

## “SILENT INTONATION” AS A COMMUNICATIVE PHENOMENON OF CHAMBER-ENSEMBLE PERFORMANCE

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**Abstract:** The principle of unity in multifacetedness is the basis of chamber-ensemble performing art and is presented as a diversity that differs as a quantitative/qualitative structure of instrumental compositions, formed based on a combination of different textural-register and timbre-dynamic qualities. Accordingly, the creative personalities, their emotional and psychological state, technological and executive capabilities are also different. It is shown that the formation of a common artistic concept requires the coordination of all components of the ensemble-performance complex. The mechanism of the formation of intonational unity in the ensemble is shown.

**Keywords:** Silent intonation, The principle of unity, Ensemble, Harmony.

### 1 Introduction

Performing work in an ensemble is defined by a combination of individual independent voices-soloists and is aimed at conscious harmonization-coordination of complex musical-ensemble interaction to achieve artistic integrity of performance.

The formation of a common artistic concept requires the coordination of all components of the ensemble-performance complex: the general artistic interpretation-performance plan and individual performance tasks of each of the ensemble members; functional-role thematic hierarchy of ensemble parties; personal psychophysical communication of performers - their visual and auditory contact; performance-technological interaction of musicians - manifestations of “silent intonation”, gestures in achieving synchronicity of sound; artistic and figurative interaction - verification of strokes, dynamic balance, tempo rhythmic synchronicity; chronotopic harmony of “performance-ensemble space”.

Ensemble interaction of instrumental partners is a multi-channel process, which presupposes the establishment of subtle functional connections between artistic thinking with its most important component - the sphere of hearing, on the one hand, and the sphere of game movements - on the other.

Performing gestures represent a leading factor in chronotopic coordination and are used as a means of plastic expression of figurative, logical, and emotional representations that unfold in parallel with musical language. The psychology of stroke-gesture, performing behavior of ensemble members, timbre sensitivity, brought up by the auditory experience of stylistically different patterns of musical expression - all these values are mastered by experience, not only personal but also generalized, theoretically based on professional observations and knowledge.

### 2 Material and Method

The specificity of chamber intonation is determined by the special orientation of the content that chamber-ensemble music carries. The methodological basis of the research is a systematic approach that underlies the consideration of the ensemble as a complex system of interacting parties. The connection between instrumental and expressive means and their content capabilities is traced using the elements of semantic analysis. Evolution, piano- and instrumental-specific issues are considered from the standpoint of history and theory of performance. The task of identifying patterns in correlation, ensemble parts in compositions of different styles, eras, and genres when comparing both musical material and figurative-expressive characteristics of instruments involves the use of methods of holistic and comparative analysis.

### 3 Results and Discussion

*“Silent intonation” as a semantic dominant performance and ensemble harmony*

In studying the problems of ensemble coordination, attention is paid primarily to the individual characteristics of musical sound production on different instruments, as the performance pronunciation-intonation reveals the dialectical unity of thinking of several participants, related to intonational complexity of expression and differentiated personal-instrumental features.

The harmonizing function, which is the basis of ensemble mastery, presupposes such activity in which performance-technological and directing-psychological principles are harmoniously combined, i.e., the practical side of realization of ideas is combined with theoretical - comprehension of the creative act, which P. Florensky [4] defines as “unity of self-consciousness”.

The combination of these concepts is basic for B. Asafiev’s intonation theory: the figurative-intonational form of thinking appears as “meaningful breathing-pronunciation”, which is guided by different types of instrumental breathing-sound-leading and is realized by the activity of human intellect. The specific meaning of intonation, according to the scientist, presupposes the concept of performing energy as a musical movement in its unity with the forces or stimuli that cause and act in it and assumes the concept of shock-phenomenon on which the movement arises and depends on the development of movement energy. Physically, from the outside, the push is a keystroke, a moment of injection, with the inevitable emphasis on what lays the tone of the performance, i.e., the emotional tension of musical intonation [2].

The process of instrumental-ensemble coordination is guided by a qualitative set of possibilities of musical breathing-intonation of the performers and articulatory-timbre properties of the instrumentation, forming ensemble intonation, which attracts to the artistic sphere of ensemble creativity and “silent intonation” - a certain set of performing movements that are immanently (as the embodiment of professional-game actions) and consciously (as the management of the process of ensemble coordination) used by performers.

