

THE MYSTERIES OF CREATIVITY

Original article

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Perforemer as a Thinker: on the Problem of Interpretation and Reinterpretation

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Abstract. This article raises the question of the criteria of the performer's mastery, which firstly implies actualization of dialogical interaction with the composer, secondly binding collaboration on the side of both the musician and the listener, the latter being a partner in a creative act of the kind. Finally, the artist engaged in musical performance is to be a thinker since music is not only expressed at the speech level but also at the level of mentality. It is proved that provision of the above three conditions only can enable the performer to carry hardcore music lovers with singularity and distinct identity of his own rendition of the score. It is also stated that one of the effective methods of work with the author's text is its reinterpretation. Viewed in the light of Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogical concept, the said method should be treated as co-existence of the given and the created, the cognitive and the ethic. The criterion of consistency of the dialogue as an experience in the agreement of contradictions, is then the performer's pure taste and clear insight into the aim pursued by the new concept: whether it is enrichment of the world music culture or, alternatively, demonstration of one's own willfulness and arbitrary rule. Establishing her system of reasons, the author of this paper turns to such authorities as Ferruccio Busoni, Glenn Gould, Maria Yudina, brothers Mikhail and Nikolay Bakhtin, thus making comparisons between reinterpretation and literary translation.

Keywords: performer-thinker, criteria of the quality of performance, interpretation, reinterpretation, performance as a dialogue

For citations: Volkova P. S. Perforemer as a Thinker: on the Problem of Interpretation and Reinterpretation. *Arts in Cultural Dialogue*, 2026, 1 (1), 32–46. <https://doi.org/10.67019/3033-8298.2026.1.1.002>



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Исполнитель как мыслитель: к вопросу об интерпретации и реинтерпретации

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Резюме. В статье поднимается вопрос о критериях исполнительского мастерства, которое предполагает, во-первых, актуализацию диалогического взаимодействия с автором звучащего произведения, во-вторых, непременно со-творчество как со стороны музыканта, так и слушателя, выступающего соучастником такого творческого действия. Наконец, в-третьих, работающий в области музыкального исполнительства художник должен быть мыслителем, поскольку музыка предстает не только на уровне речи, но и мышления. Доказывается, что лишь при выполнении этих трех условий музыкант-исполнитель может увлечь за собой подлинных ценителей музыки оригинальностью и самобытностью собственного прочтения нотного текста. Утверждается, что одним из действенных методов работы с авторским текстом становится метод реинтерпретации. Рассматриваемый в свете диалогической концепции М. М. Бахтина, обозначенный метод предстает как со-бытие данного и созданного, познавательного и этического. Критерием состоятельности диалога как опыта согласования противоречий становится безупречный вкус исполнителя и четкое осознание того, какой цели служит его новая концепция: обогащению мировой музыкальной культуры или демонстрации своеволия и произвола. Выстраивая систему аргументации, автор обращается к авторитету Ф. Бузони, Г. Гульда, М. Юдиной, братьев М. М. и Н. М. Бахтиных, проводя аналогии между реинтерпретацией и художественным переводом.

Ключевые слова: исполнитель-мыслитель, критерии качества исполнительского мастерства, интерпретация, реинтерпретация, исполнение как диалог

Для цитирования: Волкова П. С. Исполнитель как мыслитель: к вопросу об интерпретации и реинтерпретации. *Arts in Cultural Dialogue*, 2026, 1 (1), 32–45. <https://doi.org/10.67019/3033-8298.2026.1.1.002>

Introduction

These days, when in the performing art, alongside great, longstanding contests, there appear numerous brand-new events at which young pianists compete in skills, one might raise one, yet pivotal question. How holistic are the criteria of the performing qualities of different artists, and what is decisive when the audience (viewers), i.e., this or that performer's fans, choose the leader and

name the loser? The question is far from idle since many merited musicians often view such events with skepticism noting that contests sometimes fail to reveal a true talent.

