

The Craft of Musical Communication

by Keith Hill and Marianne Ploger, ©2005

Introduction

We present this essay in two parts because each part describes a distinct aspect of the Craft of Musical Communication, each of which relies wholly on the other to "work." One aspect is not more important than the other. Each depends on the other to project the full force of which they are both capable - for producing inspiring performances of music.

The techniques and concepts presented here have been tested with musicians and listeners, as well as with what can only be called "hostile listeners" - the ones who profess a strong antagonism to classical music. When the techniques were used while playing the music during our presentations, the result for musicians was mixed: about 95% of the musicians loved the way the music felt, and 5% of the musicians hated what they thought violated their notion of how music ought to go and were openly antagonistic to the techniques. For non-musically trained listeners, 100% felt inspired by the result, and for the hostile listeners, 100% were pleasantly surprised by

what they heard. During the performances, it seems, they discovered that the problem they had with classical music was the way it was played, not the music itself, nor their relative ignorance of that kind of music.

What we have found is that hostile listeners are incredibly smart and perceptive in that they have no patience for listening to music played in a manner that doesn't communicate. Furthermore, when these disinterested, hostile listeners were asked to tell the performers what they needed to do to the music to make that music work for them, and when the performers responded in a loving and compliant manner to accede to their suggestions, these listeners responded with cheers for the players and the music, some saying that the performances brought them to tears...which is the real point behind playing great music...isn't it? Invariably, the listeners were in total agreement about what the players needed to do to make the music "come alive" for them and, equally invariably, every suggestion they made was almost word for word what we have presented below in the first part: the art of delivery.

These experiences/experiments can be and ought to be reproduced by anyone who is truly serious about learning the craft of musical communication, if only to have the force of proof to give him or her the confidence to absolutely know that these techniques and concepts work just as we say they do. It is not enough to take them on faith. They must be tested with listeners of all kinds. However, care must be taken in dealing with trained musicians, as they tend to be too prejudiced due to indoctrination in the current style of playing classical music, a way of playing in which these techniques are almost nowhere to be found.

Why the hostility and antagonism between classical musicians and hostile listeners? We suspect that the hostility on both sides is due to a misunderstanding of each about the other. Musicians tend to dismiss normal, ordinary people as being crass and unsophisticated in their musical tastes and therefore, not worth bothering with as listeners. And these listeners tend to write off classical musicians as being out of touch, indifferent, snobbish, and effete and therefore not worth listening to. This current environment surrounding classical music is tragic because the music was designed to express, in many cases, deep and intense love, and it used to be performed lovingly

and engagingly for the enjoyment of everyone. Believe it or not, nowadays, classical music is associated with fear and evil in our cultural cliches. For example, in movies, the villains too often are seen listening to classical music as they order the murder of others. Classical musicians are depicted as egotistical, self centered, solipsistic curs totally lacking compassion, common sense, or both, and violence and huge explosions are too often accompanied by some of the greatest classical music ever written.

This means that each of us has a role to play to change this nasty environment into one that is full of the joy of music...and not just for musicians. That is why we have presented this essay.

A curious side-effect, which occurs when well trained musicians use these techniques and concepts in their performance practice, is that these ideas have the power to transform otherwise ordinary performances into ones which show every sign of true musical mastery. Even curiouser is that when these techniques are missing from a performance of music, even one which is virtuosically perfect and otherwise very musical by the highest conventional standards, the music feels supremely, even breathtakingly competent

but never feels masterful. These effects are not subtle, because almost everyone can easily notice the effect of musical mastery. Therefore, any musician who desires to partake of the wonderful side-effect need only use and master what follows.

Part 1: The Art of Delivery

Playing a musical instrument is a technical craft. Expressing music, by contrast, has been viewed as an art. This view has been held so long that we rarely question it. The purpose of this essay is to question the truth behind this view and to propose another view: that expressing music is also a craft. It is the craft of musical communication, the art of delivery. It is possible to be very good at using a musical instrument skillfully for the purpose of accurately realizing musical notation yet have little skill at the craft of communication. It is also possible to be unskilled at the craft of playing a musical instrument to accurately realize a musical score and still have a high degree of skill in communicating music. This means that these skills have very little to do with each other. The greatest musicians were highly skilled in both crafts. Alas, today we too often hear musicians referred to as “great” who have

little skill in the craft of musical communication.

Musical Communication as the "Art of Delivery" (which is what Aristotle calls the Modes of Utterance, Poetics XIX) is the craft of handling musical material by technical means designed to enhance the enjoyment and understanding of the meaning of music for untrained music lovers. The purpose of this craft is to touch the soul, raise the spirits, elevate the minds, and deeply move listeners with music; the technical means employed in the exercise of this craft are 11 in number. These techniques are designed to present heard musical information in forms which the human brain can easily process and comprehend. The cognitive aspect of these techniques is what makes them so powerful. In fact, these techniques are wholly derived from normal human speech and perceptual experiences which we utilize everyday to express ourselves and communicate with others. All of them are natural to human expression.

The 11 techniques are designed to enhance musical communication rather than act as a replacement for being musical. Being musical is a spiritual quality, and it is this quality that indeed resides in the realm of art. If there is a downside to these techniques, it is that if a musician isn't

deeply spiritual, the use of the communication techniques will make this lack of spirituality obvious to the listeners. If a musician is spiritual, the communication techniques reveal this reality clearly. The true art of musical performance fuses the craft of accurately realizing a score using a musical instrument and the craft of musical communication, which supports the intended affects with the spiritual substance of the musician.

As the word “technique” suggests, these 11 techniques are very practical tools, not mere theoretical concepts. To that end, we have placed at the end of the discussion of each technique, where the means of application might be ambiguous, a suggestion for how to apply the technique. The techniques need to be applied to work. When they are applied, they do the job for which they are intended. Unapplied, the effect they contribute is absent from music.

There are two kinds of music...music meant to be heard and music intended to be listened to. The 11 cognitive techniques apply only to music intended to be listened to in the same way that human speech is. What does this mean for music which is intended only to be heard? For such music, these techniques are unnecessary. Nevertheless, even for music which only

intended to be heard, the hearers enjoyment of the music is enhanced if these techniques are employed in the performance.

What follows is a discussion of each of the 11 cognitively-derived techniques needed to enhance the communication of music. They have been organized here according to the intensity of the communication enhancing effect each technique has on the listener.

1. The Synaesthesia Technique

Synaesthesia means “multiple, simultaneous perceptions.” The brain is designed for perceiving multiple sensations at the same moment; with the senses of sight, smell, and taste, we expect our sensory experiences to be loaded with multiple, simultaneous stimulations. Even a simple pie is a combination of different flavors from fruit, flour, sugar, salt, spices, eggs, butter, and the effects of cooking. The culinary art lives because people adore eating food that is highly dimensional in flavors. Each dish mingles salty, sour, sweet, bitter, and savory (meaty) in various proportions, and we taste these different flavors on various parts of the tongue, creating the effect of *synaesthesia*. The senses of sight and smell function similarly. A large measure of the joy of

viewing Monet's best paintings is to see all the colors of the palette on every square centimeter of surface. The sense of hearing likewise needs that same level of stimulation. Yet, due to a basic ignorance among musicians about how the ear/brain makes sense of heard experiences, classical music is performed today in a manner designed to eliminate *synaesthesia* altogether.

Although the many different frequencies and timbres are detected differently by the ears, we 'hear' or perceive musical and other regular, simultaneous sounds as composites rather than distinct and discrete frequencies and timbres. When music is performed in a way designed to have sounds such as chords heard as composites, the normal human ear hears only one sound. If the composer has written a four note chord, and all the notes are played simultaneously, the listener will hear not four notes but one sound only; a rich sound, but nonetheless only one sound. If the performer endeavors to perform each note in the chord so that the notes don't sound absolutely together, the normal listener will easily hear all four notes and the chord simultaneously, creating an experience for the listener of hearing a total of five sounds altogether.

