

Editorial

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With this issue, I introduce myself as the new editor of *Analitica*. I thank the team that preceded me, and I am honored to continue this important project of sharing knowledge and insights with our readers. A journal dedicated to music—which is an intricate interplay of practices and sociocultural dynamics—must constantly monitor the ongoing transformations shaping our fields of study, which have become increasingly “open.” In my previous experience with the *Rivista di Analisi e Teoria Musicale (RATM)*, we observed a progressive shift in discussions toward boundary areas of study, a growing focus on relationships rather than objects, and a heightened interest in critical readings of disciplinary paradigms. We aim to embrace this trend and envision *Analitica* as a resonant chamber for this emerging and widespread sensibility.

The challenge is not only to engage the diverse voices of our community, but also to recognize that this community has become more multifaceted. The emergence of new subjectivities — or rather, with our growing awareness of them — requires not only that they are given a voice but also that new questions are asked. Indeed, we believe that a journal should not simply “reflect” a discussion as a passive observer, but it must recognize itself as an active participant and be capable of giving direction.

In this sense, I believe it is essential to turn to younger generations who, as natives of an increasingly complex world, have immediate access (in the literal sense of the term) to the ideas and debates shaping among our readers. Therefore, we have two deputy editors, Giusy Caruso and Gabriele Cecchetti, both of whom are actively engaged at the international level in fields that deeply impact our

areas of study. Additionally, young scholars are represented in the Editorial Board, a highly competent team that manages the journal and is open to different disciplinary fields.

A primary challenge was to establish a cultural and scholarly orientation, and we were unanimous in recognizing that *Analitica* must carve out its own specific identity within our Society of Music Analysis. Within the broad domain of music theory, beyond the analysis of repertoires, we aim to place particular emphasis on artistic research and performance studies—areas where discussions are emerging that best interpret the issues most relevant to us with the right critical spirit. Additionally, we seek to engage with music education, cognitive and computational sciences, and more broadly, inter-categorical approaches that are capable of broadening perspectives and fostering connections between ideas. As stated on our website, we also intend to pursue this by encouraging «proposals that expand or even challenge traditional ontologies, epistemologies, and methodologies» within our disciplines, «and that intersect theoretical and analytical themes with the perspectives and methods of artistic or empirical research».

It is worth recalling that the debate on “openness” and transversality is highly advanced in other fields of study, yet it struggles to expand within our domain, where it remains underrepresented. This is evident even in the Conferences we attend, both in Italy and abroad, which are generally structured around specific sessions built around well-defined areas of study. Kevin Korsyn, criticising the concept of “discipline”, discusses how according to Foucault «the persistence of a disciplinary name over time

may conceal profound discontinuities in the object of knowledge. Thus, he warns, for example, against assuming that eighteenth-century natural history and nineteenth-century biology study the same subject. Biology is the study of life, but the concept of life as such did not exist in the eighteenth century, which recognized a continuum of natural forms with no clear break between the animate and the inanimate» (Korsyn, 2003, p. 41). Similarly, to give an example, when we deal with the study of Forms in music, in Haydn as in Brahms, we overlook the fact that, over time, the meaning of Form (not to mention the very concept of the musical “work”) has acquired such diverse connotations that it becomes misleading to consider it as belonging to the same disciplinary frame.

For some time, discussions have taken place around the concept of postdisciplinarity, and more recently, a volume edited by Tomas Pernecky (2020) provides an updated perspective on the topic. Postdisciplinarity challenges the current organization of knowledge into separate fields, beginning with academia. Recognizing the complexity of knowledge, it proposes a radical transformation, positioning itself “outside” the very notion of discipline. This shift would allow us «[to] construct a new cognitive space, in which it is no longer merely a question of opening up disciplinary borders through degrees of interaction/integration, but of fundamentally challenging the obvious fact of disciplinarity» (Darbellay, 2016, p. 367 cit. in Ings, 2020, p. 52). Using a powerful metaphor, some have described this shift as moving from models inspired by dividing walls to models resembling a web-like structure (Caton & Hill, 2020). From a different standpoint, but along the same lines, Donna Haraway explores what she has termed “tentacular thinking” (Haraway, 2016).

