

## *Partita 3* for solo cello: preparing the performance after the notes on energy flow

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**Abstract:** The article reports the process of constructing the performance of a piece about to be premiered from the dialogues between the composer and the performer, from the most prosaic to the most conceptually elaborated. The main issue to be explored is the concept of 'energy flow', which permeates the whole discussion. The concept starts from its conception by the French philosopher Gilbert Simondon and reaches applicability as a mediation between the compositional act and the performance act, functioning as a framework that escapes from linguistic referentialities or quasi-romantic subjectivisms. In this way, we aim to present the concept in operation, besides presenting an anatomy of the piece itself, which runs through the compositional thinking and the thought involved in its performance, offering a deeply collaborative analytical approach.

**Keywords:** Collaborative Creation. Creative practice. Musical performance. Musical composition. Contemporary music.

In 2016, the composition of *Partita 3: linhas*<sup>1</sup> for solo cello was completed. It was written after several collaborations between the cellist William Teixeira and the composer Silvio Ferraz in two versions of a cello concerto, 6 short pieces written after Domenico Gabrielli's *Ricercari* for solo cello and dozens of collaborations in the performances of pieces previously written for cello solo, chamber music and cello and orchestra.

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<sup>1</sup> A video recording of this piece performed by the author is attached to this article.



Fig.1. First line of the sketch of *Partita 3*, written by Silvio Ferraz, and mesures 27 to 30 of *Ricercari 5*<sup>o</sup>, written by Domênico Gabrieli.

After those collaborations born the first phrase of the new *Partita*, a kind of harmonic deformation of the central part of the 5th *Ricercari* by Domenico Gabrieli. The history of collaborations between performer and composer goes beyond this score and is also embodied in dozen of articles published, what is certainly a part of this process. Often, even the performance process of a previous work affects a new one, which never corresponds to what the composer has in mind. This aspect is relevant when considering collaborative works, which are often crossed by contagious aspects, what demands in each new piece a new path for working, since after considering the history of collaborations, this history is not always welcomed in the process of conceiving something new.

### The first reading (Silvio & William)

S – In the first reading, one of the doubts was the *arrestato* bowing: what did the composer want with this idea? It is a *bariolage* bowing but without moving the bow vertically, just rotating the bow producing the noise of skipping over the strings. To solve the problem we exchanged some video messages. I received two versions from William, a first with a lot of bow and a second with less, but then I sent one where I played with even less presence and in a more percussive way. But listening to the result of his first reading of the entire piece<sup>2</sup>, with the gesture in the place where it belongs to, came the conclusion that as I played there was too much noise, and that there should be a place between the second version made by William and the one I had done; and that this version would be realized not as an isolated object, but as an object that is the continuity and the previous one fading out. As the gesture needs weight to be played, I did not change the dynamics: a mistake. For the performer, the idea remains that the passage is *forte*, and, for this reason, the noise should sound *forte* too. The mistake

<sup>2</sup> The audio recording of this first reading is attached to the article and it is the same we mention in the section *After the first reading*.

in the notation would give the idea that the object would be an isolated object and not a flowing gesture among other objects.



Fig. 2: Partita 3, p. 2, lines 3-4.

W – My method for preparing any repertoire, but especially Silvio's, involves in parallel the study of microstructures and macro-structures (concepts that I attribute to the ideas worked in the lessons I had with Hans Jensen at Northwestern University). Micro-structures are the choices of fingerings, caring for the purity of the intonation in each note, the choice of bow areas, position shifts, all of that 'out of time', in extremely slow beats, seeking the cleanliness of each structural element. However, this stage does not make sense if in parallel and from the beginning there would be no practice of macro-structures, which are the great gestures and the great lines, which abound in this particular piece, demanding all sorts of resistance and contaminating the microstructural stage itself, revealing inconsistencies in technical decisions towards the ultimate energy goal. This stage happens entirely in the final tempo and already seeking the energy of the piece as it was designed to be. In this piece, the study of the two stages in parallel is particularly necessary, taking months for them to contaminated themselves properly; and it is here that a sight-reading performance does not go ahead; I mean when the performer already hopes to obtain the final results in the firsts contacts with a piece of music<sup>3</sup>. But who would risk going up the stage to play Dvorák's Concerto with only a week of practice? This is the ethic, however, that leads many performers to evaluate new compositions as 'poorly written' or to believe that a composer 'does not know the instrument'.

There is, however, a phase zero, a stage prior to the instrumental contact with the score itself, which is the *deciphering*. This deciphering encompasses the understanding of the normative information attributed to each symbol in the score. This step is not limited to the reading of a performance guideline, because each symbol in its own place of a given text

<sup>3</sup> Silvio: I notice that when the pieces were commissioned for specific concerts they were made immediately, never leaving a piece without an immediate premiere. But this is not the case for pieces without an expected performance date, like this Partita, a Fantasia for violin, a cycle of pieces for piano (Fantasia). These are pieces that were in the drawer for years until they were read and then performed. By associating myself with many virtuosos interpreters of Contemporary music, such as Luís Montanha, Lídia Bazarian, Cassia Carrascoza, Irvine Arditti, Félix Renggli, Alexandre Zamith, Carlos Tarcha, Fábio Presgrave, I ended up having these ones as my writing laboratory. Their technical limits ended up being mine too, occasionally with me trying to go further.

integrates its own singularity of sound and space. In this first examination – an anamnesis of the text – one must imagine the place of performance of each sound, the strings that sound better to each excerpt, the way to plan the flow of each section and the very identification of those sections that bring together elements of permanence. It is through this imagination that a sound image begins to be formed in what could be called an *inner singing* (Gagnepain, 2003, pp. 9-12.). This step takes months in the case of a piece as complex as the *Partita 3*, even though its effective duration is about 3 minutes!

