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REIMAGINING THE FLUTE MASTERCLASS: CASE STUDIES EXPLORING
ARTISTRY, AUTHORITY, AND EMBODIMENT

by

SARAH CARRIER

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Music in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts, The City University of New York

2019

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Sarah Carrier

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Music in satisfaction of
the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts.

Date

Karen Henson

Chair of Examining Committee

Date

Norman Carey

Executive Officer

Supervisory Committee:

Jonathan Shannon, Advisor

Emily Wilbourne, First Reader

Judith Lochhead, Second Reader

Karen Henson, Reader

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Abstract

REIMAGINING THE FLUTE MASTERCLASS: CASE STUDIES EXPLORING ARTISTRY, AUTHORITY AND EMBODIMENT

by

Sarah Carrier

Advisor: Jonathan Shannon

This work explores the flute masterclass as an aesthetic, ritualized, and historically reimagined cultural practice. Based on fieldwork that took place between 2017 and 2019 in the United States, in Italy, and on the social media platforms Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube, I argue that the masterclass—an extension of the master/apprentice system that dominates learning in the classical music tradition—is characterized by embodied qualities of artistry and authority. These qualities are not inherent, but are perceived through subjective, social, familial, and affective bodies.

Chapter One outlines the main themes and the research design. Chapter Two is a case study that analyzes the concept of charismatic authority in relation to a world-renowned British flutist, his former teacher, and the influence of the French School of flute playing. Chapter Three discusses the role of sociality in professionalization and the search for artistry in a ten-day masterclass. Chapter Four, a case study of masterclasses at the National Flute Association Annual Convention, explores how flutists perform identity within the “imagined flute community” through gestural excess and modes of conduct. Chapter Five investigates flute

masterclasses on the social media platforms Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube and the impact of online media on artistry, authority, and embodiment. Keeping in mind Latour's actor-network theory, the "post-internet," and the centralized web, I consider the reshaping and disruptive effects of social media on the traditional flute masterclass. I conclude that in order to continue as a relevant site for aesthetic experience and meaning-making, the flute masterclass must fashion a disciplined authority that respects the identity and selfhood of the student performer.

Acknowledgements

There are many individuals I would like to thank for making the completion of this dissertation possible. First, I am deeply thankful for my advisor Dr. Jonathan Shannon, whose vast knowledge, endless encouragement, positivity, and incredibly useful suggestions were essential at numerous stages in this process. I would also like to thank Dr. Emily Wilbourne for her meticulous close readings and probing questions which kept me on-point. I am also thankful for my other professors at The Graduate Center, CUNY, especially Dr. Stephen Blum and Dr. Jane Sugarman whose rigorous classes fostered my interest in ethnomusicology and provided a framework to engage in the type of analysis of my field that I might not otherwise have the courage to pursue.

There are many flutists who have generously given their time and permission to observe and participate in their classes. Although I cannot name these individuals here for obvious reasons, I am thankful for their candor and openness to this project.

I owe profound thanks to Robert Dick, a priceless musical mentor since our first lesson at New York University in 2008. It was his encouragement that led me to pursue doctoral study at The Graduate Center.

I am very thankful and supremely lucky to have my husband Eric Morrell who was brave (or foolish) enough to date me while I was in the very beginning stages of writing this dissertation. I am thankful for his support and humor always. My bandmates, Andrea Christie and Ashleé Miller of The Parhelion Trio have also been very patient with me in the final stretch.

Without my parents this endeavor would not have been possible. Thank you for being a constant source of support throughout my life.

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Chapter One

Reimagining the Flute Masterclass

In this ethnographic study, I analyze the flute masterclass as a historically reimagined practice in which participants perceive authority and artistry through the body. While today masterclasses are a ubiquitous part of musical training, this was not always the case. The foundations of the masterclass were born out of the master/apprentice system of learning, established in medieval Europe by the 14th century through the formalization of guilds (Burwell 2012, 277). Masterclasses took their current shape when, in the mid-19th century, the master/apprentice system moved to a public sphere in the masterclasses of Franz Liszt. This new form of teaching music was both a reflection of its time and a reaction to it. The students' awe of the musical genius at work, the resemblance of the masterclass format to other theatrical teaching modes of the time (such as the surgery theater), and the international cohort of students (thanks to advances in transportation and communication), all align with historical understandings of this period. What stands out as reactive is the way that Liszt purportedly rejected the routinized, method-based learning taking place in the growing number of music conservatories throughout Western Europe (Walker 1996). Without Liszt's need to break away from institutionalized training by focusing on interpretation and expression—what we can label as aspects of the artistry of music—masterclasses would be little more than practical workshops on proper technique.

