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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Observations and Reflections on Jani Christou's creative processes

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Master of Arts

in

Music

by

Anahita Abbasi Hafshejani

Committee in charge:

Professor Rand Steiger, Chair
Professor Lei Liang
Professor Mark Dresser

2017

The Master thesis of Anahita Abbasi Hafshejani is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publications on microfilm and electronically:

Chair

University of California, San Diego

2017

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List of Supplementary Files

Anaparastasis III / The Pianist (1969), by Jani Christou

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Observations and Reflections on Jani Christou's creative processes

by

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Master of Arts in Music

University of California, San Diego, 2017

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Understanding, examining, and observing the creative processes of any piece of art, guide us to a profound insight of the creators thoughts and ideas. In my opinion, Jani Christou was one of the most imaginative and creative composers of the 20th century. His profound knowledge in Philosophy and music, and his radical, fearless musical voice, interconnected an additional layer to his

latest pieces, like *Anaparastasis I and III (The Baritone and The Pianist)*. In *Anaparastasis III*, which is the focus of this thesis, Christou plays between the “ common”, “traditional”, “ expected” and “dictated “ rolls of/between the performers, the soloist, conductor and the audience. At the same time, he is carefully choreographing and directing the visual aspect of his musical materials. To him, every detail matters and each component plays a significant role toward the perception of this piece. Here, I observed and analyzed the piece, by following the footprints of his creative processes. Creating needs a genuine, especial, multi angled, focused “care”, which I am aiming to point out, its fundamental role in this research and in particular in the creation of this piece.

Introduction

Within the last years, I have worked with numerous artists across the globe. What fascinated me the most, was the variety of their creative processes. These directed me into a quiet new attitude of observing, hearing and perceiving. As a composer with the conservator - training background, I have been trained to analyze and explore various aspects of each piece extensively. While exploring, I came across to the works by the Greek - French composer, Georges Aperghis, whose pieces expanded my imaginations immensely. I started studying composition and working with Georges Aperghis around 2013. For Aperghis, a pre - existed limitation does not exist. He allows his imaginations to float, explore and examine any and every kind of detail. Further, he studies them carefully and starts getting to know their qualities within various environments. Being his student, I started to explore my surroundings to find out my own creative processes. Now, in 2017, after some years of continuous research, I found myself being inspired by anything around me. The environment that I live in, the people that I am interacting with them, the society, political issues, nature and science.

I came across to the works of Jani Christou, when I was composition student in Beat Furrer's studio in Graz. The multilayer structure in his music

intrigued and fascinated me to start getting to know his music. In 2017 in our analysis Seminar at UC San Diego with Katharina Rosenberger, I decided to dig deep in to Jani Christou's music. Due to his sudden and very young death, there are unfortunately not that many resources available on his music. Nevertheless, there were a few writers, scholars, musicologists, performers and composers, who were invested in his music. In this thesis, I am bringing all the information that I have been able to gather from all these available sources plus my own interpretation, observation and analysis of his piece *Anaparastasis III (The Pianist)*. The reason, I decided to dedicate this research to this piece, is the multilayer and rich structure of this piece. By this analysis, I am aiming to follow the footprints of Christou in his creative processes; Which I find very important in the creation of any piece of art.

1: Biography - Jani Christou (1926-1970)

Jani Christou was born on January 9th, 1926, at Heliopolis, of Cairo. He began composing at an early age. In 1945 he travelled to England to study formal logic and philosophy at King's College, Cambridge under Ludwig Wittgenstein and Bertrand Russell and received his MA in philosophy in 1948. Studying Philosophy with Wittgenstein left an immense influence on Christou's perception and later on his compositions. At the same time he studied music (privately) with H. F. Redlich, who was a distinguished musicologist and also a pupil of Alban Berg. He also studied orchestration with F. Lavagnino in Rome. Christou travelled widely in Europe, and a highlight of these trips was attending lectures in psychology with Carl Jung in Zurich. This was another major impact on Christou's mind. Christou's studies in psychology were greatly encouraged by his brother Evanghelos (also a pupil of Jung) whom Christou considered his spiritual mentor and who exerted a strong influence on his creative thinking.

In 1956 he married Theresia Horemi, a painter who supported and assisted Christou in all his artistic and creative aspirations. Christou would compose for long hours, and when not actually physically engaged in the act of composing, he would spend a great deal of time studying. His many interests included philosophy, anthropology, psychology, theology, and comparative religions, history and pre-history, occultism and art.

Christou was as much a philosopher and metaphysician as he was a composer, and it is important to understand that all of his music sprang from his philosophical studies and theories. This is particularly evident in the creations from his last ten years of his life, where his compositional techniques were transmuted beyond conventional music. Christou's creations were multi layered and consisted of extended musical syntax, theatrical, political, philosophical, psychological, everyday life situations. Rituality was also another important context of his creations. *Anaparastasis III (The Pianist)* for actor and instrumental ensemble and tapes (1968); *Anaparastasis I*, for baritone and instrumental ensemble (1968) and *Enantiodromia* are prime examples of this genre of Christou's late music.

On January 8th 1970, in a car accident outside Athens, the contemporary music world lost one of its most exciting and provocative talents. Although Jani Christou was only 44 when he died, he was regarded by many as one of the leading composers of his generation and although his name remains respected, performances of his creations are unfortunately extremely rare.¹

¹ Excerpts from <http://www.janichristou.com/biography/biography.html>

2: Anaparastasis III / The Pianist (1969)

The Pianist was first performed in Munich 1969, with Grigoris Semitekolo as the "soloist", who was a close friend of Christou. Semitekolo was a painter and his wife was a great pianist. This piece was the last work Christou completed. Along with *Anaparastasis I* (Baritone), The Pianist is part of the cycle *Anaparastases*, a cycle of forty compositions, which was left unfinished due to the composer's unexpected death.

There were three performances of this piece from " sketch looking Score" (see excerpts in Appendices) till Christou was still alive and he was planing to write a proper score, but his sudden death did not allow that. This is the reason that there are two types of scores: the proto-score and the unpublished score. According to the published score- which is the score I will be referring in this thesis - the piece is written for ' a soloist, a conductor, instrumental ensemble (8-15 instruments and optionally 4 more performers 'to reinforce vocal participation') and continuum (3 tapes) (Christou, 1971). The score is also accompanied by a sketch by the composer describing details about the stage setting; Specifying 1) the seating arrangement, dress, and being motionless (addressing performers, conductor, the soloist, and even the placement of the audience and 2) the lighting. The detailed way in which he described each of the

performer's actions, brings me to the conclusion that he had a very precise picture of the whole thing in mind.

EDITING NOTES

"ANAPARASTASIS III" ('the pianist') belongs to a cycle of about forty compositions under the general title "ANAPARASTASES". Of these, only "ANAPARASTASIS I" and "ANAPARASTASIS III" have been put down in notation so as to make their performance possible.