The curious thing is that phase zero is not zero at all. When I inquire more deeply about this stratification that the process of preparation of performance brings with it, I observe the presence of the entire repertoire of the composer that I have played and practiced previously. It is not, however, a basis of preparation fully adaptable for the new cases that a new piece brings, but a direction that now can be resumed, that sometimes needs to be challenged so that new piece could be truly new in its singularity for the performer.

This is the case for the entire initial section of *Partita 3* (fig. 3), which shares the same energetic and figurative origin from Gabrielli's *Ricercar 5* fantasy session with the rewriting that Silvio did dedicated to me in 2014 (fig. 4) and with the opening section of the second incarnation of *Responsório de Domingo de Ramos* (fig. 5), a kind of palimpsest written in 2016 after my performance of the first version of the piece with the USP Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Gil Jardim, who would be premiered in this new version in 2017, with the Campinas university Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Cinthia Aliretti.

♩ = 72

veloce, sempre flautando sul pont  
il piu legato possibile  
com sordino di piombo

partita III: linha  
violoncello solo

pp

Fig. 3: First line of *Partita 3* (with William's fingerings)

Fig. 4: Fourth and fifth lines of *Ricercar secondo*, rewritten by Silvio Ferraz on the *Ricercar 5* by Domenico Gabrielli

Fig. 5: First measure of the palimpsest (second version) of *Responsório de Domingo de Ramos*

The three lines share obvious attributes, which are the speed and ferocity of the gestures, albeit in contained dynamics, combined with the rhythmic unpredictability that the triplets produce. However, a single change as the first note from C sharp to D sharp in Partita causes a total reconfiguration of the fingerings and, consequently, of the gesture as a whole. Although there is a kind of maintenance of melodic pattern, the pitches chosen in the Partita require more position shifts and string skipping, causing the gestures to imply a higher energy flow than the two earlier cases. In addition, the Partita is a great tour de force, so this beginning needs to be an instant trigger, yet able to endure, unlike the *Ricercar*, where it happens in an intermediate section, and even in the *Responsorio*, which even if happening in the beginning, belongs to a short initial section, which will give place to the orchestra a few moments later.

My point with this comparison is that although I had already practiced the two previous cases, the preparation for Partita 3 started practically from zero, the zero that I define here. The zero moment created by the composer when he totally reconfigured a musical figuration in another discursive context, implying radically different bodily and mental movements; hence, a new gesture. To this is added the fact that the composer this time prescribes the use of a mute of greater absorption of vibration and, in the same text, builds a linearity so energetic that, in *sul ponticello*, makes the clarity of pitches to be difficult to get.

## After the first reading (Silvio)

After the first preparation, with notes already in place, tempos, dynamics, bowings, fingerings, all the micro craft carried out after the score, I noticed that it would be interesting to work on the energy flow of the piece.

But what would be this energy flow? In this case, what I'm thinking about is the transduction process, in the point-to-point passage, of the 'performance energy'. 'Performance energy' is an envelope that brings together, on the one hand, the energy of sound (dynamic and spectral flow) and gesture, of a proprioceptive and motor order, and on the other hand, those aspects related to listening, the figure and texture in face of repetitions, permanencies and transformations or cuts.

When we talk about a energy flow, the first aspect that I observe here is related to the notion of permanence of a note or texture of a constant tangled type that lasts long enough to establish what we can call a continuous and immersive sonority.

The second aspect would be the continuity of transformation, gradual or abrupt, in which different layers come into play in the 'performance flow beam' of this listening object, where one layer can be characterized as permanent while another is transformed. For example, an isochronically repeated rhythmic structure to which notes or timbres can be associated, which gradually transform or even bounce. Or even the same structure interrupted by evolutions or dynamic accents.

In the practice as understood in music until Webern's *Bagatelas* op.9 or Schoenberg's *Farben*, continuity came, in a way, in the presence of the instrument itself. If in the Webern's *Bagatelas* for string quartet the sound of each instrument changes, in a way making each instrument a multiple sound source, in pieces of music even from the so-called European avant-garde as in Stockhausen's *Klavierstück VI*, the presence of the piano and its usual timbre, and the melodic-harmonic construction itself with leaps, choices and privileges of intervals, ends up guaranteeing the continuity of the game that is figuratively understood as fragmented.

But, from experiences like *KlangfarbeMelodie* in its two models, *Farben* and *Bagatelas* op.9, composers like Berio, in his *Sequenze*, or Lachenmann, in *Pression*, with regard to continuity will only have the visibility of the instrument, which would unravel in an acousmatic situation.

The third aspect would be that of continuity by resonance, when an element that remains permanent, passing from one moment to another within the piece, has a characteristic very

close to that of a resonance, to that of something that continues the previous state but gaining new characteristics in the next state<sup>4</sup>.

There would then be three types of continuity, and a fourth, which we will call continuity by local modulation. The term is bad, because in music modulation has a very defined meaning. But the use here concerns Gilbert Simondon's proposal, since when he says about modulation, he is talking about the relationship that happens between two energy flows, one carrier and another modulating, or doubly modulating, one of amplitude modulation and another of frequency modulation. A flow of energy X is interrupted by a flow of energy Y, and at the point of intersection between the two flows there is a modulation in which the new flow is modulated by what it receives from the previous flow at that small point between one moment and another. It is the recurring example of the cut between high registers and the low cluster carried out by Ligeti in *Atmosphères*. The low sounds modulate the memory of the treble, and the treble that just happened modulates the listening to the low sound that is now heard. At this point, a thickness of the present is observed, making use of an idea by Gérard Grisey: the thickness of time. It is as if at that moment time was unfolding<sup>5</sup>.

