Rhetorically Performative Early Music: YouTube Videos as Statements

Robin Rolfhamre

Professor of Music Education, University of Agder

Daniel H. Øvrebø

Research Fellow, University of Agder*

Abstract: Increasing history consumption in today's society creates, in different social formations, a common expectation of what historical music is, can and should be. In this chapter, we draw on music education and Baradian agential realism perspectives to offer what we perceive as a promising procedure for studying early music performance from a less anthropocentric stand. We ask: How does early music performance intra-act with YouTube as medium, and how does this intra-action enable informal learning? We first address the significance and prevailing interpretation of rhetoric in this context, and what a move from a single-case rhetoric to an ecological one offers. Subsequently, we introduce agential realism as an approach to studying early music performance, particularly through the lense of Barad (2007). Here, we offer a discursive practice that can contribute to future studies, which we follow up with an exemplary case study. The case is later discussed and analysed, and in conclusion we draw attention to the online media's role both in sustaining historical culture for new generations, and in cumulatively reinventing itself as a pedagogical process both within and outside educational settings.

Keywords: early music performance, YouTube, agential realism, rhetoric, musical communication

---

Introduction

Jenna (a fictional character in this example scenario) has to study. The theme for the day is literature from the Rennaissance era. Sitting down at her desk, she is soon distracted, and suddenly finds herself wandering off, looking for videos online, searching for more entertaining input than her current textbook offers. She browses through Netflix, and watches a couple of episodes of a Renaissance period drama. She finds the music intriguing, something she has not heard the likes of before. On an impulse, she enters YouTube and searches for Renaissance music, only to find a plethora of music performance videos of every kind, all parading under the label "Renaissance". After a while, she returns to her textbook again with the audiovisual examples still in mind, and reads on about the period's literature. Here, something truly important happens in terms of pedagogy and historical perception. In a non-moderated fashion, through her online excursion, she has familiarised herself, perceivingly learned something, or acquired a greater understanding of what the "Rennaissance" means. That is, she has been the subject of informal learning without guidance, with the effect of creating an uncensored sense of a historical past.

Increasing history consumption in today's society creates, in different social formations, a common expectation of what historical music is, can and should be (Liakos & Bilalis, 2017, p. 5). Period dramas, costume TV series, docudramas, fantasy games, and romanticised medieval historical event portraits all contribute to what we expect, for instance, the medieval, Renaissance or Baroque to be. This affects not only mass perceptions of history, but also present and future generations of aspiring historians and musicians. The question is, from what perspective do we approach and make sense of historical evidence, and how do we ultimately "connect the dots", so to speak, and convey our take on history to others. These matters have become even more pressing today, particularly during the current on-going COVID-19 pandemic. There is, now, increased pressure on educators to create online educational content for classes, a problem easily solved through online resources. Moreover, early music performers, like many others, have, to a much greater extent than before, started to inhabit digital performance space, compensating for cancelled

live concerts. Therefore, more and more content related to music performance has become available to basically anyone with internet access.

Contrasting conceptions merge – for instance, the emotive emphasis of much present-day entertainment media with the distanced and more objective restoration of past practices and truisms – to become something at once alien and mystical (the alluring otherness of old lost arts), as well as something reassuringly familiar, conforming to what we expect. This is indeed a deeply interesting phenomenon offering many different approaches (e.g., historical culturalism, digital humanities, cultural heritage, psychoanalysis, historiography, materialism, and so on). We will here address the issue from the perspective of music education and Baradian new materialism, offering what we perceive as a promising, and often very different from canonical approaches, procedure for studying early music performance from a less anthropocentric stand.

A music educational setting, here, means an informal, every day, intra-active situation where learning is acquired mostly through a sum of impressions and conclusions, stemming from material exposure (in this case, YouTube videos). Rather than choosing to focus on a formal educational setting where a teacher utilises selected music performance videos – as curiosities – to pinpoint an otherwise carefully designed narrative, we are more interested in the cumulative, non-choreographed knowledge discovered through the individual perceiver's own browsing. That is, how the exposure of more or less random, un-censored YouTube videos shapes their concept of a given cultural heritage, and how this happens. In this sense, the preservation of a cultural heritage, and its development through new generations of audiences, is more a matter of collective responsibility, based on cause and effect relationships rather than the decisions of one specialist at an acclaimed institution.

The aim of this chapter, therefore, is to offer a starting point into this complex matter, within the field of European early music heritage and performance studies, highlighting an understanding of what early music is and was, from the perspective of an active material process, rather than a passive acceptance of historical truths and their representations. In an earlier chapter of this volume, Rolfhamre presents his idea of what the historically informed performance, as a phenomenon and practice, does

