IRASM 55 (2024) 1: 181-194

Towards a Theory of Musical Content: The Role of the Threefold Composer-Performer-Teacher Complex

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UDC: 78.01
DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.21857/ygjwrc2vvy
Original Scholarly Paper
Izvorni znanstveni rad
Received: 6 June 2023
Primljeno: 6. lipnja 2023.
Accepted: 15 March 2024
Prihvaćeno: 15. ožujka 2024.

Abstract – Résumé
The study of the process of development of musical culture is one of the urgent tasks of art studies. The purpose of this study is to offer theoretical analysis and substantiation of the triune role complex of »composer – performer – teacher« in the system of the theory of musical content. The practical significance of the topic provided in the paper can be used by specialists and teachers in educational institutions in the preparation of methodological programmes and practical classes in the fields of the history of art music, musicology and art studies. The results of this study may be of scientific interest to students, musicians and performers, teachers, and art historians.

Keywords: teacher · artistic and creative activity · theory of musical content · composer · musical performance · threefold role complex

Introduction

Since ancient times, human thought has tried to penetrate and comprehend the secrets of music. The most interesting question was the essence of music, since there was no doubt that music can have a great impact on a person due to the special meanings it contains. The essence of music is a complex question that has interested many generations of musicians, thinkers and scholars, and retains its relevance even today. It is not surprising that the fundamental question of the content of music has received very different, but sometimes mutually exclusive opinions (Weinstein-Reiman, 2021; Rigauditre, 2018; Scott, 2017; Gorbunova and Zalivadny, 2020). Music is a special kind of human sound activity. It is as close as possible to language, more precisely to the intonations of speech, which, by changing the intonation and other characteristics of the sound of the voice, reveals the inner state of a person and their emotional connection with the surrounding world.

At the same time, music is radically different from all other varieties of human sound activity. Musical sounds are part of historical systems based on the tones chosen by the musical practice of societies. In each piece of music, the tones form their own system of vertical connections, and the horizontal sequences create their own form (Korvel and Kostek, 2019; Omigie, Pearce and Lehongre, 2019; Nuttall et al., 2019). Music as a living and active art arises and exists as a result of the union of all kinds of activities. The connection between them is carried out through musical images, because music as an art form does not exist outside of images. Under the influence of the composer's musical and creative imagination, a musical image arises which then materialises in musical composition. The music itself, as a phenomenon, is so strong that it simply cannot go unnoticed in a person's mind. Music has a huge potential to influence people, and this influence can be controlled, as it has been throughout history (Bakalova, 2021; Larsen and Whitaker, 2013).

The scientific knowledge of music has undoubtedly been dominated for a long time by such areas as the history of music, various teachings on the composition of a musical work, elementary music theory, harmony, form, and many other aspects of the theoretical study of the language of music. The theory of musical content as a science has emerged relatively recently, towards the end of the 20th century. However, the comprehension and recognition of this theory is still insufficient in the professional musicological environment, and outside of this field of knowledge – in aesthetics, art history, literature, cultural studies, and psychology – it is practically absent. Moreover, this theory is almost unknown to foreign researchers in the field of art studies (Yeoh, 2021; Manzano and Barbosa, 2020; Shaymukhametova, 2017).

It is worth noting that the theory of musical content and composition are closely related. If theory creates rules that should be followed, then the composition is the perfect and final expression of a musical work. In addition, theory follows practice and deduces laws from the existing musical tradition. The efforts of theorists to fully control the creative process of writing music have never been successful, and most composers freely used and use the sound material of their time and do not rely on certain existing musical theories. The purpose of this study is a theoretical analysis and substantiation of the threefold role complex of »composer – performer – teacher« in the system of the theory of musical content. In other words, it is important to understand how all three aspects of the complex affect the main task of creative performance – the qualitative embodiment of a musical work.

