Moving early music: Improvisation and the work-concept in seventeenth-century French keyboard performance
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Chapter One: Introduction

Setting the Scene

Once, when I was a young graduate student in Montréal, I attended an unusual masterclass. It was given by a prominent and internationally renowned baroque violinist, whom I had heard perform brilliantly the previous evening. Being a harpsichordist and organist myself, I attended not only to support my violinist friends, but also to learn everything I could from a great artist whose performing style I much admired. As I sat in the subterranean rehearsal room of McGill University where the class took place, however, I began to feel ill at ease.

One of the student violinists—with whom I frequently played in chamber ensembles and the school's baroque orchestra—had just performed the first movement (Adagio) of Bach's Sonata in G minor for violin, BWV 1001. As usual, I found her playing deeply expressive and full of vitality, and I expected the master violinist to agree, albeit with suggestions for various technical and musical refinements. The pupil looked expectantly at the master, eager for her approval, but found something else: the master's annoyance. With a sigh, the master offered some perfunctory comments. Oh yes, the performance had been very musical, and certainly, she handled her instrument deftly. But to what purpose had she put her technique and musicianship? The pupil had clearly ignored many of the fine details of Bach's notation, arbitrarily introducing inappropriate bowing, phrasing, timing, dynamics, and a host of other musical details. She had clearly missed or ignored what Bach intended for his composition. Why had she done this? Did she think herself above Bach, the great composer? Did she not realize that her primary role, as a performer, was to seek to understand and transmit Bach's message, encoded however obliquely through the score's notation? Had she no respect for Bach's work?

This was what made me feel so unsettled. I knew enough about the history of Western art music (WAM) to recognize the vestiges of Romantic ideology in modern concert life, including its deification of the great composer and its moral imperative to *Werktreue*, or fidelity to the musical work.[1] I had thought that we enlightened musicians of the Early Music Movement—we historically-informed performers—had moved past such things. What I knew about seventeenth- and eighteenth-century musical culture included recognizing the imprecision of notation, the centrality of performers, and the importance of improvisation. Surely, if we were interested in understanding and performing historical music on its own terms, such notions would be incompatible with *Werktreue*. Yet here was incontrovertible evidence that I was wrong. Here, in an officially sanctioned setting, in a community of historically-informed performers, the master was chastising the pupil for having neglected her responsibility to the composer, to the score, and to the work. None of us batted an eye.

After leaving the masterclass and reflecting on the experience, I came away with a far greater sensitivity to the influence of *Werktreue* within my own musical life. The advice given by my teachers, for example, though grounded in the techniques and methods of the eighteenth century, was nevertheless expressed in terms of interpreting a composer's intentions ("I think what Bach intended here was…"). Historically-informed performance (or as it is often affectionately rendered, HIP) suddenly appeared as just another means of satisfying *Werktreue*. Studying history was a way of moving even closer to what the composer intended, of becoming a better interpreter of musical works.

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[1] Although *Werktreue* depends very much on Romantic ideology, it does nevertheless seem to be primarily an invention of the early twentieth century. It is certainly wrapped up in the trappings of Romanticism and the work-concept "because a particularly authoritative idea of the work *is already held firmly in place*" (Goehr 2007, xxxii). *Werktreue* only achieved its full flowering in the twentieth century, and was further sustained by the advent of recording technology (Ashby 2010). One might also trace the origins of *Werktreue* in the editorial aesthetics of the mid- to late nineteenth-century, particularly in the editions of the *Bach Gesellschaft* that sought to present "pure" texts without editorial additions.

It was really only after reading philosopher Lydia Goehr's *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works* (2007) that this problem crystallized for me. Goehr's book, in which she argues that the work-concept only emerged with regulative force around 1800, shifted my awareness to the various concepts—or more perniciously, ideologies—that silently guide our practices. Moreover, it revealed how an historically contingent concept like the work-concept could gradually recede from view, hidden behind the objects it engendered. The very idea that I should be faithful to a musical work is, after all, dependent on the notion that such a thing as a "work" exists at all; yet the existence of such works is something only rarely questioned by musicians. It follows, then, that without something like the work-concept to organize their practice, musicians before 1800 must have conceptualized music differently. Without the ontological framework of the work-concept, along with its associated ideals and practices like *Werktreue*, how might music-making have functioned differently in the past? How might musicians have conceptualized their creative process and its products? How might this music have actually sounded if produced under such radically different conditions? Moving to the present, why were we, as historically-informed performers, not trying to find answers to these questions? How different *could* our music and our music-making be if we only tried?

These questions form the problematic core of my research. In the years since that uncomfortable masterclass, my awareness of the work-concept and its tacit influence has only sharpened—particularly now that I find myself also in the role of teacher to a new generation of historically-informed performers. This dissertation constitutes an effort to move from *awareness* of the problem to an active *understanding* of it, and then ultimately to a variety of creative solutions. The ultimate aim of my research, then, is to answer the following question: without the work-concept, what kinds of practices become possible in HIP? In order to do this, I first select a musical repertoire in which the work-concept fits particularly poorly. Using the music of the seventeenth-century French harpsichordist and composer Jacques Champion de Chambonnières (1601/2–1672),

I replace the work-concept and work-based performance with an alternative conceptual-practical locus: improvisation. Using tools from historical music theory and historical improvisation studies, I then formulate a theoretical-practical description of Chambonnières's improvisational language. Using this framework, I learn to improvise in an historically-informed manner, relying upon a specific corpus of Chambonnières's harpsichord pieces as exemplars. Finally, I bring this acquired knowledge and experience to bear on the historically-informed performance of seventeenth-century French keyboard music.

Since this problem of the work-concept's tacit influence stems from my own artistic practice, it must therefore also be explored through practice. This research is what is often described as *artistic research* (or alternatively, practice-led research), a mode of inquiry in and through performance. Because of this, throughout this dissertation I will make reference to a variety of audio recordings of my own playing, including improvisation exercises, practice sessions, and public and private performances. These recordings are not only intended for illustrative purposes. In a very real sense, they directly constitute a vital part of the methods and outcome of the research project. Nevertheless, since my research—like all artistic research—is of an interdisciplinary nature, it will also be necessary to frame the various methodological choices I have made.[2]

What follows in this chapter, then, is a series of four conceptual and methodological plateaus, each one treating a particular facet of my research project. Although these various topics may not always be addressed directly in each subsequent chapter, they nevertheless form the ever-present thematic backdrop for all of my research. I will first interrogate historically-informed performance, understood here at once as a method for artistic renewal and as a sedimented musical tradition. Next, I will explore in greater detail Goehr's idea of the work-concept. In particular, I will pursue

[2] By "interdisciplinary," I refer not only to the various academic disciplines that inform my work (music theory, musicology, philosophy, etc.), but also to the larger disciplines of academic research and artistic practice.

the ramifications of the concept's regulative force. I will connect Goehr's work to Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of doxa and habitus, using them to understand how the work-concept can continue to exert its regulative influence on HIP. Third, and returning to HIP-as-method, I will consider the extent to which HIP can be used as a tool for research. I will first explore the notion of HIP as a kind of experimentation, comparing its workings to what historian of science Hans-Jörg Rheinberger calls an "experimental system." Finally, I will turn to HIP as a particular modality of artistic research. In dialogue with a number of artistic researchers, I will make clear what conditions must be placed on HIP if it is to function not only as an artistic method, but also as a method for research. After describing these four plateaus, I will move on to a brief evaluation of several examples of artistic research, each sharing at least some themes in common with my own work. Lastly, with all of these pieces in place, I will provide a brief summary of each of the dissertation's chapters, including its particular area of focus and its relevance to my wider research questions.

I can turn now to a consideration of the conditions under which my project began, and around which my whole professional life still hinges. What, exactly, is historically-informed performance?

