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Citation: Pace, I. (2019). In Defence of Analytically-Informed Performance. Keynote Paper presented at the International encounters on Music Theory and Analysis Conference, 6 Nov 2019, São Paulo, Brazil.

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In Defence of AIP (Analytically-Informed Performance): The Performance-Analysis Dialectic Revisited

Keynote lecture, International Encounters on Music Theory and Analysis Conference (EITAM), São Paolo, 6 November 2019.

Abstract: Over a period of time, a group of internationally influential British musicologists, most prominent amongst them Nicholas Cook, have published a range of articles investigating the relationship between analysis in performance, provoked initially by antipathy towards other work on this subject from Wallace Berry and Eugene Narmour. Cook's analysis-related writings range from relatively uncontentious espousals of a variety of analytical techniques, through other writings broadening the scope of analysis to better encompass hybrid art forms such as music with video and film, then through intricate attempts to explore a two-way interaction between analysis and performance, whereby the analyst has the potential to learn as much from the performer as vice versa, towards more recent writings in which he coins the term 'Analytically-Informed Performance' (AIP) as a counterpart to Historically-Informed Performance (HIP), and argues against the value of such a practice.

In this paper, I mount a defence of AIP, starting from the position that a great many of the decisions any performer must make inevitably constitute some type of analytical perspective. Framing the concept of analysis broadly, incorporating the analysis of other performances, I survey the potential relationship between a range of different advanced analytical strategies and the type of work and associated questions generally undertaken by performers, whilst continuing to support the position taken by mid-period Cook and others, whereby analytical approaches can be modified or nuanced fruitfully by incorporation of perspectives derived from performance. I incorporate this discussion into a wider model of practice-as-research, presenting analytically-informed techniques as a sub-species of performative approaches and attitudes, which can also involve historical, documentary, stylistic and other approaches, or ideally some combination thereof. In particular, I argue that the analytical dimension, and all it can real about the specifics of any individual compositions, provide a way beyond the anonymising of works in terms of all-purpose period style as critiqued by 1950 by Adorno, writing about the Bach performances of his time.

I demonstrate these arguments through a range of examples, from Debussy, Dukas, Ives, Stockhausen, Finnissy and others, including some of the works presented in the recital I will be giving in this festival. I also add an autoethnographic dimension by surveying how various manifestations of the approaches described have informed my own work as a performer and concurrent musicologist over a quarter-century.

The starting point for this paper comes from a passage in the 2013 book *Beyond the Score: Music as Performance*, by Nicholas Cook.

And Rosen's take here on historically informed performance—which is not so different from the post-Taruskin consensus—might suggest a corresponding take

on ‘analytically informed performance’. Whereas in HIP the interaction between scholarship and performance has always taken place in the studio, rehearsal room, and concert hall, with scholars often serving as consultants to performers, interactions between theorists and performers have tended to take place on campus, on the scholar’s turf: more than HIP, what I shall term AIP has been pursued within the contexts of academic epistemologies, modes of dissemination, and criteria for evaluation. (An obvious reason for this difference is that there is not a distinctive AIP audience, in the way there is an HIP one.) Two further comparisons should reinforce the point. The first may seem rather ironic, given my suggestion in Chapter 2 that the prescriptive nature of the page-to-stage approach resulted in part from the influence of composer-theorists such as Edward T. Cone. I am now suggesting that a useful model for the relationship between analysis and performance might be found in that between theory and composition. Composers who work within the context of academia are theoretically informed, but do not simply translate theory into composition, even (perhaps especially) when it is their own theory: they use it rather to open up previously unimagined possibilities, to spark ideas off, to react against, to play with, and so to forge a conception that is both sonic and personal. Performers do all of that, and the example of composition shows that the academy is capable of supporting epistemological pluralism. (p. 97)

Here is my response to this, as published in a review-article of that book published in 2017:

