

A twist on the historically authentic musical performance.

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Abstract. According to the mainstream view in the philosophy of music, the only way to authentically perform works of past centuries is according to the ideal of Historically Authentic Performance (HAP). This paper aims to show that, despite recent defences of the mainstream view, it lacks motivation, and hence should be abandoned or revised. As we shall see, first, there is no plausible account of HAP as a final and intrinsic value consistent with the work-focused teleology of work-performance. Second, a plausible account of the value of HAP in work-performance regards HAP as a way of performing works of past centuries convincingly. However, this approach does not support the mainstream view because this only leaves HAP as an interpretive option. Finally, an alternative defence of the value of HAP in the form of an indispensability argument is considered: HAP is indispensable to accurately comply with a work's score, and thus to perform it faithfully. This strategy supports the demands of the mainstream view, but we will see that, if we take this option seriously, HAP must be understood in a substantively different manner than the mainstream view does, such that it ultimately amounts to the second option analysed above.

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1. A challenge.

A significant portion of the repertoire of the practice of performing works of Western classical music is constituted by works of centuries ago.¹ Vivaldi's concertos, Bach's fugues, and Mozart's and Mendelssohn's symphonies occupy central lieu in concert programmes today. Conventions, aesthetic ideals and musical instruments have significantly changed from those centuries to our days. Notably, in contrast to works of other art forms, the aesthetic appreciation of, and engagement with, musical works of past times involves an additional *challenge*. You can go to the Prado Museum and directly see José de Ribera's *Immaculate Conception*. The very same thing that Ribera created in the 17th century, a painting, is the full

¹ In what follows, by 'work-performance' I will mean *the practice of performing works of Western classical music*, and by 'work' and 'musical work' I will mean *Western classical musical works*.

object of appreciation and is available for us to appreciate it. This is not the case for musical works: Bach did not give us the full object of appreciation of his *Tocatta and Fugue directly*, but rather only some notations for performance in a musical score. Given this fact, the challenge can be put shortly as follows: how are works of past times to be performed for a proper engagement with, and aesthetic appreciation of them?

In order to substantiate the challenge, paying attention to some relevant features of the practice of work-performance may be helpful. The challenge is mainly motivated by the fact that work-performance is what Nelson Goodman (1976, 113–114) called a ‘two-stage art’. It is a practice in which, after the composer’s labour is done, the work is to be realized in physical sounds for its full aesthetic appreciation. In a first stage, the composer composes a work by means of specifying a set of instructions for performance, typically encoded in a musical score’s notations. In a second stage, performers realize the work in physical sounds by means of following those instructions. So far, so good. But things are a little more complicated. On the one hand, the composer’s scored instructions typically underdetermine many properties and details of the final sounds of a work’s performance (Davies 2011, 112), and this underdetermination is taken to be bigger for works of past centuries than for contemporary ones (Davies 2003, 39–40). On the other hand, musical works are not for *reproduction*, but for *performance*: performers are not expected to be mere deliverers of the work, but sense-makers of it (Scruton 1997, 444; Dodd 2020, 5), and not all notations of the score are instructions to properly perform the work, but recommendations in light of the conventions of the performance practice at a certain time (Davies 2001, 211–3; 2011, 107). Moreover, not only conventions but also musical instruments have evolved in the last centuries and have different timbral properties than their historical homologues. So, again, how are those works of past centuries to be performed for a proper engagement with and aesthetic appreciation of them?

A mainstream answer in the philosophy of music to this challenge is that *the* adequate way of performing works of past times is according to the ideal of *Historically Authentic Performance* (HAP) (Davies 2001; Sharpe 2004; Levinson 2019; Kania 2022). In its most up-to-date formulation,² HAP is the

² HAP has a long record dating back to the middle of the 20th century, and different formulations of it have been provided (e.g., in terms of authenticity of sound, authenticity of practice and fidelity to the composer’s intentions) insofar as previous ones have been objected (for criticisms, see Young (1988); Scruton (1997); Kivy (2002); Dodd (2020)). For this reason, I will focus here on the most updated version of HAP.

ideal that *the* proper way of performing a work of Mozart is with the best quality period instruments (or their replicas) of the kind prescribed by Mozart's score and following the scored instructions in a way that matches the conventions of the performance practice of that time. This is the *only* way, according to the mainstream view, to produce an authentic performance of works of past centuries, a performance valued for enabling an adequate appreciation of, and engagement with, those works. Performances with modern instruments and that depart from the conventions of the context of composition of the work can be, at best, interesting performances, but never authentic performances of that work.