The Two Faces of HIP

Historically informed performance (HIP) is at once two distinct practices, even if the two are often conflated in the minds of both audiences and performers. On the one hand, HIP is a method by which performers try to "join historical awareness to historical music" (Haynes 2007, 10). Such performers seek to engage, through the medium of performance, with historical evidence of various kinds (treatises, sound recordings, instruments, etc.). Since all historical evidence is by definition fragmentary and incomplete, performers must also necessarily work imaginatively to fill in any gaps in their understanding of the evidence. While many performers may choose this approach because

of its alignment with various kinds of *authenticity*,[3] the ultimate result of the movement is actually to form a musical style and substance wholly of the present. By virtue of its combination of historical evidence and the musician's contemporary response to that evidence, HIP thus "reconstructs the musical object in the here and now, enabling a new and hitherto silenced subject to speak" (Dreyfus 1983, 304). The musicologist Richard Taruskin (1995), most notably, has described the early HIP movement as a creation of twentieth-century Modernism, thereby forming a style of performance more in touch with the modern world than the so-called mainstream performance tradition. Thus, although HIP seeks to reconstruct performance practices of the past—because they are desired as more "authentic," more apt, or simply more interesting—the result of this effort is a newly formed contemporary style.[4]

This contemporary style is the foundation for the second face of HIP in the twenty-first century, namely an established oral practice—or, a tradition—parallel to that of "mainstream" performance. After HIP's early days of artistic experimentation, the style invented by pioneers like Gustav Leonhardt, Frans Brüggen, and Nikolaus Harnoncourt began to spread as part of the Early Music Movement. Aided by a recording industry eager to capitalize on novel sounds for old music, historically informed performers were able to share their newly conceived style with a wide array of listeners across a wide geographical distribution. At the same time, as HIP's pioneers cemented their professional reputations, they also began attracting students eager to learn this new style and attitude to performance. Many of these students were drawn to the ethos and methods of HIP. Perhaps more importantly, though, they were also drawn to the *sound* of HIP: its particular instruments

[3] The notion of authenticity has an acrimonious history within HIP. Authenticity had long served not just as an ideal for HIP, but was also imagined an achievable goal. The most significant nail in the coffin of this notion was likely that delivered by Taruskin (1995), about which I will have more to say later. Peter Kivy's *Authenticities* (1998) is particularly useful in disentangling the kinds of claims performers make towards authenticity: or rather, what authenticit*ies* there might be at play in musical practices.

[4] Joost Vanmaele (2017, 23-37) provides a useful summary of the history of HIP from its beginnings into the twenty-first century, traced through a series of representative texts by practitioners of HIP.

(historical harpsichords and organs, gut strings, winds with fewer keys), its articulations (distinct and variably shaped, in comparison to the constant legato of mainstream performance), or its tone colors (often clear and transparent, with little vibrato). Over time, as these students began to enter the professional world, HIP was also introduced to conservatories and universities, further cementing its place in contemporary musical life. In this way, students have perpetuated both the *methods* and the *sounds* of HIP as inherited from their teachers, but with one key difference. Unlike their teachers, students of HIP do not necessarily need to "invent" a new style of performance. Instead, they absorb, learn, and internalize the style—just as they would for any mainstream performance style—in the traditional manner: by way of apprenticeship under master teachers.

What we have, then, is an autonomous performance tradition (HIP) existing parallel and adjacent to the disruptive method (HIP) by which it was first created. Indeed, historically-informed performer and musicologist John Butt has observed that already "by the late 1980s it was quite clear that HIP could engender its own traditions, albeit 'invented'" (2002, 12). It is now possible to become a successful HIP professional without ever once engaging with HIP's methods.[5] There is still, inevitably, a period of *defamiliarization* that occurs whenever someone first engages with HIP-as-tradition. In order to conform with the tradition, one is forced to grapple with a new instrument, new playing techniques, new approaches to phrasing, etc., and as a result, the music that one plays is made shockingly unfamiliar. The conventional, institutionalized way out of this unfamiliarity, however, is not imaginatively to invent one's own solutions based on one's reading of historical evidence. Instead, a compensatory *refamiliarization* is ready-made, provided to the player as an integral

[5] Ton Koopman would evidently agree: "But these days, I notice that many of the good performers are less and less interested in sources. Great musicians like Harnoncourt, Leonhardt, Brüggen, like myself and others have made many important discoveries; and younger players seem content with relying on those discoveries. They go off and make music, relying on what the earlier generations have taught them; they often do not bother to do their own research. I think that's dangerous because, if we are wrong, the next generation should find out our mistakes, and correct us" (2003, 7).

part of an already-established tradition. Choosing to align oneself with HIP, then, is not ordinarily a matter of escaping performance traditions; rather, it is a movement from one tradition (mainstream performance) to another.

Of course, many reputable institutions, teachers, and players do indeed teach and espouse the methods of HIP as well as its traditions. In favorable circumstances, students might learn to "re-create" the style of their teachers through careful study of historical materials, imaginatively reconstructing and re-discovering the performance traditions of HIP on their own. Eventually, they might even propose alternatives or emendations to their teachers' own styles. In some ways, then, the pioneering spirit of the Early Music Movement is still alive. As performers, many of us continue to innovate and re-shape our performance styles by way of HIP's methods. The performance tradition in which we work is therefore not fixed, but dynamic, as any comparison of performance styles from, say, 1980 and 2020 will demonstrate. However, in comparison to the movement's pioneers, our own capacity to innovate seems quite limited. Where it was once possible to effect radical stylistic change in the span of a single decade, we now measure small, appreciable change over several.[6] Why does it no longer seem possible to radically re-think the music we play?

There are, I think, several reasons for this. First, the very existence of a *tradition* constrains the practice of HIP-as-method. The two faces of HIP, method and tradition, are mutually influential. Our tradition bows in semi-deference to method, allowing itself to be updated if presented with strong enough evidence. Our method, meanwhile, is perpetually constrained by tradition. That is, whenever we engage in HIP-as-method, the artistic results of this process are evaluated against the

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[6] Haynes (2007, 46-7), for example, discusses the enormous change observed in the performance style of recorder player Frans Brüggen between 1962 and 1973. In the span of little more than a decade, Brüggen had more or less invented a wholly new style of performance, which Haynes refers to as "Period Style." Stylistic innovation does still continue within HIP-as-tradition, even today, as evidenced by the work of performers and conductors like Skip Sempé, Teodor Currentzis, Christina Pluhar, and many others. As fresh, inspiring, or novel as we might find their performances, the scope of these innovations is, however, still constrained—in ways that Brüggen's performances were not—by their embeddedness within HIP-as-tradition.

backdrop of tradition, representing the general consensus of HIP's practitioners. Moreover, the various performance decisions we might make (the creative, imaginative component of HIP-as-method) are also pre-conditioned by our performance tradition. By way of example, let us suppose that I read a treatise that suggests a particular fingering for scalar patterns in particular situations, and I attempt to incorporate this fingering into my own performances. Under normal circumstances, the tradition of HIP—the one I learned from my teachers and in which I participate on a daily basis in my professional life—functions as the tacit framework for my artistic decisions, creating imperceptible limits on the ways in which I might engage with this particular historical evidence. The new fingering will likely have a determinate effect on my articulation and phrasing; but unless I have a very compelling reason for it, using this new fingering pattern will have no tangible effect on my pre-determined ideas about tempo, arpeggiation, and a host of other performance factors. To re-formulate an earlier point, HIP-as-method is not normally an invitation to invent a new style, but rather an opportunity to modify an existing one. In this way, HIP-as-method supports the slowly evolving continuity of HIP-as-tradition.

From a positivist perspective, this seems like an appropriate approach to HIP. As performers continually strive towards authenticity, even if only acknowledged as an ideal rather than as something truly achievable, they gradually alter their own style of performance. Tradition, representing the critical consensus of historically-informed performers, thereby constitutes a line of development that continually approaches—however provisionally, or asymptotically—perfection. Performers embedded within this tradition are usually not concerned with re-starting this line of development, with finding a new point of origin. Instead, they continually make small course adjustments, corresponding to new historical evidence or new ways of reading historical evidence, that collectively constitute the line's asymptotic curve. Of course, HIP-as-tradition does gradually

change over time, but it achieves this change at the same time as it disavows it, preferring instead to concentrate on its ultimate goal of authenticity, truth, or perfection.

In reality, though, the study of history is not a positivist enterprise. Historians must *interpret* the evidence with which they work, and thus, different historians may draw different conclusions from the same evidence. Moreover, historians do not normally make any claims to the completeness of their histories: each history is provisional, approaching only some portion of the past from a particular perspective. As oboist Bruce Haynes puts it,

> [o]ur "Period Bach" style, for instance, is carefully honed by music historians and performers, and constantly compared to historical evidence and new ideas. Period Bach style is not Bach's style, of course. It is ours, using Bach's as an ideal. We accept its criteria provisionally, since we know updates are on the way. We are in the same position as historians who are only able to take the evidence available and draw the most complete possible information from it; they neither can nor do claim to know what really happened.[7] (Haynes 2007, 149)

HIP, then, despite its reliance upon historical methods, is at least two steps removed from history. First, as discussed above, critics like Dreyfus, Taruskin, and Butt have collectively established that HIP was never the reconstruction of any musical style from the past, but rather a wholly *invented* contemporary style, *inspired* by history. Second, in contrast to the fragmentary and provisional character of the writing of history, HIP—when enacted in performance—is necessarily complete and fully determined. While rehearsal and practice might permit leaving multiple options open, performance demands that the musician make decisions, whether consciously or unconsciously, conditioned upon the performer's embodied habits and tastes. Unlike the historian's "performance" in writing, however, a musician's performance allows no doubt or equivocation.

