

# Evaluating a Performance – Ideal vs. Great Performance

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## Two Notions of Performance

Music, as everybody knows, is a performing art. Not only are musical works performed, but they are also designed, by their very nature, to be performed. The notion of a performance of a musical composition is therefore part and parcel of our conception of music. And yet the relationships between a composition and its performances give rise to many difficult problems, some of which will be touched on later. For the present I want to stress two more specific issues in which the significance of the notion of performance for music lies. The first is that a musical composition is constituted by concepts and properties intrinsically connected to performance. In fact, I believe that the very meaning of these concepts and properties is rooted in the ways they are manifested in performance. Hence, even if a certain composition has never and will never be performed, it is still constituted by concepts and properties whose meaning lies in the ways they should be manifested in performance.

The second point is that since music is in fact a performing art, since we perform music, and listen to various performances of the same compositions, and conceive of them and evaluate them as music, notions of performance are an integral part of the conceptual repertoire in which we conceive of music. Hence questions pertaining to the nature of performance, and to the relationship between a composition and its performances are inescapable in any philosophical investigation of music. And around these general questions a host of others suggest themselves: What makes a particular performance (even if faulty) a performance of a particular work? Can there be different equally good performances of the same work? In what terms should performances be evaluated (and graded) and how? Can a composition be individuated apart from its performances and how?

On many of these problems and the issues surrounding them, a distinction between two conceptions of performance seems helpful, and sometimes

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necessary. On the one hand we may conceive of a performance as a musical entity in itself, independently of the composition whose performance it in fact is. A performance thus conceived can be aesthetically evaluated “on its own” so to speak, or in and of itself, with no regard to our having an independent access to the composition whose performance it is. Sometimes, to push it to an extreme, we may not even know that it is a performance of a particular composition, and may not care if it is. Let us call this the “*autonomous* conception of a performance.”

On the other hand we often think of a performance as being essentially a performance of a particular composition, and we thus conceive of it and evaluate it. Here knowing which composition the performance is a performance of is essential. It is arguable that on this conception we must also have (in principle at least) an independent access to the composition, by being able to read its score, for example.<sup>1</sup> Being a performance of a particular composition is, on this view, part of the very nature and identity of the performance. There can yet be various different performances of the same composition, and they may be compared and evaluated as such. In light of this essential relationship between the performance and “its” composition (the work whose performance it is) let us call this the “*intentionalistic* conception of a performance.”

There is a great difference between these two conceptions, and they imply important differences for the nature of music and of musical composition. I am not committing myself here to any particular view of the ontic nature of a composition — whether it is a class of performances, or a kind (in [first name] Wolterstorff’s sense) or a design (in Roger Scruton’s).<sup>2</sup> I shall exemplify the pertinence of the above distinction for one case. Many people think that music resides only in performances (some would add, actual and possible). A composition, on this view, is either defined as a set of performances or has no independent ontological status — it is at best a sort of a blueprint for performances, something like a notation for artistic dance. Such a view seems to presume the autonomic conception of performance. For it does not allow for conceiving of the performance as being essentially related to an independently given composition. On this view, saying that one hears a performance of, for example, Beethoven’s fifth symphony does not amount to conceiving the performance as inherently related to an independently given composition such as Beethoven’s Symphony in c minor, but merely to describing or classifying the performance in a certain way.

I believe, though, that most people, if asked, would adhere, as a matter of course, to the intentionalistic conception. They would agree right away that a performance is of a certain composition, that this is part of its very identity and that it should be thus evaluated. This may appear somewhat paradoxical in light of a very common actual attitude toward performances, which seems to presume the autonomous conception. This is an attitude presumed by the vast majority of concert goers and listeners, who are unable to

read a score and to form a conception of the work by such reading and of those few who can, most do not do so unless they write the work or intend to perform it themselves. It is doubtful whether this vast majority has independent access to the work itself; they listen to a performance (evaluate it, reckon it in comparison to others, and so on) as an independent work of art. They watch with admiration performers (usually soloists and conductors), indulged in their own making, without having a look at the score, and sometimes in obvious defiance of it.<sup>3</sup>

There are many in-between and “hybrid” positions in which performances are regarded as contributing, in one way or another, in addition to the score, or even without it, to the identity of the work. I shall not discuss them here.<sup>4</sup>

