
Authentisch? Zum Umgang mit Emotionen in der Alten Musik

Internationales Symposium
der Schola Cantorum Basiliensis

23. – 25. November 2023

Abstracts

Donnerstag 23. November 2023, 14.00–19.00 Uhr

Rob C. Wegman (Princeton University)

“When Silence is Golden”

Years ago I took the kids to the movie theater to see *My Dog Marley* (2008). It was entertaining enough for a while, but watching it became an ordeal when the dog became terminally ill. The director decided to milk the heartbreak for all it was worth, and must have instructed the composer accordingly. I resented having my feelings manipulated – successfully I’m afraid. But I did find a potent remedy: plugging my ears. It made all the difference: I immediately regained control, and watched the rest of the movie with relative indifference. I’m reminded of this whenever I read yet another medieval author telling the story of Alexander the Great: how he was reclining peacefully at a banquet until a musician lapsed into a mode that was known to provoke uncontrollable fury. For all that he was a powerful conqueror, Alexander was compelled to grab his sword and nearly killed a nearby servant. The musician, realizing his mistake, quickly changed the mode back, and Alexander settled down. Medieval authors saw this as a tribute to the power of music. For us today (or at least myself) it is more like an attack on the sovereignty of our minds. Part of the reason may be that we don’t typically attribute much power to music, not over us. For example, our appreciation of the Fifth is contingent on our understanding of it, according to Hoffmann. We can render the music powerless by virtue simply of denying it that favor. Many have wondered if the modern emphasis on musical understanding isn’t a way of warding off feelings altogether. According to Hanslick (in a treatise that continues to spread unhappiness among the young and impressionable), the alternative to understanding would be mere *pathologisches Aufnehmen der Musik*, an indulging in the “Aesthetics of Feeling” which it was acceptable then to attribute to women. And yet, didn’t my resistance to “*My Dog Marley*” amount to something very similar? Dismissing the music as “merely sentimental”, calling it “trivial”. just because I couldn’t stand having my feelings manipulated? Should music be emotionally powerful or not? Must reason always be in charge, lest emotions might be? Do we owe the original music, when performed today, understanding rather than feeling, or the other way round? One could scarcely think of a better opportunity to tackle these questions than this symposium held by the Schola cantorum Basiliensis.

Marie Louise Herzfeld-Schild (University of Music and Performing Arts, Vienna)

The Cultural History of Music and Emotions: A Theoretical and Methodological Introduction

Emotions make history – and emotions have a history. This has been the central claim of the interdisciplinary field of the History of Emotions since its institutionalisation over two decades ago. Numerous studies on a wide range of historical topics have supported this claim and at the same time established a sound theoretical and conceptual framework for a methodologically thorough investigation of emotional dimensions of the past. Until recently, music has played a somewhat muted role in both historical studies and theoretical considerations of this academic

field – which is quite surprising given music’s commonly (mis)understood definition as "language of emotions". Vice versa, very few musicologists have included the methodological and theoretical framework of the History of Emotions in their studies of emotional dimensions of music – if they found it worthwhile to study them at all.

This introductory talk presents those concepts, theories and methods from the history of emotions that currently seem most promising for musicological purposes. It will discuss how they can be transferred (and transformed) to unfold their full potential for historical musicology, and will use selected examples to demonstrate how they can be applied.

Disa Sauter (University of Amsterdam)

Music Shapes How We Feel

Music shapes how we feel: it can make us smile, give us goose bumps, or even bring us to tears. In this talk I will introduce two frameworks from contemporary affective science: the discrete emotions approach and the dimensional model of emotions. I will discuss how empirical psychology research can help test diverging predictions from these accounts. Specifically, I will describe a study of how people represent the subjective experiences associated with Western and Chinese music (Cowen, Fang, Sauter & Keltner, 2020, PNAS). We played American (n = 1,591) and Chinese (n = 1,258) participants 2,168 music samples and asked the listeners to report on how it made them feel. We found 13 distinct types of subjective experience associated with music in both cultures. These findings suggest that listeners' emotional reactions to music are in part universal. More broadly, they highlight how the study of music can provide insight into the structure of human emotion.

