



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

An improvisatory approach to nineteenth-century music

Mooiman, A.

Citation

Mooiman, A. (2021, December 14). *An improvisatory approach to nineteenth-century music*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3247235>

Version: Publisher's Version

License: [Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3247235>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

An Improvisatory Approach to Nineteenth-Century Music

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van
de graad van doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,
op gezag van rector magnificus prof.dr.ir. H. Bijl,
volgens besluit van het college voor promoties
te verdedigen op dinsdag 14 december 2021
klokke 16.15 uur

door

Albert Mooiman

geboren te 's-Gravenhage
in 1965

Promotores:

Prof. dr. M.A. Cobussen

Prof. dr. J. Fidom

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Copromotor:

Dr. M.C. Schuijjer

Amsterdamse Hogeschool voor de
Kunsten/Conservatorium van Amsterdam

Promotiecommissie:

Prof. dr. R.C. Graybill

New England Conservatory, Boston

Prof. dr. phil. G.C.M. Schröder

Hochschule für Musik und Theater Felix Mendelssohn

Bartholdy, Leipzig; Universität für Musik und darstellende
Kunst Wien

Prof. dr. J.C. de Jong

Prof. dr. C.C. de Jonge

Dr. J.A. Wentz

Dit proefschrift is geschreven als een gedeeltelijke vervulling van de vereisten voor het doctoraatsprogramma van de Academy of Creative and Performing Arts (Universiteit Leiden). De overblijvende vereiste bestaat uit een demonstratie van de onderzoeksresultaten in de vorm van een artistieke presentatie.

This research was supported by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) under project number: 023.003.042.



Table of contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	5
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	12
MEDIA EXAMPLES	14
PRELIMINARY REMARK.....	15

Part 1: Prelude

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION: A LOST ART?.....	19
1.1 REDISCOVERING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.....	19
1.2 THE IMPROVISATORY.....	22
Defining 'improvisation'.....	22
Improvisation as an aspect of music-making.....	24
1.3 MUSIC AND LANGUAGE.....	27
Reviving a 'dead' language.....	29
1.4 THE URTEXT-PARADIGM	30
1.5 THE ARTISTIC VALUE OF HISTORICALLY INSPIRED IMPROVISATION.....	34
1.6 RATIONALE.....	35
Research questions.....	36
The nineteenth century.....	37
Research area.....	37
Methodology.....	38
Structure.....	39
CHAPTER 2. COMMONPLACING	41
2.1 INTRODUCTION: AN IMPROVISATORY APPROACH.....	41
2.2 LOCI COMMUNES.....	42
A student's improvisation	42
Guiding principles.....	43
Locus communis as a rhetorical concept.....	45
Early musical applications.....	46
Examples of loci communes in the student improvisation.....	47
Musical gestures and schemata.....	50
Loci communes and premeditation	52
2.3 INDIALOGUE WITH SCORES.....	53
The score as a prescriptive and descriptive text.....	53
The score as an object	54
Interpreting scores	56

<i>A music-theoretical theory of meaning</i>	58
<i>The notation as such</i>	59
<i>a. Pitch</i>	59
<i>b. Duration</i>	62
<i>c. Dynamics and tone colour</i>	63
<i>Recognising loci communes</i>	63
<i>A counterexample</i>	65
 Part 2: Improvising with scores	
CHAPTER 3. A RHETORICAL VIEW ON ORNAMENTATION	71
3.1. INTRODUCTION	71
3.2 STRUCTURAL ASPECTS OF ORNAMENTATION BEFORE 1800	72
<i>Anchor tones</i>	72
<i>Harmonic basis</i>	73
<i>Dissemination of ornamentation at the end of the eighteenth century</i>	74
3.3 THE PURPOSE OF EMBELLISHMENTS	75
3.4 VARIETY: A RHETORICAL APPROACH.....	77
<i>Classical rhetoric and music</i>	77
<i>Eloquence in verbal and musical languages</i>	79
<i>Varietas</i>	82
3.5 ORNAMENTAL COPIA IN LATE-EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY MUSIC.....	85
3.6 THE RHETORICAL FUNCTION OF ORNAMENTATION	89
3.7 WERE EMBELLISHMENTS IMPROVISED?	90
CHAPTER 4. IMPROVISED ORNAMENTATION IN BEL CANTO	93
4.1 THE INFLUENCE OF BEL CANTO.....	93
4.2 BEL CANTO PERFORMANCE PRACTICE AS AN EXAMPLE OF AN IMPROVISATORY APPROACH	94
4.3 SOURCES OF BEL CANTO ORNAMENTATION	95
4.4 CHANGEMENTS.....	97
<i>Changing the melody</i>	97
<i>Ornamentation as a manifestation of varietas</i>	98
<i>Lablache's taxonomy of musical 'elocutio' in bel canto</i>	100
4.5 ASPECTS OF MUSICAL ELOCUTIO.....	101
<i>a. Means of expression</i>	101
<i>b. Ornamenting with taste</i>	104
<i>c. Phrases</i>	108
<i>Phrase-based ornamentation</i>	110
<i>d. The right accent</i>	119
4.6 STEPPING-STONES TOWARDS IMPROVISATORY BEL CANTO ORNAMENTATION	121
<i>Unpremeditated ornamentation</i>	121
<i>Playing with the score: harmony</i>	123
<i>Playing with the score: melodic patterns</i>	127

