

Reports

Research Projects

MUSIC AND ENUNCIATION

From various positions in musicology it is claimed that we have to move beyond the structuralist work concept. Instead of viewing music as a text *carrying* meaning the current conditions of music offers us a view of music as an act *performing* meaning. Certainly, the avant-gardes are full of compositions that move our attention from the internal qualities of the object to the performative act enunciating this object as art – an act, which thus claims a certain aesthetic view from the listener. John Cage's "4'33" (1952) is a good example of this tendency. In aesthetic theory we see new notions of the aesthetic as a relation, an attention, and some scholars even talk about an enunciative paradigm in the arts, where the enunciation of something as art is enough to turn it into art.

The current Ph.D. project (2005–8, Department of Aesthetics and Culture (Interdisciplinary Aesthetics Studies), University of Aarhus) is motivated by these changes in the field of music. The objective of the project is to take these new perspectives on music into account, by performing a *general* study of music as a performative act, an act of enunciation. The project uses the term 'enunciation' as a key concept, because it refers exactly to the (performative) act of producing statements, as we see it in the linguistics of Émile Benveniste (*Problèmes de Linguistique générale*, Paris, 1966 and 1974) and in later philosophical contexts.

In the study of enunciation in narratology and reception theory the subject matter is not the actual situation of enunciation (where somebody listens to or plays the music), but the *implicit* enunciation of the aesthetic artefact that is described in terms of the positioning of an implicit sender- and receiver position and discursive horizons of the artefact. In these theoretical understandings the perspective or attention given to the object is not just *applied* by the real recipient, but also *implied* by the artefact. It is this situation where the music meets our intentionality with its own implicit intentionality that is the main interest of this project; that is, the act of enunciation as it is implied in and between the implicit level of the text, the performance and the recording.

The unspecified term 'music' used in the project-title is not intended to refer to a prescriptive category, but to the specific medial expressions that we, in our culture, call music. The project will, however, with its offset in the avant-gardes and the question of aesthetics, focus on western art music and its historical constructed ways of establishing aesthetic relations, but it will also involve studies of other discourses of music. Each object of study is chosen in order to illustrate different perspectives of how music functions aesthetically.

Anette Vandsø Andersen

REPRESENTATIONS OF JAZZ IN AMERICA AT THE TURN OF THE 21ST CENTURY

'Jazz is America's classical music'. Since the mid 1980s this has been the rallying call for the jazz community in the US. In 1987 Congress passed Resolution 57 deeming jazz a 'valuable national treasure' and since then jazz has experienced a significant shift of its cultural position becoming a signifier of sophistication and innovation – jazz has become cultural capital.

The present research project is the principal constituent of a Ph.D. fellowship with the Department of English, Germanic and Romance Studies at the University of Copenhagen from September 2004 till August 2007. It aims to trace the effect of these changes on the discourses surrounding jazz over the last 20 years, as the 20th century came to its end. There have been a number of studies on the representations of jazz in the last decade, but the majority of these centres on representations from the surrounding culture in the form of fiction, film, or art, such as Krin Gabbard's work in *Representing Jazz* (Durham, NC, 1995) and *Jamming at the Margins* (Chicago, 1996) as well as the two volumes edited by Robert O'Meally, *The Jazz Cadence of American Culture* (New York, 1998) and *Uptown Conversations* (New York, 2004). This project differs as it focuses on representations *within* the jazz community, investigating the contesting definitions through different types of media. A preliminary structure for the dissertation divides it into three main chapters: The first chapter provides an analysis of Ken Burns' documentary series *JAZZ* produced in the years 1996–2000 and aired on PBS the first time in January 2001; the second chapter discusses representations in *Down Beat* over a 20-year period (1985–2005); and the final chapter will investigate the genre of the jazz biography with a comparative analysis of several biographies on Miles Davis, including the ghost-written (by Quincy Troupe) autobiography.

The common foci of analysis in all three chapters rest on three paradigms of critical thought. One is what I call 'the perfect metaphor', signifying an understanding of the process of mythologizing and erasure of dialectics as jazz is used in various discourses as a metaphor for any number of (American) doctrines such as 'democracy', 'freedom', and 'e pluribus unum'. The paradox lies in the fact that it is often the perceived hybrid nature of jazz, its internal contradictions and dialectics that generates its use as metaphor, but in the process the dialectics and contradictions are ironed out as it, in the words of Barthes, passes from 'history to nature'. This function of jazz as a metaphor becomes particularly important in connection with the second paradigm of critical thought, the imagining of communities. The metaphor is particularly apt in the imagining of a national community (as the Ken Burns series proves), but also the jazz community itself uses strategies of imaging in which jazz as a metaphor is brought into play, negotiating terms of authenticity and tradition. Here the third and last paradigm comes into play by considering orality as the privileged mode of representation, thus providing a frame through which the jazz community can be seen as imaging and narrating itself.