Whether one can access the work itself without reading the score (by knowing, for example, other performances of it) is also a problem I shall not discuss here in detail. It suffices for my present introductory purpose to realize that it is beset by grave difficulties. Let me mention some. We may grant perhaps, that a proficient musician can “reconstruct” the work itself by hearing a performance of it, when the work is relatively simple and in a familiar style. Once the work exceeds a certain level of complexity, or is in a less familiar style, this becomes practically impossible. But apart of this practical barrier, there are problems of principle here. For what does “reconstructing” the work mean here? Presumably, being able to write it down. So again the identifying criterion of the work is its score. Or perhaps one would say, reconstructing the work may mean being able to repeat it, to play it again (without writing it). But then, what would be the criteria for a successful repeat, or for the “it” in “playing it again”? Moreover, could this conception allow for the performance (on the basis of which the reconstruction is made) to be faulty here and there? What could that mean if the only access to the work is through the performance?

The notion of “the work,” and the requirement for having independent access to it, are important on the intentionalistic conception and for evaluating performances. On this conception a performance is conceived of as being essentially a performance of a certain composition. Hence its aesthetic evaluation depends on the properties of that composition. It is entirely pointless, or even conceptually impossible, on this conception, to evaluate a performance or any of its properties in and of themselves, disregarding the properties and demands determined by the composition whose performance it is.

### **Aesthetic-Normative Properties (A-N Properties) and Ideal Performance**

A musical composition is constituted by normative properties that determine how it should sound, and which must be realized in performance. (Starting with a D-eighth and moving onto a G-quarter together with a G

chord in the bass, is an obvious example. But having all that in piano, in an Andante of 3/4 is also such a property. We shall say below more about such properties.) However, music as art is characterized by the fact that a large part of the *aesthetic* properties of a musical composition — those properties relevant to its aesthetic evaluation and conception — are, in this sense, normative. For this reason, I talk about aesthetic-normative (A-N) properties.<sup>5</sup> This might appear suspiciously circular: an A-N property of a performance is a property that has *as a correct performance* of the composition of which it is a performance; a correct performance of a composition is one that realizes the A-N properties determined by it — in other words, those properties that a performance must realize. These characterizations might appear to be circular: on the one hand, we are defining (or characterizing) an A-N property on the basis of the concept of a correct performance, and on the other we are defining a correct performance on the basis of the concept of A-N properties.

Is this not a vicious circle that empties the above concepts of all content (as well as the assertions that are to be grounded in them)? Can we find a way out of this circularity?

One can say much about A-N properties without being tainted by the circularity under discussion. A-N properties are the properties conceived of in understanding a composition (as a musical piece of art). They are the properties relevant in aesthetically evaluating and understanding a composition, and for conceiving of it as it is. We would all agree that the very notes themselves, as well as harmonic structures and progressions, bridges between motifs and themes, contrapuntal progressions, structural-formal elements, registration and orchestration are A-N properties of a musical composition. However, fine shades of phrasing (the construction of a musical sentence), shades, and sub-shades of rhythmic structure, tempo, and the composition's internal dynamic — all these and more are also to be counted among the composition's A-N properties. Those properties — and the relations between them — are properties that a skilled and sensitive musician will try to uncover and understand when studying a composition in depth (and his ability will determine his understanding, the limits of which cannot be known in advance). There are other properties — the nature of the emotion or mood expressed by a passage (or a part of it), the extent of its emotional validity or persuasiveness in context, its "rhetorical" or "dramatic" character, and so on — which musicians sometimes steer away from talking about as elements involved in understanding a composition. I believe though that such properties are to be counted among the composition's A-N properties, and that recognizing them, being open to them and understanding them are also part of aesthetically evaluating and conceiving of the composition.<sup>6</sup>

So far we have discussed A-N properties without referring to the issue of performance and so it would seem that we have not fallen foul to the circularity mentioned above. However, because I believe that the concepts

involved in conceiving of a piece of music and evaluating it are ultimately connected with the concept of performance, in the end, we accept that there is circularity, but deny that it is problematic. This circularity merely expresses a deep and important internal connection between the concepts of understanding, conceiving of, and evaluating a musical composition on the one hand, and performances and their evaluation, on the other, in that the concepts acquire their meaning through modes of performance. Although I believe this position is of great importance, it is not crucial for the case I am making here. For, as we have seen, whoever does not accept this position, and thinks we can grasp these concepts independently of notions of modes of performance, need not be bothered by the question of circularity anyway.