He [Cook] notes disparagingly that in the work of Wallace Berry, ‘Practice is subordinated to theory’, but of what performance is this not in some sense the case? What teachers preach and performers follow, even in a conservatoire, are ‘theories’; the issue is the degree of critical reflection. Cook coins a term, ‘analytically informed performance’, or AIP, which he claims exists primarily on campuses and ‘has been pursued within the contexts of academic epistemologies, modes of dissemination, and criteria for evaluation’ (p. 97). This resembles another of his concepts: ‘[S]tructuralist performance, better known as modernist performance, the kind of performance in terms of which Schenker’s writings on performance have been read, should be seen as a historical style, and not the paradigm for performance in general as which it has been widely represented in music-theoretical and pedagogical circles’ (p. 87). I do not know what a non-‘structuralist’ performance would be; all performers in some sense articulate some structural aspects of a piece, whether wittingly or not. In chapter 7, Cook is sceptical as to whether ‘large-scale structure’ is ‘the most productive place to look for the emergence of musical meaning’ (p. 246), citing [Daniel] Leech-Wilkinson cautioning performers to be wary of music theorists. But every performer needs to make decisions about such long-range factors as relative dynamics, tempos, use of different sounds, and textures at strategic points. To maintain that analytical work could never fruitfully inform performers in these respects appears like bad conscience or even musicological anti-intellectualism. Tim Carter has written about students who think that other than simply ‘playing the notes’, all one needs is ‘sincerity and reverence’; such students would be as dismissive of the work of Cook and his colleagues at CHARM [Centre for the History and Analysis of Recorded Music] as they would of the work that CHARM is keen to disregard.

Ian Pace, 'The New State of Play in Performance Studies', *Music & Letters*, vol. 98, no. 2 (May 2017), pp. 281-292 (quote from p. 289)

In 2011, I took part in a roundtable in a study day on 'Performing Musicology' at my own institution, City, University of London, together with Cook's colleagues in CHARM, Daniel Leech-Wilkinson and John Rink. Leech-Wilkinson gave a statement, delivered with a demeanour of affected aristocratic disdain, feigning horror at a phenomenon by which performers were supposedly starting to pay attention to musicologists, and this was affecting the nature of their performances. To Leech-Wilkinson, this was thoroughly wrong, preferring the unmediated, instinctive responses of those performers unsullied by such decadent intellectualism. In contrast to this, he played a recording of Chopin performed by Alfred Cortot, as an example of the type of golden age performance he favoured before the rot set in. Cortot became a type of noble savage of a performer for Leech-Wilkinson, and the audience there could marvel as he was lost in rapture at this, before returning to his characteristic Anglophone anti-intellectual invective. A further aspect of the latter was a predictable and almost mannered attack on the 'authoritarian' nature of musicological discourse, though when pushed by me, Leech-Wilkinson refused to consider that any comparably authoritarian or hierarchical culture might intrude on the world of the conservatoire. I myself have undertaken a considerable amount of research and activism into many incidences of physical, emotional and sexual abuse taking place in conservatoires and specialist music schools, married to a rigid set of values in which prestigious teachers are assigned a type of total power over students, free to manipulate, bully, and humiliate them on a regular basis, and in some cases brutally assault them as well, while managements in such institutions have threatened students with dismissal and destruction of career prospects if they dare to report such things, [as for example in the case of students whose teacher attempted to rape them in sound-proofed practice rooms, so that no-one would hear them scream.] If anyone wishes to know more about specific cases in this respect, which have been fully documented as a result of criminal trials, I would be happy to say more during questions. But for this reason, I wholly reject the attitudes of Leech-Wilkinson as expressed on that occasion, and in various writings, though he has tempered this view in some later writings. In 2011, he slavishly admired many 'great performers' who could do no wrong, but concentrates his ire on musicologists who suggest to performers that the nature of various harmonic processes in works of music might suggest emphasising certain moments in their performances.

Leech-Wilkinson's view is echoed in Cook's recent writings and some of Rink's (all three of them co-founders of CHARM), which share a quite obsessive disdain for something they construct variously as 'structuralism', 'modernism', which has supposedly corroded the earlier twentieth-century traditions they lionise. Both Leech-Wilkinson and Cook's disdain for musicological input into performance (Cook makes disparaging straw man comments about how historically-informed performance, 'the net effect was to subjugate the practice of performance to the regime of scholarship and the written word' in an essay on empirical musicology and interdisciplinary performance studies, as if such performers did little else) presumably does not apply to their own work, or if it does, such work can comfortably be avoided by such performers.

