



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG
ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND DRAMA

**Conflicts in contemporary music
interpretation**

Brunner-Lachenmann: A case approach

Antonio Galindo Agúndez

Degree Project, Master of Fine Arts in Music,
Symphonic Orchestra Performance

SWEDISH NATIONAL ORCHESTRA ACADEMY

Autumn Semester 2011

Degree Project, 30 higher education credits
Master of Fine Arts in Music, Symphonic Orchestra Performance
Academy of Music and Drama, University of Gothenburg
Autumn Semester 2011

Author: Antonio Galindo Agúndez

Title: Conflicts in contemporary music interpretation. Brunner-Lachenmann: a case approach

Supervisor: PhD. Harald Stenström

Abstract

Key words: Interpretation, performance, education, contemporary

Classical musicians have made a habit of reproducing again and again works written between two hundred and one hundred years ago. We even insist on calling to works written fifty to seventy five years ago contemporary music. Through their reflections on society, art and artists face doubts, conflicts, certainties and uncertainties better and faster than any other social influencing field. However they must be updated to the music produced at the time they live; then society can interact in art and performers could interact with composers.

The second part consists of a case study in order to better picture the challenge involved in creating something from the very starting point, from the very genesis, surrounded by all its authenticity. Helmut Lachenmann and Eduard Brunner in their relationship during *Dal niente* creation

Contents

A. Conflicts on contemporary music interpretation

- 1. Introduction 5
- 2. General questions of interpretation in 20th century music 8
 - 2.1 Contemporary education 9
 - 2.2 Interpretation versus performance 10
 - 2.3 Drama or synthesis 11
 - 2.4 Simplicity or complexity 12
 - 2.5 Previous knowledge versus intuition 14
 - 2.6 Previous study 15
 - 2.7 Supervising 16
 - 2.8. Communication versus isolation (when performing) 17
 - 2.9 Value of the piece versus value of the interpretation 19
 - 2.10-Responsibility to the composer, the audience, oneself and the tradition 20

B. Brunner-Lachenmann: A case approach

- 3. A case approach: Eduard Brunner and Helmut Lachenmann 22
 - 3.1 Eduard Brunner 23
 - 3.2 Helmut Lachenmann 26
 - 3.3 About Dal niente: Encounter 28
 - 3.4 Compositional process 30
 - 3.5 Interpretation 31
- 4. Conclusions 33
- References 37
- Index of pictures 38
- Acknowledgments 39

Conflicts in contemporary music interpretation

Brunner-Lachenmann: A case approach

"Todo está por inventar"¹

Introduction

We, classical orchestra and performance musicians, have made a habit of reproducing again and again works written between two hundred and one hundred years ago. We even insist on calling works written fifty to seventy-five years ago, contemporary music. Is that contemporary music? Are Millares, Equipo Crónica, Saura or Frédéric Roussif contemporaries of our generation? Certainly, they are not. In their time, the social situation was completely different from what it is nowadays. Certainly they reflected a humanity more influenced by the theories of Freud than by the theories of Piaget or John McCarthy. We assume that art is always ahead, the avant-garde of reflections on society. Art and artists face the doubts, conflicts, certainties and uncertainties better and faster than any other social influencing field.

However, as musicians we insist on repeating works of the past in a kind of museum culture. This is true; nevertheless, the music of classicism and romanticism, reflects all the kinds of substances out of which mankind is composed. Passions, tragedy, faith, joy, love, poetry, colour, air...every single basic element of humanity is present. Notwithstanding, the continuous repetition of it, by means of CDs or the increasing numbers of orchestras and musicians, could transform music into a consumer object and cause it to be swallowed by pop culture.

To face this fact, I would rather make a claim for chamber music and for contemporary music. I would make a claim for a closer touch to music. For a more lively

¹ "Everything is to be invented" is a phrase I took from a friend of my region who invented a system with plants to make water drinkable.

contact with music. In the time of Brahms, there were not many possibilities to hear the clarinet quintet, which received its first private performance on 24 November 1891 in Meiningen with Richard Mühlfeld and the Joachim Quartet, led by Joseph Joachim. The public premiere was on the 12th of December 1891 in Berlin. Audience, consequently regarded music as a spontaneous fact; as an unrepeatable opportunity. I make a claim for this spirit, I make a claim for the freshness of music, the expectation of the unknown, the expectations of genuineness, the touch of sound and mainly for a broader reflection that arises after a performance, surprising us in every sense, both aesthetically and personally. Also, an extensive approach to music as a phenomenon linked with other arts will be claimed. It is crucial to find the associations between different arts in order to place music where it belongs.

In this assignment we intend to bring closer the relationship between musician, new music, and the choices required to provide audiences with a responsible product. We will certainly go into all the feelings, emotions, techniques, thoughts, tricks, results and wishes of a skilled interpreter confronting a piece of music from the last forty years. During this research we will see all the matters of decision that a musician should be concerned with when talking about interpretation: The performances, post-performance, thoughts and emotions that are in process while the audience is lead into a sound world.

In its structure, the first part of this research will be presented as a conflict and as a drama. Between the player, the piece, the tradition and the conditions during the dramatic process that occur when developing the interpretation of a new piece of music. This will be presented as an opposition between the author's thought and texts from musicologists or psychologists. On the one hand we will have the opportunity to describe all previous requirements, knowledge and common places that derive from the tradition and agreements on classical music interpretation. On the other hand, we will fill out the lacking areas of tradition with emotions, feelings and conflicts that would appear during this process; that also involve making decisions. Not always as easy as we think; not always as arbitrary as we believe.

The second part consists of a case-approach in order to better picture the challenge involved in creating something from the very starting point, from the very genesis, surrounded by its authenticity. We will examine the relationship of Brunner and Lachenmann during the creation of *Dal niente*. Eduard Brunner, who I had the privilege of interview, is an

eminent clarinet performer from the second half of the 20th century who is especially interested in new music for the instrument and who is responsible for the commission of several pieces. One of his collaborations was with Helmut Lachenmann, one of the most distinguished composers of the moment. Lachenmann is the owner of a style that has crossed the traditional barriers of the instrument and musical language with only the help of strength, human energy and emotion, using the instrument as a tool for communication. The analysis of *Dal niente*, the piece composed for Brunner, is divided into an approach to both Brunner and Lachenmann and three different aspects of the creation: Encounter, Compositional process and Performing. This part is based on the testimony of Eduard Brunner in relation to *Dal niente*, which was dedicated to him in 1970, and completed with the texts and reflections of other musicologists as Max Nyffeler and Edgar Reitz.

2. General questions of interpretation in XX century music

Normally, from a personal point of view, when opening a new piece of music from the late 20th century, the first thing I do is to take a look over the whole score and find as many of the most technical passages or spots as possible. I guess this represents what we normally do when confronting a new piece. From a personal point of view, there are two very important things that should be evaluated first: the instrumental issues and the aesthetic frame. This means that we have to plan carefully where to focus our effort for successful practising and development of our abilities by literally, just read the music. This includes both the physical part of the job and the understanding of the music as a living structure. One of these aspects is nothing without the other. It might seem that solving the instrumental part, we are on the right track to perform it correctly. This is in fact a misunderstanding; when performing, it will probably sound hollow, unable to fool anyone merely through displaying technical abilities. Success does not lie there. Additionally, the process of building a piece of music for performance will develop faster if soul and understanding are set in advance.

Nonetheless, after being able to read the music, a wider perspective must be taken into account. The musician must be able to understand the way the piece is made in order to always practise in a descriptive way. This is to say, always playing with a communicative purpose to describe the gesture, the archm the articulation, the direction or the character of the phrases, both in contemporary and traditional music.