Anne Dvinge

VOCAL MASKS: THE RHETORICAL SINGING TRADITION IN ITALIAN OPERA

My Ph.D. project (2005–8, Department of Aesthetics and Culture (Interdisciplinary Aesthetics Studies), University of Aarhus) focuses on the original productions of three works that occupy key positions in the Italian operatic canon: Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (1643), Mozart's *Don Giovanni* (1787) and Verdi's *Otello* (1887). Rather than conceiving of their operatic scores as finished artworks, it is argued that the three composers saw them – albeit to varying degrees – as the source of performances, relying on the active musical contribution of the singers. Therefore, by involving contemporary accounts of the original performers of some of the leading roles, historical singing treatises, early sound recordings, as well as letters and other statements by the composers on vocal performance, the project attempts to reconstruct the musical and theatrical profiles of the singers for whom the composers wrote. This leads on to the reconstruction of some central aesthetic principles underlying what is seen as a specifically Italian performing style, the neglect of which throughout the 20th

century has had bearings on how the scores have traditionally been read by scholars as well as practitioners.

It is a central thesis that Monteverdi, Mozart, and Verdi all favoured a rhetorically based singing style which can be traced back to the rise of opera around 1600, and principles of which appear to have reigned within the Italian tradition all the way up to Verdi and Puccini. In the 18th century the rhetorical conception of music fell into disrepute, but its practical ideals survived among Italian singers and composers and could still be taken for granted by Verdi in the late 19th century. In line with classical rhetoric, the Italian tradition understood singing as the extension of speech which, in turn, was considered inseparable from its concrete affective and performative context. The strong sense of 'speech in song' led to the well-known ideals of the *bel canto* tradition – clear enunciation, expressive timbre and phrasing, textually determined use of ornaments – but also to some more overlooked conventions concerning song as a theatrical language, such as the character's 'vocal mask'. With this term I refer to a view of singing neither as the medium of a psychological subtext, nor as the display of the singer's personal voice, but as the site of character portrayal, implying that the singer would change his/her voice according to the character represented. The vocal mask is the operatic equivalent of the technique of the classical actor who would put on a visual and vocal mask rather than identify psychologically with the role, which convention was suppressed with the advent of the naturalistic acting style in the late 19th century.

By reconstructing the original vocal masks of central roles in Monteverdi, Mozart, and Verdi we should get a clearer and more vivid image not only of the three particular operas as they were theatrically conceived by their composers, but also of a largely forgotten convention in Italian opera.

Magnus Tessing Schneider

Conferences

SPORTING SOUNDS, UNIVERSITY OF AARHUS 2006

Supported by the Center for Sport Studies (University of Aarhus), this conference on sport and music was held at the University of Aarhus on 27–28 September 2006. The relationships between sport and music were explored by an interdisciplinary and international group of scholars that ranged from studies that saw music as central to sport, to others that recognized the marginal nature of music to sporting practices. This spectrum seems to be an appropriate structure for this report.

In cases such as ice dancing, synchronized swimming and some gymnastics, musical accompaniment is stipulated in the rules and is therefore an essential part of the sport. 'Music and figure skating' formed the subject of a paper by Glenn Harman (Mayo Clinic, USA) in which musical and corporeal rhythm were shown to be correlated. Less essential, but nevertheless important, is the use of music as a motivational aid in sport training and in the enhancement of sport performance. Four papers addressed this dimension of musical applications to sport. There were 'The Effect of Video and Music on Emotions' by Georgios Loizou, 'Psychological Effects of Music in Sport' by Costas Katageorghis and 'Emotional Response to Music in Sport' by Daniel Bishop (all of Brunel University, UK). Additionally, a paper on the connection between 'Rowing and Music' was presented by Michael Mann (Luxemburg). A related paper by Peter Vuust (Aarhus University Hospital) suggested that relationships between musical development and the brain could be applied to sports.

Two highly significant papers with a more historical dimension were by Anthony Bateman (De Montfort University / Hallé Orchestra, UK) on “‘Ludus Tonalis’: Sport and Musical Modernisms, 1900-1935” and Jeffrey Seagrave (Skidmore College, USA) on ‘Music as Sport History; The Special case of Pietro Metastasio and the Story of the Olympic Games’. These papers illustrated the important, but more incidental place of music in sports. The same applies to ‘anthems’ and hymns in sports as in the paper by Jeffrey Hill (De Montfort University, UK) on ‘Singing the Nation: “Abide with me” and the FA Cup Final’. In this paper he reviewed the rise and fall of this well-known hymn in England’s premier football event.

Popular music in various sporting contexts was explored by Mike Huggins and Keith Gregson (St Martin’s College, UK) in their paper ‘Songs of Sporting Heroes in Victorian England’. The centrality of masculinity in lyrics and style in popular music was stressed in several papers: ‘Bouts of Kiwi Loyalty: Musical Frames and Televised Sport’ by Malcolm Maclean (Gloucestershire University, UK), ‘Friday Nights and the Gates are Low’ by Michael McGuinness (Teesside University, UK), and ‘Supporter Rock’ by Dan Porsfelt (University of Växjö, Sweden).