<i>Early techniques and modern vocal training</i>	134
CHAPTER 5. CLAVIER UND GESANG: SINGING ON INSTRUMENTS	141
5.1 INTRODUCTION	141
5.2 BEL CANTO AS AN ARCHAISM	141
5.3 BEL CANTO AS A REFERENCE	144
5.4 PIERRE BAILLOT	145
5.5 LOUIS DROUËT	149
5.6 THE CENTRAL POSITION OF THE PIANO	151
5.7 SINGING ON THE PIANO: STEPHEN HELLER'S <i>L'ART DE PHRASER</i>	154
5.8 THE ROLE OF THE INSTRUMENT	159
5.9 SONG AND ARIA ARRANGEMENTS FOR PIANO	162
5.10 SINGING A PIANO PIECE	168
5.11 SONGS WITHOUT WORDS	174
5.12 CHOPIN	177
<i>Bel canto techniques on the piano</i>	177
<i>Fioritures</i>	179
<i>Early recordings of op. 9 no. 2</i>	186
<i>Varietas in Chopin's performances</i>	187
<i>Ornamenting Field today</i>	189
5.13 LISZT	193
CHAPTER 6. ANDANTE: THE TEMPO OF A WALKER	197
6.1 INTRODUCTION	197
6.2 MUSIC MOVES	197
6.3 THE PREDOMINANCE OF GOING ON FOOT	199
6.4 WALKING FOR PLEASURE AND AS A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION	201
6.5 INCREASED DISCIPLINE	202
6.6 SPEED	203
6.7 IMPROVISING ON FOOT	205
6.8 THE TEMPO OF A MACHINE	206
6.9 RETHINKING MUSICAL TEMPO	207
CHAPTER 7. IMPROVISATORY TIMING	210
7.1 INTRODUCTION	210
7.2 IMMANENT AND TRANSCENDENTAL TEMPO	211
7.3 TIMING IN ACCOMPANYING ARPEGGIATIONS IN SCHUBERT'S <i>IMPROMPTU OP. 90 NO. 3</i>	213
7.4 OTHER EXAMPLES OF EXPRESSIVE ARPEGGIATION	217
7.5 LEVELS OF MUSICAL PULSE	219
7.6 TECHNICAL CONSEQUENCES IN PIANO PLAYING	221
7.7 TEMPO RUBATO	224
<i>'Rubato' in declamation</i>	227
<i>Instances of metrical rubato in vocal music</i>	229