With these elements in mind, and the importance of the continuity aspects of a performance energy flow, after the first reading performed by William, my interaction was in the sense of writing a map of the energy flow that is not always clear in the score. Having in mind that often, in the indications of scores there are tempos, dynamics, but it is necessary, in addition to deciphering, to read how the passage takes place between one object and another, between a performance gesture and another. A leap in strong dynamics, between 3 strings and 5 positions of the type E1->C# 4 on a cello, followed by a *tremolo forte-decrescendo*, between the first and second string as of C#4/G3, define two objects, but which are related by continuity, of the attack-unfold type. I could understand a similar idea in a very fragmented work by Mozart, his *Fantasia in D minor*, when the sequence of ascending chords over A Major, as if it were a single object and no longer 4 chords, an attack-unfolding object with high resonance. It is what maps Lachenmann in his types of sound (Lachenmann, 2009, pp. 37-60). Now a passage that involves a very *fortissimo* attack on a open string and the echo of this gesture on the neighbour string, a octave higher with repeated note, this one also brings two objects and that are also related by attack-unfolding. It is what you could call an *explicatio*, when a sound-gestural object is explained, unfolded outwards, in the next object, almost composing a single object that evolves. Such a connection is different from that of a

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<sup>4</sup> Boulez draws attention to this mode of continuity of converging or diverging heterophonies and their general qualities from which we take the idea of "dependence" here: the point of arrival or departure of a heterophony. "the heterophony will be linked, that is, glued to the antecedent, by a determined immutable point, such as a height (or complex of heights), or silence ..." (Boulez, 1963, pp. 140-141)

<sup>5</sup> In my article 'Kairos: ponto de ruptura', I developed this idea of cut in *Atmosphères*. (Ferraz, 2015, pp. 45-46)

descending melodic passage, on A and D strings, which is cut by another low sound on the C string with repeated notes or strong re-attacks of that same note.

### **First parenthesis: the partiality of notation in the expression of compositional thought (Silvio)**

The dynamics indicated in the score, as well as the notes and articulations, do not always express precisely the relationship of continuity in the sound flow. I think here of some problems inherited from the melodic, polyphonic and homophonic traditions. Such traditions define functional relationships between the elements of type X as a function of Y, where each musical instrument or 'voice' is an independent data. The first leap was the transition from polyphony to the notion of chord in homophony. If at first each voice was totally independent and all had more or less equal importance as a line to be followed, drawing parallel continuities, with the chords, this independence disappears, but all voices are still asked to be equivalent in dynamic terms. A chord *forte* has all notes *forte* and accentuating either the top or the bottom of the chord is a matter of style that will define the interpretation colour of performers a, b or c. But this is not the reality when a performer faces a spectral composition of a composer like Grisey or Murail. Here notes are no longer independent elements or voices, nor are balanced and equitable components of a chord. The notes are now emulating frequencies of a single sound, and the dynamic relationship may be such that only one of the instruments gains presence, as in the beginning of *Partiels* where at each octave the composer may ask the instruments to relate in a difference of 16 dB.

In other words, we are facing a single object, where the dynamics say a little about the will of the composer, but it is necessary an understanding of what acoustically means a relationship in which the dynamics decrease every octave or every 4 or 5 partials. This fact is not given in the score, it comes from the knowledge of the thought of composers who took spectral data as a compositional reference, and this is expressed in texts, which are not simple decorative annexes of scores, but a definitive part of the score. If a scholastic tradition of music says that the score is everything, today it is clear that 'everything' is a lie in both Corelli and Bach, and even Stockhausen or Grisey. The score is just one of the elements for the construction of musical performance and we can even say that it contains the elements of notation more approximate and uncertain. It is important to observe that Beethoven takes a leap by noting gestures, and to do so he adopts the metronome, requiring a reading that demands other readings. Debussy's music without the knowledge of the pianistic *touché* technique proposed by the composer and transmitted by Maurice Dumesnil, would die as a badly finished simulacrum<sup>6</sup>. Dumesnil's text is not an observation, a proposal, but it has the

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<sup>6</sup> *How To Play and Teach Debussy* (Schroeder & Gunther: New York 1932).



status of a score. And Igor Stravinsky said the same about the videos and recordings that he left out of his works. It is not Stravinsky's performance, but an addendum to his scores and even those addendums are partial. The fact is that the score does not encapsulate all the necessary data, especially when it is no longer understood as a mere flow of musical ideas, but as an uninterrupted sound flow, where even the cuts are data for continuity.

And we would also have as privileged examples those of the collaborations between composer and performer. An example of collaboration and the relevance of the performance report for the realization of what was underway in thought partially recorded in score is the composition of *Sequenza XIV* by Luciano Berio – Roham de Saram. In the various versions prior to the final version, the way of tapping the body of the instrument is a major performance index. The proof of the incompleteness of the score is in the performances of this piece by Éric-Maria Couturier (Ensemble Intercontemporain) and the one recorded by Roham de Saram, for whom the piece was written and who collaborated with Berio until the last version of the score and revisions that were not incorporated since Berio passed away before a last meeting between them both. What Berio thinks 4-fingers percussion on the body, Saram plays with fingers and Couturier with flat beats. In this *Sequenza*, as well as in several others, the theme is the performer himself, the theme is Saram, his origin from Sri Lanka, his modes of improvisation, as we noted in the 2015 article, *Extended Technique and Polyphonic Writing in Luciano Berio: Sequenza XIV*<sup>7</sup>.

We bring this example only to reinforce the idea that there is an idea of the composer, but it is only partially expressed in the score, what demands a supplementary material since the beginning of preparation for performance. This would make the deciphering and a sight-reading of the score what we might call a blind performance.