Realizing that each member of the panel typically has sought-for criteria guaranteeing some objectivity in this definitely subjective process of assessment, we must name the criterion which we believe to be the principal one. If music is viewed as thinking whose essence was

most adequately disclosed in Maurice Bonfeld's monograph (Bonfeld, 1991), then the performer appears to be a thinker able to deeply impress both an expert and a simple amateur by singularity and distinct identity of his own ideas. Relevance of such a statement is conditioned by the following. If contemporary key figures of musical aesthetics are composers-philosophers and philosophers-composers whose very personalities "permit to approach understanding of music as a transcending experience constituting the ultimate value" (Go, Shao, 2023, 35), then the performer has every right to be involved in this 'circle of confidants' solely as a thinker. One good historical example showing how the ideas of the performer-thinker are actualized, are the legendary lectures given by Arthur G. Rubinstein. As A.V. Malinkovskaya, expert in the piano art history, points out, "in fact those were concerts-lectures. Anton Grigorievich's performance was accompanied by his more or less detailed commentaries on the personalities of the composers and their styles, historical and cultural circumstances imprinted in their various compositions" (Malinkovskaya, 2025, 152). As indicated by Shi Ya Van, "the statement made in his [Chopin's] 'Method of Methods' on the necessity to strain after harmonic combination of an intuitive comprehension of the metaphoric structure of the studied pieces and a substantial analytical and technical precision of each of its elements, later became one of the basics in the professional training practice of

piano players within the Russian music education system" (Shi, 2023, 86).

In other words, much as creative work excludes any whatsoever replication, performance, according to the position of Canadian pianist Glenn Gould, is not at all replication. From this perspective, ranged as musicians carrying with singularity of their approach to the interpretation of both classics and contemporaries, apart from Glenn Gould (1932–1982), might be rather a limited number of performers. These are first and foremost Ferruccio Busoni (1866–1924); Kaikhosru Sorabji (1892–1988); Maria Yudina (1899–1970), Alexei Sultanov (1969–2005) and others.

Meanwhile the stories of their lives and fortunes apparently prove that their method of working with the score often raised protests of both the composers (thus, well known are the aesthetic disagreements between Ferruccio Busoni who offered, during one of the concerts, his own transcription of the piano piece two of *op. 11* by A. Schoenberg, and the author who was dissatisfied by the concept of the piano virtuoso⁶) and the critics who were their contemporaries. Typically, the latter are those expressing most reproaches addressed to innovators and concerning their rather free treatment of a piece of art whose authorship belongs to someone else, irrespective of the fact whether mentioned is the classical or contemporary repertoire.

Trying to answer the question "which way ... one can investigate ... the elusive ... phenomenon of musical performing art ... so that the said investigations would

⁶ For a closer look on the item see (Bulatova, 2009).

obtain necessary conceptivity, and what could help justifiably build them into the scholarly space" (Ruchkina, 2010, 280), N. P. Ruchkina offers the following. "Here we need a completely different integral methodology of scholarly knowledge, characterized, above all, by a specific aspect angle focused on the probatory analysis of a hard-to-conceive, in terms of discursive knowledge, phenomenon which is probably the interpretative conceptuality of the creative work of this or that musician" (Ruchkina, 2010, 280–281).

This author defines the starting point for the creation of the sought methodology as "phylogenetic inversion" (Ruchkina, 2010, 281) specifying that the latter was initially "applied in the work with scientific texts" (Ruchkina, 2010, 285). "Broadening the sphere of its output factor" (Ruchkina, 2010, 285), N. P. Ruchkina expresses certainty that the above method permits "to clarify the genetic way of these or those ideas, discoveries, find the ideas which are probably linked with continuous threads" (Ruchkina, 2010, 281).

Since phylogenetic inversion is in fact not a method but "a term that in evolutionary biology denotes a hypothesis *that in the course of evolution structures along dorsoventral axis accepted orientation opposite to that of the ancestral form*"⁷, it becomes clear why the researcher bringing forward this 'method' "does not propose any practical ways to solve it <the phylogenetic inversion>" (Monastyrshina, 2019, 12). Nevertheless, the very idea that inversion

is "a chromosomal rearrangement meaning a 180° turn of a chromosomal segment"⁸, affords ground to resort to another, generally more organic for musical aesthetics and, more specifically, for a performing art term that constitutes an opposition to interpretation. "The awareness of the external limits of the topic and the purposeful imparting to it of a monographic character can provide a further powerful impetus for the design of the material" (Korsakova, Sadritdinova, 2025, 10).

Artistic performance in the context of reinterpretation

So far, the term *reinterpretation* appears to be most relevant in philology, which fact is witnessed by quite a number of investigations of the said phenomenon through the lens of various cultural artifacts. Introduction in scholarly discourse of the notion we are interested in, is strongly stipulated by a significant and actively elaborated in modern literature studies theory of translation. We here mean the problem of correspondence of the source text to the foreign-language text.