The performance of a musician, in particular, an ensemble player, is based on three factors - auditory, temporal, and motor sensations, so the ability to reproduce subtle, precise movements is the same indicator of professional ability as developed musical hearing, memory, and sense of rhythm.

As a performance-instrumental one, intonation distinguishes each of the members of the ensemble; thus, different ones are the performance “manners”, “silent intonation” - an individual system of gestures used for artistic communication, and on a conscious and subconscious level in one way or another implemented by all members of the ensemble. For perfect performance ensemble interaction, it is extremely important that all components of this psychophysical complex are in a state of harmonious balance, because performance gestures aimed at achieving a certain technical and sound result on a particular instrument (“sound will”, according to K. Martinsen, 1966 [6]), in turn, performs a psychological mission, involving ensemble partners in the search for appropriate performance actions-tools in the implementation of a common artistic idea.

The use of the terms “mental” and “physical” in application to music and performance suggests that the first of them covers a wide range of phenomena (thinking, emotional experiences, perceptions, and ideas) associated with the search for an artistic image, i.e., the ideal model of future ensemble performance. Therefore, the mental acts as a carrier of artistic intentions of the

performers. The second component - motility - is an expression of these intentions in specialized instrumental and performance actions that are part of the material and technological basis of performance. Undoubtedly, artistic comprehension performs leading functions concerning the technological side of the creative process, but this does not mean the passivity and complete subordination of the latter: in search of artistic image, the performer uses certain technical "samples" laid down in his "instrumental base" and invented technical tool does not act regardless of the artistic image.

From our point of view, determining the psychophysical principles of ensemble communication, we can draw certain analogies with acting in a play, when each gesture and each cue (its intonation, rhythm, timbre, dynamics) of the characters involved depends on the overall tone of verbal material.

Prominent dramatic actress M. Yermolova [15], answering questions that affect her understanding of the role - psychological, plastic, or verbal indicators - noted that the search for an idea of a character arises from his posture, movements, gestures; even a purely "visual" image contains elements of plasticity and expression that become the "starting point" for finding one's own gestures and intonations which define the actor's image. Without such interaction, it is impossible to feel an integral part of the creative action of the play.

According to the director and teacher K. Stanislavsky, finding a certain image, awareness of own role in the play should be effective to involve a person in the process of understanding the whole, with his self-esteem, with his understanding of others, with his deep feelings. "Physical actions" for the director were not an end in themselves, but a way to enter the personal world of the character, which allowed to influence feelings, to evoke emotions that correspond to the plot development: "We are not interested in the action itself, but the logic of action. With the help of simple physical actions, you can get the logic of feeling the role. Then you will have a line of physical activity and, in parallel with it, the inner line of your feeling, which justifies these actions - you have moved from feeling to action" [13]:

At one time, the search for ways to improve ensemble interaction led the German scientist, composer, conductor Mattheson (1991) to the idea to endow the performer-clavier with conducting principles, emphasizing that, since the clavier is the leading instrument of the era, the clavier performer must not only master it but also know the features of all instruments involved in the ensemble [7]. The main task of the clavier performer in the process of ensemble performance should be "tact", and this should be done flexibly enough to allow other instrumentalists to demonstrate their skills. As the author admits, a small nod of the head or a simple pointing of the eyes, or a light gesture is enough to lead the ensemble to adjust the performers to the desired musical effect.

This vision of ensemble psychophysical interaction, to some extent, echoes Pythagoras' teaching on eurhythm, which determines a person's ability to find the right rhythm in all life situations - not only in singing, dancing, and playing musical instruments but also in thoughts, actions, conversations. Namely, Pythagoras started the tradition of comparing public life with both the musical system and the orchestra, in which each person, like the instruments of the orchestra, has a role to play. Later, finding the right rhythm in ethics was formed into a common and fairly broad concept of tact.

"Silent intonation" acquires special significance in the performance-ensemble artistic chronotope, actualizing artistic information in technological and instrumental manifestations: musicians-ensemblists much more often than in solo performance, turn to sign language to explain their creative intentions, in particular, in regulating the synchronicity of entry and the end of phrases, in dynamic and agogic-tempo shifts.