In the following chapters, a more detailed description of the different tasks to be considered when performing will be developed. Some terms will, of course appear more than once, or be repeated with a slightly different meaning. Unfortunately, a lexicon for contemporary music and its interpretation is not completely established and systematized. You should also consider that language, as music, is an integral system, it is of extreme difficulty to isolate terms. We do it mainly with the purpose of providing a clearer picture of the system, which is a whole in itself.

2.1 Contemporary education

Music in the last century has become a major subject of study. Now, not only extremely talented or enthusiastic people have access to this special education. No major attention was paid to classical music before in the way that we study it nowadays. Especially after WWII, conservatories and universities started to rise in every corner of Europe for music education. After that, music education has consisted of the repetition of certain pieces over and over using methods that have not changed very much from the old times. Some other subjects that could be related to the clarinet playing such as painting, photography and psychology have evolved considerably during the course of the last fifty years; this is not, however, so notable in the music education.

What we call “classical music” suffered a shock and a split after WWI. Years before, music seemed to have taken a direct path to the abyss, which in fact happened with humanity and culture in those years. R. Strauss and R. Wagner were stretching tonality to a point of no return. In pieces as *Till Eulespiegel* or *Rosenkavalier*, R. Strauss combined melodic resources with patterns of extremely disordered tonality. Wagner changed all the previous harmonic resolutions and achieved those resting points with instrumentation instead. After that, Europe suffered the WWI and music tried to restart in a new language, the twelve tone system. Twelve-tone, although it is theoretically surpassed, has not been generally accepted among instrumentalist, musicians and music educators. This is my explanation: Music until twelve-tone was based on a natural order deriving from the division of a string (Pythagoras) into different parts. The fact was: as more divisions were made, the combination of those sounds with the root sounded more and more unnatural. After its systematization and regulation in different keys and orders, harmony became more and more complex and increasingly expressive at the same time; until the break. After that, music broke every connection with nature and belonged fully to mankind. Culture and technology became as complex as music, but music, even if it is intellectually understood, should certainly point at feelings and indescribable emotions. The system of twelve tones was taken directly from the systematization of humans to allow a writing code that could be used worldwide mainly with European instruments and singers. Every connection with nature broke. Although it is intellectually understandable, it lacks emotional links; however, some other musical resources such as timbre or rhythm have taken relevant positions, substituting for harmony. These substitutions happened, later and music creators are showing a preference for both aspects, for

example, spectralism or minimalism, genres that have wider acceptance.

However, it will not be until it is taught and understood in conservatories and universities that new music will start to be generally accepted. Contemporary music should be an important part in musical education. For example, some other genres have an advantage and are included in programs at the academy already, for example, jazz and world music. This did not occur before they were widely accepted by both performers and audience.

2.2 Interpretation versus performance

The education held in Conservatories and the products of music competition in the last thirty years have mainly provided a panorama of very skilled musicians, a set of perfect and fast players, but also a great collection of CD recordings to hold dust in libraries and old fashioned houses.

Fortunately, this is starting to change into a livelier musical environment. Instrumental music is starting to be a more frequently included subject in daily life. A new generation of performers, who understand their duty as a matter of sharing, are changing this picture of instrumental music.

For example, two weeks ago I had the opportunity to listen to Andras Schiff, piano master during the last 30 years. He played a huge variations program. I really appreciate the effort and the wisdom but to be honest I was waiting for the excitement, unfortunately it did not happen. Strict black clothes and a distant attitude towards the audience in a hall for more than one thousand two hundred persons, did not help in the purpose of communication. We can also include the lack of improvisation and freshness that variation should have meant.

We can confirm that the playing was more than just reading, of course, when talking about a great master, and good style, but that, nowadays, is too little for music that does not belong any longer to our values and faiths. The new 21st century world demands people getting involved. Apart from the fact that people are not longer prepared to sit down for one hour with the stage in front of them. I suggest that we musicians should leave the stage and get mixed in with the audience (actually it happens in the new Kaija Saariaho clarinet concerto) to make them participants in the art. Let's make our message clearer and more understandable. Let's make people throw away all the stiffness and seriousness that 19th century composers and conductors meant their art to be. Let's have a lot of respect, of course,

and interpret them in the fairest way possible, but let's also allow people to feel part of it as well.

20th and 21st century music puts demand on players, to perform. It is not enough for the audience, from the performer, just to play or read notes. Of course it should be done in performing, in acting, in reading but I would make a claim for a deeper insight into the music. An effort must be made and a much more dramatic moment can surely be found.

Recently, in a concert, I tried to mix poetry, movement and music for solo clarinet in a very basic state. The result was not as good as expected since the audience did not seem to react in an exciting way. Concretely, it was *Three pieces for clarinet alone* by Stravinsky, pieces and selected poems of the time when the pieces were composed, and poems of Mayakovski. The concert started with the reader in the place where the player should have been and the player hidden in the back of the audience, and after every poem, one piece was played. Before the third one, the performer went to the stand in the middle of the room. The reaction of the audience was extremely poor, from my point of view. Just one little girl turned to watch where the sounds were coming from. The rest of the people were just petrified in their chairs. Unfortunately, no enthusiasm could be noticed. I guess the performance could have been much more determined and I should have collected some testimonies afterwards, since the impression of a musician when on stage is of big value but there was no feedback at the time. Furthermore an improved idea has been taken place afterwards when we mixed poetry and music in equal terms –including free improvisation- in a dramatic show that shocked the reduce audience we had. We achieved the drama and contact with people expected. Probably this example was what we aimed, a real mixture of arts presented in a new space and a contemporary way that included performing in a bar and what was followed by a collective reflection.

2.2 Drama or synthesis

Music from tradition and education in school is regarded as a dramatic confrontation. First the student is supposed to fight with technique and daily etudes. From the 18th century instrumental music has always been based on the opposition between two different themes: A and B themes in the classical sonata form. Consequently, barely two characters can be recognised. In the 19th century the concept changed into a more descriptive

language in the so called; “program music”. The drama concept is not valid any longer in most 20th century music. From my point of view, music is composed in a complex structural and textural form, where a relation between the elements is hard to define in a simple A-B definition.

Taking the *Berio sequenza IXa* as an example, we could say that it represents in sound a new "gesture" concept. Even if the phrasing is made in an extensively romantic form, it should be seen as a new conceptually conditioned perspective. Gesture is to 20th century music what phrase was in "classical" music. Finally, the compilation of gestures makes what I will call synthesis. Consequently, any association of ideas or confrontation should be abandoned. No more black and white or good and evil. The underlying messianic idea that was present in the music from the 16th to 18th centuries has been abandoned or has been evolved at the same time as the ideas of mankind. It has been the evolution of a picture of humanity governed by good and evil, by the principles of religion in the occidental way of thinking. Immediately after that, the chains of religion were completely broken and the humanship went deep enough inside in its psyche to understand that the human being has as much good as evil, as much violence than dearness. What make the difference are the ethic, the evaluation of actions and the assumptions: three concepts that beat the old regime. Those ideas are together and described in the psychoanalysis theories of Freud. Taking it into music, development and elongation of the form and harmony replaced A and B phrases. Nowadays, after the theories of Piaget and cognitive development or Chomsky and the behaviorism we place the knowledge of humanity and culture in another conditions, more scientifics, more external; Gesture and articulation, in music.

2.3 Simplicity or complexity

Going further into the development of interpretation we can easily contrast two different ways of approaching music that musicians adopt. These are an intuitive or an analytic way. We could classify them also as simple or complex; the simple one is better related to the intuitive way of performing. This means interpretation according to rules learnt as part of an academic music education, with rules based on a chronological approach of music and the quite common emphasis on romantic and classical music.