"ANAPARASTASIS III" is written for a soloist, conductor, instrumental ensemble and tapes. It is the last work Jani Christou composed. It was composed in the autumn of 1969, and was first performed in Munich on 13th November 1969 by the 'Musik unserer Zeit'. The role of the soloist (pianist) was played by the painter Grigoris Semitekolos, and the work was conducted by the composer Theodoros Antoniou. It was performed again with the same soloist and the 'Ensemble of Contemporary Music' under Th. Antoniou, in Athens on 28th November 1969 and 28th September 1970.

These three performances used a rough sketch drawn by the composer instead of a score. He was planning to write a proper score and parts later. His sudden death made this impossible. The present score was put together on the basis both of the sketch and information we took from the original performers of the work. Thus Gr. Semitekolos gave us all the information relating to the role of the soloist, and for which he had taken extensive notes under the direction of the composer. Information about the orchestra and the function of the tapes was given to us by the conductor of the work, Th. Antoniou.

A fundamental problem in putting together the score was the method to be followed in noting down the role of the soloist. At first there were two solutions: either by using detailed cinematographic directions or by using a more general and free notation. The first method, which would have been based on the personal interpretations of the original soloist, would have run the risk of becoming stylised or fossilised. The second method, that of a free notation, ran the danger of straying from the spirit of the work. We finally preferred a third and more certain solution: a free notation, but one bound by definite directions at certain critical points of reference. This is the method we believe will allow every performer of the work to develop his own personal interpretation, but within the limits prescribed by the composer.

Another problem was that of the tapes surrounding the work. In his rough sketch, the composer presented two tapes, and these were used in the first and third performances of the work. But he used three tapes for the second performance. This was told to us by the composer Stefanos Vassiliades, who assisted Christou at the tape-recorders on this occasion. This third tape was in fact found in the composer's archives. It appears that he must have noticed a lack of 'high frequency' in the original tapes, and later prepared a third, which he called 'threads'. This tape is called Number 1 in this score. All the other information concerning the function of this tape was given to us by St. Vassiliades.

In the Composer's Notes we have included extracts of his thoughts on the meaning of 'the pianist', which we found in his personal notes.

At the end of this edition we have added a series of photographs taken at rehearsals of the work for the second performance at Athens. The photographs appealed to the composer, who intended to include them in an edition of the work as an added assistance to the performers.

We should like to express our thanks to Th. Antoniou, Gr. Semitekolos, and St. Vassiliades for their substantial participation in the assembling of "ANAPARASTASIS III". Their contribution is a guarantee that the score represents the composer's intention.

We should also like to thank the poet Nicos Germanacos who translated the directions in the score, and all the other texts in this edition, into English.

Figure 2.1.1: Editing notes from the Published score; *Anaparastasis III/ The Pianist* (1969)

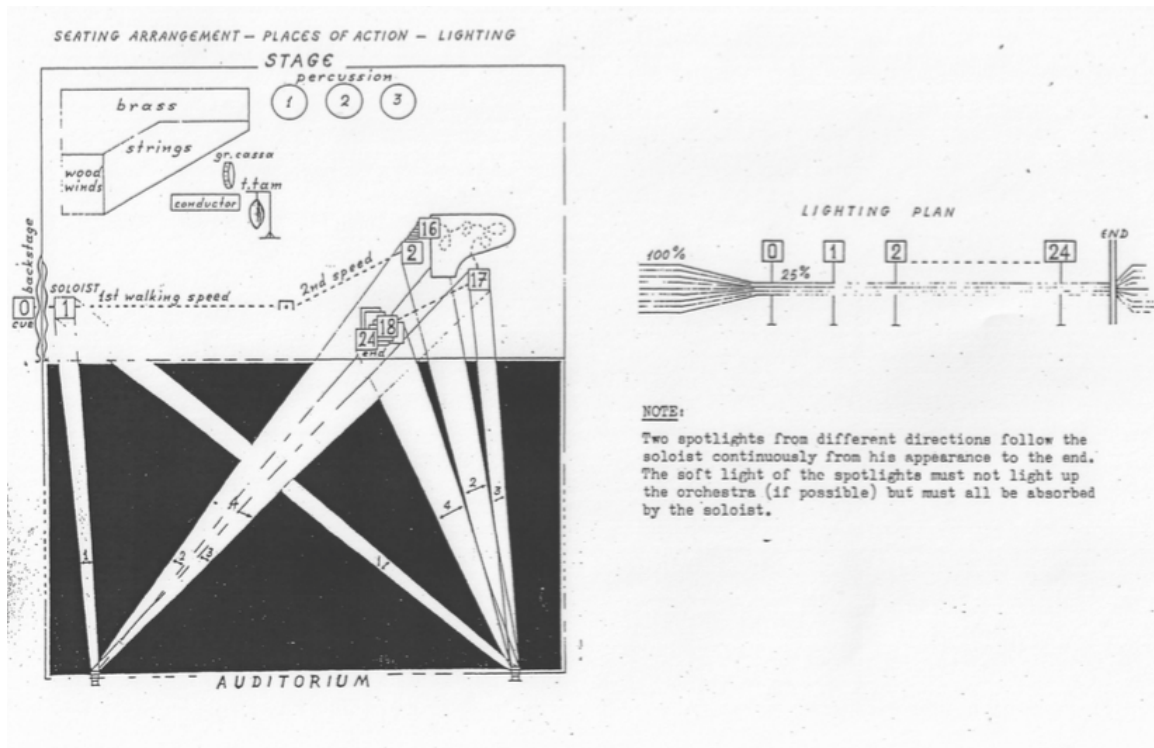


Figure 2.1.2: Seating and lighting arrangements from the published score. *Anaparastasis III/ The Pianist* (1969)

2.1 Formal Structure

According to the soloist's actions, the piece could be divided into three parts:

Part 1 (Cue 0-15)

At first, the soloist sits on the piano stool and looks as though he will play something but starts sobbing instead. While still sobbing, he strikes the highest and lowest keys of the keyboard very violently. Then he repeatedly bangs the keys and produces rhythmical groans in between the sounds of the piano, while the musicians produce 'mysterious sounds'.

(Cue 9)

9 30" 10 11

arab. My & PLO DE K

for Surtis (6ix) 195

mysterious sounds

Orche. *2-3* *3"* *4"* *5"* *6"* *7"* *8"* *9"* *10"*

p *ssssh...* *ssssh...* *ssssh...*

mysterious sounds: rubbing worry-beads, bowing on the back of the bridge of the strings, crumpling a piece of paper, shuffling feet on the floor, tapping on the body of the strings, or brasses, or whatever other sound the source of which is uncertain. Each musician is assigned a sound and produces it at the conductor's signal. These sounds must be distinct. Towards the end, one sound can cover up another.

create the feeling of impending disaster

Cond.