I have argued elsewhere that on the intentionalistic conception of performance (and some other plausible assumptions) every composition has one "ideal performance" which realizes or fulfills all A-N properties determined by the composition.<sup>7</sup> This, though, does not imply that there is an ordering or ranking of all the performances of a work. There can be various different performances of the same work, none of which is preferable over the others, and yet there is one ideal performance of the work. A performance, on this conception is itself a type that has many tokens, which, though they can differ acoustically (and in other respects), they all fulfill the same A-N properties determined by the work. It is in short an equivalence class of token-performances with respect to the A-N properties of the composition.<sup>8</sup>

I shall summarize the basic argument as follows: Where two performances differ, they either differ with respect to a property which is not an A-N property determined by the composition, in which case they are not different *as performances of the composition* (under the intentionalistic assumption), or that at least one of them (possibly both) fail with respect to that property, in which case they are not both ideal. The argument for an ideal performance does not have an epistemic significance in the sense of pointing out how to determine the A-N properties of a work, or how to rank given performances; it does not even presume that we know or can know the ideal performance of a work. The main significance of the argument is claimed to lie both in highlighting some important implications of the intentionalistic character of a performance, and in the style of conceptual connection it indicates between a musical composition, its aesthetic-normative properties and features of performance or ways of fulfilling them, to which I called attention at the beginning of this article.<sup>9</sup>

### Evaluation and "Great Performance"

Anyone interested in the aesthetics of music has a natural expectation that the discussion will have some bearing on questions of aesthetic evaluation. What considerations should guide the evaluation of a composition? Are there objective criteria for evaluating a piece of music? It would seem,

though, that only rarely will one find answers to these wishful questions in the philosophical (or musicological-technical) literature. To the extent that answers are proffered, discussions about questions of evaluation are usually too general to leave us any real hope for formulating criteria for, or even constraints on, specific evaluative considerations.

The reader should expect no better answers here. The above discussion on ideal performance perhaps clarifies something about the conceptual relationship between a composition and its performance, but it certainly does not presume to provide a list of rules or criteria for evaluating compositions or performances, and the question of which A-N properties a given composition has must remain open. Nonetheless, I think there is room to clarify philosophically why this is the case; namely, why we should not expect to be able to formulate clear rules or criteria for the aesthetic evaluation of music. Here too we will find that things are clearer in relation to evaluating a performance than evaluating the composition itself. I shall try to characterize the notion of the great performance, in distinction to that of the ideal one.

The issue of evaluation is so wide and multifarious that naming some simple distinctions may help focus our concerns within the general domain. Generally speaking, in terms of musical aesthetic evaluation, we would do well to distinguish the different subjects of evaluation from possible modes of evaluation. With regard the former, we should distinguish between evaluating the musical composition, the performance of a certain piece, a particular composer, or a particular performer. For each of these categories, of course, different parameters can affect our evaluation: a composer can be judged by the wealth of his imagination, his ability, his professionalism, his versatility, speed, and so on. A composition can be judged by its originality, emotional richness, the technical ability expressed by it, its performative difficulty, the quality of its musical texture compared to the quality of its orchestration, and so forth. Similarly, with regard performances and performers, there are different and varied parameters for aesthetic evaluation. Singers, for instance, can be evaluated on their appearance and the way they stand on the stage, or the strength and quality of their voice no less, and usually more, than the musical qualities of the performance that are more closely connected to the composition itself. Violinists, cellists, and pianists are also often evaluated on the basis of highly noticeable properties, such as cleanliness or virtuosity, no less, and sometimes even more, than musical properties to do with the nature of the performance, properties that are more "concealed," that demand knowledge and understanding, and that are less noticeable.