Great interpretation, as the "big" public understands it is generally of the fiery and romantic type. Since so much of the music we hear publicly performed comes from the romantic period, many performers are forced to adopt the manner, even though they may not be born to it. But the true romantic -the interpreter who creates an impression of giving himself in an uninhibited way- has great power over audiences everywhere. I am now thinking in terms of real thing...On the other hand, the performer who is deeply moved, and who without a shadow of embarrassment can openly appeal to what is warmest and most human in man's psyche, and who in a sense exhibits himself in this state of vibrant sympathy before the glazed stare of a large and heterogeneous crowd- that is the performer who really communicates with an audience and who usually wins the loudest plaudits.

(Schwartz et al 1998 p.155)

The intuitive way is clearly related to the body, which is indeed related to gesture. The impulse comes from the body motion and the phrasing is learnt during extremely hard practice sessions over cadenza passages (for example when we are confronting a solo clarinet piece). While, on the other hand, the intellectual approach to music consists of setting a new panorama for the evaluation of the piece. That means finding out sources for performing. It should be of great help to find the aesthetic where the author and the piece are framed. Then, the primary structure and consequently the underlying ideas in the score. Imagining first the way the clarinet should sound in the piece. How the voice is lead to express the aims of the composer himself.

At this point I can hear the querulous pro performer asking: But is there only one way of reading a piece of music? Aren't divergent readings of the same music possible? Most certainly they are. As a composer I should like to think that any one of my works is capable of being read in several ways. Otherwise a work might be said to lack richness of meaning. But.... it must be read within the frame of reference that is true for the composers period and individual personality.

(Schwartz et al 1998 p.153)

To sum up, a deep review of the concepts of interpretation should definitely be done before approaching a new kind of music. This statement involves complexity from the point of view that we have to dive into a new lexical environment in order to adapt ourselves for different rules. Simplicity, on the other hand, is required when performing. Simplicity of a beautiful handicraft, in which the player without any embarrassment to himself places, his soul in connection with the thoughts of the composer during the time of composition. This

fact, seemingly to be an extremely complex connection, should be presented in the simplest way. It is, in fact, a task impossible to hold, impossible to catch; the only task in our hands is to set the basis for the emotion to occur, and then to flow in the stream. That is the main point of music, to provide an effective communication and that, should keep the purpose safe.

2.5 Previous knowledge versus intuition

Pierce defined intuitionism as the claim that we have cognitions of objects outside of consciousness and uninfluenced by previous cognitions, and that we know, intuitively, that we have such knowledge independently of the influence of any previous knowledge.

(Pierce et al 1993 p. 48)

In disagreement with the quotation above, we could propose that music is mostly based on tradition. Music, represented on a piece, written to be performed several times, represents a tradition in itself. The reproduction of the sounds again and again makes it sure that music is alive, when played, but extremely dependent on a preterit time, the time it was composed. Also, our first contact with music is produced in the simplest homophony, by the traditional songs of our mothers. From then on, music knowledge builds up over time. Music has become so complex that it is not easy to understand. Once again, and apart from the extreme complexity of concepts and writing, our education is basically focused on 19th century music, and we scarcely know the music of 20th century, and even less, the 21st century music. Previous knowledge is a fantastic tool in order to approach music. Considering the evolutionary line that is surpassing us right now. Music has to be listened to, with the roots of our souls, with the most primitive meaning. To access that state of mind, it is of great importance to approach the music considering the evolutionary line, recognizing that 19th century aesthetics were buried a long time ago, but still represent the peak of musical expression. Besides, intuition can be seen as a careless way of approaching music. Intuition is also basic in music. The best players combine a mixture of deep knowledge and careless approach to their activity providing them with a genuine touch in the music. I consider intuition an invaluable tool to show music in the most natural way, to provide the audience with the easiest message, a message connected to their feelings and codified in an extremely complex language that the performer has been deciphering during his/her learning period.

As an example, one of the most outstanding stars of clarinet performance nowadays, Martin Fröst, seems to do the freshest interpretations you could ever listen to. He does, in

fact, an extremely detailed plan on how he is going to play the music; he has studied down to the smallest detail, such as the points as which to use circular breathing at the last tone of Nielsen's clarinet concerto. You might notice it from the first row of the concert hall, but you will never notice it from the fourth row, that is something mysterious about interpreters like him. A perfect blend of deep study presented in the most intuitive way.

2.6 Previous study

We have already set up the basis of previous knowledge and intuition; two facts related to approach the musical language and expression. Now, when we consider previous study, we mean the time before the clarinet is ready to be played. I should call previous study the time when the sheet music is held in our hands in order to evaluate it. We look at it and set the basics of interpretation, we try to imagine sounds and build a structure of musical development. We try to look at it from above as a kind of city in which we must drive from one point to another in the most efficient way. We look at it and we feel when the climatic points must be reached. So first, we relate the notes to our knowledge of structures and interpretation; then we relate the music to ourselves, with our own capacities, abilities and possibilities. We try to find those spots where we will need to prepare ourselves physically due to their difficulty. So, we select them and we work on them in the best way possible.

A second general characteristic of effective practise is that it involves setting and meeting specific goals. Neuhaus (1973) describes an incident in which Sviatslav Richter reported that he had repeated one difficult passage of 10 bars over 100 times and recommends.

You have to put the kettle on the stove and not take it off until it boils.... Mastering the art of working, of learning compositions is characterized by an unwavering determination and an ability not to waste time. The greater part...played by willpower (going straight for the goal)... the better the result.

This is why students are generally urged to work on a piece initially in small segments. Limiting the number of problems to be dealt with makes it possible to focus attention on a small number of problems and solve them, mastering the passage once instead of returning to it time and time again.

(Williamon 2004 p.26)

After that the building process is finished and the intervention of previous knowledge

and intuition will start to determine the shape of the piece according to all the advantages and disadvantages that we have described before.

This chapter can be applied to every period of music. However, it is mainly applicable to contemporary music because it requires the development of new abilities and is more difficult to learn, according to our educational background.

2.7 Supervising

According to the Cambridge dictionary supervise means *to watch a person or activity to make certain that everything is done correctly, safely, etc.*

Musicians very often need to listen to what we produce. It is quite often that we are working so much into detail that it becomes very difficult to put ourselves aside in order to judge our own product. Sometimes we play for others in order to test ourselves in a stressful situation or to confirm the impressions we would like to give in our music. Supervising is a constant activity among musicians, back and forth; supervising and being supervised. But when playing contemporary music, where can we find good advice and honest opinions?

On one hand, we can find someone who is into the piece, the style or the composer, someone with a wide and contrasting experience of the piece or of similar music. Sometimes it can be quite difficult to find a person qualified enough. Never mind if what you are playing is the work of a living composer, it could be interesting to write him, to ask him your questions and, if he or she is around, to play for him. He or she will probably be very grateful that someone is playing his music and setting the foundation of interpretation. Of course, he will discuss certain aspects that are in fact the matter of the music, the agreements and disagreements on aesthetics.

On the other hand, we can choose a person with interest in music or performing arts, who can provide us with a view on the interpretational facts, about the results of our understanding of the piece and how we participate in it. To sum up: how the result is projected into the audience. Setting distance from the instrumental aspects can provide us with many tools for interpretation; either to confirm our impressions or to change our procedures. Nonetheless, the supervisor should be someone of extreme confidence and whose knowledge we can trust. When talking about contemporary music, the impression of the interpretation can vary from indifference to great excitement and enthusiasm. We should be

extremely careful and choose someone whose opinion we can rely on. Finally some other aspects such as techniques, in my opinion do not need a comment here, everyone should draw their own conclusions about it.

