*, Augsburg 1756, reprint Kassel 1995, p. 252–253.

6 See John Neubauer, *The Emancipation of Music from Language: Departure from Mimesis in the Eighteenth Century*, New Haven 1986.

Gottfried Herder, most importantly, proposed that human language is personal and expressive and that the expression inherent in human speech resists transcription.⁷ Isaiah Berlin, whose work on Herder did much to bring the philosopher's ideas to the attention of the late 20th century, wrote: »[Herder's theory of] expressionism claims that all works of men are above all voices speaking.«⁸ This has important consequences for art: »to say that art is expression is to say that it is a voice speaking rather than the production of an object.«⁹ The work of art is not an unchanging object, and the voices that are speaking in it are not voices declaiming the same thing over and over. That is a fundamental difference.

If the doctrines of the ›Affektenlehre‹ demanded a one-to-one translation of concepts from language to music, first by knowledgeable composition and then through tasteful performance, it follows that a more expressive approach puts meaning in the hands of the performer. If composition and performance are related concepts, then individual performance can add meaning to music, not just transmit meaning through music. The boundary between composition and performance is blurred; the lines of communication between affect, inspiration, composer, performer and audience merge and cross one another. Let us now examine three string quartet movements, by Luigi Boccherini, Paul Wranitzky and Mozart, all circulated in Vienna in the mid 1780s, in which the border between performance and composition is less than clear.

We begin with a movement of Boccherini's String Quartet in E-flat G. 201.¹⁰ The first thing we notice is the richness of its ›performative markings‹ – nuances of dynamic and tempo. The movement is marked *Allegretto Lentarello e affetuoso*; such fanciful, ›hyper-attentive‹ combinations are, indeed, typical.¹¹ The first paragraph (to measure eight) consists of two four-measure ideas that outline the tonic triad. Both end on *appoggiaturas*, the first on the third degree, the second, over a perfect authentic cadence, on the tonic. It is a conventional opening without much melodic interest – to use Elisabeth Le Guin's words, there is more than a little of the ›mechanical‹ about it. It is the instructions for the performers' bodies, which challenge them, as it were, to reflect on bodily motion required to do justice to such a complex set of directions, that add interest, from the (typically extreme) *dolcissimo* in the first violin in measure one, to the *pianissimo* in the cello part balanced by

7 Cf. Johann Gottfried Herder, »Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache« in: Johann Gottfried Herder, *Werke*, vol. I, ed. by Martin Bollacher e. a., Frankfurt a. M. 1994, p. 9–108.

8 Isaiah Berlin, »Herder and the Enlightenment« in: *Aspects of the Eighteenth Century*, ed. by Earl R. Wasserman, Baltimore 1967, p. 47.

9 Ibid, p. 71.

10 These observations are based on inspection of the manuscript in Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin and of the first edition at the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna. The manuscript of the Quartet in E flat G. 201 in Berlin is probably not an autograph; this was most probably destroyed in the 1936 fire that consumed his estate. Nonetheless, it seems that manuscripts like this one were prepared by copyists under the composer's supervision. See Yves Gérard, *Thematic, Bibliographical, and Critical Catalogue of the Works of Luigi Boccherini*, London 1969, p. 223–225 and *passim*.

11 See Christian Speck, *Boccherini's Streichquartette: Studien zur Kompositionsweise und zur gattungsgeschichtlichen Stellung*, Munich 1987 and Elisabeth Le Guin, »One Says that One Weeps, But One Does Not Weep: Sensible, Grotesque, and Mechanical Embodiments in Boccherini's Chamber Music« in: *JAMS* 55/2 (2002), p. 207–254.

Allegretto Lentarello e affettuoso

The musical score is for a string quartet in E-flat major, 3/4 time, titled "Allegretto Lentarello e affettuoso". It consists of four staves: Violin I (VI I), Violin II (VI II), Viola (Va), and Violoncello (Vc). The tempo is "Allegretto Lentarello e affettuoso". The score includes various dynamics such as piano (p), piano molto (pianis.), poco forte (poco for.), forte (for.), and dolce (dolcis). It also features articulation marks like trills (tr) and accents (acc). The score is divided into four systems, with measures 10, 18, and 25 marked at the beginning of their respective systems.

