

'A View from Nowhere': Performance Analysis and the Listening Subject

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'We must not, as we have seen, suppose that the determinate forms reached through the critical attitude are actually in the primordial experience, or, in consequence, talk about a synthesis which is present, so long as the manifold is as yet undissociated'.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*

‘The alleged self-evidence of sensation is not based on any testimony of consciousness, but on widely held prejudice. We think we know perfectly well what “seeing”, “hearing”, “sensing” are, because perception has long provided us with objects which are coloured or which emit sounds. When we try to analyse it, we transpose these objects into consciousness. We commit what psychologists call ‘the experience error’, which means that what we know to be in things themselves we immediately take as being in our consciousness of them. We make perception out of things perceived.’

- Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*

Performers convey musical structure through tempo.

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From Monet's *Rouen Cathedral* series



The Moon Illusion



‘...sometimes I suspected myself of analyzing the graph and not the music. **The development of computer programs which combine the functions of playback and visualization, of which Sonic Visualiser is one, disposes of the problem once and for all,** for the simple reason that graphs, spectrograms, and whatever other visualizations you choose scroll as the music plays.... Sonic Visualiser can be regarded as an ideal training environment for enhancing your skills as a close listener.’

- Nicholas Cook, *Beyond the Score* [emphasis added]

‘The whole point of performance analysis is to work with music as experienced.’

- Nicholas Cook, *Beyond the Score*

‘[Musicians’] intentions concern not so much the sounding means that must be used, but rather the expressive effect that the sounds must achieve. In other words, performers are seeing the end product as the listener experience.’

-Daniel Leech-Wilkinson & Helen M. Prior,

‘Heuristics for Expressive Performance’ in *Expressiveness in Music Performance*

‘[T]he job of the phenomenologist is to get clear concerning the phenomena that need to be explained.’

- Hubert Dreyfus, ‘Overcoming the Myth of the Mental’