Stanley Fletcher: For the Performer

If you open the catalogue of almost any American college or university where music is taught, you will probably find listed there several courses under the heading, Theory of Music. You may also find listed several courses classified as "Applied Music" — which means performance. This curious term, "applied music," prompts reflection, for it seems to imply that the subject "Music" which is being "applied" in performance exists primarily elsewhere — as some sort of platonic entity having a reality apart from the goings-on in studios and concert-halls. It seems to suggest that music is first of all an intellectual or theoretical study and that the theory and practice of music are separate by their very nature.

This notion was reflected in the past in the reluctance with which institutions of higher learning approached the inclusion of music in their curricula, and the uneasiness with which musical performance has finally been accepted into the list of subjects worthy of academic respect. The practice of music is still felt by some to be an activity somehow on a lower intellectual level than its theory. The idea is a relic of the Middle Ages, still surviving even in some academic halls that have already granted lodging to musical performance. Those of us who teach performance of music can walk as equals with the inhabitants of all but the Back Bays of the academic world; but we still have to cope with a large body of folklore entertained widely by the general public and some of our colleagues of the academic and even the musical profession, a folklore which assumes that musical performance makes no demands at all on the mental capacities of the player.

One very widespread notion allows only two qualifications for the performer: "technic" and "inspiration"; in other words, it would make the performer a sort of bastard son of a gymnast and a spiritualistic medium or witch. He simply practices, it is supposed, until his fingers "fly over the keys" with the requisite speed and accuracy, and then, at the time of performance, he is "inspired" to give the music the right "expression." Another school of thought would eliminate the witch and leave the gymnast in full charge of performance. There are performers who work on the first of these notions — the technic-inspiration or gymnast-witchery principle; and some composers, tired of the inspiration part which they take to be an unwarranted intrusion of the player upon their composition, believe they would like performers to be a sort of purely gymnastic mechanism, without the witchery. They have succeeded in persuading some performers that all that music needs is a mechanical reproduction of "what is indicated in the score" — loud when indicated, soft when indicated, crescendo or diminuendo when indicated. Such playing is rightly condemned by audiences as "mechanical," "dull," "meaningless," and — yes — "uninspired." They are justified in the protest; but the composers' protest against undisciplined "inspiration" is equally well-founded. Neither of these notions offers an adequate idea of what lies behind good performance and how the performer functions when he is using to the fullest his capacities as a man and musician in the service of a musical composition.

Most performing artists resent being reduced to a mechanism, and many also know that technic joined only to that elusive entity "inspiration" makes a treacherous pair to put in charge of the important task of performance. The performer has something in common with a gymnast, certainly, and at times he does seem to bewitch his audience. But there is a good deal more. The performer is the intermediary between two human beings, literally the "interpreter" between a composer and an audience. He must take the bare score that the composer provides and transform it into the living experience that the composer conceived and that the audience hears as the musical composition.

In these two folklore notions of what a performer does, the one I have called the gymnast-witchery notion, and the still more limited one that leaves out the witchery part, we have what might be called two primitive Theories of Musical Performance. I believe, as of course you have gathered, that they are both very bad theories; neither of them explains even in a general way what goes on in good performance. I am going to be talking about the other things that I do believe are involved in good performance of music but which these two primitive theories leave out. I am going to be presenting, at least in part, my own Theory of Musical Performance. "Music Theory" will come into my discussion, but I should declare at this early stage that the notion of "Theory for the Performer" which is my point of departure has, in my mind, a considerably wider scope.

The theory of an activity is, of course, how you think about it. It is the more or less organized set of ideas in terms of which you explain to yourself the operation you are dealing with, on what principles it is founded, and how you are going about what you are doing. If you think at all about what you are doing, and work out any organized set of principles by which you understand it, then that is "theory!" The kind of theory you entertain will have a considerable effect on the way you do what you are doing. A player's performance is much affected by the way he thinks about performing. It is therefore worthwhile to consider how a performer thinks. If we consider what a performer of music is doing, and how he thinks about it, and try to explain it by an organized set of principles, then we will be concerned with the Theory of Musical Performance. The attempt to work into this general theory of performance an understanding of the music the player is performing will involve us in what is generally understood as Theory of Music.