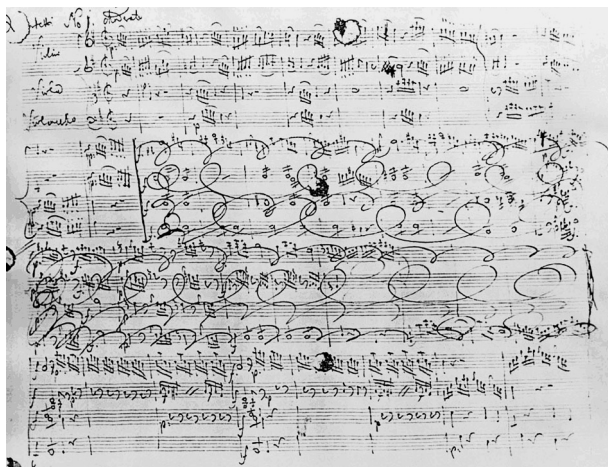
Example 1: Luigi Boccherini, String Quartet in E flat G. 201, mm. 1–31. Transcription of the fair copy in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.

piano in the inner voices, to the *subito* forte at the paragraph's end.¹² The second key area bears all the marks of a »mechanistic« compositional style. A rhythmic cell of 16th and

¹² For more on analyzing physical gestures in music see Schwindt-Gross, *Drama und Diskurs*; Le Guin, »One Says That One Weeps«; and Thormählen, »The Cultural Politics of the Virtuositic Gesture«.

32nd notes, starting off-balance after an eighth rest in m. 24, rotates between only two pitches above a typically Boccherinian bed of syncopations in the middle voices and a reiteration of a false cadence in the bass. It is hard to imagine a musical rhetoric that denies any sense of forward motion more strongly than this one does. Acts of restraint, a refusal to sing, are made physical in this music; these draw attention to performance itself.

Let me now turn to a quartet by Mozart's exact contemporary Paul Wranitzky (published by André in 1790 as his opus 10), which could hardly differ more from Boccherini's. It is constructed in a manner Koch no doubt would have found sympathetic: indeed, traces of ›Anlage‹ and ›Ausführung‹ can be read clearly in the manuscript.¹³



Example 2: Paul Wranitzky, String Quartet op. 4/10: autograph fol. 3r

Example two is the opening of this quartet. Beginning at measure 12, Wranitzky shifts abruptly from G major to E major as he tries to rework the thematic material of the opening bars over a tremolo in the lower strings. After 16 measures he abandons the attempt, unable, it seems, to find a convincing path to a strong cadence in the dominant, D major.

A second version of this passage, a more conventional transition from tonic to dominant, is found on another leaf (example three); this is the version that appears in the André engraving. Yet the 16 measures are not discarded permanently. They reappear later in the movement, after a false recapitulation (example four).

In Wranitzky's manuscript we observe the ›performance‹ of the ›act of composition‹ at first hand. We see, for instance, how Wranitzky moves a passage, a tonal gambit, from a section of the exposition where it does not function to a section where it does. What is missing are clues to the ›act of performance‹ so constitutive of Boccherini's style. The tempo of the movement, a straightforward *Allegro*, does not seem to have given Wranitzky

13 A Wgm Hs.: »6 Quartetti/per due Violini/viola e violoncello/Di Paolo Wranitzky/Composti per il sig: Artaria/Stampatore di Musica/Op. IV [sic!] Litt. A.«



Example 3: Paul Wranitzky, String Quartet op. 4/10: autograph fol. 2r

much occasion for reflection; the dynamic markings are spare and uncomplicated. His performances, in other words, are disembodied.