The synaesthesia technique requires heard musical information to be slightly desynchronized, just enough for the mind of the listener to perceive all the timbres, all the pitches, all the melodies, all the rhythms, all the details, and all the harmonies, so that they all emerge into the consciousness of the music lover.

The human brain is so competent that it has no trouble following as many as 6 simultaneous streams of information, as long as those lines or streams are functioning with total independence, even if they are "supposed to be together," as in music. As evidence for this, consider the number of musicians in a normal rock group - 6. Rock musicians understand the need for conveying the feeling of independence of parts even when the score would indicate otherwise. They are exceedingly sensitive to synaesthetic boredom and work very hard to create *synaesthesia* in their performances...to not do so would spell financial disaster for them.

In 1768, Jacob Adlung in his Musica Mechanica Organoedi, vol. 2, chapter 22, paragraph 522, says of playing the harpsichord, "One must endeavor to use more arpeggios and such, rather than striking the keys together or playing too slowly since the strings cease vibrating right

away." Mozart and Chopin also insisted that the hands are never played together.

The result of having the notes in music be "misaligned in time" is that they are desynchronous. Desynchronicity, when other than an end in itself, produces a kind of independence of voices, and when voices sound truly independent, the brain is able to perceive each individual voice more easily. When we perceive two or more voices or lines as distinct yet simultaneous expressions, the effect in us is called *synaesthesia*. It's an amazing paradox that when the motion of the voices is truly independent, the surface appears exceedingly complex but, in fact, the music is simpler for the average listener to behold and easily follow. Indeed, the listener feels deprived when the feeling of independence of voices is missing. The *synaesthesia* technique depends on the ability of the performer to hear, follow, and create multiple voices in the music; voices that are clearly independent of the others yet always manage to agree.

When the lines are played as one usually hears them played today, that is, always together or simultaneously, even a trained musician has trouble to tell the voices apart. This is because the brain reads the interval played in this manner as being a

composite. Once so recognized, the brain little needs to pay attention to what is happening except in the lowest or the highest voice. Indeed, very few musicians today have the ability to expressively sing and maintain two voices at the same time...this inability results from a "keypunching" attitude in performing, ironically, an attitude that has now even infected singers. Only by consciously creating distinctions between lines and singing each and every voice in the music can the performer make clear to the listener what is happening in music with more than one line. Differences in timbre and volume help create more distinction, but these devices never are as consistently successful at creating clear distinctions between the different lines in music as when the *synaesthesia* technique is used, even to only a very slight degree.

Giovanni Tosi, in his treatise on singing titled "The Art of the Florid Song," published in 1736, uses the term *vacillare* to describe the effect of vacillating in the melody from being before the bass to lagging behind the bass. He states, "The singer should endeavor to sing before the beat or after the beat and never with it." Astonishing!!!! Today, almost no classically trained singers do this because they are usually mercilessly censured for

doing so. *Bel canto* means “beautiful singing,” not “beautiful tone;” Tosi says of *vacillare* that it “is one of the most beautiful effects in music.” The vacillations he describes give the synaesthesia technique a feeling of flow and freedom...a most beautiful effect indeed.

It is interesting to realize that J.S. Bach, in manuscripts of his keyboard pieces, uses *vacillare* just as Tosi recommends. When you listen to the next YouTube post below, watch the manuscript as it scrolls by. Careful observations of his manuscript reveals that the vertical alignment of the notes of the right hand either precedes or follows the notes of the left hand. About 60% of time, the right hand notes precede the left hand notes, and about 40% follow the left hand. To suggest that Bach was doing this either unintentionally or that he had problems with vertical alignment is preposterous: Bach was probably the most intentional of all composers, especially when it involved music, and he had no problems aligning notes in orchestral scores.

Forqueray, in his published arrangement for harpsichord of his fathers’ “Pieces for Viola da Gamba,” gives instructions that the player play the music exactly as it appears on the printed page. The pieces that follow show the right and left hand notes being vertically non-aligned even

to the extent that some whole notes in the left hand appear in the middle of the measure!!

And Giulio Caccini, in his “Nuove musiche e nuove maniera di scriverle” (“The New Music and the New Manner in Which it is Written,” Florence, 1614), suggests something very similar to *vacillare* when he writes: “Sprezzatura is that elegance given to a melody by several technically-incorrect eighths or sixteenths on different tones, technically-incorrect with respect to their timing, thus freeing the melody from a certain narrow limitation and dryness and making it pleasant, free, and airy, just as in common speech, where eloquence and invention make affable and sweet the matters being expounded upon.”

Does all this mean that using a synaesthesia technique in the form of *vacillare* is easy? Certainly not. Proficiency requires practice. It is even harder to develop the ability to think and imagine all the voices one is playing, be they 2 or 5 at once, so that each voice is sung both extremely expressively and independently of the other voices. But it can be done. We coached an organ student who was unable to play all voices of a 4 part Chorale Prelude from Bach's *Orgelbüchlein*, and within 20 minutes, he was singing and playing all four voices

independently and expressively throughout the entire piece - we know from experience that it is possible for all musicians to learn to do this. Furthermore, Bach's music cannot be heard as it was intended to be heard unless one masters this technique.

Listen to the following musical example of a Bach three part Invention and hear how each voice is being sung expressively and independently creating the effects of Synaesthesia and *vacillare*. Take the trouble to find other recordings of the same piece and discover if those performers were able to create this feeling of true independence of voices.

Application: Always play with one hand leading the other and vacillate between which of the two hands leads. Give up trying to be together in ensembles. The exception to this is when one arrives at the end, when a simultaneous concurrence of the voices tells the brain that the music has come to an end.

Application: Sing expressively each and every line or voice as independently as possible of the other lines or voices. Prevent yourself from lapsing or dropping your attention to any line or voice; the listeners will hear the lapse in attention and cease to pay attention.

Application: In ensembles, vacillate between having the upper voice lead the lower voice and the lower voice lead the upper voice. This vacillation needs to follow the logic of the musical lines and structure. When the upper voice leads, the music soars. When the lower voice leads the music lingers, resisting forward motion.

2. The Inégal or Entasis Technique

Entasis is an ancient Greek term meaning “tensioning.” Speech that is delivered in a metrically perfect manner has the power to cause the listener's brain to shutdown and cease processing the meaning of what is being said...all within a few seconds of hearing such speech. The human brain needs the condition of constant or stable irregularity for it to remain alert and attentive: irregularity produces a state of alertness and attentiveness. Constancy or stability eliminates the feeling of discomfort which chaos, the erratic and irregular, often creates. The balance in tension between the feeling of predictability that constancy (stability) provides and the feeling of anticipation that irregularity and unpredictability creates a state of Entasis.

The opposite of Entasis is Stasis or staticness. Entasis in normal human speech is brought about by the flow of thought, which is both irregular and constant. So it must be in music.

The French, in the 17th and 18th centuries, understood the importance of entasis. This, we believe, is what the musicians who wrote about *inégal* meant by the term. The word actually means rough, irregular, unequal. The conventional interpretation of this word betrays its real meaning by forcing it to conform to the present fashion for perfect metricality in performance practice of old music - that interpretation suggests that *inégal* means perfectly regular limping. Had the French writers meant that, they would have used the term for limping. Otherwise, they would have used the phrase “égal inégal” or “equal unequal.” Therefore, we must take the term *inégal* at face value and understand it from a cognitive point of view.