A matter of principle for us in the history of correlation between two entities is a necessity to distinguish translation as *imitation directed towards resemblance* and as *imitation directed towards difference*. Thus, for Walter Benjamin translation as imitation is impossible precisely because the translator, trying to reach similarity with the original text, preserves only those items that are

⁷ Inversion (evolutionary biology) – Wikipedia. Available at: https://translated-turbopages.org/proxy_u/en-ru.ru.d45c2cee-696fc303-2f31f63e-74722d776562

[/https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inversion_\(evolutionary_biology\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inversion_(evolutionary_biology)) (accessed on: 14.09.2025).

⁸ Inversion (biology) – Wikipedia. Available at: https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Инверсия_%28биология%29 (accessed on: 14.09.2025).

translatable in principle. By contrast, focusing on those items untranslatable, the scholar this way emphasizes the situation of dissimilarity, which challenges the very idea of translation. Insisting on untranslatability as something that has to be translated, Benjamin characterizes translation as a fact forming the notion of truth anew.

The fact that in one of the recent publications we see an attempt "to reveal similarity in views of two prominent representatives of their time on the problem of translation or, otherwise, performing interpretation, which is solved by Busoni in the domain of performing art and by Benjamin in the domain of oral art (poetry and prose)" (Dent, 1974, 164), enables to project the ideas of the German philosopher on musicology. The outcome of the mentioned direction can be viewed in the fact that translation as similarity-oriented imitation most of all corresponds to the phenomenon of interpretation. This refers to secondary artistic activity, when the performer follows the score concept whose authorship belongs to the composer.

What concerns translation as a dissimilarity-oriented imitation, it corresponds to a reinterpretation experience as a primary artistic activity. Here the Latin prefix *re-* synchronically means return, refusal, repetition, and rethinking. In other words, a performing activity carried out under the banner of reinterpretation, leads to a situation at which, working with a piece written by a definite composer, the performer reconstructs this piece as if he, the performer, is its creator. It might be

thought that an experience of the kind conditions automatic placement, in the problematic field of performing art as reinterpretation, of the listener too.

Indeed, being involved in the act of creation evolving between the composer-philosopher/philosopher-composer and the performer-thinker, the latter, in accordance with the well-known triad, should also possess a definite culture of thinking. One argument here can be the words said by E. Dent regarding F. Busoni: "He believed that his audience knew classical music as he himself did"; hence "it would be needless to tell the listeners what they had already known. Those who came to his concerts with a strong concept how Bach, Beethoven or Chopin were to be performed, often left bewildered or even enraged" (Dent, 1974, 258). Symbolic, in full tandem with Busoni, yet somewhat more drastic, was the statement made by Glenn Gould: "Nowadays recordings of the great performers of the past and present coexist and are available at any moment to those who wish to listen to them. So, the performer has either to compose music anew or find another job" (Monsenzhon, 2008, 154–155).

It would seem that an ideal concert pianist espoused by these two brilliant musicians is expressed with absolute precision, yet reality apparently proves that the unity existing between these performers separated in time and space is not so implicit. Let us explain it by a concrete example.

It is common knowledge that any creative work implies artist's freedom, that is why any violence restricts its most vivid

manifestations. However, it is the score mottled with the composer's notes on the tempo, character, hues, etc. that examples willfulness and limitations the performer is to defer to. From this perspective rather indicative are Busoni's creative efforts aimed at editing J. S. Bach's compositions. This activity brought him such recognition that there appeared a joke popular among the people who knew Busoni. The essence of the joke was that Busoni's wife Gerda (**nee** Sjöstrand) was repeatedly introduced as Mrs. Bach-Busoni. Commenting on this funny fact, Erinn Knight writes: "Truth or fantasy, yet this social misdeed shows how closely the name of Busoni was linked with Bach's name" (Knyt, 2010, 22).

No doubt, Busoni's titanic work at Bach's legacy became a guideline followed by so many performers of the great German's music. However, by a twist of fate, while creating his bold 'interpretations of Bach's music, in many ways agreeing with Busoni in what concerns performing principles, Glenn Gould strived to bring the score as close as possible to the variant cultivated during the Baroque era "that left Bach to us" (Khramov, 2022). Meant here is the music discourse just fixing the pitch and metric peculiarities.