[7] This vision of HIP should certainly be contrasted with earlier understandings of "authenticity," such as that of Adorno in "Bach Defended against his Devotees" (1983), first published in 1955. Adorno sees the move towards authenticity as part of a larger misguided desire for objectivity, wiping away the subjective excesses of Romanticism. Haynes, however, acknowledges the subjectivity of the performer in engaging with music of the past and with historical evidence, and the "authenticity" that it achieves is always accepted as provisional.

Instead, as an event taking place in time, the performance moves inexorably from start to finish without the possibility for gaps, revisions, or second-guessing.[8]

These essential differences between history and HIP explain why it is so difficult for HIP to re-invent itself. Historically-informed performers need to be able to play in diverse professional settings, often with very little rehearsal time. They cannot possibly re-invent their musical style with each performance. Rather, they rely upon shared stylistic and technical conventions in order to make the most of their rehearsal.[9] The long result of this practice is to have gradually transformed what was originally an imaginative method of artistic renewal into a tradition of unspoken conventions, pre-suppositions, and unquestioned physical habits. An originary, subjectively-driven, historically-contingent period of artistic experimentation has ultimately sedimented as objective truth.

Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu describes processes like this using the related concepts of doxa*,* orthodoxy and heterodoxy. Bourdieu, recognizing that "every established order tends to produce […] the naturalization of its own arbitrariness" (2010, 164), conceives of doxa as the product of this naturalization. Doxa is described as the "quasi-perfect correspondence between the objective order and the subjective principles of organization" (164). It achieves this alignment between the natural and the arbitrary or contingent, however, without "awareness and recognition of the possibility of different or antagonistic beliefs" (164). In the world of HIP, then, most of the performance habits, bodily or otherwise, of musicians belong to the sphere of doxa; they constitute the arbitrary (or, at least, contingent) elements of style that have gradually been naturalized as self-evident. Doxa is then only made apparent through the opposition of heterodoxy; as Bourdieu says, "the truth of doxa is

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[8] The differences between the historian's interpretation and the performer's, then, is also akin to the philosopher Jerrold Levinson's (1993) distinction between critical and performative interpretations. For Levinson, there is no direct translation or connection from one kind of interpretation to the other, and so the kind of "interpretation" a performer reaches will have an entirely different function and mode of production from the historian's.

[9] Solo performers, obviously, may not have the same constraints with respect to rehearsal time as ensemble musicians. Nevertheless, they are still likely to make efficient use of their time by relying on learned conventions.

only ever fully revealed when negatively constituted by the constitution of a field of opinion, the locus of the confrontation of competing discourses" (168).

In HIP, perhaps the clearest example of such heterodoxy is in the field of nineteenth-century performance practice. In recent decades, it has become increasingly common for historically-informed ensembles to give performances of nineteenth-century music, using something like the same "Period style," as Bruce Haynes calls it, they might use for Bach. Researchers in performance practice, however, have uncovered specific practices (like portamento, or pitch sliding) that do *not* figure within "Period style," but which are nevertheless confirmed by unambiguous historical evidence (namely, early-twentieth-century sound recordings).[10] A number of performer-scholars have experimented with these techniques in performance, and as we might expect, the results diverge considerably from what HIP ensembles generally sound like.[11] Their novel performances (heterodoxy) therefore unveil a certain kind of doxa within HIP, subsequently allowing for a new kind of consciously articulated orthodoxy to take doxa's place. The stakeholders in this orthodoxy include successful performers in HIP-as-tradition as well as their loyal audiences, who develop strategies to delegitimize heterodoxy and uphold orthodoxy. For example, sliding performance is castigated as evidence of both poor technique and poor taste, while non-sliding performance is praised as evidence of good technique and good taste. Performers who dare to challenge this orthodoxy therefore risk censure at the hands of those most interested in maintaining it.

For all of these reasons, it remains an immense challenge to recover the potency of HIP-as-method within the confines of HIP-as-tradition. There are, as I see it, at least three ways out of this

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[10] The field of nineteenth-century performance practice is growing rapidly. For an excellent summary of issues encountered in early (piano) recordings, see Neal Peres da Costa's *Off the Record* (2012). For a more general overview of issues in early recordings of all kinds, see Leech-Wilkinson (2009). And for recent perspectives from artistic researchers and performers, see Scott (2014) and Stam (2019).

[11] An excellent example of this is cellist and researcher Kate Bennett Wadsworth's recording of music by Brahms for cello and piano (2018), which features a variety of "uncouth" performance practices like portamento.

gridlock. Each one has the potential to inaugurate new practices that are jarringly opposed to HIP-as-tradition, so much so that they enable the recognition of doxa. The first way is to discover new historical evidence. The second way is to interrogate the (often tacit) conceptual frameworks by which we interpret existing historical evidence. The last way is to critically examine the methods by which we, as performers, imaginatively engage with historical material in performance. In sum, these three methods correspond essentially to three stages in the historically-informed performer's preparation: the gathering of evidence, the interpretation of that evidence, and the imaginative, often experimental engagement with that evidence through performance.

In the case of nineteenth-century music, as we have seen, the first method is truly a viable way forward. Since nineteenth-century performance practice is still a relatively new area of interest, performers and researchers are continually discovering new historical evidence to interpret creatively. But what of historically-informed performance of more well-trodden repertoires? As a harpsichordist myself—whose repertoire effectively reaches a caesura with the turn of the nineteenth century—exploring nineteenth-century performance practice is simply not an option.[12] Although researchers do regularly uncover new historical evidence, the frequency and scope of such findings pale in comparison to the discoveries of the twentieth century. Lacking new historical evidence, therefore, I turn to the second and third ways forward. I begin by interrogating a concept

[12] I should, however, mention the work of my former harpsichord teacher, Robert Hill. He has investigated performance practices evident in early piano roll recordings for Welte-Mignon, recorded in 1904 by Carl Reinecke (1824-1910). Hill (2008) analyzes Reinecke's playing as "quantitative accentuation," in which different parts of the bar are accentuated agogically according to their metrical or expressive weight, not only qualitatively (louder or softer), but also quantitatively (longer or shorter). Given that personal performance styles tend to remain stable throughout adulthood, Hill has reasoned that Reinecke's performance may represent an accurate picture of early nineteenth-century performance practice. The fact that there is such an enormous distance between this performance practice and what we typically hear from historically-informed performances has led Hill to speculate that some of our initial premises in creating "Period Style" may have been quite wrong: that perhaps prior to the twentieth-century, the bar's metrical hierarchy was based on unequal temporal divisions rather than equal ones, for example. Based on this reasoning, Hill has developed his own highly expressive and idiosyncratic performance style that essentially reads the evidence from Reinecke's performances back into the eighteenth century, leading to highly temporally flexible performances of composers like Bach and Mozart. In this sense, at least, there may yet be things for harpsichordists to learn from nineteenth-century performance practice.

central to the performance of Western art music, and therefore, by proxy, central to HIP: namely, the concept of the musical work.

The Musical Work

What is a musical work? A wide variety of philosophers and musicologists have provided potential definitions, each depending on the author's philosophical orientation or their musicological/musical interest and focus.[13] Arguably the most influential and decisive of these efforts, however, was Lydia Goehr's thesis, put forward in 1992 in *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works*.[14] In it, Goehr reframes the question of the musical work's ontology, moving from a concern with works themselves to an historically situated "work-concept." She makes this move in order to, temporarily, sidestep some of the difficulties she and others encounter in adjudicating ontological claims about the musical work. By focusing first on what kind of concept the work-concept is, she will then be better equipped to think about what kind of object a musical work might be. She then famously argues that the work-concept emerged around 1800. A number of musicologists have quibbled with Goehr about her precise dating of this emergence. Reinhard Strohm (2000), for example, argues that it makes better sense to look forward through history, rather than back, to reveal the emergence of the work-concept, and he identifies evidence of such transformation as early as the mid-fifteenth century. Nevertheless, as Goehr argues,

> [it] is less importantly the specific date of the concept's emergence to which my thesis is committed than to the historical fact that the concept emerged, and with this at least Strohm has no disagreement. If works existed in 1450 and were named as such, then I am wrong as a matter of fact. Still such an error would not

[13] For a recent appraisal of these approaches, see Davies (2018). Davies situates these diverse perspectives on the musical work within his concept of the "classical paradigm," which acknowledges musical performances as particular instances of "multiple artworks." Importantly for the notion of a musical work, "a performance in the performing arts is generally of something else—what we can call a performable work—and plays a necessary part in the appreciation of the latter" (2018, 46).