The synchronicity of the starting performance of all participants, especially at the beginning of the work, when the tempo is not yet set, is impossible without showing one of the performers -

barely noticeable nod, bow, wrist "breath" of the pianist forms a special gesture, the so-called *aufact* (German - overtact), which, presenting at the planned pace, involves all participants in the required tone of a performance and determines the "starting point" of the ensemble sound. Here, to a certain extent, the conductor's functions are performed: gesture, facial expressions, and gaze adjust the ensemble-partners to a single "artistic wave" (tempo rhythmic, timbre-articulation, dynamic-agogic) for reproduction of the collective-ensemble sound.

For experienced performers, these movements are almost invisible ("barely"), they are even difficult to be called full-fledged movements, because they are inseparable from the performing style (or performing "manners") of the instrumentalist, but are captured by ensemble members and connect them to a certain "emotional flow".

Apparently, this is "barely" which K. Stanislavsky (1983) [14] spoke of as a decisive factor in art, and the definition of that degree - a little louder, quieter, slower, more fun, gentler, etc. - should be controlled by the created in "live" musical-performing chronotope by ensemble aesthetics of sound.

O. Serov held a similar opinion, noting that in the performance, one barely noticeable accent, one barely perceptible change in movement opens "whole new horizons", which largely depends on the talent of the conductor, who instantly, with a magnetic wave, at a glance, is able to convey the idea to instrumentalists and make them obedient to his own will.

Ensemble-performance gestures not only regulate the course of the playing process in the synchronicity of sound but perceptually "inform" about the further development of the musical plot, which requires coordination-awareness of the role of each instrumental part in the projection on the artistic integrity of performance.

Although the difference between performing gestures and conducting is quite obvious, there are common psychological factors that affect both chamber and ensemble performers and orchestral instrumentalists: the personality traits of the leader, his style of communication with performers are to some extent influenced by their manner of playing. Experienced conductors are well aware of this, noting that during conducting, "spiritual currents" arise between them and the musicians, through which an invisible connection is established.

The American conductor Ormandi believes that the conductor's influence on the orchestra is similar to the hypnotic effect on the minds of musicians, who, as if enchanted, follow all the instructions of the conductor's gesture. Extremely important in this process is eye contact: "... eyes are omnipotent - this is a means of constant communication between the leader and the musicians, it is a mirror that reproduces every thought and emotion..." [10].

The tasks of the leader of the orchestra and ensemble, despite the differences in functional and role principles, are quite similar: leading an ensemble group (of any number) can only be done by a professionally authoritative musician who can evoke the necessary emotional tone in the ensemble not only by gestures or looks but also by own performance. The relevance and speed of reaction of other performers are determined by the degree of their confidence in the proposed interpretation version.

Confirmation of this opinion is found in D. Oistrakh [9], who, turning to the conductor's activity, concluded that the conductor can do only what the orchestra likes - only the interpretation that corresponds to the artistic aspirations of the team, and this is the answer to the question why one conductor succeeds and another does not.

These words rightly indicate the relationship in any ensemble communication: performers can respond to those "messages" that correspond to their artistic concept, rejecting the accidental ones, caused by changes in the performing and listening space, the peculiarities of the concert hall, and so on.

Thus, ensemble performance is a process of creative communication and the formation of special psychologically comfortable performing relationships and conditions for the implementation of ensemble interpretation, which in ensemble performance is a set of gestures-signs that are intuitively captured by all participants and transformed into their own performance artistic actions.

#### *Ensemble instrumentalism as a system of creative interaction*

Music is a specific product of artistic thinking in sound images. The genetic basis of this activity is the direct and inverse relationship between the biophysical manifestations of a human and his spiritual, primarily emotional and figurative, activity. "The culturogenesis of this connection is rooted in socio-historical practice aimed at artistic and figurative rethinking of natural (voices of nature) and artificial (instrumental) sounds of the real world" [5].

Since all types of human activity - practical, theoretical, sacred (according to P. Florensky [4]) - have their own set of objects (tools), the qualitative composition and application of these tools (schemes of their use, level of ownership, impact on the process and result in human activity) determine the scope of the concept of instrumentalism. Musical instrumentalism can be considered the reproduction of musical and artistic ideas in instrumental art. The ensemble as a genetic feature of musical performance, which involves a dialogue between human and instrument, even in solo performance, is the basis of the concept of musical instrumentalism.