Materials and Methods

The methodological basis of this article is developed from the works of modern researchers on the theory of musicology, and the main issues it addresses are reflected in studies by Weinstein-Reiman (2021), Gorbunova and Zalivadny

(2020), Omigie and Pearce (2019) Larsen and Whitaker (2013), Manzano and Barbosa (2020), Shaymukhametova (2017), Paananen (2021), and many other authors who pursue questions surrounding the establishment of musical culture. In the study and analysis of the literature, the main concepts of research were identified and the comparative research method was aimed at clarifying the similarities and differences of each of the independent components of the theory of musical content as part of a threefold role complex, namely, musical performance, pedagogical activity and compositional creativity.

Results

The selection of the components of performing, composing and pedagogical skills in the theory of musical content follows from the analysis of the content of the activity of a modern musician. It consists in a continuous process encompassing training, self-study, rehearsal and concert performance activities. The Russian pedagogical tradition has always been based on the fact that a musician-teacher is responsible not only for preserving the traditions of the great masters of the past, but is also responsible for educating future generations of musicians. Music pedagogy was considered part of a huge structure, as part of a living and long-lasting tradition. This explains why many famous performing musicians paid such attention to the education of future musicians.

Today, traditional labour systems are being replaced by new modern systems focused on the needs of society and the state, in which professional qualifications play an important role. All this requires new approaches to defining the structural, substantive and methodological foundations of higher music education. The professional community focuses on developing the independence of each student in obtaining knowledge and developing the ability to apply the acquired knowledge in professional musical activity to achieve success. In such conditions, a new understanding of the education process arises, in which a variety of pedagogical and practical experience is aimed at providing the future specialist with all professionally and socially significant competencies that would allow competing and adapting to changes in the professional environment. The professional mentality of a modern musician is formed not only on the basis of theoretical musical knowledge. According to researchers, the professional mentality of a musician can be defined as a lifestyle that characterises a subject who implements the Self-concept through musical activity and ensures his professional development by using all aspects of the heritage of the chosen profession (Ohanezova-Hryhorenko, 2019). In this regard, the role of the educational environment that contributes to the development of a professional mentality and the growth of a professional culture of specialists, especially musicians and teachers, becomes relevant. A special place in their training is occupied by vocational

training, during which the multi-level educational complex »school – faculty – university« is created, and which comprises a continuous educational process in which the creative personality of the future musician is formed. Researchers suggest that the pedagogically organised musical process is the most perfect type of cultural and musical environment (Buckner, 2019).

The advantage of such a musical educational environment lies both in the organically progressive logic of the educational path and in the content enrichment of the profession, characterised by the diverse musical and pedagogical training of future musicians-performers. The introduction of new technologies into the educational process actualises and expands the educational environment, capturing a wide socio-cultural field, thus the musician realises their own musical and educational mission also through pedagogical activity. The professional culture of a musician is formed mainly at the university, where a special professional and creative atmosphere is cultivated which is as close as possible to the atmosphere of professional activity. In such an environment, all knowledge and skills have a general cultural, and professional and practical significance, and contribute to the development of professionally oriented worldviews and values (Manzano and Barbosa, 2019).

The development of a musician's personality takes place throughout their life in an adapted musical and educational environment, where the university contributes to the development of basic professional qualities and the cultural and personal abilities necessary for a musician to advance. A necessary condition for this process is the fruitful joint musical and artistic work of the teacher with the students, the humanistic orientation of the pedagogical action, and the understanding of the socio-cultural task of the teacher-musician in a broad social context. The professional culture of a modern music teacher is versatile due to the versatility and complexity of closely related components of pedagogical action, namely:

1. Axiological values reflecting professional, educational, cultural, musical, and artistic values.
2. Technological aspects, including methods and techniques and pedagogical and musical support of the educational process, in which a person is attached to values.
3. Personal and creative discovery by the teacher of the mechanism of assimilation (acceptance and choice) of the values of pedagogical musical culture; compliance with skills, interpretations, professional, and educational values.

Of particular importance in the development of the theory of musical content is the educational process of future musical artists, including the general psychological and pedagogical issues that are addressed in the path towards becoming a

master musician and teacher. The professional maturity of a musician can be determined through an assessment of their efforts at self-improvement, which lasts a lifetime, as well as through their professional activities, including training, rehearsals, and concert performances. For a musician-teacher, pedagogical work is also added to the practical dimension. When it comes to individual training or live performances, it implies an interstructural view of the activity (Bonnasse-Gahot, 2020).