In music, cognitively speaking, every note played in a way that is predictable creates stasis. In stasis there is an absence of tension and, consequently, listening further to what is being played is pointless. Should performers fail to understand the entasis technique, the result is deadly because it virtually guarantees that the audience will be

prevented from really paying attention to the music. In his treatise on Poetics (XXIV), Aristotle observed that "sameness of incident soon produces satiety." Similarly, anyone can observe that it takes only three notes of equal value with two equal spaces between them to create a condition of boredom in the brain. Within the time it takes to hear three notes, the brain has noticed that the second event is like the first, that the third is like the second and the first, and it predicts that the fourth will follow the pattern. As soon as that prediction comes true, the brain either goes to sleep from boredom or looks elsewhere for something more interesting. If this happens, as it usually does, in the brain of a performer, mistakes are the natural byproduct. To the listener, mistakes which occur in a static musical environment become the meaning instead of the music...a disaster. This is why musicians today who can't learn to play music without mistakes are discouraged by every means possible from performing in public.

Learning to play music exactly according to a metronome is the major cause of performance anxiety. It is virtually impossible to try to avoid making mistakes when your brain has gone to sleep - avoiding mistakes is hard enough when your brain is fully alert. And when the mistakes become

the meaning, which is always what happens, the groundwork for paralyzing fear of performing has been carefully and cleverly established. It is the reason why one might define talent in music today as the ability to play the right notes, exactly in time, with a brain that is fast asleep.

Metrical exactitude in musical performance guarantees that most listeners are barred from experiencing the spiritual essence of great music. It also guarantees that music can only be heard and ignored by most people. It is the embodiment of slavishness in music...slavishness to the metronome...exactly the opposite of what CPE Bach, in his "Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments," suggested when he wrote that one should "endeavor to avoid everything mechanical and slavish. Play from the soul, not like a trained bird." The entasis technique is the way out of slavery into freedom. It is simple to do: perform notes of equal value in any manner other than that which appears, feels, sounds, or can be construed as regular or equal.

Using this technique presents problems, the greatest of which is that it can sound chaotic. Most musicians vehemently hate this effect; indeed, it is unpleasant. However, there are other cognitive techniques, discussed in this essay, that are

designed to create order and logic out of the chaos of totally irregular, unmetrical music making: the Gesture, Syntactical, and the Recognition Signal techniques. They create the feeling of logic, flow, and meaning when the techniques of Synaesthesia and Entasis are being applied. The second problem is that musicians have been bullied into playing metrically accurately for so long that playing not-metrically accurately on purpose is hard to do. It actually takes practice, as does the synaesthesia technique. But, as with all things, practice makes perfect...except in this case, one must understand that perfect is a feeling in the souls of the listeners, not an articulated fact in the accurate presentation of pitch and time value of each and every note in the score. Music must feel perfect. To be so, it must appear metrically imperfect.

What, then, is the role of the beat? We feel that the beat should be felt and not heard. Like the beating of the heart, the musical beat needs to fluctuate in speed as the emotional content of the music fluctuates. Like the naturally shifting accents in speech, musical accents need to shift according to the meaning being expressed. As soon as the beat, meter, or accents become noticeably regular and unvarying, they appear too obvious and are in bad taste because they sound pedantic and academic.

In the next musical example, you will hear a Scarlatti Sonata played with Synaesthesia, Vacillare, and Entasis or inegal. Notice how the music appeals to our feeling more than our judgment.

Application: Avoid performing music in strict accordance with the beat. Avoid having ever more than three notes of equal value sound equally with equal spaces between them. Even two notes of equal value and space is enough to create a flattening of the listener's attention.

3. The Gesture or Inflection Technique

The Gesture or Inflection technique is designed to group musical and verbal information into larger units which have shapes that are easily recognized and remembered by the brain of the listener. Language lives or dies by inflection. Flat, uninflected speech is instantly tedious and tiresome to focus on. Highly inflected speech is effortless to pay attention to. Music is the same. Inflection (gesture) is the technique we all use in speech to organize the distinctly irregular nature of language. Specifically, the shape of the gestures or inflections is a

parabolic curve. The egg is an excellent example of this kind of shape; one could also say that the shape is elliptical. This shape creates a feeling of naturalness and is easy to follow. Language without this gesture of inflection is flat, expressionless, ugly, and difficult to comprehend...so it is with music.

To properly realize a logarithmic gesture in music, a performer must study nature and copy the shapes that nature has to offer. Further, human speech patterns are replete with this gesture in utterances, words, phrases, and groups of phrases. By consciously playing music using the elliptical gesture everywhere and in any way it can be applied, a performer can guarantee that the listeners will feel that the result will be more natural, comforting, and loving.

The brain interprets flat, uninflected speech as the behavior of a listless, dying, depressed, or extremely ill person. In similar manner, it interprets highly inflected speech as the behavior of an animated, spirited, lively, robust, and healthy person. The same is true in music. People normally don't like to be around listless, depressive personalities and love to be with animated, loving people. In the same way, they like listening to music that is animated and highly expressive, even if the feeling of the music is of sadness and of grief.

Application: Organize musical information in easy to follow and understand gestures and mini-gestures.

4. The Syntactical or Voice Leading Technique

The Voice Leading technique comes from the syntactical or grammatical property of speech. Notice what happens to the above sentence when all the words are reordered to eliminate references: “The or voice grammatical syntactical comes technique property speech leading of from.” The reason the reordered sentence can never make sense is that every word has been treated as the equal of all the others. The order, or lack of it, as is really the case, is designed to reinforce that equality - that is, all the words in that sentence above refer to no other words. The result is that the sentence means absolutely nothing...even if we know what each word means.

The human brain requires referential relationships in everything it takes in in order to make sense of things. Anything which lacks this referential aspect creates the feeling of nonsense in the brain. We ignore it at our aesthetic peril. It is this syntactical,

"referential" property of language that underlies the logic in music. This is the logic needed to make the inégál or entasis technique work most successfully.

Sense and meaning in both language and in music come from the appropriate grouping of words and notes into phrases or gestures which seem to go together, but only when the grammatical sense of each word or note is considered and "leaned" on or stressed to emphasize the intended meaning. Just as all parts of a sentence refer in some way to the noun/subject, every note in the diatonic scale refers to the tonic. This view holds that understanding the intervals and chords in any scale is essential to understanding music's expressive meaning, just as the phrases and clauses in sentences are essential to understanding meaning in language. This is the heart of the voice leading technique. Since the human brain is "hard-wired," so to speak, to grasp meaning through grammar and phrases in language, for the brain to be exposed to music which has little feeling of grammatical tendency is to force the brain to work out what those tendencies are--all by itself. The problem is...music goes by too fast for that to happen, so the brain will just "tune out" and go into a sleep mode. The question is: is this an

appropriate outcome for a musical performance?

The outward technical device used for the voice leading technique is *legato* (using the real meaning of *legato*, which is "connected," as "connected in the mind," rather than merely in the ear), and the musical approach for this type of legato is *cantabile* (using the real meaning of *cantabile*, which is "in a singing style," and taking that style to mean the style of a truly great singer). Bach was renowned for his cantabile playing. Indeed, a letter dated 12 April 1842 written by F.K.Griepenkerl (a student of N. Forkel) relates that "Bach himself, his sons, and Forkel performed the masterpieces with such a profound declamation that they sounded like polyphonic songs sung by individual great artist singers; all means of good singing were thereby brought into use. No *cercare*, no *portamento* was missing. There was even breathing at the right places...Bach's pieces want to be sung with the maximum of Art."