[14] As Goehr herself admits (2000, 234), much of her approach was also anticipated by Carl Dahlhaus, who described the late-eighteenth-century origins of the work-concept. Where Goehr takes issue is in Dahlhaus's uncritical use of the work-concept in also describing earlier practices.

> undermine my claim that the work-concept should not be assumed naturalistically or essentially to exist in all music practices of whatever sort. (Goehr 2007, xlviii)

What is most significant about Goehr's thesis, therefore, is its recognition of the work-concept's historical contingency. Despite the fact that most classical musicians treat the existence of musical works as simply given, Goehr allows us the possibility of imagining times and places when this was not yet the case.

As Goehr describes it, the work-concept is what she calls a *regulative concept,* one that can "determine, stabilize, and order the structure of practices" (2007, 102). In contrast to constitutive concepts and ideals, regulative concepts "guide the practice externally by indicating the point of following the constitutive rules" (102). Although a regulative concept operates in tandem with other associated concepts and ideals, it is still the operative, controlling factor in the shaping of practices. In the case of the musical work-concept, for example,

> [it] emerged in line with the development of numerous other concepts, some of which are subsidiary—performance-of-a-work, score, and composer—some of which are oppositional—improvisation and transcription. It also emerged alongside the rise of ideals of accurate notation and perfect compliance. In this process, the work-concept achieved the most central position. (Goehr 2007, 103)

The regulative concepts that guide our practices often evade our conscious awareness. Unless we draw attention to them explicitly, it is far more common for us to act by reference to constitutive rules or ideals than to their governing regulative concepts. They function, as it were, in the background of practice. Eventually, regulative concepts "are treated as if they were givens and not 'merely' concepts that have artificially emerged and crystallized within practice" (Goehr 2007, 104). Thus, the regulative work-concept that continues to structure our practice vanishes, and in its place emerges a series of self-evident givens, musical works. They are a consequence of what Goehr calls "the ontologizing of a concept" (xlviii). In effect, what Goehr describes is very close to Bourdieu's notion of doxa, wherein something that was once arbitrary and contingent becomes reified into something necessary and eternal. We learn these regulative concepts implicitly through long periods

of social interaction—like musical education, for example—and ultimately, these concepts form layers of invisible, yet highly effective doxa.

For most Western classical performing musicians, the musical work is something usually taken for granted and very rarely questioned. Indeed, for the vast majority, the work-concept functions implicitly as it guides their musical practice, both in terms of how they conceive of the "objects" of music and in how they respond to the ethical dimensions of musical performance.[15] In my own early musical education as a pianist, the work-concept was something I understood without needing any definitions. The content of my own lessons, practice sessions, and performances consisted not of an uninterrupted continuum of "music," but was rather partitioned into entities called "works." This encapsulation of a given quantity of music into a discrete work made perfectly intuitive sense: I learned music through notation, and each stretch of musical content was given its own visual cohesion on the page with clear boundaries between one work and the next, separated by title, double barline, page number, opus number, or volume. Thus, whatever music I produced at the piano necessarily had an object—the "something else" that my performance represents (Davies 2018, 46)—and even after I had memorized a span of music and could reproduce it without its notation, it remained a performance of a work. Despite their differences in style and notation, my teacher spoke of works by Bach, Beethoven, and Chopin in roughly the same terms, and I felt no fundamental distinction between the activity of performing Bach and the activity of performing Chopin; the objects of these performances were fundamentally of the same kind.

An engagement with the musical work was, therefore, a vital part of my *habitus* as a classical musician. Habitus, another of Bourdieu's concepts, could be defined as "a general, mainly tacitly and

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[15] The most obvious connection between the work-concept and performance ethics is in the ideal of *Werktreue*, which is itself derived from the work-concept. Being faithful to a work, after all, is predicated on acknowledging the existence of musical works as classes of objects.

socially acquired whole of embodied patterns for action and behaviour—how to sleep, how to eat, how to play, how to be a man or a woman" (Coessens and Östersjö 2014, 333). It constitutes the individual's dispositions of practice that, collectively, can become sedimented as doxa within society. Because of the way they shape practices, regulative concepts function in constructing and shaping habitus. Reciprocally, the exercising of one's practice, conditioned by habitus, also effectively reinforces the givenness of regulative concepts. Describing the work-concept, Goehr highlights how regulative concepts can reinforce certain patterns of thought or action while precluding others.

> Regulative concepts are delimiting. They indirectly suggest to the participants of a practice that only certain beliefs and values are to be held and only certain kinds of actions are to be undertaken. In this sense, regulative concepts are structuring mechanisms that sanction particular thoughts, actions, and rules as being appropriate. Thus, for example, performing a work involves employing the appropriate regulative concept(s). One shows one's knowledge and understanding of these concepts when one, for example, complies with a score, plays these notes and not others, plays in such a way as to indicate respect for the genre musically and historically conceived. (Goehr 2007, 104)

In this way, regulative concepts and their associated practices are inextricably entangled. In the case of classical musicians, the performer's habitus is shaped towards the sociocultural practice of *work-based performance*. This entails a host of subsidiary practices, including interpretive strategies (how to read and perform the score, how to determine the scope of the performer's decisions) and modes of listening (hearing a performance's "of-ness," its representation of the work). The regulative work-concept, meanwhile, continually reaffirms the self-evident naturalness of these practices.

I proposed earlier that one way forward for HIP was to re-think the conceptual framework by which historical evidence is interpreted. Now, however, it should be clear that this is not enough. In the case of regulative concepts like the work-concept, it is extremely problematic to simply suspend them or replace them with others. Concepts of all kinds *regulate* our practices, not just creative,

artistic practices, but also practices of thought.[16] Within HIP, work-based-thinking and work-based-practicing, playing, and performing operate in tandem to produce an illusion of the work's ontological givenness, thereby limiting any possibility of developing different (artistic and conceptual) practices. Concretely, the work-concept reinforces a musician's focus on fixed objects (works) rather than on the flexible processes by which those objects might come to life. This focus creates tangible limits on a performer's potential for musical freedom and creativity, since it also constricts the ways in which musicians create meaning within performance. Moreover, it casts a shadow over alternative practices, like improvisation, that might re-orient a performer's balance between fixity and fluidity. Stepping outside the thrall of the work-concept therefore also requires a simultaneous step outside of habitual practice, outside of habitus. If one of the goals of HIP-as-method is to effect change in one's artistic practice, then removing, bracketing, or ignoring the work-concept is just a first step. Beyond this, we must cultivate new modes of thinking, living, and being—a newly-acquired habitus, fashioned from heterodox concepts and practices.

Goehr's most significant contribution for the future of HIP, then, is in *enabling* us to imagine these alternative constellations of practices, concepts, and ideals—constellations that are decentered from the work-concept's gravitational pull.[17] We can, of course, venture at naming these new centers of gravity. Goehr cites musicologist Elaine Sisman, who proposes that the work-concept ought to be distinguished from seemingly related concepts like the "opus-concept" and *Werktreue*, each of which has its distinct historicity and regulative force. Goehr (2007, xxxii), however, fears that "a desire for more historical nuance and specification…threatens to unfurl into infinite specification." "Why

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[16] Goehr (2007), for example, asks "how it is possible to think about the concepts that at the same time we employ in and for our thought" (xliv).

[17] Goehr is by no means the only scholar to have attacked the work-concept: a great number of musicologists have chipped away at it as well. In Chapter Two, I will explore some of this work in connection with seventeenth-century French keyboard music.

not," she wonders, "go further and add the composition-concept, the piece-concept, the oeuvre-concept, the tune-concept, the song-concept, the riff-concept, and even the improvisation-concept?" (xxxii). As a practicing musician, my own take on this is a pragmatic one: why not, indeed! If HIP-as-method is, in fact, a constant search for the new within the old, then "infinite specification" is exactly what is needed. By attending to the uniqueness of practice observed and intuited (via historical evidence) in each sociocultural setting—each individual historical period, geographical locale, composer, genre, etc.—we open ourselves to defamiliarizing encounters with historical materials. Each musical repertoire, considered as a component part of a socio-cultural whole, offers the opportunity of developing new concepts to more closely describe it, as well as new practices to more closely re-create it. Each repertoire—each piece, even—is a singularity, different from others surrounding it. HIP-as-method thus encourages us to search continually for provisional, increasingly adequate means of understanding a repertoire's peculiarities. The concepts and practices engendered through this process have the radical potential, when realized through the performer's reformed habitus, to shine new light on doxa. How might a musical practice centered on the "piece-concept" in seventeenth-century France, for example, differ from practices affiliated with the work-concept? What novel practices might a piece-concept enable? How might our understanding of the piece-concept alter through an engagement with these practices? Finally, how strange might our more familiar practices and concepts seem in juxtaposition with these newer ones?[18]

To summarize up to this point: recognizing the historical contingency of the work-concept enables us to imagine other concepts that might exist in its place, concepts that might serve as creative impetus for historically-informed performers. As a regulative concept, however, the work-concept acts in tandem with its associated practices, together forming a rigid layer of the classical

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[18] Readers interested in potential answers to these questions should consult Chapters Two and Five, which together deal with developing an implicit notion of "piece" in seventeenth-century France.

musician's habitus. Stepping outside of the work-concept therefore also demands an equivalent movement outside of work-associated practices—a turn towards perceiving, living, and performing *differently*—in order to *defamiliarize* the familiar. This is an approach that emphasizes, above all, the *uniqueness* of each musical repertoire—or even each piece within that repertoire—staged through the creation of particular constellations of concept and practice.