performatively, rhetorically and pedagogically in terms of present early music discourse. While his view is dedicated to meta-perspectives on musicology and performance practices, we are here concerned with digital audiovisual representations of performances as case studies shedding light on early music as a current practice, rather than a more or less skilfully executed representation and re-establishing of something long gone. Although it would be natural to digress into the historically informed performance movement here, this is covered in chapters 2 and 5 of this volume. To avoid unnecessary repetition, we advise the reader to see those chapters should they want to read more. What should be pinpointed here, however, is how technological advances, both in the past and present, go hand in hand with artistic expression and rhetorical constructs. From the impressive gardens of Versailles with their fountains, to printed propaganda (posters, artworks, sculptures, coins, etc.), to the sound of musical instruments, to theatres built to enable (even force) the audience to focus on stage activities, to gramophones, to television, to VR, the available technologies have always been used to promote the intended content and effects, thus making an impression (understood from a rhetorical perspective). Audiovisual media, including YouTube videos, are, of course, no exception here. There is an ever-growing body of literature dedicated to film music, music on small screens, televisions, and computers. Steadily developing into a vibrant scholarly tradition that by far exceeds the limitations of the present chapter, education and the media has more recently crystalised into a discipline. Studies show that YouTube, for instance, has become a platform enabling users to connect, inspire and learn from each other, particularly through the tutorial format (Lange, 2019; Whitaker et al., 2014). Pires et al. (2019) identifies five pronounced ways of engaging with YouTube among youths: 1) radiophonic, as if listening to radio; 2) televisual, as if engaging with a user-controlled television; 3) social, seeking interactions with others beyond mere solitary online presence; 4) productive, as in distributing their media to others; and 5) educational, for the purpose of learning something. Some studies focus on YouTube based learning and teaching, in which the pedagogical agenda is created more or less explicitly through the perspectives of the content creators (e.g., Marone & Rodriguez, 2019; Waldron, 2013; Whitaker et al, 2014).

Others look more specifically at incorporating YouTube videos into more formalised learning scenarios and what effects this causes (e.g., Cayari, 2018; DeWitt et al., 2013; Jones & Cuthrel, 2011).

Many of the studies we encountered emphasise planned, active participation in social networks for learning and exchange. This also seems to be the case for studies aimed more specifically at music performance videos and education. While studies show that music performance videos can be incorporated into more formal educational settings (e.g., Cayari, 2018; Marone & Rodriguez, 2019), the authors of music performance videos, at least from an educational perspective, generally seem more concerned with showcasing their own skills and/or inspiring others, normally without expressing an intended educational purpose (e.g., Whitaker et al., 2014).

More work seems to be necessary, however, on incidental learning and music-specific cultural sustainability in relation to YouTube music performance videos, which were originally conceived and presented as aesthetic presentations with no expressed educational purpose or agenda. Moreover, the music performance videos of period music, such as early music, served to represent and preserve selected interpretations of a cultural legacy. Lange (2019) distinguishes between YouTube based informal learning, and incidental learning, which differ in that the first is planned and conscious, while the latter is an unplanned result of doing something else. In the fictional case of Jenna, above, we could say that her unplanned excursion into period music performance videos – which introduced her to Renaissance music – while initially performing other learning activities, constitutes a case of incidental learning, in terms of her forming an idea of what constitutes the "Renaissance". She also participates in more than one of Pires et al.'s (2019) five categories while doing so, from the recreational entertainment of the period drama to the move to YouTube, thus learning more about a topic by consuming in a radiophonic or televisual manner. Maybe she even commented and interacted with others, and gained some kind of knowledge from doing so, a perspective studied by scholars including Lee et al. (2017) and Dubovi and Tabak (2020).

In this chapter, following a Baradian new materialist position, we ask: How do we intra-act with early music performance represented through

online videos in ways that convey different subject positions? The incentive has its roots in the online media's ever-growing importance in distributing and communicating musical performances globally, reaching new audiences who may otherwise have had little or no access to the general early music community. In this view, early music is very much a present, social activity drawing on something once lost, and offering something exotic, as well as pursuing the historical through representation and appropriation. It is how we convey our European cultural heritage today, and how we protect it as a rich tradition beyond the written word. Therefore, in the present chapter, we are not particularly interested in what *should* or *would* be considered accurate representations of early music through original sources. What we are interested in, however, is its rhetorical function as a medium today, favouring presentism over historicism. Analyses comparing historical sources to what is performed are therefore entirely omitted in the following case studies. Our contribution to early music performance studies is to offer a perspective on its mediating, rhetorical function through online media, by providing an alternative analytical method utilising rhetorical and new materialist ideas. Our goal is for Medieval early music performances to be more readily included in educational ethical discourse, showing how cognition and encounters – through their inherent rhetorical persuasive function – blend effectively with filmed music performances to create sensation and calls for action, as well as a sense of meaning. This will help to highlight both the communicative potential for early music represented through performances on YouTube, as well as the responsibility of early music performers who use online media channels to extend the scope of their performances. In addition, we aim to provide input to future discourse on incidental learning in the contexts of cultural heritage, music performance and communication of and through music.