It is then clear that total reinterpretation of the score in full accordance with the value-based dominant ideas of its epoch is impossible without a deep dive in the context accompanying the history of the creation of the work of authorship. "In case there is no realization of the immensity and multidimensionality of the composer's legacy and variety of its

inner intertextual links, impossible is full-fledged formation of the learners' professional world, stimulation of research activities, improvement of mastery" (Prid'ma, 2024, 106). Above all, as noted by G. A. Torgoni, "performance from memory not only raises the level of freedom in the interpretation of an artistic image, it also becomes an invaluable repository of spiritual experience as it permits to obtain greater professional literacy, increase the associative area of the performing thinking" (Torgoni, Morozova, 2024, 89). One can hardly admit that Svyatoslav Richter who was reproached for a very slow tempo of his performance of Part Two of Sonata Nine by Beethoven, deluded himself about the author's message, the more so as this genius of music, great erudite person could speak, alongside Russian, Beethoven's language as his mother-tongue. In the same way one can hardly suspect that changing the character of the B-moll Prelude by J. S. Bach performed during the Great Patriotic War, Maria Yudina failed to realize the essence of this piece of music as she placed a premium on up-tempo and boosted sound. "To undertake the interpreter's mission, the performer has to learn to operate in his work with many contexts revealing the social and aesthetic nature of the music image, singularity of its intonational sphere, stylistic and genre reference, history of creation and perspectives of development, interconnections with all kinds of outer factors and phenomena, etc. It is this thorough, comprehensive study of the artistic image that contains prospects for original, plausible and convincing

interpretation of the music content in compositions belonging to various genres and trends" (Krasovskaya, 2023, 99).

It is of importance to note that performer's direct involvement in the work aimed at the creation of a piece of music was originally rather widespread. Suffice it to recall that in the 17th – 18th centuries "music could simply not exist without a collaboration between the composer and the performer. It was either improvised, or composed immediately, ... hence it mostly belonged to the performer, as compared to the later or perhaps earlier times. Most of the music created at various epochs was only outlined without being completely recorded ... The performer could be in a way compared with a young child with a coloring book in his hands, and the sketches further turned to pieces of art" (Fuller, 1989, 117).

One must admit that the above quote affords ground for viewing the experience of reinterpretation as perhaps even more acceptable in the work of a contemporary musician-performer in his treatment of scores, than interpretation itself. This idea may be supported by Dmitri Shostakovich's words addressed to Maria Yudina: "This is not at all what I wrote, yet play it this way! This way only!"⁹.

To completely realize the responsibility of the performer opting for reinterpretation, let us resort to V. B. Khramov's observations. In his monograph dealing with Glenn Gould's creative work, this Russian music scholar

and practical performer undertakes a comparison study of a Baroque-adapted fragment of Sonata 1 (f-moll) by Ludwig van Beethoven and the same fragment, yet with the composer's notes. These are the eight starting bars where V. B. Khramov finds 27 (!) notations. Further on, comparing Beethoven's *urtext* with the established version belonging to Artur Schnabel, the scholar already mentions 50 editorial notations, "which means that he <Artur Schnabel> added his own 23 signs to Beethoven's" (Khramov, 2022).

Hence the circumstances become rather awkward: in case of abject and thorough follow-through of the composer addressing his speech to his contemporaries, the performer unintentionally excludes him from the circle of those living in the 21st century, and not without reason. Emotions initiating maestro's creative experiences, are in subjection to the epoch that has shaped them. It would be sufficient to compare, say, the 18th century of sentimentalism and sensationalism with the 19th century, a time of pragmatism and cruelty. That is to say, one should not forget that emotions "differ from culture to culture" (Lobanova, 2025, 52).

On the other hand, obeying Schnabel's orders, the pianist rather does his will than embodies the composer's concept. Meanwhile one has to admit that the essence of the musician's performing activity is in the achievement of "an equal

⁹ Kirillova, L. 'Stalin's favourite pianist with a Gospel in hand: in memory of Maria Yudina'. *Pravmir*. Available at: [https://www.pravmir.ru/lyubimaya-pianistka-](https://www.pravmir.ru/lyubimaya-pianistka-stalina-s-evangeliiem-v-rukah-pamyati-marii-yudinoj/)

[stalina-s-evangeliiem-v-rukah-pamyati-marii-yudinoj/](https://www.pravmir.ru/lyubimaya-pianistka-stalina-s-evangeliiem-v-rukah-pamyati-marii-yudinoj/) (accessed on: 27.12.2025). (In Russian)

synthesis of two ... tendencies, mimetic (*the past*, responsible for the written record of scores) and creative (*the future*, anticipating reproduction of the text). Both these tendencies are extremes often actualized as a unity that embodies a total of creative intentions of two producing minds, the composer and the performer, within an act of creating a piece of music" (Okisheva, 2025, 86).