HIP as Experimentation

I have now discussed two different means of highlighting the gulf between HIP-as-method and HIP-as-tradition: first, through the discovery of new historical evidence (as has been the case recently in nineteenth-century performance practice); and second, through the adoption of a new critical and conceptual framework for interpreting existing historical evidence and constructing new narratives. Moreover, as I argued above, if new concepts are to be put to effective work in HIP, they must be accompanied by analogous changes in practice as well. Without this important step, any newly-introduced concepts will, in all likelihood, simply be naturalized into the performer's existing habitus.

The third way of advancing HIP I proposed was to interrogate the process by which performers imaginatively engage with their interpretations of historical evidence. As I already noted, HIP-as-method works to create *new* styles of performance by creatively filling in the gaps. Any engagement with evidence is necessarily provisional and incomplete, and therefore, it falls to the performer to construct, reconstruct, or invent the missing pieces.

There is nothing neutral or objective about this process. The performer begins, on the one hand, with their habitual set of embodied performance habits, strategies, and ideals—their habitus—and on the other, with a set of performance practice ideas, conceptual and practical notions distilled from study and interpretation of historical evidence. Hopefully, if these performance practice ideas are interesting ones, they will conflict in some way with the performer's usual way of doing things.

In this way, they serve as a way of destabilizing the performer's habitus. They force the performer to ask: how can I do this differently? Historically-informed performers—or, more precisely, performers who are engaged in HIP-as-method as means of stepping outside of tradition—thus navigate a complex web of interactions as they work with historical materials through rehearsal. Over the course of hours of practice, and with recourse to taste, imagination, and experience, the performer will *experiment* with various ways of performing differently, using the tension between historical evidence and habitus to generate new styles of musical performance. This movement from habitus to experimentation is not unidirectional; rather, it emerges through a dialectical process, as a back-and-forth negotiation between the known and the unknown.

In many ways, HIP-as-method functions analogously to what historian of science Hans-Jörg Rheinberger (1997) describes as an *experimental system*. Rheinberger, developing this notion over the course of a detailed study of an American laboratory working on protein synthesis, characterizes such experimental systems as particularly emblematic of how research is conducted in the life sciences. He discovers that the usual scientific model for the formation of new knowledge—a theory-driven model, in which theoretically-formed hypotheses are proved or disproved within individual experiments—does not apply in such settings. Rather, the experimental system allows for the possibility of generating unexpected new knowledge, the system "designed to give unknown answers to questions that the experimenters themselves are not yet clearly to ask" (Rheinberger 1997, 28). Rheinberger describes experimental systems as "the smallest integral working units of research" (2004, 4). "System," as he explains, "means here simply a kind of loose coherence both synchronically with respect to the technical and organic elements that enter into an experimental system and diachronically with respect to its persistence over time" (ibid.). Of particular note is Rheinberger's distinction between "technical objects" and "epistemic things." Technical objects—the various tools, techniques, and concepts used within an experimental setting—represent

everything that is already (well-)known within the system. Epistemic things, meanwhile, are the forms of knowledge that crystallize within the system through the manipulation of technical objects. In naming it an epistemic "thing," rather than "object," Rheinberger emphasizes its openness, vagueness, and lack of clear determination, how it "embodies in an experimentally manipulable manner what one does not yet exactly know" (2004, 4). The difference between technical objects and epistemic things is therefore crucially a matter of how they are used within an experimental system: the distinction between the two is functional. Nevertheless, such distinctions need not remain stable over the life of a given experimental system. As Rheinberger explains,

> epistemic things can eventually be turned into technical things and become incorporated into the technical conditions of the system. And parts of the technical system can acquire epistemic status and thus turn into research objects. The dialectics between epistemicity and technicity is at the inner core of an experimental system; it is its driving force. (Rheinberger 2004, 4)

The component parts of an experimental system may therefore function in periods of relative stability or flux. As new forms of knowledge emerge from within a system, they may serve to open the possibility of forming still newer epistemic things, and, at once, to call into question the givenness, or technicity, of things we only imagined to be well understood.

Although few historically-informed performers would likely characterize their work as constituting an experimental system, complete with the institutional and social attributes described by Rheinberger, there is nevertheless a kind of experimentation that occurs as musicians prepare to perform. The process described above—in which heterodox concepts and practices are creatively reconciled with an existing habitus, demanding creative intervention from the performer, and resulting in new styles of performance—resembles the way unexpected knowledge crystalizes within an experimental system. Experimental musical practices, therefore, mirror certain aspects of experimental systems in the sciences. As philosopher and music theorist Henk Borgdorff notes, we "can therefore just as well speak of 'experimental practices' as of 'experimental systems', not least

because Rheinberger also applies his findings on experimental systems to academic practices outside the laboratory" (2012, 191-2).

The distinction between the epistemic and the technical is of particular importance in analyzing the dynamics of HIP-as-method. Within a given musical practice, the 'technical' may be broadly construed as what the performer *already* understands: the elements of that practice that are given, fixed, or unproblematic, and often embedded within the musician's habitus. The epistemic, meanwhile, is what the performer *seeks* to understand; it points to the elements of the practice considered unknown, contingent, or problematic. The knowledge that these epistemic things embody, given that they are embedded in a *practice*, is not just propositional or declarative (knowing-that); it is also procedural (knowing-how).[19] For example, many experimental practices in nineteenth-century piano playing—like pianist Anna Scott's practice as described in her dissertation "Romanticizing Brahms" (2014), for example—involve desynchronization or dislocation of the hands. This technique of desynchronization is often one of the primary *epistemic things* within such experimental practices, constituting a stylistic element that is foreign to the performer's habitus, and hence, relatively problematic and poorly understood. The performer *experiments* with desynchronization through recourse to various technical aspects of their practice. In this sense, 'technical' aspects refer to the host of elements of musical practice considered to be *un*problematic: for example, a pianist's understanding and use (knowledge and know-how) of dynamics, tempo modification (rubato), and phrasing might initially be 'technical objects' within such an experimental practice. Gradually, as the pianist experiments with desynchronization, its epistemic qualities will emerge in relation to the experimental practice's technical attributes. The pianist might discover, for

[19] This distinction between knowledge-how and knowledge-that originates in Gilbert Ryle's *The Concept of Mind* (1949). Ryle describes the two kinds of knowledge as distinct and independent, such that a person's ability to take some kind of action (knowledge-how) does not necessarily demand factual or propositional knowledge (knowledge-that) about the action.

example, that they prefer to desynchronize musical material to a greater or lesser degree depending on how it interacts with issues in tempo modification, whether it figures as part of an accelerando or a rallentando. Moreover, they may also find that this preference enables them to use desynchronization in their performances with greater creativity and conviction. The result of such an experiment is two-fold. First, the pianist will have learned enough about the epistemic thing (desynchronization) to incorporate it into the well-understood technical apparatus of their experimental practice; and second, this change in practice may also reveal newly-found problematic, epistemic qualities within formerly technical objects (tempo modification). This 'dialectics between epistemicity and technicity' is what drives the pianist's experimental practice forwards.

In many experimental practices, of course, it can be difficult to distinguish rigidly between the epistemic and the technical. In a recent informal survey, experimental practitioners pointed to how "the function of an element can fluctuate during a performance, which in turn requires a description of technical objects in not only stable but also unstable states" (Schwab 2014a, 116). Moreover, within a given experimental practice, it is very possible to work with multiple problematic areas at once. In Scott's study of Brahmsian performance practice, for example, she juggles multiple epistemic things over the course of her experiments, including dislocation, tempo modification (particularly rushing), arpeggiation, and phrasing. Which of these, at any given time, is exclusively epistemic or technical? Rather than defining these problematizing aspects of her practice in terms of fixed technical objects, then, she instead explores their interrelatedness. Knowledge materializes through the interaction of epistemic unknowns within her experimental practice at the piano.