In terms of modes of evaluation, it must be noted that an evaluation is always made from a certain point of view, which is determined or controlled by the type of interest that is directing us. One can evaluate a composition

in terms of its economic value, its national or historical meaning, its psychotherapeutic qualities, the type of influence it has on people in certain situations, or, for that matter, on the milk production of cows, and so on. This enormous range wipes out all chances of a serious discussion on the concept of evaluation in general. For us, there is clearly one concept of evaluation that is particularly interesting – aesthetic evaluation. Many have emphasized that this concept is dependent on our isolating a type of *sui generis* aesthetic interest, irreducible to other interests.<sup>10</sup> In many ways, aesthetic evaluation theory characterizes this concept, and so many people have stressed, for instance, that aesthetic evaluation refers to the composition as an end in itself. However, apart from this concept requiring further clarification, it is clearly not enough.

In what follows we shall narrow our horizons, and focus on the aesthetic evaluation of the performance of a musical composition. Here too we must make a fundamental distinction between evaluating a performance as a musical entity or phenomenon in and of itself (the autonomous conception), and evaluating a performance essentially conceived of as a performance of a certain composition (the intentionalistic conception). Since we are mainly concerned with the latter concept, it is natural to expect that the evaluation of the performance is not unrelated to the evaluation of the composition.

It would seem that we can organize the wealth of considerations raised above under three main headings: 1) Considerations to do with evaluating the cognitive aspect: the compositional knowledge and “musical information” that are embodied by the composition and that find expression in performance. 2) Evaluative considerations that focus on the emotional, dramatic and rhetorical aspects of both the composition and its performance — for instance, to what extent the performance is emotionally convincing, to what extent it properly expresses the composition’s emotional, dramatic or rhetorical character, how well does it flow, how varied it is, and so on). 3) Evaluative considerations that focus on aesthetic aspects, which are understood as *sui generis*, and as irreducible to other categories (including the above. Such aesthetic considerations focus on irreducible concepts like beauty, or what it is “correct” or “appropriate” to do in a certain context.

These three categories give rise to many problems. I shall concern myself with a certain aspect of the third category.

Above and beyond considerations of “beauty” or “appropriateness,” we sometimes talk in terms of a special concept of “greatness.” There are compositions that are thought of and evaluated not only as good and beautiful, but as “great,” as well as performances where the concept of greatness is not understood in terms of what it is appropriate to do, or even in terms of beauty. This concept of greatness is difficult to explain. Sometimes, it is used to imply that the composition’s or performance’s aesthetic properties are not merely aesthetic properties, but rather that they are connected to or



express important aspects of the “human spirit,” or general cultural traits. A great composition is not merely professionally potent or correct or beautiful, but rather seems to express or instantiate something deep and important about our lives, our spiritual and cultural world, our emotions, and so on.<sup>11</sup> Sometimes we talk about a great composition in other terms, as possessing a special and overwhelming power, through which it apparently irresistibly forces itself upon us, and leaves us unable to judge it using the regular criteria of correctness and beauty. We behold it with the wonder and astonishment usually reserved for powerful natural phenomena.<sup>12</sup>

This concept of greatness has been linked to concepts of knowledge: the great composition apparently teaches us important and deep truths about ourselves, our lives, the nature of our emotions, and so on. This concept of knowledge is different from the one I spoke about earlier in relation to cognitive conceptions. In that instance the nature of such knowledge and its elements can be comprehensibly indicated, so much so that many philosophers have tried to interpret it in information-theoretical terms.<sup>13</sup> The concept of knowledge employed in talk about “great” compositions, on the other hand, is more difficult to explain, and somewhat abstract and mysterious; attempts to interpret it end up with offerings that are no less abstruse.

Sometimes these terms are employed to discuss not only compositions themselves, but also performances. A great performance is not necessarily the most beautiful, clean, exact or correct one. Like a great composition, there is something about it, beyond the regular evaluative considerations, which forces itself upon us. But what is the nature of this “something,” and in what sense is it beyond regular evaluative considerations? Can it be clarified in more “positive” and intelligible terms? To a certain extent, I would say that it can. With regard to performances (when conceived of under the assumption of intentionality as performances *of* given compositions), we can interpret the concepts of knowledge and greatness in terms of the A-N properties that constitute the composition. The aesthetic evaluation of a performance can be explicated in terms of knowledge in the following way: we (aesthetically) esteem a performance to the extent that it expresses or realizes the maximal number of the composition’s “important” normative qualities; a performance is highly thought of to the extent that it reveals these properties to us, or “persuades” us to change our conception of them (meaning, to change our conception of the composition). A performance is “great” when it reveals the composition’s properties that are both very important and concealed, such that we would find it difficult (or impossible) to conceive of them independently of that performance.

