

# Negotiating the musical work.

## An empirical study.

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ICMC 2006



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# Outline

## 1 Introduction

- Conditions, Purpose and Terminology
- Music and Notation

## 2 Method

- Semiological approach

## 3 Empirical Studies

- Excerpts from harp piece
- Love Mangs' Viken

## 4 Discussion

- Whose work? Whose performance?
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# Conditions, Purpose and Terminology

- The musical work before its ultimate notation and performance.
- Mixed media music - music for instruments and (live) electronics.
- Wish to gain a deeper understanding of the underlying processes in the communication between the composer and the performer.
- Making use of this knowledge when working on interactive performance systems.



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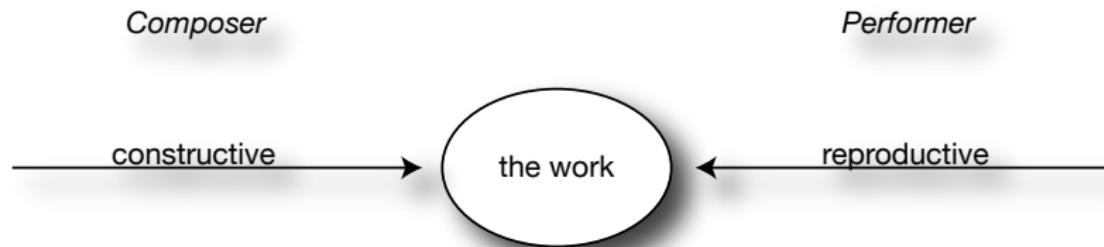


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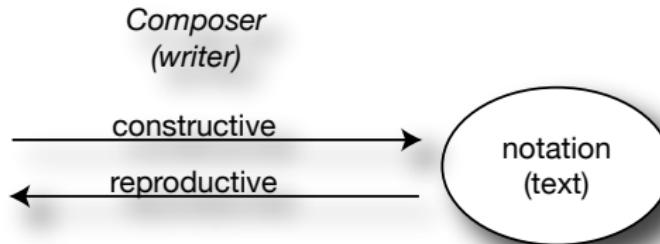
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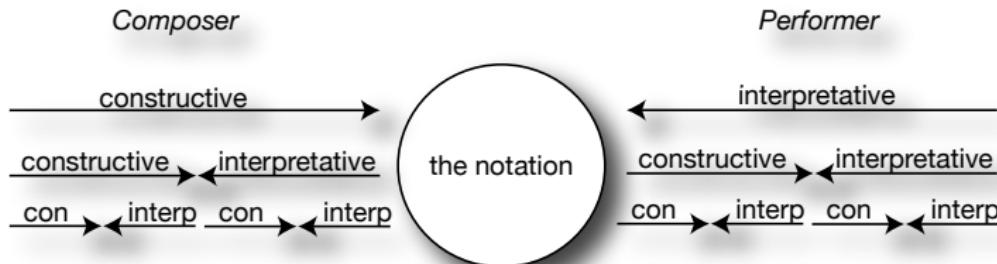
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# Musical Semiology

- Analytical understanding of the musical work in its entirety.
- *The notion of a 'single, well-defined item of information to be transmitted, all the rest being simply noise' is 'misleading as soon as we move from the artificial communication of information to a concrete act of human communication [...]' (Molino)*
- *'...recognizing, elaborating, and articulating the three relatively autonomous levels (poietic, neutral and esthetic) facilitates knowledge of all processes unleashed by the musical work [...]' (Nattiez)*



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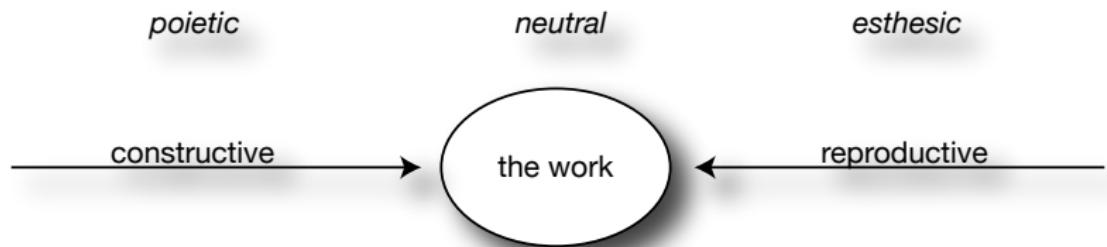