The structural units in this case are actions (sensory, mental, and motor). Admittedly, the musician's activity, in this case, cannot be considered as a simple sum of actions. Such activities are usually associated with a holistic system, interconnected and performed according to a common plan of classes or performances. The performance of music, with respect to its technological elements, consists of separate fragments, separate actions or movements, called operations, which form the microstructure of the musician's activity. Working on a piece of music is a central element of musical art. Of particular theoretical and practical importance in this context is the idea of the psychological and pedagogical content of the musician's creativity. Ultimately, it directly affects the form and content of the teaching and educational process of a musician's training, and their entire professional musical activity. Personal abilities and professional abilities are determined by factors affecting the musician in both external and internal ways (Bere, 2019).

The social factor of a musician's personal development manifests itself in the form of attitudes and motives, that is, the attitude to music as an artistic and professional activity, an interest in playing a musical instrument, the desire to convey the secrets of musical art to others, interest in the educational process, knowledge and skills (including the presence of an individual style of work), and the development of important professional qualities. The presence of internal efficiency is reflected in the professional competence of the musician and the teacher. When describing the professional competencies of a musician and a teacher, it is convenient to distinguish four main blocks (Manzano and Barbosa, 2020): orientation and musical performance, knowledge, professionally important skills and qualities for a musician. Ultimately, the structure of musical activity would be incomplete without the need for self-expression. A person's musical orientation correlates with the need for musical and aesthetic education, which is carried out in the process of achieving three hierarchically arranged goals (Shaymukhametova, 2017):

1. The education of emotional reaction, which in future performers and teachers is associated with the regulation of their emotional state and adequate planning of their professional activities.
2. The development of the ability of future performers and teachers to perceive musical images.
3. Development of musicality among future performers and teachers.

4. The musician's knowledge consists of two blocks of knowledge: general and special. The general block of knowledge is responsible for the general level of culture and social literacy of the future musician and teacher.

Special psychological and pedagogical knowledge allows an active musician to maintain the level of musical and acting skills, while simultaneously creating an atmosphere for the development of the younger generation. The main distributors of traditions and interpretive, artistic, and methodological achievements in the field of music are musicians-teachers. The teacher traditionally recognises the need for general cultural knowledge, knowledge of music history and music theory. When preparing a composer and performer, such disciplines as music history, music theory, polyphony, analysis of musical composition, etc., are taught. But it is worth remembering that music pedagogy not only refers to methodological guidelines, but also specific psychological and pedagogical knowledge and skills that form a musician as a professional.

In the current education system, it is worth spending more time on the essence of musical content, interpretation, and study of music. It is also worth noting that many practical results of performers are not based on the results of psychological and pedagogical science, which in some cases significantly limits their reliability and practical significance. The mastery of a musician is the practical mastery of the techniques of performing individual actions and operations or general activities in accordance with the rules and purpose of musical activity. Teachers distinguish three groups of skills (Cvetković-Crvenica and Jovanović, 2019): communicative (including artistic), gnostic (including perceptual), and motor (including functional). Natural data is the most important component of a musician's ability. It is the quality of natural data that largely determines the success of a musician's professional activity. Data quality means, in addition to special musical abilities, phenotypic signs reflecting the already established range of intensity of mental processes (memory, thinking, etc.) and movement characteristics (strength, speed, accuracy, etc.).

Common musical abilities are based on common components of some important professional characteristics: perception, memory, thinking, imagination, emotions, motivation, attention, psychomotor skills, etc. The common components of professionally significant characteristics are based on psychological-pedagogical, neurodynamic, and morphofunctional features aimed at ensuring the preservation, development, and transmission of musical interpretation. As noted above, abilities reflect a person's phenotypic capabilities, i.e., a mixture of innate and acquired traits. Innate qualities are realised in skills. Performance skills form a cross-cutting structure that is important from a professional standpoint. But competencies have a hierarchical structure, so professionally important characteristics have a vertical structure, and each top-level component is built on a lower-level component. This combination of horizontal order and vertical hierarchy reflects the musician's educational and interpretive practice. All innate musi-

cal abilities (musical hearing, rhythmic musical abilities, musical memory, etc.) develop under favourable conditions. In the process of learning, musical abilities are transformed into skills, which is typical for the professional skill of a musician. Therefore, the assessment of musical abilities is based on the fusion of the analysis of the innate part of the abilities and the results of their development (Paananen, 2021).