In this paper, I will look at some key texts on analysis and performance, then give a brief overview of Cook's own changing relationship to musical analysis, and mount a defence of the relevance of analysis to performers, also arguing that this is far from being a particular recent phenomenon, if the concepts are framed more broadly. I focus on Cook, who will feature prominently in another forthcoming review-article, and also a book chapter which places his work at the centre of some tendencies in recent British musicology. This is not because of any sort of reverence, but rather concern for the highly didactic nature especially of his recent work, with its cavalier dismissals of whole fields of scholarship and indeed performance proceeding from different assumptions, not always from any position of real familiarity on the part of Cook, and a tendency to lionise other scholars, regardless of any other merits or otherwise of their work, simply because they hold to the same party line, in a manner which I believe has created very real and thoroughly inept new hierarchies. A former Regius Professor of Music at the University of Cambridge deserves to be subject to more of a critical perspective than has been customary, not least because of acolytes whose own careers have owed a fair amount to his patronage.

For reasons of time, I will put to one side the important works (sometimes only in sketch form) relating to performance with an analytical component, by Heinrich Schenker, Theodor Adorno or Rudolf Kolisch, and concentrate on a body of work which has developed in more recent times. One of the first major book-length studies of analysis and performance was Edward T. Cone's *Musical Form and Musical Performance* (1968), based upon a series of lectures given at Oberlin College in 1967.

Cone focused initially in particular on issues of timing, not least relating to gaps between sections of movements of a piece. Amongst his other interesting conceptions was that 'Active listening is, after all, a kind of vicarious performance, effected, as [Roger] Sessions puts it, by "inwardly reproducing" the music – which, I take it, is also what Hindemith means by "mental coconstruction."' (p. 21) This dignifies the listener with a *creative* rather than purely analytical one, and by implication stresses the creative nature of analysis itself – for what is active listening if not some type of aural analysis? He also looked sceptically at the idea of an 'ideal' or 'perfect' interpretation, recognising the extent to which this corresponded to some Platonic ideal of 'the music'.

Otherwise, Cone focused upon some quite fundamental aspects of basic musical diction, offering suggestions as to how, for example, certain phrases or sub-phrases in a Mozart Sonata might be emphasised or de-emphasised by a performer in light of an informed view of their function in terms of harmony and voice-leading. Looking at the Chopin C minor Prelude, Cone recognised multiple analytical readings of the bass lines, and concomitant choices available for performers, so that no interpretation in this respect would be exhaustive. In the A major Prelude, he discerned ways in which one half of the piece can be read as a diminution of the other, and suggested means to emphasise certain bars to make this clear. Cone even considered performance of electronic music (a realm studiously avoided in later writings by Cook) and how this changes conceptions of the nature of 'performance'. In the third main section, Cone considered the limitations of overarching stereotypical conceptions of particular composers and the corresponding demands for performance – playing Beethoven 'passionately', Mozart 'Classically', Schumann 'Romantically', and so on, noting a problematic implied historical teleology of increasing freedom until this was

frustrated by the metronomic dictates of Stravinsky. From this, he considered the dialectic between style (something common to a whole body of works) and form (unique to a particular work). While Cone did not relate this to performance, this dichotomy is I believe of fundamental importance in this context, and I will return to it presently.

Cone's work was refreshingly non-didactic; he rarely if ever attempted to prescribe any singular approach to interpretation, but instead drew upon information from score-based analysis to suggest new possibilities for performance strategies. Nothing in the book suggests to me other than that he was seeking creative and meaningful approaches to the very act of performance, which yielded stimuli of considerable subtlety and insight.

But this area of scholarship lay relatively dormant for some time, until the appearance of few pieces in the 1980s by Joel Lester and Janet Schmalfeldt, and then the appearance of Wallace Berry's *Musical Structure and Performance* in 1989. This was a much more extended book than Cone's, and so I will just focus on parts of it. Berry at the outset was careful 'not to deny that intuitively informed performance is often convincing, as for example when a gifted interpreter, out of long and profound experience, relatively spontaneously finds the "right" tempo or dynamic inflection', but felt this was relatively rare, and argued that analysis might facilitate such a process. Berry also recognised that the relationship between analysis and interpretive decisions was far from straightforward, and remarked that 'Analysis tempers the purely subjective impulse, resolves unavoidable dilemmas, and offers means by which the teacher can articulate ideas persuasively and rationally'

Key aspects of interpretation, for Berry, included tempo and its modification, and articulation, while key analytical concerns related to musical structure and within this, *function*, which he defined as 'the place and processive role of any given event in an identifiable directed tendency'. But at the same time he recognised the importance of 'surface and near-surface detail – a piece's individuating, comparatively dense network of foreground and middleground lines', and the immediacy of these elements. He felt nonetheless that these should be informed by a wider conception of the whole.