In ensemble performance, the concept of musical instrumentalism becomes multilevel, as the subject-material base of instrumental composition (objects of human activity) expands, and the process of "embodiment of the idea" is complicated by the need to coordinate theoretical activities by all participants of the joint creative act.

Thus, the meaning of the concept of ensemble instrumentalism can be a plurality of subject-instrumental characteristics of the ensemble and the ideal psychological characteristics of its members, which in the process of co-creation form a new quality-set of instrumental and artistic expression.

The specific properties of ensemble instrumentalism are determined primarily by organological characteristics - musical and instrumental qualities of a particular ensemble composition, as instrumentally expressed musical thought requires the material and physical basis of reproduction (on certain instruments). To paraphrase M. Bakhtin, we can say that every musical thought in the ensemble, reproduced instrumentally, is a reaction to the "performing thought" of the ensemble partner, which stimulates the emergence of new instrumental and artistic ideas and affects the overall effect of ensemble performance. Since ensemble music performance, like any joint creative act, has a wide range of mobile elements that require some correction depending on the conditions of performance - acoustic and spatial characteristics of the premises, performance capabilities of ensemble partners, psychological compatibility, etc. - a stable element in this process should be an instrumental factor that carries information about certain technical and performance qualities of each partner and the ensemble as a whole.

An important factor in the field of ensemble creativity is the technological and expressive capabilities of the instruments, which act as material and physical indicators of the ensemble instruments and determine their acoustic, timbre, dynamic, articulatory properties. Each instrument of the ensemble brings to the overall ensemble palette not only purely physical indicators of the instrument - in the form, methods of sound production, sound, but all the socio-historical and expressive-aesthetic potential inherent in textural and timbre instrumental features, national specifics, professional specifics. In turn, each instrument, having its own instrumental characteristics, which depend on its design features, timbre qualities, as well as artistic and technological means of expression, in the ensemble is subject to the laws of total expression for the artistic

embodiment of the author's idea, which leads to the new sound quality of each instrument and the ensemble as a whole.

At one time, Plato was quite skeptical about the various instrumental combinations; in particular, in his opinion, multi-stringed songs and melodies are not needed and all "multi-stringed and multi-harmonic instruments" should be abandoned, resulting in the fact that for the city, most suitable ones are lyre and cithara, and for shepherds in the field - syrinx, separately warning against mixing the voices of men and women, slaves and "nobles", people and animals, noise and tones. Music without words was not considered an art by the philosopher at all: the struggle for the purity of musical art was especially sharply reflected in Plato's speeches against instrumental music as a new, independent art form [11, 12].

Each musical instrument in the ensemble is a living part of the artistic whole, which can contribute to the creation of a certain musical image. The combination of instrumental components of the ensemble (acoustic, technological, articulatory, timbre, dynamic, etc.) in different possible variants gives different artistic results. This variability is analogous to painting, where the process of mixing multicolored paints will never give the same shade of color twice - even a slight deviation will inevitably lead to a different artistic effect (or, according to the philosophical statement, "it is impossible to enter the same river twice").

When studying the problems of instrumental and ensemble performance, attention is first of all paid to the specifics of sound formation on various instruments, because it is an indicator of instrumental musical breathing - the beginning and measurement of any musical manifestation. Analyzing the performing arts of musicians of different instrumental specializations, we use the capacious Asafiev concept of "performing breathing", transferred from the sphere of vocal intonation to the instrumental sphere. According to Asafiev, individual features of breathing are one of the main criteria of professional culture, talent, and skill of the performer.

Breathing as a unit of comprehension manifests itself at the elementary level of intonation, on the scale of interval sound combinations that sound in the space between tones; it is felt by the performer as three-dimensional, "living" in its elasticity and causing "respiratory-muscular" effort due to one or another degree of intonation tension. But the role of instrumental-musical "breathing" is especially significant in the projection on large-scale constructions, whole sections of the form, which are voiced by a single, continuous impulse caused by the end-to-end components of musical thought. In the foreground, there is the function of motion control - "rhythm-controlling" role of respiration, the organization of the internal unity of the tempo rhythmic process in the relationship and interdependence of all its components: fractional pulsation, rhythmic-constructive side, increases and decreases, distribution of sonority on large "spaces" of the form. Finally, breathing determines the emotional tone of the performance, its "nerve" and "degree", the extent of psychological saturation of music at different stages of the performance process. "Establishing in tone", in sound tension, i.e., intonation is inherent in all instruments, but in each, it is qualitatively special" [2].