Application: Sing as expressively as possible every line in a score and then play the music exactly as expressively as you sang it. We have noticed that musicians are almost never more expressive in their playing than they are in how they actually sing music. A

musician who sings music in a boring manner WILL play in a boring manner. It is therefore imperative that those musicians who can play more than one line at a time on their instrument be competent to imagine singing every line in the score simultaneously for the entirety of each piece. This is hard work!!!! Get used to it. It is what making music is all about.

What is unbelievable as much as it is fascinating is that non-musicians can tell instantly the moment a player has stopped singing the lines in his or her imagination. Though they can't articulate what has happened, listeners usually say that the life went out of the music, just at that moment.

Sing every note as expressively as the note requires and no less, then play it that way. This often means that you must sing all the music in your imagination, as you play, with such intensity, conviction and energy that the little that "leaks" out into the music as it is heard will ravish the listener.

5. The Recognition Signal or Harmonic technique

The Harmonic technique or Recognition Signal is designed to assist in creating the feeling of harmony in the souls

of the listeners and the person talking. Human beings will produce this "technical" utterance when acknowledging or agreeing with the person talking. The harmony between speaker and listener results from this utterance; the absence of this utterance indicates a failure to communicate or to persuade. The technique is most effective when the speed and manner of executing it is closest to a spoken technique.

The recognition signal in human speech is designed to express many things from the listener's point of view...agreement, the ability to follow a line of reasoning, "please continue," assent to a point made, etc. It is sounded: uh-huh, with the pitch rising at the end. In section X of his Poetics, Aristotle defines recognition as "a change from ignorance to knowledge." When listeners hear the recognition signal expressed in music, it creates the feeling in the listener of being able to easily follow what is happening in the music and the feeling of unanimity between the performer and the listener. It is crucial to know with utter clarity how each note might be harmonized. The recognition signal or *cercare* is the vehicle whereby the feeling in the listener of not knowing what is happening in a piece of music is changed into a feeling of knowing what is happening.

That feeling is usually described as spiritual because it is experienced as a feeling of being enlightened.

The word "cercare" (pronounced chair-cár-e) is defined in Riemann's Musiklexicon as a 17th century Italian ornament in which the upper or lower auxiliary note is performed softly and suddenly to the main note. This is exactly how the recognition signal is expressed: in other words, the recognition signal is a *cercare*. Yet, today the *cercare* is frowned on by classical music singers as being in exceedingly bad taste. Do you suppose Bach played his own music in bad taste? Who do we trust in this matter? We choose to trust Bach and natural human expression.

Application: The speed of the *cercare* is its most important characteristic. If the speed of the *cercare* is too slow, then it sounds like an arpeggio. If the speed is too fast, then it sounds like a grace note. The correct speed for most uses is the speed at which you most naturally would say "pah-DUM" with the accent on the second syllable. If you say this as PAH-dum with the accent on the first syllable, it is too slow. And, if you say it as pahdum without accent, it is too fast. As the music expresses greater gravity of feeling, the *cercare* is performed more slowly and

with greater emphasis. As the music expresses more liveliness, the *cercare* is performed more rapidly and lightly.

Bach's statement of the Chaconne from the D minor violin Partita is really just one big excuse for playing one *cercare* after another. The Italian concerto by Bach begins with a *cercare*. Beethoven's Pathetique sonata begins with a *cercare* followed by another with a few notes stuck in between. The 9th Symphony of Beethoven is full of *cercare*...though you would never know it from hearing it as it it usually played.

6. The Distortion or Attention-Grabbing Technique

This technique encompasses any device used to get or place the listener's attention where the performer desires it to be. A clearing of the throat is just such a device - it draws the attention to that particular moment. Magicians' tricks would never work if they failed to employ this device, which they call distraction. A trill or any other ornament is also such a device. When a singer changes the vowel being sung during a long held note, it is a distortion of the original vowel and creates a feeling of increased interest in the minds of the

listeners on the long note. Noise or "dirt" is another example - the *acciaccatura* is an example of "dirt" being added to a chord.

Distortion technique is heard when a singer allows the voice to crack or break for emotive effect. Another example is when a violinist crushes the string when playing a specific note to create a distortion which "attentively loads" the note. The conventional definition of *portamento* refers to a glide in pitch from one note to another; that, too, is a distortion technique.

Although Aristotle does not use the word "dirt," he does, in fact use the word "error" in the following sense: "error may be justified, if the end of the art be thereby attained, that is the effect of this or any other part...is thus rendered more striking." (Poetics, XXV) He adds to this the warning: "If the end might have been as well, or better, attained without violating the special rules of the poetic art, the error is not justified: for every kind of error should if possible be avoided." No clearer definition of poetic license can be had. The distortion technique needs to be used judiciously if the end result is not to be marred by a wanton intemperate use of the technique. And so it must be for all the techniques.

The greatest error of all is to create a feeling of boredom in the listener by a too-

polished performance...it is the grossest breach of good taste. Here we must add a comment: there are listeners who actually like music played in a manner that most people, us included, find totally boring and meaningless. These listeners tend to be interested primarily in the information presented in a piece of music, how it is constructed, how the composer has played with the information, and the mathematical accuracy of the performance. The ideal performer for such listeners would be a computer, because they make no mistakes in the data transmission. But neither data transmission nor accountancy is appropriate to the realm of art. Most listeners listen to music to feel what the music is about, that is, to feel the feelings which the great composers intended when they first wrote the music. Where feeling is natural and genuine, there is bound to be some element of chaos and unpredictability. The impulse to eliminate these elements is an error of arrogance and ignorance. For man to assume to know better than nature what is right is arrogant, and to assume to understand nature without the ability to create naturalness in art, even to the slightest degree, is ignorant, even if that nature is only that of music.

Therefore, think carefully when sterilizing a musical performance by eliminating everything interesting and unpredictable, lest you achieve perfection without realizing that the only thing perfect about perfection is that it is perfectly boring. The true aim for perfection in art is the *feeling* of perfection, not the fact. The feeling of perfection in Botticelli's "Birth of Venus" is a direct result of the astonishing amount of distortion he used in the creation of that painting in relation to the proportion of its design.

Application: Don't be afraid of making ugly sounds, especially if the affect you are after needs it to feel right. Ugliness, like Beauty, is relative. We experience something as more beautiful when it is juxtaposed with something ugly - that is the appeal of stories like "Beauty and the Beast." Conversely, music without dissonance is boring. Dissonance without consonance feels irrelevant and harsh. Consonance without dissonance feels saccharine and dopey.

When learning to master ornamentation, understand that adding an ornament enhances the moment in the music to which it is added. Avoid ornamenting or enhancing moments that are already loaded with some other more

effective technique of enhancing. Since the great composers clearly understood these techniques, they wrote them into the scores so that musicians would know which technique they were asking for. The ornaments a composer wrote into the music were those considered to be essential and therefore, obligatory. However, more could be added *ad libitum* as needed depending on the instrument, the room acoustics, and the tempo.

Zest is the principle effect of the distortion technique. Even a disconsolate affect needs zest to communicate the degree of intensity of the feeling. Poetic license grants every performer the freedom to create an enhanced experience of feeling for the listener by whatever means necessary. It is not, however, a certificate of refined or sensitive taste. That is the responsibility of the performer - despite everything being allowed, the performer must always be sensible to a quality of integrity so that the music, not the playing, remains foremost in the hearts of the listeners.

7. The Anxiety Free or "Sans souci" Technique

We call this technique "sans souci" because it is designed to create moments in the music which give the feeling of shrugging the shoulders, throwing up the hands in a gesture to say, "Don't take all this so seriously!! Live a little!! Stop controlling!! Let go! Be happy!! Don't worry so much!! In other words, "sans souci" without a care!"