'Pianists, singers, conductors and other performers make choices, and to deny that these ought to have reasoned bases would seem to negate the imperative of rationality itself, a value by which at least in more civilized moments we like to think ourselves guided.' (p. 7, beginning of chapter 2)

Intuition was certainly valid, but could 'also be a capricious guide, and is clearly inadequate in solving problems, as when a performer faces a dilemma respecting tempo or articulation, and where an interpretive choice needs to be underscored with explanation and substantiation, as in teaching.' (p. 8) He also viewed as 'scarcely disputable' the following comment by Schmalfeldt:

'There is no single, one-and-only performance decision that can be dictated by an analytic observation.' [italics in original]

Berry looked at some basic textual issues of the correct pitch in works of Beethoven and Chopin, and used analytical means to answer these (as others have done). The famed A-natural/A-sharp dilemma in the lead-up to the recapitulation of Beethoven's *Hammerklavier* Sonata, was resolved by Berry as A-natural on the grounds of 'the vital function of chromatic voice leading' (p. 13). Elsewhere he considered Schenker's conclusions on how dynamic shading may help to articulate intervallic progressions and the vitality of emphasising chromatic alterations, and was sympathetic without necessarily embracing Schenker's derivation of general rules. He also suggested how players might emphasise particular notes to bring out voice-leading, for example in a song of Hugo Wolf, and considered whether, in a Beethoven Symphony, the conductor might underline a type of written-out acceleration through motivic fragmentation and imitation in *stretto* (by adding a literal acceleration of the tempo), or whether the processes do the work already sufficiently? This is to me a key question in interpretation, to which I would add a third possibility: the interpreter might do something quite distinct from the processes implied by the score, either as an act of caprice, or in order to create a distinct and dialectical perspective. In this case, the conductor could actually slow down, in order to bring the *stretto* processes into closer focus. In a detailed analysis of Debussy's song 'C'est l'extase langoureuse' (the first of the *Ariettes oubliées*), Berry considers the basic tonal idiom, the metrical and rhyming structure of the poem, as well as its use of 'sound images', the formal divisions and delineators of the music, motivic components (both vertical and horizontal), the relationship between melody and accompaniment and more. All of this analysis is then used to derive conclusions about tempo, dynamics and other aspects of performance.

A year prior to the appearance of Berry's book, Eugene Narmour published another much-remarked-upon essay, 'On the Relationship of Analytical Theory to Performance and Interpretation'. Narmour considered the naivete of a view by which the performer's responsibility lied wholly in terms of the composer (though he overstated the extent to which this has been traditionally the case), preferring a tripartite model of an interrelationship between composer, performer and listener, with the performer bringing to bear upon a work their own aesthetic beliefs, experience of style and learning tradition. At the same time, they should not only consider the wishes of the composer, but also the sensibilities of the audience.

But Narmour went on somewhat prescriptively to look negatively at, for example, performances of Brahms's *Intermezzo* op. 118, no. 1, which did not connect the opening three-note stepwise descending figure in the treble to the following chord in the bass. Narmour's argument was that the last note of the treble motive ended on a weak sixth, while the crotchet motion implied that the music moved into the following bar, not to mention the accent on the left hand chord. Furthermore, the last cadence of the piece is said to 'confirm' this pattern. To Narmour, pianists were too clear to bring out the arpeggios, and lost a sense of the four note motive, and he did not hesitate to criticise Julius Katchen in this respect. Glenn Gould, on the other hand, was praised for bringing out the motive, but condemned for omitting a repeat, which was said to undermine the work's proportions.

I cannot agree unequivocally with Narmour here – I believe that the phrasing suggests a fragmented motive which only incidentally connects with the left hand chord, a

latent relationship which is only finally made manifest in the last bars, rather than requiring to be so from the outset.

(a)

1. Intermezzo
Allegro non assai, ma molto appassionato

The musical score for '1. Intermezzo' is presented in three systems. The first system begins with a forte (f) dynamic and a crescendo hairpin. The second system continues the melodic and harmonic development. The third system concludes with a 'dim. rit.' (diminuendo and ritardando) marking and a final cadence. The word 'espress.' (espressivo) is written in the first system.