7.8 METRICAL RUBATO IN INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC.....	232
<i>Pianists</i>	234
7.9 TEMPO MODIFICATION.....	237
7.10 DISCUSSION: UNDERSTANDING NINETEENTH-CENTURY TIMING	239
7.11 SHAPING THE LINE.....	241
<i>Vocal music: following the text</i>	242
<i>Declaiming instrumental melodies</i>	244
<i>More examples of instrumental declamation</i>	245
<i>A parallel from theatre: Stanislavski</i>	248
7.12 POLYPHONY OF LAYERS.....	250
7.13 HARMONIC PHRASES.....	255
7.14 RUBATO ON THE ORGAN.....	258
 Part 3: Towards ‘Historically Inspired Improvisation’: improvising without a score	
CHAPTER 8. A BRIEF HISTORY OF TERMINOLOGY	265
8.1 EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY DEFINITIONS: ROUSSEAU.....	265
8.2 EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY GERMAN SOURCES	269
<i>C.Ph.E. Bach</i>	269
<i>Sulzer (Kirnberger), Wolf</i>	270
8.3 NINETEENTH-CENTURY SOURCES.....	274
<i>Busby</i>	274
<i>Koch</i>	275
<i>Rees (Burney)</i>	277
<i>Häuser</i>	278
<i>Schilling</i>	279
<i>Bernsdorf, Schubert, Paul</i>	282
<i>Mendel-Reissmann</i>	283
<i>Grove, Riemann, Sawyer</i>	285
8.4 CONCLUSION.....	287
CHAPTER 9. PRELUDING	292
9.1 INTRODUCTION	292
9.2 CZERNY’S SYSTEMATISCHE ANLEITUNG ZUM FANTASIEREN: BACKGROUND, CONTENT, RECEPTION.....	294
9.3 ORNAMENTAL PRELUDES: FUNCTION	296
9.4 ORNAMENTAL PRELUDES: HARMONY.....	303
9.5 HARMONIC LOCI COMMUNES.....	309
<i>a. Cadences</i>	311
<i>b. Tonic – dominant movement</i>	313
<i>c. Sequences</i>	314
<i>d. Scales</i>	317
9.6 FIGURATION.....	321
<i>The brilliant style</i>	321

<i>Figuration in ornamental preludes</i>	323
<i>The role of technique</i>	328
<i>A dictionary of ornamental patterns</i>	338
<i>Example prelude</i>	340
<i>Performing an ornamental prelude</i>	342
9.7 MORE EXTENDED PRELUDES	343
9.8 MODULATION.....	347
9.9 POSTLUDE	356
<i>Preluding today</i>	356
<i>Historically inspired preluding</i>	357
CHAPTER 10. CADENZAS	363
10.1 INTRODUCTION.....	363
<i>Cadenzas on the threshold to the nineteenth century</i>	363
<i>Were cadenzas improvised?</i>	363
<i>Preludes and cadenzas</i>	368
10.2 VOCAL CADENZAS.....	369
<i>Hiller</i>	369
<i>Bel canto cadenzas</i>	377
10.3 CADENZAS FOR MONODIC INSTRUMENTS.....	384
10.4 PIANO CADENZAS: MOZART'S CONCERTOS.....	389
<i>Mozart's original cadenzas</i>	389
<i>Improvised cadenzas by Robert Levin</i>	391
<i>Three improvised cadenzas to KV 414</i>	394
<i>Conclusion</i>	401
10.5 CADENZAS ACCORDING TO CZERNY.....	402
<i>a. Lead-ins</i>	402
<i>b. Cadenzas</i>	404
CHAPTER 11. IMPROVISED DANCE MUSIC	416
11.1 INTRODUCTION.....	416
11.2 VIENNA DANCES.....	416
11.3 SCHUBERTIADES.....	418
11.4 SCHUBERT AS AN IMPROVISER.....	420
11.5 DANCE FORMS IN SCHUBERT.....	422
11.6 FOLK MUSIC	425
11.7 HARMONY IN SCHUBERT'S WALTZES.....	428
11.8 HISTORICALLY INSPIRED WALTZES.....	430
11.9 TEACHING WALTZES À LA SCHUBERT	434
<i>New melodies on existing basses</i>	434
<i>Improvising new waltzes</i>	436