Of course, as Stephen Davies (2001, 209) stresses, the mainstream view does not defend that there is 'only one authentic performance'. The mainstream view is *pluralistic* about the aesthetic diversity of a work's authentic performances. Within the limits imposed by the conventions in place in Mozart's time, the authentic performances of a work of Mozart can display differences in tempo, dynamics and ornamentation. This seems to be undisputable. What I underline here is, rather, that the mainstream view is *monistic* as to *how* a work's authentic performances can be obtained: it admits as authentic performances of a given work *only* those that follow the conventions of the performance practice of the composer's time and are rendered with the best quality instruments (or their replicas) of that time. Andrew Kania (2022, 139) is explicit on this when he claims that 'if (...) the goal of work-performance is to evince understanding of the performed works (as composed in a context), then (...) we should interpret scores according to the conventions operative in the context of their creation'. Similarly, Davies (2001, 252) also advocates for this monistic approach, arguing that 'an ideally faithful performance will satisfy all the work-identifying instructions conveyed by the score (taken in conjunction with the conventions and practices it presupposes)'.³ Additionally, regarding the use of the best quality instruments (or their replicas) of the composer's time, Davies (2001, 71) says that 'it is the sounds of the instruments they [the composers] knew

³ It is true that Davies admits that faithfulness to the scored instructions, read against the relevant historical performing practice, can be traded off for other performance values, but the result is a performance with 'a degree of authenticity that falls short to what is ideally possible' (Davies 2011, 108–9; cf. 2001, 241). And he endorses the fundamentality of HAP with respect to other performance values claiming that 'a commitment to authenticity [in the sense of HAP] is fundamental to the enterprise of work performance' (Davies 2001, 247; see also 241).

and for which they wrote (...) that capture the tonal nuances of their utterances’, and hence, ‘we must listen to performances on period instruments’.

Is the mainstream view well motivated and justified to endorse this monistic approach? This is the fundamental question that I explore in this paper. As we shall see, there are good reasons to think that the mainstream view is not well motivated; but even if it is, and if we take HAP seriously, I will argue that HAP must be understood in a radically different way than the mainstream view does. The task of answering the fundamental question will lead us to investigate the grounds of the value of HAP in work-performance for the sake of addressing the challenge of performing works of past times introduced above. A first option, considered in §2, is to regard HAP as a way on its own of being true to those works. I will show that there is no plausible way to motivate this approach that satisfies the monistic demands of the mainstream view. In §3, a more plausible alternative view to ground the value of HAP in work-performance will be introduced, namely, to see HAP as a way of being true to past works by means of performing them insightfully. Nonetheless, I will observe that this does not satisfy the monistic demands of the mainstream view. Finally, in §4, another plausible way of grounding the value of HAP in work-performance will be considered, which consists of viewing HAP as indispensable to comply with the instructions for performance encoded in the work’s score. However, I will argue that, if we take HAP seriously, this alternative ultimately amounts to the view analysed in §3.

2. Grounding the value of HAP

In the task of facing the challenge presented in §1, the concept of *authentic performance* acquired fundamental importance in the debate. Authenticity is, in short, a performance value in work-performance, which means that, *ceteris paribus*, a work’s authentic performance is better than (preferable to) a non-authentic one. When we say that a performance (*e*) is *an authentic performance of a work of past times*, we are saying that *e* is a performance that has a special value, namely, that *e* is a faithful performance of that work. Critically, authenticity is not a monadic property of a performance, but a relational one, and there are different kinds of authenticities depending on the kind of thing that occupies the second relata of the faithfulness relation (cf. Dodd 2020, 2). In the context of addressing the challenge of performing works of past times for a proper engagement with and aesthetic appreciation of them, the other relata of the faithfulness relation is a musical work. Thus, the relevant kind of authenticity to face the challenge is *work authenticity*: we are seeking performances that are true to past works, ones that enable an adequate

engagement with and aesthetic appreciation of those works, what makes those performances have a special value.

In recent literature, two varieties of work authenticity have been identified. They are two ways in which a performance can be said to be true to a work. One is *score compliance authenticity* (SCA), according to which a performance (e) is true to a work (w) if e accurately complies with w 's score. A second one is *interpretive authenticity* (IA), according to which e is true to w insofar as e presents w convincingly, doing justice to w 's overall integrity and point, in a way that e displays the different parts of w fitting together as a unitary whole. This distinction is introduced by Julian Dodd (2015 and 2020) upon analysing different examples of the practice of work-performance. He observes that SCA and IA are distinct varieties of work authenticity and hence two different performance values in work-performance: *ceteris paribus*, e is all the better the more it fits w 's score, and e is all the better the more justice it does to w 's integrity and point. In addition, both SCA and IA are taken to have final value in work-performance: they occupy a non-consequentialist space and performers cannot trade them off for the sake of maximizing other performance values, like originality or liveliness (cf. Dodd 2020; Rohrbaugh 2020).

Accordingly, if HAP aims to be a plausible answer to the challenge introduced in §1, HAP must fall under the scope of work authenticity. To this extent, we are faced with a dilemma. HAP must be either a third variety of work authenticity on its own (different from SCA and IA) or, alternatively, a way of maximizing either SCA or IA. I will consider the first horn of the dilemma in the remainder of this section, and the other horn will be addressed in §3 and §4.

Before going on into that, it is important to stress that Kania (2022) has recently criticised the distinction between SCA and IA, arguing that SCA and IA are not two different performance values but a single one. There seems to be good reasons to draw a neat distinction between SCA and IA (cf., Dodd 2020, chap. 5; Puy 2022, 142–4), and I will assume it in §2 and §3 for the sake of a more accurate explanation. Even if those reasons are not compelling, this does not invalidate the strategy of this section: what I try here is to motivate HAP as a variety of work authenticity on its own, and hence as a second variety of work authenticity if SCA and IA are a single performance value, or as a third variety of work authenticity if SCA and IA are regarded as two different performance values.⁴

⁴ In addition, Kania's view will be explicitly addressed in §4, in what can be seen as the strongest argument in favour of the mainstream view.