(b)

The musical score for the second part of the analysis is presented in two systems. The first system shows a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The second system continues the piece, featuring a 'dim. rit.' (diminuendo and ritardando) marking and a final cadence.

Narmour also considers the conception of melodic ‘nonclosure’, and how particular intervallic content creates melodic implications, and interestingly how some analytical considerations of the Overture to Handel’s *Messiah* might inform an assumption of

employing double-dotted rhythm— another case of generalised style and the particularities of individual works existing in a dialectical relationship. On this basis, he arrives at value judgements relating to particular performances of this work, favouring the double-dotted approach. He also considers how some of Richard Strauss's writing in *Der Rosenkavalier* can be viewed as counter-intuitive in terms of contour and dynamics, and the implications for performers. Once again, he compares different performances and presents evaluations on the basis of his analytical perceptions.

Narmour's work can read as prescriptive, an analyst attempting to tell performers what they can do. I prefer to read it as simply one writer giving their own view, which readers and performers are free to accept or dispute. Certainly I believe some of his insights could be most valuable for performers approaching any of the scores in question, whether or not they necessarily share all of his conclusions.

Bit from my Arnold piece. Creation of *Music Analysis*, and Whittall/Dunsby book. But then Cook's as well.

Overview of Cook on analysis. Cook is a prolific writer, so I will concentrate upon his principal publications relating to performance here.

1987 *A Guide to Musical Analysis*

1989 *Musical Analysis and the Listener*

1990 *Music, Imagination, and Culture*

1995 'The Conductor and the Theorist: Furtwängler, Schenker, and the First Movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony'. In *The Practice of Performance: Studies in Musical Interpretation*, edited John Rink (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 105-125.

1996 *Analysis through Composition: Principles of the Classical Style*

1998 *Analysing Musical Multimedia*

1999 'Analysing Performance and Performing Analysis'. In *Rethinking Music*, edited Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 239-61. Modified versions of the same: 'Words about Music, or Analysis versus Performance'. In *Theory into Practice: Composition, Performance and the Listening Experience* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1999), pp. 9-52; 'Music as Performance'. In *The Cultural Study of Music: A Critical Introduction*, edited Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert and Richard Middleton (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 204-14.

2007 'Performance Analysis and Chopin's Mazurka's', *Musicae Scientiae*, vol. 11, no. 2 (2007), pp. 153-4, 183-207.

2011 'Off the Record: Performance, History, and Musical Logic'. In *Music and the Mind: Essays in Honour of John Sloboda*, edited Irène Deliège and Jane

Davidson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, pp. 291-310).

2013 *Beyond the Score: Music as Performance*

Both *A Guide to Music Analysis* and *Music, Imagination and Culture* consist in large measure of critical summaries of others' analyses. Original analyses are rare, and certainly not extended; much of Cook's original content is relatively general or consists of passing observation. To some extent this is also true of *Analysing Musical Multimedia*, with the exception of a few passages such as his analysis of Madonna's 'Material Girl' or a step-by-step overview of the sequences in Walt Disney's *Fantasia*. The situation is somewhat different in *Analysis through Composition*, which contains a fair amount of original content, albeit designed as an introductory textbook for students of basic elements of the classical style rather than more in-depth analyses. It is difficult to identify any major

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, much of Cook's work was occupied with a type of 'meta-musicology', turning his hand to pronouncements on a range of different subjects, to the point where few collections of essays published in the UK would not have a Cook contribution. He also took prominent positions in various capacities which enabled him to bestow patronage on favoured scholars. In the 2010s Cook focused upon performance, and took harsher views on the relationship between this and analysis than had been the case in some of his important earlier writings.

There are many issues I have with Cook's work. He is profoundly unsympathetic to new music (except when produced by a small few of his acolytes), and also to a great many varieties of continental musicology, even to the point of accusing one French musicologist of reiterating 'the Nazi creed of "blood and soil"' when she criticised his eschewal of any socially critical function of music. His critiques of historically-informed performance show no knowledge of the wider history of the movement, nor is his rhetoric matched by proper data such as might be achievable through a wide range of listening, and perhaps also proper study of relevant writings, interviews, sources, and so on. At a recent talk which Cook gave at City, he admitted under questions that he had only very limited knowledge of medieval music, of historical performance, did not seem to understand the conception of free improvisation, and remained resolutely oblivious to studio composition, while he could not name a single analyst who supposedly epitomised some of the tendencies he associated with serial music. But none of this prevented him from pronouncing on all of these subjects. As such, many of his claims are unsubstantiated and hollow and do not fulfil basic scholarly criteria, if one includes amongst these evidence of sustained engagement with an area before presenting sweeping interpretations of that area as a whole, or not ignoring inconvenient phenomena which do not sit easily with the over-arching arguments one wishes to make.