Early music performance studies, as well as pedagogy and rhetoric, are very much anthropocentric matters. Recent work acknowledges the material world and its influence on the human subject to a greater degree than what was common earlier. In Judith Butler's influential work on gender (e.g., 1990/2006), discussion centres on people as *inter*acting with the material and socio-political world. These perspectives have also entered

early modern music through the path paved by feminist and gender studies (e.g., McClary, 1991/2002; Scott, 2003, to name only two). But these materialist approaches still place humans on higher ground. Barad's (2007) agential realism and intra-action offers a levelling of the hierarchical relationship between humans and the material world, with the first being positioned, not as a focal point interacting with the external material world, but as one piece of a whole operating on the same playing field as the external material world, where all exert influence on all (hence, *intra*-acting rather than *inter*-acting). As Liakos and Bilalis comment in a very different context than Barad:

> To understand historical culture, historians need to abdicate from their role as the rulers (and judges) of the history production process. They need to become objects of their research and to embark on a collective journey regarding the role of history in society and their role as historians, without implying a duality between academic history and lay historical culture. (Liakos & Bilalis, 2017, p. 7)

This decentralisation of the human subject as truth provider offers interesting pathways into the study of early music presentation and historical cultural heritage. It can offer a complement to historicist approaches, thus redefining the performer and inspiring new self-perception and artistic possibilities. This will be especially relevant in a future post-COVID-19 society, where online streaming, digital cultural heritage immersion, and mass cultural consumption will most likely operate very differently from just last year (this is written during the pandemic).

For the rest of this chapter, we first address the significance and prevailing idea of rhetoric in this context, and what a move from a single-case rhetoric to an ecological one offers. Subsequently, we introduce a new-materialist approach to studying early music performance, particularly through the lens of Barad (2007). Here, we offer a discursive practice that can contribute to future studies, which we follow up with an exemplary case study. The case is later discussed and analysed according to agential realism ideals and, in conclusion, we draw attention to the online media's role both in sustaining historical culture for new generations, and in cumulatively reinventing itself as a pedagogical process both within and outside educational settings.

Setting up a rhetorical ecology

Pre-aesthetic, early modern cultural production was predominantly governed by rhetoric (Rueger, 2011). It was carefully and holistically designed to persuade the receiver using multiple areas of expertise, all working towards the same end – to create rapport (Eriksen, 2001; Rolfhamre, 2018a; Rueger, 2011). With social, and socialising effects in mind (Rolfhamre, 2018a, 2014), it sought to constitute itself within the realms of rhetorical ecologies (cf. Rivers & Weber, 2011) based on iterative formations (cf. Derrida, 1982), in which selected imagery, analogies and designs – or historical fragments in general – were meant to position the subject forcefully, maintaining its *image* and *brand* (to use modern terminology) or simply promoting a specific cause (Burke, 1994; Liakos & Bilalis, 2017).

Early music performance being rhetorically performative is, then, no novelty. This is why rhetoric and phenomenal reception together offer a particularly interesting analytical perspective in the sense of the online early music performance video as a mediator of early music – that is, an early music-ness, or what we perceive as a convincing early music performance. This perspective is especially important in terms of the historically informed performance (HIP), not only as a field of interest and artistic creativity, but also as a cultural heritage safekeeping-phenomenon. Moreover, the open online format offered by social media platforms, such as YouTube, enables the mediation of this cultural heritage from the initiated HIP "natives" to the uninitiated on a global scale. Indeed to the latter the non-refereed early music performance video, *as is,* may fully represent what constitutes early music, no matter who its creator was. Such multiplicities of early music signifiers offered by social media platforms, thus, iterably and cumulatively create the popular concept of cultural historicism often presented as "cultural heritage", which it performatively (in both a Derridean and Butlerian sense) helps maintain and develop further.

One obvious issue that arises from this chapter's use of rhetoric in new materialist analysis is the very different emphasis on the human subject, which begs the question of how they can combine well. The question, however, is perhaps not how a rhetoric can or should, in fact, be

fully anthropocentric, but how it fits within a more levelled hierarchical intra-action, which is less of a conundrum. It is merely something intra-acting with other things. Moreover, it may be argued that rhetoric – being about persuasion, or inducing someone to do, feel or believe something, for instance – can function both in conscious and unconscious, deliberate and undeliberate instances. Imagine a cathedral church organ, for instance, with all of its rhetorical devices (material, ornaments, size, tone-quality, amplitude, etc.) as a symbol of rank, wealth and power. Or, consider a microscope or spectral analysis machine, designed to show persuasively one, delimited aspect of reality. With a wink and a nod to both Barad and Derrida, once they leave their creator (being bought by someone else, somewhere else), these items still act out their significance iterably in relation to other designs without (perhaps) there being a known addressor or addressee. In Rivers and Weber's (2011) rhetorical ecology the possibility for such considerations appears. The rhetoric among materials may or may not have been construed by different individuals in different times, contexts and with varying intent (some may be for something while others against). Yet at the same time, the theory of argumentation, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca inform us, has discursive technique as its object (1969, loc. 227). This is also where rhetoric may indeed meet new materialist theory.