Ultimately, any object or thing within an experimental practice has the potential to develop epistemic qualities. Recognition of those qualities, however, is conditioned and limited by the musician's habitus, as well as the tradition within which the musician works. The score, for example, might initially be understood to function as a technical object—perhaps even the primary technical

object—within Western classical performance traditions, including HIP. The presence of the score carries with it a host of well-understood score-based performance practices: playing these notes, notated on the page, and just these notes; playing just these rhythms. Musicians *know* how to play a score. An experimental practice, however, acknowledges that even well-secured technical objects like the score can function as epistemic things, so long as practitioners are willing to suspend, question, or problematize deeply-seated components of their artistic habitus. As visual artist and artistic researcher Michael Schwab explains it:

> These scores (or artistic traditions in general) are the material that re-emerges as again epistemically open in a meaningful artistic experimental system. It is set against a perceived epistemic closure that happens when such scores or traditions are simply re-performed as if new negotiations need not be entered into. At the site of the performance and under the conditions of tradition, an artist continually experiences and even produces epistemic loss, which the researcher in him or her attempts to suspend in ever new iterations. (Schwab 2014a, 121)

Using the score—or the musical work—as an epistemic thing, therefore, upsets its stability of meaning, both for its performers and its audiences. Audiences thereby gain the opportunity for new experiences of familiar works, while performers gain new means of creating and conveying meaning within established artistic traditions.

Although certain aspects of Rheinberger's concept of the experimental system seem perfectly at home within an artistic context, it is not a perfect fit.[20] What kind of knowledge is it, exactly, that is created within an artistic practice? For an (experimental) artistic practice, is the creation of knowledge even the primary aim? It seems clear that the kind of 'knowledge' created within artistic experimental practices is of a different order than that of scientific experimental systems. Rheinberger, for one, has drawn a distinction between the 'epistemic' and the 'artistic,' while at the

[20] One might also cite artistic experimentation's lack of reproducibility as another point of difference with scientific experimental systems. Rheinberger, however, already acknowledges that experimental systems must be capable of "differential reproductions," such that "generation of differences becomes the reproductive driving force of the whole machinery" (2004, 5). Both scientific and artistic reproducibility, then, are also always playing with difference in order to reach new knowledge.

same time acknowledging the potential links between the two (Borgdorff 2012, 196). In this sense, the epistemic is normally related to propositional knowledge, while the artistic or 'aesthetic' is related to "a complex interrelationship of sensation/perception (*aisthesis*) and artistic practice" (Schwab 2014a, 121). It is just these interrelationships that the still-nascent field of artistic research attempts to explore.

HIP as Artistic Research

Artistic research is a relatively new mode of inquiry that joins the aesthetic with the epistemic: it brings an artistic perspective to bear on the production of various kinds of knowledge. Often defined as "research in and through artistic practice" (de Ruiter 2017, 249), artistic research takes place from the point of view of the artists themselves, offering an insider's perspective on artistic practice.[21] The research therefore takes place from within the researcher's own artistic practice, thus collapsing any distance between the observer and the observed. Although this kind of research often does draw upon concepts, methodologies, and 'technical objects' from other disciplines, the primary tools of artistic research are necessarily also located within an artistic practice. Finally, the research culminates in an artistic outcome: that is, an artwork (or performance, composition, etc.) that embodies the knowledge thereby produced.

As I have just argued, it would be useful to distinguish between the aesthetic and the epistemic. While the epistemic is relatively easy to describe, the aesthetic is anything but. It is bound up with the various non-discursive, tacit, or subjective elements that make up an artistic practice, and as such, is fundamentally irreducible to propositional knowledge. In a very real way, then, the artworks

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[21] The formulation "in and through artistic practice" points both to the research's topic (research in) and its methods (research through). It is meant to help distinguish artistic research from different but related forms of research, such as research *on* artistic practice (as in musicologists' studying the practice of performers, or research on extended techniques or technical devices used within performance) or research *for* artistic practice (as in a composer's research on an historical event, personage, or literary work in preparation for composing).

produced within artistic practices do stand on their own: they do not depend on explication or interpretation in order to be understood. Artistic research, however, serves to create links (as also suggested by Rheinberger) between the realms of the aesthetic and the epistemic. These links operate in two directions. First, artistic researchers must orient themselves towards the epistemic by, for example, formulating research questions, forming hypotheses, or constructing experimental systems; and they must then transform or incorporate these epistemic concerns into artistic practice. Second, they must also work to discursively supplement aesthetic products and processes—or create *expositions of practice as research,* as Schwab (2014b) puts it—that can communicate across disciplinary boundaries, such that the kinds of knowledge embodied by artworks might also enter academic discourse.[22] The ways in which this supplementation occurs vary according to the particulars of any given artistic practice, but they are all conditioned by what philosopher-musician Marcel Cobussen calls an "aesthetic sensibility" (2014, 67). Cobussen defines this sensibility as a "subtle, perpetual and complex play between understanding, imagination and informed intuition, a play between cognitive and affective knowledge, and a play between discursivity and corporeality" (74). Such an aesthetic sensibility therefore serves to ground and legitimate the various formations of knowledge that take place within artistic research.

Does—or better, can—HIP function as artistic research? For Cobussen, in any case, the answer seems to be yes, even if it is not recognized as such by the performers themselves. He cites the example of a lecture given by Ton Koopman, in which Koopman described his preparations for a

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[22] In this connection, I am inspired by the model proposed by Deleuze and Guattari in *What is Philosophy?* (1994), in which art and philosophy constitute two different modes of thought. I will have much more to say about this when I deal more fully with Deleuze's ontology (via DeLanda) in Chapter Five. For now, suffice it to say that art is concerned with the intensive, with 'percepts and affects,' while philosophy is concerned with the virtual, with creating 'concepts.' In this way, traversing the gap between these two forms of thought is not a matter of explication or even translation. Rather, philosophy can operate parallel and adjacent to art, creating concepts that "correspond without resemblance" to works of art (DeLanda 2002, 54). Although I am certainly not doing philosophy in this dissertation, I am nevertheless engaged in traversing the path from one domain of thought (the artistic) to another (the epistemic).

recording of the complete works of Buxtehude, where “he visited the houses where Buxtehude had lived, investigated the churches where his music had been played, scrutinised scores, tracked down instructions that Buxtehude had left about how to perform his works, studied information written down by his students, and so on” (2014, 66). Koopman’s research output, then, consists in its artistic results (concerts and CDs) as well as explanatory materials like lectures and liner notes. The only missing ingredient for recognizing this as artistic research (and having it legitimized as artistic research within a wider community of researchers) would be an interrogation of Koopman’s own aesthetic sensibility, that is, the means by which epistemic concerns are transformed into aesthetic ones and vice versa. As Cobussen says, Koopman “places much emphasis on historical informedness but does not elaborate on how these data are translated into the final aesthetic results” (67).

Composer and artistic researcher William Brooks (2014) offers a much more detailed discussion on the limits of HIP as artistic research in a book chapter on the performance practice of William Butler Yeats. In somewhat self-contradictory fashion, Brooks seems to argue both against, and later for, understanding HIP in this way. Brooks discusses three different ways of engaging with and recreating Yeats’s recitation practice: working with recordings of Yeats, working with notation from Yeats’s circle, and finally, using and adapting Yeats’s method to create new readings. On the one hand, Brooks seems to feel that these first two ways of working cannot constitute artistic research. Describing his efforts in composing ‘psaltery’ accompaniment for Yeats’s recordings, he writes,

> this was an interesting activity, and I believe the results are convincing; but it did not feel like artistic research. The process was more akin to the restoration of a missing part in a Renaissance motet: there were decisions to be made and variants to be tested, but both the compositional technique and the standards to be applied were known in advance. I was not building on Yeats’s research project; I was merely recreating a lost fragment from it. (Brooks 2014, 193)

Likewise, in describing his working from notation, Brooks finds HIP lacking:

> This too was interesting and—with more practice or a more talented performer—probably aesthetically convincing; but it too was research only in a limited sense. I was, after all, merely executing a score; and though I certainly learned quite a bit—for example, about how hard it is not to "sing"—I didn't advance Yeats's ideas significantly. As with any "historically informed" performance, the combination of scholarship, intuition, and judgment produced unexpected variations and curious difficulties; but no new terrain was traversed, though the ground was somewhat cleared. (Brooks 2014, 193)

Ultimately, it seems Brooks has written about these two "historically-informed" approaches to performance only to set up a contrast with "the third, most open option: to adopt the method but to deliberately disregard the traces, the scores, the specific artefacts of Yeats's original project" (ibid.). For Brooks, it is only now, when he is responding to the present rather than the past, that *interesting* artistic research can take place.