Let us begin by considering a player in the act of performing a musical composition, see what is involved in his activity, and note some principles which may serve to make his occupation understandable. There are four obvious external elements that we can start with. There is the player himself, who is a complex and busy human being. There is his instrument (let us say a piano) on which he is playing. There is the score that was set down by the composer. And there is the audience for whom he is playing.

The score, the player's starting point, gives him a set of specifications for the performance of the composition in terms of pitch-relationships, patterns of tones to be sounded in sequence, some to be

sounded together. These are fixed requirements. Also given is the pattern of metrical relationships, the relative speed at which the tones must follow each other, measured on the scale of a regular underlying pulse. The speed of that underlying pulse a composer may indicate as a rate on the metronome. However, there may be some indications as to when the underlying pulse should speed up, or when it should slow down; and when this is to happen, the amount of speeding up, or the amount of slowing down, cannot be indicated exactly. The composer can indicate in general when the music should be loud and when it should be soft, but it is not possible for him to say precisely how loud or soft; nor is it possible for him to indicate, if the music is to grow louder, just how much louder it grows, and at what rate of increase; nor, when it is to grow softer, just how much softer, or at what rate of decrease. Furthermore, if several tones are to be sounding together there is little that a composer can write into the score that will give precisely what the dynamic proportions should be although this question is important to the effect of sonority.

Also in the specifications of the score there is one class of terms which do not refer at all to the objective and measurable characteristics of the sound event, such as loudness and duration, but to the emotional effect on the listener. Such terms are "maestoso," "amoroso," and "scherzando." Terms like these do not constitute a direction to the player in the sense that the rest of the score does. They are rather a kind of test to be used by him to determine whether he has appropriately gauged the elements which, because of the limited communicative power of the score, the composer could not make specific.

At best, the specifications of the score are meagre and limited, and there is much required in the performance of a composition that the performer must judge for himself. The how loud, and how soft, how fast, how slow; the how much louder, how much softer, the how much faster, how much slower; and the balance between simultaneous elements that determines sonority — these we may call the plastic characteristics of music in performance. These are the aspects of performance which depend on the judgment of the player, matters in which he must make up his own mind from the sparse clues a composer can give him. It is in this area of the plastic that a player exercises his art of performance. Dynamic proportions and rhythmic subtleties — these must be the contribution of the player to the composition as he performs it..

It is all-important how he derives his judgments on these matters. But before we go into this question, let us first consider the listener.

The listener may not be aware of the composer's score, for pianists play a good deal from memory. He will be aware of a player much occupied with his job, and of the large instrument and the sounds emerging from it and resounding in the music-room. He will be aware of the pattern of sounds rising and falling, expanding and contracting, changing and increasing and fading, now faster, now slower. Most important of all, he will find himself curiously compelled to listen and attend to them, and he will find his attention drawn to this or that element

in the patterns as they form and dissolve in his mind. Some passing events will recall previous ones, and his experience begins to organize, to have shape, design, form. He finds his emotions and perhaps his visual imagination becoming involved in the experience. There is a compulsion which takes hold of him, and something in him becomes strangely identified with things in the music which seem to live and move, as he may have found himself perhaps, while watching a play, becoming involved and identified with the actors and the events on the stage or screen. If the musical performance is successful, it will all somehow add up in his mind as the performance of a play adds up for him, so that when the last sounds have died away at the end, the total impression of the composition will stand as a whole in his mind, as a structure in sound that is somehow colored by the associations of personal experience which it evoked in him during the performance. He may find it difficult to separate the composition from the subjective responses which it aroused. The composition becomes for him an "expression" of those reactions he had: of nobility, of piety, of vigor or energy or struggle or affection, of darkness or moonlight or gay dancing — or whatever it might be. But to some extent, depending on his own capacities and of course on the quality of the performance itself, he will carry away with him some conception of the composition as a design in sound, self-contained and untranslated into those other subjective terms. He may even be able to whistle a fragment or two; and the outlines of the composition as an event will stay with him, just as the broad structure of a play, or the outline of a book, or the contours of a landscape he has enjoyed, may remain with him long after his experience of them.