### **The Energy Flow (Silvio and William)**

What we intend to bring in this article is the role of what we call a *concrete continuity* as opposed to the idea from Structuralism of *ideal unity*<sup>8</sup>. The retrieval of concrete continuity is due to new notions that make possible the understanding of the performance flow, like the reinsertion that ethnomusicology and other readings that gave importance to musical gesture made by the body of the musician, the body of the instrument, the body of the concert hall, in

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<sup>7</sup> William: Regarding the presence of a performer personally involved in the creation of a musical discourse, at whatever level, the limits that will be presented in the second parenthesis of this article are still present. When I played the Berio's *Sequenza XIV* for Roham de Saram in 2014, I performed it with the scordatura required by the composer in the score. After listening the final result, Saram said: "I think this is what Berio wanted", since he himself did not use the scordatura prescribed by the composer because he considered an unnecessary effort when compared to the destabilization of the tuning caused to the instrument in the middle of a recital with others pieces.

<sup>8</sup> The Concept of Unity and Musical Analysis (Morgan, 2003, pp. 7-50) and Concepts of Musical Unity (Maus, 1999, pp. 171-92).

what we call music<sup>9</sup>. Even the practice of composers made this body unavoidable, like Berio himself in his *Sequenze*, and the work of composer-playwrights like Dieter Schnebel and Georges Aperghis<sup>10</sup>.

Along with this presence of the body is also the growing idea that musical listening is crossmodal, in fact, that all listening is crossmodal. In this sense, the act of listening to a performance flow calls not only for the direct visual of the performance, of the space, but also the visual present in the image of the musical figure, the tactile of the notion of texture, the proprioceptive and motor of the notion of gesture, in addition to symbolic relations that a flow of this type triggers; and all these instances are mutually affected and modulated. In this sense, a concept like that of unity begins to fade, in such a way that bringing back the idea of a concrete continuity seems opportune to us.

The fact is that lacks to concrete continuity a music theory, since most of the theories of music have been dedicated to the unfolding of the analysis forged from dodecaphonic and serial music, that is, starting from a structural paradigm<sup>11</sup>. A starting point, however, could be the essays compiled by Albert Bregman in his *Auditory Scene Analysis* (Bregman, 1994). In his book Bregman brings several experiences relating precisely to the elements that forge the continuity or discontinuity of an auditory flow in a given scene. It is interesting to note the presence of Bregman's thought among composers of Spectralism and his contribution in what is perhaps the main book on timbre as a compositional piece, *Le timbre métaphore pour la composition* organized by Jean-Baptiste Barrière (Barrière, 1991).

What we have is a simple model that we seek to exemplify in the figure below, where each point of a flow is connected to the other by energy transmission.

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<sup>9</sup> According to Roland Barthes: "Structuralism is essentially an activity [...]. The objective of all structuralistic activity [...] is to reconstruct an object. The structure is, therefore, in fact, a simulacrum of the object" (Barthes apud. Dosse, 2007, p. 277). François Dosse comments, adding that, "This structuralistic activity is seen as an 'imitation activity' [apud. Barthes], mimesis established not on an analogy of substance, but of function [...]. In this regard, Barthes puts this activity that uses linguistics on the same plane to build a science of structure and the *nouveau roman* of Butor, the music of Boulez and the painting of Mondrian, whose compositions participate in the same simulacrum of the object as the semiological work." (Dosse, 2007, p. 277)

<sup>10</sup> See Schnebel, D. *Son et Corps*. Dijon: Presses du réel, 2017.

<sup>11</sup> A strong example of this is the analysis of Edward T. Cone, Nicolas Cook's little manual, and works of analysts such as Allan Forte, J. Straus, Riemann and others.

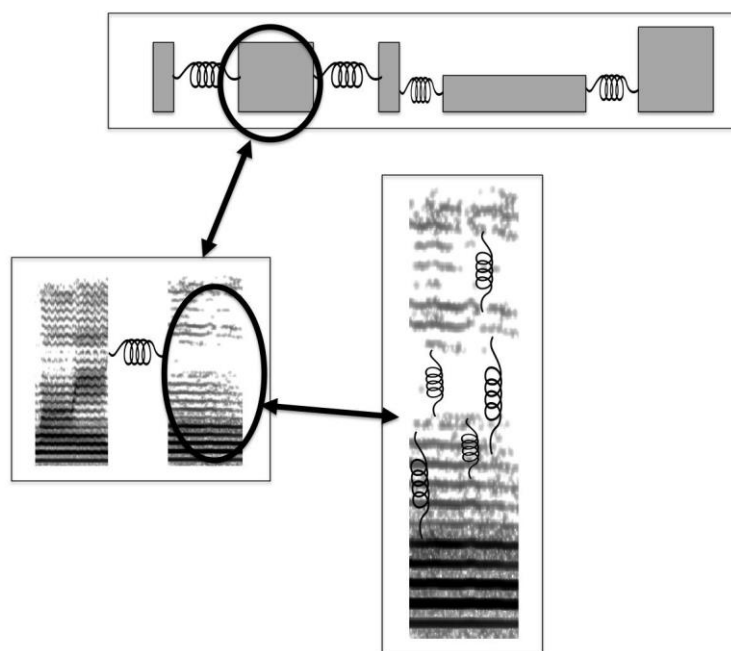


Fig. 6: Image of the mass-spring model projected at a formal level (sequence), object level and internal level (spectral).

The model we use here is taken from the mass-spring model, in which between each mass there is a spring that transmits energy from one point to another. This spring being expressed by an operator, what Gilbert Simondon in *On the Modes of Existence of Technical Objects* calls “alagmatic”<sup>12</sup>. It is in this sense that each moment of a musical flow can be connected to another by an energy transfer point, a transduction point, in which one type of energy can gain continuity transformed into another type. A textural flow can unfold in a figure, vice versa, or a gesture can give place to sonority.