Very often a non-musician point of view can rebel much of the essence of interpretation. Someone with a cultural or aesthetic taste could very often have the most helpful ear. Considering that our audiences are composed mostly of not musical experts but of rather people interested in the performing arts, the impression could be of bigger value than the severity of the notes or the clarinet techniques. I am not justifying a lazy attitude towards the rigor of the music or the responsibility about the pieces, I assume everyone will face these issues in a mature fashion. I just mean that a pure vision of the music as an art fact, as a living experience of entertainment with a philosophical or aesthetical dimension, is the main way to confront a performance situation.

2.8 Communication versus isolation (when performing)

These are two different performance choices, which we can say to be the two main ways of approaching interpretation on stage. The first one is a communicative attitude towards the audience and the other one is isolation and deep surfing on the structure of music. In this separation I think we should consider the instrument first. For example, the king of the 19th century, the grand piano, seems to be, when not performing chamber music, a piece of furniture in isolation. Players might focus all their concentration on the keyboard and rarely listen to the sounds produced, because they abandon them in order to prepare for the next note. They fly over the music as they do over the keyboard and they try to achieve the next step in a climate of isolation and extreme concentration based on visual activity and proximity with the instrument. They sit down oblique to the audience. As an example, I was attending a concert with maestro Andras Schiff (as mentioned earlier). Then, his attitude towards the audience was one of no contact at all with the approximately one thousand people in the hall. He showed his respect for the audience and then built his bubble in front of the piano. He played as a maestro and showed the structures and lead the audience to ecstasies in certain points, but honestly the result could have been better from the performance point of view. His attitude towards those who applauded his interpretation was, as it seemed, bored and apparently not very involved and compromised with the music. But he certainly was with the music. From my point of view it showed a wrong balance between the concentration and the purity of

music itself. On the other hand, he seemed to abandon himself in favour of the shining of music and the compositions; he seemed not to think about himself but was just as a media for the music, lowering his role as an individual in favour of the music. His focus lay mostly in the world of sounds, which flew from the piano.

For contrast, we will use Martin Fröst as an example. We will start by mentioning the conditions that the instrument set. Clarinet is played in front of the audience and normally without notes to provide interpretation with no barriers. The music can light the hall without impediment and the performer can be completely opened to his/her audience. This requires a personality ready for it. The musician is tremendously exposed; in other words, he is naked with his clarinet and his abilities in front of the audience. There is nothing to hold or nothing to look at; basically it is he and his charisma. In that sense, Martin Fröst after a fresh interpretation of Mozart's *clarinet Concerto*, did an improvisation as an encore. From his performance one can perceive two directions of communication: One goes directly to the audience and tries to reflect the most brilliant moments of the score, it is reflected physically or as a walk through the finest resources of his technique. The other direction goes to the musicians on stage. His amazing knowledge of the music and the piece allows him to communicate with the orchestra. He knows exactly when they should emphasise, speed up, slow down, hold a tone longer or keep tight with the soloist. When this sort of communication occurs it results in amazingly brilliant moments of musical interpretation both for the audience and the orchestra.

After the concerto, as we said before, he played a solo encore. He improvised on a tone. This improvisation showed the extent of his technique and musical taste, resulting in a charming mixture. His body language showed very much of his music, accompanied every musical gesture according to its character or importance. Using this as a tool, he managed to hold the attention of the audience and made them feel like part of his personal music.

That is probably the difference of the two examples, one provides the music to the audience and they must be aware and concerned with its importance and internal language, the other one shows the music as a personal view, he puts himself over it, with great respect to it, but also leading everyone else into his game of sounds.

2.9 Value of the piece versus value of the interpretation

After performing a new piece of music, several judgments will be made, for sure. The first judgment starts with oneself. But everyone in the audience is going to judge unless you give them some minutes of joy, peace, sorrow, terror, excitement or relaxation. It is all about producing an impression of reading the music as a sequence of living feelings, then they will be drawn into your world and you can share with the audience the most beautiful lines of your production as a transmission of certainties, global vision and study. This is what interpretation is about.

Furthermore, premiering a piece is a different question. In this case not only your interpretation will be judged, but also the piece itself will be judged. Both verdicts will be fine and correct, and we as interpreters will assume both equally. We can consider that the composer should take care of his part, but if we consider that we, freely, chose the music to play, then, if it is not correctly judged, it should be because something has gone wrong during the study or the performance process. We assume that the success or the failure of the piece itself is something that belongs to us as much as it belongs to the composer in the moment of interpretation. This is a fact and this is the most responsible attitude towards it.

Both are equally important and we should be aware of our importance as interpreters too. Composers know that without interpreters there is no music, paper and notes do not make the music, music is made by the possibility of sound. Music belongs to the instant and consequently music belongs to interpretation, and creation, belongs to musicians, composers and the audience too.

Let's illustrate with an example taken from "The Guardian" newspaper in its review of Martin Fröst and the Göteborg Symphony orchestra in Royal Albert Hall in London about *Peacock Tales* by Anders Hillborg.

...Martin Fröst isn't just a knock-out clarinetist, he's an accomplished mime, too. Masked and unmasked like some capricious imp, he balletically twitched and twirled his way through the piece as though he were there both to play and to sabotage it. His clarinet was brandished like an additional limb emitting banshee-like pyrotechnics on a zillion glissandi. On a couple of occasions, Fröst's Petrushka-like alter ego blocked his ears in protest. I can't say I blamed him. Without the performance element, musical interest would never have sustained 30 minutes.

(The Guardian, August 15th, 2008)

Here you can say that most of the glory goes to the performer, without taking into account that both the composer and the player are responsible for the development of this piece. The acting is previously agreed, so they make a mistake of valuing the music without its theatrical part. But indeed it is of extreme justice to elevate Martin Fröst to the main element of the performance. Probably there is no other like him with such a full range of acting and playing the clarinet, no one could ever reach the intensity of his interpretation, but it is true as well, that he could not develop himself in a new dimension without the piece and the hands that wrote it.

2.10 Responsibility to the composer, the audience, oneself, and the tradition

The Saint-Simonian movement somehow managed to convey to these six musicians (and even more powerfully to David and the other "member" musicians) that art, too, must be transformed, must do more than amuse the privileged classes. There can be few precedents, especially in France (where the status of a musician was perhaps lower even than in England or Germany), for Liszt's remarkable essays on the demeaning social position of the artist or for Nourrit's willingness to proclaim his feeling about the need to restore music-dramatic integrity and moral power to the operatic stage. Even Nourrit's headier vision, and Berlioz's, marks a new willingness on the part of musicians to take responsibility for their art and its relationship to its audience. Like the best teachers in any age, the Saint-Simonians caused many musicians to reflect on great matters -artistic and social- and to clarify his own position. It was not the least of their many achievements.

(Locke 1986 pag.122)

This text illustrates the responsibilities that were transferred to music after the 19th century, and it is of great importance to understand our responsibility as interpreters and our responsibility to the composers in particular. Some people, at the time, considered music as a tool for social reflection. These views made changes to the vision of music as a pure fact of amusement and joy for the privileged classes. Which was its main function during the 18th century, or as a religious offering, as in the example of Bach, who devoted his music to God. So in the 19th century a new model started to be found. New society, which was more concerned with the importance of a single human being considered as an individual bunch of desires, rights, obligations and opinions, needed a new kind of music to please the spirit. Possibly from then on we could appreciate music as an art and not merely as an art craft. The

intentions of the music became more realistic (in the sense that it tries to bring the reality closer) and the resources of a musical language were used as a tool for reflecting the conflicts of humanity. This makes a big difference from the previous model, one more focused in the process and the present composer situation.