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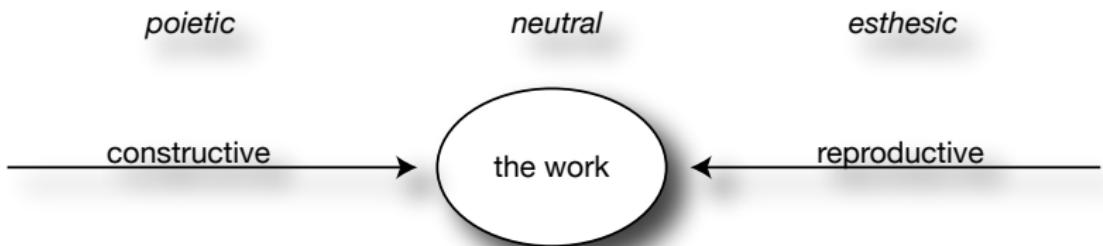
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- the poietic - the constructive phase
- the esthetic - the interpretative phase
- the neutral - the trace



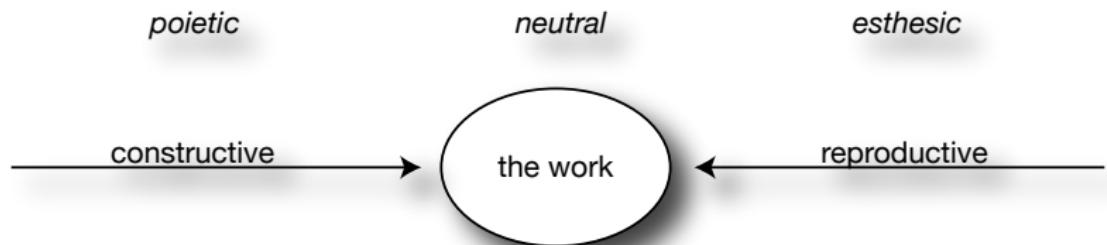
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# Method - Summary

- Drawing on Nattiez and Molino and their idea of tripartition.
- Using a qualitative method for the selection of material for analysis.
- Doing a verbatim transcription of video documentation from which a graph was extracted.
- For an indepth review of the method and theory for this study, see <http://www.ems-network.org>.



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# Four notations of the same two bars.



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Musical notation for two bars of music. The first bar starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a tempo of 16 eighth notes per minute. The second bar starts with a bass clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a tempo of 8 eighth notes per minute. The notation includes various note heads, stems, and rests, with some notes connected by beams and others separated by vertical stems. The music consists of two measures of sixteenth-note patterns.



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# Four notations of the same two bars.

A musical score for harp, showing four different notational representations of the same two bars. The score includes a treble clef, a bass clef, a key signature of one sharp, a time signature of 5/16, a tempo of 60, and various performance instructions like slurs, grace notes, and glissandos.



# Four notations of the same two bars.

A musical score for harp, labeled "Harp" on the left. The score consists of two staves. The top staff uses a treble clef and the bottom staff uses a bass clef. The key signature changes from B-flat major (two flats) to F-sharp major (one sharp). The time signature changes from 5/16 to 3/8. The tempo is indicated as  $\text{♩} = 60$ . The dynamics are marked *mf* and *ff*. The notation includes various note heads, stems, and beams, with some notes having small vertical lines above them. There are also several slurs and grace notes.



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# Conclusions

- Negotiations between the 'vision' and the idiomatic constraints of the instrument.
- The presence of the performer led to new impulses.
- Poietic analysis: music **was not** altered.
- Neutral analysis: music **was** altered.
- Shows the recursive nature of the interplay between poietic and esthetic processes.



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- A piece that uses real-time sound processing.
- Investigate the boundaries between composing and performing.
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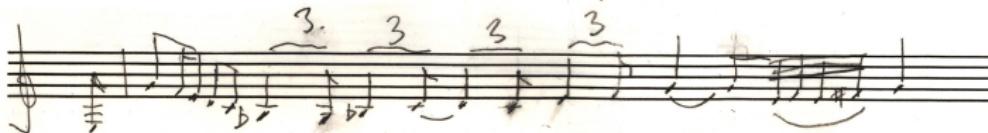


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# Notation of the excerpt.



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Musical notation for harp, labeled 8b. The top staff shows a melodic line with various note heads and stems, some with '3' above them, indicating three-note chords. The bottom staff shows a harmonic pattern with 'tr' (trill) markings above certain notes. The notation is on a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The word 'snd' is written to the right of the staff.