Mozart's string quartet in G K. 387, the first of the six ›Haydn‹ Quartets had the longest pre-publication history of the six in the set.¹⁴ As Wolf-Dieter Seiffert has argued, K. 387 and its sisters were subject to extensive revisions and performed more than once before their



Example 4: Paul Wranitzky, String Quartet op. 4/10: autograph folio 4r

¹⁴ On the compositional history of the ›Haydn‹ quartets see Alan Tyson, *Mozart: Studies of the Autograph Scores*, Cambridge, MA 1987, particularly ›Mozart's ›Haydn Quartets‹: The Contributions of Paper Studies«, p. 82–93 and ›The Origins of Mozart's ›Hunt‹ Quartet, K. 458«, p. 94–105. For the musical text of K. 387/1 see Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Neue Ausgabe sämtlicher Werke*, Serie VIII, Werkgruppe 20, Abt. 1: *Streichquartette*, Bd. 2, ed. by Ludwig Finscher, Kassel u. a. 1962, p. 3–12.

publication in 1785.¹⁵ Their musical texts, unusually rich in performative signs, bear witness to this process; some of the changes, as Seiffert has shown, were added between completion of the autograph and publication of the engraved edition. I will limit my informal analysis to a few passages at the beginning of the first movement of K. 387. The paragraph beginning in measure 11 is a contrapuntal elaboration of the material from the opening, but the dynamic pattern (*forte* in the first, *piano* on the second measure) is retained; the chromatic figures woven around an approach to D major dominant sonorities in mm. 16–17 accompany a loss of forward motion. Just at a point of harmonic stasis, under a two-measure held b-natural in the first violin, however, the addition of a *crescendo* to a sudden *piano* in measure 19 (found in Artaria first edition and added most likely after the first performances of the quartet) adds some sense of forward momentum. The un-melodic chromatic figures, accompanied by almost mechanical repetition of a Phrygian half-cadence on V/V, are accented only by sudden fortepianos, whose increasing frequency only underscores the increasingly insistent rotation of the chromatic 16th-note figurations over the dissonance-and-release, dissonance-and-release pattern of the half cadences; indeed, this passage has a rather Boccherini-like quality¹⁶. The arrival on V/V in measure 24 works in this context like an afterthought.

Like Boccherini, by intervening in smaller details of ›Vortrag‹ on such a massive scale Mozart calls attention to the paradox between the actor and the enacted. It is hard to imagine that he believed that every piece of music has one best performance and that sufficient skill in reading musical notation is enough to attain it. Real expressive performance cannot be captured in text; as Herder reminded his rationalist opponents, expression cannot be reified. To play any music strictly *com'è scritto* would be to replicate exactly the kind of thinking about expression (and music) that Herder – and Mozart? – had rejected. That does not preclude a composer like Mozart from seeking to encode expression, an aesthetic of infinite nuance, in a text as best he can. This increasing precision is not the same, however, as the progress in notational exactitude that is such a commonplace in most tellings of Western music history¹⁷. The paradox remains; the dialectic between notation and performance cannot be collapsed.

15 Wolf-Dieter Seiffert, »Mozarts Haydn Quartette: Zum Quellenwert von Autograph und Erstausgabe unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Finales aus KV 387«, in: *Studien zur Musikgeschichte: Eine Festschrift für Ludwig Finscher*, ed. by Annegrit Laubenthal and Kara Kusan-Windweh, Kassel 1995, p. 377 to 392. My comments here should be read together with Seiffert's »Die Untersuchung autographischer Korrekturen als Chance ›authentischer‹ Werkinterpretation dargestellt anhand von Mozarts ›Haydn-Quartetten« in: *Mozart-Jahrbuch* 2001, p. 306–343, here: p. 337–343.

16 On mechanistic writing in Mozart see Annette Richards, »Automatic Genius: Mozart and the Mechanical Sublime«, in: *Music and Letters* 80 (1999), p. 366–389.

17 Cf. Butt, *Playing with History*.