In our opinion, one right track leading out if the situation could be a view of reinterpretation from the standpoint of the dialogical concept of Mikhail Bakhtin, a philosopher who was on friendly terms with Maria Yudina for quite a number of years.

Reinterpretation in the light of Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogical concept

A need to view reinterpretation with regard to a harmonizing dialogue seems significant for one simple reason. Any piece of art can only be born due to "*the intemporal tandem 'composer – performer' joined by the piece of art as a language fact...*" (Prihodovskaya, Okisheva, 2024, 207). Here we have "two modifications of one piece of art, modifications of its written record and a sounding fact", which forms its *dual nature* [ibid.]. If however the performer prefers to work with the score without looking back at previous interpretations, then those well-wishers who refuse to support his creative urge, readily advise him to write his own composition and "do whatever you want with it", rather than give him a *carte blanche* in regard to the author's music. "Signposts on this path are conditioned by various culture factors, yet first and foremost by the attitude of

the composer, the performer, the listener to the music texts as dialogical phenomena of the 'spiritual' (heavenly) and 'material' (earthly) worlds" (Rapatskaya, 2023, 42).

At first sight, non-admission of the said experience is conditional upon the prohibition of any arbitrariness to a piece of art that has already been blended in a definite performing tradition. At the same time those artistic stereotypes that have been formed in the perception of that piece presently create a psychological barrier hindering, in the indignant lover of music, any recognition of validity of new artistic interpretations. Yet, if we take into account the fact that performance itself, perception too, are processes deeply creative, then we should agree on the indisputability of the following thesis. The less habitual is the next performance of a well-known piece, the more internal work it will require on the part of the listeners to enable their understanding of the performer's idea.

Is the audience, while coming to the concert, ready for such a serious, co-creative, activity (mental activity), especially these days, when any contact with art bears an element of show, attracting viewers and listeners with specific, at times purposefully demonstrated by the musician's individual style, onstage dress, shoes? This question is of special relevance in view of comprehending music as an emotionally *contagious* event. As noted by the researchers of musical-aesthetic emotions, "much as man catches emotions of other people by way of perceiving emotional mimics, voice position, music can 'infect' interpreted as expression of feelings"

(Levina et al., 2023, 32). If rather serious in this respect classical concerts of the past century were named by Glenn Gould a circus because the performer in his *hic et nunc* creative activity is to not just to think of the logic in which the music material develops but also as the saying goes, "make a spectacle of himself", then what can be said of today's priority grades of the consumer society basically living by market laws, according to which art is often bought and sold as a commodity? A. Lerch, C. Arthur, A. Pati & S. Gururani note that "every performance will ultimately be heard and processed by a listener. The listener's meaningful interpretation of the incoming musical information depends on a sophisticated network of parameters. These parameters include both objective (or, at least, measurable) features that can be estimated from a score or derived from a performance, as well as subjective and 'internal' ones such as factors shaped by the culture, training, and history of the listener" (Lerch et al., 2020, 224).

As for the infamous advice to another 'bright spark' to abstain from touching 'someone else's thing' counting on 'his own' only, this would elude, in a public debate, the wanted dialogue between the composer and the performer, marked, as Mikhail Bakhtin explained, by infinity and inexhaustibility. Developing the Socratic dialogical experience with a view to written speech, Bakhtin disclosed the essence of the latter as a co-existence of the given (the textual cognitive in the text) and the created (the textual ethical). And if the notion of reinterpretation reflects the fact of

simultaneous presence in the performing practice of the basic text (the score) and its new interpretation (the performance itself), then correlation between the new interpretation and the ethic line actualized in the performer's activity becomes evident solely within the context of Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogical concept. Besides, providing an opportunity to hear something familiar with a different, new subject matter, Bakhtin's dialogue initiates a precedent for a comparison of both variants. As researcher I. S. Kuznetsova states, "Immanuel Kant presumed that by the power of its emotional impact, by the excitement generated, music takes the second place after poetry... It brings up aesthetic emotions, thus developing creative talent in man. What is still more important, music promotes communicational culture" (Kuznetsova, 2024, 14).