Very important here is an image brought by Bergson in his course *History of the Idea of Time*. There, Bergson distinguishes two modes of knowledge, relative and absolute. The relative is the seeing from the outside, in contrast to the absolute, where the seeing being is confused with the seen object. Perhaps this would be the interpreter’s task: to perform in such way that allow the listener to listen from within, the listening confused with the energy flow in what it is expressed in the score as juxtaposed elements by composition<sup>13</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> This model is also based on physical modeling synthesis, bringing to the domain of performance flow the model present in synthesis applications, such as Modalys (Ircam) and specific patches in Max/Msp and PWGL. This model allows us to distinguish the chain transduction of mechanical and acoustic energy, and its subsequent extension in live-electronics, transduction in electromagnetic energy and subsequent translation by analog-digital-analog coding, thus highlighting the phases of sound production in an acoustic instrument in the presence of live-electronics: 1) excitation; 2) excited body; 3) resonance body; 4) capture mechanism (second body excited); 5) AD-DA translation.

<sup>13</sup> BERGSON, Henri. *Histoire de l'idée de temps: cours au Collège de France, 1902-1903*. Paris: PUF, 2017. pp.24-27.

It was based upon this model that, after a first reading<sup>14</sup> and preparation of the piece, we considered the following elements related to the game between score and intention of flow imagined by the composer:

**Silvio Ferraz**

Wed, Apr 17, 8:41 PM  
to William

Wow, what a blast!

So let's work on all the boring dynamics I've written first.

All this nervous that you put in this beautiful realization, but now imagine all this contained in the *ppp*, in the *pp* a little more loudly (a little less noisily).

In the *arrestato bowing*, less bow pressure... the more still bow more a percussive thing and relaxing from the storm.

Incidentally... there's this thing I'm thinking about: storm-relaxation from storm ... near-far.

The beginning: *veloce, sempre flautando sul pont.; il piu legato possibile; with sordino di piombo*  
Suddenly a violent *ff* cuts everything but goes back to what was before ... *crescendo* to *mp* and keeps oscillating to reach the *f* and the *staccato* accents of this passage

then violence returns, on a single note ... ugly (*cativo*): *questo passaggio deve essere giocato violento, molto al talone, cativi e subito, sempre con una intensione molto forte, ma muto (com sordino di piombo) al mp, l'arco sempre deve essere alla corda, quasi interrotto sullo stesso punto del tallone.*

the intent is *forte* but the sound is muted, almost all you can hear are the accents, the glissandi, the small *appoggiaturas* in a *subito* (which is a little more *f* than the rest in *mp* and mute.)

The *arrestato bowing* of the 3rd and 4th lines ... there is relaxation, the sound that disappears even more and more gradually (more defined pitch, less noise) but still in *mp* ...

Three sudden cuts in *ff diminuendo* to nothing ... and the *arrestato bowing* but with less pressure because it is *ppp*.

In line 2 on p.3 the C, open string, is almost only slipped (they are small notes) and *sul ponticello* ... at the end of the line everything in *mf* and more sound of notes, phrases

Violence itself is in the first figures of line 4.

new violent *cativo* (ugly), but *lontano, pp* ...

And finally Debussy ... only the bigger notes get a little accent.

The end ... perfect, I would just say to let the last attack resound.

Be careful, this piece goes through the open C and G strings ... don't play them with more force than necessary otherwise they will jump too much (composer error).

But damn... how difficult it is and how amazing the way you put it up. I was even in doubt if this violence was supposed to be.

But I thought about it, and maybe the violence will be contained.

Annita's mother, Nitona, smoked, coughed a lot, spoke loudly and suddenly slept ... occupied a space of a thousand actors. When she went to the theater, afterwards the actor talked, at the bar, that he was calm only after he heard that Nitona was in the audience. In the last few days she was just lying there and sometimes there was a loud throaty laugh, but the rest of the time I imagined her talking and laughing loudly but inside her body.

This would be the image to help build this character-piece.

Abs  
Silvio

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<sup>14</sup> Audio recording attached.

Exemplifying the data expressed in this message, we present next the passages in the drafts and in the final score. In the first excerpts the insertion of the central part of the piece, which was already written for another piece and, because it is precisely an insertion, implies a moment of change of direction in the piece, what is the extension of the final note of the figure-gesture of the line previous (passage from the second to the third line, in the final score below – Fig 8). This change of direction implies a sudden change in the performance of the piece, mode of attack, bowing, sound, and consequently in the listening of the piece. In the second passage (Fig. 9) we exemplify the continuous passage commented above in this text, in which the passage of “arrestato bowing” (the bow almost stopped over the strings, in pendulum movement over the four strings) is a kind of resonance far from the previous passage of reiterated notes in *forte*.

So we have the sudden passage, by cut, in which everything changes direction (breaking and new trajectory of the energy flow) and the passage with direct *explicatio* by distant resonance. Such an example leads us to the observation made by Paul Klee (Fig.7):

[...] the juxtaposition of strong contrasts generates an expression full of strength. The insertion of a means of connection between the contrasts, distances them mutually and weakens the expression... Curve of movement taking into account the notions of ‘strong connectionless contrast’(1), ‘connection’(2) and ‘secondary contrast’ (3 and 3a). (KLEE, 1980, p. 319)