1" 2" 3" 4" 5" 6" 7" 8" 9" 10"

ffff

Soloist

oh oh oh oh oh oh oh oh oh

produce staccato groans at second intervals.

prepare your mouth and body for the scream

produce are suff break oh

AAAAA

Figure 2.1.3: excerpts from the score; Cue 9. Anaparastasis III/ The Pianist (1969)

This leads to a “piercing scream” by the soloist, which is followed by a section (labeled as “stoning” by Christou) —> (Cue 13) during which the soloist continuously bangs the piano keys and groans, while the musicians with the conductor produce a sound-scape of pandemonium. (Conductor here is required to encourage this frantic atmosphere by playing a bass drum or tam-tam).

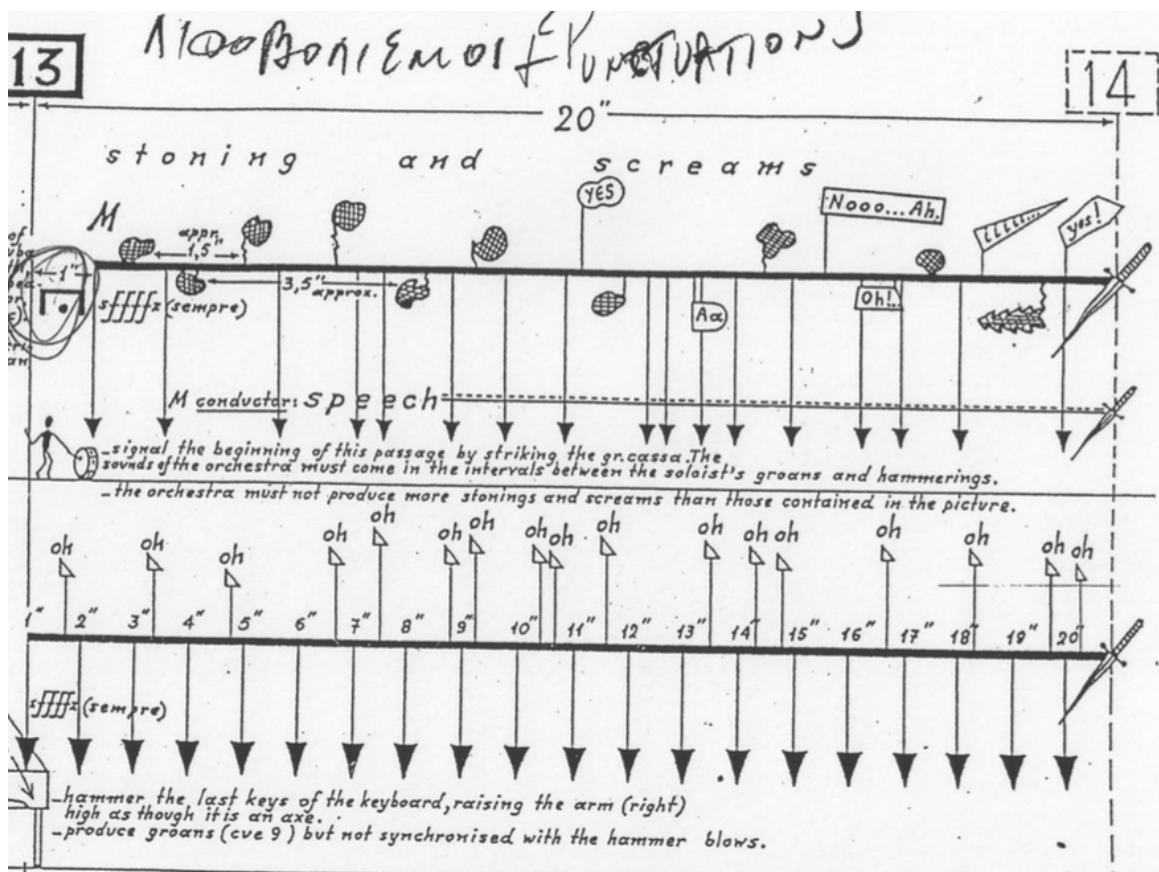


Figure 2.1.4: excerpts from the score- “ stoning”- ; Cue 13. Anaparastasis III/ The Pianist (1969)

Part II (15-19)

The second section of the piece starts with the soloist “smashing down the lid of the piano furiously and falling to his knees.”

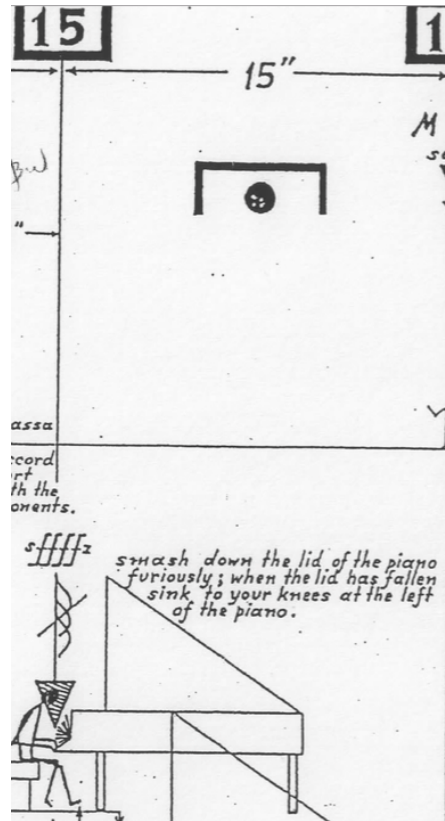


Figure 2.1.5: excerpts from the score; Cue 15. *Anaparastasis III/ The Pianist* (1969)

The composer calls this section an “attempt at communicating with the piano”; this includes caressing, kissing, licking and murmuring to the piano, giggling, and using postures of begging, or even threatening the instrument.