Having made this remark, then, allow me to consider the hypothesis that HAP is a third variety of work authenticity, different from SCA and IA. According to the hypothesis, *e* is true to *w* by means of performing *w* with the best quality instruments (or their replicas) of the time of *w*'s composer and following the conventions of the performance practice of that time. This is consistent with mainstream view, which sees HAP as a performance value insofar as, *ceteris paribus*, a performance of *w* is all the better the more it fits the historical conventions and uses the best period instruments. But the monistic approach of the mainstream view entails something else: HAP is not only a performance value, but also a final and more fundamental value than SCA and IA when it comes to performing works of past centuries. To recall it, the mainstream view affirms that *the* adequate way of performing those works is according to HAP. This means that, in case of normative conflict between HAP and SCA or IA, HAP must be maximized. The monistic approach of the mainstream view implies that HAP cannot be trumped even if performing *w* with modern instruments that maximize compliance with *w*'s score (e.g., in intonation and tempo),⁵ or if departing from some historical conventions facilitates the comprehension of *w*'s integrity and point.

So, one may wonder, why should performers have the obligation to perform those works following HAP instead of doing otherwise to address the challenge presented in §1? Why is a historically authentic performance of *w* better than a performance that is more faithful to *w*'s score, or presents *w* in a more convincing way, but uses modern instruments and does not follow all the conventions of *w*'s time of composition? Two answers to this question attempting to motivate why performing a past work according to the ideal of HAP is more valuable than doing otherwise, have been supplied by Jerrold Levinson (2019) and Stephen Davies (2001).

To avoid some previous objections addressed by James Young (1988) and Peter Kivy (1995), Levinson defines the ideal of HAP more precisely. In Levinson's words, this ideal consists of 'making available to listeners a composer's work as it was envisaged at the time of its creation, with the least

⁵ Even if the best quality instruments (or their replicas) of the composer's time are available, their technical underdevelopment may prevent accuracy regarding the work's score in intonation (e.g., some tones in natural horns and trumpets are at odds with the intonation of those tones in equal temperament once adopted into the performance practice) and tempo (e.g., to make a silence longer than written to allow time to change registration in a Baroque organ). Technical developments have been intended, among other things, to overcome these difficulties in performance.

distortion possible, and in the technically best performance achievable' (Levinson 2019, 190). Levinson argues why performing past works this way is valuable as follows: 'We value experiencing music performed authentically because having such experience is a way of really connecting to the past, to those who lived and struggled and created in earlier times (...)' (Levinson 2019, 194). Performances that follow HAP are thus valued for giving us acquaintance with a past culture by means of being faithful to the composer's conception of the work. Given this value, the adequate way of performing those works is according to HAP. As Levinson puts it, 'what is required are performances which their composers would have recognized as representing or instantiating their music as they conceived and created it' (Levinson 2019, 194).

Davies offers an alternative account of the value of HAP. His defence of HAP lies on the idea that musical works are *creations of their composers*. This fact has, according to Davies, an important consequence: our interest in hearing and performing a work is an interest in the *composer's achievement*. In his words, 'we are interested in musical works as of their composers (...). The analysis of the value of authenticity I have offered, presupposes a certain attitude to, and interest in, music, one that gives a central place to works as creations of their composers' (2001, 249–51). Accordingly, we value HAP because this is the most faithful way to display the composer's achievement. This explains why, according to Davies, we value performances that follow HAP even if they display 'the performed work as poor' (Davies 2001, 249), for this enables us to rightly evaluate the composer's achievement.⁶

We should note that, if HAP were valued in the ways defended by Levinson and Davies, this would be so in practices in which musical works are not valued for their own sake, but instrumentally. In Levinson's case, works are valued as a means to gain access to a past culture—that of the work's composer. The goal of that practice is to connect to the past *through* performing works of music. HAP emerges here as a final and intrinsic value of this practice because it derives from its very end: the means of attaining the end of the practice is to perform works according to HAP, which enables a causal connection to items of the composer's time, and this is why performing works this way is more valuable than doing otherwise. Similarly, in Davies' case, works are valued as a means to appreciate the composer's achievement. The goal of that practice is to evaluate the composer's achievement *through* performing their works. And again,

⁶ True enough, this is not the only strategy presented by Davies to ground the value of HAP in work-performance. In §4, an alternative one will be considered.

HAP is a final and intrinsic value of this practice because it stems from its very goal: it is the most faithful way of presenting the composer's achievement for evaluation, and this is why performing works according to HAP is more valuable than doing otherwise. In both practices, HAP is a final and intrinsic value that cannot be negotiated for the sake of SCA and IA, which satisfies the monistic requirements of the mainstream view.