Discussion

The degree of expression of musical abilities in professional activity determines their quality. This problem requires a more effective assessment system in the educational process of training musical artists. However, it is difficult to systematise the components of a musician's performing and pedagogical skills from musical, pedagogical, and psychological studies of new educational norms. It is necessary to understand the depth of the topic, accept high standards of requirements and formulate an agreed specification of relevant knowledge and skills, considering the huge empirical component of the musician's upbringing.

In order for music to be perceived, it must be heard, it must be played, not to mention that it must be invented, written and interacted with those who perform and perceive it. Nowadays, in the context of globalisation, which develops intensive processes of humanisation of science and art, a harmoniously developed personality owning information and communication technologies, the phenomenon of a creative personality, which revives the universal type, is of great importance. This refers to a musician who is able to accurately decipher the composer's idea of the work, accurately embody it, while introducing their own creative vision into the interpretation, which does not destroy, but enriches the original author's idea. In practice, composers, in fact, are forced to look for performers and conductors for the musical embodiment of their works. Often, this creates a number of problems in many ways. Firstly, musical compositions in electronic format are popular in the world today. Composers have a great opportunity to use modern computer programmes to edit their musical compositions. They enable the composer to save a lot of time and use it correctly. The most effective aspect of these programmes is that the collected music materials can not only be conveniently reproduced, but also stored electronically, which helps to quickly edit or rethink them. This approach of the composer is more welcomed by the performers (Katsiavalos, Collins and Battey, 2019), since it greatly facilitates the initially complex process of the musician's penetration into the essence of the musical work and the process of subsequent embodiment of the musical meaning in their own interpretation.

Secondly, the quality of compositional skill also requires adjustment. For example, it is necessary to restore the traditions of the composer's ability to play various musical instruments. The modern composer is gradually moving away

from playing some instruments. This is usually conditioned by a lack of time, which is mostly focused mainly on finding new innovative musical technologies, modern ways of organising sound, and creating new forms and musical genres for their works. At the same time, the quality of a piece of music may deteriorate due to ignorance of the specific features of a particular musical instrument. As a result, this leads to disagreements between the composer and the performer, since a modern composer is used to providing the performer with musical material in a ready-made form, that is, only the *Urtext* (musical transcript) without a true indication of strokes, dynamics and other important elements, which not every performer of a musical work can agree with.

Today, when creating any piece of music, the composer has to constantly communicate with many performers in the process of writing a piece. Sometimes a composer needs to know exactly for which particular artist a new piece of music is intended. This is an extremely important and necessary moment for each of the composers. Knowing the potential of this performer, the composer makes it easier to prefer one or another variation of sound production, the use of new effects, which is very important today. In addition, sometimes the performer can find such a solution to the issue of performance that it would be difficult for the composer to come to this. The performer can give valuable advice in the course of composing a piece of music.

Even in ancient times, when syncretic art was associated with life processes, the results of this activity had no boundaries and structures. Only in the ancient classics, with the development of lyrics and art, among other events and processes of human life, musical works appear. It is from this moment that we can talk about the formulation of the term «musical composition» (Buckner, 2019). The highly organised creative activity of the performer, based on the author's text, is a level of artistic thinking, including the generation of new ideas, on the one hand, and the exact reproduction of the source material, on the other. This process is impossible without the ability to look for new solutions, without understanding the integrity of the transformed and what will be achieved as a result of the transformation. A creative approach to work is impossible without artistic thinking, without intuition, without an emotional state of mind, without judgment. Visions of alternative ways of thinking, ways of thinking and associations on a particular topic play a positive role in artistic thinking. The result is a complex network of movements that promotes the free flow of thought. In the initial phase of working with a creative task, there is always some excess of various options, roles, and ready-made scenarios for solving the problem, which in turn leads to more effective results. It is important that the performer is a meta-human – understanding themselves as a whole and part of another whole with which they interact. This is possible only with full awareness of the process of empathy, only, in this case, there is art and poetics of the work, an individual attitude to action, thought, or feeling. At the same time, there is an unconditional subordination of the language