Round Table

Modality and Ethos/Emotions – Intercultural Approaches

Alexander Lingas (University of London), **Peter McMurray** (University of Cambridge), **Eleonora Rocconi** (University of Pavia), **Disa Sauter** (University of Amsterdam) and **Ken Zuckermann** (Basel)

This panel discussion will focus on the effects of music on the human soul in ancient cultures. In particular, it will look at the role of modes in relation to 'emotions', drawing on sources from different cultures. With this as a common thread, our participants, who specialise in different cultural areas of music from the past, will engage in dialogue on the concepts of ethos and pathos in ancient Greek culture, the ability of music to represent or express human emotions as described in ancient texts, debates through Islamic history on the concept of 'listening' and the impact of music on the devout listener, or the Eastern Roman/Byzantine liturgical tradition and the ethical qualities attributed to each mode. The question of what the modes actually convey in terms of ethos and emotion will also be addressed through an exploration of the Indian raga tradition. Using paradigmatic examples, we will also address the question of whether there are common, transcultural aspects ('universalia') in the perception of the emotional impact of music, broadening the perspective to include contemporary musical experiences and the question of

whether and why music affects people, and with what. Is this question always relevant, regardless of time, repertoire or culture? For composers, for performers, for listeners?

Freitag 24. November 2023, 9.00–12.30 Uhr

David Mesquita (Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, Basel)

Zwischen «ernster Gravität» und «lüsterner Weiblichkeit» – Kontroversen um die Affekte in der spanischen Kirchenmusik des 18. Jahrhunderts.

Es ist bekannt, dass sich die italienischen Innovationen des frühen 17. Jahrhunderts – der Basso continuo, der neue Dissonanzgebrauch der «seconda pratica», die Oper – rasch über weitere europäische Länder ausbreiteten und weiterentwickelten. Ein wichtiger Aspekt dieser Neuerungen war die Bestrebung, Affekte beim Hörer auszulösen, insbesondere im «stylus theatralis».

In die Iberische Halbinsel hingegen drangen diese Neuerungen nur bedingt ein – man könnte von einer «longue durée» der spanischen Renaissance sprechen. Dahinter stehen musiksoziologische Gründe: Während das italienische Musikleben von rivalisierenden Höfen geprägt war, konkurrierten in Spanien hauptsächlich die Kathedralen mit ihren hervorragenden Kapellen um die besten Komponisten. Daraus resultierte eine zunehmende ästhetische Divergenz zwischen Spanien und Italien. Die Tiefe dieser Kluft wurde schliesslich deutlich, als der italienische Stil im frühen 18. Jahrhundert am Madrider Hof in Mode kam und sich letztlich in ganz Spanien verbreitete. Damals entstanden dabei Polemiken zwischen den Befürwortern der italienischen Expressivität und denen des spanischen «estilo ecclesiastico». Neben der berühmten Kontroverse um Francesc Valls ist die Debatte zwischen Juan Francisco de Corominas und dem Benediktiner Benito Feijoo sehr aufschlussreich. Darin finden sich Diskussionen darüber, wie die Musik das Gehör und den Intellekt befriedigt, sowie über die Affekte, die die Kirchenmusik hervorrufen soll.

Anhand von exemplarischen Werken soll der Umgang mit Affekt und Emotion im Spannungsfeld zwischen «estilo ecclesiastico» und italienischen Innovationen näher untersucht werden. Daraus ergibt sich ein komplexes Bild, in dem sich viele Komponisten nicht komplett der einen oder anderen Ästhetik anschliessen, sondern diese zu einer eigenen Synthese verbinden.

Katarina Livljanić (Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, Basel)

D'una certa melodia naturale, e patetica, che eccita divozione: Liturgical Chant and Emotions

In this workshop-presentation, we will explore different traditions of medieval liturgical chant and the emotional power they operate on the singers and on the communities in which they were transmitted. Why are some liturgical chant types sung by soloists and the others by the schola, and what could that mean about their emotional impact? How to perform chant today, out of the liturgical context, and how to channel its emotional potential in interaction with today's concert audience? How can we be helped in that endeavour by the musical notation, other written records and still existing oral transmissions? We will hear examples from Gregorian, Old-Roman and Glagolitic liturgical chant repertoire.

Bettina Varwig (University of Cambridge)

Plenisentient Musicking

This paper will explore early modern European conceptions and experiences of affect in acts of music making. It will outline the physiological and spiritual nature of affective motions in an early modern body-soul, and show how performing or listening to music could have a direct impact on these bodily-spiritual motions. By passing contagiously between performers, their instruments and their listeners, music and the affective charge it carried could bring about cathartic transformations in those it touched. And in reimagining these early modern affective experiences, we are invited to retune our own ears and bodies to the transformative power of these musicking moments.

