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Transforming Performance

An inquiry into the emotional processes of a classical pianist

Skoogh, Francisca

2021

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FACULTY OF FINE AND PERFORMING ARTS | LUND UNIVERSITY

Transforming Performance

Transforming Performance:

an inquiry into the emotional processes of a classical pianist

Francisca Skoogh

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DOCTORAL DISSERTATION
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dnYzaExZZUI3MkNqNk5Ja3pIMHJiQT09

Faculty opponent
Prof. Daniel Leech-Wilkinson

This artistic research PhD project challenges classical music performance culture through a series of experimental collaborative projects. My particular interest lies in how this culture shapes the psychological experience of performance from the perspective of the individual musician. The project's aims can be further defined through the following research questions: a) How can I better understand the psychological impact that the traditions and ceremonies of classical music have on my performance? b) Departing from my own practice, what other factors affect me emotionally during performance? c) How can experimentation with the traditions of performance culture in classical music provide different modes of emotional regulation in staged performance?

This thesis is a compilation of projects and publications in which I explore classical music performance through my individual experience as a soloist. Selected concert performances of classical works, experimentation with performance settings, and the creation of two commissioned works, play central roles.

The method and design builds on the qualitative study of several case studies of my practice as a concert pianist in collaboration with other musicians, choreographers and composers. The methodological approach entails combinations of autoethnographic methods, stimulated recall and thematic analysis. The theoretical framework is twofold, and rests on psychological and psychoanalytical perspectives as well as on a socio-historically driven analysis of the music-theoretical concept of Werktreue.

Some artistic results are available online in The Research Catalogue and others are published on the CD Notes from Endenich (Daphne Records). The combined outcomes of the project suggest, that musicians can benefit from an increased awareness of factors that affect the western classical music performer. While this thesis is specifically directed towards other musicians, it is also my hope that the findings can be valuable also in other research fields. Without the active contribution from musicians and artists into the investigation of how they function as performers, and of the values that accompany them on-stage, it is difficult to understand which needs should be addressed scientifically. For music researchers, there are many opportunities to dig into the different aspects of performance, but it is vital to let musicians show the way by collaborating within the field of Artistic Research, and thereby, together with musicians, find new ways to transform their experience of performing.

Signature *Francisca Skoogh*   Date 2021-01-07

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*This thesis is dedicated to the loving memory of my mother
and father, Myriam and Frank*

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Reading instructions

This thesis is a compilation of projects and publications in which I explore classical music performance through my individual experience as a soloist. Selected concert performances of classical works, experimentation with performance settings, and the creation of two commissioned works, play central roles. Included are three peer reviewed papers—two articles and one audio paper (Skoogh & Frisk, 2019[1], Skoogh[2], in press, Olofsson & Skoogh, 2020[3], submitted)—and one CD, Notes from Endenich[4], Skoogh, 2020). The first article *Performance values – an artistic research perspective on music performance anxiety in classical music* (Skoogh & Frisk, 2019)*,* problematises perfection in western classical music performance and presents the concept of performance values also discussed below in Section 3.5. The second article, *Play: emotional regulation in classical music performance* (Skoogh, in press) will be published in Ruukku, a Finnish journal of artistic research, in a thematic issue on slowness and silence, inertia and tranquillity. The second article presents two artistic projects which explore new ways of emotionally regulating Music Performance Anxiety (MPA) by identifying performance values connected to the traditions and ceremonies of classical music. The projects are also described below in sections 4.4.1 and 5.1.

The CD, <u>Notes from Endenich</u>, is a recording of the Schumann Sonata, op.11 (1836/1981), and the solo piano composition *Unbekanntes Blatt aus Endenicher Zeit* (Storm, 2018), the outcome of my collaboration with the composer Staffan Storm, revolving around the music of Robert Schumann and psychological processes during interpretation. This project is discussed further in section 5.2.

While the above-mentioned publications that form part of this thesis focus on specific projects, the present book describes and discusses theories, themes and insights also with reference to additional projects not included in the articles (Section 4.1-4.3).

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[1] https://jased.net/index.php/jased/article/view/1506

[2] https://www.researchcatalogue.net/profile/show-exposition?exposition=798739

[3] https://www.researchcatalogue.net/shared/ee62759e097393abef23200f110a1335

[4] https://open.spotify.com/album/23MMMkIA3mR9b9Fyo0PcZv?si=4WqPwEKSQF24zusa_dl9wQ

It is highly recommended that the reader watch and listen to the thesis exposition published online in The Research Catalogue (RC), Skoogh, 2020[5]. The media presented there are sounding results connected to the articles and the additional projects in this text.

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[5] https://www.researchcatalogue.net/profile/show-exposition?exposition=798739

Chapter 1.

Introduction and Background

For as long as I can remember, playing the piano was about being able to play the score, in a manner which reproduced how I had heard someone else play, often a famous pianist. Initially, it was about trying to find out what those dull blobs of ink on the score really sounded like. It was the piano and me, every day, and I remember happiness, pride and a feeling of competence when mastering a difficult piece. As a child I remember my relation to the compositions, how I admired the inventions by Bach, the sonatas by Mozart and Beethoven, and how revered these composers were by adults close to me.

My mother bought a piano when she was expecting me, and had decided that her child should play the piano as part of an overall good upbringing. I have memories of sitting at the upright piano in our house in Helsingborg, before and after school. I was trying to prepare so that my teacher would be happy, and so that I would dare to perform the piece in public. Looking back at those early years in the late 1970s, and the early years of my professional career, it was mostly about playing music that I loved to my mum or dad, or a neighbour, or sometimes to a real audience in a school concert, and eventually in a traditional concert hall setting.

Performing to an audience has meant many things to me over the years. It has scared me, surprised me, on many occasions made me a better musician, but yet I never gave the situation much thought. The audience was sort of an "anonymous crowd" (Skoogh & Birgersdotter, 2012) sitting silently waiting for my performance (see further section 4.4.1). My main conception of a performance was that the audience should get something from me; *they* should receive an experience, certainly not the other way around. In the initial phase of my doctoral studies, I developed the following analytical perspectives on these experiences from my professional practice prior to the research project:

- The musical work and fidelity to the composer's intentions

- The imitation of a master; the admiration and the trust directed towards the teacher.

- The overall ambition of how to maximize performance in terms of mastering instrumental technique, musical interpretation, memorizing vast piano pieces, winning competitions, being at one's best at all times, always challenging oneself with new repertoire.

This may sound tough, and it was. It was at the same time inspiring, enjoyable and also very lonely. The overarching goal of my practice was to achieve excellence. Gabrielsson (1999) suggests that excellence in music performance involves two major components, "a genuine understanding of what the music is about, its structure and meaning", and secondly "a complete mastery of the instrumental technique" (p. 502). In order for the musician to achieve this (s)he identifies two steps in the planning of the performance, in which one has "to acquire an adequate mental representation of the piece of music, coupled with a plan for transforming this representation into sound, and to practise the piece to a level that is satisfactory for the purpose at hand" (p. 502).

From my experience, these two components and the preparatory steps are characteristic of how classical music performance is generally taught and practised. Gabrielsson's description of what constitutes excellent music performance reflects common conceptions and ideals in the classical music field. However, this thesis wishes to create a deeper understanding of the psychology of performing western classical piano music, drawing on my individual perspective as a musician, with the further aim of challenging conventions that frame these experiences.

During my years of study at different academies, performing was never discussed conceptually, and questions regarding, for example, stage fright were seldom raised. If someone had a problem with staged performance, the most common advice was to practise more. Today, musicians suffering from stage fright are often referred to therapy, with the aim of helping them to cope with their fear of performing. Very few classical musicians have addressed the issues of contemporary performance culture through proactive artistic approaches. Furthermore, students are rarely introduced to such methods for proactively dealing with the issues of stage fright by means of altering the performance situation. While psychological treatment of Music Performance Anxiety (MPA) does have the potential to improve performance, it is my conviction that it only addresses a limited perspective, and through a reactive rather than artistically proactive manner. This thesis builds on a multifaceted analytical and artistic approach to the issues underlying MPA, with the further aim of creating a series of artistic projects that intentionally address the field of inquiry.

1.1 Identities

The introduction above reflects upon the undefined feelings I have had in relation to performing throughout my life. I have explored some characteristic issues in the practice of classical musicians, many of which are seldom discussed, and certainly too little addressed through systematic analysis. I have used different identities throughout this research project. The reader will find that I move between a first-person perspective, in which I describe and reflect on the projects and themes through my experience of working as a professional pianist, and a third-person perspective, in which I take a step back, making observations through the lens of theory. Sometimes both are active at the same time. Finally, I also engage in the project through my identity as a psychologist, which comes through mainly in the way I reflect upon and analyse the emotional aspects of my performance, as well as how I build artistic projects based on psychological theories and concepts. Shifting between these different identities has provided valuable perspectives when investigating what ethnomusicologist Bruno Nettl might have called my personal "backyard" (1983, p. 186). Nettl further notes how someone studying a culture from outside may typically be a visiting fieldworker, while an ethnomusicologist can be both musician and researcher with two active perspectives:

> ...looking alternately at insiders' and outsiders' perspectives, and moving from being exclusively the students of musics with which they initially do not identify to stepping back and taking outsiders' roles in examining musical cultures that are in some sense their own. (Nettl, 1983, p.186)

I do by no means claim to be an ethnomusicologist, but I do find it important to explore actively my different identities in this thesis, as I have used them to navigate within my practice. In Section 2.3 on autoethnography I expand on the importance of a personal narrative.

My work in this PhD project has been guided by psychoanalytical theory and practice, in particular the writings of Donald Winnicott. I have also used the concept of projective identification and research on emotional regulation. The reason for this is that I am a psychologist and had been a practising clinical psychologist until January 2019. In addition to how my practice as a musician informs my research, my practical experience as a psychologist permeates my work as a researcher. It is not possible for me, or even desirable, to separate my professional knowledge of, for example, psychological therapeutic interventions from my musical practice. Therefore, inspired by the writings of Schön (1987) I have simply let my professional knowledge guide me from the beginning. I believe it has provided a beneficial, cross-professional kind of thinking, departing from this dual position as practitioner in two occupations.

> A constructionist view of a profession leads us to see its practitioners as worldmakers whose armamentarium gives them frames with which to envisage coherence and tools with which to impose their images on situations of their practice. A professional practitioner is, in this view, like an artist, a maker of things. (Schön, 1987, p. 218)

Schön describes professional knowledge as something constantly and almost effortlessly used, by observing the know-how of professionals, in this case, an architect:

> He compresses and perhaps masks the pro-cess by which designers learn from iterations of moves which lead them to reappreciate, reinvent, and redraw. But this may be because he has developed a very good understanding of and feeling for what he calls "the problem of this problem." If he can zero in so quickly on a choice of initial geometry which he knows how to make work with the screwy slope, it is perhaps because he has seen and tried many approaches to situations like this one. (Schön, 1991, p. 104)

As a psychologist with experience of clinical, therapeutic work, I do similarly have an eye for the "problem of this problem". In sections 3.2 and 3.3 I present some key concepts that I have employed when looking at myself as a performing artist, from my professional perspective as a psychologist.

In the next section I present a project from 2011, which was a starting point, and which provided inspiration for my PhD research, thereby metaphorically opened the door for asking questions, many of which were new to me.

1.2 Changing the concert format–a turning point

An initial spark for the development of the fundamental concepts and methods that underpin this PhD project was my collaboration with K.G. Hammar, the former archbishop of Sweden, in a series of interdisciplinary concerts. I wanted to explore the possibility of creating meeting points between theology, music and audience-participation in a classical concert setting, in order to interact with the audience in a new way. The major part of the program consisted of me playing Liszt's "Années des Pelerinage", Italy. After an intermission, K.G. Hammar and I sat on stage for the second part and conducted an open, unrehearsed conversation about what we had just experienced. The audience was invited to participate in this conversation, and I repeatedly turned to the audience and asked them what they were feeling and what their thoughts were. This was something completely new, both to the organizers and to the audience, and my impression was that it made some members of the audience feel insecure, even perplexed. The organizers were hesitant and had many questions

before the concert, and were quite concerned, wondering whether the concept would work.

Now, in retrospect, I can see that what motivated me to nevertheless go ahead with the project was related to a curiosity, similar to how Frisk (2010) describes an initial creative spark: "It is as a listener I (as a performer) am able to reflect on that which I play and in that sense the audible trace, although produced by me, is a shared object of reflection for both myself and the listener" (p. 284).[6] Frisk detects a break with the traditional view of a music performance when the performer becomes a listener among other listeners; he suggests that "instead we may consider the image of a group of listeners in which some members are also performers and creators" (p. 285). I was at the time not very conscious of what I wanted the project to achieve; I think I was aiming at placing myself as a listener or audience, in what Frisk describes as a blurring of the boundaries between the producer and the consumer. As it turned out, this did not go unpunished in the world of chamber music societies. Some audience members did not appreciate the idea and told me so. Then again, some members were curious and communicative. My conclusion then, was that some members of the audience were delighted to share their experience, while others became almost defensive. It is possible that they expected the musician to be the one that "performs" and that they themselves were not prepared to give something back in return.

Here, I wish to take the opportunity to state that my research has not focused on the audience's perspective. I quickly realised that what the audience thinks of my performance, whether they like my playing, and what the critics will say, is something that I have been concerned about during my entire professional career. There is nothing wrong with that, and it is probably inevitable for a musician to think about how his or her performances will be received. But taking into consideration the audience's response to my performances would be another thesis, and would demand a different research focus.

The project did, however, awaken my interest in the traditions and ceremonies that are present in the performance situation, in particular how they psychologically affect me, in my own performances in the settings of western classical music.

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[6] Of course, the obvious reference here was Small's concept of musicking (Small, 1998), but at the time I had no knowledge of this term.

Chapter 2.

Aims and methods

2.1 Aims and research questions

The aim of this PhD project is to question the current western classical concert performance culture with particular interest in how it shapes the psychological experience of performance from the perspective of the individual musician. This aim can be further defined through the following research questions:

1. How can I better understand the psychological impact that the traditions and ceremonies of classical music have on my performance?

2. Departing from my own practice, what other factors affect me emotionally during performance?

3. How can experimentation with the traditions of performance culture in classical music provide different modes of emotional regulation in staged performance?

2.2 Artistic content and methods

This thesis consists of several case studies of my practice as a concert pianist, based on the projects listed in Chapter 4. The projects have been documented mainly in audio and video recordings, either made by myself or by the concert organiser. I have also discussed key themes with collaborating artists and choreographers, and made recordings of rehearsals. Across the project I have made use of personal notes and conversations, both written and in video format from selected performances, often with reference to heightened emotional pressure in the performance situation (see fig. 1 from the performance of the Rachmaninoff third piano concerto, 2018). Hereby, I have documented the emotional processes connected to my performing, and my relationships with the repertoire and other artists in the institutional context of the

performances, with the aim of making all these data part of my qualitative analysis, through autoethnographic writing and thematic analysis.
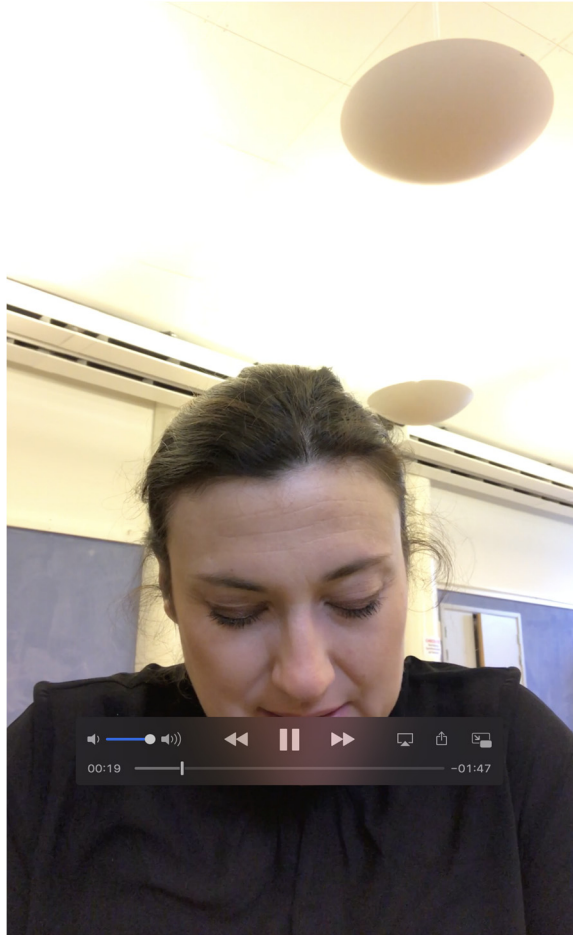
Fig. 1 Still photo from a video recording of me, made after a rehearsal of the Rachmaninov third concerto, Norrköping Symphony Orchestra, 2018. This video was eventually used as the basis for Article no. 1 (Skoogh & Frisk, 2019).

The artistic projects that form part of the thesis entail experimentation with the concert format (sections 4.2, 4.4.1 and 5.1), and the commissioning of new collaborative works from two composers (see Chapter 5). Throughout all of the projects I study my own emotional responses to performance in traditional and experimental settings. My own preconception of the field of western classical music has been enhanced through further theoretical study, and this framework, along with an emerging understanding built on the qualitative analysis of the documentation of my own practice within that particular performance culture, has continually guided the design of each of the next projects.

Rather than looking for one single objective reality, I have drawn on the constructivist (or interpretivist) paradigm, where interaction between the researched and the researcher is central (Ponterotto, 2005). Ponterotto further notes how "a distinguishing characteristic of constructivism is the centrality of the interaction between the investigator and the object of investigation. Only through this interaction can deeper meaning be uncovered" (p. 129). In my case this interaction plays out in a different way as it also takes place between my own different roles in the projects—primarily as performer and researcher—and knowledge and meaning are uncovered in the ways that this interaction unfolds.

I have concentrated on the themes that have been important to me as a performing musician in the context of my practice and it has been my aim to incorporate subjectivity in a deliberate way in the analysis (Morrow, 2005). Thematic analysis (TA) was used to identify and analyse the collected data, and emerging themes were defined through the qualitative analysis of my experience of the initial artistic projects (see further Chapters 4 and 5). However, during the thematic analysis, I found it difficult to separate my identity as pianist from those of researcher and psychologist. As mentioned above, throughout the project I have sought to explore my threefold identity by moving in between these roles and perspectives. I immediately acknowledge the complexity of this task, and the challenges it poses both to the data collection and the analysis, but I found it essential to create a project design that is congruent with my practice as it has transformed over the years. The child who played to her parents and family, or the young conservatoire student who began to develop a mature relation to the repertoire and its institutions, certainly form layers within the classical pianist I am today, twenty years later. But today, I do perform and interpret music, and look at my projects and my emotional responses as a professional concert pianist, psychologist and researcher[7]. In order to approach these three identities and bring them together through qualitative analysis, I have employed an autoethnographic method, discussed in the next section.

2.3 Autoethnography

Autoethnography has been used in many different fields, such as ethnography and education (Anderson, 2006, Hayler, 2011), as well as in social sciences, music and

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[7] In addition I am a teacher at the Malmö Academy of Music. I am the main piano teacher in the performance program and also the founder of the Performance Centre and the music psychology course The Performing Human Being.

psychology (Jones, Adams, & Ellis, 2016, Bartleet & Ellis, 2009, Buckley, 2015). In an overview, McIlveen (2008) presents autoethnography as a strong method with which to establish trustworthiness and authenticity in research in vocational psychology.

The defining feature of autoethnography is that it entails the scientist or practitioner performing narrative analysis pertaining to himself or herself as intimately related to a particular phenomenon. Autoethnography entails writing about oneself as a researcher-practitioner, but it is not the same as autobiography in the literary sense. It is not simply the telling of a life—not that doing such would be simple. It is a specific form of critical enquiry that is embedded in theory and practice (i.e., practice as a researcher and/or career development practitioner) (Mc Ilveen, 2008, p. 14).

This narrative notation, pertaining to me, my story, my experiences, became my favourite mode of *emploi*. For instance, when I was asked to write an essay for the Swedish National Radio I used the opportunity to express my experience of the concert tradition of western classical music in Skoogh & Birgersdotter (2012). Through this radio broadcast I established at the very beginning of my research a connection with listeners inside and outside of the musical community. To record the essay with my own voice was important as it reinforced the notion of "my voice" in the discourse. Already at this early stage of the project, my identities as performer and psychologist emerged, as I chose to contrast spontaneous reflections on my practice with theoretical perspectives drawn from psychology and psychoanalysis. This method of using my recorded voice to document and express my research was used again in one of the final projects in this thesis: my collaboration with Kent Olofsson in the audio paper *Play always as if in the presence of a master* (Olofsson & Skoogh, 2020).

McIlveen (2008) continues to frame how autoethnographic narrative writing departs from the normal style of a scientific publication. He argues that analysis and narrative writing are deeply interconnected in autoethnographic method:

> Rhetoric and method are inextricably linked in autoethnography, because the method itself ultimately requires rhetorical expression in reporting. An autoethnographer may use a combination of archival data (e.g., memoirs, photographs), concurrent self-observation and recording (e.g., diary, audio-visual), and triangulation through other sources of data (e.g., interviews with individuals who could corroborate data or conclusions). Analysis of data would entail the production of a meaningful account. Rather than a self-absorbed rendering, an autoethnography should produce a narrative that is authentic and thus enable the reader to deeply grasp the experience and interpretation of this one interesting case. (McIlveen, 2008, p. 4)

Throughout my projects I have used such a combination of archival data, self-observation, and recordings, interviews, and conversations with collaborative partners,

as material in my autoethnographic analysis. I return below to the central importance of authenticity in qualitative inquiry, and in particular, with reference to autoethnography.

A distinction can be made between analytic autoethnography and evocative autoethnography, where the analytical could be seen as representing a more traditional scientific approach (Anderson, 2006) and the latter a freer, evocative style (Ellis, 2000; Ellis & Bochner, 2000). McIlveen observes how "the analytic approach tends toward objective writing and analysis, whereas the evocative tends toward empathy and resonance within the reader. Both are valuable, however the user and reader should be aware of their differences" (2008, p. 4). Autoethnography can also take shape through a therapeutic style of writing, through which the reader can make sense of, or understand our experiences: "As witnesses, autoethnographers not only work with others to validate the meaning of their pain, but also allow participants and readers to feel validated and/or better able to cope with or want to change their circumstances" (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011, p. 280). In this thesis I employ both the analytical and evocative approaches. For instance, the key concepts and theories presented in Chapter 3 are outlined using an "objective writing" form to emphasise the field in which I operate, and the concepts that have influenced me. However, in Chapter 4 I use a combination of analytic and evocative writing, perhaps to connect better with my reader, but most of all to remain empathic with myself, in particular with regard to some difficult experiences of performances. Further, it should be noted how I found it impossible to write and analyse concert experiences during the actual performance, due to the high demands and focus of skills required in performance.[8] Therefore to write retroactively about past concert performances became the most reasonable solution, just as suggested by Ellis, Adams & Bochner (2011): "As a method, autoethnography combines characteristics of autobiography and ethnography. When writing an autobiography, an author retroactively and selectively writes about past experiences" (p. 275). The ethnographic component of my writing is based on how I situate my practice in western classical concert music, and in the discussion in Chapter 3 of the role of Werktreue in this context.

The descriptions below of my artistic projects, and in particular the articles and the audio paper, include objective writing, where I take a step back and look at my

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[8] This is discussed further by Robin Nelson in relation to quality and originality in practice. It is vital that there is a recognition of how some artistic research projects need to include the ability to perform and the preparation time that takes within the research frame: "It would be impossible for a pianist to undertake a research inquiry into reinterpreting Beethoven's piano concertos unless she had high order skills in playing the instrument" (Nelson, 2013, p. 79).

performances from a more theoretical perspective; but these also have sections with evocative and therapeutic writing.

2.3.1 Critical views and important rules for autoethnography

Delamont (2009) problematizes autoethnography as social research, and makes a distinction between "reflexive autobiographical writing on ethnography" (p. 58) on the one hand, and "autoethnography where there is no object except the author herself to study" (ibid) on the other. She continues by acknowledging that these two approaches are often combined, and that this complicates a critical inquiry. However, in her final argument, she claims that social research must be defined by having a research topic which is situated outside of the researcher's self. Although not necessarily all applicable to the discipline of Artistic Research, Delamont's criteria for social research are helpful for assessing the credibility of the research design, and the modes of data collection (see further pp. 59-60). Several critics of autoethnography (Sparkes, 2000, Walford, 2004) have focused on its strong emphasis on the self and the possible lack of truthfulness in the narratives that are presented, also questioning its far-too-personalized research methods. However, autoethnography is deeply situated in the development of a qualitative research paradigm, which proposes alternative perspectives: as Frisk & Östersjö observe, instead of "focussing on how the methods and the results can be assessed according to positivist criteria, alternative viewpoints on knowledge production have been developed, sometimes exchanging the key words of validity and reliability with related concepts such as authenticity and credibility" (p. 47).

Along these lines, and with the aim of outlining arguments for the research rigour of autoethnography, Le Roux (2017) suggests the following criteria, with the important addition of resonance and contribution:

> Subjectivity: The self is primarily visible in the research. The researcher re-enacts or re-tells a noteworthy or critical personal relational or institutional experience – generally in search of self-understanding. The researcher is self-consciously involved in the construction of the narrative which constitutes the research.

> Self-reflexivity: There is evidence of the researcher's intense awareness of his or her role in and relationship to the research which is situated within a historical and cultural context. Reflexivity points to self-awareness, self-exposure and self-conscious introspection.

> Resonance: Resonance requires that the audience is able to enter into, engage with, experience or connect with the writer's story on an intellectual and emotional level.

There is a sense of commonality between the researcher and the audience; an intertwining of lives.

Credibility: There should be evidence of verisimilitude, plausibility and trustworthiness in the research. The research process and reporting should be permeated by honesty.

Contribution: The study should extend knowledge, generate ongoing research, liberate, empower, improve practice, or make a contribution to social change. Autoethnography teaches, informs and inspires (Le Roux, 2017, p. 204).

Further, and returning to the perspective of authenticity in analysis and writing, McIlveen (2008) proposes that, in order to bring experience and theory together coherently, autoethnography must

a) be a faithful and comprehensive rendition of the author's experience (i.e., fairness, ontological authenticity, and meaningfulness);

b) transform the author through self-explication (i.e., educative authenticity and catalytic authenticity); and

c) inform the reader of an experience he or she may have never endured or would be unlikely to in the future, or of an experience he or she may have endured in the past or is likely to in the future, but has been unable to share the experience with his or her community of scholars and practitioners. (McIlveen, 2008, p.4)

By situating my projects within the frame of western classical music, in particular by launching a critical discussion of how it has been impacted by the concept of Werktreue, I have laid a foundation for the historical and cultural context that is my practice. The autoethnographic method employed in my project is not restricted to academic writing, but has also led to the creation of an audio paper, through which other layers of authenticity in the shaping of documentary materials, voice-over commentary, performance and collaborative composition, are woven together. Hopefully, in this way, I can also reach musicians and other practitioners.

2.3.2 Music autoethnography

Music autoethnography is an approach that combines autoethnography with music studies. As a method it emphasizes the narrative of practitioners, and offers a possibility for musicians to create a deeper understanding of their artistic practice. One of several interesting music autoethnographies by Bartleet and Ellis (2009) made me think of the gains in therapeutic treatment that I have experienced as a clinical psychologist when

helping patients. When a patient tells his or her story to someone who listens, and the listener mirrors the patient's feelings and experiences in life, this can often result in a sensation of calm understanding. As in a therapeutic situation, music autoethnographies vividly describe the need to understand oneself in context. In a music autoethnographic narrative there are nuances and perceptions of an environment that come forward in a way I have not seen in biographies or interviews. There is an account of an inexplicit yet important notion that being dysfunctional as a musician, as described by Bartleet below, can be related not only to personal struggles but also to norms upheld by the field of classical music.

The first part of the introduction to music autoethnographies by Bartleet and Ellis (2009) made me think of many of the gains in therapeutic treatment that I have experienced as a clinical psychologist. The sense of harbouring that can arise when the patient tells his or her story to someone who listens and mirrors the patient's feelings and experiences in life. The need to understand oneself in a context is illuminated by various personal accounts.

> Over the months that followed, with time and constant reflection, I started to see musical patterns, meanings and insights. I started to understand how my feelings of musical inadequacy and dissatisfaction with conducting were tightly linked to the notion of the 'all-knowing' conductor upheld by my profession. Trying to fit that role was taking me further and further away from the pleasures of music-making. (Bartleet & Ellis, 2009, p. 3)

The style of a written dialogue is striking, graphic and compelling, which is important when reaching out to, for example, young musicians or students in higher music education in early career development.

Specific to this writing style is the description, and sharing, of emotions serving to underline the findings of the authors, through their personal stories (Bartleet & Ellis, 2009, p. 1-3). When working as a psychologist I have seen how the patient's expression of emotions may be crucial for creating substantial personal change. Expressing emotions as narrative and method has been important for me in the artistic projects. In this thesis, emotional expression and regulation has played an important part, and the discussion of these is present in all the articles and in the discussion of my collaboration with the composers Staffan Storm and Kent Olofsson (see Chapter 5).

2.3.3 Musicians' personal perspectives on classical music

Interactions and rehearsal traditions within classical music have been portrayed with personal accounts, like for example in Bayley's (2011) research into contemporary string quartet rehearsal. Her article focuses on the interaction and communication of composer and performer. She describes how performers usually only have the score to work with and how this means that

> … a rehearsal will be based on the musicians' combined complementary or even conflicting historical knowledge and experience about the composer and his/her musical style, and the limited information supplied in the notation. Notation and its historical perspective thus plays a large part in determining the musical interaction among players who generally identify their goal as the most appropriate or 'correct' interpretation. (Bayley, 2011, p. 389)

She also states that being true to the score is something pertaining to western art music and that being the primary goal of any performance might leave out what happens in the interpersonal process. Indeed, both interpersonal and intrapersonal processes are true for solo performances as well, as this thesis will outline. Both solo performances with and without orchestra.