Music students today, unlike those of Liszt's time, can learn from recordings of master performers and have access to more media than ever. However, it is easy to overlook the cultural

and social functions that continue to give masterclasses value in Western classical music: 1) how they help sustain the master/apprentice model rather than requiring all master teachers to become modern educators, 2) maintain both the real and symbolic authority of the master separately from the authority of prevailing institutions of routinized musical training, 3) grant students access (albeit very limited) to the master teacher, and 4) utilize the often-neglected features of orality, embodiment, and affect that are essential to the transmission of “the art” of Western classical music.

Embodiment

One of the main focuses of this dissertation is to approach masterclasses through the performing body, prioritizing the senses, perception, and affect. The senses, which drive embodiment and perception, serve as the “interface between body, self, and the world,” orienting us not only physically, but constructing the “parameters of existence” that define our social group (Hahn 2007, 3). Rather than reducing the flute masterclass to a description of its qualities and features as an objective analysis would require, I analyze this aesthetic praxis through the participants’ engagement with the cultural object, as Csordas (1990) articulates, “framing the body as a starting point for the analysis of culture and the self” (39). Perception, as a pre-objective beginning rooted in the body, is a tool with which to study objects of culture (9). Under theories of embodiment, when perception and practice are analyzed in the body, the distinction of subject and object collapses (40). With this, the body creates an indeterminate methodological field (McGrail, Davie-Kessler, Guffin 2013).

While perception and consciousness are rooted in the body, it is paradoxically “characterized by absence,” meaning that our bodies, specifically the parts involved with the

senses, are rarely within our perceptive field (Leder 1990, 1). This absence may in fact be largely responsible for the persuasiveness of the Cartesian mind/body distinction, one of the most problematic paradigms of Western thought (3). While one might argue that musicians, athletes, and surgeons are more aware of their bodies in their occupational roles than telemarketers, bank tellers, and pharmacists, their perceptive organs remain invisible to their perceiving selves. The flutist does not “hear their hearing” nor do they “feel their feeling” of the keys under their fingers. In a state of masterful performance, it is possible that awareness of the body recedes even further from the perceptive field. Likewise, at the level of mastery, the flute as an “extension of the body” is best forgotten.

Focus on the body promotes an anthropomorphic view of the world in which the human body is “an intelligent and critical resource in the [...] production of those small and larger orders that underlie our social, political, and economic institutions” (O’Neill 1985, 16). In this sense, it is possible to learn how flutists shape the social body of the flute-playing world through a shared embodied experience. This applies to institutions at varying levels, for example: flute choirs, local flute clubs, the National Flute Association, and *Flute Talk* magazine. Also shaping musical communities and their sociotext are their familial bodies—genealogies formed from student/teacher bonds. These are maintained through oral traditions, texts, and performance traditions, “immortalizing music teachers through their students” (Fonseca-Wollheim 2017). This reproduction of flute culture through transmission from teacher to student creates a kinship that can resemble maternal and paternal relationships.

Perhaps even more direct than the performing body’s social and cultural impact, is its relationship to emotion and expression. Keil (1966), in his response to Leonard Meyer’s *Emotion and Meaning in Music* (1956), argues against a “one-to-one” relationship between notated

musical syntax and expression (337). Meyer's concept of "embodied meaning," which ironically disavows the body, attaches psychological principles to musical form, thus yielding expression through notation rather than embodied means. Keil criticizes this construction for its formalization, its Eurocentrism, and its rejection of movement as extramusical (338, 339). Using jazz as a point of departure, Keil uses the term "engendered feeling" to articulate an additional set of parameters of expression outside of musical syntax that derive from bodily movement such as choreography, symbolic action, and the relationship between the performer and their instrument (340). Keil's notion of engendered feeling is relevant to the performance space of the masterclass because of its accommodation for expression that is derived from embodied performance rather than the score alone. Coming from what he calls a "pragmatic, cognitive approach," Leman (2016) states that expression "can consist of gestures, postures, attitudes, flavors of sensory qualities, or nuances in articulation—that is, of things that constitute expression *as such* and that don't require a reference to be understood during interaction" (4). Expressive interactions rely on "ongoing, pre-reflective, back and forth corporeal articulations that mark and constitute the interaction" (3). While expression can evoke or suggest emotions, conflating the two is problematic. As emotional states are often the result of reflective thinking and conceptual constructs (thus being granted labels like "sad" and "happy"), expression in its pre-reflective nature is linked to the perceptual field.

