

# Choreography

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The particular significance of what a player does and how they do it, how they place a finger on their instrument, leads me to what I call 'choreography.'

Choreography does not just mean that I'm thinking about the presence of the player in the performance venue, the venue itself, and the concert situation: where someone plays and someone listens. It's primarily a term (a metaphor) for a structural principle: when, for instance, a violinist places their first, then second, then third finger down next to each other on the fingerboard, this is a movement in space, even if the space is only a few centimeters long.

Another example: in *Verkündigung*, the harmonic language of the wind instruments develops out of their fingerings: specifically, out of the tension between the open (all keys are open) and the closed (all keys are closed) instrument. The length of the air column becomes the decisive factor in determining the quality of the resultant noises. On a saxophone, for instance, the shortest air column produces a C-sharp, the closed a B-flat; this is at once a harmonic and a spatial reference system. The spatial movement of the finger on the instrument generates an equivalent in terms of a scale of noises or pitches: I mean no more or less than this by "choreography."

And yet this is considerably different from result-oriented thinking: where a pitch is specified, but the player has a certain freedom in how to realize it.

If, for example, a particular fingering of a harmonic is more important to me than the resultant pitch, this has nothing to do with the result being arbitrary. Notating a pitch is by no means the same as having an exact idea of a sound. To me, a fingering on the violin has much more individuality than a pitch (which I can produce with various fingerings), but this is easily overlooked within the traditional harmonic framework. A fingering is always recognizable, regardless of which of its sonic possibilities are manifest themselves ("speak") in a given moment.

It's really about the opposite of openness and randomness. It's about coming closer and closer to the object. An approach which holds certain mysteries: if I look at a person from a distance of a few meters, the sentence, "I see a person" holds true. But if I go so

close that I can clearly see the pores of their skin before my eyes, so close that one of their body parts fills my entire field of vision, the sentence isn't quite right anymore. It doesn't really fit.

Another example, and - I think - a true parallel: in classical physics, a meter is a meter (just as a note is a note in classical music); whereas in quantum physics (perhaps we should talk about "quantum music" as a parallel?): there is the phenomenon whereby, when one comes close enough to an object, the object is no longer what it seemed to be. Under certain circumstances, it disappears completely, or at least takes on multiple possibilities for interpretation. At a certain degree of precision, everything becomes polyvalent; an increase in precision is polyvalence.

Wave-particle dualism corresponds to the dualism of quantitative and qualitative descriptions of music, of the notation of results and the notation of actions, of objective and subjective writing. Thus we have a choice: deciding between one or the other, or oscillating. This 'oscillation', along with an ever-sharpening conception of the two sides' incompatibility, determines my work. *Verkündigung*, for instance, stays wholly on one side, that of notating the action, composing solely based on subjective production mechanisms of the performer.

It's a matter of contrasting the exact prescription of a result (without an exact knowledge of or possibility for influencing the ways and means of sound production) and the description of what is to be done (without being able to pinpoint the result). It's a matter of the dualism of quantitative and qualitative descriptions of music.

The concept of choreography belongs to the qualitative type of description. But to be more precise, it is dualism itself that interests me here. The collision of irreconcilables: irreconcilable musical attitudes, irreconcilable modes of writing, irreconcilable ideas.

The parallel to quantum physics continues here. In quantum physics, one refers to "observer participation." This means that the observer becomes part of the whole, part of the observable process. Above all, it means that it's impossible to make any statement about a process without intervening in it. This is tantamount to saying that the observer changes - or, in a certain way, creates! - the observed.