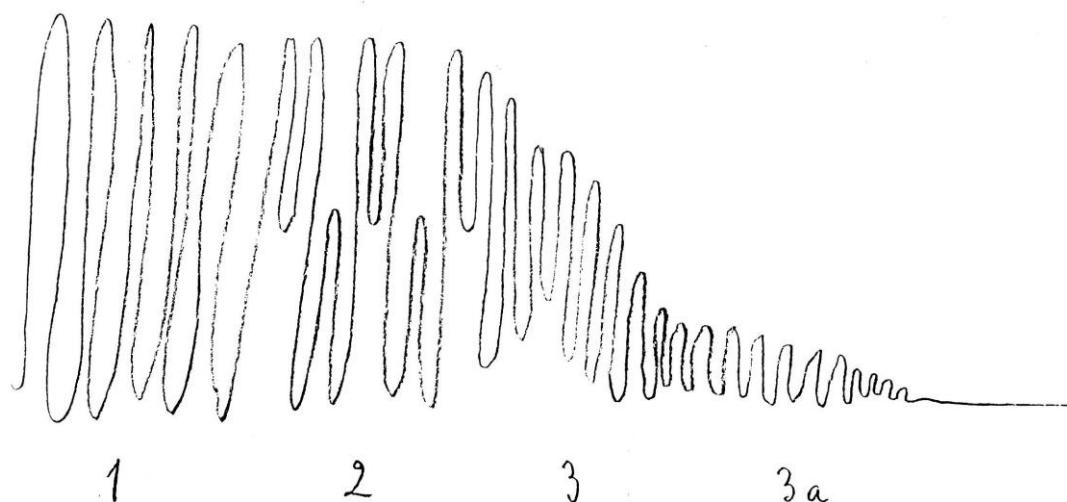


Fig. 7: Drawing by Paul Klee about the close connections or leaps in a line: “Strong connectionless contrast’(1), ‘conection’ (2) e ‘secondary contrast’(3 e 3a)”.

Fig. 8: Excerpt from Partita 3, exemplifying the inlay process, which favors the leap between distant objects, in the draft stage (with materials from different compositional projects) and their presence in the final version of the score.

Fig. 9: Draft and final version of a linear transformation of an energy flow, from the strong reiteration of notes to their resonance with “arco arestatato” in *bariolage*.

## Second parentheses: the presence of the composer in the expression of interpretive thought (William)

The question of Bergsonian absolute knowledge anticipated a fundamental question: what is a performance? This question, obviously, only makes sense when not only the entities of composition and performance are dissociated, but when the access to the knowledge of the former by the latter is corrupted or made impossible by some kind of distance. As Lawrence Dreyfus recalls, the origin of the term *performance* in the English language occurs at first, exclusively in contexts where it refers to the fulfilment of a promise made, that is, the one responsible for the performance of a given promise (Dreyfus, 2007). From this idea, therefore, the second component of the problem continues, which is the faithful fulfilment of the promise made.

The notion of a faithful promise-fulfilment procession does not present itself as a serious problem when its owner is a single personal entity; the problem actually exists only when an information gap is assumed between two different entities, that is, when the person responsible for compliance does not have enough information to understand the content of the promise he must fulfil. It is at this point that the divorce between the composition and performance entities takes place and where the idea of the prevalence of one over the other becomes the only possible way to resolve the issue. It is precisely this path that has been, as a rule, the basic premise for studies in musical performance, which conclude in an inevitable bifurcation: either choosing to submit to the composer's will or the performer assuming the role of creator of the meaning of musical discourse, freed from the oppression of that authoritarian entity<sup>15</sup>. Although this discussion could lead to a theory of musical authority, at this moment there is a tacit component that offers an earlier and more effective way out of our dilemma: the assumption that the gap between composer and performer is information.

Starting from the already defended understanding of composition as the impression of a energy flow and performance as the materialization of that flow, it is denied, therefore, that it is a informational gap that connects composition to performance, but rather an energetic one. Of course the structural distance that exists between notational fields, that is, distinct texts, either by time or space, is not ignored. This exegesis is a fundamental part of an immanent approach to musical discourse; however, the deciphering stage is only the basis for the development of an interpretation like the one in question. To put it more clearly: the question is not at what point the *Partita* stops to be Silvio's and becomes William's, but how it could

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<sup>15</sup> This notion is a basic premise for the entire musicological field called Performance Studies and can be observed especially in the chapters of Colin Lawson, Peter Walls and John Rink in Rink. John (Org). *Musical Performance: A Guide to Understanding*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

consist of an energy flow in which the compositional entity Silvio is actualizes in the entity William point-to-point (*de proche en proche*). We resume again a process like the proposed alagmatics, where the premise of the substance, be it in transubstantiation or consubstantiation, does not need the dilution of the compositional entity as a mere memorial data to resolve, but finds a third way where the presence of the composer is real in performance as it energizes musical discourse in its flow.

Perhaps this understanding becomes even harder because we come, in the West, from an artistic tradition that still has the composer as a genius whose creation 'divinely inspired' must be obeyed literally (literallistic would be more accurate), at the risk of violating his Will. The real presence I propose here, however, is not of that order. Wagner's terrible anti-Semitism should not be taken into account in order to understand his harmonies, for example, nor could any misogyny or incitement to rape by Beethoven be perceived due to the interrupted cadences of his Ninth Symphony<sup>16</sup>. Such considerations would only occur in socio-historical approaches that still stick to structural aspects, forgetting the universal that precedes them: the humanity of the subject and, therefore, of music.

As a way to avoid such misunderstandings, the philosopher Alexander Nehamas<sup>17</sup> proposes two simple categories for understanding authorial action, from which it is possible to understand more clearly from which presence I defend the reality, distinguishing the writer, that is, the individual located in the story that efficiently causes its text, the author, the person involved in the text and accessible in its immanence. "The writer realizes the existence of the text, but the (implicit) author realizes its meaning". The author, therefore, "is the figure implied by several texts taken together", being a "plausible historical variant of the writer" (Vanhoozer, 2005. p. 286-288), being not just another level of causal heteronomy, but an implication of the writer's creative actions. This is the level of authorship, therefore, that can be inferred from the composition in the energy flow contained in a musical discourse. Although the person of the composer (writer) inevitably affects his compositional act (author), it is of interest here to access it not as far as his private life is concerned, but within the scope of his immediate job of expressing an energy flow, whether by an immanent analysis involving manuscripts or dialogues, either through the text of the score itself, which establishes the fundamental connections of which the piece consists.