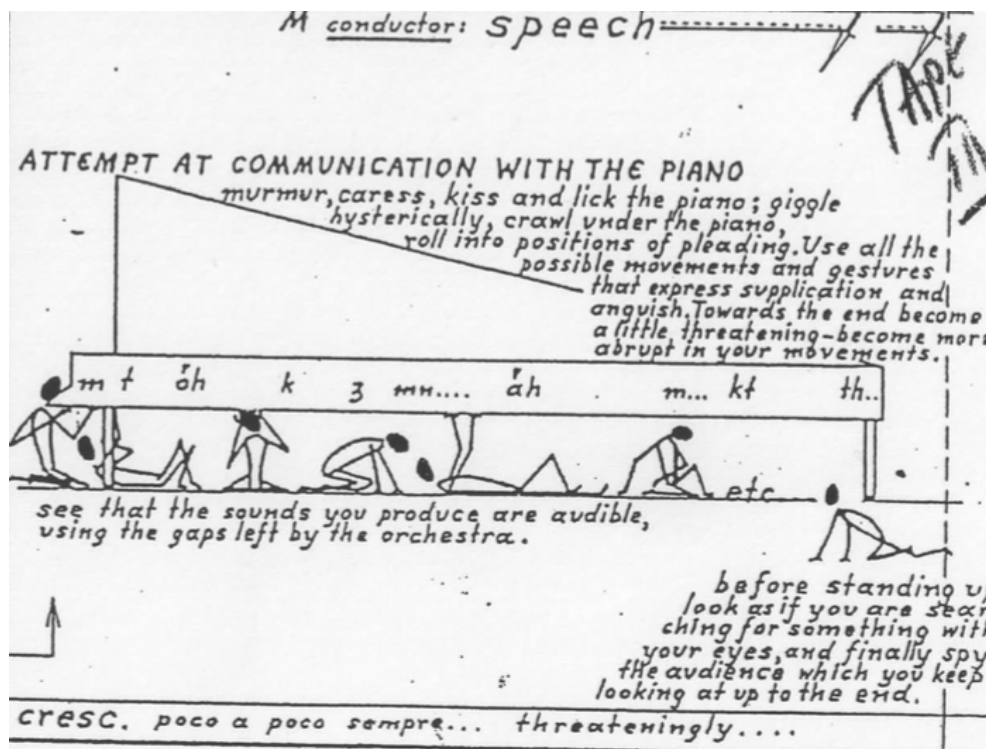


Figure 2.1.6: excerpts from the score- " Attempt at communication with the piano"; Cue 16. *Anaparastasis III/ The Pianist* (1969)

The musicians have to produce mysterious sounds again and the conductor speaks a text written by the composer. (Figure 2.1.7)

16
Anaparastasis
17

120 (maximum)

punctuations, mysterious sounds and breaths

mf-mp
depending on the volume of tapes

punctuations: as in cue 3
mysterious sounds: as in cue 9
breaths: as in cue 3

see that the orchestra leaves gaps so that the sounds produced by the soloist can be heard.

M conductor: speech

ATTEMPT AT COMMUNICATION WITH THE PIANO

murmur, caress, kiss and lick the piano; giggle hysterically, crawl under the piano, roll into positions of pleading. Use all the possible movements and gestures that express supplication and anguish. Towards the end become a little threatening—become more abrupt in your movements.

m t oh k 3 mn... ah m... kt th..

see that the sounds you produce are audible, using the gaps left by the orchestra.

before standing up look as if you are searching for something with your eyes, and finally spy the audience which you keep looking at up to the end.

Figure 2.1.7: excerpts from the score- "mysterious"; Cue 16. Anaparastasis III/ The Pianist (1969)

When the soloist eventually stands up in “terrified immobility”, the musicians and the conductor “shriek and scream piercingly”.

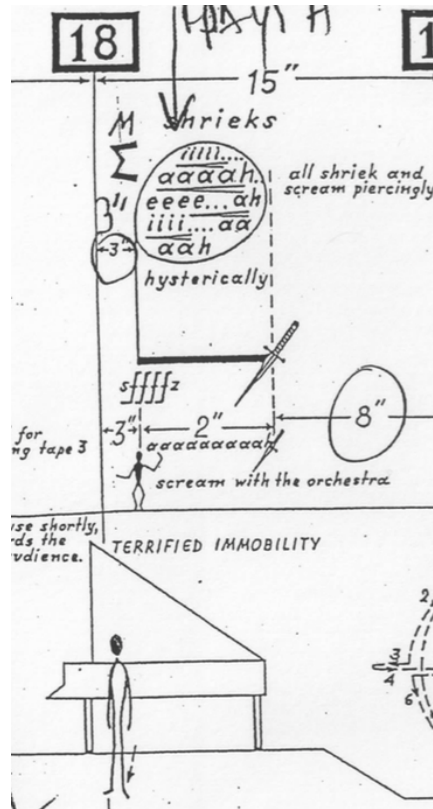


Figure 2.1.8: excerpts from the score; Cue 18. *Anaparastasis III/ The Pianist* (1969)

Part III (19- 24)

The third section contains what is called by Christou the soloist's “attempt to communicate with the audience”, through “slow ritualistic movements” and “occasional cries of intense effort”.

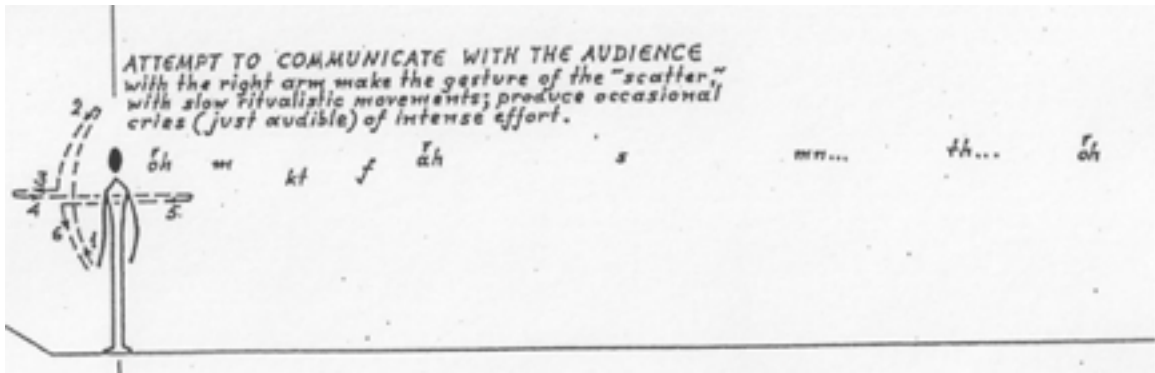


Figure 2.1.9: excerpts from the score; "The soloist"; Cue 19. *Anaparastasis III/ The Pianist* (1969)

This attempt is repeated three times and is accompanied by an immense accelerando and crescendo by the musicians, conductor and tapes.

Figure 2.1.10: excerpts from the score; from Cue 20; *Anaparastasis III/ The Pianist* (1969)

The soloist finally remains motionless, the outbreak of the orchestra is stopped abruptly and the tapes fade out slowly (Christou, 1971).

24 stoning, shrieks and words - terrifying situation 20 appr. 1750"

Orch

Cond.

Soloist

Tape 1

Tape 2

Tape 3

PERPLEXITY

FREEZE

deafening volume

deafening volume

deafening volume

SILENCE

maximum

do not prolong this climax

signal "fade out" of each of tapes 3, 2, 1 successively

slow FADE OUT

slow FADE OUT

slow FADE OUT

J. & W.C.

Figure 2.1.11: excerpts from the score; ending; Anaparastasis III/ The Pianist (1969)

2.2 Context Analysis / Mythological and philosophical analysis

2.2.1 Incommunication

Anna-Martine Lucciano's ² description of the Pianist reads as follows:

“ At first sight, this work may be described in very simple terms: a pianist comes on stage to perform his piece. He tries to play, but an insuperable barrier of incommunication separates him from the instrument. Both the dramatic tension created by the soloist-actor and the musical tension reach their climax in a crescendo that rises to the utmost intensity, ending in defeat and dissolution.”