That is, when the alignment of notes in the score suggests that the notes be performed strictly simultaneously, they are rather to be purposely jumbled or played in an irregular or a staggering manner to create a careless (*sans souci*) effect. A rose by any other name smells as sweet - whether you call it a *sans souci* technique or tempo rubato or jazzy feeling, the idea of relaxed effortlessness is paramount in the feeling which this technique gives to music.

Anxiety rubs off on all who observe it. A musician who is concerned and anxious about making mistakes generates a feeling of anxiety in the audience through body language, the sound, and through the way the music is presented -

Physical tension and mental stress create anxiety; attention and relaxation dispel anxiety.

Mechanical, metrical, and regular playing creates anxiety; inégal, irregular, and logical playing eliminate anxiety.

Obsessions with relatively meaningless detail and accuracy create anxiety; sweeping gestures and focus on meaning and purpose dispel anxiety.

Self-consciousness creates anxiety; confidence and a total lack of self-consciousness dispel anxiety.

Listeners can only truly enjoy listening when a *sans souci* environment and attitude prevails.

Application: *Sans souci* is the antithesis of how we are taught to play classical music. The attitude is the most important means of applying this technique. To apply it means looking for every opportunity to use it - try every passage to see if it can't be improved by having the lines staggered by exactly one half the written value...sometimes the bass leading and sometimes the treble leading.

8. The Stride Technique

St. Lambert, in his preface to his compositions, states that the normal tempo in music is that of a man walking. The observation that anyone can make from looking at people walking is that they all walk at different tempi, and the only conclusion that one can make of this is that St. Lambert was an idiot! However, if we take what St. Lambert said seriously and attempt to discover what he observed, then something very interesting happens: we discover that he was right. That is, if you observe all people walking, they indeed walk at all different tempi, but if you observe only those people walking "who are intending to get someplace specific," they all walk at the same tempo. Large or small, young or old, the tempo is the same for anyone who is healthy, able, strong, and normally formed. The tempo they stride at to get someplace intended is exactly 116 beats per minute - for every other purpose, people walk at all different speeds.

What makes this so interesting is that music, like thought, always intends to get someplace specific - the end of the thought or the cadence. Even more interesting is that just as people walk to get someplace specific at 116, most people also speak with the

normal accents in their speech occurring at a rate of 116 beats per minute - only when we have something specific to say. People who by temperament, by personality, by persuasion, or by habit speak either faster or slower than that speed are perceived to be intolerably dull or slow witted if they speak much slower than 116, or untrustworthy, if they speak much faster than 116. The affect of being slower is of slothfulness or of painful self-consciousness. The affect of speaking faster is that of a shyster who is always trying to fast-talk people into doing things they don't want to do.

At the same time the normal accents of our speech occur at 116 beats per minute, our moments of pause, our moments of emphasis, our phrases, the duration of silence between exchange of speakers in conversation occur at 72 beats per minute. Furthermore, if you divide 116 by 1.618... (the number needed to calculate the ratio of the "Golden" proportion) you get 72 (71.69 exactly...)!

There are a few other tempi which work. These tempi are multiples or divisions of 116 and 72 such as 58 (one half of 116), 144 (twice 72), 96 (4 times 72 divided by 3...a 3:4 ratio), 108 (3 times 72 divided by 2...a ratio of 3:2) 87 (116 times 3 divided by 4...a 3:4 ratio), etc.

Anyone who finds these observations too incredible should prove it for themselves: take a metronome, set it at 116, and put it in front of a television to discover the truth for yourself. Set the metronome at 72 to verify the speed of emphatic moments, pauses, phrases, etc., then try setting it slightly off these tempi to see if speeds such as 118 or 74 or 114 or 70 produce the same level of coincidence.

What one can conclude from these observations is that the human brain is designed to process heard information at a precise rate of flow. The rate of flow may change depending on the significance, density, importance, intensity, or degree of urgency of the information. If the information flows at a rate faster than it can be processed and comprehended, we feel overwhelmed. If it flows at a rate slower than it can be processed and comprehended, we feel hampered, impatient, irritated, or bored by the manner of delivery.

We have proposed that the mechanism in the brain which processes flow does so on the basis of speed of flow in relation to intensity of content. If the intensity of content decreases, yet the speed of flow remains constant, the perception will be that the flow has become much slower. Hence, as intensity of content decreases, the speed of

flow must increase, lest the mind become bored. Conversely, if the intensity of content increases, but the speed of flow remains the same, the mind assumes that the speed has increased, thus, the speed must decrease or the mind will soon feel overwhelmed. This is most easily understood as an inverse proportion: the more that is happening in the heard music, the slower the tempo needs to be, and conversely, the less that is happening in the heard music, the faster the tempo needs to be. Furthermore, each of these musical communication techniques, when added to a performance, will require the tempo of that performance to be ever slower, if only slightly, depending on the information intensity of the score.

Thus it is fair to criticize the way classical music is performed today, as it is overly controlled as to metrical regularity and tightness of simultaneous soundingness of parts, because, in the case of early music, musicians feel compelled to play too fast (due to the lack of interest or meaning in the delivery) or, in the case of romantic literature, too slowly, in order to include in their performances those techniques which they are accustomed to using for the purpose of "warming" up an otherwise cold sounding, mathematically accurate performance. Those techniques to which we refer are: a

continuous vibrato, acceleration and deceleration of a predictable and regular sort, and predictably regular gradations of change in volume (techniques which when applied to speech produce the silliest, most ridiculous effect). In the first case, of early music, the excessive speed fills up the spaces between notes so the listener's brains won't have the opportunity to fill up those spaces with thoughts of boredom. And, in the second case, the "warming" techniques, used to take the chill off otherwise stiff, passionless performances, are distractions which the performers hope will divert the listener's attentions from their unimaginative playing.

Tempo selection in music needs to account for the changing rate of flow, which depends on the significance, density, importance, intensity, or degree of urgency of the information, as well as the affect of the piece. Failure to hit upon the right tempo will create the effect of forcing (if the tempo is slightly too slow) or racing (if it is slightly too fast). However, if these observations are dismissed altogether, then the selection of tempo is based on hope; much like buying groceries, throwing them into the oven and hoping an edible dish will emerge after a while...a kind of three stooges approach to cooking.

Application: be aware of where in a piece a value maybe played at 116 or 72 and test these tempi on listeners. These tempi should make music feel more natural to listeners. Sometimes it will be more challenging to play because the speed may be far faster than a player can handle the technique of playing. However, many composers took these tempi into account in the writing of the music and made the piece so that it would be easier to play when taken at the correct tempo...even if the tempo was significantly faster than normal.

9. The Evaporation or Mystery Technique

This technique is best executed on dynamic instruments such as the clavichord, fortepiano, pianoforte, violins and such, lutes and guitars, as well the voice. The evaporation technique is a diminishing of the volume of sound on the end of a phrase until it altogether disappears or evaporates. The technique is also used in cinema, where it is called the fade. The evaporation somehow forces the minds of the listeners to finish the phrase as it disappears. By playing with the power of suggestion, a performer can lure the music lover on a path of his or her own

making. The part of the music which evaporates is usually not particularly important - evaporating the less interesting parts of the score makes them as powerful to the mind of the listener, even if they are less obvious to it.