There are many A-N properties that are evident to any sensitive listener (for instance, such “absolute” properties as the structure of the notes’ pitch); some are less overt, to be discovered only after much analytic effort and an extended acquaintance with the composition (such as thematic relations



and broad harmonic progressions, as well as subtle emotional and rhetorical aspects); additionally, there are also hidden properties (which are also some of the composition's A-N properties), which demand extraordinary skill, knowledge, and experience in order to grasp. These degrees of openness are true of properties of mood and expressiveness, as well as of "technical" ones. These are not clear distinctions, but rather points on a continuum familiar to any musician based on his experience.

The central issue for us is that, in principle, all these properties can be conceived of and known independently of the performance at hand; furthermore, it is according to them that we evaluate and "judge" it, by asking to what extent the performance succeeds in expressing or realizing them. But in addition to all this, there are also performances that expose us to A-N properties that we simply could not have conceived of without this performance. This, I propose, is the mark of a great performance. This characterization can also explain the feeling that a great performance forces itself upon us, because we do not judge it in the light of familiar A-N properties (which we conceive of and know independently of the performance) but rather reveals the existence of A-N properties that we could not have conceived of other than in or through it.

If there is some validity in this characterization of the concept of a great performance, its significance lies not only in clarifying a notion that is fairly intuitive for many of us, but also in indicating a limit of the intentionalistic conception of performance. For if a great performance reveals to us properties of the composition that we cannot grasp independently of it, our insistence on the intentionalistic nature of performance seems to be stretched to its limits. For, a performance, on this conception, is *of* a particular composition, which is conceived of, including its A-N properties, independently of it. But our characterization of great performance may seem to pose a challenge to the very idea of a composition and its A-N properties being conceivable independently of any particular performance. Also, it should be clear that if we insist on these properties, revealed by the great performance, as being A-N properties of the composition, an ideal performance must realize them. The main difference here is not only that a great performance need not be ideal (there may be many A-N properties it misses), but that an ideal performance is an abstract, ideal, notion — as we have emphasized, we may never actually confront it. A great performance, in distinction, is by its very nature, an actual performance whose very presence reveals to us hidden A-N properties of the composition.

The issue of a composition's (or performance's) greatness is also connected to the composition's singularity, when the aesthetic interest in it is aimed at its being one-of-a-kind. Stephen Davies, for instance, emphasized that aesthetic interest in a composition is directed toward it as an end in itself, and not as a means to something else. From this point he concluded

that a composition should be evaluated as an individual instance in and of itself.<sup>14</sup> Nonetheless, he strenuously distinguished between this and the claim for singularity, which he interpreted as claiming that a composition is *sui generis*, incomparable, sharing no properties with any other composition.<sup>15</sup> The claim for individuality looks to me to be correct (and fairly trivial), but Davies's conception of singularity seems unhelpful, and it is obvious that there are no compositions that are singular in that sense.

However, there is another sense of singularity which Davies, unfortunately, does not refer to or discuss. A composition is singular in this sense when it itself determines the criteria for its evaluation; when it is not evaluated by a priori standards that apply equally to other works. This, as opposed to Davies's concept, seems to me to be interesting, and speaks to genuine intuitions. It may well be that the aesthetic evaluation of music (a composition or a performance) treats it as singular in this sense — but I do not know; it could also be the case that it is not always, but only sometimes correct. However, I think that it does characterize our attitude toward a *great* composition, one which forces itself upon us in the sense that it creates new evaluative standards for itself, and determines the criteria for its evaluation; it expropriates itself from the reaches of pre-existing criteria.<sup>16</sup>

This claim concerning the characteristics of a great composition must be distinguished from the fairly common view that artistic taste in general and the criteria for artistic judgment in particular are shaped in response to what are regarded as masterpieces and works of genius that have already been integrated as such within a certain historical-cultural framework (Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, Schumann, and so on). We never start from square one — not in art, music, or any other field. We always rely on quintessential examples, and any criteria we have are none other than comparative trajectories of masterpieces — we learn from them, and we use them to evaluate other works, all the while changing, revamping, and refining these comparative criteria — and we are never equipped with a priori criteria. I assume that this is correct and important; however, this is not what I referred to in what I said above about great compositions. Rather, I intended that great compositions create internal criteria for themselves. And although comparisons to other works may enhance our grasp of those internal criteria, great works cannot be judged comparatively or by external criteria, even those historically brought about by other great pieces of music. What are these internal criteria? By their nature it is difficult, maybe even impossible, to say anything general here, for they are specific to every composition, and are conceived of while studying it.