From out of the rules of dialogue notional since antiquity, we will denote three basic ones:

1) participants of the dialogical situation have to be linked by a common topic, in our case a definite piece of art talked about by way of musical discourse;

2) for some time the speaker (composer) turns into a listener, and, the other way round, the listener (performer) acts as a speaker because he builds his speech supported by the same laws as his interlocutor (composer);

3) each participant of the dialogical situation is to undertake *search for truth* instead of trying to turn his interlocutor into his supporter and thus win a victory over him. As stated by researcher Marja Heimonen, "these relationships require

sensitivity, respectful and critical listening, and dialogue among and between students and teachers" (Heimonen, 2012, 71).

Taking into account that a true dialogue is impossible 'beyond' contradictions which finally have to be accommodated or otherwise harmonized, it becomes clear that the performing activity is generally an utterance initially contradicting the utterance of the composer. Within this context, the impression produced by Maria Yudina's performance on Maria Grinberg can hardly be surprising: "I come to her concert. I listen. I am amazed and stunned by her rendition! I come back home, take the scores and realize that Yudina has turned everything upside down. One day later I again go to the same concert with the same program, and now she persuades that this is the only way it should be performed"¹⁰.

Coming back to parallels between the art of performance and the translation theory, we must note that the experience that 'turns everything upside down', rhymes with the line of a professional translator Nikolay Bakhtin, Mikhail Bakhtin's brother. In expert's opinion, resort to the logical structure of the material expressed by verbal signs (sheet music in our case) is nothing but the opening phase in the perception of the sense of a literary text. Therefore, a poetic translator deems it possible "to destroy it down to the basis that contains the semantics of the author's inner experiences and then to get involved in this stream with

the aim of recreating an utterly new form" (Bakhtin, 2008, 84).

Does not F. Busoni mean the same stating that "notation, musical composition is above all a joker aimed to catch inspiration ... A translator's task is to turn rigidity of signs ... into emotion. Yet legislators demand that the translator should reproduce this rigidity of signs; they believe that the stronger the adhesion between his reproduction and the signs, the closer it is to perfection" (Busoni, 1911, 15). As a result, since notation deprives the author of inspiration, the performer's primary target is a necessity to spiritualize these dead signs in the process of experiencing his own artistic inspiration. Do not the following words said by Glenn Gould stay in accord with the authors cited: "A musician playing the piano is also to be a composer managing this instrument because 'professionalism has not been canceled'" (cited by (Khramov, 2024, 106))? A matter of principle for us is the fact that the maestro himself dwelled, while working at a piece of art, solely upon its structure whose thorough analysis gave him right for his own interpretation! As a researcher writes, "the creative result of the musician's work is not score sonorization at concerts, not artistic presentation of the same, but creation of a new concept of a piece already known, already recorded" (Khramov, 2022).

Clearly realizing that "freedom is a predicament of morality" (Khramov, 2024, 105), we must remind: Bakhtin's

¹⁰ Kirillova, L. 'Stalin's favourite pianist with a Gospel in hand: in memory of Maria Yudina'. *Pravmir*. Available at: [https://www.pravmir.ru/lyubimaya-pianistka-](https://www.pravmir.ru/lyubimaya-pianistka-stalina-s-evangeliiem-v-rukah-pamyati-marii-yudinoj/)

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opposition between the cognitive and the ethic originated from moral philosophy of Socrates' dialogues. His rhetorical competence was defined by a perfect mastery of the oratorical canon – a triunity of Ethos, Logos and Pathos. Inferiority of written speech, unlike oral expression, is in the fact that the composer's speech subjectified in scores preserves the importance of Logos only, whereas Ethos and Pathos are only potentially represented in it. This must probably be the reason why Glenn Gould who bravely undertakes actualization, in the process of musical performance, of his own Ethos and Pathos, is named a philosopher, "moreover, in a Socratic sense" (Khramov, 2024, 104).

It is significant that "resorting to masterpieces of piano music, taking a liberty to modify the author's will clearly denoted by signs, he must be sure that his concept will improve the piece, that at least its variant will not be worse. In this case only it can claim to be a creative product as creative work, in a simplest definition, is an activity aimed on the creation of a new, better being, in this definite case of a new, culture enriching concept of a piece of music. In other cases ... the new concept ... is a manifestation of willfulness" (Khramov, 2022).