“Incommunication” is one the most important elements of both Anaparastasis I & III. In Anaparastasis I, the baritone seeks to express the words, but is unable to pronounce them and they appear in a distorted, unintelligible form. In Anaparastasis III, struggle and the inability of the performers to communicate, or express themselves through a musical medium is impeded in the formal structure of the piece. We can also assume that they are both a kind of psychodrama, unfolding in a theatrical spirit of a ritual, a sort of laying bare of the human soul...

² The Works and Temperament of a Greek Composer, by Anna Martine Lucciano

2.2.2 Metapraxis, Continuum and Protoperformance

Anaparastasis III contains three basic concepts formulated by Christou: metapraxis, continuum and protoperformance. From a technical aspect, if we observe the whole piece in macro aspect, it appears that *The Pianist* is a piece that demonstrates a general metapraxis by all the performers participating in the piece.

How so?

- 1) The soloist is required to play the piano, but instead performs all these extra-musical actions.
- 2) The conductor speaks, screams and plays percussion.
- 3) The musicians produce also sounds with their voices as well.

I will explain these more in details in the next pages.

2.2.3 Metapraxis

The composer specified the content of metapraxis:

“A metapraxis is an implosion, a tension under the surface of a single medium which threatens that medium's meaning barrier. An assault on the logic of the performer's relationship to his own particular medium. A violation within a single order of things. Or, a subtle pressure against the

barrier of meaning which any system generates for its own preservation.”
(Christou, 1968)

The Pianist also generates a connection between the musicians' metapraxis and the unhistorical anxiety of the lonely human being during the confrontation with the hostility and inflexibility of an organized system. The role of being part of an “orthodox” organized system, changes its position within the piece. This is quite directly expressed especially through the conductor's spoken text:

“although you are a member of a group caught up in the same pattern, you are nevertheless on your own. Perform with individual abandon, mindless of the others, contributing as much of your individual inventiveness as possible within the limits set by the specifications of the pattern.” (Christou, 1971)

This also is a hint to the political situation of that time in Greece, which I will be speaking about it in chapter 3.

2.2.4 System and Anti-System

A pattern described as System and Anti-System is present in Anaparastasis III; the composer himself in his notes on the scores characterizes the conductor and the orchestra as a System:

SYSTEM: *“The conductor and his team belong to a world which, although it wants to be controlled by some ‘system’, cannot manage to ignore the events that threaten the coherence of this system. “(Christou, 1971)*

Whereas the pianist constitutes the Anti-System:

ANTI-SYSTEM: On the other hand the soloist, with his activities and efforts at the end of the work to make an explanatory gesture, aims at breaking through the barrier of coherence of the “system”, and capture a meaning beyond the “system”. This gesture is the signal for the ‘scatter’ that urges the members of a team, who are bound to a prearranged course, to perform their “program” in their own fashion. But since, perhaps, such an initiative is a false illusion of freedom, the gesture is never completed. (Christou, 1971)

2.2.5 Patterns of opposite and paradoxical terms

It is very striking to see that he is always having a pattern of opposites and they are most of the times in pairs or in triangles.

- 1) a system and an anti-system within which praxis and metapraxis are performed.
- 2) soloist vs the musicians and conductor / soloist vs. the audience / whole piece vs the tape.
- 3) the conductor's spoken text vs. the actions during the piece. (context and also “ motionless”- newsletter “)
- 4) communication with the audience vs. inability of communication.

2.2.6 Continuum

Another layer of this multilayered piece is the tapes. All the actions are taking place on top of the sustained layer of sound of the tapes, which Christou calls them “ Continuum”. For Christou, Continuum stands for an independent element, which “represents the neutral ground on which a system and an anti-system that opposes the system, confront one another” (Lucciano); This element is structured as a very subtle, gradual and ruthless crescendo, which generally seems to reinforce the actions of the performers, but ultimately proves to remain uninfluenced by the actions of the performers including the conductor on the stage.

Another important function of this element is that it also marks the beginning and the ending of the piece. (Figure 2.2.1 & Figure 2.2.2.)

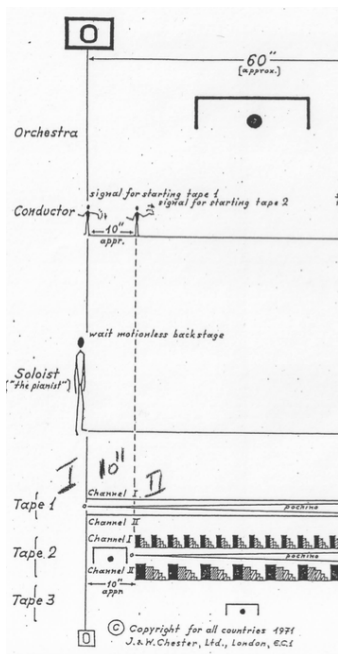


Figure 2.2.1: excerpts from the score; beginning tapes- continuum ; Anaparastasis III/ The Pianist (1969)

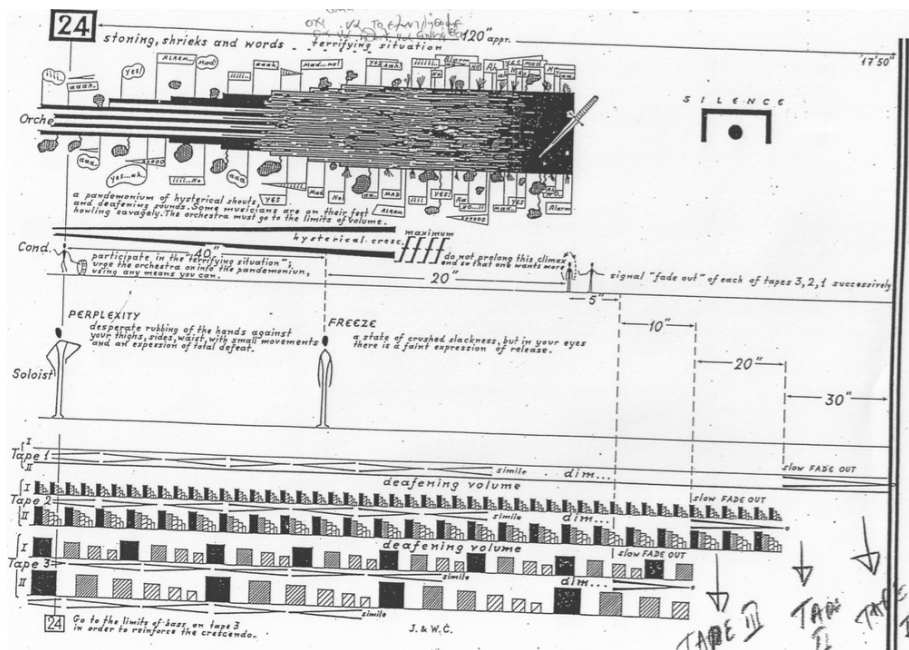


Figure 2.2.2: excerpts from the score; ending. tapes- continuum ; Anaparastasis III/ The Pianist (1969)

2.2.7 Protoperformance and Ritual

Protoperformance seems to be a central issue in *The Pianist*. Christou had defined protoperformances as “the root of all art” and “rituals of renewal” (Christou, June 1968). I will specify more what Christou means and thinks about Protoperformance in the Concepts chapter.