Tess Knighton (Catalan Institution for Research and Advanced Studies – Universitat autònoma de Barcelona)

Reading Emotions in Sixteenth-Century Sources

One of the major lines of inquiry of the research project “How Processions Moved: Sound and Space as Performance in Urban Ritual, c.1400–c.1700” (SOUNDSPACE: ERC-2021-ADG n°. 101054069), of which I am Principal Investigator, is to analyse the sensory, perceptual and affective discourses that gave processions meaning for all those present – participants and ear-witnesses. Throughout history and to the present day, processions have formed a moving intersensory experience that mobilises the emotions of the urban community: but how did this work in practice in the historical past? How can the historian enter into a performative moment in the past to understand the emotional impact of sound in acoustic space?

In 1995, Edward Muir asked “what did it feel like to witness and participate in a ritual?” This may seem an impossible challenge for the historian but is perhaps more approachable if modified to how were those present *expected* to feel during the performance of a procession. For example, how might the sound of a harp in a procession, according to context, have evoked associations with the celestial music of the angels, with King David’s praise through psalm-singing, or with the tortured body of the crucified Christ pierced by its strings and thus induced or enhanced emotional responses of joy, jubilation, pain and sorrow? Barbara Rosenwein’s concept of “systems of feeling” (2002) in which emotions are considered in terms of how they were valued, devalued, ignored, tolerated or deplored in society and of what modes of emotional expression were expected, encouraged and discouraged, even prohibited, affords a starting-point. Hermeneutic analysis of historical discourses associated with and communicated by the sounds and musics of processions can help to gauge how these related to prevalent systems of feeling in processional practice and can afford glimpses of affective impact. However, close reading of emotional discourses raises considerable lexical and hermeneutical challenges: as Rosenwein and others have pointed out, words and imagery used to describe senses and emotions in the past are usually ‘fuzzy’; and references to music are in most instances highly generalised. Furthermore, awareness of multiple voices and the potential for multivalent expectations and responses is crucial in analysis discourse, as is the context in which contemporaneous texts were written: by whom, for whom, at whose instigation and for what purpose?

This paper will examine some of these issues and present examples of the kinds of affective discourses that would have fed into processional practice and elicited the expected emotional response.

Freitag 24. November 2023, 14.30–18.00 Uhr

Andrés Locatelli (Basel) & Jeffrey Döring (Leipzig)

The Language of Pain: A Multidisciplinary Exploration of Human Emotions

This brief presentation is an introduction to *The Language of Pain*, a multidisciplinary artistic project with music by Claudio Monteverdi that will be performed on November 24th in the context of the symposium *Authentisch? Zum Umgang mit Emotionen in der Alten Musik*. What is pain in today's society? Is empathy possible without pain? How do Seicento madrigals help us understand our relationship with pain and suffering?

The project explores the meanings of emotional and physical pain as an individual and collective experience as well as the social practices associated to it.

Michele Calella (Universität Wien)

Pathos, Rhetoric and Morality: Emotions in the musical «Figurenlehre»

The historical significance of both "Affektenlehre" and musical-rhetorical "Figurenlehre" has been called into question in contemporary musicology. Despite the criticism, some publications, primarily aimed at musicians, today still argue for the relevance of these theories in the compositional and performance practices of the 17th and 18th centuries.

However, advocates and opposers of these theoretical frameworks often muddle the two, overlooking their distinct theoretical traditions. While the doctrine of musical rhetoric, essentially developed in a German context, often addresses the question of the affective impact of music, rhetoric as an art of speech does not consistently feature in the various philosophical and music-theoretical discourses on the emotional dimensions of music.

A close examination of the musical "Figurenlehre" from Joachim Burmeister (1599) to Johann Adolf Scheibe (1745), with particular attention to the role of emotion, reveals many inconsistencies and contradictions. This is not only due to the fact that the authors adopted different models of classical rhetoric from antiquity but also to the fact that they assimilated the contemporary literary rhetoric in different ways, in which the emotional response (pathos) was increasingly considered important when delivering a speech – although some authors argued that such a pathos should be always regulated by morality (ethos).

Johannes Menke, Angelika Moths, Valentin Richter (Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, Basel) und Studierende der Schola Cantorum Basiliensis

Irina Olshevskaja, Sopran; Sophia Mücke, Violine; Paul Poupinet, Violoncello; Valentin Richter, Komposition und Leitung; Johannes Menke, Angelika Moths, Moderation.