CHAPTER 12. PLAYING WITH GENRES.....	437
12.1 INTRODUCTION: GENRE AS A LOCUS.....	437
12.2 CZERNY'S FANTASY ON ONE THEME.....	440
<i>Czerny's Anleitung: 'genuine, fantasy-like improvisation'</i>	440
<i>Improvising on a single theme: the improvisator as an orator</i>	441
<i>Czerny on form</i>	443
<i>Czerny compared with Marx</i>	445
<i>Examples of genres</i>	447
<i>Fantasy on one theme</i>	456
<i>The Wanderer Fantasy as a fantasy on one theme</i>	459
12.3 FANTASIES ON SEVERAL THEMES.....	462
12.5 VARIATIONS.....	465
12.6 GENRE IN THE LATER PART OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.....	469
<i>Genre in composed music</i>	469
<i>Recorded improvisations: Arensky</i>	470
<i>Transcriptions of recorded improvisations</i>	471
<i>Recorded improvisations: Albéniz</i>	472
<i>Recorded improvisations: Granados, Saint-Saëns</i>	474
<i>Recorded improvisations: Elgar</i>	477
<i>Free fantasies</i>	480
<i>Capriccio</i>	482
12.7 HISTORICALLY INSPIRED IMPROVISATION: A FANTASY ON ONE THEME.....	484
<i>a. Introduction and first movement</i>	485
<i>b. Second movement</i>	488
<i>c. Third movement</i>	489
CHAPTER 13. ORGAN IMPROVISATION IN PARIS	492
13.1 THE FRENCH SCHOOL OF ORGAN IMPROVISATION.....	492
13.2 THE ORGAN CLASS AT THE CONSERVATOIRE DE PARIS.....	494
13.3 THE CHORALE.....	496
13.4 THE FUGUE.....	501
13.5 THE SONATA	505
13.6 IMPROVISATION IN PRACTICE: VIERNE, DUPRE; CONCLUSION.....	510
 Part 4: Coda	
 CHAPTER 14. AN IMPROVISATORY APPROACH TO MUSIC THEORY	519
14.1 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.....	519
<i>An improvisatory approach to scores</i>	519
<i>Bel canto</i>	521
<i>Instrumental music</i>	522
<i>Timing</i>	523

<i>Why did an improvisatory approach to scores disappear?</i>	524
<i>'Fantasieren'</i>	525
14.2 MUSIC THEORY AS A GENERATIVE SUBJECT	526
<i>Analysis and performance</i>	528
<i>Describing the general</i>	531
<i>Reification</i>	532
<i>Acquiring a musical language</i>	534
<i>Concatenationism</i>	536
<i>Epilogue</i>	539
APPENDIX	541
1. ALEXIS DE GARAUDÉ: EXAMPLES OF ORNAMENTATION	541
<i>Garaudé, A. de: Méthode complète de chant. Paris, 1854; 267-268</i>	541
2. LOUIS DROUËT: EXAMPLES OF ORNAMENTATION	542
<i>Drouët, L.: Méthode pour la flute. Paris, n.d.; 60-63</i>	542
3. DICTIONARY OF ORNAMENTAL PATTERNS	546
4. ALEXIS DE GARAUDÉ: EXERCISE PIECES FOR ORNAMENTING	554
<i>Garaudé, A. de: Méthode complète de chant. Paris, 1854; 269-285</i>	554
5. HARMONIC REDUCTIONS OF SCHUBERT DANCES	571
<i>Recorded realisations of the reductions</i>	571
<i>Recorded harmonic loci</i>	571
6. CARL CZERNY: EXAMPLES OF VARIATION TECHNIQUE	578
<i>Czerny, C.: School of Practical Composition op. 600, vol. I. London, 1848; 22-28</i>	578
REFERENCES	585
SUMMARY	609
SAMENVATTING	613
BIOGRAPHY	617

Acknowledgements

This study marks the end of a very intense and rewarding period. During this journey of more than seven years I have been supported by a large number of people. I would like to mention some of them here, knowing that it is impossible to include the names of all those friends and colleagues who, sometimes unknowingly, helped me greatly with some casual remark or a moment of genuine interest.

This project would have been impossible without the continuous and supportive involvement of a wonderful team of supervisors. The keen eye of Marcel Cobussen has been an enormous help in my attempts to organise my thoughts, and his constructive criticism has been a true grindstone for my ideas. Hans Fidom has been involved with this project from the earliest beginnings, when he kindly invited me to join his research group at the Orgelpark in Amsterdam. His flexibility and support have been a great help to ensure a proper organisation of this multi-disciplinary project. Though Michiel Schuijjer formally joined the supervising team at a later stage, his profound knowledge and professional friendship have kept me from many pitfalls. I am extremely happy that this team, each member representing one of the three disciplinary areas of this study, has managed to work together at all times, exemplifying the collaboration between professional fields that my study hopes to foster.