The ritual quality of the performers’ actions in *The Pianist* is very explicit, and the word “ritual” is mentioned several times by the composer inside the score. Metapraxis unfolds in the manner of protoperformance and with the assistance of the continuum. The performance of *Anaparastasis III* most resembles a ritual, which is, however, performed within the context of a piano recital. From this point of view, it could be argued that Christou is utilizing the conventional part of a musical work in a way that reinforces even more the metapraxis performed by all the musicians. Christou seems to have found an extremely effective way to express. Wittgenstein claimed that “everything ritualistic ... must be strictly avoided, because it immediately turns rotten. Of course a kiss is a ritual too and it isn’t rotten, but ritual is permissible only to the extent that it is as genuine as a kiss”. The way this ritualistic quality is expressed in the score of *Anaparastasis III*, with its lack of extreme stylization and its proximity to the human psychology of a musician who performs, gives the work all the potential for a “genuine” performance and, as a result approaches a

ritual that is not “rotten”. Being the student of Wittgenstein, Christou has been influenced in various ways, nevertheless by creating this explicit and blunt ritual he emphasized his own thoughts about the rituality. The connection between Christou's ideas about protoperformance and Jerzy Grotowski's following statement is remarkable:

The Performer, with a capital letter, is a man of action. He is not a man who plays another. He is a dancer, a priest, a warrior: he is outside aesthetic genres. Ritual is performance, an accomplished action, an act. Degenerated ritual is a spectacle. I don't want to discover something new but something forgotten. Something which is so old that all distinctions between aesthetic genres are no longer of use. (Grotowski, 1988)

2.2.8 Expression

The possibility and impossibility of expression. This is in my opinion one of the most important aspects of *The Pianist* and *The Baritone* pieces, and in general in Christou's thoughts and ideas as a composer and creator. We can argue that the soloist characterizes himself as “psychologically handicapped” (Lucciano), which can also show the connection of Christou and Psychology. In general we define music as a means of expression: this function of music is supposed to be what makes it similar to language where a musical instrument becomes musician's medium/ tool of communication with an audience. Here in this piece, what is communication (The same in communication which Anna-Martine Lucciano also highlighted). I do think this is one of the most

important central ideas of the piece. From the language point of view, this is also a clear cue to show the strong ties between Christou and Wittgenstein's philosophy, which was dominated by an obsession with the insufficiency of language as an expressive medium and an ultimate failure to invent or discover ways of efficient expression through language.

“we are struggling with language. We are engaged in a struggle with language”. (Wittgenstein)

This could be referring to any form of language, or also could become the motto of *The Pianist*; or perhaps, *The Pianist* could be viewed as a re-enactment of *Wittgenstein's* dictum. This again is a good hint to the idea of organized and disorganized system that I talked about it in the beginning of this chapter. All this brings us to the Conceptual Framework of *The Pianist*, within which the ideas and practices of “*The Pianist*” can be included seems to suggest many references to the work of *Ludwig Wittgenstein*. These references could be divided into two categories:

- 1) The essential matter of the struggle with a language; which is constructed in order to express and fails to do so, which seems to be the root issue from which the ways of tackling an artistic/philosophical “problems” is born. These categories seem to take the form of a shift in

the conventional perception of the medium (language for *Wittgenstein*, music for Christou).

2) A skepticism towards all common practices, which suggests a fresh look at the roots of the medium. This leads us to the construction of a system of expression, which is free from conventions and commonplace features. (“for example” pointing out to all the extra-musical actions in the piece...)

The soloist's metapraxis develops as a natural consequence of the insufficiency of language, and the ending of the work could perhaps be summarized with *Wittgenstein's* words again: “*in art it is hard to say anything as good as: saying nothing*”. (*Wittgenstein*, 1980)

The concept of metapraxis, seems to be one of the Christou's practical techniques, to transcend the conventional borders of musical expression, without hesitating to use extra-musical elements as a way to connect with the intellectual, expressive and metaphysical aspects with as much sincerity as possible. The pianist's metapraxis could be also seen as a shift of perspective towards musical performance in general. In a way, Christou's *Pianist* is based on a similar shift of perspective towards a piano performance; which was not common during his time. The pianist is actually required to do everything a pianist would not be expected to do during a piano performance and makes use of only “extra-pianistic”

practices in order to express himself. He plays with this paradox idea of what we used to know, believe and perceive as an expression by “ a pianist”. Christou sees it as an attempt of a human expression and overlooks all expectations, conventions and aesthetic objections for the sake of this. These all enriches the piece and let the audience experience a completely new experience. As if they are part of the creation of the piece; part of the Metapraxis.

3: Political situation

Although Christou never mentioned if this piece is a political piece, there are various details hinting and highlighting political beliefs. For this reason it is important to take a look at the history of that time. Artistic censorship was massive at that time in Greece, and many artists who were considered “dangerous” for the political situation, either left the country or were sent to prisons and exiled. The dictators promoted mostly folk and nationalistic music (on radio and TV channels) or generally music that looked “harmless” to them. In this context, one could not exclude the possibility of *The Pianist* baring some sophisticatedly concealed anti-dictatorship messages. The conductor’s speech within the piece, reminds me of this dictatorship and its relationship to art of that times. Although the speech functions as the instrument to organize the system, it also carries the idea of dictatorship in radio that time.

From another angle, *Anaparastasis III* was composed in this context of a general fear of free expression. It seems to me that the work is influenced by this and it could also be seen as a protest against censorship. The pianist’s inability to express himself (incommunication) could be a very explicit parallel to the condition of the Greek citizens (including the composer) at that time. This also reminds me of another

characteristics of the figure of the conductor. He seems to have an oppressive touch; according to the score, when he speaks, his reading has to be simple and clear, "he must not color his voice at all. It must be a dry reading, such as that of a newscaster". (Christou, 1971). I would assume this also is another hint to the political situation of that time in Greece. The conductor's text itself (to be read in the piece) itself has a rather domineering and oppressive shade:

"Although you are a member of a group caught up in the same pattern, you are nevertheless on your own. Perform with individual abandon, mindless of the others, contributing as much of your own individual inventiveness as possible within the limits set by the specifications for the pattern. "(Christou, 1971)

This text sounds like the voice of an indisputable power talking to the lonely figure of the soloist, (maybe symbols of the citizens and artists of that time) by giving him orders or making statements about him. Another highlight is how the composer sets two different categories inside the score; calling the conductor and his group "SYSTEM" and the soloist "ANTI-SYSTEM"; the implications of the use of these terms could also have a sociological content, with the "SYSTEM" being the established power and the "ANTISYSTEM" being the opposing, powerless individual. The fact that the individual finally fails to communicate with the audience could be

indicative of the composer's personal view on the socio-political situation in his country at that time.