These same problems reappear, albeit somewhat less starkly, in his writings on analysis and performance. In the essay 'Analysing Performance and Performing Analysis', he focuses on Berry's work, with one particular critique: 'Performers, it seems, have a great deal to learn from analysis; the possibility of a reciprocal process of learning is apparently not considered'. Narmour is viewed as an even more extreme example, and he cites Tim Howell as calling such writing 'authoritarian', while Cook's view of the work of Fred Lerdahl and some of Schenker and 'structuralist

music theory' in general is of a similar nature. I do not believe this work is any more 'authoritarian' than any other type of value judgement; Berry and Narmour's conclusions are far from arbitrary or uninformed, even though their applicability to some repertoire may be limited. Cook thinks that 'Lerdahl and Narmour both eliminate the musician as an individual, and replace him or her by a theory whose input is some kind of musical text and whose ultimate output is an aesthetic judgement'. But instead of this, I would say that Lerdahl and Narmour are acting in the manner of performers in their analyses – they are imagining ways of performing the music on the basis of responses to musical texts. Nonetheless, Cook goes on to think of how analysts might learn from what performers actually do, rather than what they think they should, and I would wholeheartedly endorse incorporation of this dimension. By the time of *Beyond the Score*, however, Cook's move away from analysis in the 2000s, the view has become more negative, in line with the opening quotation. The possibilities of a fruitful dialogue between analysts and performers has disappeared, though the weight of Cook's negative judgement (which is surely as 'authoritarian' as any of those he critiques) was much more strongly weighted against analysts back in the 1999 essay.

In his famed 1950 essay, 'Bach gegen seine Liebhaber verteidigt' (Bach defended against his devotees), Theodor Adorno argued against a type of mechanical performance of historically-informed performance of Bach which he observed at the time, claiming 'they say Bach and mean Telemann and are secretly in agreement with the regression of musical consciousness which even without them remains a constant threat under the pressures of the culture industry'. More widely, he argued that many of those celebrating Bach's work – writing at the time of the bicentenary of his death in 1950 – 'have made him into a composer for organ festivals in well-preserved Baroque towns, into ideology'. Similar views are found in his sketched Theory of Musical Reproduction – a disdain for performers and performances which reduce the particular to the general. This maps onto Cone's dichotomy of style and form, and can be said to differentiate historically-informed from analytically-informed performance. It would be too simplistic and crude to claim that historically-informed performance, much maligned by Cook, deals only with issues of period style (and instruments, techniques, seating, etc.), as various such work draws upon historical documentation relevant to specific works and their historical performance. Nonetheless, approaches derived from work-immanent analysis are an important counterbalance to re-emphasise the particularity of remarkable works of music and their specific demands in performance.

But this latter approach is not necessarily anything new. Few performances of any value could not be said to entail some type of response to the particularities of their scores. All performers need to make some decisions on tempo and tempo modification, articulation, voicing or balance, rhythmic nuance, timbre, and so on. How one shapes a phrase is surely based upon perceptions of its melodic contour and/or harmonic function of particular pitches (and perhaps relationship to other phrases in the work) – this is, in the broadest sense of the term, analytical information which is feeding into performance. Even quite spontaneous and capricious interpretive decisions are not often wholly divorced from any consideration of the score. It would certainly be erroneous to imagine that many renowned musicians of past eras were oblivious to analytical or music-theoretic considerations, as so many of them benefited from a rich and rigorous musical education over and above their

training as performers, and brought a consequent level of insight and perception to the music they played as a result. The implied view of Leech-Wilkinson and others of older performers inhabiting some realm free from such theoretical or analytical corruption is little more than a romanticised view of a golden age. Perhaps the only major exceptions are literalist or objectivist performers such as Arturo Toscanini, Bruno Walter, Walter Gieseking or Hermann Scherchen, who were primarily concerned with the letter of the texts they interpreted. Examples such as that described by Cook of Wilhelm Furtwängler drawing upon the work of Heinrich Schenker are only striking because at the time Schenker's theories were unusual and had not yet won widespread acceptance.