of the image to purely artistic purposes, i.e., the interpretation of the artistic image (Manzano and Barbosa, 2019).

Interpretation as a means of artistic comprehension of a work is the result of performing activity in the process of merging two kinds of time: historical and real. The term expanded in the mid-19th century and is an important term in the performing arts. Not everything happens consciously when a play is born, especially during a live performance. Spontaneity, unpredictability, creative aspirations of artists often come from the subconscious and are guided by an irrational source. Thus, the musician-performer must certainly understand the specifics of the work, having read the author's opinion in their own way. However, the interpretation of the performer, as a certain reflection of their personality, is unique; but it should not deviate from or contradict the author's intention. The study of performing practices of different cultures and eras reveals a broader and more subtle picture of the relationship between performers and composers. The term »performer« as a specialty appeared relatively recently. Its history is closely connected with the appearance of musical notation, the development of which took place in the sense of an increasingly accurate and detailed fixation of the author's idea and its elements. Researchers in the field of art note that various aspects of a musical work have been ignored for centuries because the composer assumed the role of the performer and did not require a detailed interpretation of the performance, and because the composer controlled their own performance. But the composer's creativity is, first of all, the creativity of the author of a musical work. From the first assumptions of the composer to the general audience's perception of the work, music goes through a difficult path of transformation. There are four important points on this path (Bonnasse-Gahot, 2020):

1. The composer's idea is the beginning of the process of creating music and the first stage of the development of a musical piece.
2. The idea of a piece of music is recorded in the form of a musical text or not, but in such a way as to give the performer a relatively specific task.
3. The performer of a piece of music sings or plays, creating a sounding version of a piece of music.
4. The listener creates their own idea of a piece of music.

The depth of the author's thinking is largely determined by the level of development of the composer's imaginative thinking, the breadth of the associative background, the ability to create contextual cultural connections between different arts, life conflicts when working with an idea, and creative work on a particular musical phenomenon. This statement is confirmed by the experience of many famous musicians, teachers, and researchers of the psychology of musical activity, who have found that the richness of the performer's inner world is related to the maturity of their conception of musical activity (Bere, 2019).

At all stages of the work, the concept of a musical work can change in the creative process, and the interpretation of the performers of the works differs not only from different performers, but also from the same performer – from one concert performance to another (Ohanezova-Hryhorenko, 2019). All three subjects of the threefold role complex in the theory of musical content – composer, performer, and teacher – create a specific and mutual relationship to musical works. The composer creates a musical work and the text of the musical work provokes the performer to create their own sound version of the work. Moreover, on the one hand, the implementation of this individual version is carried out based on the professional skills of the musician formed under the guidance of the teacher, and on the other hand, the musician-performer, technically and emotionally mastering the material, creates their own pedagogical potential for the future transfer of experience to young musicians.

The acquisition of performance skills by a musician and the skills to maintain professional form is part of the professional task of a teacher.