The musician's perspective and embodied knowledge as vital parts of interpretation and analysis are presented by Dogantan-Dack (2016). With concrete examples from Beethoven's op.110 and Chopin's Nocturne op. 9 no. 2, she describes in detail how an artistic research interpretation might be different from the Werktreue ideal, in that there are many variables influencing an interpretation. Personal decision making, bodily sensations and gestures, the affordances of the instrument, how to produce a certain sound such as cantabile, are just a few of these. Being part of such a hardwired tradition as a classical pianist, it is almost impossible to see the traditions and the canonical, unwritten, interpretative rules from the outside, and to take on a critical perspective, not least because you are part of a musical industry and a musical professional life. Dogantan-Dack gives a musical example of these normative rules, discussing the tempo in the Arioso dolente, op. 110. By playing the movement in a generic way "it starts to approach the range indicated in performance editions and generally adopted by other pianists, phenomenologically the Arioso dolente begins to take on the movement qualities associated with normative pianistic cantabile" (p.192). As an artistic researcher, she can study why this normative cantabile happens, and if there is a need for presenting other ways of approaching the tempo in this particular movement to avoid "general" playing. The embodied pianistic expertise is presented throughout the chapter in contrast to the Schenkerian way of presenting "analytical

fiction" (Dogantan-Dack, 2016, p.194) that still informs some musicological perspectives and influences music education. Dogantan-Dack also critiques the notion that the instrument should not matter, that, for example, pianists should neglect the piano and interpret music as being an abstract entity itself. This perspective, originating from a text-based orientation that thinks of scores as texts rather than scores as scripts (Cook, 2001), tends to put the performer in an position in which quality is defined by the ability to perform the music in accordance with its exegesis through music theory. In my research, I argue that this also has an alienating impact on stage performance. Classical musicians incorporate these normative, strict rules and it can impact their emotional approach to music and performance.

Rink (2016), in a way similar to Dogantan-Dack, departs from a specific piece (Chopin's b minor *Prelude*) and emphasizes the prospective possibilities (rather than the retrospective ones) of analysis in practice. His analysis of the *Prelude* is extensive and contains a variety of parameters such as the physical position of the hands on the piano, the texture of the keyboard, different motions, displacement and confinement. As a pianist I think this gives a good sense of how complex the feeling of performing this piece is. Of course, as Rinks points out, no description in this sense can ever be complete enough, but what Rink shows are "potential elements of a performance" which could "challenge the standard view of performance as reproduction" (2016, p. 145). Other potential elements that influence a performance are psychological phenomena, which is the focus of my research. Rink urges researchers to use a new set of principles of which the last one is particularly important with regard to the inquiry of this thesis. He stresses that a "continual engagement with the act of performance and with the performers themselves is needed to reveal the basis of their decision-making and the creative consequences thereof" (p. 145). Such engagement with the act of performing, and with performers themselves, demands the active presence of performers in the research design, and, as this thesis suggests, should also include the perspective of the emotional conditions of performance.

2.4 Thematic analysis

Thematic Analysis is a common procedure for the qualitative analysis of data, and has sometimes been seen as a set of methods that can be used in different forms of qualitative analysis (Boyatzis, 1998). Braun & Clarke (2006), however, put forward thematic analysis as a distinct method, for instance different to the use of coding in grounded theory. My use of thematic analysis builds on their particular approach.

Together, with stimulated recall, I used TA to analyse data collected in the projects that I was a part of. TA may contain subjective interpretation, which I found particularly necessary for my research, since it was based on my performance practice, my own observations on that practice, and how I interpret myself as part of a specific performance culture.

The method also focuses on capturing something important and representative in the data material, in relation to the research questions. The validity of the analytical process is built upon the researcher's assessment of themes and the consistency and transparency of the process. A theme can appear in large quantities in one project, or little or not at all in others, therefore the researcher's judgement is necessary to determine what a theme is (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The thematic analysis served the dual purposes of contributing to an analytical understanding of the artistic process, and in providing material for later artistic projects. Hereby, the qualitative analysis was gradually woven into the artistic development launched by the project.

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarizing yourself with your data:	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes:	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes:	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes:	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes:	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report:	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

Fig. 2: Phases of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87)

In my analysis of the first projects, carried out between 2014 and 2016 (the *Dance Productions*, the *Lied Project* and the *Performance Simulator*: see sections 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3), I applied the first three phases of TA (as shown in fig. 2). Instead of reading and re-reading the data, I watched and re-watched video recordings of the performances, as described below, using the procedures of stimulated recall. I also read my notes after rehearsals, as well as email conversations, and listened to and transcribed video interviews of the choreographers in the project. I took note of initial ideas, and the repeated coding process brought forth particularly interesting features, themes that became the main findings from the qualitative analysis. Hence, themes such as "playfulness" and "centre of attention" were important in the earlier stages of my PhD: what could be described as an explorative phase. Through the initial qualitative analysis, and my further analysis of the themes that I identified, I was also able to integrate,

further review, and challenge the outcomes of the analysis in and through my artistic practice. This can be observed in all the later projects, such as the *Piano Concerto Performances* and the *Commissioned Pieces*. In the two last projects, the *Commissioned Pieces*, the composers and I used thematic findings as methodical and expressive tools, re-integrating them as part of my performance practice, but now with a novel critical perspective. Finally, and as can be seen above in fig. 2, the sixth and final phase in TA proposed by Braun & Clarke (2006) constitutes the "final opportunity of analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis" (p. 87). Producing a report has in this thesis resulted in writing articles, but also in the production of an audio paper and a CD, and taken together these publications comprise representations and analysis of artistic processes, artistic results, and the development of a theoretical framework.

2.5 Stimulated recall

Stimulated recall was originally used as a tool to stimulate memories and thoughts from an earlier situation, and is a qualitative research method using audio or video data as stimuli with the aim of allowing informants to re-enact memories and experiences. The researcher and the informant together watch a recording of a specific event that is of interest to the researcher. The researcher records the comments and then transcribes and analyses them. It has been used in various pedagogical studies (Calderhead, 1981, Keith, M. 1988, Lyle, 2003, Reitano, 2005, Odendaal, 2019) as well as in music research, since the pioneering studies of Bastien & Hostager (1988). In music research, it does not give a detailed record of a natural social event, but is instead directed to giving researchers information on the meaning-making and communication processes of musicians (Bastien & Rose, 2014, p. 22). I have adapted this technique as part of my autoethnographic methods, reflecting on what I hear when listening back to my performances. Recordings of concerts and rehearsals have served as a basis for these stimulated recall sessions. Such reflection-on-action (Schön, 1983) has given me the possibility to analyse my practice and my performances. I have noted that during a stage performance and, to an even greater extent, the days and hours before, I am not my "ordinary" self. I turn inwards and am not available for any deeper interaction with family or friends. I have also noted a strange kind of focus and an out-of-body feeling that serves as preparation for the stage performance. Before embarking on this PhD project, I did not listen in a broader, analytical way to my studio or concert recordings. Much like athletes moving on to the next competition, moving on to the next concert

is always somewhat easier than reflecting in a profound way on what happened in the previous performance. My listening to recordings was merely a matter of detecting technical flaws, with focus on some particular sections of a piece that I knew may be in need of further practise. But, through the recurring stimulated recall sessions, I developed different ways of listening, and thereby, of analytically and emotionally evaluating my performance.[9]

During the first period of research, from 2012-2015, I focused on listening to recordings (video and audio) of live performances. During the listening sessions I jotted down thoughts and comments and extrapolated from these the themes presented in the next chapter. My aim was to bring back to me the whole situation and my felt experience of the performance. I did not focus on the quality of the performance (in terms of musical shaping or technical precision), or how I succeeded with performing the work at hand, but rather on what other processes had occurred within me, what emotional or performance-related aspects had emerged. This is very different to the improvement-driven way I listened to recordings in my professional life of before, as "just" a pianist. For instance, in a studio setting, I would be assessing the takes for a CD-recording that is to be edited and detecting where faults need to be corrected. While the repeated listening of a recording situation is a shared feature, in the stimulated recall sessions, instead of focusing on how I "perform", I took notes on the felt experience of performing.

A challenge when collecting material for stimulated recall, is that the entire situation of making a video recording risks altering the behaviour of the participants. For many rehearsals I used my iPhone, placed on the stage floor beside me, instead of a more advanced camera setup. This way, much less attention was drawn to the recording, both by myself and, for example, the orchestra members and conductor in an orchestral rehearsal. It also helped me to avoid adjusting my behaviour or being negatively affected by the documentation, such as losing concentration on the task at hand. Other musicians confirm this observation. Bayley's (2011) research on the rehearsals and performances of Finnissy's Second String Quartet took place over a two-year period. Her method was to record interviews and rehearsals, choosing audio recording instead of video, as it was found to be less intrusive. The lack of a visual representation in the documentation was also a constraint, as concluded by Bailey, since therefore "there are consequently several musical and verbal interjections that cannot be interpreted

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[9] For further discussion of similar processes in which the long-term development of different listening practices among musicians is affected through the use of stimulated recall, see Östersjö (2020, pp. 94-96).

accurately. However, these limitations were outweighed by the greater intrusion that a video camera would have brought to the situation" (p. 391).

In addition, I used documentary recordings (made by the concert organizer), again to avoid the distraction of having to prepare a recording before a concert.

2.5.1 The artwork as a result

According to Annette Arlander, in Artistic Research (AR) the artwork (in the case of this thesis, the collaborations, the concert performances and studio recordings) is considered to be a result but is often underestimated as such and therefore described verbally, rather than considered in their own right:

> Another problem in doctoral research is the tendency for the artworks or performances to remain in the background in the final discussion and evaluation. The written report tends to be considered the real research work (an influence from the humanities and social sciences), regardless of the scale of the artworks or productions, and their examination in live situations. (Arlander, 2010, p. 329)

The different ways of presenting results have been widely discussed in AR, or, as it is referred to in the UK, practise-based research (PBR). Marcel Cobussen (2014) addresses the question of where the central knowledge production is to be found in PBR and notes how

> As a part of a PhD project, PBR implies that artistic actions or productions of the researcher are in some way an integral part of the whole project. This can mean, to give one example, that artistic experimentations are the source of data which will be used to respond to initial research questions, themselves emanating from the artistic practice. However, and this is the crucial point, the idea of works of art as integral parts of a PhD project means that there is the possibility that these works will also be the results of the research. Although (most often) accompanied by a written thesis, the final outcomes of the research project are, in the latter case, communicated through art and distributed by means of art works. (Cobussen, 2014, p. 2)

Cobussen continues to stress that, in the relation between artistic output and the written thesis, art is one language and written language is simply another:

> The art work is not a practical aid which rushes in to help the discursively presented conclusions; it is itself the statement and the conclusion. Furthermore, perhaps it is precisely the written thesis that somehow functions in the margins of the main thing, the artistic production. Banned to the periphery, the thesis at most confirms in another language what the artwork already expresses. It is the artwork that speaks, the art work

that claims the leading part. Music, painting, dance, theatre, film, poetry: these are the possible results of PBR. During the research process, the subjected media have undergone changes, and it is through this transformative process that knowledge is obtained, that is, that the current (scientific) knowledge has altered. (Cobussen, 2014, p. 3)

The present thesis, and the articles that form part of it, can, to some extent, be considered a confirmation in another language, hopefully presenting the same results as the artworks express. As also argued above, the themes that emerged from my qualitative analysis of the initial projects were subsequently used and transformed in the two commissioned pieces, created in collaboration with composers Kent Olofsson and Staffan Storm. In my understanding, these compositions are not part of the analysis, but rather, they constitute an artistic outcome of the analytical process. I do describe them (Chapter 5), one could say I felt obligated to verbalise them. To summarize, the sounding results of the thesis are as important as the written text. They can be listened to without my written analysis, i.e. the sounding comment or analysis can be heard, for example, in the video from a performance in Stockholm (Piano Visions, 2018) the audio paper (Olofsson & Skoogh, 2020) and in the CD-recording *Notes from Endenich* (Skoogh, 2020).

In the next chapter I will present key concepts and theories; the implementation and discussion of these theories and concepts are also presented in the articles and in the different projects (Chapter 4).

Chapter 3.

Key concepts and theories

3.1 Werktreue

As stated in Chapter 1, one of the prerequisites that dominated my years as a student, but also as a professional musician, was the focus on the work and fidelity to the work. To better understand current performance culture in classical performance I will present an overview of one of the most influential concepts in the world of western classical music, often referred to in its German language form, Werktreue. I will approach it by outlining its history, its impact on higher music education and also give an account of different adaptations and reactions to the concept among performers and composers.

3.1.1 Werktreue and performing classical music

To be true to the score, to follow instructions, to be accurate and stylistically correct are main areas of focus for a classical musician. And yet, this is not enough. At the same time the musician must also interpret the work, with the aim of realizing the intentions of the composer. Lydia Goehr (1992) argues that the notion of performance interpretation as a means for revealing, and projecting to the audience, not the intentions of the performer in the performance, but those of the composer, is embodied by the concept of Werktreue, which in musical practice effectively merges the notion of being true to the text (the score) and the work: "A performance met the Werktreue ideal most satisfactorily, it was finally decided, when it achieved complete transparency. For transparency allowed the work to 'shine' through and to be heard in and for itself" (p. 232). These intentions of the composer are specifically related to the conception of musical compositions as "works", a container for these intentions which Goehr (1992) relates to E.T.A. Hoffman's writings on music. Still today, in my experience, many classical music performers subscribe to similar ideas of living only for the works, and they are seeking to understand them as they were conceived by their composers. Certainly, Hoffman did not invent what Goehr calls the regulative work-concept, but

he captured a movement in the world of ideas in the early 19th century, and the call for performers to be true to the work, of Werktreue, still casts its spell on much of classical music culture. Goehr argues that, still today, we "see works as objectified expressions of composers that prior to compositional activity did not exist. [...] Once created, we create works as existing after their creators have died, or whether or not they are performed or listened to at any given time" (1992, p. 2). Or, as observed by Benson, "Not only does the ideal of Werktreue say a great deal about our expectations of performers, it also suggests a very particular way of thinking about music: one in which the work of music has a prominent place." He also notes that the assumption that musical works have an essentially ideal quality, has "not affected merely the theorists" (p. 5-6), but it also has many practical implications and consequences. It implies that the composer is to be seen as the true creator and the performer as someone who "perfectly realizes the composer's intentions," as Grout had noted on a similar point already in 1957 (p. 341). As this is a point made more than a half century ago, can there be consequences for me as a performer still today?

The position of the musician as someone who reproduces the work perfectly was noted in a statement by the jazz trumpet player Wynton Marsalis, who said that in classical music the performer is required to know their place, play perfectly and simply "not mess it up" (Benson, 2003, p.14). Along the same lines, Hindemith argued that the performer must "duplicate the pre-established values of the composer's creation". Copland described the performer as existing merely "to serve the composer", just as Stravinsky referred to the musician as someone who should realise the composer's will "that contains nothing beyond what it specifically commands" of the performer (Benson, 2003, p. 12). But what can be the psychological reaction of a performance when given such rigid criteria? Perhaps some statements from performers moving between jazz and classical music could be illuminating. Keith Jarrett, whose career has moved him further and further into the scene of concert halls and performance of iconic classical works, has stated that he had come to suffer from the same nerves that classical players have: "I've not heard about anybody who manages to escape this. But I didn't have that problem until I got into the classical world... And now that actually is contagious into the jazz sometimes" (Rosenthal, 1996, n p).

Werktreue is very much the result of the division of labour between composer and performer, which became stronger during the 19th century and manifested in the post-Beethoven era (Talbot, 2000, Goehr, 1992). As noted by Goehr, "The ideal of Werktreue emerged to capture the new relation between work and performance as well as that between performer and composer. Performances and their performers were respectively subservient to works and their composers" (Goehr, 1992, p. 231). But if the split of the musician in the two agents of composer and performer (Östersjö, 2008)

is one source for the emergence of the regulative work concept, there is yet another split which has affected the ideologies of Werktreue: the split between the contemporary performer and historical praxis. The revival of historical performance practice, and performance on historical instruments, emerged in the early 20th Century, and soon became yet another central factor in the evaluation of "truth" in performance. Here emerged the notion of being true to the work by authentically reproducing its sound, through performance on period instruments, and being true to the score by performing it according to historic practice. Indeed, the performance of classical music has become surrounded by conflicting rules and restrictions, all relating in different ways to the regulative work-concept, and its call for a performer to be true to the work and the intentions of its composer. John Butt (2002) captures the essence of Werktreue by pointing out that "there is a sense that the listener (and presumably also the performer – both kinaesthetically and as a critical listener of his own performance) is deprived of some experiential truth if exposed to the 'wrong' sort of performance" (p. 55). There is a preconception that the work has an identity and that the performer is morally bound to realise this identity in sound. Most importantly, on top of this, there is an ethical or moral tone to this attitude but no explanation as to why it is important to adhere to this preconception.

3.1.2 The Audience

A performer needs an audience and therefore needs to understand what kind of processes are beneficial in this interaction. This is a vital relationship for the survival of western art music, or any genre of music for that matter. The research of Pitts and Gross (2017) explores the possibilities of audience exchange by peer-to-peer dialogue, and focuses on communication that goes beyond the one-way communication of spoken introductions and pre-concert talks. Their focus is to investigate the effects of audience exchange methods and how to develop new and existing audiences for the contemporary arts. They problematize the more common dialogue models where the expert-driven approach prevails, and the voice or opinion of the artist, director, actor or musician is privileged over that of the audience. These pre-concert talks or similar events are often controlled by the organizer of the event with questions and answers.

> Organised opportunities to talk with other audience members, but without the mediating presence of an "expert" from the arts organisation, remain relatively rare – yet there is potential for such activity to bring the advantages of enriching audience experience through conversation, without the pressure to articulate a view to someone assumed to be more knowledgeable. (Pitts & Gross, 2017, n. p.)

Again, the quote above reflects on research focused on audience communication development, but has not yet investigated what impacts (possibly psychological ones) new behaviours like this could have on the performing musician. The pre-concert dialogue presented in section 4.4.1 is an example of a dialogue between me and my audience that stemmed from me as a musician and my need to go beyond conventions, to become less of a 'performing machine'.

> While struggle to understand how to perform music in a largely unconceivable social and political musical landscape, becoming a machine may in fact appear to be a sensible refuge. In my case it is translated into the choice between performer as human or performer as perfection. And here, much to my great surprise, on the contrary, to communicate the emotional range and greatness of Rachmaninov's third piano concerto, the audience had no need for a cyborg. Somehow, I have always tried to destroy myself and create a neutral performer. My experienced failure received by others as a non-failure is a paradoxical part of my practice. I have sought to melt together two conflicting performance values that constituted my inner "perfect performance" into a cyborg me. This affected my performance experience negatively, but I was "saved" by the reception of my performance, the interaction with the audience, in a way that should not, be possible according to demands of perfection in the classical music industry. To paraphrase Haraway, this experience made me want to explore further how to be a human on stage, rather than the cyborg I thought I had to be. (personal note by Skoogh, Skoogh & Frisk, 2019, n p)

It was not at all with the audience's attitude in mind that I decided to challenge the normal concert behaviour, rather the opposite: my intention was to try not to think about what they would think about me as a performer. In some ways this relates to the Pitts and Gross investigation of new ways to communicate with an audience and expand social encounters taking place "during and after the experience of 'the art itself'" (2017, p. 77). To be honest, my personal interaction in connection to the Schumann concerto had little to do with the wish to communicate per se; it was about extending my psychological performing space, or my potential space (as outlined in section 3.3.1), and moving beyond achievement in performance. However, the side effect might indeed be that of a social encounter, providing knowledge on how to expand the view of performance in the concert hall tradition and the way we, as performers and audience, conceive musical performances as both static and divided. The performer's anonymous contribution to the life of the musical work has been explored by Small (1998) among others, who highlights an important lack of narrative about musicians as creators.

> As for performers, we hear little about them either, at least not as creators of musical meaning. It seems that they can clarify or obscure a work, present it adequately or not, but they have nothing to contribute to it; its meaning has been completely determined before a performer ever lays eyes on the score. (Small, 1998, p. 5)

Indeed, we hear little about performers, and perhaps even less *from* them. This is one example of a perspective where artistic research can make an important contribution. Small's concept of musicking (1998) opened up a series of perspectives. It allows for a rethinking not only of performance, but also of the listener in western concert hall culture. Hereby, it becomes possible to take "in all the activities that affect the nature of that event which is a performance" (Small, 1998, p. 11), and further, leads to an expanded understanding of how we communicate and behave when experiencing music. It suggests novel perspectives on western art music, and in the next section I will consider further perspectives on this culture.

3.1.3 Authenticity in relation to Werktreue

Leistra-Jones (2013) discusses authenticity as a concept behind Werktreue and argues that its impact can be seen mainly during the 19th century, in the shift away from flamboyant, popular, and spectacular forms of virtuosity, towards the performer's fidelity to the composer's intentions with a musical work. Werktreue "became a dominant paradigm for performance, as a 'museum' concert culture based on the faithful presentation of musical works gradually supplanted popular concerts based on improvisation, audience interaction, and the star personalities of virtuosos" (Leistra-Jones, 2013, p. 399). Through a study of the manifestations of authenticity and Werktreue in the practice of Johannes Brahms and Joseph Joachim she also examines not only the "how" in Werktreue, but also the "who". There seems to have been a particular need to praise self-restraint, not showing off, and not revealing too much about oneself as a performer on stage. It would have been unthinkable to share personal thoughts on performance, and in particular the kinds of difficulties with performing as presented in section 4.4. The question is if some of these restraints still lingers on.

Aspects of Werktreue can also be teased out of Peter Kivy's conception of authenticity in classical music performance, which he suggests can be divided into four different categories: Authenticity as Intention (the composer's intentions for performance), Authenticity as Sound (the original sound of the Music), Authenticity as Historic Practice (the performer's original practice) and The Other Authenticity (the uniqueness and originality of the performer) (Kivy, 1995). This categorisation is helpful in understanding what classical performers are juggling within their practice, but it also explicitly serves to point to a tension between the first three categories, which relate to

Werktreue in different ways, and the final form, which Kivy calls "The Other Authenticity". This form of authenticity emphasizes the self-expression of the performer, as a challenge to the ideals of transparency and being true to the work.

Kivy embarks on a quest to define sincerity in performance, drawing on how the performer might perceive the work and apply his or her emotions according to the character of the work. He dismisses the possibility for the performer to "feel the emotions of which the Hammerklavier is expressive" (Kivy, 1995, p. 114). He does not see how "the concept of sincerity would help explicating the concept of the personally authentic performance" (p. 111). However, I argue that emotional authenticity can be important to the performer on a personal level, not limited to how he or she relates to the work. Kivy discusses how performers and performances could be elevated to the same level, but for this to happen personal authenticity must be raised to a different level in order to count:For what gives the concepts its life, what bestows upon the performer the status of artist and on the performance the status of art, is the real full-blooded possibility of the performer finding a better or at least different way of performing the music from the way the composer has specifically envisioned and explicitly instructed. This is what bestows upon the performance personal style and originality - what makes it the performers 'version' of the work and not just the composer's 'version'. (Kivy, 1995, p. 142)

A further discussion of the psychological impact of the Other Authenticity might contribute to an understanding of the challenges and possibilities inherent in classical music performance in the present day. There is a strong possibility that the demands of authenticity discussed by Kivy are still somehow dependent on the respect for the work, the composer's intentions, and this—paired with perfectionist tendencies—may have negative psychological effects on the performer. Perfectionism (discussed further below) is related to higher distress and performance anxiety in musicians. In particular, socially prescribed perfectionism shows high correlations with debilitating anxiety (Kenny, Davis & Oates, 2004, Mor & Day, 1995). However, some studies have modified the view on perfectionism as being all negative, showing that

> [...] striving for perfection was associated with intrinsic motivation (intrinsic/identified reasons), higher effort, and higher achievement. Whereas perceived pressure from music teachers was also associated with intrinsic motivation (identified reasons only), negative reactions to imperfection were associated with extrinsic motivation and higher distress. While negative reactions to imperfection are clearly unhealthy, striving for perfection may be regarded as a healthy pursuit of excellence. (Stoeber & Eisman, 2007, p. 2182)

Hence, the striving and dedication of musicians to emphasize the work over everything else can result in positive motivational processes; but the hiding of authentic processes

that might not fit the image of a successful musician can also be seen as a result of excessive perfectionistic goals.

> A performance is of a work. It is, as a recent writer, whom I will be discussing later on puts it, intentional: which is to say, it takes an intentional object, that is the work of which it is the performance. Second, performers are customarily thought of, and described, both by fellow musicians and lay audiences as 'artists': 'performing artists'. Third, I take it as a valid inference from the description of performers as performing artists that their performances are art works. Indeed, that is the very heart of my proposal. (Kivy, 2006, p. 112)

I believe musicians need to be aware of the notion that performances are themselves works of art, not just renditions of other works of art, and that they should be open to a wider conception and awareness of authenticity in performance. This thesis proposes ways in which authenticity in relation to Werktreue can be challenged through artistic practice.

So far we have considered the philosophical foundations for the emergence of Werktreue, as well as some of the practical consequences this has for the performer in contemporary classical performance culture. In the next section we will turn to the consequences of such a regulative framework within teaching institutions for classical music.

3.1.4 Werktreue in the conservatoire

The classical repertoire is taught mainly through different forms of individual one-to-one lessons, or private lessons, with a teacher, or in masterclasses. A masterclass is often open to the public, has an audience also consisting of other students, and is often led by a renowned teacher or prominent artist. A masterclass may be instrument-specific or style-specific (Hanken, 2017, p. 76) and can vary in the experiences that students report. It is not only perceived as positive: negative experiences have been reported and females seem more likely than males to find masterclasses intimidating and unfriendly. Researchers suggest that institutions show interest in addressing this: "In discussing these outcomes, we consider the institution's role in helping students to negotiate social gradients of expertise and socialisation to a professional self-concept" (Long, Creech, Gaunt & Hallam, 2014). Hanken (2017) lists the benefits of gaining new perspectives, such as being taught by someone other than their regular instrumental or singing teacher, and preparing for concerts (since the masterclass has concert-like properties, the student can practise performing in front of a live audience which responds as an audience with applause). Initiation is another benefit, where the masterclass serves as

an "arena where the apprentice musician, through a concert-like performance, is confronted with the standards of the community" (p. 81).

However, the masterclass is also a screening tool to select the top students that are considered to be the coming stars, the outstanding musicians of the future. Hanken (2017) notes that masterclasses can be a baptism of fire rather than focusing on development.

> Such merciless demands and selection mechanisms become more understandable if the masterclass is perceived as an initiation into the community of professional music practice. It demonstrates the conventional standards in a profession where the public concert represents the moment of truth. Students who cannot do justice to the music and meet the expectations of the audience must be told that they do not measure up to standards. One of the functions of the masterclass is therefore to test whether the student has the potential to become a full-fledged member of the community of music practitioners. (Hanken, 2017, p. 83)

Hanken's discussion of the findings underlines what has been my own experience, that "doing justice to the music" (in other words, the work) is one of the main goals for a student in masterclass settings. This discussion on how students must do justice to the music shows us, to a certain degree at least, how firmly rooted the concept of Werktreue is within higher music education.

The masterclass tradition stems from the development of pedagogy within the elite conservatoires during the 19th century and was influenced by Werktreue. The set of tacit knowledge, competencies and sensibilities surrounds this dominant concept within classical music performance, and was crucial for any music education. Navon (2020) argues that Werktreue "owes its prominence to a historically specific educational regime in which performing musicians learned their expertise" (p. 64), a set of educational practices that were represented by the Leipzig conservatory (see further below). Also notable is that the stability and power of modern conservatory training has contributed to the perseverance of Werktreue (Navon, 2020). The great respect for the canonical works of the past created a tension that even the great Franz Liszt noted as he developed his performances and divided them into two separate kinds: one that was committed to faithful renditions and the other where he could engage in virtuoso extravagances and improvisations (Goehr, 1992, p. 232). The progressive Liszt was certainly aware of some of the negative influences in which an overly strict application of Werktreue might result, as expressed in the following example from his teaching:

> During the late nineteenth century, musicians and music critics often spoke of the Leipzig conservatory as synonymous with 'a dry, pedantic, and conservative approach' to performance, manifesting a notably extreme application of Werktreue. Franz Liszt, in one of his own masterclasses, warned a student against performing his Liebestraum no. 1 in a "Leipzigerisch" manner: "You must play that totally carried away as if you were not even seated at the piano, completely lost to the world, not 1, 2, 3, 4 as in the Leipzig Conservatory". (Navon, 2020, p. 68)

The impact of Werktreue on the education of classical musicians is centred on the notion of initiating the student into a deeper understanding of the score. Navon (2020) identifies Mendelsohn as one source for the development of this practice at the Leipzig conservatory. This was built on the notion that "knowledge of music theory would ensure that a student's interpretation of a work, rather than relying on pure instinct, was built upon recognizing (erkennen) the musical laws (musikalische Gesetze) employed by the work's author" (p. 75). In present day teaching practices, a deepened understanding of the score may also be drawn from historical knowledge of the life of composers (and their struggles), and this is thought to benefit the interpretation of the work and express its true nature. Again, this understanding and broader knowledge of the composer is a part of the Werktreue tradition, where the respect for the written score and the composer's intentions is the most important aim, or even raison d'être for a classical musician. Researchers have noted the particularities in classical music of this focus on the composer and the work, and the worries of being overly present with one's personality as a performer arguing that "...distinguishing elements of classical music performance are a focus on interpretation, interest in following the composer's intentions, concern about excessive demonstration of the performer's ego, and a respect for the printed score as the ultimate repository of truth about the work" (Hunter & Broad, 2017, p. 253). These prerequisites result in little acknowledgement of musicians' individual agency and the "tension between what they feel and what they perceive as the composer's intentions" (Hunter & Broad, 2017, p. 253).[10] In recent years there has been a greater interest in understanding the explicit discourse of Werktreue in education, in order to challenge its continued impact. Hunter and Broad (2017) observe how "the core ideology on which these classical-music-focused educational settings have traditionally rested relies on a canon of deified composers and reified works—the 'classics' of so-called classical music" (p. 253). What works, what classics that should be included in this canon is not as interesting as the fact that it

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[10] The problem area of the underlying lack of agency among classical performers is discussed in a rich and tangible manner by Leech-Wilkinson (2020), also building on interviews with conservatoire students. For a further discussion of performer agency and creativity in classical music performance see also Laws (2019), Cook (2018) and Klorman (2018).

exists. On the basis of this they ask what this "does" to musicians, how do musicians react?