Cognitively speaking, the brain is designed to lock on to what always appears to be out of its reach. This is why, though the eye is designed to perceive light, it is shadows which most attract it. When ideas are stated flatly and emphatically, the mind tends to treat them as unimportant, a fault of much technical writing, but when ideas are merely alluded to and suggested by inference, the mind won't be satisfied until it knows all about them. When ideas are clearly expressed with a strong point of view, the information is processed and accepted or rejected by the mind, but in either case can't be ignored. When information is ever present, it becomes part of the landscape and few notice the information, but when sound is strongly waxing and waning unpredictably, the mind of the listener is allowed to more easily grasp how the ideas are wrought and grouped. Whatever is mysterious and hidden tantalizes the soul. This is the perennial lure of the spiritual realm; brains invariably want what they can't have.

By shading a performance to reflect an understanding of the evaporation technique, as well as the other techniques, listeners feel the paradox between an understated phrase ending and the strong attention-focusing effect which is created by the evaporation technique.

Application: Choose particularly unimportant moments in the music to “evaporate”, like the ends of phrases or arpeggiated chords - moments which would otherwise fall flat. Then, prepare the minds of the listeners by gradually diminishing the volume of the sound so that only the last note, though played, is completely silent. This only works in live performances where the listeners can see the note being played but not hear it. In recordings, the note needs to be heard but also needs to be so soft that it causes the listener to feel the evaporation effect. Poetic license and a sense of what works are the best guides.

10. The Timing or Hesitation Technique

One way to perform the timing or hesitation technique is to hesitate a moment before playing the most important note in a line; yet another is to hang on to or hesitate

on a note for much longer than its written value. This technique involves manipulating the listener's expectations of what note is going to sound, when it actually sounds, and when it stops sounding. This technique happens when a climactic note is slightly delayed by the performer, like a hesitation, so that the listener has just enough time to take the suggestion and mentally fill in the note before the performer finally makes the note sound. Comedians use this technique to change the timing of an expected word to one that is unexpected, which, of course, causes laughter.

Public speakers who overuse this technique come across as being contrived and unconvincing. Ditto with performers. As always, unpredictability is key to creating naturalness of effect.

The cognitive partner of hesitation is anticipation. Anticipation is created by building up assumption on assumption about what will happen. When the event which should occur fails to happen at the expected time, there exists a moment of disappointment. That moment of disappointment gets transformed into a rush of pleasure when the event finally comes to pass. This is what children experience on Christmas morning: parents use delaying tactics to draw out the moment of opening

the presents in order to increase the pleasure of discovering what Santa left for each child. If children are given free reign to rip everything open in a willful race, they can experience disappointment even at getting what they wanted. If they are prevented from building up any anticipation by knowing that there are heavy-handed rituals to be followed, they lose interest in the moment of discovery. So it is for most people when it comes to music, comedy, politics, and sports; the art of these endeavors is in the timing.

Application: Know what notes in the music are the highest in pitch, strongest in accent but weakest in affect, most obvious and predictable, or the climax of the piece. Then, either delay a moment before playing them or hold them longer than written. The moment the hold or delay becomes obvious, it is too long.

The purpose of this technique is to catch the attention of the listener unawares in order to create the effect of a quickening of the attention. The moment that effect happens for the listeners is the moment the music must continue to its inevitable conclusion.

11. The "Excrucis" Technique

The word *excrucis* is derived from the Latin: *ex*, meaning - out of, and *crux*, meaning - cross. *Excrucis* is, literally, "out of cross" or "out of crossing." This technique has to do with how important moments involving dissonances are treated. When voices in music, each of which is logically and expressively following its own inexorable path, come together in a crossing (dissonance) which then resolves in an elegant and beautiful manner, the moment is ripe for the *excrucis* technique. These moments, properly treated, produce some of the most "excruciatingly" beautiful effects of which music is capable.

Perhaps the easiest way to think about this is by noticing how it is similar to the feeling one gets when deeply hugging (out of a crossing action) or being deeply hugged by one you love or who loves you intensely. It feels so good it hurts. Many times such moments in human interaction are heavily loaded with profound emotion of the most positive and spiritual kind. This is the cognitive effect of the *excrucis* technique. Making the most of those moments in which such voice crossings are found means temporarily slowing the action down, to the point that any casual observer can notice

exactly what is happening, without causing a loss of flow, in order to create a "grinding" effect as the dissonances rub and grate against each other in the crossing process.

Epilogue to The Art of Delivery

1). These are the cognitive techniques needed to enhance communication. According to Aristotle, in Poetics XXI, "The perfection of style is to be clear without being mean (commonplace)." The purpose behind these techniques, for the performer, is to connect musical information into clear and meaningful phrases to help the listeners make sense of the score. The effect of these techniques is a clear sense in the minds of the listeners of what is important and what is unimportant. Also, the brain needs constant and intense stimulation in the form of unpredictability, clarity of reference, clarity of relationship, uninterrupted flow of idea, and the occasional enigma in order to maintain an alert, attentive, and focused frame of mind. That is the function of the techniques - these eleven different techniques are devices needed keep the brain from falling asleep and to create connections in order to make clear the musical hierarchy for the listener. What feels clear for the

listener creates a feeling of resonance in the soul and so moves it.

2). CPE Bach stressed the importance of flowingness in performance. Flow helps the feeling of connection of all parts and aspects of a heard piece of music. This is of great interest because the use of these eleven techniques can have the tendency to create a disruption of flow, due to the infusion into a musical performance of so much interest, meaning, character, emotion, and expression. That, we believe, is the reason CPE Bach tried to impress on his readers the importance of flow. However, too often, we read such passages, as that from CPE Bach's treatise, and assume we understand what they mean. That feeling of assumed understanding gives us license to do anything that can be argued will create the effect of which the writer speaks. In the case of CPE Bach's use of the word "flowing," the meaning today has been perverted to mean constant and continuous sound using the metronome as the final arbiter of truth. Judged by Bach's own words, that behavior is both mechanical and slavish...or as Aristotle might have described it, mean or commonplace.

From all that CPE Bach says of flow, it is clear that he is referring to flow as in "flow of thought." Flow of thought, whether musical or verbal, must be strictly

maintained, especially in front of an audience, lest a lapse be detected and the performer appear to have lost his or her train of thought. It also needs to be remembered that flow of thought is always supported by the intention to say something specific. Constant and continuous sound has no such requirement, and as such, is a pathetic attempt to appear competent in the face of the lack of musical ideas or thoughts. And ultimately, it is for this reason that the injunction to maintain strict flow must refer to flow of musical thought because maintaining strict flow of musical thought is essential to an "agreeable" (to use Bach's term) or "love"ly performance.

Flow, however, is not the same thing as tempo or speed in music. As we all know from experience, a performance can exhibit an absolutely strictly maintained speed and yet be devoid of flow of musical thought. In music, it is *musical* thought which must flow; the notes are necessary only to carry that flow. Musical thought must flow like a great river. The eddies, whirlpools, currents, and swirls that one observes on the surface of the river never stop the overall movement of the whole river...it flows on, come what may. So it should be with musical thought. Its purpose is to express the meaning of the music intended by the composer. The

performer's job is to intuit what that meaning is and to express the musical thought behind the notes. Any honest effort in this regard, no matter how meager, is better than none at all. These eleven techniques are a means and an aid for uncovering and communicating to listeners the intention of the composer.

3). The problem with using these techniques is that they are effective only when they are obvious. The trick in using them is to be as obvious as possible without having any one technique be the center of attention. This is most easily done by using all of them simultaneously, whenever possible. By intending to use all eleven techniques simultaneously, it becomes impossible to use one to the exclusion of the others, thus keeping all eleven in the right perspective, as it were. As soon as one can notice the technical means of generating an effect, the technique is being employed improperly. As the saying goes: Art disguises itself. It is a delicate balancing act to use a technique or techniques without having the technical aspect become the focus of attention.