In addition to examining the human body in relation to the flute masterclass, I also examine the flute itself as a body that stands in relation to the flute masterclass, considering an "epistemology of things" as adopted by New Organology (Tresch and Dolan 2013, 284). The flute, like any other instrument—musical or scientific—is, for the flutist, an extension of self. As a musical instrument, it serves to express the inner states of the performer and composer,

“moving outward from the mind to the world” (281). Key to forming its epistemology, the flute possesses an ethical dimension, involving the self’s relation to the instrument, an aesthetic relationship that has experienced historical variations over time (283). Through these variations, we can better understand the larger projects of the flute and the flute-playing world. The flute is also a gendered instrument, its “feminine” status revealing a sociological perspective of the flute which is expressed by children from a young age (Delzell and Leppla 1992). Masterclass participants experience the normalized gendered qualities of the instrument through their own gender, sexuality, and race.

Objects and “flat” ontologies

While this work focuses on embodiment, it is not limited to paradigms of embodiment. For greater breadth I looked to other philosophical and ontological frameworks that afforded analysis to the objects of flute-playing. While I frame masterclasses as something that takes place with bodies, I also want to make space for the objects that carry so much meaning in our music-making efforts. In addition to reading object-oriented perspectives, what truly kept me from focusing solely on phenomenology and embodiment was the process of ethnographic writing itself—reflection, interpretation, analysis, and description—which added new layers of meaning beyond my immediate lived experience. The distance of time from my fieldwork gave my work a perspective that was impossible to access during and immediately after the conclusion of my fieldwork, mainly because my memories were too raw with emotion and judgement. By wrestling with these conflicting ideas and allowing them to coexist, I was able to investigate masterclasses in a way that is more true to self than the exercise of pursuing a single unwavering

argument. This meant expanding the philosophical scope of this dissertation while I was in the process of analysis.

Another problem with focusing solely on the performing body in the context of the masterclass is that it would practically over-correct the dominance of the musical score in critical analysis to the point of omission. While I agree with the position that “the music is not the score” in the sense that, in the words of David Elliott (1991), “music is a verb as well as a noun, (23)” I do not wish to appear to overlook or ignore the shaping power of the musical score as a significant cultural object in classical music. Of course, what gives written scores their power is the time and energy musicians spend thinking about them and performing them. However, I want to acknowledge that these scores may seem to have power in themselves as material objects in their potential to connect performers with the composer’s process and the imagined past.

These troublesome realizations required that I seek larger, more accommodating frames to include in my writing on embodiment in the masterclass. After being introduced to the New Organology, I read about two related ontologies from the social sciences and philosophy that are both “flat” ontologies, meaning that they consider all objects on an equal field rather than privileging the human subject, rejecting the anthropomorphism of post-Kantian thought: Latour’s actor-network theory (ANT) and Harman’s object-oriented ontology (OOO). ANT gives agency to objects as actors in networks of shifting relations while OOO fundamentally views aesthetics as the root of all philosophy. Because they are complimentary theories, I felt that I could utilize both instead of having to reject one or the other. Unwilling to pick subject over object, I position the body as the thing that realizes and perceives artistry and authority, rather than positioning the body as a source of all knowledge. This is why, in the chapter on the aesthetic practices of the followers of a master flutist, I refer to OOO, while in the chapter on masterclasses mediated

through social media I refer to ANT. As someone who only seeks to understand flute masterclasses on previously unexplored levels, I have found it more useful and interesting to express my journey through different modes of thought which reflect currents in postdigital aesthetics rather than ascribe a single mode for the sake of artificial uniformity.