This discussion is highly stimulating for our community, which is always prone to the risk of adopting a reductive and unifying approach to analysis. In many respects, this brings us closer to the way performers engage with musical works. Recent studies on this topic highlight the transversality and

complexity of the performer’s approach, whose potentiality — as John Rink writes — lies «not in the *communication* of specific meaning, but in the *construction* of infinite meanings» (2018, p. 91) (*italics mine*). In the first case, “communication” implies the transmission of values considered immanent to the work — which is thus idealized — whereas, in the second case, “construction” opens up to an expanded concept of “structure” that includes an indefinite series of agencies, among which the performer is one. For Daphne Leong, «structure, in this broader conception, explicitly includes perceived, performed, and even imagined elements. It can be active, fluid, and dynamic» (2019, p. 8). *Performer’s analysis*, as it is often said, represents a stimulus to pursue more relational analytical strategies (Born, 2010), capable of bringing together multiple agencies within the complex assemblage that constitutes the musical work.

Having outlined the project, I will now turn to the five articles featured in this issue.

In his article, *Spectral Organization. Process and form in Gérard Grisey’s Solo pour deux*, Alessandro Ventura analyses a piece by Grisey (1981) in which the composer addresses some fundamental themes of his compositional programme. Specifically, it explores time management and the problem of form, starting from a broader process of continuous acceleration into which various other cross-cutting processes are integrated in diverse ways, sometimes independently of each other. The goal is a kind of self-generation of form that eliminates any element of arbitrariness, deriving the compositional criteria directly from the material itself — the sounds, with their acoustic properties, and the two instruments, with their specific characteristics. This results in a network of derivations stemming from a few fundamental organizational principles, such as the harmonic series (based on B-flat and E) and the Fibonacci sequence, which intersect in various ways with other agencies specific to the instruments in play: trombone and clarinet. For instance, the two fundamental notes are intrinsically linked to the trombone, as they correspond to two of its basic

positions, and to the clarinet, where E is present in the low register, while D — its deepest note — corresponds to the 10th harmonic of B-flat. This complex system also intersects our listening capacities and places us as listeners in the role of active agents within the compositional framework. The analysis examines the possible criteria for segmenting the piece based on various parameters without concealing the difficulty of arriving at a general idea of unity. This, in turn, offers another point of discussion derived from the article: a piece like *Solo pour deux*, traversed by a dense network of processes, might lead us to reconsider the aesthetic values traditionally deemed essential, as the notion of unity in art becomes increasingly difficult to maintain when confronted with complex dynamics.

While Ventura's focus is on the creative phase of the piece, Daniel Barolsky's article — *The mistaken art* — explores the unusual topic of mistakes and other forms of imperfection in musical performance from a perspective that is undeniably bold and original. In fact, the author acknowledges errors as factors that can enhance the credibility of a performance event, introducing a "fair" tension and breaking the perfectionist logic imposed by our technological world. It is no coincidence that Barolsky takes issue with the kind of performance that is very much in vogue today, the aesthetic values of which are derived from the studio recording model, where everything can be edited. This creates an "expectation of perfection" and an idea of performance that is flattened by the logic of the machine, to which even humans are forced to conform. On the other hand, there are examples of legendary pianists such as Cortot, famous for his exciting performances (both in concert and on recordings) despite numerous textual inaccuracies, or Rubinstein, who, after a lapse of memory, improvised in the style of Chopin, and many others. In his judgement on Cortot, Alfred Brendel recontextualizes imperfections as part of a more general performance experience. The article skillfully combines a whole range of findings and observations on the subject by performers and musicologists. It

also discusses cases in which instrumentalists introduce errors voluntarily. It should be emphasized that the interesting aspect is not to start from the mistakes in order to assess their impact, but rather to use them in the context of a more general recontextualization of the idea of the musical "work." In this new frame of meaning, errors become something else because the focus shifts to the performative event, where characteristics related to the sign (the "correct" notes) lose relevance, while those connected to the phenomenological dimension of the performance and its creative (or re-creative) aspect gain importance. In this sense, errors contain traces of humanity, opening the door to empathy and communication.