I do not deny that those practices exist and that they are rewarding for us. However, the problem of Levinson's and Davies' approaches is that they do not provide an account of the value of HAP in the practice of work-performance. To see this clearly, let me start by assuming the intuitive premise that, from different viewpoints and practices, a singular thing can be valued in different ways (Stecker 2006, 6). A fork can be instrumentally valued for the way it serves to pick food from a dish as well as for its own sake—for the sake of its very qualities of brilliance and slenderness. Likewise, there can be practices in which a musical work is instrumentally valued and other practices in which that work is valued for its own sake. According to Levinson's and Davies' accounts, as we have seen, HAP is a final and intrinsic value of practices in which works are instrumentally valued. But work-performance is a practice in which works are valued for their own sake and the rest of musical objects (a work's performances, versions, interpretations, etc.) are instrumentally valued for the way in which they present those works.⁷ Indeed, a neoclassical work composed in the 21st century can be an excellent work in itself even if it is not a significant achievement of its composer relative to its place in musical history and does not enable us to connect with past cultures. Work-performance is primarily work-focused but not culture-focused or persona-focused. Consequently, Levinson's and Davies' approaches provide an account of the value of HAP in other practices, but not in work-performance. Their approaches require musical works to be instrumentally valued to achieve further goals, but this can be so in practices whose teleology is inconsistent with work-performance, in which musical works are valued for their own sake.

One might object that we usually prefer to, and have more interest in hearing and performing works of great composers like Mozart and Beethoven than those of less talented ones such as Antonio Salieri or Ferdinand Hiller. This can be seen as evidence in support of Davies' view that, in work-performance, we value *works as of their composers*. However, we can easily see how this fact is better

⁷ Paradoxically, this teleology of work performance is also acknowledged by Levinson (1987, 76) and Davies (2001, 247).

explained in the opposite direction—one consistent with the idea that works are valued for their own sake in work-performance. The order of the explanation is the converse of the one suggested by Davies: in work-performance, we value and are interested in *composers as of their works*. We do not value a work of Mozart *because* it is composed by Mozart, and indeed, Mozart has some poor and minor works. Instead, we value Mozart *because* he composed great masterpieces, and we do not value Salieri *because* he did not compose masterworks. The fact that a work has been composed by Mozart by Mozart only predisposes us to think that there are high possibilities of it being a great work, given his renowned mastery, but our expectations may fail when experiencing that work. Therefore, it is not true that we value works as of their composers in work-performance, but the converse: first, we value works for their own sake, and then, we transfer value from works to composers, valuing them in virtue of their works.

Notably, valuing works for their own sake does not imply valuing them in a decontextualized way. Knowledge regarding the context of composition has an important role in the proper appreciation of works in work-performance. Indeed, judgments of works are typically relativized to artistic categories which relate those works to historical facts (cf. Walton 1970). A Scarlatti's sonata is adequately valued *as a baroque sonata* just as a Mozart's sonata is properly valued *as a classical sonata*. The expectations attached to the first work are not adequate for the second, and vice versa. Thus, history has an important role in work-performance: knowledge of a work's context of composition is instrumental to better understand and rightly appreciate that work for its own sake. Crucially, the converse does not hold in work-performance: experiencing works is not instrumental to acquainting us with and understanding the context of composition, contrary to what Levinson's approach suggests.

Therefore, there seems to be no plausible account that motivates the status of HAP as third kind of work authenticity on its own in a way that satisfies the mainstream view's monism, i.e., as a performance value that is different from and more fundamental than SCA and IA.⁸ When we try to do so, we are led to

⁸ One might be tempted to explore another defense of HAP in this line following Carolyn Korsmeyer's (2016, 222–3) account of cultural artifacts' *age value*, which prompts a kind of wonder, 'an experience sought for its own sake', that a replica of it does not elicit. However, musical works neither have age (and hence, age value) nor does the distinction between originals and replicas hold for them because they are not artifacts *tokens* —the kind of things Korsmeyer is concerned with. As noted in §1, past composers only gave us some notations in a musical score and musical works admit multiple, properly formed (genuine)

value musical works instrumentally, which is inconsistent with the teleology of work-performance in which musical works are valued for their own sake. Accordingly, let me put aside the first horn of the dilemma to focus on the second one.

3. A plausible defence of HAP

As we have seen, the attempt to ground the value of HAP in work-performance as a third variety of work authenticity on its own has been revealed as unfruitful, leading us to instrumentally value musical works, whereas they are valued for their own sake in work-performance. However, if the value of HAP could be grounded in terms of SCA or IA (the two varieties of work authenticity), this would provide us with an account consistent with the work-focused teleology of work-performance. My contention, in line with Dodd (2020, 65), is that HAP can be plausibly valued in work-performance as a way of facilitating IA.

To illustrate this alternative strategy, let us pay attention to Nicholas Harnoncourt's case, usually regarded as one of the icons of the historicist movement. Among the relevant aspects to be considered to give a 'good' and 'adequate' performance of a past work, Harnoncourt (1988, 99 and ff.) identifies the kinds of instruments, timbre, size of the orchestra, clarity of the structure and style. Crucially, to make interpretive decisions about those aspects, he does not embrace a historicist criterion, according to which we must follow the conventions of the work's time of composition. By contrast, he embraces IA as a criterion, as he suggests in these remarks:

We have to look to the persuasive power of the rendition, not to elements which are "correct" or "wrong" (...). That the most convincing rendition usually is also the "most correct" is another matter entirely. (...) Understanding the work must be accorded first place, with everything else subordinate to it (Harnoncourt 1988, 92).