> What interests us here more than the contents of the canon, however, is the fact of its existence, together with the ways in which the genre-specific notions of dead, though ultimately authoritative, composers and unique, more or less fixed works preserved in scores may affect how classical musicians think about what they are doing. (Hunter & Broad, 2017, p. 254)

This core ideology probably affects musicians, and more so, it creates values (further discussed in section 3.5 on Performance Values below) that influence and accompany performances. This thesis gives several examples of how I think about what I am "doing" and how musicians within Artistic Research might contribute to the welcomed, renewed critical perspective on Werktreue, as we are indeed a part of the structures described by Hunter and Broad (2017):

> Further work might also show to what extent (if at all) the structures of conservatoires and other formal music-educational environments, with their emphasis on assessed performances and, increasingly, on self-conscious reflection, bring a renewed critical perspective on the ideological worlds of classical music. (p. 267)

Hunter and Broad (2017) present a study, partly ethnographic, based on the observations and comments of performers as they reflect on what they do. It is based on semi structured interviews with professional musicians, in higher music education. They note that the younger generations of musicians do not completely comply with the demands posed by these ideals. They suggest that musical interpretation might be moving in different directions in the years to come, suggesting that "Perhaps if the generational shift that we perceive in the examples we have quoted reflects a wider reality, young performers will feel less tension about their place in the music, and older performers will use a more authorial (and perhaps more honest) rhetoric about their interpretative choices" (Hunter & Broad, 2017, p. 267). I will argue below that the wider reality reflected in this research, as well as questions of performer agency and authority, can be addressed as a part of conservatory programmes, and within the field of Artistic Research. Some examples of artistic projects that counter and question the impact of Werktreue on the performance of classical music are found in the next section.

3.1.5 Artistic experimentation with Werktreue

In this section I will outline a few Artistic Research projects that approach the performance of classical music and the classical iconic work from an explorative standpoint. The Swedish composer Anders Hultqvist has created several projects that question the division between interpretation and composition. In 2011 he presented two new works, a re-composed version (which he refers to as a "staging") of Beethoven's fifth symphony and a new composition drawing on Albinoni's Adagio, which were premiered by the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra.[11] Hultqvist points out the difference between opera and other classical genres, suggesting that there is much to learn from the world of opera. Productions within the opera have much in common with theatre practice, where re-interpretation is a much more normal state of mind, whereas an orchestral institution has less experience of deconstructing works of art:

> The goal of the new interpretations is to re-read and re-set the music from within, and relieve it of some of the cultural layers and interpretational rituals conventionally assigned to the pieces. I want to bring forward slightly different stories, than those told by the two composers in question, and this from within the musical material. Both of the works are exceedingly well known and are in different ways incorporated into our cultural canon. On the one hand, Beethoven's Fifth is seen as the overall emblematic piece for the whole classical tradition. On the other, Albinoni's Adagio plays a different role in the cultural landscape and addresses nostalgia in a more direct manner (Hultqvist, 2011, n.p.).

One of the most interesting aspects of the projects is Hultqvist's discussion of the difficulties he encountered when presenting this idea to the director of the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra (GSO), one of Sweden's leading and internationally renowned orchestras. He experienced that challenging and problematizing the cultural canon can often be perceived as suspicious and met with resistance:

> When I first confronted the director of the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra with the idea of re-setting some classical pieces the conversation took an interesting direction. At one stage he asked me if I was to add some new music of my own to the Beethoven interpretation. I said no. He then asked suggestively if there would be some electronics

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[11] "A theatre director can change, or completely remove, a sentence that appears to be old-fashioned in an actor's utterance. The director can even cancel a whole scene without disappointing the audience. But all of this is true only if the essence of the play is in some way kept intact, both in respect to the new staging and in relation to the central ideas in the original text. I see no reason why this should not be applicable to the musical score as well. Absolute music is also built around some kind of narrative idea, which evolves through the staging of the central musical ideas. Form and content is of course closely connected, but that does not have to mean that there is one, *and only one*, solution to the final setting of the music". (Hultqvist, 2011, n.p.)

added to the performance. Again, I said no. After some seconds of silence he suddenly asked if I wanted to ridicule Beethoven. (Hultqvist, 2011, n.p.)

Some of the negotiations between Hultqvist and the management of the orchestra are documented in the email conversations between the composer, the director of the orchestra and the conductor, which are published as part of an exposition in the *Journal of Artistic Research* (Hultqvist, 2011). The conversations show how both the director and the conductor worry about how the project may appear to the audience. It also gives an example of how the director of the GSO does not want Hultqvist to portray the orchestra as part of the musical discourse in the text written for the programme.

> In the last section starting with 'A concert hall is built…' you write in the third to last sentence that 'reproducible readings of the classical repertoire has made the music static'. I suggest that you formulate it; '…runs the risk of becoming static'. I suggest that you entirely cut out your last section about the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra's role in the musical discourse. (Hultqvist, 2011, n.p.)

This conversation underlines the general difficulty of introducing change in concert hall contexts. Already the inclusion of critical or unconventional perspectives in programme notes is often policed by the management. In the project with Robert Schumann's Piano Concerto in Section 4.4.1, I wrote a very idiosyncratic text for the audience; the difficulties receiving permission for this can be compared with Hultqvists exposition.

What can musicians do, or rather not do, with the classical canon? Paulo de Assis has conducted several experimental concerts investigating new ways to rehearse Beethoven's music, "…how to organize the rehearsal in such a way that a dialogue is possible between musicians and audience on what constitutes Beethoven's music not as a set of closed works, but as a world that can be explored?" (Orpheus Instituut, 2020, n.p.). Another of de Assis' projects revolves around Beethoven's Diabelli Variations, op. 120. In a series of concert performances, lectures, articles, and installations he problematizes the score suggesting new potential developments for western art music. "The Diabelli Machines takes this idea of music as 'time–machine' further, exposing some of the historical materials related to the original Diabelli Variations, and fostering the generation of new materials that create a transhistorical dialogue between past, present, and future" (Research Catalogue, 2020, n.p.).

Novel approaches to the performance of score-based music have emerged through the field of artistic research. Over the last decade or so, several researchers have proposed analytical frameworks that redefine the very conception of musical performance. The work of Paulo d'Assis (2018) builds on a philosophical understanding of performance

which replaces the notions of interpretation and representation with experimentation, "understanding performance first as a space of problematization" (p. 19). Östersjö (2008) proposes a model in which the identity of the musical work is analysed as the result of interaction between multiple agents: composer, performer, instrument, score and electronics, among others. Östersjö deconstructs the concept of musical interpretation as dependent on the division of labour between composer and performer. He outlines the interaction between the agents of composer and performer by problematising the binary opposition between interpretation and construction. Furthermore, he undertakes the difficult task of describing the ontology of the work as an oscillating between interpretation and the musical work. He introduces the identity of a work as created under the influence of several agents, and the notion of musical interpretation in the form of 'thinking-through', involving an ecological approach to perception (Östersjö, 2008, p. 53). He provides extensive examples from several collaborations with composers, such as Per Nørgård, including how his rubato playing is internalised and further applied in Nørgård's body of work in the Postludio in *Libra* (Östersjö, 2008, p. 381). In my understanding, this documentation provides examples of how a musician's agency can be expanded, while still negotiating a considered relation to the expressive intentions of a composer. Perhaps most importantly, Östersjö points out that it is not possible to separate his own critical reflections on his practice as a performer from "issues of the musical work, musical interpretation, authenticity and intention, nor from the influence of an absent or present composer, from technology, my instruments, the score and other 'texts'" (Östersjö, 2008, p.27).

The work as a sequential phenomenon, instead of a fixed intention set by the composer, is relevant for this thesis. *Play always as if in the presence of a master* (see Section 5.1 below) is modelled on this notion. It has been a traditional working method for musicians to understand the composer's mind or life situation, to gather knowledge about the circumstances in the composer's life, and from this deduct the composer's intention with the work. There is of course no such thing as a single intention which can be recovered through bibliographic and historical study.

> Thus, in the field of music, we should be concerned not with specific biographical events, but should imagine pieces as the result of an infinite sequence of decisions. This helps us to temper the view of musical works as static, timeless objects and allows us to see them as something much closer to the process of performance itself. (Butt, 2002, p. 85)

This provides a contrast to blindly trying to figure out and follow the composer's intentions as if they were commands, as if these intentions had survived, and were still to be obeyed in all performance contexts across centuries. Butt points to the absurdity of the notion that a performer must pretend to adhere to the composer's persona as a

"timeless subjectivity" (p. 77). Not even composers themselves kept a strict view on their works, as can be exemplified by Schumann's revisions of his early works.

Until recently, the discussion and debate regarding the work-concept, Werktreue and authenticity has been largely driven by musicologists and music philosophers, and it has concerned the classical or modern repertoire. However, the contemporary music arena has not kept up with this critical and intellectual work and in many contexts seems to keep the Werktreue tradition alive, as noted by Ian Pace:

> This 'work-concept' has been extensively analysed and critiqued by a succession of musicologists, but to the best of my knowledge very little of this debate has filtered through to those regularly involved with the production of new music. The 'mainstream' approach perhaps allows for a little creative input on the part of the performer, usually in the form of decoration, but mostly this consists of the appropriation of the text in terms of various mainstream stylistic conventions, such as might commonly be applied to standard repertoire. (Pace, 2014, n p)

Pace continues to argue that, rather than continuing to sustain the conflation of work and text in the manner of Werktreue, it would be more beneficial to talk about musical *texts*, rather than *works*, as inspiration for a multitude of differently shaped performances, as "frameworks for action for creative performers" (Pace, 2014, n p). A very important reflection by Pace[12] is the possibility that performers think of notation as a task where performing "becomes less one of playing something 'right' as playing it 'not wrong'" (Pace, 2014, n p).

While having a great respect for the work or the composer's intentions is not negative *per se*, it is also not the magical solution to interpretation and communicating monumental classical works in performances today. A growing number of instrumentalists[13] who are also academic scholars (such as the examples mentioned in this section) are of course vital for the discussion of Werktreue. As outlined above, Werktreue has been investigated, debated and researched from different perspectives, but not from a psychological point of view. Savage (2004) outlines how hermeneutical insights into a work's capacity can be a credible alternative to both the view on Werktreue as musical formalism (where the core is a work's structural upbuilding) and the "social Werktreue" (where the deconstruction of the formalist view means that music must be unpacked by uncovering a socio-historical context). "Because the musical work is viewed as a cultural artifact embodying socially constructed meanings, its complicity with hegemonic sexist, racist, orientalist and imperialist agendas demands

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[12] Thereby confirming the quote by Marsalis that classical music is mostly about not messing up.

[13] Peter Hill, John Rink, Kenneth Hamilton or Siegfried Mauser

the demystification and radical destruction of the principle of its aesthetic autonomy" (Savage, 2004, p. 517). Savage suggests that the hermeneutical addition to how to define the meaning of the work is a better option.

> The contemporaneity that each work successfully achieves breaks open new possibilities in the midst of existing social and historical conditions. A work's capacity to communicate anew therefore points beyond the impasse of musical formalism and the socially transposed Werktreue ideal to new vistas for aesthetic criticism and musicological critique. (Savage, 2004, p. 523)

Is it plausible that the concept of Werktreue psychologically affects musicians during performance? Could extensive focus on the work reinforce unhealthy aspects of perfectionism and further, how can musicians deal with the psychological impact of such a forced fidelity towards the score? The aim of this PhD project is to question the current western classical concert performance culture with particular interest in how it shapes the psychological experience of performance from the perspective of the individual musician. A work's capacity to communicate anew could open up the possibility for the musician to invest in other aspects than the hard-wired respect of tradition. Beyond the social Werktreue, and Werktreue as musical formalism, it is important to address the psychological reactions, in particular those of forced perfectionistic strivings connected to the fidelity to the work and the emotional regulation of the performing musician.

3.2 Perfectionism and emotional regulation

In this Section I will give an overview of some of the psychological theories on perfectionism, laying the ground for a further discussion of this problem area as they surface in the artistic projects outlined below. The exploration of the issues concerning MPA as a part of a complex system of interactions between performance values and perfectionism is found in the article *Performance values – an artistic research perspective on music performance anxiety in classical music* (Skoogh & Frisk, 2019).

In psychological theory and research, perfectionism has been described and studied as having both negative and positive effects. The term is considered to be multidimensional but has proven to be difficult to conceptualize and define (Flett & Hewitt, 2002). Two major dimensions of perfectionism have emerged: perfectionistic strivings and perfectionistic concerns (Stoeber & Otto, 2006). Perfectionism as a maladaptive coping mechanism has also been described, and can be a response to psychological distress or loss of control in a problematic life situation. It has been

connected with anxiety, depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder and eating disorder. Perfectionism has been researched in behavioural contexts, and perfectionistic behaviour has been analysed as constituted by several different personality traits. Nine unidimensional personality traits that contribute to perfectionistic behaviour have been found and summarized as: "Order, Satisfaction, Details and Checking, Perfectionism toward Others, High Standards, Black and White Thinking about Tasks and Activities, Perceived Pressure from Others, Dissatisfaction, and Reactivity to Mistakes" (Stairs, Smith, Zapolski, Combs, & Settles, 2012, p. 162).

As a personality trait, perfectionism can be measured with the Dutch Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale of Hewitt, Flett, Turnbull-Donovan and Mikail (1991), which has also been used to study musicians and other performing artists (Mor & Day, 1995). They found that both self-oriented and socially prescribed perfectionism is connected to performance anxiety. Perfectionism was found to be not only linked to debilitating anxiety but also to the lack of facilitating anxiety (p. 219). They conclude that cognitive behavioural interventions can improve levels of negative perfectionism but

> [...] the perfectionistic standards may be difficult to modify because striving for perfection is a socially acceptable behaviour and it is often demanded in certain occupational groups, such as professional performers. Socially prescribed perfectionism would be even more difficult to modify if significant others [a]nd (sic) audience members did not indeed expect perfection. (Mor & Day, 1995, p. 221)

There is an inherent tendency toward perfectionism in competitive environments where goal orientation dominates, such as in sports, academia, and very much so in classical music performance. Kapsetaki and Easmon (2017) conducted a survey study on the prevalence of eating disorders in musicians, evaluating their relation to perfectionism, stress, anxiety and depression. One of their findings was that perfectionism was higher in classical musicians, compared to non-classical musicians. As shown in Section 3.1.1, this is confirmed by musicians such as Jarrett and Marsalis, drawing on their experiences in both the classical and jazz worlds.

Perfectionism seems to have a negative impact even among very young musicians. One study showed strong correlation between MPA and perfectionism between ages 10 and 17 (Patston & Osborne, 2016). There was also a significant gender difference, with the study noting that female musicians experience "a steeper and more intense developmental trajectory than males. The developmental pathways of MPA and perfectionism are consistent in late childhood between males and females" (p.47). The third finding, that levels of MPA and perfectionism increase with years of experience, gave rise to new questions from the researchers: are the increases due to the students or the teachers, and is it a normal consequence of the psychological development of

children, or are teachers somehow influencing these conditions (p.47)? MPA is frequently considered to be an individual problem and a range of interventions have been suggested to musicians to address the problem, but unfortunately, several of these are based on studies that have not always been methodologically strong enough (Matei & Ginsbourg, 2017). Examples of these interventions include cognitive–behavioural therapy (CBT), multimodal interventions, acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT), the use of beta-blockers, virtual reality exposure training and psychological skills training. A majority of these are treatments directed to individuals, consistent with the notion that MPA is a psychological disorder.

Perkins, Reid, Araújo, Clark and Williamon (2017) investigated health issues amongst musicians, such as lifestyle and health-related attitudes and behaviour. They found that music students had higher levels of wellbeing and lower fatigue than comparable populations within the same age group. However, it also showed that engagement in health responsibility and stress management was low; another finding was high perfectionistic strivings, limited use of coping strategies, poor sleep quality, and low self-rated health. In the study they encourage a further look into the "core cultures of conservatoires", and for musicians themselves to take greater responsibility for their health (Perkins et al., 2017, n.p.).

The examination of core cultures of conservatoires encouraged by the authors must be done with a keen eye on the hidden values connected to performing classical music. Perfectionism comes from not only individual pressure to perform at one's best, but also from the culture of how to perform the musical canon and the traditions surrounding it. These factors are perhaps not instantly found when asking musicians about their wellbeing, but are more connected to the unspoken, and sometimes very strict rules discussed in Section 3.1. Musicians deal with the wish to attain perfection on a daily basis, but are not always used to reflecting on it.

3.2.1 Emotional regulation

Performing western classical music is a matter of great cognitive effort, particularly with regard to the memorization of large quantities of music, and the technical mastery of the material. Suppression has been found to be an effortful form of self-regulation that leads to memory impairments for social information. This implies that other forms of memory impairment could interfere with musical performance, which is why it is important for musicians to apply adequate ways of regulating emotions, preferably through cognitive reappraisal. Social sharing of emotions seems to be valuable and when someone experiences an emotion, especially a negative emotion, "…people around that person play a critical role in the regulation of this experience " (Rimé,

2007, p. 481). For a musician, the audience can also play such a critical role. Could experimentation with the nature of the relation between performer and audience constitute a possibility for emotional regulation? This may suggest that in addition to the intrapersonal strategy discussed above, interpersonal social sharing could be used to regulate negative emotions derived from unsuccessful performance. Musicians can, as shown in the projects below, share and express emotional difficulties with the audience, and thereby regulate negative emotions.

According to John & Gross (2004), two emotional regulation strategies, cognitive reappraisal (changing thoughts concerning an emotional event) and expressive suppression (changing the responsive emotional behaviour in connection to the event) can be used to frame how musicians process live concert experience. It has been found that reappraisal strategies have a healthier profile of short-term affective, cognitive, and social consequences than suppression (John & Gross, 2004, p. 1301).

There are few studies focusing on emotional regulation strategies among musicians, but there have been attempts to describe how performers deal with stress by examining cortisol levels in connection with working memory. The results from one study showed that more experienced performers were less insecure, had better regulation of their cortisol response, and demonstrated better working memory (Killough, Thompson, & Morgan, 2015). It is not clear which emotional response strategy or strategies participants used during the study. The author's suggestion for future studies is to "directly examine the effectiveness of different emotion regulation strategies in performance situations" (Killough, Thompson, & Morgan, 2015, n. p).

Rimé (2007) observes three classes of regulation needs when having experienced a negative emotional experience: socio affective (comforting, love, care, contact, social support, understanding, recognition, social validation, support and esteem), cognitive (abandonment of goals, reorganisation, modifying schemas, recreation of meaning, reframing new appraisal of the emotional event) and action needs (concrete help and assistance, re-creation of meaning, restoration of mastery and control through action, successful experience through action) (p. 474). It is plausible that musicians regulate emotions related to negative performance experiences within the action need class by soliciting a teacher for help and assistance, by restoring mastery and control through action (practise more) and by searching for a successful experience (the next concert performance). Musicians could benefit from adding strategies for regulating emotions within the socio-affective and cognitive class, and it is important to develop this area at educational institutions. The *Schumann piano concerto* and the *Commissioned pieces* projects described below are examples of the creation of shared experiences of performing, in which the author explores socio-affective approaches to the regulation of negative emotions, through novel forms of audience interaction.

Is there anything to be learned from how we use emotional regulation in everyday life, and how authenticity is defined in psychology? John and Gross (2004) review the findings on commonly used emotional strategies, suppression and reappraisal and how they are connected to social functioning, and well-being.

> As predicted, we found that suppression was related to inauthenticity but reappraisal was not. Thus, individuals who chronically use suppression are keenly aware of their lack of authenticity, and they admit to deceiving others about their true inner feelings, attitudes, and beliefs. They do so, they report, because they are concerned about not being accepted by others, suggesting that these individuals use suppression particularly in relationships they care about and are afraid to lose. (John & Gross, 2004, p. 1313)

Performing can be considered an everyday life activity for musicians, and it is a mix between a social relationship with both peers and audience, and professional activity. To be able to perform and reinvent, not just repeat, a classical canonic work, several levels of personal input, or "personal authenticity" (Kivy, 1995, p.123) are needed. The performance of classical music in contemporary concert hall culture is connected with the social pressure to perform with as few mistakes as possible, and musicians are not likely to talk openly about the difficulties of performing under this pressure, but rather use suppression. To suppress negative feelings during a performance and even before a performance during preparation, is paired with expectations to be personally authentic in the interpretation of the score, which could create a cognitive dissonance on stage and negative feelings or mood. There are three meta-mood scales measuring aspects of emotional regulation: Repair, Attention, and Clarity (Salovey, Mayer, Golman, Turvey, & Palfai, 1995). The Repair scale measures optimistic attitude and the use of distraction to improve negative mood, referring to awareness and the positive valuation of emotions. The Clarity scale assesses clarity about, and comfort with, one's feelings. Reappraisal has been positively related to mood repair because it involves trying to think differently about the situation. However, suppression, requiring recurrent effort, seems to interfere with increasing awareness, clarity, and comfort regarding emotions that the individual is trying to suppress. Stage performance under these conditions creates a situation where the musician shuts down, which in turn reinforces inauthenticity. "More generally, then, these findings suggest that suppression involves ''shutting down'' emotions in a way that interferes with attention to the emotion, prohibits coping via venting, and creates a painful awareness of inauthenticity in social relationships." (John & Gross, 2004, p. 1314). I have described the experience of shutting down as trying to choose between oneself or something not human.

> If I could have chosen between being myself at the moment of performing the Rachmaninoff concerto or switching to be the flawless cyborg version of me, I would without a doubt have chosen the cyborg. Why? Out of respect for the work, out of respect to the audience, the cyborg would have been the perfect solution, without fear and without strong feelings of discomfort (personal note by Skoogh in Skoogh & Frisk, 2019)

Could one obtain reappraisal by expressing emotional experiences made during performances of a musical work in front of the audience or even by? This is described in Projects, in Section 4.4 of the *Piano Concerto Performances* and in the *Commissioned Pieces*, Chapter 5.

3.2.2 Challenging perfection

There seems to be signs that classical musicians have to be perfect, and that failure is the equivalent of losing job opportunities or simply forcing musicians to quit performing altogether:

> Some performing artists, such as professional musicians and actors, experience crippling fears of evaluation when faced with the prospect of performing in public. From a diagnostic standpoint, performance anxiety of this type is considered a type of circumscribed social phobia; however, enough distinct features warrant separate consideration. For one thing, people who make their living as performing artists face more overt pressures for perfection than does the average person who engages in a casual social interaction (Dews & Williams, 1989). After all, few job opportunities exist for a pianist who consistently misses notes or an actor who blows his or her lines. (Alden, Ryder, & Mellings, 2002, p. 375)

Statements like these are not completely true. On the contrary, artists fail, perhaps not consistently, but they fail occasionally and still manage to have a career. The study referred to above is a study conducted in 1989 based on a questionnaire with 201 responses from music students. The authors drew the conclusion that performing artists face more overt pressure than the average person. In western classical music this is very much the case, as described further in Section 3.4. In recent years this has been acknowledged by an emerging field that challenges this particular culture of the performing arts. "Challenging performance" is a project concerned with the relationship between beliefs and performers creativity and wellbeing in western classical music (WCM) (Leech-Wilkinson, 2020). This is a project that aims to look into the issues surrounding perfectionism, and the dominating attitude that mistakes are unforgivable. It also outlines the dangers of the conformism of these concert cultures,

in which the aim is to keep a status quo, and the project proposes a turn to more diverse ways of performing.

> WCM does this all too well, hoping to protect itself in what it experiences as a relatively hostile (or at any rate indifferent) environment: its culture is highly constrained and conformist, fearing that any difference from normative behaviour may have deleterious consequences for cultural survival. And yet everywhere where WCM finds the funding and social attitudes conducive to its flourishing there is more than enough economic and social safety, comfort and resource to sustain much more diverse practices without any threat to a flourishing artistic and commercial practice. (Leech-Wilkinson, 2020, n.p.)

In addition, within existential psychoanalysis there is an interest in bringing phenomenology in dialogue with the performing arts to offer new ways of working with issues that negatively affect the health of performers (Brizzi, 2020). By outlining five themes, Brizzi (2020) uncovers many hidden aspects that affect musicians in connection to performing, such as pleasing beliefs and reverberation. Alden et al. (2002, p. 384) notes that there are indeed few studies conducted on musicians and perfectionism. However, findings show that musicians and actors show a tendency to display a combination of socially prescribed perfectionism and self-oriented perfectionism (SOP) (Dews & Williams, 1989 and Mor & Day, 1995). Thus, in contrast to the studies of social anxiety discussed above, evaluation anxiety in performing artists (i.e. musicians and actors) appears to be linked to SOP, and there is also reason to believe that perfectionistic standards for performance may be integral to this condition. "Theories of social anxiety must be able to account for these differences" (Alden et al., 2002, p. 384).

Auslander claims that being a musician "is to perform an identity in a social realm" (Auslander, 2006, p. 101). However, very often, classical musicians are unaware of, and have little experience of, defining their social realm, probably because this is not encouraged or part of their education. Classical musicians focus on mastering an instrument, their interpretation, and being able to perform at their best, towards perfection, under pressured circumstances. Much could be gained if musicians could situate their identity and their practise in relation to tradition and classical music culture, and reflect on how performance affects them emotionally and how they can transform stage performance into something more playfully explorative. By doing so they can possibly open up new ways of emotional regulation.

3.3 Psychoanalytical influences

As stated in the introduction, my identity as a psychologist has formed the projects and the interpretation I have made of myself as a performer, responding to the specific culture of western classical music. My main interest as a psychologist has been object relations theory, and the notion that we develop as humans in relation to others, or—as I will explore in this chapter and throughout the projects—in relation to music and performance.

Performing music entails moving between inner and outer reality, between expressivity and the need to withdraw, between a sense of security and a total loss of control. Reading Winnicott I experienced a homecoming, in the sense that he provided a deeper understanding of the kinds of difficulty that performance can present:

> In the artist of all kinds I think one can detect an inherent dilemma, which belongs to the coexistence of two trends, the urgent need to communicate and the still more urgent need not to be found. This might account for the fact that we cannot conceive of an artist's coming to the end of a task that occupies his whole nature. (Winnicott, 1965, p. 185)

In this chapter I will present the different psychoanalytic concepts that have inspired and guided my projects.

3.3.1 Play

Play is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as to "engage in activity for enjoyment and recreation rather than a serious or practical purpose". The term is used in a number of areas, such as within sports, theatre, describing children's play, and also for performing on a musical instrument.

Psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott defines play as a preoccupation children can engage in, where the content does not matter, but rather the importance lies in a withdrawn state of mind, a special area that is not easily left, nor easy to interrupt. He also outlines how playing connects to cultural activities. "There is a direct development from transitional phenomena to playing, and from playing to shared playing, and from this to cultural experiences" (Winnicott, 2005, p.69). He also states that playing is the base of creativity and all human cultural activities are developed forms of playing. He shares this view with Huizinga, who also emphasizes the connection between play and musical

creativity, which he finds to be inseparable, stating that "music never leaves the play-sphere" (Huizinga, 1949, p. 158).

Winnicott's conception of "play" is interpersonal, or relational, situated between inner and outer reality, and takes place in between the internal world and external world. At the very beginning this place is between child and caregiver and can happen only in relation to a feeling of confidence and dependability in the mother-figure (Winnicott, 2005, p. 135). Winnicott emphasized the importance of play in the development of children and also throughout life. To be able to play is one of the most important factors of psychological well-being. Play is not something only children engage in, adults also play. By playing, he meant not only the ways that children of all ages play, but also the ways in which they do sports, converse, make a joke, or, in the musicians' case, perform.

Play consists of many features, such as the preoccupation in the playing of a young child, where the state is important, not the content. The psychic area of play is not an inner reality, nor an external one, but in between. Furthermore, playing implies trust and embodiment, and it takes place in the interplay of the subjective and what is objectively perceived. Winnicott specifies that a high degree of anxiety is possible during play but that there is indeed also "a degree of anxiety that is unbearable and this destroys playing" (Winnicott, 2005, p. 70). He continues to claim that cultural experience is located in the potential space between the individual and its environment much like the way play is manifested (p. 135). This potential space is a field where the child can be playful only "in relation to a feeling of confidence" (p. 135) and being connected to and dependent on others (the mother). One important aspect is that playing has to be spontaneous; it is not compliant and cannot happen when a person feels pressured to perform in some mandated way, forced to live up to a standard, be consistent, or obliged to make sense.