The most obvious thing about the performer, who is the immediate agent in this event, is that he is physically very busy, which is what leads naive people to consider him mainly a sort of athlete or gymnast. The gymnastics have an interest in themselves, and some people like to sit on the left side of the music-room in order to watch the player's hands. A player cannot get far without that gymnastic skill. He must have exact and subtle command of his nerves and muscles in fingers, hands, arms and foot, so that physical difficulties do not block his musical intentions, and so that he can bring the sound-patterns forth from the instrument not only accurately but with all the necessary and appropriate plasticity of dynamics and movement and rhythm. He will have some specialized ideas and principles in terms of which he understands this part of his problem, and these might be called his Theory of Technique, which for him is an important accessory to his Theory of Performance. Theories of technique (and they are many) may sometimes affect the musical quality of a performance very much. For instance, a pianist who works from the premise that the piano must be treated as a percussion instrument may thereby profoundly influence his musical results even to the extent of distorting the composition. However, since technique is most appropriate and effective when it is least in evidence, I will make no further mention of it beyond noting that it does constitute a part in a performer's theory. It is the theory of his gymnastics, but there is more to performance than gymnastics.

A performer is not merely a first cousin to a chimpanzee, oper-

ating an instrument in accordance with a code of instructions written on paper. He is a human being like the listener who has as diversified and personal a range of responses to the music as any in his audience. But he is also one who has studied exactly what it is about musical relationships which forms patterns and designs to arouse these reactions in a listener. He knows how these factors work and what he must do to control them to communicate to the listener as far as possible the idea of the composition as he believes the composer conceived it. His responsibility is to arouse those responses and only those responses in the listener that are appropriate.

It is an objective energy or power in the musical sounds and patterns that produces such a wide range and variety of effects in a listener, an energy and power which the composer and performer have at their disposal, which dictates its own laws and which they must understand. A composer explores the forces latent in musical sound-relationships, testing them on his own sensibility and constructing his work accordingly. The performer follows him in this process in order to work out the pattern of experience which he must bring about in the listener. But it is crucial to observe that his control of this experience is on the level of the sounds. During performance he is not concerned with such subjective matters as emotion or imagination, or any of the further responses that the music may stimulate in the hearer and that it may have stimulated in himself. He is concerned with realizing a composition in sounds, as he sees it implied in the specifications on the composer's score. Through control of the plastic factors, dynamic and rhythmic, he is endeavoring to produce a sound-event that will command the attention, hold it from beginning to end, and keep the listener occupied and engrossed in the perception of musical forces building up their own logical and dramatic involvements and working themselves out to a conclusion determined by their own nature. THAT is the composition. In doing this, he is dealing with two psychological functions in the listener, the listener's attention and his sense of time as they are operated upon by musical patterns.

I think it is from this standpoint — a consideration of how the performer exerts control over the listener's attention and sense of time — that we can best understand what a performer accomplishes.

The player's skill with his instrument is applied to the molding of those plastic aspects of the composition which the composer must leave to him, the management of loudness and softness, of balance, perspective and sonority, and of the subtleties of rhythm and pace. By the way in which he manipulates these plastic resources he effects his command over the listener's experience of the composition. It is by control of minute shadings in loudness that he makes the listener follow a musical line to its point and its conclusion. It is by a change in the dynamic level, or a slight change in the fine-grained regularity of the underlying pulse, that he points up for the listener the fact that one statement is ended and a new one begun. Through such subtleties of loudness and softness, regularity and irregularity, he makes clear the difference between "the-same-thing-going-on-happening" and "something-new-beginning," between "this-is-important" and "this-is-inci-

dental!' By the balance between simultaneous sounds he determines whether the listener's attention will be mainly on one or the other, or so equally given to each that it is the relationship he perceives and to which he responds. He can give emphasis to certain characteristics of the composition above others and so regulate the degree of significance that is attributed to each part in the impression of the whole. He can prevent the listener from attributing more than fitting importance to any minor event in the whole, by treating it casually. And he can make certain that the listener does not miss the events which are most significant in the work, by giving them stress and emphasis.