Here Harnoncourt makes a fine distinction between 'correct' and 'convincing' renditions of a work. In his view, it is contingent for a work's convincing performance also to be a correct one. But, how can this be so? To make sense of this distinction, let me stipulate that a work's correct performance is one that is evaluated according to an explicit rule: e is correct if and only if e is according to a rule (r), where r is either

instances. Kosmeyer's view would apply, at best, to the appreciation of works' original *scores* as aged objects in themselves, but this is disconnected to the point of this paper of how to perform those works.

an explicit instruction for performance of the work's score, or a convention of the performance practice of the time of composition of the work that we explicitly entertain when it comes to evaluate *e*. By contrast, a performance is convincing, not because it accords to explicitly entertained rules, but because it presents the performed work as a consistent meaningful entity as a whole.

The distinction just stipulated has long roots in a philosophical tradition that goes from Kant to Wittgenstein of differentiating the game of understanding and appreciating art, on the one hand, and the game of correction, on the other hand. Wittgenstein marks this difference as follows:

In certain styles in Architecture a door is correct, and the thing is you appreciate it. But in the case of a Gothic Cathedral what we do is not at all to find it correct –it plays an entirely different role with us. The entire game is different. It is as different as to judge a human being and on the one hand to say 'He behaves well' and on the other hand 'He made a great impression on me' (Wittgenstein 1967, 8).

The analogy with the evaluation of persons is important here. When we judge that a person behaves well, we are considering the matching of her behaviour with specific norms that are relevant in a particular context. Indeed, it is not the same to say that a footballer behaves well in a football match than in a visit to Pope Francis. Not spitting on the ground is a relevant rule in the latest context but not in the former. The same kind of evaluative process is the one that takes place when we judge that a work's performance is correct. We are judging it according to the explicit rules for performance notated in its score, as well as to conventions about, for instance, ties, staccato or vibrato, that we singularize as relevant standards at that particular occasion. However, when we express the good impression a person caused on me, we are judging the general adjustment that we experience of her overall behaviour, expression and way of being to a form of life, an overall system of rules, values, past experiences and expectations. Analogously, when we judge that a work's performance is convincing, we are not judging its accordance to explicitly entertained standards, norms and conventions. Instead, we judge that the performance does justice to the work as a whole insofar as, on the basis of the common ground of the musical tradition, we experience it as presenting the work as something whose parts fit together and, this way, as a performance that makes sense of why the work unfolds as it does, regardless of whether such a performance is according to this or that particular rule.

Given this distinction between the game of appreciating art with understanding and the game of correction, it is apparent that, for Harnoncourt, the goal of work-performance is not to obtain a work's

correct performances, but convincing ones. Accordingly, Harnoncourt's interpretive criterion is pretty clear: performative decisions should be taken for the sake of achieving a work's convincing performance, i.e., one that makes sense of its integrity and point. Let us see how this criterion works with an example.

Imagine that we decide to perform a work of Mozart with the best historical instruments of Mozart's time rather than with modern ones. Following Harnoncourt's criterion, our decision cannot be justified by appealing to Mozart's time convention of performing his works with those instruments. Historical justifications of this sort have no normative force in the game of work-performance, and this is reflected by how Harnocourt refers to someone who endorses them: 'I tend to regard such a person more as a historian than as a musician' (Harnoncourt 1988, 72). In other words, the idea is that this person is not in the game of work-performance, but in a different one: a game of correction, like some practices considered in §2. Instead, the decision of playing with historical instruments should be grounded 'purely on musical considerations' so as to have normative force (Harnoncourt 1988, 72). According to Harnoncourt, there is not *the* perfect instrument to perform a work, and each instrument, either historical or modern, presents some advantages and disadvantages. Given the peculiarities of each instrument, the musician has to find a balance between gains and losses and judge which is the most adequate to perform the work. A Böhm flute has a more homogeneous sound than a Hotteterre flute. Homogeneity of sound can help to evince some aspects of the work's content, but can also lead to conceal others. Then, the musician must judge what the best option is concerning what the work demands as a whole for the sake of a convincing performance of it.

We have arrived at a plausible account of the value of HAP in work-performance: in some cases, HAP is a way of being true to a work by means of providing convincing performances of it. A performance that follows the relevant historical conventions and is rendered with the best instruments available at the composer's time is valuable if it maximizes IA, that is, if it provides a convincing performance of that work. Accordingly, the value of HAP in work-performance is *extrinsic* (its value does not stem from itself but from IA) and *instrumental* (it is valued as a means of attaining IA, and hence, negotiable to this extent).⁹

⁹ For the distinction between intrinsic/extrinsic and final/instrumental value see Korsgaard (1983). The account of HAP as an extrinsic and instrumental value of work-performance is compatible with what has been recently labelled as 'historically informed performance' (cf. Ravasio 2019). One matter is being historically informed about a work's context of composition, styles and genres, which is helpful, and

The bad news for the mainstream view is that, this way, HAP is not *the* adequate manner of performing works of past times. It is only an interpretive *option*, and hence this strategy does not meet the monistic requirement of the mainstream view.