But nowadays, the responsibility towards the composer should be understood in a different way. The music writing has evolved so much that the notes are written very precisely. The demands of composers are written down to the last bit of his/her will. That means that every convention in interpretation has to be forgotten: the new language of a certain composer demands just reading. This involves an extensive knowledge of the composer's circumstances and some familiarity with his musical language.

The work-performance relation can be conceived as a one-many relationship between types and their tokens. Performances are spatiotemporally delimited events; works are abstract entities. Though made by human beings, works seem not quite of this world. They share theoretical space with patterns, structures, designs, theories, schemas and other abstracta. Some regard works as autonomous fixed entities, particularly after the death of the composer. What sort of fixity is this?...One may always revisit the work, the contents of which are definitely determined by its author operating in a precise context of creation².

(Godlovitch 1983 p.85)

What responsibility do we have to the audience? On the one hand we should please the audience although this could be in conflict with strict music reading. Audience could be moved by two aspects: 1) the honesty of playing, the immersion and involvement of the performer, and 2) spectacularity, a broad communication road between audience and interpreter and also showmanship from the player; these aspects are both equally respectable. I do not think there is much to be worried about in relation to the contact with the audience, with all the conditions and explanations we have been giving through this research it should be enough to understand the importance of expression and fidelity. Throughout for example, when performing a new piece of music it can be of extreme help for the audience to be introduced to the topic or the conditions in a brief explanation. That could be done by means of paper or speech.

The responsibility against oneself is based on considering the privilege that we have when we have the opportunity to perform pieces in front of an audience, that we have chosen

² From the original source: See Levinson. "What a Musical Work Is", *Journal of Philosophy*, 1980, vol 77, pp. 5-28.

and that we have had the opportunity to work on with the composer. That is extremely more powerful; even more than the proper ego.

There is no responsibility against the tradition when talking about contemporary music. Music is just happening now. By the time you have realised a sound it is gone. If you try to think in advance to the next tone, you will find emptiness. New music just place us in a field of intellectual uncertainties.

B. Brunner-Lachenmann: A case approach³

3. A case approach: Eduard Brunner and Helmut Lachenmann⁴



Lachenmann and Eduard Brunner represent the continuation on the genuine tradition of composers and interpretation. Lachenmann and Brunner established contact through the interpretation of *Trio Fluido*, although Lachenmann was known for Brunner as probably, Brunner was for Lachenmann too. Their relation is based on mutual interest about pushing the frontiers of music further, finding new possibilities of expand the expressive language of the music and concretely the clarinet. The curiosity and open mindness of Brunner allowed him to approach various composers as Gubaidulina, Sacher, Denisov, Francaix and Lachenmann.

³ This chapter is based on interviews hold during years 2010,2011 at Reina Sofia Music Superior Center in Madrid.

⁴ Chapter 3.3 is a transcription of the interview, where Q is Antonio Galindo and A is Eduard Brunner. In chapter 3.4 and 3.5 we can find a edited transcription of Brunner's speech without questions.

Lachenmann is a composer based in Germany who has been stimulated from Italian sources, having Nono as one of his main references. Lachenmann is the owner of a musical language that has surpassed time and styles. He handcrafted his music dealing and using the resources and fashions of his time, as electronics, tapes, multiphonics, etc. However, he is mostly characterized by his language of pureness of musical expression through music, and reflected on the will and process that occur while a pure sound is trying to be achieved. His will and originality find their roots in the intention of the musician, the contact with his/her instrument and the contact of the different parts of the instrument -far from tradition in the sound production, close to tradition in musical deciphering-. Some other composers as Sciarrino have been using his ideas of sound.

3.1 Eduard Brunner⁵

Eduard Brunner was born in Basel in 1939. From an early age he was in contact with music. The music tradition in his family came from his grandfather, a music editor in Poland. In fact, it was his mother and grandmother, both piano teachers, who influenced him strongly. Brunner really appreciated music although he did not like the piano. During Brunner's childhood, the atmosphere was extremely heavy in Switzerland due to the Second World War and even though Switzerland was neutral, it was easy to appreciate the violent and sorrowful atmosphere. Eventually that did not help, at all, on anything related to music. Brunner's favourite instrument was the trumpet; he was really in love with it but unfortunately, due to health problems, small size, and complexion as a child, he was unable to continue with the instrument. Nevertheless, he is nowadays very satisfied with the clarinet and with his career playing a more demanding instrument with a richer repertoire.

Eduard Brunner has always been extremely skilled in music. It was very simple for him to sing in tune, to repeat melodies on the piano as well as to read notes. His first instrument, apart from the afore mentioned piano, was the recorder. His skills allowed him to easily learn it reasonably well (due to the limitations of the instrument), of course among any other child possibilities. As a consequence in school he was many times kicked out of the room in school because he only wanted to make jokes during the music lessons.

⁵ This biography is based on the interviews hold and tries to reflect his own testimony as trully as posible.²³

At the age of nine and thanks to the advice of a friend of his parents, Jean Paul Janz (clarinet and viola player in the Basel orchestra), he started to play the clarinet. It was he who gave Brunner his first lessons: “Janz was a very good musician and a extremely smart man. Some years after he even published a book about Nietzsche”.

His skills in music and clarinet playing allowed him to offer recitals and concerts in schools or for family and friends. Already at the age of ten, at his father’s birthday party –they were born on the same day- he played the *Kegelstatt Trio* by Mozart with his mother and Janz. Related to this moment, he remembers a concert on his sixty years birthday with V. Lobanov and Yuri Bashmet; “It was at Festival Kreutz together with Vassily and Yuri, then it came to my mind the same piece when I was ten, fifty years ago, and I still did not know the music well enough”.

Thanks to his quick development and the positive musical environment Eduard Brunner soon started to have relationships with composers and players of a consistent level. At the age of twelve he played *Capriccio* of H. Suttermeister in first performance. That was his début with a composer and a contemporary piece. At the age of fifteen he started at the Basel Conservatory. He really does not have so many memories from this period of time, apart from the contact with other musicians and specially composers; there were also some interesting teachers at that time in Switzerland. On the other hand, his clarinet teacher Oswaldo Mengassini, former clarinet at Scala Opera Theater, was not very interesting, just aware of easy virtuoso way of playing. It took Brunner only three years to obtain all the possible degrees at the Basel Conservatory.

By that time Brunner was eighteen and he admired the english clarinet player Kell. England was at the time a very nice place to study, but unfortunately before Brunner was able to make up his mind, Kell moved to United States. For his modest family it was impossible to face the possibility of study there. Instead, Brunner decided to go to Paris, one of the main centres for clarinet and for music in Europe. There, he established a closer relationship with Heinz Holliger although they already knew each other from the time in Basel. His teacher was Louis Cahuzac; Cahuzac was, in fact, one of the prominent clarinet performers who even worked together with Igor Stravinsky. Brunner really appreciates this period and Cahuzac’s advice, patience and dedication. Paris gave him the chance to meet and share activity with the best among European musicians. He says himself:

“I was one of the last students of Louis Cahuzac and I was a perfect copy of him so I was considered the best student he ever had. Unfortunately, Louis suffered an accident with

his motorbike so he was unable to play clarinet and move his fingers properly. The other way round I was very lucky, because from then on, I started to play with the best musicians of the time such as Beck Quartet, Paul Baumgartner, Rita Straigh and the Lucern Festival where I met Paul Sacher and Hindemith... It was one of the biggest opportunities that life have given to me.”