John Bale

SHOSTAKOVICH – TODAY, COPENHAGEN OCTOBER 2006

On the occasion of the Shostakovich centenary a two-day symposium, *Shostakovich – today*, was held in Copenhagen on 25–26 October 2006. This was only one of the events associated with the centenary celebration organized by Music Around, a body consisting of the symphony orchestras of Copenhagen and Southern Sweden. Within four weeks all Shostakovich’s 15 symphonies, in addition to numerous other works of the composer, were performed live in Copenhagen, Malmö, and Helsingborg. With the opportunity to hear all the symphonies, the symposium focused on this genre from the perspective of 2006 and provoked a reconsideration of some of the symphonies not very often played, providing a more complete view of the symphonies as such. Especially some of the ‘political’ symphonies, as the Second and Third from the late 1920s, and the Eleventh from 1957, have been neglected, the former often on the basis of Shostakovich playing down their importance later in his life, the latter being considered a muster of Socialist Realism. More differentiated views and a new interest in concepts of political music within the communist sphere give way to a more open-minded approach to the qualities of these works. This is also an indication that a genuine post-cold war reception has slowly emerged, opposed to the fierce discussions of the 1990s along the lines of pro- and anti-communism. The ‘new Shostakovich’ of the 1990s was still a by-product of the bipolar worldview of the cold war, even if the ‘whole Shostakovich’ might still not be uncontested as the Shostakovich of 2006.

The idea of the symposium was to engage students of the university in discussions with invited scholars, and this was the core of the first day when 11 students presented short papers at the Department of Musicology. The second day was a public session at The Royal Library presenting the guests as keynote speakers. Levon Hakobian from the Moscow Institute of Arts History gave ‘A history of Shostakovich’s relations with the Soviet ideology’, using the symphonies 2, 3, 11, 12, and 13 as examples. Being an art historian as well as a musicologist, concepts of ideology in visual arts was compared with concepts found in the symphonies. From the University of Bristol, Pauline Fairclough gave an introduction to Shostakovich reception in the UK, showing the changing views on Shostakovich the symphonist as well as on particular symphonies. Finally, David Fanning, University of Manchester, gave a paper on

‘Shostakovich and others: where his symphonies came from’, drawing on his huge knowledge of symphonic tradition. Taking influences from Mahler as granted, he showed numerous other connections and similarities with nineteenth and twentieth century symphonists. The symposium ended with a round table discussion.

The Danish Cultural Institute, The Royal Library and the Department of Musicology of the University of Copenhagen organized the symposium, and the association with Music Around was a very important factor to the success and the public attention, attracting close to 100 people during the two days.

Michael Ejeldsøe

Danish Musicological Society, 2006

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 Cand.mag., Fie Skovsbøg Thaning

The Society’s general assembly took place on 22 March 2006. In his annual report among other issues the chairman stressed that the Society’s edition series, *Dania Sonans*, the first volume of which appeared in 1933 and the latest in 2003, was no longer part of the ‘active’ responsibilities of the Society. Formally, however, the *Dania Sonans* series is maintained for prospective publications. Following the assembly, Henrik Marstal – former member of one of the committees appointed by the Danish Ministry of Culture to compile a national, cultural canon – presented his views on ‘Cultural Canon – how and why?’, in relation to which research assistant, Fie Skovsbøg Thaning (University of Copenhagen) acted as respondent.

Under the heading *Challenges of Music Historiography to Danish Musicology* the third one-day symposium of the Society was held on 29 April 2006 at the Department of Musicology, University of Copenhagen. An initial lecture with the title ‘Plaidoyer for a new Danish Music History’ was given by Siegfried Oechsle (Christian-Albrechts-Universität, Kiel). Moreover, the programme comprised four sessions with a total of 12 papers. Finally, Jens Henrik Koudal (Danish Folklore Archives) presented a discussion paper on ‘Music in Denmark – Danishness in Music. Place and Nationality as Critical perspective? Ten Statements on writing a new *History of Music in Denmark*’ which led to a concluding plenary debate on the main topic. The day was rounded off by a recital by pianist Elisabeth Sivertsen playing a work by Danish composer Jørgen Jersild. A total of around 65 participants joined the symposium, and the majority of papers was subsequently published on the Society’s web-site (www.hum.au.dk/musik/dsfm/dsfm_m/dsfm1.html).

In October a revised membership directory was dispatched to the members of the Society. The Society’s fourth symposium is scheduled for 21 April 2007 and will address the topic *Musicology between visibility and professional legitimacy*. (General information on the Society can be found on p. 123).

Thomas Holme Hansen