Separately, it is necessary to pay attention to such an important component of the musical creativity of both the composer and the performer as musical memory. Musical memory is the ability to store, preserve, and reproduce musical works. Like any professional memory, a musician's memory is complex and polyphonic: it includes processes and actions of varying complexity and relies on the senses associated with the creative profession. Usually, different types of sensory memory prevail in musical memory, such as: auditory, visual with various combinations of other sensory and psychological types, emotional, and figurative. And in different circumstances, depending on the institution and the purpose of the activity, the same musician has a designated dominant memory. In some cases, the composer uses intellectual memory to study the texture and form of a musical work, and in others the possible difficulties in the performance of a musical work. Congenital partial symptoms also play an important role in this. The study focuses on the features of mnemic processes in memorising and playing music. In order to perceive the melody of the work, it is necessary to connect a large number of sounds in memory, which gradually cease to sound. Traces of the echo are preserved in the emotional and short-term memory of the composer. At first, a comparison of what is heard and presented is perceived, that is, the perception of comparative shades is stored in long-term memory. This is an emotional and aesthetic assessment of what was heard (emotional, verbal and logical memory). In the musician's mind there is a form of work called tonal-structural, which is carried out with the help of the components of mental activity and intellectual memory of the creator of the musical work. For comparison, repetitions are studied in parts of the work, and with sufficient experience – in complex forms and variations. For example, remembering a known work, a vocalist recalls the tension of the vocal cords, and the instrumentalist involuntarily repeats finger movements, which illustrates the presence of motor memory. These examples

show that memory plays a much greater role in the perception of a piece of music than in other activities. The memory requirements of a musician are much more complicated. The music pieces are stored in the memory of the brain, which is responsible for auditory perception, its emotional structure and motor programme of performance, which at the time of performance are combined into a single coherent sound. However, memory, being a reservoir of the musician's life experience, causes a lot of associations and images that help the performer to implement a creative idea.

Musical memory is an auditory reservoir, which contains the creative potential of both the composer and the performer: only with the help of collected and developed auditory experience can something original be created (Sapsovych, 2020).

Conclusions

This study on the topic »The theory of musical content: the triune role complex of composer – performer – teacher« presents a theoretical analysis of the threefold role complex: »composer – performer – teacher« in the theory of musical content. As a result of the conducted research, an analysis of the study of musical performance, pedagogy, and compositional creativity as an independent, but at the same time, an inseparable whole, which cannot exist without each other in the modern practice of art studies, is presented. In addition, in this study, the approaches existing in the theory of musicology and pedagogy to the study of the specifics and principles of the threefold role complex »composer – performer – teacher« are considered.

The musical content is the spiritual side of music personified in the sound, originated by the composer with the help of objectified constants formed in it, such as genre, pitch system, composition technique, form, etc. Each musical content has several sides: substantive, emotional, and ideological. The central concepts of the musical content are the idea (the sensually embodied thought of a musical work) and the musical image, that is, a single formulated character that is naturally revealed in accordance with the musical feeling, and the musical impression of feelings and mental states. The main and characteristic side of the musical content is beauty, that beauty outside of which there is no art. The predominance of sublime aesthetic, artistic feelings of beauty and harmony, through the prism of which the lower, ordinary feelings and emotions are refracted, which allows for music to carry out the main social function of the elevation of each individual. The theory of musical content contains answers to questions about the rules on which a piece of music is formed, and what you need to be able to not only perform music competently, but also comprehend its meaning. In the direct perception of music, on the one hand, and its expedient analysis, on the other, there are universal categories – harmony, rhythm, and form.

The structure of the threefold role complex of the theory of musical content contains the most general patterns. The immutable structure is quite detailed, full of specifics, and meets the peculiarities of each individual piece of music. Since a musical work contains the results of the composer's work, the activity of the performer and the practical contribution of the teacher, the content of a musical work is unimaginable without taking into account this threefold complex.

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Sažetak

Prema teoriji glazbenog sadržaja: uloga trostrukog kompleksa skladatelj-izvođač-učitelj

Proučavanje procesa razvitka glazbene kulture jedan je od važnih zadataka proučavanja umjetnosti. Namjera je ovog rada ponuditi teorijsku analizu i utemeljenje trostruke uloge kompleksa skladatelj-izvođač-učitelj u sustavu teorije glazbenog sadržaja. Praktičku važnost tematike ovoga rada mogu primijeniti specijalisti i učitelji u obrazovno-odgojnim ustanovama u pripremanju metodoloških programa i u praksi u područjima povijesti umjetničke glazbe, muzikologije i istraživanja umjetnosti. Rezultati ove studije mogu biti od znanstvenog interesa za studente, glazbenike i izvođače, učitelje i povjesničare umjetnosti.