Paris, together with London, was the European centre for music so a lot of opportunities for performing and premièring arose. Consequently composers from Switzerland, most of them old friends and teachers from Basel, dedicated works to him sending many pieces for première in Paris. On the other hand, at the age of 19, he started to play with the Basel Symphony Orchestra as a professional musician. However, it was not a good atmosphere for him because other musicians still looked at him as a child. Four years later he won the audition in the Bremen orchestra and he jumped there for some months, right before being called by the Bayerisches Rundfunk and its main conductor Rafael Kubelik. In



this orchestra, one of the leading orchestras in the world, he was appointed for 30 years and shared stands with the best musicians, conductors, and soloist of the time.

The orchestra gave Brunner a big chance to learn symphonic repertoire, solo repertoire and chamber music as well. During those thirty years he recorded the entire classic solo repertoire for the clarinet and the new compositions made at the time. During this period his agenda was covered with eighty to one hundred concerts a year. Regarding chamber music, he played with extremely famous quartets such as, the Borodin, Amadeus, Arditi and Emerson as well as with musicians such as Gidon Kremer, Holliger, Oleg Kagan, Natalia Gutman and Alfred Brendel among others, and participated in festivals such as Lockenhaus, Varsovia Autumn and Schleswig Holstein. It was then when Brunner was the first wind performer to be able to play with musicians from the eastern Europe, concretely, the role of Oleg Kagan was fundamental. He convinced the authorities to let Brunner travel to Russia. It showed the first synthoms of the flexibility and weekness that started to occur in Russia before the disolution of USSR. Once again, art was facing social issues before anything else.

His position as first clarinet and his projection and immediate rise as a solo clarinettist, plus his interest in contemporary music allowed him to get in touch with composers such as

Lachemann, Denisov, Yun, Boulez, Françaix, Gubaidulina, Sacher, Hindemith, Britten, etc. He has kept these relationships through the years.

His activity as a teacher before 1992 –when he started in Saarbrücken- was based on master-classes in different countries, from China to Japan or USA, and of course, in most of the European countries. Germany was the country where Brunner developed most of his career and where he still lives nowadays. He has also organized and advised music festivals such as Hitzadras, Kreuth, Saarbrücken and others in Switzerland.

For the time being he keeps on intensely active, with performing and teaching –he retired from Bayerisches Rundfunk in 1993. His interest in contemporary music and chamber music is completely alive. He teaches in Reina Sofia Superior School in Madrid and in master-classes all over the world (Marlborough, Prague, Schleswig-Holstein, and Weimar).

3.2 Helmut Lachenmann

Helmut Lachenmann was born into a Protestant family on November the 27th, 1935. Consequently, his first musical contact was located in the church from listening to choir singing during the mass. The sound of the organ has always been really intriguing to him. His first encounter with composed music was through Orlando di Lasso, Heinrich Schütz, and other pre-Bach era composers while singing in the choir. Not long after, he started with his own composing, writing huge sized music, including a symphony. Most of his early works are lost. Between 1955 and 1958 he studied composition with Johann Nepomuk David and piano with Jürgen Uhde at the Stuttgart Musikhochschule. Those years were very conservative and academic that found continuation in the nest of Darmstadt, where he went for the first time in 1957. There he found his mentor, Luigi Nono, probably the only composer who embraced the past during the era of serialism.

Lachenmann was the first private student Nono had, working beside him from 1958 to 1959 in Venice. Later on, he got in touch with Alfons Kontarsky, Henri Posseur, Frederi Rzewsky and Karlheinz Stockhausen in Köln during 1963 and 1964. At this time, his contact with the percussion players Christoph Caskel and Michael W. Ranta was of great importance . Its impact is still noticeable in his music.

To continue with this portrait and to set a clearer picture of the complexity of

Lachenmann, I would like to insert some texts of his own and of important musicologist or people who are sensitive to his aesthetic:

When Lachenmann creates a sound particularly irritating and original throughout different instruments, he knows that to produce it should first convince the best musician to shed the achievements of tradition his conservative virtues and his own discipline to produce completely different sounds from normal ones.

...we are not opposite to a hermetic or isolated creator, refugee in the abstraction. His music is not meant to be difficult, is just the intellectual conditions in which is produced: in a society of a absolutely profanity based on commercial relationship who looks suspicious to the artistic sfera. After all, none of us live in the Johann Sebastian Bach`s world, when music was just composed to please God.

(Edgar Reitz, "music, game, interpretation spirit")

We are thus today once again faced with the task of bringing art "to safety", even if the word "safety" may initially give us a start.

My –severely reductive- definition would be as follows: art –as it defines itself for us today within the European historical context- is a form of magic broken in and with spirit, broken in the name of a creative will that is increasingly realising its autonomous purpose, and accordingly reacting to the reality it constantly recognises anew. (Unquestionably, such a definition directly opposes the role afforded to art by society as a service-object, whether intensively or superficially employed- even in those contexts where it is granted an autonomous status).

(Lachenmann et al. 2004 p.56)

My three thesis on composing – which I here consciously present, not for the first time, as metaphors – are:

- Composing means: reflecting upon music.
- Composing means: building an instrument
- Composing does not mean "letting oneself go", but rather "letting oneself come"

(Lachenmann et al. 2004 p.56)

Pieces of Helmut Lachemann for clarinet

- *Trio fluido* (viola, marimba and clarinet) 1966
- *Dal Niente -Interieur III-* (solo clarinet). Dedicated to Eduard Brunner 1968
- *Accanto* (clarinet, tape and orchestra) 1975/76. For Eduard Brunner
- *Allegro sostenuto* (clarinet, cello y piano) 1987/88 For Eduard Brunner

Komponist	Werk	Verlag	Jahr	USA
Peter Ades	Quintett f. Klar. u. Str. 9u.	Eigen	1978	*
Peter Ades	Einklangsfraude Kl + Pfl	Bote u. Bode	1985	*
Frank Michael Bayes	Quintett f. Kl + Str. 9u.	Bote u. Bode	1977	*
Augustin Blod	Quintett f. Kl. + Str. 9u.	Sonoton	1985	*
Conrad Beut	Konzert f. Kl. + Ord.	Schott	1908	*
Edison Denisov	Konzert f. Kl. u. Ord.	Sikorski	1980	*
Edison Denisov	Quintett f. Kl. u. Str. 9u.	Sikorski	1987	*
Peter Esch	Pièce p. Clar. Solo	Eigen	1959	*
Jean François	Quintett f. Klar. u. Str. 9u.	Schott	1977	*
Jean François	Tema con Variationen Version Klar. + 11 Str. 9u.	Schott	1978	*
Sofia Gubonidolina	Quintett f. Kl. u. Str. 9u. ^{5 Sopran} Ein Cello ohne Streicher	Sikorski	1985	*
Gisa Kantaheli	"Rhapsodie" Klar. + Ord.	Sikorski	1991	
Rudolf Kelterborn	Quintett f. Klar. + Str.	Bärenreiter	1966	*
Rudolf Kelterborn	Vier Stücke Kl + Pfl	Bote + Bode	1970	*
Peter Kirsevaltes	Solostück	Eigen		*
Helmut Lachemann	Interieur III "dolce" u. "a"	Breitkopf u. Härtel	1976	*
Helmut Lachemann	Accanto f. Kl. + Ord.	"	1979	*
Helmut Lachemann	Allegro sostenuto f. Kl. + Pfl	"	1988	*
Cassidy Lobanov	Sonate op. 45 f. Kl. + Pfl	Sikorski	1988	*
Cassidy Lobanov	Beschwörung op. 52 Kl + Pfl	Sikorski	1989	*

3.3 About Dal niente: Encounter

Q- As far as I know Lachemann and you were working together...Where and why did you get to know each other?