4. HAP and score compliance

The defender of the mainstream view can essay an alternative account of the value of HAP compatible with the work-focused teleology of work-performance. The core idea of this strategy, vindicated by Davies (2001, 250) and, more recently, by Kania (2022, 139), is that reading the work's score against the conventions of the performance practice of the composer's time is indispensable to complying accurately with the score, and hence, to faithfully perform the work. The strategy consists of an indispensability argument and an additional claim.

The indispensability argument in support of this strategy can be summarized as follows:

- (i) Composers create their works by means of specifying their work-determinative properties in a musical score.
- (ii) The score encodes a set of explicit and implicit instructions for performance according to the conventions of the performance practice in which it is written.
- (iii) To decode the score's implicit and explicit instructions, we must read the score following the conventions of the performance practice in which it is written.
- (iv) Thus, HAP is indispensable for SCA and hence to perform the work-determinative properties faithfully.

The argument concludes that HAP is a constitutive value of work-performance, a *pro tanto* obligation indispensable to successfully attain one of its final values: SCA. The key premise is (iii). Only if the conventions of the performance practice of the time of composition of the work are followed can the

sometimes indispensable, to convincingly perform a work, and a very different matter is to say that we are obliged to follow the historical conventions to perform that work for a proper appreciation and understanding of it. The idea of being historically informed does not entail the last commitment. In this case, however, I agree with Kivy (2002, 130) in that what is historically informed is not the performance, but the performer. As such, being historically informed is not a property of performances and does not concern my discussion here.

implicit and explicit instructions for performing that work be decoded and can the performer accurately comply with the work's score.

This argument on its own is not sufficient to secure the monistic demands of the mainstream view. If SCA and IA are two distinct varieties of work-authenticity, the argument shows that HAP is indispensable to achieve only one of the final values of the practice, SCA, and hence HAP would remain as optional to perform a work authentically. The defender of the mainstream view needs thus an additional claim, namely, that SCA and IA are not two different performance values but a single and *the* fundamental norm of work-performance, as Kania (2022, 127) has recently defended. Accordingly, the most fundamental performance value is to evince understanding of a work through complying with its score. Following the conventions of the time of composition (including the election of the best quality instruments (or their replicas) of that time) is indispensable to accurately comply with the work's scored instructions, and score compliance accuracy is indispensable to evince understanding of the work. Consequently, HAP provides the only way to obtain a work's authentic performances, which meets the mainstream view's monism.

The additional claim is not indisputable. Strong reasons and examples have been provided in recent literature to show that SCA and IA are different performance values in work-performance (cf. Dodd 2020; Puy 2022). These criticisms are an updated resonance of the intuition, expressed in previous literature, that there is a more fundamental performance value than compliance with the score in work-performance (cf. Kivy 1995; Scruton 1997). However, for the sake of the mainstream view, I will assume that the additional claim is true, and thus that SCA and IA go together as a single and fundamental value.

The indispensability argument is not unproblematic either. Dodd (2020, chap. 3) rejects (iii). He argues that the criteria for SCA must be those of our actual performance practice, and they are now pluralistic, admitting both historical and non-historical approaches to SCA. Dodd motivates his claim against (iii) arguing, first, that a rule's requirements (including, a score's instructions for performance) only emerge when we are 'trained and immersed in a nexus of customs and practices', on pain of falling into an infinite regress in the interpretation of the rule's requirements (Dodd 2020, 69–70). Second, he draws an analogy with the application of laws: the standards to judge an action as insulting are not those of the time of approval of the law, but rather those of the action's time, and the same would apply to the criteria for SCA (Dodd 2020, 63).

We might harbour doubts about the soundness of this analogy. Scores of works of past centuries can be seen as historical documents. From this idea, other analogies might easily come to mind. 'Switch

off the lights' means something different in a novel based on a 21st century story than in a novel from the 18th century, and analogously, the same musical notation may mean something different in an 18th century score than in a 21st century one. Insofar as we should read the 18th century novel according to what words meant at that time to correctly grasp its meaning, we should read an 18th century score's notations following the standards of that time to decode it correctly. To this extent, Kania (2022, 139) argues that, whereas constructivism about legal interpretation seems to be plausible, constructivism about the meaning of scores is not. Changes in a law's meaning go hand in hand with jurisprudence's changes, but what a score mandates does not change over time.

One might suspect that the view of musical scores as historical documents obviates the fact that work-performance is a performance practice and situates us in a different practice, along the lines drawn in §2. But also, someone might be persuaded by Kania's criticism to Dodd's objections to (iii). For this reason, I will assume that the indispensability argument and the additional claim in favour of the mainstream view are both correct. So, my point is: even if we assume that SCA and IA go together as the most fundamental value of work-performance, and that HAP is indispensable to attain that value, *HAP must be understood in a radically different way from the mainstream view if we take HAP seriously*, in such a way that it amounts to the view analysed in §3.