The question whether and to which extent a listener of today is able to tell the difference between one and another, is to a great extent rhetorical. "Deep, homogenous, abstract insight characterizes

perception of those who study at the faculty of music, people for who man and his activities are placed in the center of the system" (Vershina, 2024, 65). Although we avoid speculations on the position of musical philosophy and musical aesthetics in training modern composers, musicologists, performers, music tutors, i.e., professional listeners, we shall only share our long observations of students mastering such disciplines as Russian Language and Speech Culture, Sociology, Culture Studies, Philosophy. Quickly and easily passing tests, which activity is zealously trained at comprehensive schools, these young people enter universities without abilities of thinking.

In a somewhat different way, the same idea was expressed by a professional *neurolinguist, Professor of Saint Petersburg State University Tatiana Chernigovskaya*: "Most people do not think at all. Thinking is a frightful labor ..., a strain of personality as a whole"¹¹. Expressing confidence that the thinking ability can be developed like any other, we must note that the role of music in the development of this ability is unprecedented because nothing can compare to nonverbal arts in the influence produced on the development of "the second part of the intellect" which Tatiana Chernigovskaya associates with *sensibility*¹². L. A. Rapatskaya emphasizes the requirement "to introduce in the curriculum at least one theological discipline which might become a basis for

¹¹ Tatiana Chernigovskaya: "I can see apocalyptic features everywhere, I cannot see any progress". Sobaka.ru. Available at: <https://www.sobaka.ru/krd/city/>

science/126840?ysclid=ml81fftvw657092938 (accessed: 02 February.2026)

¹² Ibid.

a future dialogue between the spiritual and secular knowledge, which dialogue is so necessary for education" (Rapatskaya, 2024, 20). From this viewpoint a performer-thinker acts as a listener's guide to the world of high culture, the culture of thinking as well. That said, the mutual search for truth might and must be carried out supported by the artistic freedom of each participant of dialogical communication, the freedom that "permits man to move along two paths, moral and immoral" (Khramov, 2024, 105).

Conclusion

Summarizing all the above we must emphasize the importance of the following. The only criterion for a performer aiming to reinterpret composer's legacy, has always been and still is (apart from the pure taste unimaginable without vast erudition) clear realization of the target contained in the new concept: whether it is interest on the part of the audience, or unconditional recognition of authorities in the given area, or material wealth, or satisfaction of ambitions, or formidable worship to good at the chosen field of endeavor.

In this last case, "motivated by an experience of a necessity to restore the unity of being, a creativity of the kind is implicitly oriented on an axiologically valid result whose dominants are moral bases and selfless service to the ideal" (Volkova, Zhukova, 2024a, 219). The high status of the sought service and special

value of all the participants making a dialogical triad may be mentioned on the grounds that "evangelic 'In the beginning was the Word' appears to be coordinate to the lines 'In the beginning was the Number', 'In the beginning was the Sound', 'In the beginning was the Music', 'In the beginning was the Gesture', 'In the beginning was the Emotion'" (Volkova, 2024b, 186).

The noted parallels manifestly show that "sound, much as emotion, are integral properties of musical speech exactly as intonation actualized in non-verbal discourse holds in storage this or that gesture" (Volkova, 2024b, 186), and the number holds this or that rhythm. Finally, the fact that "the Slavic Word shows its relation to both the Sound and ability to hear" (Volkova, 2024b, 186) permits to agree that the performer, the same way as the rhetor, is a personality "pretending to an answerable right to participate in persuasive speech" (Khabankova, 2016, 8) in accordance with the idea contained in this speech. "This approach emphasizes the need for systemic, interconnected thinking that fosters a comprehensive understanding and application of knowledge" (Piper et al., 2015, 99). This means "the rhetor's intentions to change actuality of the world around us or introduce something new in this world" (Khabankova, 2016, 10). Beyond a reasonable doubt, anyone wielding such power is not to be just a man of reason, but a man of thought!

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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Volkova P. S.: conceptualization; methodology; writing – review & editing, data curation; methodology; investigation; validation; writing – original draft preparation

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The article was **submitted** 11.01.2026; **approved after reviewing** 19.02.2026; **accepted for publication** 05.03.2026.