Unfortunately, HIP seems to be a straw man within Brooks's argument. For Brooks, HIP is fundamentally concerned with "re-creation," an approach that closes off the possibility of "traversing new terrain," or of generating new research questions. Brooks therefore characterizes his way of adopting Yeats's *method* to create new compositions as "in response to a living person, who had her own embodied understanding of the text," with the result that "suddenly the project seemed alive" (2014, 193). The implication is that HIP, in recreating the past, leads only to retracing *dead* research. We may also recall Brooks's characterization of his earlier forays into HIP as "merely executing a score," rather than creating something new. As I hope is now perfectly clear, this is a mischaracterization of HIP-as-method—indeed, of performance more generally—on several levels. In contrasting the *re-creation* that takes place in performance with the *creation* that characterizes composition and artistic research, Brooks seems to be denying the performer's creative agency to construct new meaning within a performance. Moreover, even if re-creation serves as a kind of regulative ideal for HIP, Brooks seems to undervalue the creative, imaginative, experimental practices that take place in performance, in which new kinds of knowledge (albeit tacit) are formed in response to those ideals. The result of this is a missed opportunity in exploring the ways in which

these three modes of using existing research might interact and affect each other. In what concrete ways, for example, might Brooks' own HIP-experiments have contributed to his Yeats-inspired composition, *Everlasting Voices*? In contrasting his own present-focused compositional practice with HIP's past-focused performance practice, Brooks seems to have missed how HIP-as-method creates, rather than re-creates, new styles of performance, wholly in the present.

On the other hand, in Brooks's conclusion, he seems to imply that HIP *could* function as artistic research, so long as it focuses on creation rather than re-creation. In the case of any kind of research in and through performance, Brooks quite rightly argues that "to study such research always entails, to some extent, the re-creation of an act—not as an academic exercise but as a part of the research method itself" (2014, 194). He concludes, however, that even if what we are striving for is re-creation, "it also follows that no performance is ever actually 're-created'; the traces are only an incentive to bring something new into being" (195). It is in this sense that Brooks defines his vision of historically-informed performance-as-research as "defiantly in the present, but acknowledging (as the present does) the past" (195).

In the case of artistic research output like Yeats's work, any given trace of such research "exists to justify the continuation of a practice without conclusion" (Brooks 2014, 195). The kinds of practices studied by HIP also leave traces. I would argue that these traces invite performers to use them to create something new: new performances, or more radically, new styles. It is only through these *new* things that we can perceive the continuity of the *old*. Within a research context, using historical traces as epistemic things within experimental practices also creates the possibility of generating new research from old materials. Brooks and I agree, then, on how seeking re-creation can ultimately lead to new creation. Where I differ from Brooks, however, is in my recognition of the potential for novelty within each performance. In my view, Brooks was already creating new art

(and new knowledge) in the earlier stages of his research, something he missed while "merely executing a score."

As I return to my question from earlier—can HIP function as artistic research?—I hope to answer it in these pages with a resounding 'yes.' I will use historical techniques in order to problematize my own artistic practice, transforming it from an inflexible tradition into an experimental practice. Through dialogue with music theory, philosophy, and other disciplines, I will also transform the tacit, procedural insights gained through practice into declarative knowledge, research to be shared and disseminated. In these efforts, I have been inspired and influenced by a number of other artistic researchers. In what follows, I will describe some of their projects, all of whose themes very much pertain to my own research.

Comparable Studies

Perhaps the clearest point of comparison with my own work is in Anna Scott's dissertation, "Romanticizing Brahms" (2014). In it, Scott investigates the persistent gap between modern pianists' performances of Brahms and what historical evidence actually reveals, the "gaps between what pianists believe, know and do" (349). She posits that an "ideology of control" tacitly guides modern pianists' ethical considerations and performance style in the music of Brahms. She then argues that this ideology enables a highly selective construction of Brahmsian identity, founded upon a nationalistically-inflected strain of biographical criticism. This image of Brahms aligns his supposedly ideally-German character with a healthy, controlled mind and body, which is then also associated with a style of performance evincing a similar level of control and objectivity. So constructed, this narrow identity rejects any elements of Brahms's performance style that do not align with the reigning ideology. By confronting this ideology with tangible historical evidence, namely the sound recordings of pianists from the Schumann-Brahms circle, Scott thus highlights and problematizes the construction of both identity and ideology. She analyzes these pianists' performance styles,

pinpointing a number of specific performance techniques (like desynchronization of the hands, rushing, etc.) and characteristic ways in which those techniques are deployed. Moreover, she recreates these performances at the keyboard, in order to make "their styles part of [her] own mental and physical apparatus as a pianist today" (327). After this period of analysis and style copying, she then experiments in applying these newly learned techniques to repertoire for which she had no recorded example. Through this transformation—from sound artifact to embodied experience and artistic practice—she discovers that these historical performance techniques undermine traditionally received ideals of structural clarity and control.

So much of what Scott accomplishes here is laudable, and I find many parallels with my own approach. She clearly identifies a concept that impacts performance (her "ideology of control"). She uses the tools of HIP to circumvent this ideology, stepping into a new and unfamiliar practice in which such ideology holds no sway. Scott is, of course, fortunate to be able to rely on sound recordings. She can therefore truly re-create these observed practices within her own body and mind, more or less without interpretation or equivocation. Interestingly for my own project's concern with the score, she comments from time to time on various ways in which her model pianists (Adelina de Lara and Ilona Eibenschütz) deviate from the written text, including adding, doubling, and removing notes from the score. Scott refrains, however, from commenting on how, or even whether, such deviations ultimately figured into her own experimental style. Had Scott written about her re-creation of this particular aspect of historical style, she might also have uncovered ways in which it relates to other nineteenth-century stylistic tendencies like desynchronization and tempo modification. How might Scott's own outlook on performing Brahms's have altered had she integrated such textual interventions into her own performing style? It is just this kind of improvisatory relationship to the text that will be explored in my own research.

Although it has very little to do with HIP, the dissertation of Stefan Östersjö, 'SHUT UP 'N' PLAY! Negotiating the Musical Work' (2008), is also a very strong influence. Östersjö thoroughly investigates the question of the musical work in relation to artistic practice within contemporary music. Through a series of case studies, in which he documents and analyzes his experience working with several different composers, he uncovers a huge diversity of practice that precludes the possibility of truly rigorous separation between "work" and "performance." Rather than viewing the performer's role as solely one of interpretation, he instead views it as "the final constructive phase of a musical work" (372). In order to better understand the various interactions between performers and composers, he formulates the concept of the *field of the musical work,* a musical-discursive practice wherein multiple agents operate, including score, composer, technology, editor, and instrument. Using this field, he is able to analyze the diverse workings of these agents in different contexts.

What I take away from Östersjö's work is a deep concern for the uniqueness of each project in which he takes part. Each project constitutes a unique field, a unique constellation of musical agents. As a result, Östersjö's experience of and interaction with the contours of the musical work—what he calls 'thinking-through-practice'— vary drastically depending on the disposition of the field. Perhaps one reason for this diversity of musical practice lies in Östersjö's emphasis on contemporary music, in which thinking-through-practice takes place within a field of *living* agents. In this respect, we may also recall Brooks's observation above that his own artistic research project only came alive when it was effectively transposed into the world of contemporary music. In my own work, although I am indeed working with old music written by dead composers, I still aim to recover the liveness and variety experienced by Östersjö. Indeed, as I will demonstrate in later chapters, a critical aspect of my approach is to transform static texts (scores) into changeable, moveable frameworks for improvisation.

Finally, I have also been greatly inspired by the research carried out by Paulo de Assis as part of the research project MusicExperiment21.[23] Like me, de Assis is fundamentally concerned with the ways in which ontologies of music exert their influence over practice. Turning away from the work-concept as inherited from the nineteenth century, Assis instead explores what kinds of music-making become possible when music is conceptualized according to other ontologies: more specifically, the ontology of Gilles Deleuze. Rather than working from what Deleuze wrote about music, Assis instead *applies* Deleuze's ontology to music. He is also very much influenced in this respect by post-Deleuzian treatments, such as Manuel DeLanda's reconstruction of Deleuze's philosophy.[24] Assis uses a wide variety of concepts and distinctions borrowed from Deleuze—including the virtual/actual, the intensive/extensive, difference, becoming, haecceity, and many others—in order to understand a musical practice supported by an ontology that moves beyond representation towards problematization. For de Assis (2018), a Deleuzian musical work is a multiplicity, of which a traditionally-received musical work constitutes only a small portion. These traditional "works" are only "specific zones, or partial elements of something that can be more aptly described and thought about in terms of musical multiplicities, which are fabricated by intensive processes that generate virtual structures and actual things" (61). The ontology proposed by de Assis therefore allows for a far more expansive view of the work, in which "there are as many virtual images of a musical work as persons thinking of it. Every single person has his or her own and unique diagram of any given musical work" (62).