I feel very honoured that Roger Graybill, besides sharing his enormous expertise and experience, has been willing to take on the task of advising me in language matters. His sharp eye for unclear formulations and clumsy reasoning surely has helped me avoiding mistakes – not to mention the many instances of simply wrong English, which he corrected gently and with endless patience.

Essential to this project has been the financial support of the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO). The newly created ‘Promotiebeurs voor leraren’ enabled me to conduct this research as a part of my work at the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague. Without this possibility it would surely not have happened. In addition, I owe many thanks to my ‘home institution’, notably vice-principal Martin Prchal and head of the Music Theory department Suzanne Konings, for showing ceaseless interest and finding creative solutions for the many time conflicts that appeared during the process.

I feel privileged to be surrounded by such wonderful colleagues at the conservatory and beyond. Countless are the casual chats I had with a wide range of musicians in the corridors or during a quick cup of coffee in between classes, and it is characteristic for the spirit of the place that many of these conversations were as substantial as inspiring. A few colleagues have to be mentioned: first of all Karst

de Jong, a brilliant improviser himself and musical companion since my adolescence. I cherish the memory of the long conversations with Theo Verbey, who sadly passed away in 2019. His critical mind is still missed dearly. I certainly would like to include my students as well; it would be pedantic to repeat the first sentence of Schönberg's *Harmonielehre* here, but I do feel that my conversations (verbal or musical) with them have shaped this study.

Outside the Royal Conservatoire as well, the circle of musicians who sympathised with my work is large. Precious to me are the many stimulating hours I spent at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. I would like to thank David Dolan for his generosity and friendship, and for frequently inviting me as a guest teacher. Our trio performances and recordings together with the unique John Kenny indirectly also contributed to this study. Many thanks I owe to Elisabeth von Magnus and Simon Schouten for their friendship, for inviting me at the Kunstuniversität Graz, and for opening doors that would otherwise have remained closed.

It is a commonplace to call the years of a doctoral research intense; when the topic is as broad as this one, connected in so many ways to one's profession at large, one arrives at a stage where almost everything seems to be relevant to the research topic. It is very easy to lose oneself in a mild addiction, not unpleasant for yourself but certainly less admirable to the people around you. My biggest thanks go to my wife Wilanne, who not only managed to cope with this situation, but always believed in this project and never stopped encouraging me. More and more she has become a participant, sharing her professional expertise and never getting tired to discuss newly developed ideas with me. I am also very grateful to our children Julia and Hubert, who were a wonderful sounding board and contributed by bringing in their professional backgrounds. Without those people this book would have been entirely different – if it would have existed at all.

Media examples

This study contains a large number of audio and audio-visual materials.

They are accessible through

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/7mwxf4zg7gvkoro/AABYbyyhALkZ3BaM2nO5YPCWa?dl=o>



Alternatively, they are available on

<https://easy.dans.knaw.nl/ui/datasets/id/easy-dataset:227966> (Audio files chapters 1-14)

<https://easy.dans.knaw.nl/ui/datasets/id/easy-dataset:227962> (App #1 [Audio files appendix, first set])

<https://easy.dans.knaw.nl/ui/datasets/id/easy-dataset:227963> (App #2 [Audio files appendix, second set])



The examples are numbered as follows: [chapter number].[section number] #[reference number]. Thus the code 7.2 #3 refers to the third audio file in chapter 7, section 3. All media examples are clearly indicated in the text.

Preliminary remark

For many years, long before the *Wiener Philharmoniker* finally decided to allow women to join their world famous ensemble in 1997, the world of classical music has been inhabited by musicians of both sexes. For this text, this frequently poses a problem concerning the gender of personal and possessive pronouns: an oboist can equally be a he or a she. Explicitly writing ‘he or she’ would impede the readability of the text, using the modern ‘their’ for a singular is grammatically incorrect and sometimes confusing, and ‘she’ by default only inverts the problem. In general I have tried to avoid the dilemma by using plural where possible; when the musician would most likely be a woman, for instance in the case of a coloratura singer, I of course have chosen ‘she’. In other situations I have often used an inclusive ‘he’ or ‘his’, and I beg the reader to take it as a ‘grammatical’ gender (though this does not exist in English), and certainly not as a suggestion that we are still living in the nineteenth century.