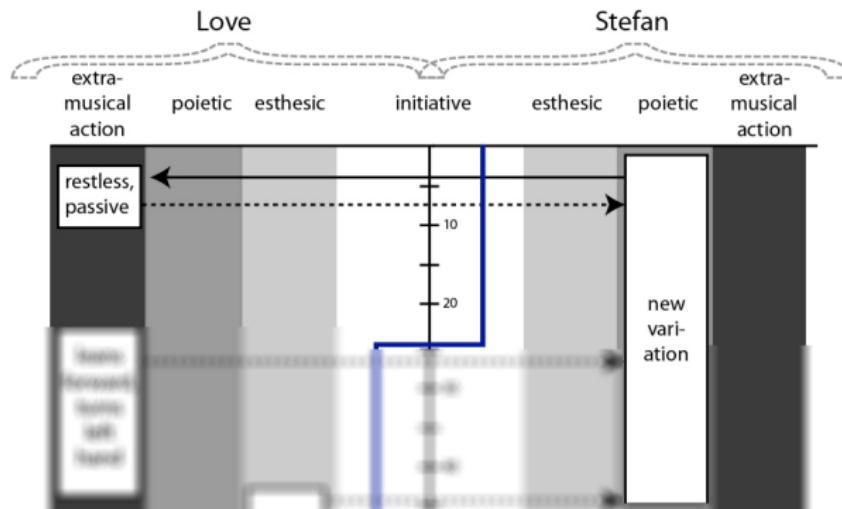
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# First video clip - transcription / graph

	Verbatim transcription of the video	Comments
1	<b>First clip: ~1 min</b>	
2	Stefan: "Yes...Where were we?"	
3	<i>Trying out a phrase, then turning to the sheet of music to write the phrase down. Apart from tapping his fingers on his legs, Love is passive while Stefan is writing,</i>	Love appears a bit restless, while waiting for Stefan to finish writing.
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11	<i>Stefan puts the pen on the music stand.</i>	
12	Stefan: "So the motif so far would be":	
13	<i>Stefan reads the newly notated phrase on the instrument, and turns to Love</i>	
14		
15	Love: "mmm" (nodding)	Stefan turns Love waiting for response or some kind of feedback on the suggested material. However, Love's response is not very articulate.
16	Stefan: "should we have these last as well?"	He seems not to be very engaged at this moment.
17		
18		
19		
20	<i>Stefan tries to add the last bit to the phrase, plays the longer version.</i>	
21		
22	<i>At the end of the phrase:</i>	
23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Stefan turns to Love.</li><li>- On the last two trills Love</li></ul>	
24		At the moment when Love finds an interpretative line of approach to the
25		



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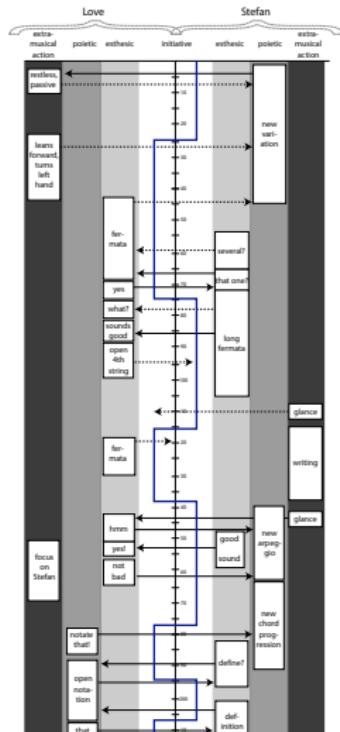
[play movie](#)

[play movie with transcript](#)

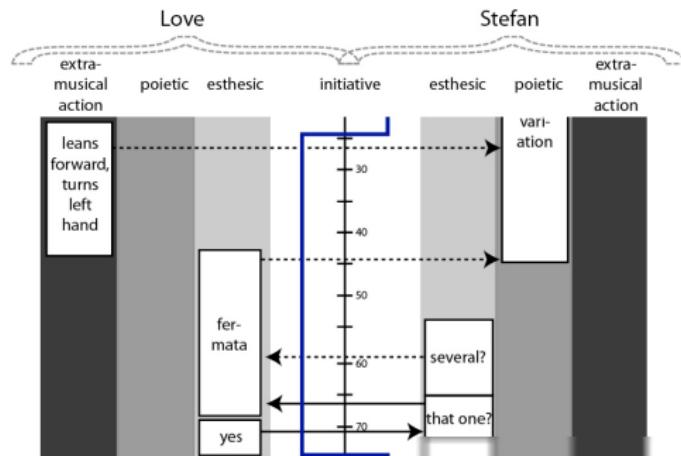


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# The complete graph.



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# Whose work and whose performance?

- Are the roles swapped? The roles of composer and performer seem to overlap.
- Composition may be regarded as a complex interaction between esthetic and poietic processes.
- Performers may similarly be said to oscillate between these two modes of artistic activity.
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# Interactivity between the two agents.

- Remarkable flexibility in the communication.
- Complete misunderstandings lead to the inclusion of new material.
- Noise in the communication - creative misunderstanding.
- A striking lack of synchronicity between the agents.
- An independent flow of the initiative, constructive and interpretative actions.



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# Interactivity between a performer and a computer

Concepts we will attempt to use:

- Noise in the communication may not be a problem.
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- Analyzing these processes may alter the way we think of musician/machine interaction.
- Future work
  - Using the knowledge gained from these studies in a new piece for 10-stringed guitar and computer.
  - Expanding the study to include more cases.



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