This would also seem easier to understand in the light of what I said earlier about great performances. Normally, we judge a performance on the basis of the A-N properties belonging to the composition of which it is a performance. I noted that a large number of these properties can be conceived

of independently of a certain performance, even if this requires knowledge and analytical effort. However, I remarked that a *great* performance is one that exposes A-N properties that we can grasp only in and through it. To a certain extent, this characterization can explain my comments on the inter-nality and singularity of the criteria by which we conceive of and evaluate a great composition (as well as a great performance). A performance's singularity — its being a *sui generis* performance — resides precisely in the fact that the A-N properties exposed by it would not be accessible to us other than in and through it. Only in and through the performance do they seem "persuasive" — that is, they appear to be especially important A-N properties of the composition. However, it is difficult, if not impossible, to conceive of them without the performance and outside of it.

It is hard to say when an A-N property is important, but I would imagine that it is not that difficult for each of us to identify examples of more or less important properties from our own musical experience. We could offer a crude characterization and say that a property is important when it has a broad scope in relation to the composition under discussion. For instance, a single note is obviously one of the composition's A-N properties, but is usually not particularly important; on the other hand, tempo relations and rhythmic structure, polyphonic transparency and formal organization, emotional aspects or dramatic or rhetoric character, and so on, are more often important A-N properties in the sense that they apply to the whole composition, or to large parts of it. My claim is that a great performance exposes us to properties, which despite their being A-N properties of the composition, are difficult to conceive of separately from or independently of the given performance.

Here, too, I think that the above characterization can be somewhat helpful in understanding the ways the term "great" is used in relation to performances and performers — the insight that a performance is not merely good and correct, but is somehow singular, and exposes hidden elements of the composition, which would have been missed were it not for the performance.

Even though I tried to minimize it, I must confess that my primary characterization of the great performance contains a certain element of subjectivity, both in terms of the "discovery," and in terms of what we can conceive of independently of the performance. Who comprises this "we"? One person's discovery might be another's seasoned knowledge, and what one person cannot conceive of (independently of a certain performance) another maybe can. I think it is nearly impossible to generalize here, and so the general concept of greatness characterized here is relative and subjective to a certain extent. I will be satisfied if I have succeeded in throwing some light on elements of this concept in relation to each one of us (at a given time), without presuming to make a unified generalization. Nonetheless, it is interesting to note the large similarity in the way different people (with similar

knowledge and musical education) identify and evaluate A-N properties. Were it not for this similarity and (relative) uniformity, I doubt whether we would have a concept of "greatness"; then, however, I doubt whether we would have other (perhaps simpler) concepts regarding aesthetic evaluation, such as "correctness" and "beauty."