Authority in the masterclass

Today, masterclasses take on values from the present while retaining a similar format and traditions from the 19th-century model. What connects the masterclass' past to its present state is the deeply embedded concept of authority: authority of the master teacher, score, composer, and of the praxis itself. The multiple levels at which authority operates in the masterclass are often veiled, protecting masterclasses from critique within the field. Beyond their extraordinary abilities, master teachers authorize themselves through storytelling, linking themselves with famous musicians from the past and positioning themselves as professionals in the field. Authority is also exercised through the body of the master teacher. The gestures, facial expressions, and voice project the qualities of authority, all of which are perceived by the student performer and audience. The flute's canon is an ongoing project of conservation through continuous repeated performances of standard repertoire. This practice of canonization reflects classical music traditions in general as in the case of conservatories and university music schools, where the pantheon of revered composers is sometimes prominently displayed as inscriptions on the facades of music buildings and as statues and busts, representing the authority of the classical canon (Kingsbury 1988, Nettle 1995).

Presently, there are a growing number of masterclasses that try, perhaps unconsciously, to avoid an authoritative tone through drawing attention away from the master teacher. This

might include supplemental offerings such as mind-body work for the students, group activities, or presentations by guest speakers on special topics. These additions are usually a welcome update (and often useful to performers), but as they rarely disrupt the instructional portions, the masterclass is not redefined at its core, remaining a reimagined, authoritative historical and cultural object that is an extension of the master/apprentice model. To look at an example of a masterclass that stays very much in the traditional model of authority, in Chapter Two, I examine a masterclass taught by a world-renowned flutist.

Artistry in the masterclass

Artistry is a term which I have struggled to define, yet found enticing for being both elusive and meaningful. In common musical parlance, artistry is a term that is used to denote that someone possesses great musical ability, particularly in executing public performances. Within the context of today's praxis of Western classical music, artistry is not linked directly to creativity or innovation, rather, it emerges from a heightened performance state that does not neglect imagined histories, traditions, and authority. Royce (2004) defines artistry as the metaphoric, symbolic, and intangible qualities that make an artist "open to being transformed and accept the role of transformer" and "while assuming virtuosity, goes beyond it" (6). When artistry is "unlocked" onstage, the moment can be so outside of quotidian experience that it feels nothing short of magical. In Royce's interpretation, an artist "must understand that artistry opens the way for those who wish to follow to be changed, to dream, and if only for the moment, to glimpse what lies outside the realm of the everyday. Artists must do all this by giving the spotlight over to the art, rather than drawing attention to themselves." (6) In this vision of artistry, the performer is a pure and egoless guide through liminal space who can reach across the

boundary between the performer and audience, acting as both cause and effect. Claiming that artistry “goes beyond virtuosity” also suggests that artistry is a state of being that exists regardless of the perception of others. This seems to contradict Royce’s claims that artistry is intangible—by suggesting that artistry exists outside of human perception, artistry becomes something that is measurable, or at least something that is either there or not. In this case, who is authorized to recognize artistry? Is this perception limited to those with expertise in the art form (such as a master teacher) or can it be perceived by all (the audience)? Furthermore, how do superimposed factors such as power and celebrity influence the appearance of artistry?

I would like to challenge and expand Royce’s definition by framing artistry as both an ephemeral *perceived* state and as a *desire* that is indeed metaphoric, symbolic, and intangible. First, as an ephemeral perceived state, artistry does not require a consensus among perceivers, but is legitimate when perceived (even if others would jump to disagree). This of course, puts a substantial amount of value in the perceptions of the audience members. These perceptions may be psychological (surrender, forgetting the self, focus), cognitive (to be in agreement of, and thus moved by, an interpretation) and physiological (goosebumps, chills, “brain tingles”). To expand on the subjectivity and temporality of artistry—while I might feel like I witnessed a moment of true artistry on a given occasion, this does not mean that the other audience members present will necessarily attest to the same experience, nor does it mean that the performer can deliver the same heightened experience each time. A one-time moment of artistry does not make a performer a forever-artist. This framing makes room for superimposed factors. For example, the performance of a six-year-old violinist can be perceived as a moment of artistry, even if this perception is entangled with the preceptor's feelings of inspiration from witnessing a young person pull off an incredible feat. In other words, artistry is not a fact.