Online media, particularly social media, are very much about discourse techniques and how to captivate the site visitor to keep them from leaving your website, or, even better, become loyal returning visitors. Rhetoric can, here, be placed within the individual text's persuasiveness, but it can also be located in relation to other sites. Particularly, it may build its strongest discourse by relating to what it is not (e.g., "This website seems much more well-designed and trustworthy than that home-made, basic HTML-coded mess of a reader experience"). Hence, a creation's rhetorical effect, or efficacy, exists in relation to other texts, which precede and succeed it, and creates new meaning as it moves through history and geography (following the principles of a Derridean (1982) iteration-type of performativity, cf. chapter 2 of this volume). This makes rhetorical intra-action, as Barad (2007) asserts, very much an ethical matter. Indeed, while drawing on the analogy of

the famous film series starting with *Jurassic Park* (Spielberg, 1993) to illustrate how detached, historical fragments are used to construct realities and arguments, Liakos and Bilalis point out:

> … In Jurassic Park, the deadly confrontation of human and beast is associated with the park as a leisure activity and commercial venture. In contemporary historical culture, history wars and the marketing of activities related to history and the display of the past go hand in hand. (Liakos & Bilalis, 2017, pp. 6–7)

Take for instance how current lute performance practice uses a rhetoric of being historically correct based on unhistorical practices, and changes its artistic expression and execution according to the social formations it seeks to conform to – very much like rhetoric (Rolfhamre, 2018b). Nonetheless, if a lutenist's performance activity does not correspond to the expectations of the audience, they may lose their market and their ability to be professionally active. Hence, being a professional musician is also – whether we like it or not – a venture, if it should ever excel the status of personal leisure and pastime. In online media such as YouTube, we meet the rhetoric of the professional and the amateur, as well as the expert and the autodidact novice, and they are interchangeably exposed to us as we browse through the archives.

Agential realism as an approach to representations of rhetorically performative early music as YouTube content

Picking up the notion of early music performance as a rhetorically performative phenomenon, it is worth discussing exactly what an agential realism approach to doing research on early music can achieve. "The primary value of agential realism," as Rosiek (2018, p. 638) asserts in a stimulating text on agency and ethics in arts based research, "is that it offers a way to acknowledge the way inquiries can reveal real things about the world, without treating these revelations as totalizing accounts of what is possible". In arguing the affordance of agential realism for arts based research in general, he stresses that it provides a

more robust framework for discussions on ethics and agency, because art is ontologically generative. More precisely, research on artistic practice benefits from agential realism because it is "about generating new modes of being in the world" (p. 644). These modes of being are the subject of this text. Our case study investigates a specific intra-action in which early music as a phenomenon, digital media platforms, a rhetorical ecology and research meet.

Early music performance studies, with a long tradition of debating the relationship between authenticity and representation, seems therefore to benefit from an analytical perspective having as its point of departure how both research and practice are ontologically generative processes. Since we want to study its mediating, rhetorical function through online media, we are, to remain with Rosiek, not interested in treating these performances as "totalising accounts" of what is possible in early music.

Before presenting our case study, we need to consider how early music fits into the theoretical and methodological vocabulary intrinsic to Barad's agential realism. Adopting this approach means studying early music performance as a social material-discursive phenomenon, rather than treating disciplines such as historical musicology, systematic musicology and organology as separate entities. The modes of being mentioned above become the starting point of the inquiry. Agential realism necessitates the notion that identities are considered to be undecided prior to being measured. Intra-action is the moment in which the different possibilities of being are decided. In our case study, a series of becomings take place: our own researcher and musician selves (see next paragraph); the performers in the video; the sound qualities of their instruments; the works performed; the rhetorical devices employed by the musicians; YouTube as a mediator of rhetoric in general. All of these are considered to be agents within the early music phenomenon, and our specific intra-action (our case study) lets us investigate how these becomings happen.

For Barad (2007), ethics (the responsibility researchers have when designing their experiments), ontology (the existential belief that guides the inquiry), and epistemology (the characteristics of the knowledge

produced by the inquiry) are not entirely separate entities. They are entangled units that influence each other, and thus she condenses them into the concept of ethico-onto-epistemology.

The case study

When specifying what kind of case study we wanted to do, we found it very useful to discuss our approach through Postholm's (2010) differentiation of case studies, based on their utility value. Postholm's work belongs within a phenomenological approach to case studies. She distinguishes between case studies that simply present information in an area with little previous research (descriptive), case studies that afford a richer theorising of a given field (interpretive), and case studies that can clarify where previously there existed few conclusive studies (evaluative). In addition, Postholm, in reference to Stake's (1995) *The Art of Case Study Research*, specifies a distinction between case studies that seek to exemplify a given practice within one field (internal), and case studies that seek to illustrate a case across different fields (instrumental). As such, our case study is interpretive, because we seek to theorise how early modern rhetoric communicates in different performances, as presented on YouTube. Furthermore, the case study is distinctly instrumental, in as much as we work across different fields when combining perspectives from rhetoric, music performance and digital media.

The main idea behind the case study was to select representative YouTube videos containing early music performances of various kinds. From the perspective of the online video as mediator, conveyor and representation of a certain early music-ness, we sought to document early music and its intra-action with the medium, in order to understand how early music-ness manifests itself to us through online media, at a phenomenal level, and how it does so. When selecting the YouTube video cases for the study, we chose to prioritise a younger, emerging generation of performers of both sexes and of varying nationalities (e.g., Sweden, Spain, and France). They represent different settings and filming techniques, and an overview of the content and characteristics can be presented in a table:

Table 1. Overview of the Videos Used for the Case Study

Reference	Work performed	Composer(s)	Performers	General characteristics
Nordberg (2020)	A Fancy	John Dowland	Jonas Nordberg	Video with different cuts of Nordberg performing by himself.
Kvarnström (2013)	N/A	N/A	Jonas Nordberg Kenneth Kvarnström	Continuous crosscutting of solo guitar performance and dance movements.
Zapico (2014)	Capona and Ciaccona	Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger	Daniel & Pablo Zapico	Concert recording using multiple cameras from different angles.
Imbs (2019)	Corrente Prima	Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger	Albane Imbs	Informal "at home" recording session.
Les Kapsber'girls (2018)	N/A	N/A	Les Kapsber'girls (ensemble)	Two clips from a recording studio.
La Cité de la Voix (2018)	N/A	N/A	Les Kapsber'girls	Music with a voiceover featuring different cuts of both performers as well as their surroundings.
Palisander (2015)	Concerto II: Allegro and adagio	Johann Christian Schickhardt	Palisander (ensemble)	Concert recording using one stationary camera.
Bernstein (2018)	Tarantella	N/A	Palisander	Informal "at home" recording presented as a meme, with the four recorder players performing choreographed dance movements while playing.

See the reference section at the end for links to each video.

The videos were watched simultaneously by both authors through a Zoom meeting, after which the authors had a brief discussion and exchange of notes taken during the videos. The table above reflects the order in which the videos were watched. Rolfhamre was responsible for selecting the videos, which had not previously been seen by Øvrebø. Øvrebø, on the other hand, was responsible for deciding on three keywords to frame the discussion, of which Rolfhamre had no prior knowledge. As such, both authors had familiar and unfamiliar elements presented to them during the session.

Øvrebø designated these keywords in Norwegian as *ledeord* (ca. guide words), taking inspiration from Knut Ove Eliassen's approach to

extracting from the text itself a method for analysing literature, rather than relying upon any pre-existing models of theory and analysis (Eliassen & Stene-Johansen, 2007). As an example, the keyword "repetition" provides the starting point for analysing a passage from Jorge Luis Borge's *Pierre Menard, Autor del Quijote* [Pierre Menard, author of Quijote], a meta-fictional essay in which Borge invents an author called Pierre Menard who is attempting to re-write, word for word, Miguel de Cervantes classic novel *Don Quijote*. Borge's text is discussed in light of authors, other texts, and literary concepts that all relate in different ways to repetition, such as *ars combinatoria* (the idea that all prose is ultimately based on a limited number of possible combinations of letters), and Aragon's surrealist "method" of "seeing the familiar as if it was strange and the strange as if it was familiar" to name only a few examples (Eliassen & Stene-Johansen, 2007, pp. 274–275). In this way, "repetition" becomes not so much a keyword in the sense of my English translation, but a concept that guides the analysis both by establishing new relations and by *conducting* (in the electromagnetic sense that for instance metal conducts, and thus *leads*, electricity) (pp. 10–11).

The first keyword was inspired by the circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic that had to a great extent shaped social interaction in most part of society, forcing the use of digital solutions to meetings that would have otherwise taken place in person. As such, the first keyword was the "format" itself, and how watching YouTube videos is different from a concert setting. The intention was both to address the selection of clips made by Rolfhamre, and also to exchange thoughts and ideas around the whole format. The question itself might seem overwhelmingly "naive". The difference of experiencing a performance on YouTube versus live in concert is characterised by so many variables that a general comparison might seem utterly pointless.

The second guiding keyword pertained to the "content" itself, and addressed what we were noticing in the videos, in the music, in the performers, in the venues. This could be seen as an extension of the first keyword, since we now examine the relationship between what is performed and how our access to the performance shapes our experience of it.

The third keyword was in part inspired by the increased scholarly attention to "quality" in the arts, in particular as reflected in the Norwegian Arts Council's research project that sought to investigate how we perceive relationships among the arts (be it specific artefacts or artistic practices) and questions of quality. For us, this turned our attention to what we liked in the clips. Or, to be more specific, to borrow a phrase from Eric Clarke (2005, p. 92) related to subject-position in music listening, what materials in the clips "shape the general character of our response or engagement" towards interested, rather than indifferent or repelled. Through the first two keywords, we discussed both the content of the videos, as well as the format in which they were presented. The authors had different opinions on this, which can be attributed to their different backgrounds. It is not the intention here to make a case for how quality can be objectively measured or otherwise ascertained across performances of early modern music. Rather, we want to highlight how our discussion reflects any qualitative differences in the videos.

Findings: Three modes of rhetoric

Through discussing the relationship between content and form – that is, early music performance and how it is represented through a selection of videos available on YouTube – the authors were able to distinguish three different modes of rhetoric. Before presenting the three modes, the analysis will be explained, focusing on the keywords mentioned in the previous section.

Regarding the first keyword "format", one topic that recurred in the authors' discussion after watching the videos, was how in some videos the camerawork itself shaped the viewer's perception to a considerably higher degree than in the others. The first clip for instance (Nordberg, 2020) features a wide array of angles and focus areas. Close up shots that show the performer's head from the chin upwards are contrasted with low angle cuts in which we see his fretting hand on the fretboard in focus, while his head is in the cut but out of focus. The effect is somewhat similar to that of a rack focus employed in cinematic storytelling, in which the focus shifts to an object already in view, in order to draw attention to

something the viewer most likely would have missed. Øvrebø referred to this by comparing it with "popular music videos of the kind pioneered by MTV", because it directed one's attention to certain figures in the music that they would not have otherwise noticed. Rolfhamre addressed it more directly when he likened it to strategies of social media and suggested that it was about "keeping the viewer's attention" by telling "a supplementary visual narrative". The camera here, the material link between early modern music as performed by Jonas Nordberg, becomes in this video not so much a passive mediator, but a communication tool, an instrument on par with what Jonas is holding in his hands. It focuses the viewer's attention and thereby enforces more detailed listening that arguably benefits the music. The authors agreed that this was not the case in all the videos. In comparison, the live performance recording of the Schickhardt concerto (Palisander, 2015) had no particular focus as the camera was mounted, but also no opportunity for the viewer to move their focus around since the camera was placed quite far from the stage.