So in a broad sense, analytically-informed performance is a long-established practice; what is different about the work of Cone, Berry, Narmour and others is the extent to which they sometimes draw upon more systematic approaches to such analysis. If one believes that analysis can provide important and valuable information relating to musical scores, as I certainly do, then why should performers not draw upon this (selectively, of course)?

My view of notation.

I now want to present a few small examples of places where my own decisions inevitably reflect analytical decisions. The example from the seventh of Debussy's *Préludes*, Book 2 (1911-13), '...La terrasse des audiences du clair de lune', shows a transition from a texture spanning the whole compass of the keyboard (albeit with only one note in the lower two-and-a-half octaves, though this can be accounted for through Debussy's characteristic concern with timbral balance), to a focus on dense chords within a roughly three-octave tessitura in the upper half of the instrument, combined with wide-voiced bass octaves with a fifth. But then there is a major shift in focus at the *Un peu anime* towards the central registers, accentuated by other aspects of the change of character from mysticism to playfulness. If the pianist releases the low bass sonorities at this point, a whole layer of sound evaporates, adding extra clarity to the new material, exactly analogous to either a cinematic zoom or at least shift of focus (the repeated low B-flat in the second bar of the new section becomes just a residue of the preceding section, no longer given the focus provided by the earlier voicing).

The image shows a musical score for a piano piece. It consists of three staves: a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a separate bass staff. The music is in a key with three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a 3/4 time signature. The score is divided into two sections by a vertical bar line. The first section features a wide range of notes, with a dense texture in the upper register and a single low note in the bass. The second section, marked 'Un peu anime', shows a shift in focus towards the central registers, with dense chords and a more active bass line. A dashed line labeled 'B' is drawn above the first section, indicating a specific voicing or focus. The score includes dynamic markings such as 'pp' and 'B-flat' notes.

Musical score for piano, measures 7-8. The score is in G major and 3/8 time. Measure 7 features a complex texture with multiple chords in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. Dynamics include *pp* and *pp più pp*. Measure 8 continues the texture with a *p marque* dynamic. A "8^a bassa" marking is present in the left hand of measure 7.

Musical score for piano, measures 6-8. The score is in G major and 3/8 time. Measure 6 is marked "Un peu anime léger" and *pp*. Measure 7 features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand, with dynamics *m.d.* and *pp*. Measure 8 continues the texture with a *pp* dynamic. A "8^a ba" marking is present in the left hand of measure 8.

This almost a programmatic decision, though nothing that is necessarily implied by the subtitle of the piece. Rather it is a means for me of adding an extra dramatic element by introducing an isolated moment of intimacy, but clearly informed by the function of the passage in question, as one of the few moments which is concentrated in the central registers without regular punctuation from within a wider tessitura – the other comes towards the end.

Plus lent

8

8

p

pp

(timbrez légèrement la petite note)

In the passage from the first movement, 'Emerson', from Ives's *Concord Sonata* shown here, there is a relatively clear distinction between an upper melodic line and an accompaniment. Nonetheless, the main lyrical theme from the movement is fragmented and reassembled with notable shifts of register. Many performances I have heard attempt to contain this material within some sense of continuous line, but I perceive instead a quasi-cinematic interplay between distinct layers. Through voicing, rhythm, and phrasing, I prefer to separate these out as if they constitute a type of musical montage, with some continuity between the strands only achieved on the second system.

Main 'Emerson' lyrical theme.

pp

p

rit.

poco rit.
pp
f
l.h.
slowly
faster

f
cresc. and faster
3

In an earlier place in the movement, the fragmentation is more obvious because of sudden changes of density, anticipating a series of arpeggios which come very soon afterwards.

The musical score consists of four systems of piano and left hand parts. The first system is marked *mf* and *quite fast*. The second system includes markings for *p*, *rit.*, *ff*, and *very fast*, with a section marked *slower and rather quietly again*. The third system is marked *very fast*. The fourth system includes a *rit.* marking. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and fingerings (e.g., 3, 5, 6, 7, 17, 18).

Emerson 19

However basic, these decisions might have been less clear without prior knowledge of the 'Emerson' theme, and entail *analytic* decisions.