He can do all this because, having worked out his conception of the composition and prepared himself with the skill for molding the plastic resources available to him, he can himself become a listener, and by observing his own attention-processes as affected by his own performance, he can pretty well know how the listener is being affected. He holds the attention of the listener intent upon a musical line by making sure that his own attention is intently held. He guarantees the continuity and unity of a phrase or progress in the listener's mind by making sure of it in his own. He arouses expectation in the listener by himself actively expecting the significant event and seeing to it that the crux of the occurrence is not anticipated. He assures recall of a previous musical statement by reference to its evocation in his own consciousness at the appropriate time. Prepared with his conception of the work as he sees it and armed with the command over his instrument, he proceeds, in effect, to actively "hear it into existence!' He knows that where his own attention leads, that of the listener will follow; and that the structure of musical event that evolves for him will also take form for the audience.

The metaphor is apt when we speak of a performer "throwing light" upon a composition, for the play of attention which the performer controls is much like the spotlight of a stage-director, turned and led this way and that way over the complexity of a whole pattern, now brought to sharp focus, now diffused; at times intense, at times dim, giving dramatic dimensions to the event that is experienced. Like a stage director, the performer has it in his power to determine for the audience just which of several simultaneous events shall have the greatest importance at any one time, and to what degree of intensity they shall be perceived. He controls the degree to which the listener is involved in the events of the composition at each stage during its progress. He decides at which moments the grip of attention shall be relaxed and released, at which moments the listener shall be held in the grip of a line until its statement is completed. The player's own attention operates during his performance commanding, and at the same time commanded by, those plastic factors, loudness and pace, by which the relative importance of elements in the composition is made evident and through which the composition is revealed as a living and dramatic event.

Because he has such power over the mind of the listener through the plastic resources of performance, it is just as possible for a player to conceal the true nature of a composition as it is for him to reveal it.

He may make insignificant what should be important, or portentous what should be trivial. He may project through his manipulation of the dynamic shape an intent entirely at variance with the implications of the inner musical relationships. He may make dramatic what should be lyric, make agitated what should be serene, and introduce gestural intensities which do violence to a composer's more sensitive purpose. Such performances may arouse great excitement and approval in an audience, and there are performers who have achieved great fame by this questionable means. They are the kind of performers of whom it is said "he makes every composition his own!" The best performance may often be less sensational. Inevitably the personality of the player has its influence on his performance, but that performance is most faithful to the music wherein the player's personality is least evident, for all his resources as a performing artist are at the service of the composition, his own contribution of plastic treatment being held subject to the discipline of the musical relationships represented in the composer's score.

It is conceivable that a performer possessing in great degree the innate sensitivity to musical patterns that we evade defining by calling it talent may intuitively sense what is important and significant in musical patterns without recourse to overt analysis of any kind, and instinctively give in his performance the plastic form that is most true to the inner musical forces comprising them. Every artist works to an extent in this way, under the lead of intuition. But intuition needs the discipline of experience and knowledge and reason and is otherwise never entirely trustworthy in dealing with the complex and inter-related forces that make up a musical composition. The understanding of these forces and how they are used by composers to build musical compositions is of course what we call the Theory of Music.

Much depends therefore on how much command the performer has of music theory, on the degree of enlightenment with which he can view the composer's score, on how clearly and in what terms he sees the forces in the musical materials making up the texture and structure of the composition.