This matter of using the camera as an extended tool for letting visual communication enhance the overarching artistic communication brings the analysis to another point. On YouTube in general, and perhaps for music and arts in particular, users need to balance between two axes: videos as entertainment and videos as more "serious" artistic communication. The videos used in this case study can surely be said to demonstrate the whole range of this spectrum. The previously mentioned Schickhardt concerto (Palisander, 2015) has decidedly less value as entertainment and more ethos as a documentation of a live concert. No attempt is made to communicate the music other than to viewers who are perhaps already interested in either the ensemble or the composer. The same can also be said for the Zapico brothers (Zapico, 2014). On the other end of the spectrum, we have Nordberg's Dowland clip (2020). The visual narrative tells a story on a par with the musical narrative and enhances communication. The viewer is brought closer to the instrument and the performer, in a way that favours the performance itself above what is being performed.

Extending the discussion of how the camera is or is not used, it is worth remaining with Palisander (2015) simply because of how the static camera fixes the viewers' attention as if they were ordinary concert members,

rather than individuals sitting at home and watching a screen. Indeed, this very pretense seems to engender some deeper distinction between some of the videos. In Palisander (2015) the performers are positioned on stage and resort to a kind of communication based on letting the musical composition – the two movements from Johann Christian Schickhardt's *Concerto II* – communicate on its own. Its formal elements are placed firmly in the foreground, with the ensemble assuming the role of passive mediator. This is not to de-valuate the effort that the musicians in the ensemble have made. We are here merely less interested in each individual performance in and of themselves in favour of the dynamic relationship between YouTube as a media platform and early modern music as a practice of rhetoric.

In discussing the second keyword "content" further, the authors agreed that the dual axis mentioned above can be extended into three modes of rhetorical communication. The Schickhardt video already mentioned (Palisander, 2015), as well as the Zapico brothers (Zapico, 2014), *Vous avez dit Brunettes?* with Les Kapsber'girls (2018), and Imbs' (2019) solo performance typify the first mode: rhetoric based on documentation, either of a live recording or of a recording session. With a mounted camera placed either at a distance or up close, the videos serve as a documentation of an artwork and its performance that took place somewhere else. In the second mode of rhetoric the video becomes the work of art itself. In Nordberg's (2020) case, as discussed above, the video with its elaborate camerawork becomes the artistic artifact rather than a medium of presenting. The second video featuring the ensemble Les Kapsber'girls (*La cité de la voix*, 2018) also belongs in this mode. It features extensive and sometimes rapid crosscutting between a wide array of different shots. In particular, the series of head shots of the two singers performing facial gestures that imitate the lyrical content of the music is an example of the same type of camerawork found in Nordberg (2020), which sets it quite apart from experiencing a live performance. The third mode of rhetoric is based on humour, in which the communicative act is not so much premised on the music or the performance but lets the work of art serve as entertainment with a humorous purpose extrinsic to the music. The final Palisander video (Bernstein, 2018) is an example of this, as well

as the video with Jonas Nordberg together with Kenneth Kvarnström (2013). In the Palisander video, the music displays a high degree of virtuosity, including choreographed movements reminiscent of a military tattoo performance. The video itself has a headline indicating its use as an online meme: "When it's 1594 and you're out with your squad." The humorous anachronism in using Renaissance recorder music in reference to contemporary nightlife culture is quite far removed from any original rhetorical devices in the music.

One way for the authors to approach the third keyword "quality" was to look at whether the video format guided their attention towards general characteristics of the compositions themselves or to specific details in the performances. In the Schickhardt concerto (Palisander, 2015), more attention was given to the harmonic structure and melodic lines, rather than how the structure and melody was executed by the performers. A figure executed on the recorder was perceived primarily as a figure intrinsic to the narrative development of the composition, with nuances related to phrasing, tone and technique retreating into the background. On the other side of this perceptual shift were the videos of the ensemble Les Kapsber'girls, in which the focus was directed to the qualities of the performers: variations in timbre, vocal pronunciation, and emphasis on certain syllables – all results of artistic decisions made by the performers rather than the composers. In the case of the video titled *La Cité de la Voix*, this element was also supported by the camerawork, as mentioned in the previous paragraph.

Concluding discussion

In the previous analytical section, the authors identified three modes of rhetoric based on their readings and discussions of the relationship between content and form. In other words, YouTube as a medium affords three different modes through which early music performance is represented.