4. Observations

People who witnessed the first performance of The Pianist by Grigoris Semitekolo – during which he damaged his vocal chords while screaming – describe it as a sort of ritual. In some articles I recall reading that Semitekolo was not truly satisfied, if after a performance of Pianist his hands were not “bleeding”. This, of course, does not necessarily imply that this was the composer's intention to expect the performer to go to such extremities (the directions in the score are very general), but rather that the limits of a performance of this piece are left open in the score intentionally, in order to give the performer the ability to find his own personal limits throughout the piece. This also reminds me of the importance of the issue of interpretation. There is not a specific answer on this topic. In my opinion, using both versions (1. the exact words of Christou or 2. the published score) would bring insights to the freedom of choice to the “pianist”. By watching a close up video of Semitekolo, I do believe that he achieved this. He is sharing his personal experience of expressive impotence with the audience, while the ritualistic role of the rest of the musicians is the performance of their personal experience of the system which generates such impotence and also provokes such an outburst of despair by the soloist.

The fact that the composer uses the word "stoning" in the score (expressed in the Formal Structure of the piece as well) in order to describe the musicians' and conductor's effort to provoke the expressive explosion of the soloist bears a rather ritual and violent shade itself, is already a good example of providing the performers with explicit and exact material, which gives them directions but it is still enough open, in order for them to find out their own attitude toward it.

5. Conclusion

The ritual dimension of the piece necessarily requires a special treatment of the score by the performers. That is, when it comes to performing *The Pianist* one should never overlook the ritual quality of his role as a performer. The soloist is asked to drop his performance mask (i.e. his musical instrument) and actually to re-enact this process in front of an audience, which is not an easy task. Observing it from this angle, reminds me of the piece *Side show* by Steven Takasugi, in which he also gives them a new identity in order to drop their “normal” performance mask. This is in my opinion one of the reasons this whole complex multilayer piece floats naturally. As Klaus Trappmann states:

Back to my initial scepticism about myths and rituals in the 20th. century. Christou gives his dream-rituals, his protoperformances a sacred meaning. Although it is about destruction, it is also about renewal, because the destruction of structures and abandonment of orders always lead to a new, higher order. However, the present task of music is firstly the destruction of a foolish optimism and an erroneous concept of reality. “To shatter through reality” is the formula he used in various interviews. Thus – and I think luckily – what presents itself is his purposeful re-sacralisation as de-sacralisation of the established concert business and his archaisation as radical modernism. (Trappmann quoted in Angermann, 1993)

6. Concepts

6.1 Proto-performance

(All these in Chapter 6, are excerpts and exact quotes from *Jani Christou's* website; see footnotes.

The early archetypal point of view did not know history. Instead, it looked upon everything that took place, whether processes of nature close to man, or in the environment at large; whether single activities of individual men, or the compounded activities of many men; whether the fate overtaking some single individual, or the fate overtaking the group as a whole; it looked upon all of these as repetitions of some aspect of a numinous original, an archetypal pattern - or MASTER-PATTERN, even to the point of identification. Under such circumstances nothing had any meaning, or any proper existence, unless it could be considered as a repetition of the master-pattern, or as a component of such a pattern; of a master-pattern being and action existing both in time and in the center of every moment in time. This certainly not what history is about. But it is what myth was about. And it is also what rituals of renewal were about. These were PROTO-PERFORMANCE - re-enactments of the original proto-pattern - the master-pattern; re-enactments in terms of corresponding mythic imagery; key-performances re-vitalising the master-pattern, when its cycle was exhausted, through forms of sacrifice, life for life, keeping it going. Because the pattern simply had to keep on renewing itself, if man and nature were to do the same. Such rituals were vital acts of re-affirmation, of participation and identification with the master-pattern. Through these "protoperformances" man related - connected - by activating a process of feed-back between the numinous and himself; not for his own benefit only, but for the benefit of the total environment in which he lived and of which he was part. So, with this feedback fueled by sacrifice during ritual, life continued. Life passing into the master-pattern from that

which was sacrificed in ritual, and back-lashing a thousandfold as life renewed for all.

Bio-cosmic cycles did not of course depend upon man's-rituals for their renewal, but something was being renewed, nevertheless: this was man's positive relationship with all that came within the range of his experience, therefore providing him with the renewed energy for life. And in this sense rituals were effective, and the renewal of life a reality.

Or, in another terminology, the feedback activated during man's protoperformances managed to activate his psychic energy: man would first invoke the symbols representing the archetypal forms of his myths, then these symbols, in their turn, by constantly exciting and attracting his attention, would mobilize his psychic energy making it abundantly available for some life-task, or for life in general. A transformation of dormant psychic energy into available power.

But man's rituals were effective only in so far as they could activate a positive feed-back between himself and the symbols drawn from the depths of his mythic experience.

And I propose to use the term PROTOPERFORMANCE only in connection to such effective forms of ritual - or performance.

(Jani Christou, June 1968)

From Carl Jung's "The Structure of the Psyche", 1927:

Just as some kind of analytical technique is needed to understand a dream, so a knowledge of mythology is needed in order to grasp the meaning of a content deriving from the deeper levels of the psyche... The collective unconscious -- so far as we can say anything about it at all -- appears to consist of mythological motifs or primordial images, for which reason the myths of all nations are its real exponents. In fact, the whole of mythology could be taken as a sort of projection of the collective unconscious.³

³ excerpts from <http://www.janichristou.com/concepts/jungian-symbol/jungian-symbol.html>

7. Commentaries:

These are excerpts of commentaries by Jani Christou himself. (from his own website) These are Christou's own words on his music, ideas and perceptions as a composer and as a creator, which I found very special and unique in understanding him as a creator. (The complete "Commentaries" can be find under:

<http://www.janichristou.com/commentaries/commentaries.html>)

7.1 A Credo for Music

Jani Christou's "A Credo for Music" - Epoches, vol. 34, February 1966, p.146

In elaborating these thoughts concerning music, which, as I write, constitute for me part of my deepest convictions, I will endeavor to be as brief and concise as possible. In the lines that follow it may be seen that I often refer to the question of "transformation" and this concept may be interpreted very vaguely as a synonym of evolution, or at least as related to it. I nevertheless believe that a fuller explanation is necessary:

The logic of transformation cannot be explained in terms other than those pertaining to itself. It is very difficult because the validity of such descriptions depend on whether or not we are talking or listening from experience. But an image can help. Let us take as a basic concept space-time. An object can be considered as situated in ordinary space-time, that of everyday experience. That same object can be considered not from this point of view, but from a wider sense of space-time (namely, solar space-time). We can even go further and consider the object as occupying space-time within space-time, when we reach out to galaxial space-time dimensions. We can go on into intergalaxial

dimensions. That same object assumes vastly different meanings, yet it is the same object. If we now think in terms of acoustical objects or events, we can perhaps, by analogy, see how the same events can have ever deepening implications.