In a different context, that of the jazz universe, Federico Rossi's article *Processo compositivo, improvvisazione collettiva e post-produzione musicale in 'Pharaoh's Dance' di Miles Davis: una proposta di analisi* takes 1969 as its starting point, a pivotal year marked by a series of extraordinary events that changed the world. Among these is the release of Miles Davis's *Bitches Brew* and the birth of jazz rock (fusion). This represents a major turning point in music, encompassing a circularity of figures: musicians, material, recording, editing, collective improvisation, new temporalities, and so on. *Pharaoh's Dance*, the focus of the analysis, is taken as a model of a new approach to music production and recording in an assemblage of different elements, from the improvisation of the instrumentalists to the collaborative work of Teo Macero and Miles Davis in studio, to Joe Zawinul's contribution to the written parts. According to Gianfranco Salvatore, as quoted by the author, what we listen to is not a result but a process toward a goal that is still undefined and unseen. The work is ontologically reconfigured as a dynamic project, one that foresees only provisional paths. This recalls what has been called an "epistemic object" (Rheinberger, 1997) in the field of scientific research — the object of study in the laboratory, which presents «characteristic, irreducible vagueness. This vagueness is inevitable, because, paradoxically, epistemic things embody what is not

yet known. Scientific objects have the precarious status of being absent in their experimental presence; they are not simply hidden things to be brought to light through sophisticated manipulations» (ibid, p. 28). A striking parallel exists within the artistic realm, where the work does not exist in an ideal dimension, awaiting to be brought to life, but only as the provisional outcome of an experimental process (the performative and studio dimensions), and thus in a constant state of vagueness and indeterminacy. Indeed, *Pharaoh's Dance*, during the studio recordings, embodied «what is not yet known» and its ontological status was pure emergence.

In her article *Signed Songs, Signed Music, and the Italian Experience*, Carmen Ceschel problematizes the notion that «we live immersed in an audiocentric world» and invites us to engage with a different context, where sign language serves as a gateway to a realm in which “hearing” is not required to access music. In other words, we are compelled to consider the non-auditory aspects of music. What do we mean by listening? Beyond the conventional concept, it is valuable to open several other potential channels through which we can “listen”. In this way, we gain multiple dispositions toward music: rigid boundaries are broken, and new meanings are brought into view. In particular, original aspects of music production emerge as significant, driven by actions focused on spatial and visual parameters. In this regard, the author cites Tiziano Manca, who asks whether it is possible to conceive of music that could almost exclude a sound event by focusing on the instrument and its interaction with the musician’s body and gesture. This shift in focus provides an opportunity to re-semanticize a theme that seems to be insensitive to change. Music can be more than sound; it is simply a matter of broadening our horizons.

Finally, with Delia Dattilo, *Un Maestro fra i Maestri. La ricerca etnografica di Franco Oppo con i suonatori di launeddas*, we enter a singular borderland, linked to the extensive research on traditional Sardinian music carried out in the 1980s by the composer Franco Oppo at the Regional Ethnographic Institute of Nuoro, with the participation of various

performers and instrument makers from the central-southern area. A varied corpus of direct testimony in the form of recordings conveys a scenario of interrelations among musicians, the environment, materials, and ritual practices that, in addition to constituting an important documentary sample, has left a significant mark on the composer's imagination and broadened his theoretical horizons. The intricate interplay between tradition and individual creation introduces us to the concept of sound embedded within a broader discursive system imbued with latent meanings that extend beyond the musical realm to encompass existential, cultural, social, and personal dimensions. Although the interaction between the music of the oral tradition (difficult as it may be to define its boundaries) and the so-called “cultured” music is always a complex process, it is precisely this ability to look beyond one's respective borders that becomes particularly constructive. The final decades of the 20th century were a particularly fruitful period for this interest in transversality. The quotation from Luigi Nono, who met Oppo in Warsaw and remarked, «What are you doing here? There is so much to do in Sardegna», is emblematic of a perhaps unrepeatable cultural period. An entire paragraph is dedicated to the mediation between the two cultures: Oppo's world as a “cultured” musician and the music of his homeland. Upon closer examination, the material that interests him most is not merely auditory but something denser, incorporating performative gestuality and improvisatory play.

Finally, among the contributions in this issue, I would like to mention a memorial text for Edmond Buharaja, a composer, theorist, and scholar who passed away prematurely in 2024. Buharaja was closely connected to our Society of Analysis and actively participated in our Conferences. We all valued his profound erudition, paired with a discreet nature. His friend and colleague Pirro Gjirkondi recalls with deep emotion not only his compositions and academic contributions as an essayist and translator, but also his tenacious dedication to the knowledge and the fostering of Albanian music.

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