YouTube and similar media platforms present a low-threshold opportunity to publish your music however you choose without being restricted to the physical space of a concert venue. You can publish single-camera-on-tripod documentation, directed multicamera productions,

animations, 360-videos, VR videos or simply a blank screen. Moreover, you can choose to highlight or downsize the effect of the visual and aural exoticness of, for example, old instruments. It will all depend on how you stage your performance. Indubitably, what you choose to do will have an impact on the setting in which it is being perceived.

From a formalised educational perspective, for example, many teachers turn to videos to teach history because of their emotional accounts and personification of historical events, which may seem more engaging and relatable than textbooks and Powerpoint presentations. Moreover, as many students are more accustomed to and comfortable with learning about the past through film, rather than written publications (Metzger, 2007, pp. 67, 73), it may be a readily chosen pedagogic strategy in many circumstances. But, as Metzger points out, it takes effort from the participants to avoid passive consumption (p. 73). This is an even more important matter to consider in informal and/or incidental circumstances, in which there is no moderated pedagogical strategy present. An example is when people browse YouTube to learn something new or to be entertained in both expected and unexpected ways.

As the above study indicates, our reactions to the selected early modern performance videos support how cognition and encounter blend effectively with the music performance to create not only some sort of meaning but also a sensation, and a call for action inviting the viewer to engage with the material and become affected differently. Furthermore, the authors were able to identify some meaningful ways in which we could perceive of the viewings as intra-actions, and how this shaped the viewer's "modes of being". Our attention shifted between qualities of the compositions versus the performance, depending on how the setup and camerawork focused our gaze. Indeed, this very matter of our gaze and how it is (or is not) directed through the different videos became a recurring topic of our reactions, as documented in our discussion. It was difficult to address questions of content and quality in the clips without taking the format and its techniques of focusing viewer attention into consideration.

Subsequently, the study supports the idea of medial early music performances being more readily included in educational ethical discourse.

In this way we would not only designate the perceived performance as a cultural event or artefact, but include it in the community, and certain knowledge processes where we focus more on what becomes than what was. This would also point out the importance of including visual media strategies as an integral part of the musician's or content creator's performance intention, rather than merely considering it to be a practical way to "get the music out there". From this perspective then, music performance videos as decentralised artefacts may be more apt to create a critical historical discussion, than merely exemplifying a superior curricular narrative.

What this case study also shows is that, even though music performances are often addressed from the perspective of aesthetics, early music performance has inherited and still maintains much of its past rhetorical, multi-faceted persuasive function (Burke, 1994; Eriksen, 2001; Rolfhamre, 2018a; Rueger, 2011). From a materialist perspective, like the one presented here, we see that not only is the music performance itself, the sound, important to how we conceive early music, but so also is the performance setting, the musical instruments, the embodiment of the performer and the artistic direction. The materialistic aspects of the practice share an equally strong responsibility for the becomings of the essence and credibility of a historical re-enactment, as the music being performed. In addition, the topic of marginalisation must also be raised. Historical instruments and costumes, film cameras and sound recording equipment, etc., are often quite expensive, never mind the accumulated knowledge needed to utilise them according to a certain norm. Doing early music performance, at least from this perspective, is a privilege for those with the financial means and access. Our European early music heritage is often, in our experience as active musicians, focused on court, ecclesial and bourgeois culture which does not necessarily represent mainstream society. It is therefore worth questioning what we are preserving and for whom are we preserving it, and if it therefore is simply a matter of preserving the practices of past privileged social groups to be enjoyed by current privileged communities. This is why online representation of these sorts of music performances are so interesting, because, as long as you have access to a computer with an internet connection, you

can participate in this cultural heritage formation as intra-acting agents, experiencing and forming the public cultural conception of early music to be inherited by future generations. This shifts the power structure of defining what our cultural heritage is, not according to the experts alone, but also according to the common person. Early music performance videos receive their impulse from their creators, but in the realm of cultural heritage, they also live a life of their own, shaping our understanding of who we were, have become, and what future becomings we can imagine.

References

Barad, K. (2007). *Meeting the universe halfway: Quantum physics and the entanglement of matter and meaning.* Duke University Press.

Bernstein, R. (2018, November 15). *When it's 1594 and you're out with your squad! Palisander recorder group on classic FM* [video]. https://youtu.be/j1ed9gqXp3E

Burke, P. (1994). *The fabrication of Louis XIV.* Yale University Press.

Butler, J. (1990/2006). *Gender trouble.* Routledge Classics. Routledge.

Cayari, C. (2018). Connecting music education and virtual performance practices from YouTube. *Music Education Research, 20*(3), 360–376. https://doi.org/10.1080/14613808.2017.1383374

Clarke, E. F. (2005). *Ways of listening: An ecological approach to the perception of musical meaning.* Oxford University Press.

Derrida, J. (1982). *Margins of philosophy* (A. Bass, Trans.). The University of Chicago Press.

DeWitt, D., Alias, N., Siraj, S., Yaakub, M. Y., Ayob, J. & Ishak, R. (2013). The potential of YouTube for teaching and learning in the performing arts. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences, 103*, 1118–1126. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.10.439

Dubovi, I. & Tabak, I. (2020). An empirical analysis of knowledge co-construction in YouTube comments. *Computers & Education, 156.* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2020.103939

Eliassen, K. O. & Stene-Johansen, K. (2007). *Ledeord.* Cappelen Akademisk.