How does the mainstream view understand HAP? Here is an example. For a work of the early 18th century, Davies claims that 'vibrato should be used sparingly' (Davies 2001, 106). He affirms this because using vibrato sparingly is taken to be the convention of the performance practice of the early 18th century, by contrast with the 19th century convention of using vibrato widely. The problem, however, is that the conventions of the performance practice of past times were not homogeneous and unanimously accepted, giving rise to heated disagreements between practitioners of those times. Concerning the use of vibrato, Leopold Mozart (1985, 203) argued as follows in his *Treatise of Violin*: 'Would it be an error if every note were played with the tremolo. Performers there are who tremble consistently on each note as if they had the palsy'. Mozart is here affirming the existence of a widespread and consolidated practice of performing with vibrato in every note, a practice with which he disagrees. Disagreements did not only concern vibrato but also other aspects of performance that the defenders of the mainstream view take to be set by well-established conventions like the use of ties, choice of tempi and implementation of rhythmical figurations (e.g., the dispute between the so-called French and Italian styles about dotted notes, where not all French musicians supported the French style and vice versa). In this sense, Richard Taruskin (1984, 12) claims that

‘performance styles in the past, no less than in the present, had their proponents and their detractors, and many of the practical and theoretical problems that bedevil us today were bedevils then too, the subject of often acrimonious debate’. Given this situation, a pressing question may strike us: what are the historical conventions for authentically performing an early 18th century work, using vibrato sparingly, as Mozart and his supporters defended, or using extensive vibrato, as many practitioners of that time did?

A solution for the defenders of the mainstream view would be to say that this indeterminacy is just a musicological matter and that it does not undermine their approach. After all, although there can be local disagreements about specific conventions, there is a consensus with respect to more general ones. This reply sounds very plausible. However, the philosophically interesting point is that the reply presupposes the idea of a hierarchy between conventions, i.e., the idea that some of them are better established in, and more fundamental to, the practice than others. But if this is so, in case of normative conflict, the former should be maximized at the cost of the latter. Crucially, there is good evidence to say that, at least since the Baroque time,¹⁰ *the fundamental convention in work-performance is to produce a convincing performance of the work and to see all other conventions as negotiable for the sake of that goal*. For instance, under the influence of the theory of the Affects, as George J. Buelow (2001) observes, most works of the 17th and 18th centuries ‘(or, in the case of longer works, individual sections or movements) expressed only a single affect’, and ‘composers in general sought a rational unity that was imposed on all the elements of a work by its affect’. Given the point of those works, the fundamental goal of the performance practice of those times was to realize in performance the affect expressed by them, and to subordinate to this goal the choices about vibrato, ties, tempo, ornamentation, and specific aspects of the performance. But apart from these more speculative considerations, let me present three paradigmatic examples of work-performance of past times that show that producing a work’s convincing performance was placed as the fundamental norm, with the rest of conventions and norms subordinate to it.

First, in pre-classical Vienna (around 1780), the circle of the Baron van Swieten edited the scores of Bach’s *Well Tempered Clavier II* with intentional deviations from Bach’s original manuscript. The musicologist Yo Tomita (2000, 372) concludes that the aim of the revisions was not ‘to transform a piece’s integral character but to highlight the quintessence of Bach through the excision of the ‘outlandish’

¹⁰ I stipulate this date to be neutral regarding the debate on the historical great divide of the aesthetic appreciation of music (cf., Goehr 1992; Kivy 1995; Davies 2001; Young 2005; Puy 2022b).

elements'. In other words, the musicians of the Baron van Swieten's circle found that following the convention of accuracy with the details specified in Bach's scores prevented them from performing those works convincingly and judged that this convention must be trumped for the sake of that goal. Notably, this is not an eccentricity of the Baron van Sweiten's circle but an extended practice even when Bach was alive. The Hirsh copy of Bach's *Clavier-Übung* located at the British Museum includes modifications of Bach's original *Keyboard Partitas*. Among these alterations, Walter Emery (1952, 497) identifies 'musically significant' ones that reveal 'actual improvements' and whose authorship is ascribed to other interpreters of Bach's time and to Bach himself.

Second, in the full classical period (1789), to perform Handel's *Messiah*, W. A. Mozart altered Handel's original instrumentation and enhanced the original textures. The changes obey, according to Rachel Cowgill (2002, 30), 'an attempt to clarify for contemporary audiences the structural outlines of the Baroque oratorio' while being 'respectful of the integrity of Handel's score as a whole'. That is, Mozart judged that following the convention of accuracy with the original timbre can be trumped for the sake of evincing a better understanding of the work. Again, this is not a Mozart oddity. The practice of reorchestrating Baroque oratorios in light of more developed techniques of orchestration was common among conductors in the late 18th and early 19th centuries (cf. Jones 2016, 409; Wolff, Sanders & Eitel 1959). Furthermore, Mozart's revised score was published by Breitkopf & Härtel in 1803 and was the reference to perform Handel's *Messiah* in Germany during the 19th century on a par with Handel's original version (Wolff, Sanders & Eitel 1959, 180), and many of Mozart's revisions were included in Ebenezer Prout's (1902) edition, the standard version used by British coral societies in the early 20th century (Cowgill 2002, 19).