My other example comes from an analysis by the American scholar and composer Richard Beaudoin of a section from Michael Finnissy's *Kapitalistisch Realisme*, from *The History of Photography in Sound*.

Beyond some straightforward listings of tempo markings, and registering of discontinuities, Beaudoin takes a ‘vertical’ approach to the music, identifying what he believes to be near-tonal harmonic progressions in this section of the work. Much of this is very valuable and insightful, but it does omit a vital element – the performer. In fact, performance and its effects upon perception does not feature at all in Beaudoin’s article. He neglects to consider how approaches to voicing, phrase-shaping, rhythmic emphasis and counter-emphasis, or even tempo flexibility, might affect the sounding result, including in terms of its perceived harmonies and tonality.

Now, I would like to demonstrate this, using a section that Beaudoin himself analyses. This section extracts a line from Beethoven’s String Quartet op. 18 no. 5 for the bass, while the treble is a series of modified fragments drawn randomly from Wagner’s *Götterdämmerung*. But those borrowings are not Beaudoin’s concern.

Distantly reflecting [♩ = 80]

molto pppp

6:5 7:6

Collection: G Aeolian (plus E \flat) E major (\flat 9- \flat 9)

♩ = 80. simile

*The G-E \flat dyad

V 7 of D → (\flat 6- \flat 6, \flat 9- \flat 9, #11- \flat 11)

Maestoso (sempre l'istesso tempo) subito

6:5 5:3

→ Cadence to D (outer-voice octaves)

Michael Finnissy, *Kapitalistische Realisme*, from *The History of Photography in Sound*, as analysed by Richard Beaudoin.

From the *Distantly reflecting* marking, Beaudoin asserts that ‘the opening of the passage sounds both stable and open’, due to the use of a G Aeolian (with E) and ‘the stability of the first chord of the section, whose outer voice G octaves are novel in the piece thus far’, then he stresses the implied E major (with A-flat serving enharmonically as G#), together with a 9th, then flattened.. He claims that the G-E-flat dyad on the second system shows darkens the colour when ‘We are still hearing the E major chord’, which is reaffirmed by the B-E fourth immediately after the previous

dyad. Then the following passage, according to Beaudoin, forms a V⁷ cadence on to D, at the beginning of the next system, with various added notes.

Now, I am not saying I necessarily disagree with this reading, or at least all aspects of it. In particular, considering this in a somewhat more horizontal manner, I note in particular the low C# at the beginning of the last LH bar of the second system, reinforced by the C#s in the next octave which precede and succeed it, and how this can be heard as a leading note onto the low D. On the other hand, the claim for a long V⁷ pedal harmony is weak, as the seventh is only heard once briefly, approached strangely via the supertonic of V, and there is no major third of I, at least until after the *Maestoso* onto which that dominant note can resolve.

But here is the passage in question played in a manner I believe to be commensurate with Beaudoin's analysis.

[Play once, playing down LH E near beginning very quietly, then next bass E, and RH A-flat, prominently. Pausing a little on the E-flat-G dyad. Then much of V⁷]

But then try it like this:

[Play with strong LH E (relatively speaking) to emphasise C major harmony, resolving to F-A. Try and make B-flat lead to A-flat. Treat F# on next system like seventh degree of A-flat. Then accent E-flat a bit, leading to D#. Then at end resolve to C-E.]

Or this:

[Play phasing RH in and out, not singing above LH]

Or this:

[Play with RH clearly above LH]

It has often been argued that analysis cannot simply explain existing aural perceptions of a work, but also facilitate and stimulate new approaches to listening. As mentioned before, this is part of what I have attempted to do in my own earlier writings, alongside other things. But analysis which is oblivious to the role of performance, and which seeks to deny the many creative choices available to performers even when playing highly detailed scores, is to my mind limited and even somewhat naïve. I cannot accept the view of Cook and Leech-Wilkinson that analysis is of little value for performers, as detailed earlier. On the contrary, I believe that some type of analysis is at play whenever a performer renders a work of music. How formalised or systematic - or even conscious - is such an analysis is to my mind not really the issue. Performers are making many decisions all of the time, and the moment these relate to some perceptions about the scores from which they play (or perhaps some wider knowledge of outputs, composers, styles, genres, aesthetics and so on) they are engaging in analysis. And there is no reason why some of the fruits of sophisticated analyses could never be of value to performers.