Affektarien von Johann David Heinichen – Gesprächskonzert

Im einleitenden Kapitel seines epochalen Traktats *Der General-Bass in der Composition* (Dresden 1728) stellt Johann David Heinichen vor, wie aus «seichten», also wenig aussagekräftigen Texten mittels «Inventionibus», d.h. gezielt eingesetzten kompositorischen Mitteln, dennoch affekthafte Musik produziert werden kann. Er stellt in zahlreichen Beispielen Vertonungsvarianten vor, etwa mit einem «furieusesten Affect», mit «zanckenden Inventiones» oder auf «pompöse Arth», zeigt mit einem weiteren Text, wie das «flüchtige Glück» oder das «leidbringende Glück» dargestellt werden kann, oder ein Text entweder mit «aimablen Melodien» versehen oder ein darin verstecktes «brennendes Liebes-Feuer» zum Ausdruck gebracht werden kann. In einem moderierten Konzert sollen die Arienfragmente zur Aufführung gebracht werden.

Christoph Haffter (Universität Basel)

Mastering Affects: Baroque Conceptions of Emotions in Philosophy and Music

In the history of philosophy, the so-called Baroque epoch coincides with the debate between rationalism and empiricism. The theory of affects is one of its most controversial topics. For passions, emotions, feelings, or moods are phenomena in which the empirical body and the rational mind are obviously intertwined. These phenomena are, however, notoriously hard to grasp conceptually: the realm of affects reaches from pain to generosity, from corporeal sensations to evaluative thoughts. In the same period, the goal of music is also regularly defined in terms of affects. Three paradigms stand out: music is said to represent affects by imitating prosody, it is said to convince affectively by means of rhetorical figures and it is said to arouse affects immediately in the audience's body by inducing vibratory motion. I want to show how the different philosophical conceptions of what affects, passions, emotions, or feelings are, correspond to these different conceptions of the finality of music in Baroque theory. This will lead to the question how the philosophical task of mastering affects rationally is related to the musical mastering of affects in sound.

Elizabeth Dobbin (Haute École de Musique de Genève)

The Imagination, the Body, the Voice: The Singer's Expressive Tool-Kit as Viewed Through the Lens of 17th and 18th Century French Sources.

Singing in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was considered an oratorical art. As the deliverer of a type of vocal discourse, singers had the same role to fulfil as speech-based orators, and the ability to inspire an audience was considered the very definition of excellence in singing. Singers were mandated to use their voice and body to depict an emotional state, creating a visual and musical semiotic which would incarnate the affects embedded within the lyric text and music

in order to move the passions of the listener. In this presentation, I will first provide an overview of the instructions addressed to the poet, composer, singer and listener as set out in some of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century French treatises relating to the depiction of emotion. Pivotal in this persuasive configuration is the imagination and the creation of vivid and personal representations in the mind of the singer in order to evoke and thereby communicate certain passions. In conclusion, I will address how the activation of the imagination according to these treatises brings about certain changes in the posture and face of the singer, generating subtle changes in the voice and thereby impacting a range of vocal performance parameters.

Samstag 25. November 2023, 9.00–12.30 Uhr

Eva Schmid (Universität Würzburg)

Emotionen, Assoziationen, Strukturen?: Kreatives Hören im Musikvermittlungssektor

Entgegen der verbreiteten Praxis im Musikvermittlungssektor, Zuhörer*innen wie ein Audio-Guide auf musikalische Strukturen aufmerksam zu machen und Hintergrundinformationen zu einem Musikstück zu liefern, geht Kreatives Hören einen anderen Weg, der bei der individuellen Begegnung ohne Priming beginnt und durch die intensive Beschäftigung mit der eigenen Wahrnehmung zur individuellen Bedeutungskonstruktion hinführt. Vermittelt wird demzufolge nicht das WAS, sondern vielmehr das WIE. Wie können sich Zuhörer*innen einem Musikstück nähern, das sie vielleicht zuerst als sperrig oder gar fremd empfinden? Emotionen, Assoziationen und Strukturen sind dabei wesentliche Elemente, die den individuellen Höreindruck speisen und die man sich bewusst machen bzw. mit denen man sich reflexiv auseinandersetzen kann.

Deda Cristina Colonna (Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, Basel)

‘Quando il senso è maestro’, Or How Can My Colleagues Lang (1727) and Riccoboni (1728) Directly Inspire My Method in Staging and Teaching the Early Repertoire – A Presentation Workshop

My experience as an opera director and teacher has shown me how the expression of emotions is one of the hardest technical issues in acting, especially for young performers and even more so when dealing with the early repertoire. The difficulty seems to lie in the phases preceding the expression, namely

- the identification of the relevant emotion, suggested or implied by the librettist and composer
- the performer’s ability to cause him/herself to feel it
- consequently, his/her capacity to express it
- finally, the aesthetic compatibility with historically informed parameters

How did acting teachers of the past address this problem? Franz Lang explains the relationship between the expression of emotions and the playwright’s intentions in his treatise *Dissertatio de actione scenica* (Munich 1727). In his *Dell’arte rappresentativa capitoli sei* (London 1728) Luigi Riccoboni illustrates how stage action is performed as a physical reaction to stimuli rooted in the *senso* (‘sense’, ‘feeling’, and ‘meaning’ in Italian).