A- The first Lachemann piece was *Trio fluido*. Later on, I cannot remember if it was his idea or mine to make a clarinet solo piece. At the time he had composed *Interieur I and II*. The first is for solo percussion and the second is for cello alone, pressure. The third would be for clarinet. It probably is the most revolutionary in its writing and sounding.

Q- *You got to know each other in 1968, did you know something about his works before?*

A- He was also living in Munich and we knew each other from the musical environment, however, our first meeting was after *Trio fluido*. I did not know his work; at the time he was unknown. I think it was after *Trio fluido* that his work was recognized and his fame started to grow -always on the scandalous side-. I remember a concert playing *Accanto*, it was a great success, it was unexpected, before it was rarely applauded. This concert I am talking about was in Metz. The day after we played in Paris, and suddenly it was a success. His success was settled with his opera.

Q- *What could you tell me about his repertoire for clarinet? Trio fluido, dal niente, accanto, allegro sostenuto...*

A- *Dal niente* and *Accanto*...the writing seems to be extremely complicated but once it is understood they are as simple as a Haydn symphony. The underlying idea is the photo negative. At the beginning there is nothing before the sound comes, before it develops. Scales are normal but shaped only with air or a very thin veiling of sound. The piece should be read as traditional music but with a completely different concept of sound.

Both *Accanto* and *Dal niente* -although specially the first- are very extreme and represent a revolution in relation with sonority, but their structure is basically traditional. The clarinet part in *Trio fluido* is basically composed on a traditional treatment of sound, not as in the piano part where he evolves his language, pointing towards the revolution of his next piano concerto. Along his oeuvre with focus on his clarinet pieces, his language is unpredictable from piece to piece; every one is treated differently, indeed. From my point of view he touched an extreme with *Accanto* and as a consequence, he changed his orchestral language. After that he also changed for the clarinet, with *Allegro sostenuto*. We talked about a quintet, but that is not yet composed and I think he has stopped composing. I am very sad about it.

Q- *How was the creative process?*

A- He had a very clear picture of what he wanted when he composed. He played cello himself so was able to make every kind of experience himself one string instrument, but not for the winds. He normally asked me for probes in clarinet. He had a very clear picture of the sound and the shape, he just asked me about the realisation.

3.4 Compositional process

“As I already explained to you, he had a clear picture of what he wanted and asked me about the possibilities to make his idea sound. Lachenmann came with ideas that I had to translate into sound, if possible, and after making it I would explain to him the physical process. Sometimes what was first considered a mistake would turn into resources I had to develop so they could become reproducible. For example at the beginning in *dal niente* he wanted to develop the expressive feeling in the band of sound between sound and no sound, so to say, its production. That is the reason why he could not compose for oboe or fagot. Helmut was fascinated with the sound production process, and oboe and bassoon are direct. Due to that interest he became interested in the clarinet.

As you can see, the air is used as a expressive resource, treated as music in the traditional meaning representing a line and traditional writing. In fact he is very explicit about the colour or timbre he wishes for.

During this process, there were some times I thought it was impossible to manage what he wanted. Only infrequently, could we not achieve his idea of sound and not get as deep as he would have liked. Consequently, we had to develop a new thing instead.

On the other hand you may have notice that there are several differences between my performing version and the pressed edition. I think he made some changes because this piece had been played and some performers may have complained about. I do not think it is right what he did; it does not improve the piece. Fortunately, I told him and next edition will be the original one, the one we developed together.

The composition process was as follows: generally, he came with many questions that I had to write down and make into sound. After, he composed many exercises before writing the pieces – I do have at home many of those examples-. They are studies full of ideas, maybe in the same way Beethoven did. Some of them showed music notation, other just words on what he wanted to listen. On the other hand, rhythm or tempo are not very important in this piece of music; it has a good rhythm set, but not in the complexity of Stravinsky or other composers. Rhythm is subordinated to sound. We did not work on every step of the composition; he just gave me small examples. I worked on them and sent him a recording. He composed on agreement with this material. For example, for his opera he had to write examples of what he wanted from the sound and the orchestra. The distribution of the orchestra and the management of groups made it difficult to play in the first attempt.

During the time between premiering every piece, I played them many times. *Accanto* was normally very difficult to play for the orchestra, so Lachenmann used to come with us to give the conductor and the orchestra very clear instructions. He came and let them know how the music should be played and helped them with the mind opening process involved in the disjointment from the tradition. Furthermore, the reasonable amount of years between the different works is due to the thorough process that Lachenmann used for his compositions. If I do not remember wrong we started to work on *Dal niente* one year before I premiered it, so 1969.

Definitely, the aspect I admire most from Helmut Lachenmann is that even if he could have gone into a music laboratory and use electronics as many of his contemporaries did, he refused to do it and instead worked with the human involvement, considering it as the main part of the art of music making and listening to music. Consequently, his music is always human and vital."

3.5 Interpretation

"*Dal niente* is a piece I have played several times. And so most of Lachenmann works. It might be around 40 times, *Accanto* 15, and 20 *Allegro sostenuto*. The premiere of *Dal niente* was in Nuremberg in a contemporary music festival. *Trio fluido* in Stuttgart, *Accanto* in Saarbrücken and *Allegro sostenuto* in Köln.

The reaction in the audience is always different. It depends very much if the audience is specialized in contemporary music or if they are profane people. *Dal niente* caused a big impact after premiering it, it was shocking for the audience, but of course, it was a revolution of the clarinet sound and expressive possibilities. *Accanto* has always been controversial, and *Allegro sostenuto* as it is the most conservative, it has always been accepted.

From my point of view it is very important to fit contemporary music into classical recital programs, then, contemporary music is able to trigger the desired effect as a turn in the music tradition. Generally *Dal niente* and *Accanto* are played in a very contemporary environment, in festivals holding that kind of music. Then it happens to be more judgemental in the process and less in the expressive part, that is the main part of the music. People with no prejudices judge the music by the touch they get from it. I remember a concert in Köln, we played *Contrasts* by Bartok, after Oleg Kagan played Schubert's *Fantasy C major* and in the

second half, we played *Allegro sostenuto*. *Dal niente* has been often played in contemporary music recitals. *Accanto* is very often played with Mozart clarinet concerto, but always Mozart first because *Accanto* is really extreme for the embouchure.

Regarding *Dal Niente*, it is not difficult to play live, even if you are not amplified. It can be performed in a small hall. Nevertheless that was the purpose of Lachenmann and his series *Interieurs*; they are not focused on a big audience. The amplification causes a lot of problems because there are places that should be extremely soft so you have to approximate the microphone or come away from it. I have done it in halls with bad acoustics. It was also a matter of fashion, at the time they really liked to amplify everything. However, nowadays it might be better to do it without, people are much more quiet in the concerts and the spirit of the piece can float in the hall. Regarding recordings, I mean this piece is composed to be performed live, otherwise much of its spirit gets lost. Silence cannot be appreciated as a living experience."

Accanto, composed for Eduard Brunner in 1976, was also investigated with regard to pure sound; the *Dal Niente (Interieur III)* by Helmut Lachenmann exploits the range of possibilities contained in the clarinet. The musical line around on sharp curves more serious records and more acute in the beginning, is hidden in the noise variables of colour and only a few moments emerges as pure sound. When sound is produced at that time is cut short by bright accents and counterpoint, for example, later, multiphonics. Lachenmann shows his preference for the side of the shadows, rough textures, sounds the call cut or unlit part of the sound. This ideology could be interpreted as a musical version of Brecht's visual metaphors - "Those that remain invisible in the shadows" - or perhaps only as a sign of scepticism about the established world of convention and the established language sound beautiful. And it is here where the power of musical invention.