In truth, I am not particularly interested in de Assis's work for its specific research outcomes. Rather, what I admire in this research is its trajectory and methods. His project originates in finding

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[23] De Assis provides the fullest exposition of his project in his monograph, *Logic of Experimentation* (2018).

[24] Manuel DeLanda has long been involved in reconstructing, appropriating, and developing the philosophy of Deleuze. The clearest example of this effort is in his *Intensive Science and Virtual Philosophy* (2002), which manages to make some quite obscure Deleuzian concepts approachable.

problems from within his own artistic practice, and this in turn motivates a move towards ontology, towards understanding the musical things or objects around which his practice turns. As he puts it, "I found myself in a situation where my own practice could not be aesthetically assessed on the basis of existing ontological accounts, and where our ways of working with the materials started suggesting new and alternative views of what a musical work is" (2018, 43). De Assis recognizes the close relationship between concepts (particularly ontological concepts, like the work-concept) and practices. His development of new musical ontologies therefore also allows him to develop and understand new musical practices that depend on these ontologies. For example, his categorization of various layers of *strata*, the concrete "actual things" that correspond to the virtual potentiality of the work, enables him to better control the problematic space of his performances.[25] He is therefore in a better position to think about questions related to his practice, like: how do the various actual things in a performance space—performer, instrument, acoustic, alternative editions of the score, related texts and recordings, etc.—contribute towards an audience's understanding of the musical work's complex potentiality? Thus, for de Assis, an artistic or aesthetic problem has motivated his turn towards philosophy, and this philosophical turn has in turn motivated further development and change in his artistic practice. It is exactly this dialogue between theory and practice that I find most useful in de Assis's work, and what I also aim to emulate in my own research.

An Overview of Research

The plan for the remainder of this dissertation mirrors that of the artistic research projects discussed above: it moves from a problem encountered in practice towards a theoretical re-orientation, and then uses this re-orientation to effect change within practice. In brief, the ordering of chapters here follows a logical sequence of steps following my initial research questions. The first

[25] This is not the place to get into the finer details of the Deleuzian ontology on which de Assis depends; I will however address aspects of it in greater detail in Chapter Five.

step, accomplished in the present chapter, is to establish and contextualize the central problem to be explored in my research: how can performers overcome the limitations that the work-concept places on HIP-as-method, and by extension, on its potential for creating new creative practices? Next, in Chapter Two, I choose a central case study in which to examine the problem in greater detail and specificity: namely, the keyboard music of Jacques-Champion de Chambonnières. The source history of Chambonnières's music and its associated performance practices are particularly problematic when understood through the lens of the work-concept. Instead, by way of a critical reading of documentary evidence and musicological argument, I will propose that the composition, performance, transmission, and reception of Chambonnières's music functioned as the exercise of oral culture. In particular, I rely on the concept of *mouvance* to explore the ways in which Chambonnières's pieces could change, transform, and move in performance. When viewed as products of orality, Chambonnières's harpsichord pieces transform from familiar musical works into something strange: the ossified remains of embodied music-making. In place of the work-concept and work-based-performance, I adopt a cluster of concepts and practices better suited to the particulars of the repertoire, including memory, embodiment, *mouvance*, and most importantly, improvisation.

In keeping with the aim of HIP in understanding historical practices on their own terms, the next step in my project is to study improvisation from an historical perspective. Chapter Three therefore presents a summary of the field of historical improvisation studies, with an emphasis on the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In effect, this chapter forms the most important component of the new conceptual field I am adopting, intended to replace the work-concept and work-based-performance in my own practice. Historical improvisation constitutes a unique intersection of performance with the history of music theory, and as such, I engage with the claims and methods of both music theorists and performers. I begin by reviewing two major concepts by

which theorists have sought to understand compositional/improvisational fluency: the schema and the *Satzmodell*. Both models assume the presence of a repertoire of learned musical patterns that can be varied and embellished, and both models account for the relative speed and ease with which Baroque composers could compose and improvise. I then discuss the peculiar notational form known as partimento, a (figured) bass that served as a pedagogical locus throughout the eighteenth century. Using partimento, students across Europe (and especially in Neapolitan conservatories) learned a core set of schemata as embodied improvisational commonplaces, along with techniques for varying them and (mostly tacit) knowledge about how and when to use them in the course of composing or improvising. Moving towards the realm of practice, I review a number of recent pedagogical approaches to improvisation in historical styles. Finally, I explore the extent to which these techniques and methods for learning improvisation, developed with mostly German/Italian and high-Baroque/galant styles in mind, can be adapted—or better, translated—to the world of seventeenth-century French keyboard music.

Moving now from music theory to artistic research, in Chapter Four, I document and analyze my own efforts in learning to improvise in an historically-informed manner. In order to move beyond my own habitus as a performer and improviser, I must re-create Chambonnières's improvisational language in as much specificity as possible. After highlighting some distinctions between different kinds of knowledge—declarative vs. procedural and explicit vs. tacit—I pursue an inductive approach to Chambonnières's style. I play, analyze, and experiment with a corpus consisting of the twenty-seven courantes from Chambonnières's two published books of harpsichord pieces. Using some of the models and techniques discussed in the previous chapter, I explore a number of ways of treating this corpus not as a series of musical works to be performed, but rather as exemplars for improvisation. Over the course of my work with the corpus, I discuss the relationship between (music) theory and practice, and between analysis and performance. I

ultimately adopt a mode of analysis that attempts to track improvisational activity over the course of the piece. Most importantly, I am able to re-enact, test, and adjust this analysis in the course of improvising and performing. I use these analytic tools to refine my understanding of form (or *dispositio*) and modulation. I move inductively from observations about the corpus to a new conceptual framework and practical approach that I can then use within my own improvisational practice. In keeping with my desire to transform the corpus from a set of musical works into a research tool for improvisational learning, I introduce the computational musicology library music21 (Cuthbert and Ariza 2010) as a tool to effect this transformation. Using music21, I re-engineer the corpus into a source of nearly endless partimento exercises, collectively embodying Chambonnières's improvisational style. Finally, I construct a computational, probabilistic model (a Markov chain) for the patterns observed in the corpus, creating an even greater number of partimenti from which to learn. The ultimate purpose of this chapter is not to define a final, static, and complete set of improvisational findings. Rather, my goal is to outline historically-informed improvisation as a problematic-productive area oriented towards the epistemic, an area of incessant learning rather than certain knowledge. Historically-informed improvisation is, then, less a matter of making a perfect copy of a particular style (knowledge) than it is of creative engagement (learning).

In Chapter Five, I return to the problem stated at the outset of this dissertation: what happens to historically-informed performance when a new set of concepts and practices are introduced in place of the work-concept and work-based-performance? Having explored the concept and practice of improvisation in the preceding two chapters, I now bring these to bear on the historically-informed performance of seventeenth-century French keyboard repertoire. In light of embodied improvisational knowledge, is it still possible to perceive—and perform—Chambonnières's music as works? If so, how are these "works" different from those created under the work-concept? The Platonic, nominalist, and other ontological approaches to the musical work cited by Goehr have one

thing in common: an emphasis on identity, repeatability, and static *being*. By contrast, my own approach here is grounded in Deleuzian concepts of *difference, variability*, and *becoming*. In order to track the processes by which Chambonnières's "works" come into being—their ontogenesis—I compare a number of different experimental approaches to playing Chambonnières, each conditioned by an ability to read, analyze, and perform the score as embodied improvisational activity. I present these in the form of a musical suite—Prélude, Allemande, Courante I, Courante II, and Sarabande—each movement exploring a different facet of *mouvance* and musical identity. First, in the *Prélude*, I examine the ways in which French baroque preluding might be understood as pure musical activity, prior to the formation of any lasting or fixed identity. In the *Allemande*, I experiment with differing ways of "moving" the piece using improvisational technique, until I discover the limit at which it might also be "broken." The *Courante I* extends *mouvance* to encompass the practice of playing *doubles*, or variations on a piece. The *Courante II* then attempts to re-appraise a performance that "moved" too far, understanding it instead as an entirely new piece. Finally, in the *Sarabande*, I connect *mouvance* to HIP-as-tradition, exploring the ways in which present-day performance can continue to affect and shape a piece's changing, shifting identities.

In summary, I have tried to establish in this chapter a problematic area in the connection between HIP and the work-concept. I have also proposed a novel means of exploring the problem through artistic practice, using improvisation as a substitute for work-based performance. I have also defined the methodological background for the research project as a whole, consisting in an experimental musical practice (my own) that operates within the context of artistic research. With this framework in place, I turn in the next chapter to my central case study, the music of Jacques Champion de Chambonnières.