Just as there are folklore theories of performance, there are folklore theories of music which can mislead performers, and listeners too, because they are too limited an explanation of what goes on in most musical composition. For example, there is a tendency among students which is fostered not only by the layman's vernacular habit of calling any musical composition a "song," but also by popular and professional "music appreciation" teaching and even some instrumental teachers — a tendency to think of music in one dimension only, the melodic one. Students are told in lessons to "bring out" this melody or that theme, a phraseology which seems to imply that the rest of the music is to be somehow "left in." Music appreciation courses discuss compositions in terms of "themes," all else being presumably background, like the dinner music which accompanies conversation but has no connection with it. This mono-linear concept (and it is applied even to fugues) is the commonest of false and misleading theories of musical texture. It rivets the performer's attention on one dominating element, while the

rest "just happens" in an unorganized way for both him and the listener. Literally, the "composition" is not there.

The truth of the matter is of course that Western music began its development by being interested in the effect of two tones or musical lines sounding against each other, one of them further serving as bass, so that all Western music is a complex development of relationships in two dimensions. The most essential idea that must get across to the student performer is that in a musical composition all the elements are always related; that is what makes it a composition.

The first tools with which theory must arm the student are those for analyzing the way in which tones and sequences of tones interact, the way they develop tensions and propulsions, and how these build up the energy of the musical composition to an inevitable working out over a period of time and at a necessary pace. Composers have been exploring for several centuries the patterns of chain-reaction to which tone-relations can give rise. A performer must be able to take a particular composer's particular score, to see with what sources of musical energy the composer was dealing and how he worked them out. The music theorist has ways of describing and explaining how the forces in musical elements operate, and these descriptions and explanations are mental tools which a performer can use in arriving at an idea of the unique character of the composition in the score from which he starts. Music theory gives him concepts which are the tools to be used for discovering the operation of musical forces in a composition, in finding out how they relate and interact and hold together and produce their effects.

If you want to take something apart to find out what holds it together and how it works, of course you have to have tools appropriate to the purpose. If a piece of machinery is held together by nuts and bolts, you can never take it apart with a screwdriver. If what holds it together is screws, you will never succeed in analyzing its structure and operation with the help of a monkey-wrench. Correctly understood, the melody-accompaniment concept is a useful little tool to use at the right time; but when its limitations are not realized it can blind a student to the nature and vitality of much of music literature; it is too limited a theory. A limited theory is generally a false theory, too specialized a tool, and one which is inappropriate to any but a limited number of contexts. To cope adequately with the wide range of musical literature the student needs skill and experience with a very extensive kit of tools.

The greatest hazard in theory is probably over-generalization. Application of a conceptual tool (like the melody-accompaniment idea) to a context it does not fit is one example of this — the overgeneralization of a principle. A similar hazard lies in overgeneralization of a judgment.

Let me illustrate this. Students are commonly assigned, as part of their theory study, exercises to work out in harmony and counterpoint, according to rules. They are told, "of course Beethoven and

Mozart and other great composers used parallel fifths, but first you must learn to follow the rules before you can break them!" And so the student is kept with his eyes and attention riveted to the rulebook, instead of having it pointed out to him that the significance of things like parallel fifths is that they are dynamite, and then letting him study how the great composers handled dynamite. It seems to me that the way to study and understand the manipulation of musical forces is to look directly over the shoulders of the real experts, the composers.

The other day I was trying to help a young piano student grasp and see more clearly a sequence of chords in a Bartók piece, in a passage where he found the bristling accidentals confusing. I suggested that it might be easier if he described the chords to himself by their shape, as six-four chords. He thought a minute and then remembered that his theory teacher had told him about the six-four chord — it was "weak." Let me quickly say that I am far from holding a theory teacher responsible for a young student's over-simplification of a notion, but the illustration will underscore my point. As a matter of fact, the sequence of chords in question had an effect anything but weak, a fact which the force of previous authority was obscuring for the student until I pointed it out. The judgment was over-generalized and inappropriate to that context. The fact students need to learn concerning things like parallel fifths and six-four chords is a moral as much as a musical one: one may betray weakness by using means less subtle than the circumstances justify. But let them learn this from the literature, from watching the experts suffering through the problem of musical conscience.

