

SYMPOSIUM: Music Performance and the Second Person

Isabel Cecilia Martínez¹

¹*Laboratorio para el Estudio de la Experiencia Musical (LEEM), Universidad Nacional de La Plata, Argentina.*

¹isabelmartinez@fba.unlp.edu.ar

Background

Research on the psychology of music performance acknowledges a long tradition. During the last forty years, knowledge was built around the ways in which performers develop sophisticated mechanisms to regulate time and dynamics, and to temporarily align their own performance, entraining with the music they play and with the music performed by others. More recently, attention has been paid to the bodily cues that allow communication among the performers. However, in spite of music being a social practice, little is known about the role of social cognition in music performance. In particular, (i) how musicians communicate between each other through music, (ii) how they understand each other's feelings, and (iii) how they interpret the mental states of their partners. The Second Person Perspective of mental attribution is a postcognitivist theory that grew in the intersection between philosophy and psychology, focusing on the ways human beings interact and understand each other's minds. Its central thesis is that in face-to-face/body-to-body interactions, the individuals make direct and reciprocal attributions about the other's mental states, that ground the development of other general cognition -including social cognition- abilities. For the first time four stylistic music performance practices are investigated under this framework.

Aim

To explore the potentiality of the theory of Second Person Perspective of mental attribution to approach the study of social music performance.

Main Contribution

In instances where music performances are created, prepared and/or rehearsed for the first time, interactions are not automatized, allowing to account for the efforts made by the performers to understand the musical intentions of their partners. In order to make music with others, we need to instantiate a social mode of knowing each other in the very act of performance. To the extent that music is a social practice, exploring how musicians understand each other in interaction, may result in an account of musicians' mutual mental attributions, the multimodal perceptions of their bodily expressions, and the cues provided by the sonic dynamic profiles of music as performed. Embodied expressivity is therefore read through the normativity of the musical practice. Embodied/sonic musicians' expressions directly reveal their intentions, accounting for a continuity in shared musical experience.

In this symposium six papers -through which the Second Person Perspective during music performance is explored using qualitative methods (content analysis of discourse)- are presented. 1. Musical performances from the Second Person Perspective (I.C. Martínez, & D. Pérez) presents an overview of the general thesis of the second person theory and considers the relevance of this approach to understand social music performance, and the potentiality of this perspective to frame a musical theory of mind in performance; 2. Social interaction in jazz improvisation from the Second Person Perspective (J. Pérez, & I.C. Martínez) explores the reciprocal construction of music interactions in jazz improvisation, highlighting the ways in which musicians interpret the other's intentions embodied in the online flow of the improvised music; 3. The second person in the interpretation and reinterpretation in the orchestra row (J. Epele, & I.C. Martínez) analyzes comparatively the interactive temporal construction of the expressive performance in the orchestra row, and the partners of intention attributions according to the roles of leader-follower; 4. Second person interaction in chamber music performance (L. Milomes, & M. Valles) inquiries about the interaction between undergraduate students of chamber music, as a communicational process from the point of view of the second person perspective. 5. Talking about tango. A qualitative study of musical interaction from the Second Person Perspective in a tango duo (D. Alimenti Bel) explores the emotional involvement and the direct attributions of intentionality between two tango musicians from the point of view of the second-person perspective;; and 6. Djing & Reading the crowd in an EDM context from a second person perspective (M. Marchiano, & M. Tanco) analyzes the DJ-crowd interaction from the DJ perspective, identifying the second person features that take part in such a social context of musical practice.

References

Perez, D. & Gomila, A. (2021). *Social cognition and the Second Person in human interaction*. London: Routledge.

Keywords: social cognition, musicians' interaction, embodiment, performance