This attitude is present in all the interpretive actions previously described, that is, in all stages of the preparation of the piece. But it is important to note where it happens most intensely, in order to supplant all the others: in performance. George Steiner perfectly defines what I mean:

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<sup>16</sup> I have in mind Susan McClary's thesis in *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, & Sexuality*. 2a ed. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002.

<sup>17</sup> Nehamas, 1986, p. 686.



The real hermeneutics of drama is staging (even reading a play aloud usually goes far beyond any theatrical review). In turn, no musicology, no music criticism can tell us as much as the action of meaning that is performance. (Steiner, 2013, p. 13)

This is because the nature of musical meaning is not denotative, but existential, to make use of the categories of the philosopher Michael Polanyi (Polanyi, 1962, p. 60). It is only in living wholly (body, intellect, spirit) an energy flow that one can access the energy flow that pressured the composer to express it, imprinting it in his writing. In this event lies the connection that makes the composition a force present in the performance and not just as an *a priori* entity.

The performance is the fulfilment of a promise made by the composer in his craft, but it does not depend on a gnosis, on revealed knowledge, for it to be possible. The nature of this promise is that it needs to be clarified. It is not a social contract, where the terms have a binding value, but an action carried out in the structure. This is what J. L. Austin's Theory of Speech Acts consists of, when the English philosopher distinguishes the illocutionary force (what is done) from the locutionary force (what is said)<sup>18</sup>. Austin's infamous example serves us well, as he differentiates the promise that is made at the matrimonial altar from the word said at the time (for example, the 'yes'): the promise is done *in* saying yes. Performance has this illocutionary force, therefore, so that it is not the structure (of information) that depends on its link with the composition, but on the energy involved in its flow, that is, on what it does<sup>19</sup>.

From this understanding, an image that has accompanied me in this process of building the interpretation of *Partita* continues: the river. Not so much the river of Heraclitus, which is defined, even in its fluidity, by the man who bathes in it, but the river as the materialization of an energy flow, irreversible and impossible to be inside it. It is only possible to dive in that river, completely immersed in the speed of the movement of its streams. This image provides a precise analogy to describe how the energy flow could be developed into a music theory corresponding to its premises. The functioning of a river can be observed from two perspectives: its geomorphology and its hydrology. Both are essential for the resulting energy flow to be properly understood. From the point of view of geomorphology, a river is composed of its longitudinal dimensions (its continuum, the direction of its flow), lateral ("connection between the elements and processes of a system, which define the stage of its variables";

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<sup>18</sup> There is also the third level of agency, the *perlocutionary* force, that is, what is made in the other. Austin, 1962, p. 2.

<sup>19</sup> It is this concept of Austin that leads Deleuze and Guattari to conclude an overcoming of the structural paradigm. The consequence of the Theory of Speech Acts for language is "The impossibility of maintaining the language-speech distinction, since speech can no longer be defined by the simple individual and extrinsic use of a first meaning, or by the variable application of a previous syntax: on the contrary, they are the meaning and syntax of the language that cannot be defined independently of the speech acts that it presupposes" (Deleuze, G.; Guattari, F. [1980]. *Mil Platôs*, vol. 2. São Paulo: Ed. 34. 1995. p. 15)

Corradini, Fachini, Stevaux, 2006, p. 13), vertical (depth dynamics) and temporal (its in-time dynamics, kairotic, seasonal; Stevaux, Latrubesse, 2007, p. vi). It is important to recognize that the four aspects occur in the flow of time, which is why they offer a less architectural and more morphological view of structural formation. And it is this formation that matters to performance: the comprehension of the formative process used by the composer so that it is possible to enter the flows involved there, understanding what are the connections, how the objects are formed or separated and how they relate to their neighbourhoods in the transductive game of passing energy from one point to another. This morphology, however, does not determine fatal and causally which currents will pass through there. A complex of conditions makes this dynamic extremely variable, contingently to the formation of its bed, its temperature, altitude, volume, among many other components.

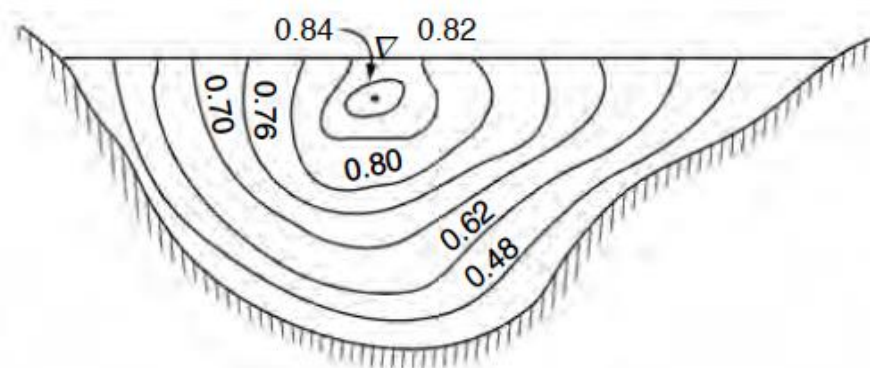


Fig. 10: Average speed variability of streams in natural course rivers  
(Source: Subramanya, 2009, p. 6)

It is in this way that I see the hermeneutics demanded by the energy flow in music: a sailing with fragile oar, where one chooses one of countless streams within the river. The meaning, in this analogy, refers more to the direction of the river, its longitudinal dimension. However, the river has several streams, even the most marginal, thus providing multiple performances. The same performer, by the way, can adopt now one current, now another, and still remain within the direction of the energy flow. In a piece like *Partita*, the challenge is precisely to enter the intense rapids that in its first note already trigger an instantly high and lasting energy. What precedes this discharge that breaks the silence? Energy.