Transformations in music do just that. Absence of transforming powers keeps the acoustical events on one level, thus catering only to our sense of decoration. Art which does not rise above this level may be craftful, but is no longer meaningful. [I think there is a much greater interest] in art that is of a liberative nature than in art which is of a decorative nature; liberative in the sense of liberating us from the common space-time continuum, pointing to other areas of experience.

I will try to classify my views in ten points here:

(i) I am concerned with the transformation of acoustical energies in to music.

(ii) Basically the meaning of music is a function of our possibility of experiencing such transformations. Music which is meaningless for one person may not only be valid for another, but can also strike him with the force of revelation (for example, a person may listen to a piece of music without being able to relate it to anything he has heard previously. He nevertheless feels that something has moved him).

(iii) The points of interest in a composition are those at which these transformations take place, although the demarcation lines are never fixed.

(iv) For both listener and composer the danger is of being seduced by the whore of decoration and aesthetics.

(v) Most of the music written in the course of the historical period of music has succumbed to these temptation in varying degrees. And this includes the period stretching from the early polyphonic school with permutatory devices right up to the present day of shoots of serialism and the schools of chance, as well as those of computer-calculations.

(vi) Decoration and aesthetics have been and are powerful negative factors in music.

(vii) A manipulation of acoustical events which fails to generate the transformatory energies achieves nothing other than the more or less aesthetic and decorative

saturation of acoustical space. Even "beautiful" music can leave one nauseated.

(viii) Every age experiences transformations within an aesthetic characteristic of that particular age.

(ix) The obvious transplantation of an aesthetic of one age to another or even a generation to a generation is not only futile and invalid but is also a declaration of spiritual bankruptcy.

(x) Contrary to what is commonly held against music of our day, its frequent jarring and shock-provoking methods can be symptoms of the necessity for liberation from an inherited aesthetic and worn-out patterns of thought.

7.2 Patterns and Permutations for orchestra 1960

The term PERMUTATION stands for the general process of multiplication of musical matter through the reorganization into different tonal and structural combinations of a given number of factors.

The term PATTERN stands for the constant regrouping of the same or different aspects of the same - components of a musical statement. The regrouping of these components is determined by sequences of permutations, so that no two expressions of the basic statement are ever identical.

Permutating components of a pattern's basic statement are usually spread amongst a group of instruments collaborating in the formulation of group-statements. Such statements may at times be delivered solely in succession or, according to the situation, they may also overlap, somewhat in the manner of the "stretto" in a fugue using group-entries. At other moments, different patterns may be evolving simultaneously - one pattern performing the function of "counter-pattern" to the other.

7.3 Complex Patterns

A musical statement may release simple or complex energy. Christou's concept of complex energy is derived from the fact that a flow of sound ordinarily considered as raw material may nevertheless have inner rhythms of its own - very much like the ceaseless atomic activity "within" physical matter out of which ordinary objects are made. Now a statement is made up out of a set of structural components with definite "outward shapes". When these structural components are expressed in terms of raw material having its own independent rhythms - in terms that is, of "live" material - it is as though we were contemplating both the outward appearance of a group of objects while at the same time we were aware of the infinite activities of the atomic particles generating the matter out which the objects are made. We are, as it were, confronted with visible and invisible structures and activities, and it is this dual action in different categories which releases complex energy. The term COMPLEX PATTERN stands therefore for the type of pattern formed by the permutations of a statement's components expressed in terms of "live" material.

7.4 Praxis and Metapraxis

Any living art keeps generating an overall logic fed by a collectivity of characteristic actions. Whenever an action is purposefully performed to conform with the current overall logic characteristic of the art, that action is a "praxis", or a purposeful and characteristic of action. But whenever an action is purposefully performed so as to go beyond the current overall logic characteristic of the art, that action is a "metapraxis", or a purposeful non-characteristic action: a "meta-action". Thus, in the performing arts, any action which requires its performer to go beyond the current logic of the medium to which he belongs, requires him to go beyond the logic of his world of action, as it were. That action is a "meta-praxis", and it is purposefully "non-characteristic". Conversely, an action which does not conform purposefully with the current logic of that medium is a "praxis" as long as it is purposefully "characteristic". For instance, a conductor conducting during a concert is a praxis, but if he is also required to walk about, speak, scream, gesticulate, or perform any other action not strictly connected to conducting, that could be a metapraxis... On the other hand, if an actor, say or a dancer, is called upon to perform during a "mixed-media" piece, and he is required to scream, laugh, move about, dance, gesticulate, or whatever, he could merely performing a praxis, and not a metapraxis.

7.5 The Meaning Barrier

The last example suggests that a metapraxis is not a function of mixed media. A metapraxis is an implosion, a tension under the surface of a single medium which threatens that medium's meaning barrier. An assault on the logic of the performer's relationship to his own particular medium. A violation within a single order of things. Or, a subtle pressure against the barrier of meaning which any system generates for its own preservation.

7.6 The Elusive Nature of Metapraxis

The implication is, of course, that as the logic of the medium keeps changing in sympathy with the dynamics of the worldwide parameters of history, the manners in which metapraxis could be expressed must be constantly readjusted.

7.7 The Opposites

One can put it in various ways. For instance, the relationship between praxis and metapraxis corresponds to the relationship between physics and metaphysics. This is not to say that metapraxis is "metaphysical", only that just as metaphysics cannot be experienced in terms of the logic of physics, so metapraxis cannot be experienced in the terms of the logic of praxis. *"Metapraxis is "beyond" praxis, yet not independent of praxis. And this points to the conclusion that just as metaphysics, if at all meaningful, is so only because of the "opposite" concept of physics, so metapraxis is meaningful only by virtue of its "opposite": praxis"*. Another instance of opposites illuminating each other or, at least, implying each other. And here one could add this: just as physics, when provoked, has a tendency to break through into metapraxis, so praxis, when provoked has a tendency to break through into metapraxis. Continuing the parallel, an ultimate realization could be the identification of praxis with metapraxis in a union of opposites, so that

a metapraxis has no further reason to be any different to "praxis". The statement, of course, is an obvious target for questions of this type: "then why this whole business of metapraxis in the first place?" To which the only answer is, just as obviously, silence.

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