Eriksen, R. (2001). *The building in the text: Alberti to Shakespeare and Milton.* Pennsylvania State University Press.

Imbs, A. (2019). *Hiéronymus Kapsberger – corrente prima* [video]. https://youtu.be/aBxMFE5Sg3g

Jones, T. & Cuthrell, K. (2011). YouTube: Educational potentials and pitfalls. *Computers In the Schools, 28*, 75–85. https://doi.org/10.1080/07380569

Kvarnstrom, K. (2013, April 14). *Sofa(r) trailer* [video]. https://youtu.be/GSX9XIeOgF0

La Cité de la Voix. (2018, September 12). *Les Kapsber'girls | La cité de la voix* [video]. https://youtu.be/9QpYX-StnyY

Lange, P. (2019). Informal learning on YouTube. In R. Hobbs & P. Mihailidis (Eds.), *The international encyclopedia of media literacy* (pp. 1–11). John Wiley & Sons. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118978238.ieml0090

Lee, C. S., Osop, H., Goh, D. H.-L. & Kelni, G. (2017). *Online Information Review, 41*(5), 611–625. https://doi.org/10.1108/OIR-09-2016-0274

Les Kapsber'girls. (2018, 15 March). *Les Kapsber'girls: Vous avez dit brunettes?* [*Did you say brunettes?*] [video]. https://youtu.be/-ey5tbMr5ec

Liakos, A. & Bilalis, M. (2017). The Jurassic park of historical culture. In M. Carretero, S. Berger & M. Grever (Eds.), *Palgrave handbook of research in historical culture and education* (pp. 207–224). Macmillan. https://www.academia.edu/41464434/THE_JURASSIC_PARK_OF_HISTORICAL_CULTURE

Marone, V. & Rodriguez, R. C. (2019). "What's so awesome with YouTube?": Learning music with social media celebrities. *Online Journal of Communication and Media Technologies, 9*(4). https://doi.org/10.29333/ojcmt/5955

McClary, S. (1991/2002). *Feminine endings* (*with a new introduction*). University of Minnesota Press.

Metzger, S. A. (2007). Pedagogy and the historical feature film: Toward historical literacy. *Film & History: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Film and Television Studies, 37*(2), 67–75. https://muse.jhu.edu/article/223506

Nordberg, J. (2020, March 27). *Jonas Nordberg (lute): John Dowland – a fancy (P5)* [video]. https://youtu.be/zUQy7S6XiPE

Palisander. (2015, August 31). *Concerto II for four recorders in D minor: Allegro & adagio – Johann Christian Schickhardt* [video]. https://youtu.be/ouZ-P-O6EDU

Perelman, C. & Olbrechts-Tyteca, L. (1969). *The new rhetoric: A treatise on argumentation*. University of Notre Dame Press. https://www.amazon.com

Pires, F., Masanet, M.-J. & Scolari, C. (2019). What are teens doing with YouTube? Practices, uses and metaphores of the most popular audiovisual platform. *Information, Communication & Society*. https://doi.org/10.10.80/136911 8X.2019.1672766

Postholm, M. B. (2010). *Kvalitativ metode: En innføring med fokus på fenomenologi, etnografi og kasusstudier* (2nd ed.). Universitetsforlaget.

Rivers, N. A. & Weber, R. P. (2011). Ecological, pedagogical, public rhetoric. *College Composition and Communication, 3*(2), 187–218. https://www.jstor.org/stable/23131582?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents

Rolfhamre, R. (2018a). "Caprice de chaconne" (1671): Symmetry and proportions in Francesco Corbetta's work for Baroque guitar. *Early Modern Culture Online, 4*(1). https://boap.uib.no/index.php/emco/article/view/1513

Rolfhamre, R. (2018b). *Informed play: Approaching a concept and biology of tone production on early modern lute instruments.* Cappelen Damm Akademisk/ NOASP. https://press.nordicopenaccess.no/index.php/noasp/catalog/book/38

Rosiek, J. L. (2018). Art, agency and ethics in research: How the new materialisms will require and transform arts-based research. In P. Leavy (Ed.), *Handbook of arts-based research*. The Guildford Press.

Rueger, A. (2011). Aesthetics. In D. M. Clarke & C. Wilson (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of philosophy in early modern Europe* (pp. 201–223). Oxford University Press.

Scott, D. B. (2003). *From the erotic to the demonic: On critical musicology.* Oxford University Press.

Spielberg, S. (Director). (1993). *Jurassic Park* [Film]. Universal Pictures.

Waldron, J. (2013). User-generated content, YouTube and participatory culture on the web: Music learning and teaching in two contrasting online communities. *Music Education Research, 15*(3), 257–274. https://doi.org/10.1080/14613808.2013.772131

Whitaker, J. A., Orman, E. K. & Yarbrough, C. (2014). Characteristics of "music education" videos posted on YouTube. *Applications of Research in Music Education, 33*(1), 49–56. https://doi.org/10.1177/8755123314540662

Zapico, D. (2014, 9 February). *Daniel Zapico & Pablo Zapico – Gio.G. Kapsberger: Capona & ciaconna* [Vídeo 3/10][HD] [video]. https://youtu.be/ByMzi6DA-ys