Each musical instrument has specific features of sound - percussion, tonicity, depth, characteristic timbre, singing, pedaling, elongation, residualness, etc. - "mutual borrowing" of these features and techniques of sound production enriches the field of expressive instruments. "On this basis, the content of the techniques of embodying the musical content is deepened, the performing skills of the musician are successfully formed. Its technological apperception is expanding; the correspondence of figurative representation and auditory-motor procedural prevention of the real embodiment of the interpretive idea in a concrete sound improves" [3].

The sound of each instrument has four physical qualities: pitch, duration, volume, and timbre. While the pitch and duration ratios have a clear definition and dimensionality, because pitch,

texture-space (mood, melody, harmony, polyphony) and temporal (rhythm, tempo, temporal proportion of parts) factors are the basis of the internal organization of music and laid down by the composer in the text of the musical work, volume and timbre are relatively free, transitional concepts - they largely depend on the material component of the instruments and the specific ensemble combination, but at the same time are necessarily included in the indicators of spatial and temporal conditions of musical performance.

#### 4 Conclusion

In combination of intonation-musical breathing of instruments with different sound production techniques - string, wind, keyboard - there are certain problems in articulatory-dynamic synchronization of sound microstructures, as specific strokes indicate the way of beginning, continuation, and end of sound production; however, string and wind instruments are endowed with the ability to change the tonal-dynamic tension within a single sound, while the piano carcass is associated with the attack of the beginning of the sound and the natural effect of attenuation at the end. Eliminating such differences at the vertical level of microstructure in the sound of instrumental-ensemble combinations requires intonation readiness and ability of all participants of the creative process to "get used" to the sonority of instruments with different ways of musical breathing-sound formation, which is the most important and difficult problem in practical performance.

The subject-instrumental characteristics of the ensemble composition are determined by the sound source, the quality of which is influenced by the properties of the instrument material, their mass, spatial arrangement, oscillations, and interrelation. To become a material, sound, according to M. Aranovsky [1], must acquire the most important quality - plasticity, i.e., the potential ability to become a form, to obtain a particular configuration.

However, from our point of view, only the "performing touch" makes the physical material spiritual and the timbre unique, differing in color even from the same instrument: the phenomenon is well known to pianists when the piano sounds (i.e., lives) or does not sound (i.e., reproduces the action of mechanics); in the artistic and semantic content of instrumental sound, not only the professional and performing level of the musician is manifested, but his social and intellectual culture, which forms a unique individual-performing manner of sound presentation.

Artistic and aesthetic requirements for the instrumental and sound side of ensemble performance are determined primarily by the polytemporal sound, the degree and nature of which depends on the composition of instruments in a particular ensemble because the sound of different timbre instruments forms a new "sound synthesis", which contributes to a wide variety timbre and sound colors.

The genre sphere of the chamber ensemble has a voluminous artistic and instrumental potential, in which each of the instruments has its own "scale" of acoustic, technological, articulatory, dynamic qualities, due to the sensory-material properties of instruments and the ideal result deriving from the culture of "sound" performers-ensembles and forms a special collective instrumentality - timbre-acoustic quality of a particular ensemble, united by dialogic-polylogical interaction of performers-participants in the process of reproduction of the author's idea.

The organological paradigm of chamber and ensemble music formation developed over a long period, the instruments became part of ensemble compositions, having passed a long historical path of changes in aesthetic criteria of ensemble-sound qualities: in contrast to baroque tendencies of instrumental-timbre "universality" of multiple semantic problems (author's definitions of alternative replacement of instruments in ensemble works), in the classicist and romantic periods, organological features become essential for the independence of artistic and

instrumental image and articulatory "performing set" characteristic of a particular instrument (group of instruments), although it remains certain composer's tradition of giving the instrumental image a "double" meaning (ad libitum of performance of the part by instruments with different methods of sound production). The importance of the instrumental factor in the artistic and semantic concept of the ensemble work increased significantly in the 20th - early 21st centuries: creative experiments of contemporary artists in search of new sounds completely changed the traditional ideas about the stability of instrumental compositions and natural organological properties of instruments.

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