The possibility of using psychoanalytic concepts outside the therapeutic environment has been noted by Townsend (2019) and Loseff (2012). (Loseff's usage of projective identification as a therapeutic process between musician and the work is described later in Section 3.3.3.) Townsend finds similarities between Winnicott's definition of play and its function in humans, and the creation of art. She develops the idea that

> the creation of a new artwork is (amongst other things) the search for a form for something hitherto unformed in the artist's inner world. This search, as an activity, can be seen as play in Winnicott's sense of the word. The new artwork embodies something in the unrepressed unconscious, and in doing so it allows the artist to 'get to know' this aspect of herself. (Townsend, 2019, p. 59)

Winnicott's play originally takes place in the potential place between mother and child, and later in psychoanalysis or psychotherapy, between analyst and analysand. Townsend argues, much like I, that "For the artist, this potential space is between herself and her medium, but also between herself and whatever aspect of the outer world she wishes to explore in her work" (Townsend, 2019, p. 67). She refers mainly to visual artists' usage of play; if translated to the musicians' world this would be their instruments, or the performance situation, or their relation to the work. Townsend also proposes that play in an artistic process is not necessarily all fun and games. She discusses her HD video animation, *Bay Mountain*, and the struggles she has had with different technical aspects of the work.

> In using the term 'play' to describe my interaction with the sand and with all the other elements of my medium, I do not want to suggest that my activity was always enjoyable. In order to find the form I needed, I had to be in touch with the disturbing feelings that the Bay evokes in me. Each time I tried a new variation, I needed to measure it against my experience. (Townsend, 2019, p. 63)

As a classical pianist I have found that the potential space between originality and the acceptance of tradition is limited. This may be because reproduction of tradition is central, as many personal accounts such as those by Bayley (2011) and Bartleet (Bartleet & Ellis, 2009) show. When discussing my failed performance in the form of a journal article (Skoogh & Frisk 2019), or expressing how excessive perfectionistic strivings affect me as a performer through the sonic means of an audio paper (Olofsson & Skoogh, 2020), I make room for a potential space where I could "play" with failure and feelings of inadequacy. I do this while still accepting the reproduction of tradition, but adding a personal story of arising struggles that are not seen or accounted for to a large extent within the academic context. The article, the audio paper and the two commissioned pieces were, using the words of Townsend, variations that I needed to measure against my experience.

Can any useful relations between musical performance and the concept of play, and the potential space as described by Winnicott, be established? The resemblance of the processes and the importance of a person's capability to engage with play as a healthy behaviour, has been noted by Kennedy (2020), who states that "For Winnicott, the answer is that in health we live in the intermediate zone, the third area of transitional space; this is then the virtual space in which music moves and which becomes tangible in a performance" (p. 121). Furthermore, to perform on stage implies, in a similar way to Winnicott's discussion on interpersonal processes, the necessity of trust in oneself and in others. Gritten (2017) has observed that "[t]rust enables and facilitates interaction, collaboration, risk taking, experimentation, interpretative leaps, and all

kinds of phenomena that are frequently associated with wonderful performance" (p. 11).

However, classical musicians operate in a culture that does not always emphasize trust and in a culture where the content and perfection of play is more important than the state of play. Many artists have experienced a loss of control, and even performance anxiety, due to high expectations and negative forms of perfectionism, none of which are beneficial to play or musical expression.

The use of psychoanalysis in the worlds of music, art, literature and theatre is of course no novelty. Potential space has been used in the analysis of Hamlet as a means to understand the redemptive movement from an internal-subjective to an external-objective way of perceiving (Reisner, 2019).

> The word 'staged' is apposite here because Winnicott sees our human experience as a kind of spatial encounter with real presences, existing without and within, and potential space is demarcated, a stage (in both senses of the word) for growth. (Reisner, p. 459)

Winnicott's potential space is a valuable theoretical concept concerning performance because of its openness. "Potential space is characterized by useful uncertainty" (Resiner, 2019, p. 459). There is a lack of images describing the state of performing that are not connected to achievement. The concept is therefore useful to describe musical performances as it grasps psychological aspects that are connected to human communication and interaction, rather than to successful renditions. "Surrounding the child is a demarcated space, a stage for being, inhabited by an absent, necessary presence. Potential space enables the use of symbolism; play is inseparable from the understanding of metaphor" (Reisner, 2019, p. 460). It is possibly through play that one can understand more of what performing is about.

Turning briefly towards the pedagogical field, similar suggestions already exist in the education of children for how music can be taught in a more playful manner. There is also an awareness of the attitudes and values that constitute an important overall experience of music. In such situations, both teachers and their students can benefit from the formative developmental stages of learning, particularly when students develop new skills and abilities in an instrument.

> Music teacher educators can create a safe atmosphere for preservice music educators to take musical risks by acknowledging that it may often feel like a personally humbling experience. It is the imperfect modelling that lessens the threat of risk-taking among peers and can infuse learning with elements of playful engagement. (Bucura, 2019, n p)

It is not easy to envision what "imperfect modelling" would look like in the world of professional classical music. Could that be incorporated in the masterclasses, in the musical work, or even as a part of the concert evening? Would it make audiences disappear, this search for play with imperfection?

> Music experience, as it is conceived here in praxis, is the result of active engagement in the construction of music in its many forms. It includes the development of skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values that lead to deeper understandings of music as art. (Barrett & Webster 2014, p. 2)

This is a consideration that professional musicians can also use in their own practice. Moreover, musicians first need to identify which of the attitudes belonging to the culture of the music profession it is that affects them. This should not only be an intellectual activity, as in the writing of articles, but must be interpolated in their performing practice.

Musical performance practice in western classical music is, as previously mentioned, occupied with preparations for performing the work and realizing the inherent intention of the work, which implies technical perfection and mastery of an instrument. Moving beyond that there are possibilities in exploring the relationship between musician, composer, work and audience by looking at human interactions as it is defined by psychoanalytical theories.

3.3.2 Hiding emotions

Winnicott's theories on the interaction between caregiver and child, the form, the quality of this interaction, conveyed through for example playing, was continued in many ways by Daniel Stern. He defines the experience of interaction between humans in everyday life as "present moment", sequences no more than a few seconds in length, which together form mini-dramas. Stern describes one aspect of human experience as the experience of vitality. Forms of vitality "...emerges from the theoretically separate experiences of movement, force, time, space, and intention" (Stern, 2010, p. 5). Forms of vitality are "how" rather than the "what" in felt experiences and specific kinds of experience are created through dynamic forms of vitality. Movement and direction are important attributes of vitality dynamics. Not only the body moving but also one's mind, one's thoughts, that can move in time through memories, in relation to sensations, for example musical flow or dance movements. According to Stern, "dynamic forms of vitality are part of episodic memories and give life to the narratives we create about our lives." (Stern, 2010, p. 11) and they serve as "the most fundamental

of all felt experiences" (Stern, 2010, p. 8) when dealing with one's own movements and those of others. Stern mentions arts and music as particularly interesting in that they are preoccupied with shaping timing and intensity of arousal. Music allows us to show written dynamics, or dynamic forms, through our bodies by for example dancing but also by playing an instrument, hence using our bodies. Stern states that the arts have been occupied with the notion of "aliveness and vitality" (p. 89), as it is inherent for human expression. "The arts have paid far more attention to this aspect of experience than has psychology" (Stern, 2010, p. 89). The concepts of play, the present moment, forms of vitality are psychological phenomena, theories that are unknown to most musicians. But if the arts i. e. music, are perfect examples of Sterns concepts of vitality, how can musicians use these concepts to develop a better sense of performing, a better present moment for their own psychological understanding of their practice?

Leech-Wilkinson (2018) outlines a thorough adaptation of Stern's forms of vitality and present moment to musical expression and action. He finds that the map and curves, which are used by Stern to describe moments of changing intensity of feelings, are possible to use in the mapping of a musical action.

> Similarly, the curves Stern uses to represent these feeling shapes could equally well be mapping of a phrase, or melody, or loudnesses, texture, rhythm, or also qualities like expectedness, complexity, mood, character, edginess, tension, all adding up in complex ways to give a sense of shape. This itself emphasizes how directly the musical features (contour, loudness, speed) model the qualitative (mood, tension and so on). (Leech-Wilkinson, 2018, p. 366)

The key feature of present moments is that they are shared, and that in therapy analyst and analysand can understand each other. Leech-Wilkinson draws on this sharedness, stating that it could be true also for the interaction that takes place between listener and performer.

A written musical phrase is always dependent; it cannot come alive without a person's imagination of the intention of the written music, and his or her experience of a present moment. Stern's present moment can be used not only in describing the progression, and experience of music as an objective interaction between past, present and future, but as a tool for musicians to understand their own psychological process during performing. Musicians can address these concepts by artistically expressing their psychological state on stage, by using works that highlight it, by using different concert formats, and by changing the way they communicate with the audience, and perhaps even more importantly what they communicate. But it is also possible to reflect, analyse and express play and present moment before concert performances on a regular basis,

preferably within a safe student group environment, much as is the case with other subjects in musical studies, such as theory and music history.

3.3.3 Projective Identification

Projective identification (PI) was first introduced by Melanie Klein (1946) but has since been used by many psychoanalysts and psychologists in their clinical work. PI is originally the description of a specific interaction between mother (external object) and child (as Klein focused primarily on the mother-infant relation). The child projects good or bad parts of itself into the mother and then identifies the mother with the projected feelings. The mother can also start acting according to the child's projection or contain the child's feelings, and "give them back" to the child in a more acceptable, "digested" form. The projective identification can be used therapeutically to alter the way a patient usually interacts and projects feelings, by giving back threatening and unwanted feelings in a re-internalized manner. During PI a person interjects or places feelings into other human beings, who in turn starts acting accordingly. A person who "receives" such feelings unconsciously starts to act, think and feel in line with what he or she has been "made into". The concept is close to projection but more advanced, and useful in therapeutic situations. A projection is when a person who feels angry starts to attribute anger to other persons who are not angry, simply to free themselves from the feeling. "Are you angry with me" in such a situation possibly means, "I am angry with you". In projective identification, a therapist may start to feel worried, sad and tired, despite not being so at the beginning of the therapy session, because the patient projects unwanted feelings into the other (the therapist). The therapist may here use the possibility of reflecting on what is happening in the room together with the patient and "return" something different to the patient. A new adapted form is reintroduced and at best accepted by the patient. However, it is important to point out that while this interpersonal phenomenon occurs between child and caregiver, it can also occur between any two humans, and is not restricted to therapeutic situations.

> In projective identification parts of the self and internal objects are split off and projected into the external object, which then becomes possessed by, controlled and identified with the projected parts. Projective identification has manifold aims: it may be directed toward the ideal object to avoid separation, or it may be directed toward the bad object to gain control of the source of danger. Various parts of the self may be projected, with various aims: bad parts of the self may be projected in order to get rid of them as well as to attack and destroy the object, good parts may be projected to avoid separation or to keep them safe from bad things inside or to improve the external object through a kind of primitive projective reparation. (Segal, pp. 27–28)

In an unusual interpretation of the concept, Loseff (2011) argues that projective identification may work not only between people but also between musician and musical work: "The music, in effect, has become invested with an unconsciously containing aspect of the interpreter, which s/he has unconsciously projected into the music, now relating to it (and feeling contained by it) as if by another person" (p. 56). In other words, music itself acts as a therapist by receiving unwanted, unaccepted parts of the musician, and then it comes back to the musician in a more acceptable form through interpretation. In therapy, a patients' negative thoughts, feelings and behaviour become more accessible and manageable through the therapist's intervention. The therapist tolerates and holds on to these intolerable and sometimes unbearable parts of the patient so that they become more acceptable. "Similarly, an interpreter who evacuates aspects of the self into the music may find those aspects to be developed and changed through musical resolution, along with musical ideas" (Losseff, 2011, p.57). The study of the musician as emotionally related to the work, and even emotionally dependent on the transformative power of the work, has yet to be explored. Losseff argues that it is clear that musicians invest large parts of themselves in music, and that music can have an empowerment effect on musicians, making them stronger and more resilient. She also points out that finding one-self in the musical material might be one of the most useful tools of musical interpretation.

3.4 Music Performance Anxiety

Music performance anxiety (MPA) is a great challenge for performing artists within all musical genres, and especially in western classical music (Papageorgi, Creech and Welch, 2013); it has been researched since the early 1970's (Goren, 2014). Kenny (2011b) defines MPA as a combination of affective, cognitive, somatic, and behavioural symptoms and observes how it "may occur in a range of performance settings but is usually more severe in settings involving high ego investment, evaluative threat (audience), and fear of failure. It affects musicians across the lifespan and is at least partially independent of years of training, practice, and level of musical accomplishment. It may or may not impair the quality of the musical performance" (p. 61). In a recent meta-study by Fernholtz et al. (2019) the prevalence of MPA in professional musicians was found to be between 16,5% and 60%; it also indicated that women are more affected by MPA than men, something which has been confirmed in other studies (Burin, & Osório, 2017, n.p.).

Musicians report three main causes for MPA: pressure from self, excessive arousal and inadequate preparation for performance. These issues are dealt with using different coping strategies such as increased amount of practicing, positive self-talk, relaxation methods, discussions, training in virtual reality environments, and the use of medication (Kenny, 2011a). All of these, with perhaps the exception of discussions, aim to handle, withstand and adapt to the situations and traditions of the classical performance culture, suggesting that psychological and medical science professionals seek to resolve psychological suffering by helping the performer to "meet the demands of an audience" (Williamon et al., 2014, n p).

Both pharmacological and nonpharmacological treatments are used to reduce MPA and two primary approaches within psychotherapy have emerged: management of physical tension and the management of maladaptive thoughts (Goren, p. 27, 2014). Following treatment guidelines on how to deal with anxiety, cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) has proven effective with psychoeducation, exposure, relaxation, applied relaxation, problem-solving, cognitive restructuring, and interpersonal psychotherapy. Other techniques include deep breathing exercises, yoga, meditation, Alexander technique, as well as bio- and neuro-feedback (Zhukov, 2019). A promising result on the effectiveness of Mindfulness is presented in a study by Diaz (2018), showing that participants who meditated at least weekly tended to report less MPA. However, many studies on the effectiveness of MPA treatments suffer from methodological weaknesses (Matei & Ginsborg, 2017). Interventions are conducted with small samples of musicians without prior screening of their MPA levels, often without control, and limited replication.

As early as the late 1980s, Steptoe suggested that the domains of career stress and stage fright are not independent. He also concluded that students must be informed of different ways of coping with stage fright. Finally, he asks from future research "...to define more precisely the cognitive strategies used by musicians who cope successfully with stage fright..." (1989, p. 10). Today, a substantial body of research has been established, investigating health issues amongst musicians, anxiety, mental skills and perception during performance (Williamon & Thompson, 2006; Clark & Williamon, 2011; Hoffman & Hanrahan, 2012; Clark, Lisboa & Williamon, 2014; Geeves, McIlwain, Sutton & Christensen, 2014; Kenny & Halls, 2018). A growing number of studies are concerned with how musicians can improve performance skills, and lower anxiety during performance, even through simulating performance (Williamon, Aufegger & Eiholzer, 2014).

Renée Fleming, Stephan Osborne and Vladimir Horowitz are well known examples of prominent musicians who have suffered from what is often referred to as stage fright (The Telegraph, 2014). Horowitz explains that exhaustion from touring was to blame

for his famous years off stage (Gruen, 1975). Martha Argerich is known for her performance anxiety, and says in her daughter's documentary about her that she does not "like it" and that "everything is too solemn" (The Guardian, 2015). She gives voice to the notion that "the concert-hall environment, itself an innovation of the nineteenth century, can be suggestive of a place of solemn, priestly ritual and, more recently, of sober, high-minded civic cultural responsibility" (Crispin & Östersjö, 2017, p. 291). Indeed, it seems, as expressed so candidly by Argerich, that it has not only an effect on the expressive properties of performance but also on the emotional reactions of the musician. Glenn Gould quit performing altogether in 1964 because of stage fright and because he did not like the lack of control in live performance, compared with the studio setting (Clarkson, 2010, p. 110). Another possible factor contributing to many of the stage-fright cases might have been trying to live up to impossible demands, an ideal brought on by Werktreue. The exposed artist is at hand as a servant to both music, composer, and in extension, the audience. "The genuine artist lives for the work, which he understands as the composer understood it and which he now performs. He does not make his personality count in any way. All his thoughts and actions are directed towards bringing into being all the wonderful, enchanting pictures and impressions the composer sealed in his work with magical power" (Goehr, 2012, pp. 1-2). Deliberately supressing one's personality could also be interpreted as not disturbing or interjecting the work with psychological issues and difficulties. In *Unbekanntes Blatt aus Endenicher Zeit*, and *Play always as if in the presence of a master*, the variations & fragments for piano and electronics, the dialogues between composer and performer, and between performer and the work, are direct contradictions to this point of view (Skoogh, in press, Piano visions, 2018, Skoogh & Olofsson, 2020).

As noted above, Hunter & Broad (2017) suggest that the particular culture of western classical music (WCM) has built-in values and issues that negatively affect musicians. Therefore, research questions and methods concerning classical musicians and MPA need to be deepened, involving musicians themselves in interdisciplinary projects. Researchers interested in MPA must be aware of other possible influences on the condition. The labelling of classical music as art and/or entertainment with specific demands and commercial value is highly likely to affect individual musicians and their psychological well-being during performance. Musicians must be involved in the development of methods to overcome MPA, perhaps by critically examining the concert culture itself (Zhukov, 2019). They could play a vital part in the wider development of ideas and concepts that WCM is in desperate need of. "There is an urgent need for an understanding of what (classical) music may be and what it may potentially do." (Johnson, 2002, p. 31) To paraphrase, researchers and musicians must ask what music psychologically does to musicians when performing. This could

contribute to the development of musical values, and other values, within WCM and a "willingness to grapple with fundamental questions about music" (Johnson, 2002, p. 32).

3.4.1 Music Performance Anxiety amongst classical pianists

Few pianists have approached and documented the negative experiences of performing. Neuhaus touches on the subject in "The art of piano playing" (1993) in the chapter on concertizing, but the focus here is on how to master the anxiety and thereby optimize the performance. He identifies the reason for anxiety in the notion that the audience, which has come to listen, must be presented with something important that is "above ordinary experiences, thoughts and feelings" (p. 227). He also adds that stage fright is something "necessary"; without feeling it, one is not a real artist. Gerig's book *Famous Pianists & Their Technique* (1990) is 560 pages long, but contains no section, or even mention, of possible psychological influences on technical issues when performing. The biographies and books on and by prominent pianists are many, but few seem to deal with the pressure of performing. An unusual book in this respect, by pianist and teacher Walter Ponce (2019), focuses on piano pedagogy with the revealing title *The Tyranny of Tradition in Piano Teaching: A Critical History from Clementi to the Present.* The author brings insight to the many negative aspects of piano education and performing.

> A sterile hygienic but dull performance is valued more than a great performance with a few mistakes. After years of this kind of indoctrination just one wrong note or a small memory lapse engenders such anxiety that playing piano is no longer an enjoyable experience; it becomes an endeavour to avoid blunders or slip-ups of any kind and at all costs. (Ponce, 2019, p. 152)

In a recent depiction of the performance ideals to which modern pianists must comply, Marc-André Hamelin describes the cancellation of a live broadcast of the Liszt Sonata with "the crushing weight of possible scrutinizing comparisons" (Schweitzer, 2015, n.p.). According to Schweitzer (2015) the question of who is worthy to perform is ubiquitous in the musical community:

> Even if a musician feels 'ready' to publicly perform a particular work, the player's life experience, musical maturity, empathy and technique are still no guarantees of a truly communicative performance. Other musicians may have the innate, unteachable ability to elevate a performance from merely pleasing to sublime but lack confidence. (Schweitzer, 2015, n.p.)

Indeed, the perfect pianist does not exist, but the personal doubts that pianists draw out of their social and cultural context are manifold. Perhaps the time has come for practitioners to speak out and act against these conditions.

3.4.2 Studies on MPA amongst classical pianists

Even if there is little written by pianists and musicians themselves on the difficulties of performing, there are a number of research studies about musicians and their experience of performance. Many of these deal with performance anxiety and the evaluation of therapies (Yoshie, Kudo & Ohtsuki, 2009, Kendrick, Craig, Lawson, & Davidson, 1982, Fernholz, Mumm, Plag, Noeres, Rotter, Willich, Ströhle, Berghöfer & Schmidt, 2019). Other studies deal with, for example, memorization (Aiello, 2001; Chaffin & Imreh, 2002; Williamon & Valentine, 2002), fingerings in Czerny etudes (Sloboda, Clarke, Parncutt, & Raekallio, 1998) or the influence of an audience on performers (Moelants, Demey, Grachten, Wu, & Leman, 2012).

It is notable that, despite the fact that many hundreds of professional pianists graduate each year worldwide, there are no larger studies on the prevalence of MPA amongst classical pianists. I will, in the following, provide a brief review on studies that have been conducted with, and that are relevant to, professional classical pianists.

Yoshie, Kudo, Murakoshi & Ohtsuki (2008) examined the effects of psychological stress, as manipulated by performance evaluation, on the cognitive, physiological, and behavioural components of music performance anxiety (MPA) and performance quality. Twelve skilled pianists participated in the study and amongst their findings was a higher level of concordance among the three MPA components in pianists with high trait anxiety than in those with low trait anxiety, and that EMG (electromyography) activity of arm and shoulder muscles and the co-contraction activity of antagonist muscles in the forearm and upper arm were heightened in conjunction with elevated anxiety. It is important for pianists to be aware of these findings and the authors recommend that musicians with high trait anxiety should "...try to divert their attention away from the physiological or behavioural responses and to concentrate on music itself to prevent subjective state anxiety from growing." (p.132)

A study by Nubé (1994) investigated the effect of beta blockers on the technical performance itself, measured by the intensity of attack and their ability to remain within rhythm. The pianists' performances were evaluated on the timing of the attack, dynamics in the melodic line, and on the total sound in Mozart's Sonata for piano K. 284, the first 12 bars of the development section. The subjects consisted of five professional pianists. Surprisingly enough an electrical piano was used, an instrument

rarely, if ever, used by classical pianists. The results showed "...some correlation between the use of the drug and an increase of individual inaccuracies in timing. (Nubé, 1994, p. 84).

Bannai, Imanishi and Oishi (2018) examined the differences of music performance anxiety (MPA) before a performance, and psychophysiological responses (agari responses) during the performance between amateur and professional piano players in two conditions, with and without an audience. This study has an even lower sample with only two participating female pianists selected from the following criteria: award-winning pianists, those who had graduated from university majoring in music, and those who had performed in concerts at least once a year as a professional pianist. One of the results showed that the "...LF / HF ratio under no audience condition of amateur players was higher than that of professional players, but that the ratio under audience-presence condition of amateur players was lower than that of professional players. These results indicate the possibility that the ratio of professional players was affected by the audience more largely" (Bannai et al., 2018). As noted by the authors of the study, there were difficulties in obtaining the cooperation of professional pianists.

Kim (2005) examined the effect of Music Therapy Improvisation and Desensitization Protocol (MTIDP) on ameliorating stress associated with music performance anxiety in female college pianists. A number of six pianists volunteered to take part in this study, and results suggested that the participants experienced less anxiety following the test. The authors concluded that the method is an alternative to medical treatment.

There are detailed studies focusing on technical deficiency caused by psychological stress. The study by Kotani & Shinichi (2018) is one example, employing advanced measuring of heart rate, MIDI information (defining the timing error as the temporal gap between two successive keypresses), and the use of sensors embedded in a right-handed custom-made cyberglove. The piece used for the study was the F major etude by Frédéric François Chopin, Op.10, No.8, employing only the right hand (the first fourteen bars). There are many special features of this research study. For example, using only the right hand omits the melody part located in the left hand, thus losing a significant musical component of those fourteen bars and the piece as a whole. The piece was chosen because it is "technically challenging enough to elicit anxiety for many pianists...and second because it requires high timing precision of the keystrokes during fast tempo performance with little effects of emotional and aesthetic expression" (Kotani & Shinichi, 2018, p. 440). The statement on anxiety connected to the work has no reference whatsoever; it would have been interesting and important to understand where this evaluation came from. The study provides detailed information on how state anxiety alters the organization of finger movements, resulting in the degrading of timing precision in piano performance in very specific laboratory

conditions. The authors conclude that the study brings new knowledge to the mechanisms underlying loss of motor dexterity under pressure.

 "Skilled performance, in many situations, exposes an individual to psychological stress and fear, thus triggering state anxiety and compromising motor dexterity" (Kotani & Shinichi, 2018, p.439). But to give an example on how artistic research can inform neurophysiological research, it would be vital to turn that statement around. That is, state anxiety, resulting in compromised motor dexterity due to psychological stress and fear, suggest that the concept of skilled performances needs to be addressed. The method used in the study includes playing an etude by Chopin from a merely technical perspective, with a fixed tempo, with a specified dynamic, and with the sole aim of playing fourteen bars with the right hand "correctly". By doing so one loses a large part of the etude's artistic value, and the possibilities to express an array of tempi, dynamics and phrasing. This increases the risk of reducing not only the composition *per se* but also the performer's possibilities to express anything at all, to an "underlying loss of motor dexterity under pressure." (p.439). Furthermore, this could affect the pianist's psychological motivation, which in turn could deteriorate the sense of control. It should come as no revelation to any research field within music that one of the great motivations of performing is the need to communicate and express a personal interpretation. Therefore, the aim of the study is an interesting and somewhat surprising testimony on the very attitudes and detailed research questions that are the focus of the research community.

3.4.3 Summary

The scoping review of the few existing studies presented above gives information on what is known about MPA amongst adult, advanced or highly skilled classical pianists. It shows that the focus on MPA is often made from an individual standpoint, examining mainly physiological measurements and therapeutic interventions. The studies were conducted on pianists by researchers, in laboratory settings or in settings of the pianists' normal habitats, such as in concerts or exams. Often, research questions are formulated by psychologists and researchers in other fields, who are devoted to music and sometimes amateur musicians themselves. This kind of traditional research explores and goes alongside existing traditions and performing situations, but does not question them. This thesis presents a pianist's look at the difficulties of performing from an inside perspective; it looks at how MPA can be addressed in real performance situations to better understand its relation to the work, and to western classical music culture.

3.4.4 MPA and Artistic Research

> The role of the artistic researcher is not to describe his or her work, nor to interpret the work, but rather to recognise and map the ruptures and movements that are the work of art in a way not necessarily open to others. The artist-as-researcher offers a particular and unique perspective on the work of art from inside-out as well as outside-in. (Faculty of Fine arts and Music, The University of Melbourne, 2018)

Artistic research has been a research field for almost three decades, where knowledge production stems from artistic practices and the study of creative and performative processes. However, a clear-cut definition is hard to find and the field has struggled to describe itself when situated amongst other sciences (Biggs & Karlsson, 2010, Borgdorff, 2012).

> In discussing artistic research as a form of knowledge production, I begin by tentatively describing this type of research – in terms of subject, method, context, and outcome – as research in and through art practice. Embedded in artistic and academic contexts, artistic research seeks to convey and communicate content that is enclosed in aesthetic experiences, enacted in creative practices, and embodied in artistic products. (Borgdorff, 2012, p. 144)

There are, at the time of writing, no other Artistic research projects investigating MPA. However, some projects do look at other performing aspects. Catherine Laws's project *Player Piano* explores the complex make-up of the performing self and the performer's different creative personae, the relationship to the piano and its history, and the embodied sense of self at the instrument (Laws, 2014). Gabija Rimkutė's project emphasises the interpretative aspect of analysed music with the aim to raise and formulate major difficulties encountered by pianists wishing to perform religious works of music. Rimkutė (2020) relies on her personal experience as a performer. "In what ways can a musician adjust his or her performance approach by taking into account the characteristics of a specific type of venue?" is a research question by Gregor Desman (Desman, 2017). The project pinpoints the uniqueness of each performance, such as the performer's physical and psychological condition, connection to repertoire and the conditions presented by a given venue.

The projects mentioned above are not designed to investigate MPA, but they are examples on how artistic research addresses performance-related issues and as such can be used as a point of departure when planning interdisciplinary research projects. Other researchers within the field of Artistic Research could follow up on studies in psychology and neurophysiology and collaborate with researchers in these fields, investigating, for example, the conceptualisation of MPA, how to incorporate artistic

expression in scientific studies, and the finding of successful coping strategies. The research questions and methods could be created in collaboration with pianists (or, of course, other musicians), addressing and developing performance in a broader context. This artistically-driven perspective could lead the way to the psychology of performance being a specific subject at music education institutions. At the Malmö Academy of Music, psychology of performance courses are included in the Masters programme through the 'Performance Centre'. The centre introduces psychological methods and knowledge that exist within performance, music psychology, artistic research and sports psychology (Malmö Academy of Music, 2020).

3.5 Performance Values

Performance Values (PVs) are values that can be identified as recurring, underlying values when conceptualising or preparing performances, and even during performance itself. They are often contradictory and complex, as exemplified in the artistic projects of this thesis, and they stem from a wider performance and interpretation culture, specific to western classical music. PVs described in this thesis are connected to difficulties dealing with perfectionism and music performance anxiety, but positive PVs could very well be mapped out in future projects. The concept of PVs is very close to what Leech-Wilkinson (2020) refers to as naturalised beliefs. He also points out that western classical music (WCM) is one of the most hierarchical systems in music, which he describes as a hotbed for these beliefs. He further observes how many of these beliefs are "unnecessary, prohibiting behaviours that no one would find problematic if they'd not been brought up to believe they should, and limiting the possible experiences that performances of scores could generate" (Leech-Wilkinson, 2020, n p).

PVs can also be understood as values dependent on Hunter and Broads definition of "core ideologies" (2017, p. 253). PVs can be found when exploring how "classical musicians think about what they are doing" (Hunter & Broad, 2017, p. 254). PVs can also be affected by the fixed works preserved in scores and the performer's understanding of the many different processes involved when performing western classical music. As an example, one important PVs observed during this research, is the notion of the perfect performance, discussed by Skoogh & Frisk (2019). My suggestion is that PVs should be considered as a supportive term for musicians, not only as passive values waiting to be identified and described. They must always be connected to a wider system of values belonging to the specific music culture and as a support for musicians

to be able to relate their own, personal experiences with particular features pertaining to classical music.