4). These techniques enhance musical communication because they induce and support a high degree of attention-paying in the listener and the performer alike. Loving

and paying attention are one and the same thing. This is why performances of music can be characterized as either supporting attention-paying or stealing from it...there is nothing in between. The mere presence of sound in a room is no guarantor of attention, only of passive exposure. When a high degree of attention is created in the listener, the meaning intended by the composer can then be felt - the alternative is either boredom or incongruity. Whereas boredom is clear, incongruity is purposefully not. That is, performers who lapse into mechanical habits of playing music and only occasionally use one or two of these techniques when they remember to do so, bore the brain but seek to interest the mind. Being both bored and interested is a confusing state to occupy for anyone, but most especially a devoted music lover.

5). Very few listeners have the skill or the power to overwhelm their feelings of boredom in order to focus on meaningless matters (i.e., sound events that can mentally be followed but remain unfelt because the feeling of boredom is too intense) such as compositional techniques and structure...matters which call attention to the "genius" of the composer rather than to the feelings which the composer intended to create in the listener. It requires a significant

amount of practice to acquire some degree of mastery to notice these structural details in music when it is performed without these techniques - that is what music students spend their years in conservatories learning. Ordinary, untrained listeners have very little time or patience to do that. Yet, curiously enough, when music is performed in a manner designed to create a high level of attention-paying in the average listener, all the details of compositional technique and structure are enhanced to the point that the average listener can detect and appreciate them.

When all of these techniques are used appropriately in a performance, the essence of the music is efficiently communicated by the performer and easily received by the listeners. In the 18th century, the French used the term *bon gout* to refer to the business of good execution in music. *Bon gout* only can exist if there is intense flavor of any kind to speak of; you can not have *bon gout* when everything tastes flat and boring. The fear of *mauvais gout* creates players who play *sans gout*. Learning to develop *bon gout* requires that everything have a strong, pronounced flavor. *Bon gout* implies a strong cultivated sense of how to balance all the flavors (the cognitive techniques) in the piece by using them all in exactly the right

amounts needed to exactly express what Affect the composer is suggesting in the music. No one but yourself can give you that strong, cultivated sense. That is something which only comes to whomever will grab it.

The result of an extremely skillful use of technique is a highly expressive performance of music that deeply touches and moves those that hear it. Using these techniques creates the effect of playing "from the soul," that is, playing "from the soul," from the listener's point of view. This is the function and purpose of the Art of Delivery.

Part 2: On Affect

Music is nonverbal communication in the form of sound. Affect is how nonverbal communication works. Because Affect is nonverbal communication, every artistic form, like painting, music, acting, dance, etc., has its own way in which the language of Affect is spoken. Without Affect, the nonverbal communicative component of music does not exist - what is left in music when Affect is missing are pitches (either in vertical structures, Harmony, or in linear structures, Melody) in time (Rhythm). Meaning does not exist except by inference. With Affect, music takes on a life of its own and means what the one(s) playing it

intend(s). For the listener, music without Affect is like acting without vocal inflection or facial expression...blank and incongruent...the effect for the listener is confusion and boredom.

Affect, like all of our expressions, is something we can choose to manage or to let it just happen. When we choose to just let it happen, sometimes it works, but most times it comes out as the Affect of self consciousness...an unmitigated disaster in music. When we manage our use of Affect, we can eventually become masters of Affect. The more diligent we are about learning the language of Affect and learning how to speak that language fluently, the more masterful our music or art will be perceived to be by the listener.

Until now, learning anything about Affect has been, itself, a source of confusion because very few people have understood what it means and how to express it. Once you have read and incorporated the lessons in this section on Affect, it is possible to reach a level of mastery in virtually any art. In the end, talent will have almost nothing to do with becoming a master musician, but the willingness and dedication to the hard work of understanding and learning to "speak" the language of the soul will have everything to do with it.

What is Affect?

Affect is the suggestion of the expression of an emotion, a state of being, a physical state, a state of mind, or an attitude. The crucial word in this definition is *suggestion*. It is also the word that makes understanding Affect difficult for most people. However, it is not as complicated as it would appear: remember, Affect is the nonverbal meaning in nonverbal communication. And most people are well practiced at expressing this type of communication - it is a natural part of human expression. For this reason, everyone has the potential to master the whole range of Affective expressions. To reach that potential takes focus, will, determination, and a certain freedom of spirit.

Perhaps the most effective way to illustrate exactly what Affect means is to examine the most sophisticated use of Affect developed in the 20th century, cartoon animation. Let's look, for instance, at Daffy Duck. This character is given to violent outbursts of feeling, insanity, and foolishness. Anyone who has seen this character's antics cannot fail to be convinced of his emotional outbursts.

In fact, Daffy Duck does not exist; Daffy is a fictional character that appears on the

screen through the magical craft of animation. Because Daffy's animators understood Affect, they could create films which would convince an audience that Daffy Duck existed, that he had passionate emotions, and that he was a conniving, greedy, slick, loquacious little duck, totally self centered and conceited. If his animators had not understood Affect, Daffy would not feel real and palpable to us...and we wouldn't love this foolish, avaricious duck so much.

To make Daffy seethe, the animators had to study all the gestures, poses, and expressions of seething and the order in which they occurred. The same is true for when they needed to have Daffy be deliriously happy or conniving or indolent or bored or irritated or in love or any of the other feelings they wished us to know Daffy has. The meaning or the nature of Daffy's character and soul was evident to us because of the careful attention to Affect which the animators diligently studied.

The reason why our own anger or confusion or love is not Affect is because our feelings are real - only when we *act* like we are angry or *act* like we are confused or *act* like we are in love do we use Affect. Affect is the result of really good acting. Poor acting bespeaks a poverty of Affect; the effect of bad acting is boredom.

Affect is present when we clearly and unambiguously understand and feel what is being expressed. When Affect is missing, we as listeners become confused because, especially in music, meaning is complex. Affect makes simple all of the complexities of feeling which music is capable of expressing. When the feeling is clear and unmistakable, the Affect or Affects being expressed impress themselves upon our soul and we respond.

The reason our soul is impressed by Affect is that Affect is the language of the soul. That bears repeating: *Affect is the language of the soul*. The significance of this statement is that we can communicate with the souls of others by using the language which all souls use to express themselves. This is why learning about Affect, thinking about Affect, performing with Affect, expressing Affect, and mastering Affect are the most important parts of the job of being a musician, artist, dancer, architect, actor, writer, poet, or playwright.

Learning the Language of Affect

Affect is the suggestion of a feeling, not feeling itself. Emotion is a feeling like anger, jealousy, sadness, or joy.

To be an Affect, an expression must be a suggestion of something and not the thing itself. In acting, when a character in a play says or does something which suggests that he or she is suspicious, a good actor will do whatever is required to create the suggestion of suspiciousness. The only way an actor will know if he or she is successful is if the audience feels that the character is suspicious. Should the audience think the character is mean instead of suspicious, then the actor has failed. Why? Because an Affect has the quality of being completely objective...which is to say, almost everyone "reads" the same meaning from the expression. This is why it is of paramount importance that musicians learn to manage and master Affect. Otherwise, those who listen may get the exact opposite nonverbal communication than the one intended.

Furthermore, if the audience merely knows that the character is suspicious but doesn't feel it, then the actor has failed. Why? Because we often know many things which we do not feel. The difference for us is that we tend not to *care* much about those things which we know, and we also tend to *care* a great deal about those things about which we have feelings. So, if the actor has not generated the feeling of suspicion in the audience, the actor has failed. Only when the

audience feels conviction about the suspicious nature of the character can we say that the actor has done his or her job well.

