Transforming Performance:

an inquiry into the emotional processes of

a classical pianist

Francisca Skoogh



DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

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*Faculty opponent*

Prof. Daniel Leech-Wilkinson

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| This artistic research PhD project challenges classical music performance culture through a series of experimental collaborative projects. My particular interest lies in how this culture shapes the psychological experience of performance from the perspective of the individual musician. The project’s aims can be further defined through the following research questions: a) How can I better understand the psychological impact that the traditions and ceremonies of classical music have on my performance? b) Departing from my own practice, what other factors affect me emotionally during performance? c) How can experimentation with the traditions of performance culture in classical music provide different modes of emotional regulation in staged performance?  This thesis is a compilation of projects and publications in which I explore classical music performance through my individual experience as a soloist. Selected concert performances of classical works, experimentation with performance settings, and the creation of two commissioned works, play central roles.  The method and design builds on the qualitative study of several case studies of my practice as a concert pianist in collaboration with other musicians, choreographers and composers. The methodological approach entails combinations of autoethnographic methods, stimulated recall and thematic analysis. The theoretical framework is twofold, and rests on psychological and psychoanalytical perspectives as well as on a socio-historically driven analysis of the music-theoretical concept of Werktreue.  Some artistic results are available online in The Research Catalogue and others are published on the CD *Notes from Endenich* (Daphne Records). The combined outcomes of the project suggest, that musicians can benefit from an increased awareness of factors that affect the western classical music performer. While this thesis is specifically directed towards other musicians, it is also my hope that the findings can be valuable also in other research fields. Without the active contribution from musicians and artists into the investigation of how they function as performers, and of the values that accompany them on-stage, it is difficult to understand which needs should be addressed scientifically. For music researchers, there are many opportunities to dig into the different aspects of performance, but it is vital to let musicians show the way by collaborating within the field of Artistic Research, and thereby, *together* with musicians, find new ways to transform their experience of performing. | | |
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