Secondly, as a desire, artistry can exist metaphorically and symbolically through its entanglement with authority. If the master teacher is thoroughly convinced by a student's performance in a masterclass, they may dub that student as possessing artistry, setting them apart from other members of the class. Artistry can also be invoked by the master teacher through their performance and through their teaching in the use of metaphoric language to assist in creating a desired result from the student. Additionally, artistry can exist without any such perceived states taking place on stage by way of storytelling: lessons learned from historic flute players, composers, and—to reach beyond the “status” of the flute—legendary artists outside of the flute world such as Casals, Callas, and Heifetz. Through imagining past masters, participants desire an unattainable ideal of artistry. In this sense, the only way artistry is obtainable beyond a doubt (while remaining intangible) is through the legendary artists themselves. These stories elevate the masterclass while imparting additional authority to the teacher. Just like artistry and affect, artistry and authority are not synonymous, but linked in a symbiotic manner. With each retelling, the artistry and authority of the legendary artist can be transformed, in turn shaping the masterclass as a reimagined historic practice.

The concept of presence and more specifically, stage presence holds a similar intangibility in that it is “something else” and “something beyond” the ordinary—commanding the space of the stage so that the audience experiences it as ‘full’ (Goodall 2008, 16). Stage presence is both sensual in its ability to be perceived and metaphysical in its association with being. By some standards of musical evaluation, stage presence is considered extramusical and even controversial, producing “messiness” in evaluation and supposedly introducing “biases that are not related to the essential formal properties of a musical performance” (McPherson and Schubert 66). Aside from skill, intent, and symbolic value, it is what “convinces” the audience of

the performer's artistry. In a sense, the performer's stage presence is a projected embodiment of their artistry that serves as part of the aesthetic experience of the musical performance.

Feedback

Performers cannot see themselves perform—they can only feel and sense their movements, expressions, and gestures. While performers can hear themselves, the sound is perceived differently when it is coming from their own bodies and instruments. A large part of the teacher's role is to be an extension of the student's eyes and ears, making the student more aware of their “forgotten body” and the quality of their sound through feedback. However, it is important to note that this feedback at the root of musical training is culturally situated and subjective. Eidsheim (2019) identifies several misconceptions about vocal timbre that in turn lead to misconceptions about race and vocality: 1) that it is possible to identify a person through the sound of their voice, 2) that the voice—as a “cue to interiority, essence, and unmediated identity”—makes it possible to know a person, 3) and that the voice is “stable and knowable.” Eidsheim also argues that vocal timbre is “as encultured as [is] self-expression through fashion” and that the source of the voice is located not only in the vocalizer, but in the listener from whom assessments are made (41). Here, I suggest that these misconceptions extend to the instrumentalist's tone, causing it to be treated as a unique and essentializing “vocality” only partially mediated by the musical instrument. In this way, the flutist's tone is treated similarly to the voice as a metaphysical window to the performer's being. To have beautiful tone is to be beautiful. Here arises not only questions of aesthetics, but of identity and its underpinnings of gender, race, and sexuality. Of course, in a masterclass the audience can always see who is performing (with the rare exception of an orchestral audition masterclass, which might initially

require performing behind a screen). As a master teacher gives feedback on a student's tone, their "voice" is potentially judged against their physical appearance. In some instances, I have heard teachers make comments that relate the student's tone, articulation, or phrasing to the student's nationality or primary spoken language. By making such essentializing comments, it insinuates that the performance of Western classical music is more natural to some than others or that those who do not tap into their "roots" in performance are being less authentic to themselves. For this reason, it is important to note that reading a master teacher's feedback as purely musical leads to an incomplete analysis, as feedback should always be interpreted through the student's performing body.

Ritual

Masterclasses are commonly thought of as an educational model—a public coaching taught by a high-profile artist, a professional, the teacher of the students in the audience or, an expert in a particular style or genre (Creech, Gaunt, et al. 2009). Numerous studies in music education have compiled data on masterclasses that take place in an institutional setting. Areas of focus include: teaching and learning in the masterclass (Hanken 2009); masterclasses as collaborative learning (Carpenter 2015); student perceptions of masterclasses (Creech et al., 2009); how students learn as observers of masterclasses (Haddon 2014); and the influence of factors such as prior experience, gender, and level of study on students' perspectives of masterclasses. There has also been analysis on the instructional interactions between participants (Reed et al., 2013; Reed and Reed 2014). I found these studies helpful as a starting point, but in reading them, I sensed that there were several blind spots. While they acknowledge that masterclasses are an extension of the master/apprentice dyad, the research generally does not

focus on aspects of culture and performance. Exceptions to the rule that have helped frame this study are writings by Kingsbury (1988), Nettl (1995), Usner (2010), and Gvion (2018). By focusing on masterclasses that take place in institutional settings, the existing literature also overlooks the entire tradition of summer masterclasses.