Theory must have many faces. There cannot be a single theory applicable to all music, but every style of musical composition needs to some extent a different theory. And the way to learn this is not by looking at the rulebook all the time but by looking at compositions. Otherwise the rules stand like the laws of the Medes and the Persians in the student's mind, and it may be years, if ever, before he opens his eyes one day to the truth of the music and finds that the rules are not anywhere near so true as all that. Dealing with real music is a safeguard against over-generalization. From the point of view of a performer, I would say that theory as it is often taught is too abstract and academic a study. It does not get around soon enough or often enough to dealing with actual compositions. There is not sufficient study of live music. The student is left with a residue of bits and pieces that are of little use to him in his job as performer.

A performer must deal with compositions right away and must develop the tools for thinking about whole compositions as soon as possible. But too often his theory study does not go beyond a static labeling procedure, a dogmatic judgment and stereotype formal concepts that never find relevance to the living music with which he must deal. The two perspectives on music, theory and performed compositions, are not brought into the same focus, so that he might see these analyzed particulars as they function in a whole composition, as he must realize it for the ears and mind of the listener.

It does not profit the performer that he is able to identify a certain relationship between voices as a major seventh unless he goes on to see its function not only as a dissonance arising from suspension, but also as tightening up the finality of a cadence with a structural and dramatic function in the progress of the whole work. Nor is it sufficient for him to be able to label a harmonic combination as dominant unless he goes beyond that to see its place in a harmonic progression that leads the music onwards and brings it to the attainment of some overall structural and dramatic purpose. This is where he must begin as a performer, but it is only his starting point. He must go on from this to consider the implications of such evaluations for his performance. He must decide: just what balance between voices at the moment of suspension (or whatever the source of tension may be) must he achieve in order to give the dissonance its requisite propulsive power according to the demands of the musical movement in texture and phrase? How acute must the bite of the seventh be at that instant, to make the event most vivid yet still proportionate to a consciousness of the integrated phrase? Or how much emphasis by subtle dynamic or rhythmic treatment must be given to the change from dominant-color to tonic-color at the instant of resolution? How much change will be too great a change and result in undue weight being given to this lesser event in the context of more important events of greater duration? Always he has to look at the context, and always at the whole composition.

The kind of theory teaching that would be of most use to the performer would consider his needs from this point of view. Since a performer needs to be able to formulate his conception of the composition as a live experience constructed out of the dynamic materials of music, which he will present to a listener as a pattern of experience in time, it is essential that the student performer learn to see the materials of music not merely as static elements to be dissected and labeled and discussed according to dogmatic rules for "good" and "bad" progressions and stereotype formal concepts. His theory study, no less than his practical studies as performer, should lead him to see music as something with an independent energy of its own, resistant to manipulation, extending itself in time by its own momentum, with the power to command the human mind and attention and to arouse incalculable responses in the imagination and emotions as a consequence. It is not something to be done on paper according to a book. It is only to be discovered through the ear and mind and the human response stimulated through the ear and mind.

I am proposing the notion that, if "musical intelligence" is to mean anything more than an apology for lack of any other kind, then it can only mean a keenly developed awareness on the performer's part of music in these conscious terms. Theory teaching has failed for the performer unless it increases his sense of the magic and mystery in the power of musical patterns, develops in him an understanding of the dynamic functioning of the materials of music, and empowers him with the ability to conceptualize a musical composition as a live psychological event, as an organic pattern of active and inter-related forces operating upon himself and the listener alike.

It might be better if instead of speaking of it as "Music Theory" we called it more specifically "The Theory of Musical Compositions." I do not mean you have to make every performer a composer, though that might help. But if we spoke of "The Theory of Musical Composition" it would remind us that we are concerned not with some higher platonic reality, but with what has gone into the making of actual living musical compositions as performers have to deal with them. It would keep us looking in the right direction, instead of into the sky.