> As exemplified in this article one possibility for addressing performance values through artistic practice is to describe experienced failures, compare them to the listeners' experience, and relate oneself as an artist as a whole and connected to a system of values. This reappraisal process is a psychological openness that may be a valuable tool for musicians. Departing from their own practical experiences classical musicians can gain insights, for example, by connecting it to other fields in arts and science, on how the outside forces of their practice influences them. (Skoogh & Frisk, 2019, n.p.)

I have addressed my PVs both off-stage and on-stage and in relation to the iconic position of the work in western classical music. I have found that they dictate the extent I can fail in performing highly esteemed repertoire, and how, or even if, I can be open about it (Frisk & Skoogh, 2019). They influence many artistic actions and behaviours on stage: for example, if and how I can interact with an audience, and how I can interact with the composer or transform a composition (Skoogh, in press, in press). Further, they are values that I probably share with other musicians and even the audience, but it is still important to define them as my individual or personal values, so that they are possible to address and challenge within my own, specific practice.

The diversity of projects included in this thesis has provided me with information about how I react and think about myself as a performer, and what values accompany me on the stage in different settings (see the next section). The PVs are extrapolated from the emerging themes in the projects and are connected to the research questions: how can the psychological impact of current performance culture be understood and which factors have an emotional effect on my performance.

Discovering personal values about performance comes close to assessing one's performance, but does not primarily aim at enhancing performance or achieving a higher degree of success. Assessing performance is mostly done vicariously by understanding how performances are perceived and evaluated by others. Williamon adapted the Johari window as a model for musicians to understand and enhance their own performance assessment. Originally it was a model of awareness of behaviour and motivation (Luft, 1969), used primarily in psychodynamic therapy, but has also been used in other areas (Afolabi, 1993, Solé, 1997). The model proposes that, when interacting with others, awareness can be divided into four areas:

- public area: an individual will be aware of some behaviours and motivations that are also noticeable to others.

- blind area: some behaviours and motivations will be inaccessible to the individual but accessible to others (i.e., this is a 'blind spot' for the individual).

- secret area: the individual will hide certain motivations and behaviours, and therefore this is the secret part of the model.

- hidden area: there is a part of behaviour and motivation of which neither the individual, nor others, are aware (McPherson & Schubert, 2004, p.76)

	Known to performer	(Typically) not known to performer
Known to adjudicator	**Public area** Musical value • Technique • Interpretation Extramusical Evaluator characterstics • Feedback about performance • Pre-existing relationship between adjudicator and performer • Adjudicator history of assessing the same player	**Blind area** Extramusical Performer related • Attractiveness and flair • Movement Context related • Communication within the ensemble • Acoustics of performance space • Audience support Evaluator characteristics • Expertise and training, of adjudicator • Using a score
(Typically) not known to adjudicator	**Secret area** Extramusical Performer related • Effort and preparation • Cognitive mediational processes (e.g. attributions, anxiety, self-confidence, self-efficacy, metacognition, and self regulation) • Luck and chance events • Coping strategies • Habits and superstitions • Consistency of ability outside the judged performance	**Hidden area** Extramusical Performer related • Variance from expressive norm Evaluator characteristics • Mood and personality of adjudicator • General adjudication history (e.g. "a hard marker," likes expressive playing) • First Impressions Halo effects Nonmusical • Stereotyping: Subconscious bias according to race, gender, etc. • Order of player (1st, 5th, etc.) Measurement error

Fig 3 The Johari Window, adapted for musical performance assessment by McPherson and Schubert (2004, p. 76).

The idea of the Johari Window is that performers should strive to reduce the area of the right quadrants of the window, and widen the left quadrants. In this way, musicians can have a better chance of enhancing their performance if they know as much about their performance-controlling factors as possible.

PVs could be placed in the areas not known to the performer, in particular the Hidden area. They are, as mentioned before, to be investigated by musicians as a tool of understanding emotional and artistic processes but should not be considered a performance enhancing tool. Rather, an explorative and expressive mapping of important and sometimes conflicting values that musicians (and perhaps all artists) have in relation to, for example, the work and the performance culture.

Some of the strongest performance values observed in the research projects in this thesis is the notion that the western classical music tradition comes with the demand of perfect performances, and little freedom relating to interpretation and how to perform on stage. As described in the Section on Werktreue, this entails the notion that the musical work has a pre-defined essential meaning, and that it is the performer's obligation to express this essence, with little or no room for playful interaction with the musical material or the performance situation.

Artistic projects

The practice-based projects included in this thesis are: two dance productions (2014, 2015), a lieder recital project (2014), my experience performing in the performance simulator at the Royal College of Music in London (2016), two piano concerto performances (2018), two commissioned pieces by composers Kent Olofsson and Staffan Storm (2018-19), and a project that revolves around the piano music of Robert Schumann, (documented as a concert performance, 2018, further discussed in an audio paper, (Olofsson & Skoogh, 2020), and as CD production on Daphne Records (Skoogh, 2020). In this chapter I will give a separate description of each of these projects. Particular focus will also be given to how thematic findings from the early projects (the *Dance Productions*, the *Lied Project* and the *Performance Simulator*) were used to analyse, create and design the later projects (the *Piano Concerto Performances* and the *Commissioned Pieces*).

4.1 Dance productions

In 2014 and 2015 I participated in two dance productions produced by the dance company Skånes Dansteater (The Dance Company of Southern Sweden). The first one, *Double Take* by Kenneth Kvarnström featured Magnus Lindberg's *Arena for chamber orchestra*, and the second movement of Beethoven's third piano concerto, op.37 (1804/1988). I performed on stage, with the dancers in front of the piano. When incorporated into a dance production in this manner, with my own performance being as a featured soloist in a piano concerto, my immediate observation was how I felt less exposed than when performing on a concert stage. While I was still on a stage, the situation was much more focussed on the artistic interaction—not only with the conductor (who I could hardly see) and the orchestra, but also with the dancers—and I had no visual contact with the audience.

The experience of performing with dancers in *Double Take*—and appearing on stage in a choreographed production—shifted my perception of the stage as a performance space. The ways in which a choreographer or dancer relates to physical space is conceptually very different to that of a musician, who is normally not trained to relate the body to a performance space in an intentional manner.

The second production, *Rikud*, was performed for the first time in Sweden in 2015. It was choreographed by Liat Dror and Nir Ben Gal, who describe the piece in the following manner: "*Rikud* explores the vibrating border between preparation and performance, between being on or off stage, and unites dancers and musicians in a playful rite" (Skånes Dansteater, 2015). The third movement, the Scherzo of the Shostakovitch piano quintet, was performed twice on stage in every performance, with the dancers moving around the musicians.

Throughout the rehearsals with both choreographers, the musical scores had an important role, but the choreographers approach to the performances was a novel experience for me. The relationship between all performers (dancers and musicians), and their relation to the performance space, as well as a specific focus on playfulness in the exploration of all of these relations, were central. Both productions also introduced approaches to staged performance that were new to me, through their explicit experimentation, and how they sought to vary the expression for each performance. A total of seventeen performances were made. Such a high number of performances is uncommon in both chamber music and orchestral performances, and had in itself an impact on my experience of playing the music. It allowed me not to have to focus on *one* single very important performance, as I normally would. Instead, I was able to experience a gradual progression through a series of performances, with the repeated performances allowing for a certain kind of experimentation each time we went on stage.

Fig. 4 Photo from Double Take, Malmö Opera, 2014, Photo by: Mats Bäcker

4.1.1 *Double Take*

Kenneth Kvarnström's *Double Take* is a performance in two acts. The first act includes six dancers and one musician. The second act includes 16 dancers and a small orchestra of 30 musicians performing, amongst other works, Magnus Lindberg's *Arena* and the second movement of Beethoven's third piano concerto, op. 37. I performed in these two pieces, as the soloist in the concerto, and my interactions with the choreographer and the dancers became an important experience. The following section presents email conversations with the choreographer, but also draws on my own reflections on the experience.

> Kvarnström's choreography, built around a trio of dancers, holds both complex and surprising elements. When on stage, with dancers performing alongside me, I became aware of my own relation to the second movement of Beethoven's third piano concerto. The piano opens the movement with a choral-like, noble theme in E major, contrasting with the darkness and drama of the c minor in the first movement. It's so simple that

you can play this passage a prima vista, but the exposure, the loneliness and the wish to give it the importance that I feel it needs, makes it very difficult to play.

There are few examples in the classical repertoire of the openings of second movements where the balance between the chords, the dynamics (pp), the melody and the phrasing is so very difficult to achieve. In addition to this is the quest to find the "right" tempo, when moving just a few steps on the metronome results in the chorale feeling too fast or too slow. This was therefore a sensitive moment in the interaction between music and dance. When looking for a tempo suitable for the choreography, Kvarnström observed how "it became clear that a fragile sound was more interesting than a more florid expression. The dance demanded lightness. Then the piano entered" (Kvarnström, 2016, personal communication). Kvarnström continues: "…To me it is important that the movement has its own musicality, that it breathes and feels good and that it's dynamic to the body. …"

> I was struck by how Kvarnström discussed tempo with body movement as a reference. This perspective is rarely addressed in piano education, nor in a rehearsal with professional musicians. In the case of Beethoven, tempo is often discussed with reference to Czerny's metronome tempi, which are commonly referred to as the correct ones (Noorduin, 2016, pp. 39-45). Such sources, which I have followed with complete trust and conviction over the years, build on the assumption that there is a "Werktreue tempo", which if not adhered to will cause the interpretation to suffer. Joining the dancers in this exploration of movement as a reference for the tempi became a new way for me to approach the shaping of this music.

Kvarnström further writes of how dancers are sensitive to the tempo in choreography. Conductors usually claim that they keep the same tempi across rehearsals, but dancers, who have been rehearsing with audio recordings, have disciplining their bodies to these exact repetitions of every duration, and notice even the smallest differences. Kvarnström notes how, when the rehearsals with pre-recorded music were over, "then came the adaptation…when we met with the orchestra, …how you wanted to play and how we had rehearsed. Who followed who?" (Kvarnström, personal communication, 2016).

> When I play, holding a note, waiting for a phrase, it is not something situated in a body movement; perhaps as an imitation of singing, but not to a movement. Relating to movement and to the body is a communicative aspect that is not overly used in the performance tradition of piano concertos by Beethoven. It had an impact on my solo part in the concerto because my performance was not about having a "big sound". Instead, it was noticed as having a tempo in accordance with the dancers, as being a part of something that I felt was new to me as a soloist. Now, I was not in focus.

Kvarnström discusses how far individual license can be stretched in an interpretation of the music by Beethoven. And further, which one of us has precedence in taking such interpretative decisions: Beethoven, Kenneth, me or the dancers? Kvarnström continues to state that in a concert version there is a direct contact between pianist and audience. But when dancers and choreography are added, am I as a soloist in contact with the audience in the same way?

> Beethoven did not care for some choreographer (why would anyone dance to this piece), which means he has priority. He decides. Then things develop and a choreographer comes into the picture and wants to put choreography to his music… How much can one change and displace the music without losing the core of the music? The same goes for the musical interpretation of Beethoven, that is your interpretation. And to Beethoven we add these two, your and mine interpretation of something. Where do we meet? Who has a priority….That is what is fantastic...and that one should perhaps work a little more with. (Kvarnström, personal communication, 2016)

Kvarnström also asked me direct questions, some of which I noted with particular interest. I identified them as having a bearing on how I could conceptualize possible future experimentation to challenge my musical practice: "The question one can ask is how did you perceive your position? Could you be the one leading or were you forced to wait? What was your role when the dance came into the picture?" (Kvarnström, 2016, personal communication).

> Usually, when performing as a soloist with orchestra, I am always in the foreground, always expected to lead and stand out thematically, visually and even dynamically. Being placed behind the dancers, away from the audience I am no longer the only focus, almost the opposite. What I produce artistically is only heard, not seen; or rather, I am not seen. The dancers act on my performance and the choice of tempi affects not only the resulting music but also sets the frame for their performance of the choreography. Kvarnström reminded us during rehearsal that Beethoven never intended dancing to be a part of this piano concerto. This is probably true, but does it mean that, when performed as part of a choreographed work, I am no longer the soloist? Can a choreographer alter the identity of the musical work by adding movement? Why does this new interaction make me feel less exposed, less anxious and more open to exploring variations in the different performances?

Choreographer Mark Morris is known for his double identity as both musician and choreographer, and for his emphasis on music and the relation to live musicians in his works. According to biographer Stephanie Jordan (2015), Morris has helped musicians access the physical dimension of music. He has also elaborated and developed modern dance by using comments made by participating musicians and used extensive analyses

of musical works. In similar ways, Kvarnström helped me understand new dimensions of Beethoven, through the actual performances *per se*, but also by sharing his views with me, and asking me questions not asked in the normal context of piano concerto performance.

4.1.2 Themes

My analysis of the videos from the performances is built on stimulated recall sessions that were carried out after the final performances. I additionally watched a video where Kvarnström describes his work (Skånes Dansteater, 2014) and wrote down key aspects of his presentation. Finally, I also returned to our email conversations from the 18th and 19th of December 2016, which have been quoted in the section above. As noted above, for Kvarnström the "movement has its own musicality" and it was important that "it breathes and feels good". Until and during the performances it was an open question for him not to be quite certain about "who followed who?" I found it fascinating that he could make it a working model to leave open who would lead: "Where do we meet? Who has a priority....That is what is fantastic...and that one should perhaps work a little more with." Kvarnström also asked me a key question that I tried to answer: "What was your role when the dance came into the picture?"

I found the following central themes: the soloist role as shared with the dancers; music as related to movement; tempi related to breathing and a "good feeling". My reactions to Kvarnström's way of reflecting on the process were at first: there is an appropriate tempo for this movement, I am quite sure; the soloist must lead; must be outstanding. The answer to his last question was simply that this was a new role for me: experiencing more freedom from conventional demands regarding tempo restrictions and sound production, and, on a more overarching level, the fidelity to the score; not being the focus of attention, but instead part of a performance where I was not the only soloist; not focusing on the interpretation of Beethoven's score, and the possible best version of the piece – these were all new to me.

I also reviewed the video recordings made by Malmö Opera, mainly from two of the performances of *Double Take* in October of 2014, and compared them with a video recording from a performance of the same Beethoven concerto two years later, with the Gävle Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Leif Segerstam.

During rehearsals in this latter performance, I realised that for me, the concerto had undergone some kind of transformation. My perception of the tempo was not related any more to the music, but to an inner picture of the dancers, the choreography, to a sense of a collective interpretation. During the concert performance this kept me busy when playing, so that there was no room for worrying about the "right way" to play.

I focused particularly on the beginning of the second movement, as it is a difficult and sensitive opening. I made annotations in the score, which eventually allowed me to compare the coding of the two performances (see Fig. 5). I found it appropriate to use the score for the annotations, since taking notes and marking the score is also how I would approach the piece when studying for a performance. This demonstrates how the work itself, the actual printed score, is at the centre of my practice.

Fig. 5 Introduction of the slow movement, Beethoven's third piano concerto (1804/1988, p. 48)

The first bars are very much a soloistic entrance, but when listening to and bringing back the feeling of performing with the Gävle Symphony Orchestra, they did not feel as isolated and exposed as how I usually perceive them. I observed that the themes drawn from my conversations with Kvarnström about the soloist role (as a new identity, less exposed, as the dancers were also soloists), and the new way of experiencing music related to movement (tempi as related to breathing and feeling with the dancers), made me play

in a more relaxed way and made me feel less anxious about the work. Also notable was the visual contact with the dancers, and, perhaps most of all, the mental experience of being a part of a performance, "musicking" with Beethoven rather than being at the naked centre of attention. To my surprise, I noted that this made me perform better from a purely technical perspective of motor control.

This observation made me look further into some of the research regarding technical control in musicians. In the next section I will summarize one study that particularly caught my attention, and relate it to the thematic findings in the production with Kvarnström.

4.1.3 Themes in relation to neurological research

The study of central neural mechanisms relating to the effect of social evaluation on motor performances, carried out by Yoshie et al. (2016) showed that we experience higher subjective anxiety and increase our grip force output during social evaluation. This can influence motor performance either positively or negatively depending on what kind of motor task is at hand. The action-observation network (AON) functions at its best when movements of the self and others are identical. The study also identified a novel pattern of response within the AON, the posterior superior temporal sulcus activation and the inferior parietal cortex deactivation: "When one is engaged in movements that are independent from those of others, the brain must suppress somatosensory prediction errors of the AON that would otherwise cause one to automatically mimic others…" (Yoshie et al, 2016, n.p.). When not being the centre of attention, but still being a very important player in a performance, a different experience emerges from being a part of a performative, artistic interpretation which evades the kind of social evaluation that has always been an important part of classical piano performance. What kind of artistic response, or staging, could I make of the results in the study made by Yoshie et al. (2016)? Kvarnström asked me how I perceived my position on-stage, which led me to reflect specifically on the social interactions with co-performers and also the social evaluation of the audience. The evaluation of co-performers is different from that of an audience, and I was engaged in movements that were dependent on those of others in a responsive way. I do not consider the audience responsive in the same way, as they are only evaluating. In the end I experienced a greater degree of performative freedom than in my usual performances as a soloist in the concert hall. In *Double Take* I simply had to focus on mimicking others, and that became a playful mimicking. This had a liberating effect on my performance, as I observed in the stimulated recall sessions of my performances of the Beethoven concerto with the Gävle Symphony orchestra in 2017 (Gävle symfoniorkester generalprogram,

2017). The relationship and resonance between my experience of the Kvarnström production (specifically my liberation through the transformation of the experience of the performance situation) and the findings in Yoshie's study, was something that I wanted to try to use further on, in order to challenge my practice through further exploration in future experimental artistic projects.

4.1.4 *Rikud* (2015)

Rikud ('dance' in Hebrew) was choreographed some 20 years ago for London Contemporary Dance Theatre and investigates the differences between performing and preparing to perform. How can this divide, perhaps imagined, be abridged? The performance starts with the dancers performing movement without music. The lights go down as is customary in the theatre and the musicians enter the stage "preparing" themselves in the dark with the help of the dancers. A pre-recorded voice announces the performance by placing it alongside political and social events at the time of the choreography. The stage is framed with lighting that creates a square on the floor. The tuning of the instruments commences, but no music is performed. The stage is lit and

dancers begin to move, gradually running and dancing. We as musicians observe. It is not until seventeen minutes into the performance that we start to play the scherzo from Shostakovich's Piano Quintet, op. 57, but now, the dancers do not engage in dancing or moving; instead they rest, drink water, and walk around us. Only one dancer moves in and around the borders of the highlighted square that forms the dancing stage. The music stops and again the dancers perform without music. Finally, music and movement are brought together. On stage we are instructed to walk in and act as if in rehearsal, and when we are playing the dancers sit and move around us in a rehearsal-like mode. Throughout most of the performance I had the opportunity to observe the dancers and let myself be inspired by them. The music itself was never the only focus, as it had been in 2005 when I recorded this piece on CD in 2007 but it was never "just" accompaniment either. This, as with *Double Take*, situated me differently on stage. The sharing of expression, the changeable positions between musicians and dancers, the discussion of, or experimentation with, the field in between performing and preparing to perform, again had a liberating impact on me.

Nir Ben Gal raises the question of whether musicians on stage are "dancers" or "players" in the performance. He continues:

> Are they just decoration that the eye should be ignored? Are they just to be heard and not to be shown to the public? In our work there were sections where musicians disappear and sections where they seem at the scene centre. And sections when they are equal dancers on stage. We tried to maintain the appearance of "respectable" and "classical" to not create resistance in the audience and allow old perceptions to merge with attempts to create something new. Humour always helps to change the form of proof fixed. So, we used a lot of humour... Of course, we broke all the "rules" possible on the stage: the dancers produce sound, the musicians appear as equal dancers, and sometimes there is just music without dance like that dance without music. (Ben Gal, personal communication, 2017)

As discussed by Hultqvist (2011), we here again find concern for the audience's demands, or that the audience might be offended or put up "resistance" because the performance was untraditional. If modern dance companies are aware of this, working with experimental and contemporary dance, how much must I, as a classical pianist, not be affected by this? Ben Gal also refers to the unwritten "rules" similar to those of classical music performances, as described in the *Lied project* in this text (see below). In preparation for my performance in *Rikud* I watched an interview with choreographer Nir Ben Gal and a familiar theme surfaced again, the concept of playfulness.

In my transcription of this video interview with Nir Ben Gal, he develops this concept:

> The audience is not always sitting in the audience watching. Sometimes it's sitting in the rehearsal room watching, sometimes it's sitting behind the stage seeing what it shouldn't see. So, we play with this.... We arrange our costumes, we take our sweat off. We do things that people usually don't see, but as we come on stage this is the movement that we will never do, it's not a nice movement, it's not proper thing to do this, and what happens is that we put those movements as part of the dance and we say, or we ask question about this, you can argue, this is a beautiful movement when I do this or when I take my sweat off, it is really touching, for me as a person who knows what it means after you work hard. The stage is a playground, it's not a serious place where you have to be on your best, …it should be a playground (Skånes Dansteater, 2015).

The sensitive shift between backstage and frontstage is discussed in the writings of Erwing Goffman (1956), who states that backstage behaviour can be interpreted as a sign of disrespect for others. Also, Nir Ben Gal acknowledges that "it is not a proper thing to do" (Ben Gal, 2015), but uses this conflict as an artistic expression, putting backstage on display.

It is a play with the internal world meeting the external, it is about imagining what the audience is thinking, it uses behind stage as the front stage. Initially I connected the experience of performing *Rikud* to several aspects of mentalization.

> Mentalization simply implies a focus on mental states in oneself and others, particularly in explanations of behaviour. That mental states influence behaviour is beyond question. Beliefs, wishes, feelings and thoughts, whether inside or outside our awareness, determine what we do. Mentalization is a mostly preconscious, imaginative mental activity. It is imaginative because we have to imagine what other people might be thinking or feeling. It lacks homogeneity because each person's history and capacity to imagine may lead them to different conclusions about the mental states of others. We may sometimes need to make the same kind of imaginative leap to understand our own experiences, particularly in relation to emotionally charged issues or irrational, inconclusive driven reactions. (Bateman & Fonagy, 2006, p. 1)

In my understanding, the choreography of *Rikud* can be understood as a play with the core features of mentalization, having the other person's mind in mind, as well as one's own. It made me understand how unaware I had been of this process, in particular in my regular concert performances. It also made me begin to think about what I could do to create the imaginative leap (as described in the quote above) needed to understand my experiences in concert performances, as these are emotionally charged situations.

4.1.5 Themes

The thematic analysis was carried out by reviewing the videos from selected performances, using stimulated recall. In addition, I watched a video interview with Nir Ben Gal taking notes of central concepts. Finally, I also collected email conversations with the choreographers. Nir Ben Gal and Liat Dror had also choreographed the themes: the boundaries between when a performance starts and the tension that surrounds it; what is allowed to be displayed for an audience. As discussed in Section 3.1 there is always a fear of somehow depriving the music "of some experiential truth if exposed to the 'wrong' sort of performance" (Butt, 2002, p. 55), and destroying the inner meaning of the work. I also compared my part in the interpretation of the Shostakovitch quintet from this production with the recording I had made several years ago. Of course, many things differed: the string quartet is different, and we had different tempi. However, what I tried to compare was my attitude towards the music: the focus of playing it correctly for the CD, compared with this project where I benefited from many performances and versions, making my interpretation much more varied. Again, using the score for my annotations was important, as it made my listening more precise when I could follow and trace small, but important differences, by reading the music. When watching and listening to the videos of rehearsals and performances of *Rikud*, another thing that became clear was that I had instructions to follow from the choreographer. There were instructions on how to enter the stage and when to play in relation to the dancers. I was also listening to the instructions that Ben Gal gave to the dancers, with a main focus of playfulness. During this analysis I found that I could benefit from adopting this theme and compare the particular stage performance settings and behaviour with a piano recital and concerto setting.

I saw Rikud as an artistic interpretation of basic mentalizing processes, but also as a play with the score between musicians, dancers and audience. Other emerging themes were the presentation, or rather problematization, of the boundaries between when a performance starts, the tension that surrounds this, and what I am allowed to display to an audience. The feeling of playfulness and joint action was very present and the sharing of a mutual experience was the core of this performance. As a musician I used the dancers' movements to play with the reality of the score, much like using someone else's mind to understand one's own during mentalizing. I noticed that this kind of collaboration, interpretation and expression is in some way an artistic mentalization process. This project, together with the insights of social interaction and positioning on-stage from the first dance project, sparked my interest in exploring playfulness as a possible "imaginative leap" (Bateman & Fonagy, 2006, p. 1). I found it necessary for understanding what can be changed in my perception of traditional western classical music performances.

4.2 Lied project (2014)

In 2014, soprano Sara Wilén and I set out to explore possible ways of deconstructing the concert rituals and built-in values of the lieder recital. Traditionally, such a recital is stripped of the dramaturgy, decor and acting that is part of the staged performance of opera and theatre. Mezzo-soprano Stephanie Blythe comments on the difference between a classical recital and opera performance in the following way: "In opera you have so many other ingredients making the experience for the performers and the audience. In a recital everything is incumbent upon you to make it come alive for the audience. When you are doing a recital, it's all you and the pianist, the composer, and the poet" (George & Mauro, 2015, n.p.). Soprano Kathleen Kim observes how "in a recital, you don't have costumes or acting onstage. It's all about the singing. It's you and the pianist and the music. You are naked. I think it's very hard because all the attention is on you. You have to be able to express and to do more. You don't have any help!" (George & Mauro, 2015, n. p.). The operatic tenor Jonas Kaufmann provides an argument for the usefulness of experimenting with this tradition, which he finds to be in a state of artistic decline:

> Actually, recitals are more conservative now than they used to be. We're still doing *Winterreise* and *Dichterliebe*. However, we know that, for example, Richard Strauss would improvise in song recitals. He was famous for adding all of his opera themes in between the songs before he would go on to the next one. Other pianists did the same thing. Have you noticed that many songs of famous Lied composers don't have an introduction? They just start right away, because one would sing the song, and the pianist would continue something in between that led into the next song. It was a much more relaxed event than it is now, where a recital follows a set format and is rather serious. You could try to recreate recitals like they used to do, but I am not sure whether the audience would accept it. (George & Mauro, 2015, n.p.)

As the quotes above indicate, the lieder recital is experienced by singers and musicians as a concert format defined by several unspoken rules, which the pianist and singer have little possibility of altering. Usually, musicians engage only in practise and rehearsal before a concert, which is of course the foundation of any performance. However, there is a strict cultural and institutional ideology in which the practice and preparation that takes place is seldom identified or acknowledged. This ideology, marked by a substantial amount of perfectionism, also applies to the very interpretation of the *work*, here illuminated by Pianist Gerald Moore's poetic language on Schubert's *Wandrers Nachtlied*, D. 768 :

Dynamically this little Vorspiel is all pianissimo but within the bounds of that pianissimo there must be a slight increase or swelling of tone and a subsequent reduction of tone. It is a curve—rising then falling; the smoothest of curves with one chord joined to the next. So restricted in range is it, so narrow the margin between your softest chord and your least soft chord that if you go one fraction over the limit at the top of your curve all is ruined. Each chord though related and joined to its neighbour is a different weight, differing by no more than a feather. You listen self-critically as you practise it. You experiment. You play it giving each chord a uniform and gentle pressure so that there is no rise and fall of tone—all pianissimo. You then try to give it that infinitesimal crescendo and diminuendo that is really wanted to give shape and meaning to the phrase: but it is out of proportion—you have overdone it—so you start again. Now you find that your chords are muddy, your pedalling is faulty, one chord trespasses on another's preserves instead of gently merging into it without blurring. You work at this. (Moore, 1966, 179–80, cited in Hunter & Broad, 2017, p. 262)

By looking at the above quotation by pianist Gerald Moore, Hunter and Broad have elegantly pinpointed a "threefold ideology of divining the composer's intention, minimizing the overt presence of the self, and working with abstract ideas" (2017, p. 261). By attributing his interpretation to something derived from the composer's intent, rather than describing how he as an interpreter makes decisions, Moore reinforces "tradition-based knowledge taken for granted" (Hultberg, 2008, p. 10). With the *Lied project* we wished to play with the forms of tradition-based knowledge which define the lieder recital today.

The project included *Frauenliebe und Leben*, op.42, by Robert Schumann and four songs by Richard Strauss: *Allerseelen*, op.10, no. 8; *Georgine*, op.10, no. 4; *Traum durch die Dämmerung*, op.29, no.1; *Cäcilie*, op.27, no. 2. In order to highlight the ideas of unspoken rules and demands, we used live video projection of the audience, the positioning of video screens, the juxtaposition of film material, and lighting. Our method of deconstructing the lieder performance grew out of our conversations, and involved lighting, three tv-screens, and the choreography of our movements on stage with the aim of altering our physical positions in the concert space. This was made possible by the technical facilities provided at the concert venue, the Inter Arts Centre (IAC), Malmö. Our aim was to create a wider understanding of what it is we want, and what we are allowed to do, as musicians on stage, including the way we position ourselves on stage and relate to the audience. In the first of several conversations during the planning of the concert, Sara and I wanted to question the authority of Werktreue, which remains a strong reference in lieder performance today. We looked at clips of famous singers on YouTube, which gave us ideas for the visual possibilities of the project by using video screens to project these clips. We both felt restrained by the strict rules, concerning both interpretation and stage performance, and we wanted to know

if we could change some of the most conservative parameters (as mentioned by Kaufmann) and unspoken rules.