## NOTES

1. Here and in the article in general I am talking of Western, classical, written music, in which we have a fairly clear notion of a composition. This, I am aware, is not a trivial assumption, and is seriously restrictive. As many scholars have pointed out, even apart of the problems raised by "classical" and "Western," it is often difficult to determine the exact point at which improvisation, dance music, folk music of various sorts, and so on, become a determinate "composition" or "work." And then it may pass through all sorts of versions and revisions, which may raise problems of individuation of the composition in question. I shall not dwell here into the problems raised by these, and simply confine myself to the domain restricted by that assumption: A Mozart Concerto, a Beethoven Sonata, a Chopin Scherzo or a Bartok quartet are examples that are sufficient to mark the domain.
2. N. [first name] Wolterstorff: *Worlds and Works of Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980) and Roger Scruton, *The Aesthetics of Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).
3. A plea for an autonomous conception of performance is presented in Thomas Carson Mark, "Philosophy of Piano Playing," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 41 (1980/81): 299-324 and Thomas Carson Mark, "On Works of Virtuosity," *Journal of Philosophy* 77 (1980): 28-45.
4. Consider, for example, B. [first name] Edlund's bold formulation: "Indeed, since it may be argued that the identity of a musical work does not reside in the score and in the exact reproduction of its inscriptions but emerges as the cumulative result of many encounters with a composition, as the weighed sum of different performances revealing different aspects of the potential richness of the work, the crucial role of interpretation in musical ontology becomes apparent"; [first name] Edlund, "Sonate, que te fais-je? Toward a Theory of Interpretation," *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 31, no. 1 (1997): 24. M. [first name] Krausz seems to think somewhat more mildly in the same direction. His view seems to be that a musical work, though identifiable by its score, is yet incomplete without "completing interpretations"; M. Krausz "Rightness and Reasons in Musical Interpretations," in *The Interpretation of Music*, ed. M. Krausz (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).
5. For an understanding of a work as defined by normative characteristics, and their connection with a correct performance of the piece, see Wolterstorff, *Worlds and Works of Art*, part 2, sects. 4-7.
6. This issue is argued over not just among philosophers, but also among musicians and analysts. On the one hand, there are those who narrow their range and only see analytical-theoretical properties as belonging to the composition's "objective" properties, and on the other there are those who emphasize its emotional, dramatic, and rhetorical properties. Let it be noted, by the way, that in the writings of many great composers (like Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann, Mahler, and others) special importance is attributed to the latter set of properties, both as they explain their intentions in their compositions, and as they pass criticism on other pieces.

7. Gilead Bar-Elli, "Ideal Performance," *The British Journal of Aesthetics* 42, no. 7 (2002): 223-42.
8. For reasons spelled out by Wolterstorff, *Worlds and Works of Art*, 48-52, with respect to a composition, it is perhaps better not to talk here of a "class," but I shall leave these fine features of the ontic nature of a performance, its modal properties, and so on, aside.
9. Confounding epistemic limitations with conceptual relations seems to me to inform much in the literature here; see for instance, Edlund, "Sonate, que te fais-je? 32; "Musicians can never know for certain whether they have succeeded in being faithful to the work, whether they have actually performed the music according to the composer's intentions." But the fact that on many occasions we do not know whether a property is constitutive of the work, and the fact that we are usually tolerant to many options, as Edlund illustrates with some features in the opening of the *Adagio* of Beethoven's op. 13, may merely show epistemic limitations. Also, Edlund's "contractual" conception of performance and his conceiving of a work's properties in terms of the composer's intentions also blur the real conceptual issues I am concerned with.
10. See, for instance: Stephen Davies: "The Evaluation of Music," in *What Is Music?* ed. Philip Alperson (State College: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1987), 303-27 and Scruton, *Aesthetics of Music*, chap. 12.
11. Against these commonly held claims, it has been argued that if music is to be profound, it must be so in a different sense than for example, the literary one, because it does not have meaning in the sense in which meaning can be said to be profound in, for example, literature. For a recent discussion, see Peter Kivy "The Quest for Musical Profundity," in Peter Kivy, *Philosophies of Arts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) chap. 6. The issue is not central to my task here and I shall not discuss it.
12. This characterization is connected to Immanuel Kant's "sublime" in Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Judgment* (CITY? PUBLISHER?) but I shall not go into that here.
13. A very influential text in this direction is L.B. Meyer, *Emotion in Music* (Chicago: PUBLISHER?), 1956. Meyer has since changed his mind, but others still adhere to his early position.
14. See, for instance, Davies, "The Evaluation of Music," 309-12. Here too one of the important sources of these conceptions is Kant's *Critique of Judgment*. For example, Scruton sees the issue of singularity — a composition's being a unique piece of art — as the main implication of Kant's "antinomy of taste"; see Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, paras. 56, 57 and Scruton, *Aesthetics of Music*, 337. I do not think that the concept of singularity as used here is the same as in Kantian anti-nomy, but a discussion of this issue is beyond our concerns here.
15. *Ibid.*, 313.
16. It could be that this is what Ludwig Wittgenstein meant when he wrote that (artistic) greatness and genius are characterized by a kind of *courage*. See Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 38.