Max Nyffeler⁶

⁶ Eduard Brunner: *Dal niente* (ECM New Series 1599). CD Recording

Conclusion

It is becoming extremely important for music to revise itself deeply. It is no longer possible to repeat the Mozart *Symphony n.40* with a row of eight double basses. It does not make sense and it does not respect any of the rules of the music. I guess it respects the market and the taste of the audience that we as musicians are educating incorrectly. With this kind of performance the spirit, the indescribable substance that underlies music and that moves us all is getting lost. It does not even respect the museum culture to which music has condemned itself.

Our contact with music, even for musicians, is just based on a repetition of traditional conventions that are getting distorted by the action of the humans, so distorted that the reviewing of music based on documents and musicologists or great interpreters such as Harnoncourt, are for some reason seen as mad attempts at recovering the past. What is wrong with that? What should be wrong is the extensive vision of music as a romantic invention, music as big as possible, as loud as possible, and with as much audience as possible. We have lost contact with the composers, we have even lost contact with the traditional music of our environment, and of course we have lost proximity with the "intellectual" music.

Music broke its own concept after the WWII. Every meaning of the previous society and organization was re-thought maybe except for music, musicians and musicologists (Mahler time was still to come). Music broke its link to nature. The crash of the twelve-tone system was the consequence of a way with no more possibilities; the music of Strauss sounded so disordered in its aggregation of keys and tonal functions that no more code could almost be found. Then came the twelve-tone system, based on the convention of tempered tuning. Music lost its link with nature, which was the resonance of a string divided in halves, thirds, etc. Every construction and evolution of that issue resulted lost. Then after that, some streams, like spectralism have tried to find the roots and the relation with nature through the physics of the sound as a sequence of harmonics, which has resulted in beautiful products of art, but they are extremely difficult to distinguish for a non-initiate audience and the demands on the instruments require a high level of virtuosity. Other creators chose systems of relating the resulting sounds artificial in their organization, especially when they were composed with the traditional concepts of phrasing and articulation in mind.

The lazy attitude towards actual music, creation and interpretation, together with the museum culture as the only alternative, should come to an end. It should be done through

a different kind of education. It should be done for the big halls, of course, but it should mainly be done with the new generations of musicians. Nowadays it is not only music itself that brings people to the concert house, mostly it is someone who conducts, or plays, something that brings extensive audiences.

In this assignment, *Dal niente* is the main subject of study. Conceived among the serie called *Interieurs* (for percussion, cello and clarinet, in solo role), *Dal niente* is a piece of extreme originality that present the clarinet in a sound dimension never conceived before. Pure in its expression, it should be played for reduced audience and intimate atmosphere. The musician, during the length of the piece, is naked on his/her will to produce sound and all the intermediate processes that take place. Those processes have normally been avoided as a sound activity, but Lachenmann in his originality is using the sound produce of the effort as a resource. We should not ignore that Lachenmann's way of composing, in *Interieurs* serie, has not just an aesthetical perspective, but also a sociological perspective - centred in the released society of the time and the possibilities of the non-dominant layer- and the aesthetical intention –recovering the lost contact between the musician as an entity of whishes and efforts and the listener as a fellow of desires and emotions-.

Besides, *Dal niente*, Eduard Brunner and Helmut Lachenmann relation promote the time line that is surpassing us nowadays. From the beginning of music, human relationships and friendship has been moving composers, musicians, conductors, actors/actress, dancers, painters, poets, to create new challenges, new pieces of art that has lived over centuries or decades. Personal relations have ended in production of masterpieces of art. Instrumentalists have inspired and are inspiring composers to create music for their instruments. They have acted as the first motion to a composition impulse.

In that sense, we can establish, in the clarinet main index of pieces, a clear chronological line that we could start with Mozart and Stadler. Their mutual affiliation to the masonic loggias has provided us with the masterpiece of our repertoire and probably one of the peaks of classical music. On the other hand, not in the same circumstances but in a very different situation was the meeting between Brahms and Mühlfeld: when Brahms already decided to stop composing and retiring at his house by the lake Ischl, he accidentally listened to Mühlfeld, and inspired by his musicianship and sound he decided to restart and compose for the instrument, and, indeed, we do have today his sonatas, trio and quintet; beloved pieces of every clarinet player and peak of romantic expression in Brahms's musical language and a extension of the clarinet expressive possibilities. We do not want to loose the opportunity to

mention, Weber and Baermann; Spohr and Hermstedt or much more recent, Benny Goodman and Aaron Copland.

Finally and returning to the time line, we find a last link in this relationship, that has gone over the years, and will be regarded as important as the others in the future. This is the relation we have been describing above: Brunner and Lachenmann during the creation of *Dal niente*. They have provided the clarinet language with resources that were not explored before them. Both equally contribute to the wideness of musical expression and particularly made a step forward on clarinet literature introducing the instrument into a world of possibilities not affordable for other instruments. It even represents the separation from other woodwind instrument in its originality of sound producing.

In conclusion, both gave us the chance to stretch our repertoire and continue in the tradition of music understood as the art of making sound transcend time, emotions, feelings and borders.

The image shows a musical score for a clarinet piece. At the top, it reads "Für Eduard Brunner" and "Dal niente (Interieur III)". Below this, it says "Helmut Lachenmann, 1970". The score is for "Klar. in B" (Clarinet in Bb). It starts with a tempo marking "♩ = ca. 80" and a first ending bracket. The music is written on a single staff with various notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *f* and *pp*.

References

- Eduard Brunner: Dal niente (ECM New Series 1599). CD Recording
- Lachenmann, Helmut (1970) Dal Niente, BG 866. Breitkopf Edition.
- Godlovitch, Stan (1998) Musical performance. A philosophical study. Edit. Routledge
- Helmut Lachenmann. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helmut_Lachenmann
- Lachenmann, Helmut. Cross, Jonathan. Harvey, Jonathan. Vellmer, Albrecht. Klein, Richard. (2004) *Identity and difference: essays on music, language, and time*. Collected writings of the Orpheus Institute.
- Locke, Ralph P. (1986) *Music, musicians and the Saint-Simonians*. The Chicago Press
- Parncutt, Richard Mc Pherson, Gary. (2002) *The science an psychology of music performance: creative strategies for learning and teaching*. Cambridge University
- Ray Griffin, David. Pierce, James, Bergson, Whitehead and Hartshorne (1993). *Founders of constructive postmodern philosophy*. State University of New York Press
- Reitz, Edgar. articles from: www.diverdi.com
- Schwartz, Elliott. Childs, Barney. Fox, James. (1998) *Contemporary composers on contemporary music*. Da capo press
- Andrew Clements (2008) "Prom 37. Gothenburg SO/Dudamel. Royal Albert Hall, London". The Guardian
- Williamon, Aaron (2004) *Musical excellence*. Oxford University Press

Index of pictures

Picture 1 (p.22): Eduard Brunner (left) and Helmut Lachenmann.

Picture 2 (p.25): Eduard Brunner with Russians composers including Denisov (2nd from left)

Picture 3 (p.28): Pieces commissioned for/to Eduard Brunner (including Lachenmann works)

Picture 4 (p.35): Dal niente score. Bretikopft and Härtel

Acknowledgments

This research was developed with funds from the Margit and Folke Pehrzon Foundation.

This thesis has been awarded first prize in European Clarinet Association research competition sponsored by "Rohrblatt".