4.2.1 A few sociological reflections

The existing sociological literature on how human behaviour is dependent on different fields is vast. I will however constrain my presentation to a few examples below, focussing on the perspectives that inspired me in the wish to deconstruct the lieder ceremony.

Drawing on Goffman's (1986) theory, Scarborough has identified key face-work strategies of musicians, suggesting that when "musicians' presentations are somehow 'wrong' for the moment, musicians choose from four face-work strategies— underscoring, substituting, deflecting, and neutralizing—in attempts to save face and perform an identity that is contextually appropriate" (Scarborough, 2012, p. 542). Since so little deviance is accepted in the rituals in the field of classical music, almost anything can be "wrong". This project had a number of unidentified objects, at least for the lieder recital tradition: the introduction videos, the projected live-filmed audience, and the use of us musicians as moving objects that could change position in the room. "As a result, it can happen that, in what might be called the Don Quixote effect, dispositions are out of line with the field and with the 'collective expectations' which are constitutive of its normality" (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 160). Practising deviance is a way of transforming the field, and in this case, questioning the conservative rules that regulate the lieder performance. But it was not easy. Originally, I had the intention of observing myself and the audience on the screen at the same time. This turned out to be very difficult in the performance situation, as I was still focused on the score. I felt that I was still in the pianistic role of a traditional lieder recital, unable to let go of this behaviour, so instead I focused on identifying themes that could be brought forward to my next projects.

Fig. 7 Photo from the preparations of the lied performance at the Inter Arts Centre in Malmö, Sweden.

Approximately 10 minutes before our performance started, the audience was let into the performance space to find three flat-screens, each showing an iconic singer and pianist. They each performed different recitals. The videos were juxtaposed, and shown simultaneously with sound.[14] The intention was to provide a live background to the demands of performing lieder repertoire in light of the many rules and constraints that tradition provides, and the measures for greatness embodied in recordings of prominent singers and pianists. The sound and the images aimed to create a surreal and ghostlike impression, and worked as a reminder of the rituals we reproduce. Sara started singing standing near the piano, where she "should" be according to tradition, but later she moved through the concert space (a small, intimate room) followed by the lighting. Although being a soprano, Sara sang in a lower register, which provided a barrier of its own to overcome. A dramatic culmination in the way we structured the performance was when the viewer's gaze was shifted around. I first turned the piano around in order to face the screen and thereby play with my back to the audience: a laborious task which a classical performer would avoid in a normal concert situation. Then, a video camera projected the audience and us from the front, live on a screen in front of us. The audience could see themselves and so could we.[15] Performing at the IAC, a mainly

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[14] The performance at IAC can be viewed at: https://youtu.be/RY19zzu91w8

[15] When the audience was filmed and directly projected on the screen, they could observe themselves watching the performance. The changed position of the piano made it more difficult for the audience to follow the pianist's hands and facial expression. Did the audience, in observing themselves, become less "passive recipients"? I could have made a questionnaire for the audience addressing these

experimental venue and not the traditional church or concert hall where recitals are normally given, also meant that the traditional classical music audience did not appear. There are therefore some issues concerning the criteria of autoethnographic contribution as discussed in Chapter 2: did our project, as suggested by Le Roux (2017), improve the practice; could it make a contribution to social change, when taking place so far away from the normal settings of lieder performance? Was there at all the wanted Don Quixote effect, the collective expectations as coined by Bourdieu (above) that our performance should have been more conservative? In her thesis, Wilén discusses the limitations of experimental settings in another project at the Inter Arts Centre, and the cultural distance it generated for the audience.

> The experimental setting at the Inter Arts Centre included a white tarpaulin that separated the performers from the audience. The lack of communication with the audience had a negative effect on my improvising experience in the moment. It was as if I made a comment aiming to communicate with the persons in the room that was not heard. One reason for this experience may be that we did not share the same frames of cultural reference (Wilén, 2017, p. 172-173).

Taking into account both Wilén's reflection and my own similar experience, it became important for me to take my projects out of experimental contexts, and instead face the institutions and audiences for whom I would normally perform.

4.2.2 Themes

The main idea for the project was to question the unspoken rules in lieder recital and to engage in conceptual discussions of how to create a different setting. These rules, pertaining to what is allowed when performing a lieder recital, and the concern for whether the audience would accept any changes in the strict tradition, were drawn from the interviews found in George and Mauro (2015, n. p.), as discussed above. We were also inspired by Scarborough's (2012) idea that musicians choose from a limited four face-work strategy; we wanted to explore a different performance that was not concerned with what would be considered contextually appropriate. Finally, as precisely framed by Hunter and Broad (2017) and Hultberg (2008), we wanted to dive into the three folded ideology that they uncovered, this particular mixture of "divining the composer's intention, minimizing the overt presence of the self, and working with

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questions, or made observations on the video analysing the expression of the audience, but the purpose of the concert was not to explore the thoughts or feelings of the audience. It was an exploration of what the lieder recital could be transformed into, and if or how it thereby shifted my own experience of performing. An interesting observation was that as a performer I didn't feel that the audience was more or less active than in any other concert I have performed.

abstract ideas" (Hunter & Broad, 2017, p. 261), and further, to challenge the "tradition-based knowledge taken for granted" (Hultberg, 2008, p. 10).

I made audio recordings of our conversations and video recordings of rehearsals leading up to the performance, as well as documenting the performance itself. My analytical procedure was similar to the qualitative analysis of the dance productions, although here, I first needed to transcribe the recorded conversations before I could work on the thematic analysis. Again, I found it helpful to approach the video of the performance through stimulated recall after a few months had passed, and I had obtained a certain distance. I compared the performance with parts of the transcribed conversations we had had while planning the performance. I looked at what we had discussed, what themes had emerged, how we had implemented the themes in the performance, and how they appeared afterwards. We used the videos that ran simultaneously to portray the theme of the constant inner sound of the great performers before us, the "rules", and their dominance over what could be considered a part of Werktreue.

> Sara: We somehow believe if I love Schubert I must always perform according to this practice. It is a sort of scout's honour. This is the way it should look; it feels good, it feels safe.

We changed our places on stage to challenge the stage rigidity of the lieder format. We filmed the audience and projected it onto a screen to try to find a way of seeing them in a different way; I noted particularly that this feature of the performance was discussed in a playful mode. We were not convinced that it would be possible to do, and maybe the possibility of playing with my position on the stage was not the most important theme. Still, we did not give up on the thought of moving on stage, especially for me, as I never face the audience as a pianist, and because it is almost impossible to move a grand piano.

I find the quote above and the quotes below to be illuminating; they are taken from transcripts of recorded conversations (Wilén & Skoogh, personal communication, 24 Sep 2014 and 10 Oct 2014), and translated from Swedish. I interleave them with comments on the themes.

> Francisca: It is really difficult to do something different with that music, a music that is so serious. To not fall into the path of being serious. It is very familiar to us; we kind of know how to move in a special way if we do it the 'normal way'. It is really inconvenient to go against the flow when trying to do something different.

> Sara: What would happen if I performed some sort of choreography when singing?

The emergence of artistic methods, drawing on the themes, can be observed in our conversations. First, in how we came up with the idea of bringing forward the impact of famous interpreters of lieder, such as Dietrich Fischer Dieskau, Brigitte Fassbaender, Graham Johnson and Geoffrey Parsons. There is no doubt that these artists have no problem in delivering lieder recitals that are full of expressivity. The great lieder singers and pianists manage to vary themselves in the most ingenious and beautiful ways, even within the very strict, ceremonial and stylistic frames. But that does not mean that the rules and traditions cannot be challenged. Another theme was the way in which we iconized these performers, and how both the audience and us had an enormous respect for the situation of the performance. I identified the theme of icons as important, and we emphasized it by making the theme "present" in the room during the performance through the video installation.

We discussed the invisible presence in the room, the lieder performance tradition, and I took note of the recurring theme of tradition and the duality that I felt.

> Francisca: I am tired of the tradition. Even if it is a good tradition.

Recordings, such as the videos projected in the performance, have always been a source of inspiration to which one is supposed to relate, but never imitate. This is also an unspoken rule in the western classical music tradition. As a child I was told by my teacher not to listen to recordings, because then I would start to imitate them instead of creating my own interpretation. I did it anyway, as they were such a joy and source of inspiration, and at the same time they became unobtainable, perfect versions of the music I wanted to perform. Perfect performances were an underlying theme, although not as pronounced as those of tradition, the importance of Werktreue, and the rigidity of lieder performance.

4.2.3 Thematic findings as material for new projects

Can we ever achieve a sense of freedom in a performance of, for example, Schumann's *Frauenliebe und Leben* as if it was not the canonic artefact it is in the lieder repertoire? Is the method of artistic play, with the room, the physical positions, the background, the light design, and the conceptual discussion between the artists, a way to bypass the tension of this rather cemented tradition? Reviewing the video of myself performing in this experimental setting, I found that I was not merely coping with the situation, but rather I was more in command of my relationship with the audience than in "normal" recitals. I identified this as yet another important theme: the artistic play, or playing with tradition.

The themes from *Double Take*, such as my physical position on stage, being the centre of attention, but still hidden, inspired and were partly employed in the *Lied Project*. It created the basis for another kind of lieder performance. This is an example of how the oscillation between performance, documentation, reflection, and analysis fed into new experimental performances,[16] which then led to new analysis. The *Lied Project* resulted in new ways of interacting with and challenging the unspoken rules of how to perform the lieder repertoire. It also made me realise that it was possible to do more experimental projects with the classical repertoire, and that as a next step I should do so with my solo repertoire. Before the *Lied Project* I was always concerned with how, as an artist, I could prepare myself for stage performance to perform as perfectly as possible. This experience made me reflect on the possibility of thinking beyond it and writing about perfection (Skoogh & Frisk 2019). Instead of preparing myself for stage performance, I wanted to "prepare the stage for me", which was an idea used later in the Schumann piano concerto and the collaboration with composer Kent Olofsson (See section 5.1).

4.3 The Performance Simulator (2016)

In 2014, a research team conducted a study at the Royal College of Music in London on how to help musicians prepare to perform. A peculiar coincidence was that they also filmed an audience (as we had in the *Lied Project* in Section 4.2 above), but with a different aim. Williamon et al. (2014) developed the Performance Simulator as a tool for musicians to create an environment close to a real concert performance. Their aims were "to design, test, and explore the possible uses of two new distributed simulation environments for enhancing musicians' learning and performance (Williamon et. al 2014, n.p.). Results showed that the participants found the simulation to be a valuable tool for developing performance skills, improving their own learning, managing performance anxiety and other performance problems, and for teaching others these skills. Anxiety levels were measured before both simulated and real performances in an audition situation, and levels were found to be comparable, suggesting that the simulation comes close to a real audition experience.

The idea behind the Performance Simulator was to create an interactive audience and plausible audience behaviours. Different settings can be played on the screen so that the musician can perform in front of a filmed audience of 11 persons, who had been given instructions on how to react. They sat still while listening to a western classical performance (with naturalistic body swaying, fidgeting movements, and coughing) and

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[16] As is the case with the last projects: *Commissioned Pieces.*

they responded to successful or unsuccessful performances with a standing ovation, enthusiastic applause, polite applause, or aggressive booing and displays of displeasure. Their responses are not only "acted" responses but also performed "on the same approximate timeline, achieved by having them watch a video of an actor mounted next to the video camera and asking them to synchronize their behaviours with those of the actor" (Williamon et al., 2014, n p).

After having read about the PS (Performance Simulator) at the Royal College of Music I wrote to Professor Aaron Williamon[17] and asked if a visit and try-out were possible. He kindly invited me to come and try the PS during the spring of 2016, two weeks before my first concert with the Rachmaninoff third piano concerto (which I will return to at the end of this section). I therefore tried out the first movement of this concerto.[18]

> I felt a bit confused entering the room as I had imagined it bigger. What is not shown in the video is the screen with the audience.
>
> There are different settings to choose from: a "happy" jury, a more or less displeased jury and a "concert audience". I chose the audience setting and sat down smiling, and decided to try to play as if "in concert", not stopping to practise certain bars. I could feel my heart beat rise and it was monitored with ECG data collected before and during performances using a wireless Zephyr Bioharness. I also completed a self-report questionnaire, Personal Report of Confidence as a Speaker[19]. Dr Terry Clark gave me an introduction to the simulator, and he also measured the electrical activity of my heart (ECG) before and during performances using the wireless Zephyr Bioharness. He reported that during the first minutes I displayed a faster heartbeat.[20] Sure enough, I had become nervous and also confused. Perhaps more confused than nervous, as the situation was so completely new to me and somewhat unnatural. The audience was filmed in a loop sequence, which I did not know at first but realised quite soon during my performance.

One of the aims of the performance simulation, in the study presented, was to see if levels of anxiety could be produced as high as in a "normal" concert situation (Williamon, 2014, n p). The reaction aimed for is "perceived anxiety", which is of course one of the reactions one might have in a concert situation. If musicians obtain

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[17] Without the personal communication and assistance from Karin Johansson, professor at the Malmö Academy of Music, this would not have been possible.

[18] https://youtu.be/BRxGI8VLXFw

[19] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3912881/table/T1/

[20] Unfortunately, the result was only given to me at that moment, but could not be obtained later for this thesis because of a software problem.

this reaction the Performance Simulator is considered to be a useful tool to use before performing in a real concert situation, because it produces the same amount of anxiety. This way the musician can prepare for an actual performance.

4.3.1 Experiencing the simulated performance

A few weeks later I gave my first ever performance of Rachmaninoff's third piano concerto in Malmö with the Malmö Academic Orchestra, conducted by Daniel Hansson, and later that spring in May 2016 with the Helsingborg Symphony orchestra, conducted by Stefan Solyom. The experience in the Performance Simulator had given me the opportunity to try out and test the way I performed under stress and heightened levels of anxiety. The simulator is designed to create an experience as close to a real performance as possible. A bi-product of this is that it also creates a simulated performance, where the confusion I felt made me react and perform "as if" I performed in front of a live audience.

> The simulation was a totally new way of performing, where simulation seemed to be the centre of artistic expression. I espoused (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 154) being a pianist, the soloist in Rachmaninoff's third piano concerto there and then in the simulator, in the small room, in my loneliness. But in the back of my mind, somehow not at all surprisingly, Dr Terry Clark, who had kindly received me and introduced me to the simulator, lingered on. He was still backstage and probably listening, so I directed my playing towards him.
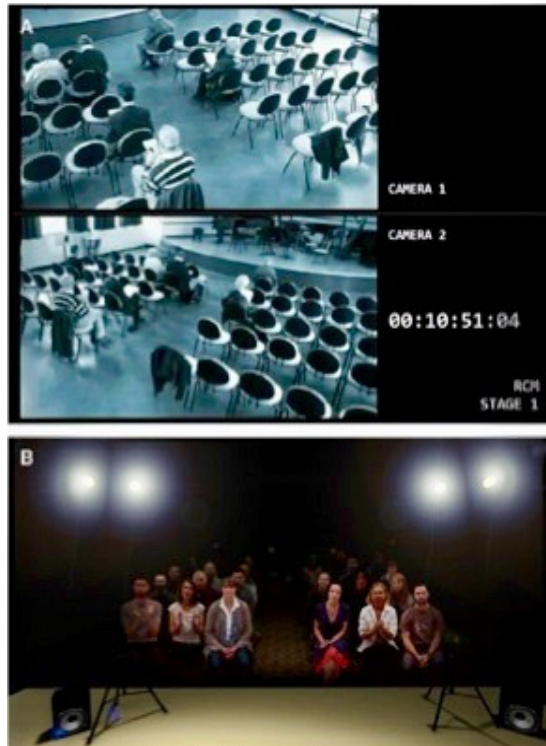
Fig. 8 The Performance Simulator. Photos from the study by Williamon et al. (2014).

Fig. 9 Trying out the Performance Simulator at the Royal College of Music in March 2016

The simulated performance made me think that I had made a complete enactment of Goffman's "frontstage" and "backstage" (Goffman, 1986). The experience of *Rikud* (2015), with its focus on what constitutes on-stage and off-stage behaviour, influenced the direction in my analysis. Afterwards, as I tried to describe what had happened to me, it is notable that I was confused; these are my annotations:

> While I was backstage, I prepared for the front stage-role. While being backstage I could withdraw and be all of the different personalities I then separated during performance in the front of stage. I could be "all" of myself. In front of stage I engage in "visual activity", and there is the prerequisite "setting", the platform of a stage. I did not have a personal front, my concert dress. Still, I acted as if in concert. The "appearance" – with small concert piano "manners" – of me playing as if it were a real concert.

Lucy Green, inspired by Lacan, discusses musical performance as a display where the performer - the displayer - wears a mask, to protect herself and as a help during the performance (Green, 1997, p. 21). The audience, the onlooker is also aware of this mask and this is a prerequisite of the performance. To the onlooker it is clear that the displayer has a double nature, both as "other" and as "mask". The onlooker is both "self" and "mask". The mask is the pivoting centre where the artistic interaction can take place. This safety-mask felt impossible to set up in the Performance Simulator as the pretending goes on at a more visual and concrete level. In a similar way, Christopher Small reflects on how the audience and the musicians never meet in a classical music context. "The two halves of the event are physically separated from each other, and the experience of the musical works themselves, the centre of the night's event, is a solitary one."

> It felt like I unintentionally played with the "fourth wall" (Tindemans, 2012, p.31). The audience is not "live" so I cannot, so to speak, pretend that they are not there as one would according to the rules of the fourth wall. The presumed listeners are filmed, "acting as" an audience, projected on a screen, put on a loop sequence, for me to interact with, in a virtual setting that should remind me of a "real" concert and thus make me feel more anxious. I was confused but also surprised by this new take on performing and I brought with me the theatre analogy as one of the important points of departure in the project (see Chapter 5 below) with composer Kent Olofsson a few years later.

4.3.2 Themes

Not many weeks after my experience with the Performance Simulator, I went into rehearsals with the Malmö Academy Orchestra for my first performance of Rachmaninoff's third piano concerto. I compared notes from the simulator experience

with notes from the rehearsals and the two performances of the concerto. As a basis for stimulated recall I reviewed the video recording from the simulator experience, in particular my facial expressions and behaviour when entering the simulator. I noted that I was more confused and curious than nervous, but the ECG measurement had shown a clear effect on my heart activity. I remember how I struggled to find a recipient for my playing, and that I had Terry in mind as "my audience" instead of the filmed audience.

During the rehearsals with the orchestra, I particularly observed that the rehearsals not only served as the obvious working environment to get to know the orchestra, try out tempi, work on difficult transitions, and so forth; they also somehow stopped me from making "as if" performances—playing the role of soloist because the interactions with other musicians were close to those of a live performance when the audience is present. Rehearsals with a conductor and orchestra have similarities to the fourth wall in theatre. We formed a version of Rachmaninoff's third piano concerto without the audience present. When entering the stage at the actual concert, a ceremony so characteristic for the classical music scene, I am awakened by the fact that the audience is there and welcoming me on stage. It is not a surprise, yet there is the same tension every time. The fourth wall is broken before the concert begins, which is disruptive, and then I put a lot of effort into leaving the audience out again throughout the performance so that I am able to concentrate. At the very end, when they applaud themselves back into their own and into my own awareness, there is, of course, no more tension. As mentioned by Williamon et. al. (2014), the pre-performance, the entering on stage, the beginning of the concert, and the end of the concert seem to be key features experienced by musicians during classical music performance. This is noticed when measuring cardiovascular activities in artists at the very beginning of a performance. I experienced it myself: the heightened activity during pre-performance was measured by Terry Clark when I performed in the simulator. The pre-performance moment was no surprise to me, it had just never occurred to me to be a key feature, and I therefore identified it as an important theme. Before starting this research, I just wanted to get over that moment, rather than address it as a theme that I could explore. As I was already contracted to play a series of other piano concertos, I decided to design possible ways of thematizing the moment before performing, and the interaction with the audience in "real", completely un-simulated, traditional concert performances.

4.4 Piano concerto performances

Performing as a soloist with orchestra is one of my professional activities and a major part of my practice as a classical pianist. It is also the most exposed role I have as a performer, which is why I have included two high-profile piano concerto performances from 2018. The concertos are also discussed in the two articles (Skoogh & Frisk, 2019, Skoogh, in press, Olofsson & Skoogh, 2020).

The two piano concerto performances are Rachmaninoff's piano concerto no. 3 from April 2018 with the Norrköping Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Leif Segerstam (not to be confused with the performance in 2016), and Schumann's piano concerto op. 54 (1845) from October 2018 with the Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra, conducted by José Miguel Esandi. These concerts are of particular interest as I examined and challenged the themes that had had an impact on my performance in the initial projects: Werktreue, rules of performance (what can be displayed and what can be communicated on stage), playfulness, and pre-performance tension. The performance of the Rachmaninoff third piano concerto brought forward new themes, situating music performance anxiety as a part of a complex system of interactions within value systems that are built on the celebration of perfectionism in western classical music (Skoogh & Frisk, 2019). This performance became of central importance as I experienced Music Performance Anxiety for the first time in many years. I documented the experience by collecting the many text-message conversations I had had with friends and supervisors. I also recorded myself talking out loud about the fear I had before the general rehearsal. I listened to some of the rehearsals, it was quite unbearable, and I tried to listen to one of the two concert performances, but could not manage to listen the whole way through. In the analysis of this material, the conversations, my own notes, and listening to the recordings, I found I was trying to do damage control by becoming more and more like a robot during the week of rehearsing and performing. It was notable in my strict playing: I did not sound at all like myself. I was trying to be as perfect as possible even though the result was the opposite. The recordings and the conversations served as a base for stimulated recall. The annotations from this became, in turn, the basis for an article on values connected to western classical performance.

> As exemplified in this article one possibility for addressing performance values through artistic practice is to describe experienced failures, compare them to the listeners' experience, and relate oneself as an artist as a whole and connected to a system of values. This reappraisal process is a psychological openness that may be a valuable tool for musicians. Departing from their own practical experiences classical musicians can gain

insights, for example, by connecting it to other fields in arts and science, on how the outside forces of their practice influences them. (Skoogh & Frisk, 2019).

The discovery of performance values (PVs) during my projects, was possible only by performing live, in both what I assess as successful and unsuccessful performances. As suggested by Dogantan-Dack (2012), performers learn on stage and live performances are sites of knowledge production. While Dogantan-Dack explores the performer-oriented discourse and the trust and support between co-performers, this thesis examines solo performances and my individual psychological processes in rehearsal and performance. However, collaborative aspects and their psychological impact have also been important, particularly in the two projects with composers Olofsson and Storm. Emotional processes from the performers' point of view have not been explored within artistic research, nor in the conventional fields of research, such as psychology. Dogantan-Dack (2012) stresses that there is need for more research on the emotional impact of performance, addressing perspectives such as: "How is the musical content of a performance affected when the performers feel a deep affection and commitment to the music they play? Is this audible in the sounds of the music they make? And does it matter for live performance research" (p. 44)?

As suggested in the discussion above about the two piano concerto performances, there are insights to be found when looking into the processes that take place during performance. Dogantan-Dack importantly points to how artistic input remains unseen if the performer herself is not actively involved in research.

> The area of live performance offers performers wishing to undertake research and contribute to performance studies a valuable opportunity to enter the academic disciplinary scene in their own terms, using their native discourse; after all, without their expert contribution in this area, the artistic issues involved in live performance-making would remain unarticulated. The insider's view on what happens in a musical performance – and what can be brought to light only through a discourse that takes account of and thrives on the situatedness and the very subjectivity of the aesthetic judgements made by the performer in relation to his or her performance. (Dogantan-Dack, 2012, p. 39)

The case studies are not focused on aesthetic judgements, such as those described by Dogantan-Dack in relation to specific chamber music works, but rather on processes and issues with performing iconic classical works, and the values that affect my performance.

4.4.1 Schumann piano concerto

The Rachmaninoff experience had made me realise that I had to do something quite radical to address my relationship with performance. I therefore implemented the themes from my initial projects (the *Dance Productions*, the *Lied Project* and the *Performance Simulator*) into a concert performance that was set six months later. The themes where:

- playfulness as a possible imaginative leap, displaying the "un-displayable" to an audience, social evaluation

- playing with tradition to prepare the stage for me

- heightened activity during pre-performance.

A main idea was to interact with the audience both live before the concert, and with a written note in the program. This was an attempt to address the theme of social evaluation by an audience (Yoshie et al., 2016) by staging a non-conventional meeting with the audience before the performance. Unconventional in the sense that it is not customary to meet with and play anything to the audience before a piano concerto in a classical music concert. As described by Small, the buildings themselves are even designed to keep us apart.

> Nor does the design of the building allow any social contact between performers and listeners. It seems, in fact, designed expressly to keep them apart. It is not only that the orchestra musicians enter and leave the building by a separate door from the audience and remain out of sight when not actually playing, but also that the edge of the platform forms a social barrier that is for all practical purposes as impassable as a brick wall. Not even the wraparound design of certain modern auditoriums, such as Berlin's Philharmonic or Toronto's Roy Thompson Hall, can disguise the fact that a concert hall houses two separate groups of people who never meet. (Small, 1998, p. 27)

I reflected on this concept of "remaining out of sight" and the proximity to Winnicott's description of the artistic "inherent dilemma, which belongs to the coexistence of two trends, the urgent need to communicate and the still more urgent need not to be found" (1965, p. 185, and mentioned above in Section 3.3.1), and thought that I could further elaborate on this idea. One of the themes from the Dance production, *Rikud*, was the notion of on-stage and off-stage behaviour, and how that could be transformed depending on how I positioned myself both physically on stage and in relation to how I experienced my participation in the performance. "The audience is not always sitting in the audience watching. Sometimes it's sitting in the rehearsal room watching, sometimes it's sitting behind the stage seeing what it shouldn't see. So, we play with

this" (Ben-Gal, 2015). This display of what cannot be seen, what must be kept out of sight, had clearly had an effect on me, and I wanted to bring it into my regular performances. Looking back to my earlier conception of performance (as mentioned in the Introduction), I wanted to rethink my perception of the audience as an "anonymous crowd" sitting silently waiting for my performance, so that *they* should get something from *me*, and receive an experience. I used the themes in *Rikud* to display what is not supposed to be displayed, to "come forward with all the work that is behind a performance, all doubts, naked and unprotected" (see audience letter below) as a part of the performance of the Schumann piano concerto.

I set out to challenge the gap between myself and the audience, to play with Winnicott's apt description of the artistic dilemma of communication, and with Ben Gal's playful approach to how an audience can be "behind the stage seeing what it shouldn't see", by interacting with the audience just one hour before the start of the performance. I decided to play parts of the piano concerto and talk with the audience. This was possible through the pre-concert talk, where I briefly presented my research and invited them into an adjacent hall to my "warm-up".[21]

Around twenty people attended, so just a small part of the audience, but for me they became a representation of the whole audience. The moment lasted only about thirty minutes, with some members of the audience asking me about the music, resulting in a casual and positive conversation about music, performing, and the special meeting between the audience and the artist. I also wrote a personal letter to the audience, kindly published by the Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra in the programme.[22] As mentioned in Section 3.1.3, this is not a normal feature in traditional classical concerts and can easily become censored by concert hall directors. I wrote to the audience about how I had used thematic influences for the

performance from *Rikud*, choreographed by Nir Ben Gal, and I invited the audience to an unusual warm-up.

> Dear audience! It's been over 30 years since I made my debut on this stage. I was very nervous and I remember being fascinated by how transformed I became when I met you on the way down the stairs on the stage in my city concert hall. I was scared, curious and uplifted at the same time. To wait behind the stage, to hide, to then suddenly come forward with all the work that is behind a performance, all doubts, naked and

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[21] Video in the article Play: emotional regulation in classical music performance (Skoogh, in press) https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/798739/798740

[22] In comparison with Hultqvist's programme comment, this was allowed without any discussion, showing that some orchestral institutions do have a more open attitude towards disruptive elements in concerts.

unprotected. Only after working with choreographer Nir Ben Gal did I realize that performing artists in other fields are thinking about this and even using it as artistic material. Rikud explores the boundary between being on and off stage. What Ben Gal did was to present behind-the-scenes behaviour on the stage and play with the respect we have for the stage, a respect that sometimes inhibits us. "The stage is a playground, it's not a serious place where you have to be your best self, it should be a place to play." His statement may sound like a reason to neglect or not be well prepared, but it's just the opposite. Before tonight's concert I let myself be inspired by him and dared to meet you in the pre-concert talk and I let you come in and hear me warm up before the concert in the Little Hall, about half an hour before the concert. It may not sound so strange, but for me as a classical musician, all boundaries in tradition and ceremonies are difficult to explore, I know that now after 30 years. Normally, I would be alone and prepare for my solo performance. When I think back, it was as if I, as a child, already knew intuitively that I must look into this more closely. Rikud is a playful ritual between dancers, musicians and audiences. That ritual, between us on stage and you who listen, is something that has been going on for me as a musician for as long as I can remember. You might also be thinking about it? (Skoogh, 2018, see original in Appendix, quote translated by the author)

Eric Clarke discusses listening as a part of the ecology of human perception. The audience is a receiver of music not least because of the division that has been made between performers and listeners as distinct categories.[23] Their listening is also situated, and the socio-cultural setting therefore defines the nature of the modes of listening that are at hand:

> Members of an audience, whether at a rock concert in a stadium, a performance in a concert hall, or a jazz gig in a bar, are placed in a situation in which they are largely prevented from acting on (or acting in relation to) the sounds they hear—even if traces of a more direct engagement can be seen in socially sanctioned patterns ranging from applause, head-nodding and foot-tapping, to dancing and singing along. What this situation affords for listeners is a type of attentive but receptive listening that has come to be regarded as more or less the paradigm of listening in the Western art music tradition—despite its historical and cultural peculiarity. (see Dell'Antonio 2004; Johnson 1995 as cited in Clarke, 2011, p. 205)

This kind of "attentive but receptive listening" is, of course, taken into account when I, as a performer, listen to myself. It is notable how much more attentive my listening becomes when someone enters the room in which I practice, or when there is an audience listening to me. It is a listening that suddenly involves not only my own perception of the music I perform, but also the audience's perception. It always has a

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[23] In addition, Small (1998) has written extensively on this topic (see Section 3.1.2).

tendency towards a critical ear. By communicating with my audience, as described above, I was trying to lessen the gap between me as the provider and the audience as the perceiver, and change some of the affordances of the western classical music concert hall.