And third, following Mozart's practice, Mendelssohn edited, reorchestrated and versioned many oratorios by Bach and Handel when he came to perform them (cf. Wolff, Sanders & Eitel 1959; Jones 2016). Mendelssohn's case is particularly interesting because he was very respectful with the original manuscripts in a historical sense. For instance, when his version of Handel's *Israel in Egypt* was edited, he had a heated discussion with the publisher, demanding that the authorship of all his changes were clearly identified (Wolff, Sanders & Eitel 1959, 181). However, at the same time, he realized the continuo part for organ of that work, but in a way 'entirely free from the pedantically rigid observance of four-plating required in theoretical books of Handel's time' (Wolff, Sanders & Eitel 1959, 182); that is, entirely free from some conventions of Handel's time. According to Wolff, Sanders & Eitel (1959, 183), Mendelssohn's

departures come after a careful study of Handel's work, 'again and again reflecting on and experimenting with all problems of interpretation and performance from the viewpoint of the performing artist'. Mendelssohn also approached the works of his contemporaries with the same spirit. After performing the *Overture in D Minor* of his friend Ferdinand Hiller, Mendelssohn (2015, 90) wrote him in 1836 reporting that he replaced 'the staccato double-basses in the melody in A major, and each time the passage recurred in F and D major (...), by sustained notes', observing to him that 'you can't think how confused the effect was' and that 'it did not sound as you would have liked'.

The examples illustrate that work-performance at those times privileges IA over any other convention when it comes to performing a work.¹¹ To perform a work of Bach, Mozart or Mendelssohn following the conventions of the performance practice of their time is *to place IA as the fundamental norm and to regard all other conventions as subordinate to it*. If we take HAP seriously, and we read the score following the conventions of the performance practice of those times, the scored instructions, both the explicit and implicit ones, should be holistically read as instructions directed to make a convincing, but not necessarily correct, performance of the work, and can be trumped for the sake of this goal. This is what Bach's contemporaries did with Bach's works, what Mozart did with Handel's work, and what Mendelssohn did with past and contemporary works. But, if this is so, defending HAP as indispensable to authentically perform a work amounts to the view analysed in §3, according to which performing a work following the specific conventions of the performance practice of the composer's time (e.g., those about vibrato, tempi, articulations, dynamics, ties, size of the ensemble, choice of instruments, etc.) is valuable only if it helps to maximize IA.

The picture drawn here illustrates that HAP must be understood in a radically different way than the mainstream view does. The idea of taking *all* the relevant conventions of the composer's time as non-negotiable norms for faithfully performing her work is an *anachronistic view* that emerged along the 20th century. Musicological opinion in line with this claim can be found. Concerning the revisions by the circle

¹¹ Someone might argue that, from *today's* perspective, the musicians of the Baron von Sweiten, Mozart and Mendelssohn were not really performing their target works, or their target works in toto (cf. Kania 2022, 130). However, the examples clearly illustrate that the performance practice of *those times* saw those musicians as fully performing their target works, and it is those days' perspective, and not today's perspective, which is at stake here.

of Baron van Swieten, Cowgill (2002, 19) notes that, 'from today's perspective, the willingness of this circle to introduce new elements into Handel's scores seems to contradict the spirit of historicism these performances represent'. As to the deviations from the original manuscript of a Mozart's minuet, Robert O. Gjerdingen (2011, 82) concludes that 'a minuet whose text seemed 'obviously corrupt' to the official editors of Mozart's keyboard sonatas would probably have seemed highly artful yet utterly normative to Mozart or his audiences'. Paradoxically, even the defenders of the mainstream view acknowledge this fact, as for instance when Kania (2022, 138) sees 'the ascendancy of historical performance-practice as part of the on-going process of the classical tradition's growing self-awareness of its past'. However, this is to acknowledge that the performance practice of past centuries is substantially different than the way it is understood by the defenders of the mainstream view. As the examples show, it did not regard all conventions of the composer's time as non-negotiable norms for faithfully performing her work. Instead, the main convention was IA, with all other conventions subordinate to maximize it.

5. Conclusion

The mainstream view's monistic approach to perform works of past centuries requires us to follow all the relevant conventions of the performance practice of the composer's time and to use the best quality instruments (or their replicas) of that time to produce an authentic performance of those works; a performance valued for facilitating an adequate experience of them. We have seen that there is no plausible way of motivating this approach considering HAP as a variety of work authenticity on its own: to satisfy the mainstream view's monism, HAP should be a final and more fundamental value than SCA and IA, but this can be so only in practices in which musical works are instrumentally valued to get further goals, which is inconsistent with the work-focused teleology of work-performance. Then, a way of motivating the value of HAP in relation to the two kinds of work authenticity has been explored. First, good reasons have been offered to think that HAP has value insofar as it maximizes IA. This strategy, however, does not satisfy the mainstream view's monism because HAP remains as an extrinsic and instrumental value of work-performance, and consequently, following the historical conventions and using period instruments is an interpretive option that has value only when it maximizes IA. Alternatively, we have considered the strongest strategy in favour of the mainstream view: seeing HAP as indispensable for SCA, and SCA as indispensable for IA. But then, paradigmatic examples illustrated that the main convention of work-performance in Bach's, Mozart's and Mendelssohn's times was to perform a work convincingly and to take

any other convention subordinate to that goal. As such, to read a score of Bach, Mozart and Mendelssohn following the conventions of their times is to see the scored instructions, both explicit and implicit, as instructions to make a convincing, but not necessarily correct, performance of the work, and hence, as instructions that can be trumped for the sake of that end. This amounts to say that, when it comes to performing work from past centuries, IA is the fundamental performance value and the rest of the performative conventions are valued to that extent. Nonetheless, this constitutes a substantively different conception of HAP than the one endorsed by the mainstream view.

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