Affect communicates directly with the soul of the receiver in an unambiguous manner. How do we know this? Infants respond to an Affect even if they don't understand the words. If you tell an infant in the most loving and adoring manner that he is super intelligent and the next moment (still in a loving and adoring tone of voice) say that he is stupid, the infant will understand the loving and adoring manner, not the words. The same is true for dogs, cats, birds, etc. The tone of voice and inflection which suggest love and adoration is received objectively by the infant as the real meaning - that is the power of the nonverbal aspect of the communication. In the same way, if you express loving words in a scolding manner, the infant will feel scolded and start to cry. The manner of expression, more than the content of the words, is what is objectively received and understood through the senses, and the infant expresses its comprehension of the real message by feeling loved or feeling hurt or attacked. If the infant reads the tone of voice and the delivery method as love, he will respond by smiling and giggling, but if the infant reads the tone of voice and the

delivery as scolding, he will react with fear and start to cry. The words used are irrelevant; only when a child becomes verbal do the words themselves become an issue. In music and in art, words are not an issue, unless you are singing a song.

As adults, we are not above responding to affect as directly as infants do; to assume the opposite is arrogant. True, when others are angry with us, we have to learn to be restrained in our responses so we avoid altercations. But in music, there is no reason to argue, which is why we usually respond to music in much the same way as infants respond to tone and gesture - it is this specific property in music that makes it so compelling to humans. We respond to music in much the same way we did when we were being loved and adored by our mothers.

Perhaps the best way to learn to express Affect is to study children when they are being naturally expressive. What you can notice about the behavior of very young children is that the gestures used to convey Affect are similar from one child to the next. These Affective gestures are not learned, but are innate to our species. Indeed, expressing all the emotions, states of mind, attitudes, physical states, and states of being are part of what it is to be human. Learning to express Affect requires paying attention to

and remembering the gestures that make up each Affect.

Old habits of making music without Affect die hard. If you wish to communicate anything meaningful in the arts, establishing the habit of paying attention to Affects must be the first order of business. The reason for this is that learning is most efficient when it means something. Learning to play music without the benefit of knowing its meaning is like learning Chinese by imitating the sounds and not ever knowing what the words mean...you plainly don't know what you are saying. The same is true in music. Focus on Affect and meaning, and everything is made decidedly easier (if only because it is more fun!).

The Structure of Human Affect

Affect is the suggestion of the expression of an emotion, a physical state, a state of mind, or an attitude. We typically express all four of these states simultaneously, on a continuing basis, for most of our waking lives. The greatest music has as its true nature this feature of human nature, that of expressing four Affects simultaneously. Indeed, when there is inherent conflict in the four Affects, the aesthetic effect is far more interesting to

us...the more paradoxical, the better. This is what makes the real difference between great art and less than great art. Good stuff only expresses three Affects of the total of four possible. Mediocre stuff expresses two Affects. Bad work expresses but one.

Human beings are complex organisms with complex inner lives. Music, in its most elevated manifestation, is the only form of aesthetic expression which is capable of capturing and expressing the inner life of the soul.

Affect is the language of the soul, so it should not surprise us that when it comes to expressing Affect, the soul always knows what to do and how to do it. Anyone who has been around infants discovers this rather quickly; infants have no benefit of language, yet they are perfectly able to communicate their needs and desires to those around them. Adults who are self-involved or are not queued into paying attention to Affect may not understand what an infant wants by his expressions and often end up blaming the infant for being irritating. This attitude is not dissimilar to how many classical musicians think about audiences: if concert attendance is declining, musicians are too quick to blame listeners for their lack of interest in non-Affective music making! This attitude is one to avoid like the plague. It accounts for why

famous opera houses and many symphony orchestras are in financial insolvency.

What follows is a list of Affects. The list is divided into the four types of Affect: Physical, Emotional, Mental, and Spiritual. This list is by no means definitive and should serve only as a model for each person to make up his or her own list of Affects.

Indeed, unless each of us takes the time to make up as large a list as possible for each type of Affect, we risk not being able to distinguish or identify Affects and how they differ from emotions. Therefore...make a list of your own. It should look something like this:

Physical	Emotional	Mental	Spiritual
slothful	anguished	pensive	compassionate
brisk	loathing	serious	humble
graceful	exuberant	pondering	forbearance
elegant	appalled	questioning	patient
pliant	frustrated	knowing	direct
mellifluous	raging	uncertain	intense
nauseous	despairing	certain	loving
tired	afraid	remembering	joyful
pained	seething	theorizing	peaceful
energetic	impatient	speculating	exuberant
leaping	happy	formulating	good
jumping	sad	fantasizing	confident
running	mad	predicting	restraint
wobbly	anxious	studying	impartial
dancing	indifferent	noticing	tolerant
skipping	melancholy	searching	accepting
hopping	tormented	categorizing	encompassing
frolicking	nostalgic	skeptical	multidimensional
striding	sentimental	provacative	greed
strutting	yearning	confused	hubris
throwing	longing	judging	pride
gesticulating	lonely	realizing	penetant
sultry	wishful	vexed	remorse

Physical	Emotional	Mental	Spiritual
soothing	craving	surprised	contrite
heaving	ardent	disputatious	sorrowful
craving	vengeful	rationalizing	lamenting
pompous	furios	agitated	recognizing
restful	jealous	dubious	miserable
choking	desirous	pleased	arrogant
restless	offended	alarmed	haughty
charming	guilty	routine	bold
flowing	scornful	meaning business	perfidious
barraging	scolding	stating	shameful
relaxing	manipulating	descriptive	horrified
slow	dejected	sterile	acknowledging
smooth	jovial	trust	apologetic
trotting	distress	mistrust	wondering
antiseptic	unsureness	cognizant	directional
sleazy	steady	controlling	characterizing
threatening	unsteady	calculating	beautiful
jolly	nervous	hesitating	clean
laughing	empty	interested	cynical

It is a useful and meaningful exercise to take one Affect at random from each column and invent a moment when all four Affects could reasonably occur simultaneously. For instance: choosing at random, we take the Physical Affect of *trotting*, the Emotional Affect of *empty*, the Mental Affect of *dubious*, and the Spiritual Affect of *apologetic*. Think of a moment in any person's life when trotting, emptiness, feeling dubious or doubtful, and feeling apologetic would naturally occur. One possibility is: if you

deeply hurt someone close to you without knowing that you did, and the person told you that they never wanted to have anything more to do with you, as that person walks away from you, you start running after to ask them to discuss what has happened. You want to make right any wrong inflicted, intended or otherwise, but because they are so offended, you doubt that they will even listen to you, which leaves you feeling empty inside.

We call this type of scenario an Affective "vignette." Great music is characterized by either a single Affective vignette or a series of short Affective vignettes which give listeners an Affective view of the inside of the soul for a moment or a series of connected moments. Bach's insistence on maintaining a single Affect from the beginning of a piece to the end was an indication of the value he placed on integrity of Affect in music. *Empfindsam* music is more like an Affective conflict or argument in which, ideally, all four Affects are exhibited in a work and are brought together in a harmony of Affect at the end of the piece.

No other art form has the power to express Affective moments in the lives of ordinary people as much as music. Great music performed without any clear Affect is like viewing a great painting in a room that has no light - everything is there which suggests that an Affect was intended, but the observer can't access it. The true art of the performer is to create an Affect and communicate that Affect by every means imaginable, so that the ordinary music lover is never in doubt as to the Affect being expressed. For a performer to be true to the art in music means being hyperaware of the Affective effect of how any three notes taken

from any place in the score might appear to an Affect-sensitive listener. This is why the 11 cognitive techniques exist: using these techniques ensures that, at very minimum, the score is not inadvertently expressing dullness and boredom...Affects that guarantee to put most listeners to sleep, instantly.