As with the Rachmaninoff concerto, I compiled the video recordings of the concert, the pre-concert talk, the letter to the audience, the pre-performance, and my own notes on behaviour and how I felt during the rehearsal period and the concert performance. I was astonished by how happy I felt entering the stage, which I even found physiologically visible when looking at myself in the video recording. I was also surprised by the quality of my performance, in that I varied dynamics, and I was able to communicate with sections in the concerto that are set up as chamber music interactions with parts of the orchestra. I felt free in my phrasings, and had a good overall technical control, as can be heard during the first two minutes in the first movement and also in the cadenza, thirteen minutes into the first movement.[24] As discussed in the third article (Skoogh, in press) the whole experience had an impact on me, down to my actual motor skills during the performance. It was simply a very unusual concert performance for me, and my conclusion was that this seemingly simple interaction with the audience enhanced my performance and my joy of playing. The audience became close to "co-performers", in that I could talk to them and see them, which made them appear more "human". There was a playfulness in the interaction, which is notable in the video. In the *Lied Project*, in *Rikud* and in my experience with the performance simulator I had detected key features of how I am supposed to act in a classical performance. What I can and cannot "put on display" (Ben Gal, 2015), how much tension exists in the moment before performing, the tension between on and off-stage behaviour, and the respect for the work. Possibly the last of these themes, my respect for the work, and my fear of not doing justice to the work, influences the other themes.

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[24] Watch the video by opening the exposition and going to <u>Schumann piano concerto:</u>
https://www.researchcatalogue.net/shared/ee62759e097393abef23200f110a1335

Chapter 5.

Two collaborative works

The themes identified through the qualitative analysis of the artistic projects discussed above in Chapter 4 became central components in the two final projects of this thesis. They were designed as collaborative commissioned works, and the way in which these themes were woven into our work became central to the emergence of an understanding of the psychological impact of a specific performance culture in classical performance. These collaborations, with the composers Staffan Storm and Kent Olofsson, built upon a continuous dialogue addressing the difficulties of dealing with the great masters, and how this affects me psychologically when performing on stage.

My last research question asks how experimentation with the traditions of performance culture in classical music can provide different modes of emotional regulation in staged performance. This is addressed through Kent Olofsson's composition, *Play always as if in the presence of a master*.

Perfectionism, understood in classical music performance as the only tool to sustain the great tradition, may hijack artistic expression and freedom, and possibly limit the expressive potential of the pianist. Taken together, the vast repertoire, the pressure to compete, and the institutional demands of making a career, leave very little room for exploring the parameters of performance and interpretation in new and radical ways. "Potential space" was Donald Winnicott's term for an inviting and safe interpersonal field in which one can be spontaneously playful while at the same time connected to others. The collaboration with Olofsson approaches musical performance as a potential space, with interpretation as play material. We sought to transcribe Winnicott's concept of potential space into artistic practice in order to challenge the relations between score and performer, and the expected concert traditions (Skoogh, in press). We further reflect on this approach in the form of an audio paper in a third publication (Olofsson & Skoogh, 2020).

The second collaboration, with Staffan Storm, resulted in the composition *Unbekanntes Blatt aus Endenicher Zeit*, which is featured on the CD *Notes from Endenich* (Skoogh,

2020, see also the Appendix). This collaboration goes further into the psychoanalytic concept of projective identification as a musical process, and responds to my second research question concerning the factors that impose an emotional effect on my performance and how to challenge these.

Both compositions revolve around the piano music by Robert Schumann, and the impact of Werktreue on his practice as performer and composer. Composers being inspired by, or using, other composers' iconic themes is, of course, not new. Brahms' Händel variations, Rachmaninoff's Variations on a theme by Paganini, Liszt's Opera Paraphrases, are just a few examples: the list is long. A recent example is the series of piano concertos commissioned by the pianist Jonathan Biss as "companions" to the five Beethoven Concertos.

> Beethoven's music has been an obsession for me for as long as I can remember. Working on it has been a constant source of joy, inspiration, and frustration. In this, I'm joined by most musicians I know, regardless of age, training, or background. One of the central tasks for any musician — composer or performer — is to come to terms with Beethoven. This is not, really, a matter of choice: it is entirely possible to prefer the music of Mozart, Schumann, or Bartók, but Beethoven's voice is too powerful, and the influence he had on the evolution of the musical language too immense, to be ignored. What this means is that any serious composer will have plenty to 'say' on the subject of Beethoven. That is why the idea of asking composers to write a piece that, in some way, responds to Beethoven, is so exciting to me: each of them will have a relationship with him that is unique and intense. (Biss, 2020)

Biss uses the expression "come to terms with Beethoven" but does not expand any further on the subject. He also seems to wait for the result of the composers' relationship with Beethoven and what they have to say about Beethoven. But the compositions discussed in this chapter have been a continued dialogue between Olofsson, Storm, and the music of Schumann, aiming to describe, zoom into and express the frustrations that Biss touches upon. As discussed by Östersjö (2008) "integrative work demands from composer and performer to interact also with shared tools" (p. 383). Östersjö's thesis (2008) was concerned with the emergence of contemporary performance practices in the collaboration between composer and performer. Although such processes are, of course, also active in the commissioned pieces in this thesis, my interests in these collaborations are the emotional aspects of performing and interpreting, and how such emotional perspectives can also guide the collaborative, compositional process.

5.1 *Play always as if in the presence of a master* (2018)

"If you question the masters of an earlier epoch with perseverance and conviction you become the medium of their replies: they speak of you through you" (Boulez, 1971, p. 19). In *Play always as if in the presence of a master*, *variations & fragments for piano and electronics*, Olofsson and I have worked to create a unique world out of Schumann's Sonata, op. 11 (1836/1981). Olofsson's development of a compositional practice within experimental music theatre, combining dramaturgy with composition, was an important point of departure (see further, Olofsson, 2018). We initially worked with fragments of the sonata, electronically sampled. The aim was to create an artistic tool that would correspond to the initial themes of the *Dance Productions*, in particular *Rikud,* and the themes of playfulness and what can be displayed on-stage. Additionally, the aim was to experiment with how I could explore and challenge the performance situation. I wanted to emphasize a playful interaction, a third area where play can take place (Winnicott, 2005, p.144) using the thematic motifs of the sonata, thereby expanding the traditional performance behaviour expected on stage. The collaboration focused specifically on the sonata, and different possible approaches to the score in performance. We discussed the creation of a work where I could be free from the demands of perfection, a work that functioned almost as a therapeutic game with electronics and communication between Olofsson, Schumann, and myself (Skoogh, in press). Brilliant musicians who have control and superior virtuosic playing are driven by both the classical music culture and also by themselves (Skoogh & Frisk, 2019). The work is an attempt at capturing feelings of inadequacy and powerlessness that may not normally get much room in a performance situation. My collaboration with Olofsson also connects to my first research question concerning the psychological impact of the traditions and ceremonies of classical music performance, and respect for the definitive score, defined as Werktreue (Goehr 1992, p. 231). It is difficult to talk about the traditions and ceremonies of classical music as a defined set of rules, not least because of the changes across different musical eras. As Benson (2003) has observed, current performance traditions were not in practice in the 18th century. For example, singers were requested to improvise and vary the musical content in order to enhance it: this would be unthinkable today. "Contemporary performers are apt to be uncomfortable following such advice. The ritual of performance in classical music is highly regulated and a crucial part of that ritual is that such advice is inappropriate. … Admittedly, performers are given a certain degree of leeway; but the unwritten rules of the game are such that this leeway is relatively small and must be kept in careful check" (Benson, 2003, p. 4-5). Exploring this highly regulated ritual of performance, connected to the respect for the work, became one of the aims of the collaboration.

Psychoanalytical thoughts on playful interaction were essential to how Olofsson and I developed *Play always as if in the presence of a master.* The central inspiration was drawn from Winnicott's *Playing and Reality* (2005), with particular attention to the notion of a potential space. "I wish to examine the place, using the word in an abstract sense, where we most of the time are when we are experiencing life" (Winnicott, 2005, p. 140). As mentioned previously, "Potential space" is Winnicott's term for an inviting and safe interpersonal field in which one can be spontaneously playful while at the same time connected to others. Olofsson and I have portrayed performance as a potential space, with interpretation as "play material". By transforming potential space to artistic development, we explore the relation between score and performer, between expected and unexpected concert traditions. It pivots around one of the great sonatas of the piano repertoire, the Sonata, op. 11 by Robert Schumann. *Play always as if in the presence of a master* has been altered between performances with different scores for each performance and contain scripts on duration and directions on improvised sections. There is no definitive version of the work, therefore there is no "right way" to perform it. *Play always as if in the presence of a master* has been performed as a lecture recital, for piano and tape recording, as a piece for piano and live electronics that required a joint performance with composer and pianist (Piano Visions, 2018),[25] and as an audio paper (Olofsson & Skoogh, 2020). There was a theatrical approach in the lecture recital version, partly developed in collaboration with theatre director Jörgen Dahlqvist.[26] During the performance version, Olofsson mixed together fragments of a recording made by me of the Schumann Sonata, op. 11, as an abstract soundscape with excerpts from a recorded interview that I gave on the subject of Winnicott's definition of play, Werktreue, and Schumann's aesthetical thoughts on music and interpretation.[27]

The performance bears a resemblance to Maurizio Kagel's concept of "Instrumental theatre" (Heile, 2016) and with *Ludwig van* (Kagel, 1969) in particular. In this piece, Kagel examines the impact of the composer and his work on audiences. Kagel's commentary with this piece refers to the crisis of the western classical work and of

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[25] Watch the concert at Pianovisions, 9 December 2018: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cOvM_e6CUE0

[26] It is notable that Werktreue is also a debated concept within theatre. Barnett (2013) discusses the contradictions and tensions between text and performance, dominance of the text over performance, and the notion that the text is a blueprint of the work. It is obvious that also in this field there is a concern that one might completely ruin a work if the instructions are not followed. "The blueprint is precise; there is no room for manoeuvre – cutting corners on materials may lead to catastrophic results" (Barnett, 2013, p. 78).

[27] Watch the video Collaborative Play at Interference #5 A Laboratory for Artistic Research, Malmö 2018, embedded in the article *Play: emotional regulation in classical music performance* (Skoogh, in press) https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/798739/798740

composers. It reviews Beethoven as an icon, with his works revered as monoliths of the western canon, making them difficult to bring forward authentically. *Play always as if in the presence of a master* moves further with the idea that this crisis, this monotonous reproduction of canonic works, also has an impact on the musician's emotions, and on his or her ability to move away from anxiety, and to perform correctly with a focus on expressivity.

5.2 *Unbekanntes Blatt aus Endenicher Zeit (2018)*

Unbekanntes Blatt aus Endenicher Zeit by composer Staffan Storm is a musical reflection on texts by Robert Schumann written just before and during his last illness. They are taken from two sources, a letter to his friend Joseph Joachim from January 1854, written only a few days before Schumann's collapse, and a sheet of text fragment, found and first published in 1935, from his time as a patient at the hospital in Endenich. In these fragments, we meet Schumann towards the end of his life, with thoughts on his relationship to life and the arts, and the memories and thoughts that occupied him during his time as a patient.

The work consists of five movements. The first movement initially breathes optimism and is freely associated with Schumann's *Fantasie*, op.17, but this material is progressively distorted as the music and goes towards its resolution. In the second movement, fragments are quoted from the *Geburtstagmarsch*, which he mentions in a letter as having only begun, and never sent to his little daughter Julie. The third movement's text is a couple of lines, a memory, from one of the love verses that Schumann had sent to Clara when she was on tour when they were separated. On the manuscript Schumann also noted some everyday matters, including clothing purchases he thought he needed to make, as if life were going on as normal. The fourth movement text is one such list. Musically, the movement is associated with the opening motif in the piano piece *Aufschwung*. The last movement is a reflection on the opening of a letter home to Clara and the children that was never completed. These are probably notes from Christmas 1854 when Schumann was separated from the family for almost a year, and here he remembers their last days together: "Dear Clara and the children, last Christmas we were still together at home. Many friends were there."In the last few years Schumann rarely had access to paper for writing scores; but on such an occasion, during a period of improvement, he harmonized an old choral, *Wenn mein Stündlein vorhanden ist*. It was the last music he wrote, and the choral is quoted in several of the movements.
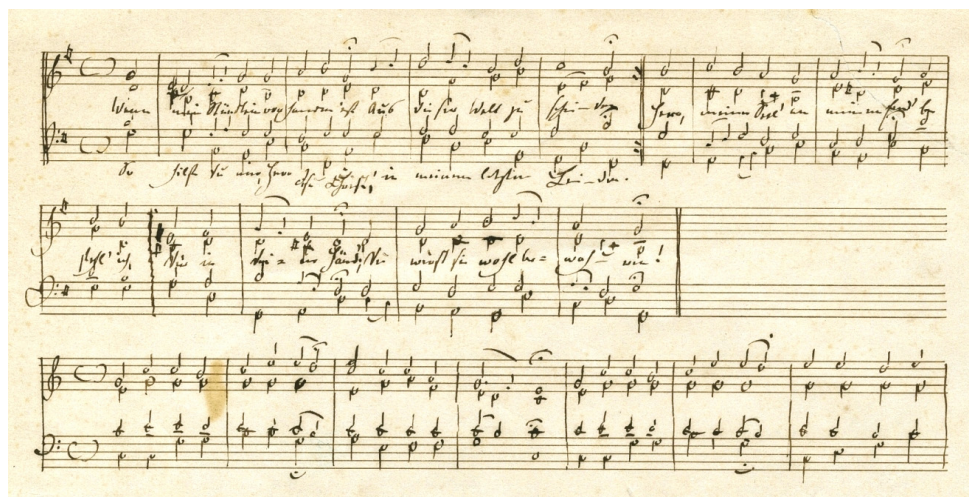
Fig. 10 Original manuscript of the choral written by Schumann, *Wenn mein Stündlein vorhanden ist*.

As mentioned in the introduction, I started my research by summarizing the way I had previously conceived my practice as a series of perspectives, one of them being the musical work and fidelity to the composition, or the composer's intentions. I wanted to direct this commissioned project towards my relationship to this fidelity and the respect for the work in classical music performance. Would it be possible to involve psychological processes in the composition and portray them when performing? As with the Olofsson project, *Unbekanntes Blatt aus Endenicher Zeit* has been a collaborative process with the composer Staffan Storm, revolving around the music of Robert Schumann. In the last twenty years I have premiered most of Storm's piano music and recorded a CD containing his music (Storm & Skoogh, 2010),[28] However, this particular collaboration did not start and end with me focusing on his written score as before; instead, shared reflections became a conscious working model. Picking up on the themes that have emerged from my collaboration with Sara Wilén in the *Lied Project*, I used them as building materials for this project. The starting point was a casual conversation between Storm and myself, in which I expressed how moved I was by Schumann's last years when he was confined to the asylum at Endenich. I had read a quite unique description of Schumann's life, using a medical approach and written by the author and psychiatrist Peter Ostwald (Ostwald, 1985). Ostwald provides insight into the living conditions of Schumann's last years, including his struggles and loneliness. He did not receive many visits; it is not clear why this was the case, but it was probable that his wife Clara had mixed feelings on visiting as it upset him, and the

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[28] https://open.spotify.com/album/0xcn2UVeg34jX0LkBPdbB3

doctors sometimes advised against visits. Overall, family therapy and health care for psychiatric disorders was not very developed at the time (p. 285-286). The only communication he had was through letters that he wrote to and received from Clara, Johannes Brahms, and Joseph Joachim. As described above, his own letters at the end of his life were very short and fragmented. Schumann hardly wrote any music during his last two years, but he did harmonize an old chorale melody from 1569, which had already been used by J. S. Bach. Ostwald comments on the neatness of the manuscript, which has no tremor or elision (p. 287). The lyrics are heart-breaking, to say the least, bearing in mind that he dies soon afterwards:

Wenn mein Stündlein vorhanden ist,	*If the hour of my death is at hand*
und ich soll hinfahren meine Strasse,	*And I must travel on my way*
geleite mich, Herr Jesu Christ,	*Accompany me, Lord Jesus Christ,*
mit Hilf mich nicht verlasse :	*With your help do not abandon me:*
den Geist an meinem letzten End	*At my final end my spirit*
befehl ich, Herr, in deine Händ ;	*I entrust, Lord, in your hands;*
du wirst ihn wohl bewahren.	*You will preserve it well.*

Schumann's loneliness and occupation with death is very present in these last years of his life. He turns inwards to find some comfort.

> Without the physical presence of Clara, their children and their closest friends to sustain his creativity, the composer turned inward, using the remaining power of his imagination to construct a fantasized social environment. Clara's letters, and the reminders she sent of their life together, helped to give shape to this mental microcosm (Ostwald, 1985, p. 287).

It appears that he did not only construct a positive social environment; his doctor reported that his "hallucinations dealt frequently with issues of the artistic value of his own work. He would grow indignant. The voices apparently criticized his capabilities as a musician" (Ostwald, 1985, p. 287). I was very touched by this, having not read anything similar before when studying his biography: the fact that he, amongst more serious illness and loneliness, struggled with feelings of inadequacy as a musician.

Around the same time as I read this in the spring of 2017, I brought the chorale to a seminar, where I was supposed to talk about it and play it. What happened in that seminar was both revealing and surprising. I am not usually someone who cries in public; indeed, I think that it has probably never happened before, except perhaps at funerals and other comparable events. However, in this particular seminar and without understanding why, I suddenly could not hold back the sadness that this choral

somehow made me feel. It took me completely off-guard, and I could not continue to talk. The other participants, including Storm, tried to help me overcome the situation by giving me some interesting new approaches to the Sonata, op. 11, which was also a topic for the seminar. They talked vividly and were engaged with my project, commenting on one of the themes I wanted to discuss, the difficulties of finding my own authenticity. I remained detached for the whole seminar and commented on what had happened to my supervisor in an email the following day:

> It (the seminar) was great, except I started crying ... haha. Really ridiculous. But I read aloud about Schumann's last year at the mental hospital Endenich and how he couldn't write anything, everything was incomplete, in fragments and how he returned to a 16th-century choral, used by Bach, among others. "Wenn mein while my vorhanden ist" "when my hour has come". And then I was supposed to play this little choral that he managed to write after all. 1-2 minutes of music, 12 bars, and I was completely broken.

Storm did not address what had happened in the seminar in the conversations that followed that year about the project, but he did incorporate the choral in *Unbekanntes Blatt aus Endenicher Zeit.* This was, of course, mainly a compositional idea, but to me, it became therapeutic, in the sense that Storm had been *listening* in many ways, and not only as a composer. In the segment below Storm and I discuss the process; our conversations took place over text message and email.

> Francisca: Your last movement. I'm really touched. I remember when I broke down at some seminar. Over his choral, well you remember? I don't know what it was that made me just not able to keep the crying away. But it is as if it became very real, that I came close to Schumann in a different way than when playing "his work". Now I have played your compositions for a number of years and only now do I think that I am beginning to approach some kind of understanding, and now it is understanding your music into his music and back. It is like a consolation if somehow one is sad about something. Whatever that might be...How do you reach each other over the centuries when you want to bypass articulation, pace, legato, pedal rubato, not unimportant details, but everything like that, to share something that is real?

> Staffan: Exactly - when the human aspect is the important and not the technical (which must be there, but which is not the point)

> All the technical aspects, all these instructions that are found in the text or transmitted traditionally have to be constantly in relation to the human aspect, which is central for art and the music.

> As is often the case in my works, music relates to something beyond itself. I can feel great sympathy for Hans Werner Henze's concept "musica impura" but more specifically I

can see that in my creation I relate to the concept of tradition. But not tradition as a routine, repetition but as a field for experimental creation and exploration, tradition as living and moving matter that is constantly being transformed by generations and individuals. I like to associate with Gadamer's view of tradition as the historical horizon (Gadamer, 1997). Tradition is not something that is disconnected from one's self, but "the past, which our historical consciousness is aimed at, and which is both own and foreign, contributes to this moving horizon where man lives his life and determines it as origin and tradition. ". Tradition has a direction, it is a flowing current from the past to the future, that is, not something static, something for once given. The art explores this and the method is intuition, a structured intuition, where the artist's collective knowledge, memory bank, operates in dialogue with the tradition that thus relates both backwards, to the present and has a direction towards the future. Perhaps one can say that it is the "memory" that creates the forward-flowing current that is "tradition"? Could one say that tradition is applied memory, memory put into practice - not least in terms of art?

In this work there is also a concrete "memory", to relate to, in the form of Schumann's notes and music that you mention above. Through and through my readings I could experience how it came to be what in other contexts could be called a hermeneutic spiral from which the new work emerged in the dialogue between the historical source material and the present. In this way, the work is the result of an artistic research process and can actually to a large extent also relate to your interest in the concept of "Werktreue" - if it stands for a static view of text and tradition then this is a work that is the result of a dynamic view on text and tradition. An important part of the artwork, or at least its creation, is our meetings and discussions. The fact that I heard you play Schumann while I was writing the piece, that your interpretation of the Schumann sonata became part of my understanding horizon, which in turn affected my way of relating to the sources in my composition work - and certainly your way of playing the sonata has then come to be influenced by my piece, not least when placed next to each other on the program? And surely the audience, as you mentioned above, related the works to each other and when they heard them together.

Francisca: What fascinates me the most is how I discovered during the journey with this project, how much this you describe, affected me on stage. Or rather, how it affected me psychologically and what impact it had on me when I perform as a pianist. The question is whether this could be done by two people that have not met or as you say, whose understandings have not met.

Staffan: But these processes are obviously not heard in the finished music work - they are silent, they are only "scaffoldings". At the same time, there are processes that are larger than the individual as they become part of a living tradition in constant motion.

> Francisca: I think they are heard in some way. Or, at least I hear them, use them when I perform. You can't imagine what it means to "go to town" on Aufschwung, to rearrange that theme "throw away from it" in some way. I also got a picture of a lion playing with his prey, hahaha. That I get to "master" the piece, it becomes a symbol for all these powerful themes in the piano literature. Then, when the performance is over, it's really as if the music has kept and taken care of these really difficult processes that can be a part of interpretation.

In the dialogue between us, the personal feelings brought forward in me by the music of Schumann are discussed in a more intellectual manner, whereas the music composed by Storm somehow also "discusses" the same themes. The new composition displays an additional emotional world, not easily described in words. The psychological investment composers have for their work is often discussed, with emphasis on the audience's reception of the music: whether they perceive or are affected by the music. Rose (2004) observes that "a composer is not only a musical technician but a person who may have a deep expressive involvement with the occasion for which he/she is composing. How do these theoretical commitments and personal emotions interact? Do they affect the listener?" (p. 153). What I wanted to display with our conversation, and with my own reflections on the collaborative process, is the psychological meaning and emotional process of the collaboration, and further, how Storm's work affected me as a performer in the harbouring of my emotions.

The psychoanalytical interpretation of my emotional experience of being held by the music, and of how music can relate to Stern's present moment, is expressed eloquently by Leech-Wilkinson.

> So too music, when one focuses one's attention on it, can be experienced as wholly engrossing, 'unbelievably rich'. It occupies the subjective now. It creates a sense of stylistic and psychological wholeness (the one leading to the other). Its phrases and sections have definition and gestalt-like qualities of self-containedness within a greater whole; and at the local level they can be quite short, short enough to be experienced within a psychological 'now'. We identify and understand music in terms of these experienced 'moments' which give it its meaning for us. The feelings it generates 'trace a time-shape of analogic risings and fallings. In other words, they are carried on vitality affects (dynamic time-shapes) that contour the experience temporally'. We sense musical continuity as having narrative qualities, although it usefully lacks the precision of the 'lived stories' which Stern finds make up everyday life. They 'capture a sense of the [music]'s style' and analogously behave as if they were people, indeed as if they were us. Thus musical units are indeed 'psychodynamically relevant'. (Leech-Wilkinson, 2018, p. 366)

Picking up on this notion of musical units as psychodynamically relevant, I will now turn to some units in the composition that were emotionally relevant to me as a performer. Storm quotes the chorale in the fifth movement of his piece, in a low register adding harmonic shadows. Other quotes or associations with Schumann pieces that pass by are from the *Fantasie* in C major and the *Geburtstagsmarsch*, which is mentioned in the second movement. Some of the compositional comments depicted below, relating to the first movement, allow me to distort Schumann's motifs to the limit of what can be considered respectable; for me this is very liberating, especially when performing on stage and responding to the reactions of the audience.

Fig. 11 Excerpt from the fourth movement of *Unbekanntes Blatt aus Endenicher Zeit*, and the rhythm and structure of the *Fantasiestücke*, op. 12 by Schumann. The pianist re-interprets this, partly improvising the notes.

Loseff speaks of the process of projective identification between subject (the musician) and the musical object (the work) (Losseff, 2011). Performing is the act of communicating with a work in a meaningful way, with parts of yourself brought into this relationship. Anyone listening to music, or otherwise occupied with describing music (such as a musicologist), can be said to have this relationship.

> But performing offers the subject something over and above a developing relationship with a score in the capacity of interpreter. The act of performing involves the body in making movements which become the music. Indeed, performers may sense that they "are" the music as they are performing, since the performer's body is directly responsible

for producing the music. The more bodily familiar the performer is with a work, the more this is so. In this regard, it may feel as if a complex piece is better known when it has been practised more, since a set of motor activities connect the performer's body intimately with his or her mental knowledge of what the work means as the interpretation evolves during the practice process. The performer is also directly in charge, in real time, of actualizing the music through his or her interpretation. (Losseff, 2011, p. 52)

Losseff draws on the writings of Kramer to introduce the possibility that music understands the interpreter.

It is implicit in Kramer's idea that the interpreter must invest aspects of the self in the interpretative process. Otherwise, challenging or unusual music would not have the power to force us beyond ourselves (we would simply switch off). If music can cause us to discover a new persona, then, Kramer seems to be saying, the narrative of a piece of music can come to perform us: in developing musical material to which the interpreter has brought aspects of the self, the processes of the music cause those aspects of the self to develop as well. (Loseff, 2011, p. 56)

I interpret "aspects of the self" in relation to performing, to being a musician, and how to understand interpretation as a subjective processes, not only as musical rules and traditions that must obeyed. The fourth movement (particularly the end) of Storm's *Unbekanntes Blatt aus Endenicher Zeit* became an expressive, musical representation of the difficulties I have had in interpreting and doing justice to this iconic music. Despite having worked with the concept therapeutically in treatments with patients, I had never considered the possibility of framing my relationship with interpretation with the concept of projective identification. The psychological processes that were part of the collaboration with Storm have been by far the most difficult to explain in words. However, I believe future work conceived with psychological considerations, such as those exemplified in this project, have a real potential to develop compositional processes within western art music. When reading Losseff it suddenly became clear to me that I interpret music, and understand music, but that it is also possible that I assign music to "understand" me, and that I interpret some processes as if music returned my feelings in an altered, resolved form. Losseff discusses the concept of projective-identification-as-interpretation as an act of control over musical material (p. 57), but arguably takes this argument a bit too far: "Similarly, an interpreter who evacuates aspects of the self into the music may find those aspects to be developed and changed through musical resolution, along with musical ideas'' (p. 57). It is when Losseff suggests that "music can have a therapeutic role for the fragile ego, a role which allows the performer to become something stronger and more resilient through the act of performance itself" (p. 57) that I would observe that one must be careful of proposing

the idea that performing music can be therapeutic in a clinical sense, even if this is perhaps not her aim. Music cannot replace a therapeutic process between patient and therapist but it can be used "as a model for some modes of interaction with musical works in which psychological investment might be better understood and hence contained and managed" (Losseff, p.58). Psychoanalysis is a valuable tool in understanding the processes between music and interpreter, as well as between composer and musician.

Chapter 6.

Discussion

> There are human elements that resonate with others, otherwise no connection would be possible and why on earth would the 'rest of the population' feel something about what artists produce? Only artists could get it. Or why would people bother seeing different musicians perform, if the vision of the composer was so separate and unique that no other interpretations of a score were possible? (Brizzi, 2020, p. 75)

This thesis has consisted of a series of case studies, based on projects that were part of my practice as a concert pianist. As suggested in the above quote, I have searched for the "human elements" in classical music performance within me, psychological elements that are a part of performance. These "human elements" are attached to musical interpretation but can be very personal and often emotional, and therefore connected to psychological processes.

The projects contribute, in different ways, to answering the research questions. My first research aim was to better understand the psychological impact of the current performance culture in classical music. The initial dance productions became essential experiences to explore this, as they were not performances in my usual realm. I was *part* of a collective performance, a "musicking" performance (Small, 1998), a part of a dance production and a part of ideas that belonged to a particular choreography, but still I performed traditional piano repertoire. Through the themes that emerged from these productions, such as playfulness, and the boundaries between the tension that surrounds the start of a performance and what I am allowed to display to an audience, I was able to identify phenomena centred on my psychological experience of the performance situation.

I used them in the following project, the *Lied Project*, and connected them to the work, that central musicological object in western classical music. The *Lied Project* resulted in an even stronger thematic finding concerning the work and the concept of Werktreue, a theme that followed me into the experience of the *Performance Simulator* and the *Piano Concert Performances*. However, the initial themes were also used in the design and implementation of strategies for the Schumann piano concerto, the analysis of the

Rachmaninoff concerto, and finally as a basis for the collaborations with composers Olofsson and Storm.