The conception of theory as the functioning of musical intelligence suggests the possibility of a higher level of operative discipline in a performer's practical studies, and an ideal for the standard of teaching of both theory and performance. On the one hand, it would call for a theory teacher having at least some of the talents of an interpreter; on the other, it requires that the teaching of performance should have constant reference to theory. Unfortunately, in much studio teaching musical materials are very little mentioned except at the most primitive level, and performance is directed solely on the authority of the teacher's intuition; or according to that hand-me-down model, "tradition," as exemplified by the teacher or by his favorite teaching editions; or, still worse, by imitation of the "master performance" on a recording. This is the purest of "monkey-business" — the mere aping of externals in which the reason for anything is never asked, and asked of the only authority from which a valid answer can be obtained, the composition itself.

Theory should be a part of all studio teaching, an integral part of the approach to performance. Even an elementary student can learn to note how the outlines of his simple piece are marked by the "resting-places" of the bass. And all students should learn that the expressiveness of music is not something they must learn to "put into it" but something they must reveal by working out that plastic treatment which makes most evident the textural and structural nature of the composition. The study of music must guide the study of its performance. The teacher must lead the student performer to a higher level of enlightenment wherein intuitive and rational perception unite and cooperate, and insight supplies the directive and corrective to intuition.

On this higher level the performer will be able to view musical compositions somewhat as an ornithologist views birds, or a botanist views plants, to see what they are like and how they function as organisms; and this conscious knowledge gained from theory will make his intuitive response to music more sure. Conversely, his intuitive sense of the rightness of musical relations in performance will be constantly checked against the results of his analysis. He will no longer be content to make a crescendo because some teacher or editor (or even the composer in the role of editor) has indicated that he should, but will ask himself: "What is happening in the music that should be pointed up by an increase in this passage?" Or, if an accent is indicated, he will ask: "What in the texture or drama here calls for emphasis, and how much?" Such a performer will recognize, when his instinct or intuition tells him to make the music suddenly softer, that the treatment is justified because of a resolving dissonance at that

moment, or because of a startling change of direction in the harmonic progress, or a sudden retreat from a previously asserted purpose in the structural development of the composition.

In sum, the level of performance I am describing here is that of an intelligent musical performer sensitized to music with all his resources. He is not merely a highly trained automaton performing under the direction of blind instinct, however refined blind musical instincts may become. He is not merely a rational mind, dissecting and analyzing the dead carcass of a musical composition with a dry brain in a dry season. In this performance the two have become one, a complete musical personality with mind and imagination and intuition working together toward producing an enlightening and communicative performance which shall engage not only the player but the listener as well at this enriched level of experience.

Such an enlightened level of study on the part of performers is particularly important in this present age, when suddenly the world of our cultural consciousness has expanded in both space and time, and the attitudes of other cultures and previous ages all clamor and compete for our understanding, and no one point of view and no one orientation is enough to serve performers as a working philosophy. The primitives saw music as a sort of beneficent drug or a magical intoxicant. At a later time, music was classed as a branch of mathematics. In the early 18th century musical composition was declared to the greater glory of God and the delight of the executant, and the 19th century discovered it as an escape into dreams. Our own time, to use the phrase of H.G. Wells, has "broken the frame of the present," and a performer is faced more than ever before with the need for understanding and synthesizing the creative philosophies of the past. We need, above all, performers who can bring to their art and study and teaching the fullest resources of insight and skill. Music is ONE study, in which theory and practice function together. I am suggesting an ideal for that study, which demands that neither theory nor performance should stand alone, for music must have both at once.

****

Eugene Weigel: For the Music Educator

> Culture is activity of thought, and receptiveness to beauty and humane feeling. Scraps of information have nothing to do with it. A merely well-informed man is the most useless bore on God's Earth. What we should aim at producing is men who possess both culture and expert knowledge in some special direction. Their expert knowledge will give them the ground to start from and their culture will lead them as deep as philosophy and as high as art.[7]

7. Alfred North Whitehead, Aims of Education, (New York, MacMillan, 1929).