After a brief introduction, a video will be presented, featuring a group of SCB students' responses to a questionnaire investigating what main difficulty – if any – they encounter in expressing emotions while performing the early repertoire. In the final phase of the presentation workshop, a set of acting exercises will be presented with the participation of students, modelled on the technical principles expressed in the aforementioned treatises by Lang and Riccoboni, with the aim of framing and solving the students' technical acting difficulties, especially in relation to the content of the text and the objective and subjective layers of its meaning.

Jed Wentz (Leiden University)

To “Feel all the Feels”: Affect, Historical Acting and the Performance of Early Music

American actress Jamie Lee Curtis said in an interview in the New York Times (12 October, 2022): “My entire skill as an artist is that I have incredible sensory responses”. Summoning up goosebumps on her forearms, she continued: “I feel all the feels, all the time”. Although Curtis is certainly no proponent of ‘pre-Method’ acting styles, her ability to voluntarily produce specific “characteristics of the passions” echoes remarks in historical sources on the histrionic art, indicating that triggering the body – *tears, trembling, pallor!* – through acts of theatrical imagination was, and is, at the heart of the actor's craft.

In this paper I reflect – after 40 years as a performer of early music, overlapping with 15 years spent in research into historical acting – on the implications of *feeling all the feels* in the pursuit of heightened musical expression: what is the difference between a personal emotion and a physiological passion? how can a passion be manifested in wordless musical sounds? and how can one perform complex musical scores without losing control of one's technique?

Natasha Loges (Musikhochschule Freiburg im Br.)

Emotional Identifications with/Reactions to Robert Schumann's *Frauenliebe und -leben* Op. 42: A Comparison of Performance Approaches in the 19th and 21st Centuries

The Kunstlied in concert offers an illusion of private emotion on the public stage, enabling the audience's emotional experiences to overlap with that of the musicians, the composer and the poet. What happens, then, when the emotions feel inauthentic or controversial? The perennially popular song-cycle *Frauenliebe und -leben* Op. 42, composed by Robert Schumann to poems by Adalbert von Chamisso in 1840, continues to provoke controversy arising from its presentation of women's attitudes to love and life. This paper is in two parts: firstly, I examine the historic presentation of the singing subject (the Frau), drawing on 19th-century performance history. This reveals that the cycle was regularly performed only in parts, and/or in combination with other works, an approach which, I argue, mitigates its expressive limitations. I then transplant the cycle into a 21st-century setting, presenting the results of interviews with three regular singers of the cycle. Their responses challenge established assumptions about the relative purity of the Lied genre and reveal how their performance values are repeatedly co- and re-constructed to embrace their evolving perception of themselves, their agency and emotional experiences, and their obligations to audiences, history and “the music itself”.

Sa 25. November 2023, 14.00–16.00 Uhr

Werkstatt «Emotionen in der Praxis» mit Studierenden und Dozierenden der SCB

In diesem Forum präsentieren Studierende des SCB anhand eines kurzen Musikstücks ihre Überlegungen zum Umgang mit Emotionen in der musikalischen Performance: Wo stellt der Ausdruck einer Emotion eine Herausforderung dar und warum? Wie gehen sie vor, um sich diesen Herausforderungen zu stellen? Zu welchen künstlerischen Lösungen gelangen sie dabei?

Diskutiert werden etwa ein Conductus, Troubadour-Lieder und Lieder des englischen 15. Jahrhunderts. In diesen Fällen müssen Musikerinnen und Musiker die Expressivität des Textes und diejenige der Musik in Übereinstimmung bringen und zudem einem heutigen Publikum den Zugang zu den unvertrauten Texten und musikalischen Faktur erleichtern. Typische Fallbeispiele für diese Art von Fragen sind auch instrumentale Bearbeitungen von polyphonen Madrigalen: Was kann oder soll übertragen werden auf dem Instrument, was nicht? Auch scheinbar eindeutiger Beispiele hinsichtlich des Affektausdrucks, wie die «Lachrimae»-Pavane von Dowland oder auch die Streichersinfonien von C.P.E. Bach, erweisen sich als 'Knacknüsse': Wo gerät Eindeutigkeit zum Klischee? Wie weit soll der emotionale Pegel ausgereizt werden? Sollen Expressivität und Experimentierfreude auf Kosten der technischen Perfektion gehen?