The themes are not only specific to the projects, but are also recurring, underlying performing values (PVs) that affect my performance, and the limitations that can arise when I perform. I have also found that my relationship to the score can be connected to complex emotional processes. It has been important not only to observe and define themes in my projects, but at the same time try to find new ways of approaching them, and transform them into the active ingredients of performing. It has also been important to try these approaches, or strategies, in both experimental settings such as the *Lied Project* and the *Performance Simulator*, as well as in regular performance venues with classical repertoire. I wished to show that it is possible to challenge the canonic repertoire and traditional stage behaviour not only with experimental performances in research environments, but to move this development into the piano recital series and the concert hall, i.e., into the very heart of western classical music. What I hope is that other classical musicians can be inspired by how I have learned from my performances, the thematic approach that I have taken, the design of the projects and analytical process, the PVs that have emerged, and how I have implemented all of this into my concert performances. The theories and concepts that I used were familiar from my practice as a clinical psychologist. It was simply natural for me to combine my knowledge of specific psychological, therapeutic concepts and theories with my musical practice; but musicians interested in conducting Artistic Research can, of course, use other connecting theoretical fields. Musicians can benefit from looking at their practice from a cross-disciplinary standpoint, with the help from other fields such as philosophy, sociology, or ethnology, to give just a few suggestions.

6.1 Emotions affecting performance

Turning towards the second research question, I stated that I would proceed from my own practice, and look at what affects me emotionally during performance. I found that performing canonic repertoire is a complex intrapersonal process that can't be left only to musicologists or music ethnologists to define. Werktreue has been questioned and challenged from the perspectives of musicology, but my contribution as a performing artist has been to emphasize the psychological effects of a rigid performance culture, stemming from Werktreue, and to describe how I perceive these effects in performance situations. I further argue that Music Performance Anxiety can be looked upon not only as an individual condition, but as a part of a complex system of

interactions related to cultural perfectionism and personal values (Skoogh & Frisk, 2019), which are in turn connected to traditions and concepts like Werktreue.

The themes derived from my projects can be used to develop an emotional authenticity, which can be related to Kivy's "The Other Authenticity". In the analysis of my performance of the Rachmaninoff concerto, and in the commissioned pieces, I wanted to re-open Kivy's discussion of sincerity as something that can be a part of performance, part of authenticity, and even part of the work itself.[29]

> In order for the concept of emotive sincerity to do any work for us in explicating personal authenticity in performance there must be an emotion that the performer feels in performance but fails to express. And, furthermore, the failure must be due not to ineptitude but to purposeful dissimulation: deceit. For a failure to express can be a case of insincerity only if the person doing the deed gives the impression of expressing an emotion that he or she in fact does not have, or conceals an emotion that he or she might in fact have by showing no expression at all. (Kivy, 1995, p. 111)

In the piano concerto projects and the commissioned pieces, I have used strategies to improve my understanding of emotional regulation during musical performance, and of the relationship between the score and the traditions and ceremonies of performing. Performing is an everyday life activity for me: it is established as a mix between a sense of being in a social relationship with my audience, and complying with professional demands and expectations. I have found ways to apply the theories of social evaluation and social pressure to my performances, and sought ways to challenge them by actively expressing difficulties and communicating personal thoughts about performing, before performing and even during performance. I have also addressed the expectations that I have felt as a performing artist within western classical music to be personally authentic in the interpretation of the score in combination with a high degree of perfectionism. When I interacted with the audience, interacted with the composers, and with the works of the composers, I used reappraisal as an emotional regulation through the sharing of emotions; but for this to work it has to be honest, or as Kivy describes, has to have an "emotive sincerity" (Kivy, 1995, p.111). Kivy does not find it relevant to discuss sincerity as an explanation for personally authentic performances. "For it is very difficult to see what the emotion is that the performer might feel, and disguise, and that

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[29] In particular this can be found in Olofsson's *Play always as if in the presence of a master* (see both Audiopaper (Research Catalogue https://www.researchcatalogue.net/shared/ee62759e097393abef23200f110a1335) and the video from the recital at Piano Visions https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cOvM_e6CUE0 (Piano Visions, 2018)).

might have anything to do with his or her performance being a bad one" (Kivy, 1995, p.111).

I have shown that emotions do indeed play an important part of performances and of how they are valued. It is through this sincerity, in deliberately not disguising emotions, that I can think and feel differently about the performing situation. This can be carried out by the recreation of meaning, and the reframing of a new appraisal of an emotional event. Being able to be personal and honest about performing, about what is psychologically difficult when trying to interpret or perform a work, is another dimension of Kivy's personal authenticity; this is not connected first hand to the musical work, but rather to personal development. This form of personal authenticity, I call Authenticity as Emotional Expressivity.

At the same time, these projects made me see the narrow frames of western classical music performance. There are possibilities to further explore pre-performance rituals, the moments before performing, and interaction with the audience. Leistra Jones's (2013) interest in what constitutes the identity of performers abiding by the rules of Werktreue in the romantic period can very well be used when looking at the conditions of musicians performing even today. I have shown the values that follow me on-stage, and they are often conflicting. The romantic period's practice of praising self-restraint, of not showing off, and of not revealing too much about oneself as a performer, is still present for me as a performer today. Complying with these rules can have negative consequences if I were to turn to robotic behaviour (Skoogh & Frisk, 2019). This thesis has instead put on display my personal performance values as a challenge to the idea of not revealing too much about oneself.

6.2 Performance Values

Through the different projects I have shown my thought processes and my understanding of the many different, un-exposed factors involved when performing western classical music. "Any "artistic" performance, if one examines it with attention, will show itself to involve more than the art with which it is ostensibly occupied" (Small, 1998, p. 109). Part of what is involved when performing classical music, besides "just" performing, are the values that follow me on-stage. I have found, for example, that one of my performance values is that the western classical music tradition comes with the demand of perfect performances and unspoken rules regarding interpretation and how to perform on stage.

To uncover my values, I have brought forward themes embedded in my practice, worked through them and found ways to not only perform and reproduce the musical work, but also express other aspects of "musicking". The themes are also part of my personal core values concerning performance, or as I define them, my performance values (PVs). Similar values or attitudes among musicians have been observed by Hunter & Broad (2017), who looked at students at conservatories from a creative learning context: "We operate under the assumption that to take the core values of classical music explicitly and critically into account in reflective practice is essential to the way practising musicians understand and respond to the changing world" (Hunter & Broad, 2017, p. 253). Taking the core values of classical music into account is the first step towards understanding the cultural demands that musicians operate within. However, defining individual PVs in relation to these demands is possibly even more important. It has been a way for me to understand and respond to the outside world in which I perform, and most importantly, my inner world too.

PVs (and perhaps even the core values as defined by Hunter and Broad above) are not easily described because sometimes they are the result of internal contradictions. Kesselring (2006) observed how "performance is a conflicting mixture of attraction and avoidance: a challenge on the one hand of being heard and seen and on the other hand a fear of being exposed with possible failure" (p. 5). He touches on the same internal process described by Winnicott: "the urgent need to communicate and the still more urgent need not to be found" (Winnicott, 1965, p. 185). It might seem paradoxical, but to strive for the perfect performance and to be in control of the work will always be my goal, even though this thesis has problematized precisely these issues. It is frustrating and even painful at times, and I know I am not alone with my experiences; this is why I want to direct this thesis first and foremost to other pianists and musicians. I wanted to portray the conflict between being true to the work and performing perfectly, but still being able to bring forward and understand the emotional processes and endeavours I have performing in the culture of western classical music. It is not only a question of Music Performance Anxiety (MPA), but, as I have presented, a web of emotional processes that have not been sufficiently explored or described by musicians. The reasons for this are not easily found, but one contributing aspect is that there is a resistance to displaying difficulties. McGrath, Hendricks, and Smith (2016) have observed that "Music Performance Anxiety is often a taboo subject in music education circles. This is possibly due to a number of issues, including the stigma of performance anxiety as a mental illness and cultural values and perceptions that make performance about the "survival of the fittest" rather than expressive intent" (p. 131). Again, it is probable that this is one of the reasons why suppression is the first choice for musicians when having difficulty performing.

The lack of exploration of musicians' individual processes, whether psychological or not, might have something to do with the taboo of expressing issues such as MPA. Returning again to Winnicott and his observation of "the urgent need to communicate and the still more urgent need not to be found" (1965, p. 185): I have tried to express my need to communicate my fears as a performer, but I have also tried somehow *not to be found*. This is because there is a certain fragility in exposing the difficult aspects of being a performer. I often hesitated in carrying out some parts of the projects, and writing an article about a failed concert performance (Skoogh & Frisk, 2019) was not exactly an easy decision. As choreographer Nir Ben Gal so eloquently put it, it has been a constant balancing act "to maintain the appearance of 'respectable' and 'classical', to not create resistance in the audience, and to allow old perceptions to merge with attempts to create something new" (2015). Artists usually show their most acclaimed concert and CD reviews, their best interviews and pictures, and we aim at displaying our awards and foremost achievements. "Like autoethnographers, artists grapple with exposing their secrets to the world, knowing that once they are out there, these secrets cannot be taken back" (Bartleet, 2013, p. 456). Being successful leads to more success while showing vulnerability will perhaps not lead to more concert engagements.

The PVs described in this thesis have had an emphasis on the difficulties I have encountered as a musician. By identifying some of my PVs and challenging them in the projects, I have transformed them and regulated the emotions connected to them, making them less harmful to me. But PVs must not be limited to negative experiences. It is important to define, address and experiment with positive PVs in future research projects.

It is important for any young, or for that matter older, musician to know that difficulties do not have to be silent or silenced, but can quite the opposite: a source of creation and a clarification of one's values (Skoogh & Frisk, 2019). By sharing the knowledge I have gained from the different projects, I hope to inspire and encourage musicians to develop strategies to move beyond negative experiences and emotions in connection to western classical music performance. With myself and my concert practice as research material, I have offered analyses of the emotional processes that take place, and methods for how to express, explore and define my own PVs. It has been a way for me to find out what makes a classical performance so well defined, but also, from a psychological perspective, elusive.

6.3 Sounding results

In many artistic research projects, knowledge production is less important than the outcome, the artwork itself.

> Problems arise on the question of the objective, because it is taken as a given that the purpose of all research is to help the artist to create a better artwork. The research – be it conceptual research, archive research, fieldwork or experimentation – can be integrated into the creative process, but the outcome being sought is not primarily to increase our knowledge and understanding, but to produce a new work. (Arlander, 2014, p. 33)

While my performances and recordings are to be considered a result of this research as "works of art", this thesis has also resulted in a better knowledge and understanding of the performance values that affects me as a musician. The result of the initial analysis led to new strategies in the later projects, allowing for more openness on psychological processes and a transformed view on myself as a performer. It also led to the discovery that classical music performance can be more playful. Arlander points out that artists should not to be afraid to experiment within their practice out of fear that it could undermine their academic credibility. "Traditionally, performing artists have concentrated on mastering particular skills and being able to apply them in live situations. Playfulness is close to experimentation, but can often be perceived as untrustworthiness in an academic context" (p. 33). I have shown that, on the contrary, playfulness is a very trustworthy source of information, as it is a part of human behaviour, and, not least, artistic expression.

Play always as if in the presence of a master and *Unbekanntes Blatt aus Endenicher Zeit* are the two final projects included in my thesis. They respond to both the second and the third research questions. Perhaps better put, they correspond to the questions rather than answer them in a definite way, as I believe the answer to those questions must be part of a continued research effort in my practice for many years to come. The collaboration *Unbekanntes Blatt aus Endenicher Zeit* has uncovered the psychological processes that are active in my performance. By using projective identification as a therapeutic tool to understand my relationship with the work, the composer, and the score as something more than just a musical, interpretational, and informative text, I examined some quite difficult emotional aspects of performing. Is it possible to use projective identification like that; is it "allowed" from a theoretical and psychological perspective? Psychologists will raise an eyebrow or even two, and the psychologist in me hesitated at first but was convinced by the musician in me, because it expands my understanding of what I am experiencing. Additionally, this project contained hesitations and concerns, that by understanding my psychological relation to music

through the work (Loseff, 2011) I would harm the true meaning of the work or deprive it of some experiential truth, turning it into the "'wrong' sort of performance", as discussed by Butt (2002, p. 55).

Play always as if in the presence of a master answers the last research question concerning how experimental musical practice can challenge the current performance culture of western classical music. Psychological aspects were also a part of the piece and Winnicott's concepts of "potential space" and "play" were used in a domain that they was not intended for. This playful use of psychological concepts in the search for ways to address performance issues is unorthodox, but instrumental. A potential place for me as a performing artist was created by combining a dialogue with Olofsson's composition, my own words, and the motifs by Schumann, all in the quest to play, not to perform in the sense of perfection or to comply with demands. We wanted, in the words of Winnicott, to "examine the place, using the word in an abstract sense, where we most of the time are when we are experiencing life" (Winnicott, 2005, p. 140). This became our artistic interpretation of play, and it helped me avoid being just intellectual about it, and instead helped me to take a step further in concrete, expressive action on-stage. The collaboration also made me relocate Schumann's Sonata, op. 11, in a way that displayed the "work's capacity to communicate anew beyond the impasse of musical formalism and the socially transposed Werktreue ideal" (Savage, 2004, p. 523), and move towards an understanding of the psychological impact that the work has on me.

The two collaborative projects with Olofsson and Storm collected and transformed the themes from the former projects, resulting in works that I will continue to play in my regular concert performances. This is important for two reasons: the results from artistic research must have an artistic result or form, and must be communicated through artistic means. It is indeed important to be able to describe the projects, to write about the working processes, and to develop an analytical understanding of the documentation of artistic procedures and results, but more importantly, I would argue, is that it must be possible to make artistic use of the new knowledge created through the projects, and to be able to "play" the results.[30] Just to put the experience down in writing would merely provide a partial image of the multidimensional outcomes of the project. Here, it is equally important to stress that, in my understanding, the results are not just academic and artistic, but also culturally situated, and make a contribution to the development of a different practice in the context of classical music performance (Piano Visions, 2018, Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra, 2018, Västerås Konserthus, 2019). The results of the collaborations are, of course, the compositions, but also the

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[30] As discussed previously in Section 2.5.1

performances and recordings of the pieces (Skoogh, 2020). These are sounding results that reach not only a scientific community but the concert halls, the organisers of classical music, the audiences, and perhaps most importantly, other musicians.

6.4 Conclusions

This thesis has uncovered my PVs and has shown how the psychological impact of the performance culture in classical music performance can be understood and challenged, through the development of new emotional and artistic strategies. The Schumann piano concerto and the two collaborations with Olofsson and Storm are different examples on how PVs can be addressed and transformed. The focus has been on the inhibiting factors of performance, however it is important to emphasize again that PVs can be positive as well. As outlined by Lamont (2012), performing music is connected to valuable and rewarding experiences, wellbeing, pleasure, engagement and meaning.

> Like listeners, performers' strongest experiences are characterized by engagement and a search for meaning, although they occur largely with non-chosen music that is almost always familiar to the participants and in front of an audience. These experiences have considerable long-term effects on performers' musical lives, and post-event evaluations of those experiences that include some negative elements show that performers recognize the value of performing within their musical careers. These experiences provide valuable and overwhelmingly positive memories of performing which they can draw on to sustain their motivation for music, both from a hedonistic and, more importantly, from a eudaimonic perspective. (Lamont, 2012, p. 589)

As suggested above, it is important for further research to investigate performers' strongest experiences, characterised by an engagement and a search for meaning, and the many positive PVs that exist when performing western classical music.

This thesis is specifically directed towards other musicians, but additionally, it is my hope that the findings can be valuable also in other research fields. Without the active contribution from musicians and artists into the investigation of how they function as performers, and of the values that accompany them on-stage, it is difficult to understand which needs should be addressed scientifically. For music researchers, there are many opportunities to dig into the different aspects of performance, but it is vital to let musicians show the way by collaborating within the field of Artistic Research, and thereby, *together* with musicians, find new ways to transform their experience of performing.

Publications

1. Performance values – an artistic research perspective on music performance anxiety in classical music

    https://jased.net/index.php/jased/article/view/1506

    This article by Francisca Skoogh and Henrik Frisk problematises perfection in western classical music performance and presents the concept of performance values.

2. Play: emotional regulation in classical music performance

    https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/798739/798740

    This article presents two artistic projects which explore new ways of emotionally regulating Music Performance Anxiety (MPA) by identifying performance values connected to the traditions and ceremonies of classical music.

3. Notes from Endenich [CD]. Stockholm: Daphne Records.

    https://open.spotify.com/album/23MMMkIA3mR9b9Fyo0PcZv?si=yqqfRls vQ5uBuALD4SUerQ

    The CD, *Notes from Endenich*, is a recording of the Schumann Sonata, op.11 and the solo piano composition *Unbekanntes Blatt aus Endenicher Zeit*, the outcome of my collaboration with the composer Staffan Storm, revolving around the music of Robert Schumann and psychological processes during interpretation.

4. Play always as if in the presence of a master

    https://www.researchcatalogue.net/shared/ee62759e097393abef23200f110a1 335

    This audio paper by Kent Olofsson and Francisca Skoogh is a sound composition focusing on portraying performance as a potential space, with interpretation as play material. In it, we also hear a pianist with many years of experience in performing Western classical music expresses her performance

values; how she manages emotions connected to expected behaviour on stage and to the repertoire. A transcription of Winnicott's potential space to artistic practice in order to challenge the relations between score and performer, between expected concert traditions. It explores one of the great sonatas of the piano repertoire, the Sonata op. 11 by Robert Schumann.

Appendix

The Musician, the Audience and the Masks

Essay for the Swedish National Radio (translated by the author)

What is hidden in the communication between musicians and audiences? In the programme "Kulturnytt", the poet Magnus William-Olsson says that the work of art is realized as a work of art, not only as a private experience, but when you start talking about the artwork with others.

For classical musicians, the emphasis in interpretation has always been on the male composer and the work. In western music it is the notes that guide and the musicians' focus is to do justice to the score, to be as close to the original sentiment as possible, perhaps above all stylistically. This is so much in focus that there is little room for the listener and for communication with the listener. This communication is in some way expected to happen by itself when the score is correctly interpreted. What Magnus William-Olsson describes is an extension of the interpretation, but it is not particularly prioritized or explored either within research or by artists themselves. Why is the audience left outside like the characters from a painting by James Ensor, like rows of unknown people in the concert hall wearing masks, cardboard figures ready to receive what is interpreted to them? Music is not just music when someone is playing, or when someone is listening, but also when we, together, start talking about music.

"It is very remarkable that a person's unconscious can react to another's unconscious, with the passing of the conscious," Freud writes in 1915. It is worth looking more into the phrasing "with the passing of the conscious". This is the very essence of a ritual that has been composed the way a classical concert is today. The audience, soloist and organizer already know the framework, the conditions. They are clear and communication is arranged in advance. The concert usually starts at 19.30. The audience takes a seat in the chairs and listens. They listen to the musician's interpretation and take it in different ways and then go home. We are all aware of this. We are aware of some of the emotions that are evoked by musicians and the audience.

What none of us know is what emerges in a dream much later, something that was woken up when your thoughts wondered, "when you are no longer at the concert". Did you miss ten minutes of the concert if you didn't listen carefully? Probably not. That is when it is right, the music hits the right spot, the moment becomes real. Something happens within us, our encounter with the unconscious. Freud talks about an "evenly floating attention" where he, as a psychoanalyst, surrenders himself to his own unconscious, mental activity. He tries to avoid thinking consciously, to fixate on something special in the patient's story, tries to avoid "interpretation". In this way, he can capture the patient's unconscious with his own unconscious. A musician captures the audience's unconsciousness with his or her own unconscious.

Projective identification is, in short, based on feelings that a person has placed or "introjected" into another person who also unconsciously begins to act and feel based on what he/she has been transformed into. The concept is close to projection but is more advanced. Music scientist and researcher Nicky Losseff believes that the projective identification not only works between people, but also in a particular relation established between musicians and musical works. Music has become something that embodies emotions, aspects of the musician's emotional life, which the musician unconsciously projects into the work, and which the musician now relates to as if the music were another person.

I have used conversations after the concert to try to get some answers to this phenomenon. I talk to the audience about their experiences shortly after I've finished playing. The audience has been both interested in the conversation but also sceptical. Someone comes forward and thinks it was superfluous to "talk", someone tries to turn up the heat and interview me about my interpretation. A voice, via email, from the audience: "Thanks again for the wonderful Liszt concert. I hope I didn't make you sad when I said I could have avoided the latter part of the concert. It was definitely not meant to be as arrogant a comment as it might seem, but rather an expression that I had wanted to stay in the mood that your playing had left me in. To discuss the current musical experience at that time felt completely out of place for me. A musical experience is, of course, something that can be discussed in general terms, but the complexity of the experience, with all its musical and non-musical associations, is not only coloured by one's own past musical experiences but largely by what one feels that the interpreter wants to convey with his story, and is almost impossible to catch in words. The verbal profane mysticism. And I was really impressed by the huge work of art that you "painted", and somewhere I wanted to stay there for a while. I think many people were in the same place as me, which may explain the rather pending discussion after the break. In short: the first episode of the evening gave me a great experience and aroused a slumbering interest in Liszt's music."

The musician plants unwelcome threatening emotions into the music and regains them in a digested form, so that they can be endured.

Just look at the theme with variations where we first hear a theme that the composer then deepens and works with and finally after going through a transformation, the theme returns. Although it is the same theme that returns, it is now a theme with in-depth content. The recurring theme can have an almost comforting character, a sense of calm and a completed life emerges. The musician does not need the audience for that type of communication, it is done as a projective identification in the space between musicians and works. Sometimes the thought of sharing something so precious can make the musician anxious. Will I succeed in conveying all that the work contains? Will the audience understand me and the work as a symbiotic entity?

The music gives birth to a need for silence, the audience is set in their own stage and is not prepared to participate but wants to be seduced. Inspired by, among others, the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, music researcher Lucy Green describes a musical performance in which the performer wears a mask, both as protection and as a help in his production of a work. Green describes that "the onlooker" is also aware of the mask and that this is a prerequisite for the communication between "displayer" and "the onlooker". To the onlooker, the displayer is double in his or her nature, both someone else and someone else in a mask. The mask is the space between the onlooker and the displayer and that is where the artistic exchange takes place. This puts valuable words to what takes place during a concert. Words that describe that it is not only the person who performs that creates something.

The musician is him or herself on stage, but not quite, and that is what the audience knows, and that is a prerequisite for communication. This "stage-me" is an extra tension, an arousal, perhaps the mask Green is talking about. The mask is not just my design that the audience can see but a mutual product. The one who shows the mask is the one who has the active position, the power to seduce, to attract, while the one who sees can end up in a passive state as the recipient of the interpretation. On the other hand, those who show themselves can end up in a passive, weak state where the mask is used as a protection against, for example, nervousness, fear, and then those who see an overview of the situation, what Green calls "the disarming gaze's power".

The man in the audience who wants to be alone with his experience shows that perhaps the audience also has a mask under which they want to remain. The verbal profane mystique, says the man in the email, the verbality tearing the mask and the silence that is so valuable. When the audience is asked to be part of the performance, they are surprised, sometimes even reluctant. It is not according to the rules of the game. As a psychologist, I am not surprised that the silence emerges in the communication

between musicians and the audience. The silence is always more expressive and filled with content.

In one of Ensor's most famous paintings, "The Intrigue", the people hide behind stiff, silent and threatening masks, not quite unlike the feeling one can get from a foreign audience on stage. When the silence just before the first tone is compact, it can feel lonely when the audience wants magic in the interpretation. In the search for communication and audience co-creation, the distance becomes smaller and the interpretative representation disarmed. As a musician, you want to know that real people hide behind, people whose masks are harmless, people who share a painting brush and scene with the performer and become part of the experience.

Audience letter

My letter to the audience in the programme from the Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra, 2018.

KÄRA PUBLIK! Det är över 30 år sedan jag debuterade på denna scenen. Jag var mycket nervös och jag minns att jag var fascinerad av hur förändrad jag blev när jag mötte er på väg nedför trappan i min stads konserthus. Jag blev rädd, nyfiken och upplyft på samma gång. Detta att vänta bakom scenen, att gömma sig, att sedan plötsligt träda fram med allt arbete som ligger bakom ett framförande, alla tvivel, så naken och skyddslös som man är. Först efter att jag samarbetat med koreografen Nir Ben Gal förstod jag att andra framträdande, scenskapande människor funderar på detta och vad det gör med oss. I den koreografi jag medverkade i som pianist, kallad Rikud, utforskar han gränslandet mellan att vara på och av scenen. Det han gjorde var att presentera bakom scenen-beteende på scenen och leka med den respekt vi har för scenen. Den respekten gör oss ibland lamslagna. "Scenen är en lekplats, den är inte en allvarlig plats där du måste vara ditt bästa jag, den borde vara en plats för att leka."

Hans uttalande kanske låter som en anledning att slarva eller inte vara väl förberedd men det är precis tvärtom. Före kvällens konsert låter jag mig inspireras av honom och vågar mig på att möta er i upptakten före konserten och jag provar på att låta er komma in och höra mig värma upp inför konserten i Lilla salen ca en halvtimme före konserten. Det kanske inte låter så märkvärdigt men för mig som klassisk musiker är alla gränser inom tradition och ceremonier svåra att utforska, det vet jag nu efter 30 år. Normalt skulle jag vara ensam och förbereda mig i solistlogen. När jag tänker tillbaka så var det som om jag som barn visste det redan intuitivt, att detta måste jag titta närmare på. Rikud är en lekfull rit mellan dansare, musiker och publik. Den riten, mellan oss på scenen och ni som lyssnar är något som pågått för mig som musiker så länge jag kan minnas. Ni kanske också tänker på den?

FRANCISCA SKOOGH
KONSERTPIANIST
DOKTORAND I KONSTNÄRLIG FORSKNING

Francisca Skoogh är en av Sveriges främsta konsertpianister och sedan maj 2018 ledamot i Kungliga Musikaliska Akademien. Under åren har hon framträtt med ett flertal dirigenter såsom Heinz Wallberg, Michail Jurovskij, Leif Segerstam, Susanna Mälkki and Gianandrea Noseda.

Francisca är doktorand i konstnärlig forskning vid Musikhögskolan i Malmö, Lunds Universitet. Ämnet är pianisten på scenen och kommunikationen som sker i scenögonblicket.

Translation of letter to the audience:

Dear audience! It has been over 30 years since I made my debut on this stage. I was very nervous and I remember being fascinated by how transformed I became when I met you on the way down the stairs on the stage in my city concert hall. I was scared, curious and uplifted at the same time. To wait behind the stage, to hide, to then suddenly come forward with all the work that is behind a performance, all doubts, naked and unprotected. Only after working with choreographer Nir Ben Gal did I realize that performing artists in other fields are thinking about this and even using it as artistic material. *Rikud* explores the boundary between being on and off stage. What Ben Gal did was to present behind-the-scenes behaviour on the stage and play with the respect we have for the stage, a respect that sometimes inhibits us. "The stage is a playground, it's not a serious place where you have to be your best self, it should be a place to play." His statement may sound like a reason to neglect or not be well prepared, but it's just the opposite. Before tonight's concert I let myself be inspired by him and dared to meet you in the pre-concert talk and I let you come in and hear me warm up before the concert in the Little Hall, about half an hour before the concert. It may not sound so strange, but for me as a classical musician, all boundaries in tradition and ceremonies are difficult to explore, I know that now after 30 years. Normally, I would be alone and prepare for my solo performance. When I think back, it was as if I, as a child, already knew intuitively that I must look into this more closely. *Rikud* is a playful ritual between dancers, musicians and audiences. That ritual, between us on stage and you who listen, is something that has been going on for me as a musician for as long as I can remember. You might also be thinking about it?

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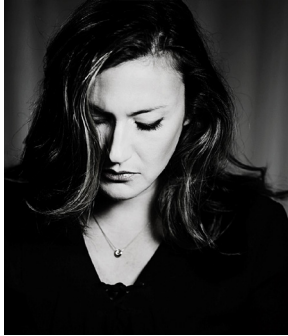
Transforming Performance

Francisca Skoogh made her debut at the age of 13 with the Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra and has since established herself as one of Sweden´s foremost concert pianists. She was the recipient of the prestigious "Premier Prix" in both chamber music and piano at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse in Paris and the Soloist Diploma at The Royal Danish Music Conservatoire. Francisca has been awarded the soloist prize in Stockholm as well as second prize at the Michelangeli Competition in Italy.

Photo: Rickard Söderberg

Francisca´s recordings have received rave reviews and can be found on Spotify and Youtube.

Francisca Skoogh is a frequent guest at both national and international music festivals and as a soloist she appears regularly with several of the Swedish orchestras and she has co-operated with conductors such as Heinz Wallberg, Ruth Reinhardt, Susanna Mälkki, Gianandrea Noseda, Michail Jurowski and Pinchas Steinberg. During recent years she has had a close cooperation with conductor Leif Segerstam with concertos by Brahms, Beethoven and Rachmaninov. Francisca has performed together with several of Sweden's foremost musicians and has premiered various works by contemporary composers. She has ongoing collaborations with composers Staffan Storm, Kent Olofsson and Royal Court Singer Anna Larsson, alto, among others.

Francisca is a piano teacher at the Performance Programmes at Malmö Academy of Music, Lund University. From 2008-2019 she also worked as a clinical psychologist in fields such as primary health care and pain rehabilitation. She has used psychological theory, her clinical experience as psychologist and her experience as a performing artist in courses and lectures such as "The Performing Human Being".

In 2018 she was elected member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Music. This artistic research project challenges classical music performance culture through a series of experimental collaborative projects. Francisca's particular interest lies in how this culture shapes the psychological experience of performance from the perspective of the individual musician.

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