One point, however, is important to be made: the river has edges. The river has limits between what belongs to its dynamics, its flow, and what does not. Thus, the number of performances is multiple, but not infinite. Because there is not only one interpretation, one is not in the field where *anything* gains validity, but where *some* things correspond to the energy proposed by the composition. Thus, the performance chooses streams that belong to the flow,

being able to even jump from one stream to another in the same performance, remaining in the flow. The morphological conditions built by the composer form a field of particular dynamics – a piece of music – and it is up to the performer to find his way along the flow of the river, actively navigating it.

This analogy seems to solve the apparent race that exists between composer and performer; a relationship based on the old metaphor of a tyrant despot and a submissive subject, to be redundant. There is no choice to be made between which of the two controls the music. Both participate in their own strengths to produce the energy flow of the same song. There is no reason to take into account, as proposed by John Rink, that “In assessing the function and relative significance of these elements, the composer’s (variable?) intentions do not have overriding authority, though they may not be wholly irrelevant” (RINK, 2019), because, on the one hand, it would be illogical not to recognize an authorial action in the act of composition, on the other hand, there is no authority by the composer that can cancel the performance. The composition is extremely and genuinely relevant, as it forms the bed, the edges and the energy flow of the river. There is no race at all, in the sense that there is some competition between the composer and the performer. Yes, there is another sense of race between the two, but in the sense that they run together. The presence of the composer accompanies the performer as he enters the stream of an energy flow and is directed by it, while actively leading his own path. The overcoming of the informational distance between composition and performance thus redefines the problem raised above; it is not a question of asking ‘what is performance?’ as fulfilment and promise are updated point by point, it is not enough in this covenantal race and complementing a final action for the promise to be fulfilled, since it is being in the flow that guarantees that. So the more precise question would be: what can a performance?

### **Final notes: apocryphal dialogue or a counter-conclusion (Silvio & William)**

S – It is important to say that: When thinking about performance like that, as an analyst of your own work, you fall into a small trap. Which, although not negative, is a trap. The words we use, the analytical methods, our vision, are all shaped, and with this we run the risk of plastering our own performance. It would be a kind of imposition of discontinuous language and methods on the continuum of gesture and performance. Talking about you, we can invent an “in yourself”.

W – It is interesting to mention that, no doubt. Especially because this is an aspect that usually keeps me away from reading texts written by performers or in this area of ‘collaborative processes’: the extreme degree of subjectivism, which does not collapse, but runs the risk of appearing as a mere opinion and, therefore, seem dispensable. Those solutions sound so particular that they find difficulty to envision more general applications, that is, for others. In

our case, one thing that I believe protects us is clarity in the responsibilities involved: you are the composer and I am the cellist. Even though we affect each other, there is an ethical component that defines the ultimate responsibility for each decision-making.

That said, the simultaneity of our discussion might not be as contagious as it seems. I wish it were! The transduction, so to speak, of the concept to the block of sensations requires a lot of effort and planning: technique. Thus, the concepts we discussed point to paths, but which still require a lot of effort to be followed. So I don't know if this plastering can happen so immediately, at least not as a direct causal relationship of our reflection. There is a component that gives me some protection against attacks by the discontinuous of language: the stage. At the end of the day, I have to make it work when I get up there...

S & W – This article is a report, a conceptual reflection, but above all a musical fabulation of practice-as-research (Pace, 2016). A fabulation that comes from a spontaneous generation, with the dialogue here present in the form of words, sounds and gestures as an outline of so many forces-references concomitant to the construction of performance. In this sense, this article was part of our process almost as a meta-collaboration, a collaborative reflection on collaboration and that, for that reason, made us think not only what it is to make music collaboratively, but also how it would be to reproduce the process in a way fitting to the process itself. Therefore, we have abandoned the idea dear to Humanities of taking the article as the research, to adopt an ethics closer to that of the natural sciences where the article is the *report* of a research, narrating its processes without being confused with it, taking it for itself a provisional character, which seems to be adequate of an academic attitude towards knowledge. Some principles were presented aiming to be impulses for musical creation, both compositional and interpretive. For this reason, the authorship of words is sometimes distinguished: more as assemblages, than as demarcations of power (Deleuze; Guattari, 1995a, p. 11); as responsible powers and not as hierarchies; neither as an objectively omniscient epic voice, or a subjectively revealed lyrical voice, but as drama, that is, as a script of actions that trigger each other (Vanhoozer, 2016).

Finally, the collaboration presented here, far from being an end in itself, appears at this end as an aspect of permanence in the process, which inevitably had much more constant loneliness. But the ability to connect concepts and sensations that music has also allows these agencies to connect and to be founded on the becoming that an object-piece has to overcome its structural cloister, coming to life in the world.

This world that a process like the one described here reveals has such status for at least two reasons: firstly because art itself has the attribute of world-projection (Wolterstorff, 1980), or, as we have understood elsewhere, how to project a reality affective (Teixeira; Ferraz, 2018). Second, because music is what people do *in doing* musical actions, it takes as its basic principle this agency, that is, of people (Teixeira; Ferraz, 2017). People make music and

people make the world, which is why any artistic achievement and, in our case, musical achievement specifically, brings together a multimodal world around you. In this way, we consider this writing as an attempt to live up to the forces involved in a musical achievement that could be phonographically objectified in a few minutes, putting in the time that is in it and from it (Becker, 1982, p. 5).

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