There is also a lack of attention towards the dramatic and ritualized performance aspects of masterclasses. As a performance setting, the masterclass designates a discrete unit of time and space in which the individual actors fulfill culturally understood roles. This is aided when there is an actual stage or some marker of physical separation between the master/student and the audience. The number of eyes directed toward the teacher and student, as well as the attention and focus toward the student's playing and the master's every word invite performance in every sense, not just musically, but dramatically. The master must project their voice and convincingly perform the master role, while the student must appear engaged, flexible, and obedient. In most cases, the role of the audience is still quite passive, the only requirement being to maintain an appropriate gaze and to occasionally voice opinions (usually to agree that the student that the teacher is working with has improved).

Masterclasses are shaped by the ritualized performance of the master teacher's authority, mastery, artistry, and lineage. Asad (1993) defines ritual as "a type of routine behavior that symbolizes or expresses something and, as such, relates differentially to individual consciousness and social organization" (57). The symbolic behaviors that for some make masterclasses redundant and predictable, even worthy of skepticism, are "outward signs," or formalized behavior that is separate from "inner meanings" (59). These correct performances of formalized behaviors, as part of the moral economy of the masterclass, show that one is committed to the teaching of the master teacher and is a good member of the community. This

might be in part why the audience, when asked by the master teacher if they notice an improvement in the playing of the student onstage, almost always responds with agreement. The suspended disbelief, the awe and inspiration are all part of the masterclass' ritual "magic."

This is not to say that by giving masterclasses the status of ritual, that they are inflexible or predetermined. As Turner (1988) states: "The great genres, ritual, carnival, drama, spectacle, possess in common a temporal structure which interdigitates constant with variable features, and allows a place for spontaneous invention and improvisation in the course of any given performance. The prejudice that ritual is always "rigid," "stereotyped," "obsessive" is a peculiarly Western European one [...] (26)." However, the fact that it exists as liminal phenomena, which Turner defines as, "privileged spaces and times, set off from the periods and areas reserved for work, food and sleep (Turner 1988, 25)," gives masterclasses a semi-sacred atmosphere that is built by everyone in the room, from master teacher and performing student to the audience members. One of the constants of the ritualized masterclass is its typical script of performance→intervention→transformation. When a masterclass session ends without the transformation element there is a sense of failure in both the part of the student and in the master teacher. Furthermore, when the audience does not witness transformation through artistry, they too are unable to transform through the ritual experience.

The transmission of culture in the flute masterclass is what allows interpretations, stories, and pedagogies to be passed down. This is important for the maintenance of this traditional art form and for creating a higher standard of performance. This type of transmission generally takes place during the teaching portions of the class, but many times it also seeps into conversations during meal times and breaks, socially situating flutists in the "flute world." Participants position

themselves in relation to others, recognizing models both in the master teacher and in more advanced students.

The masterclass itself can also be thought of as a type of cultural performance, as each one represents a concrete unit of observation with a beginning and end, organized activity, and a set group of performers and audience in a given space (Turner 1988, 23). Within these cultural performances are different modes of communication and nonlinguistic content in the form of gestures. As Turner notes, the messages produced through this content is not replicated, but subtly varied through a reflexive process, somewhat like a hall of magic mirrors, “each interpreting as well as reflecting the images beamed to it, and flashed from one to the others (24).” It is the continuous social process that gives the event meaning.

Repertoire is an integral part of flute-playing culture in its side-by-side development with the flute’s construction. In the masterclass, it serves as a ritual text. Issues of repertoire vary from masterclass to masterclass. Some teachers require that pieces are selected from a repertoire list while others leave it open to the student. Regardless, there are pieces that are heard over and over again, ranging from pieces of great depth to virtuosic show pieces. Pieces that show up on auditions lists are frequently performed. Students trying to win a spot in the master teacher’s studio in a future audition may choose to perform their audition pieces to learn what specific markers the teacher is looking for. Additionally, students may strategize to pick pieces that the teacher is known for performing or teaching exceptionally well. In these instances, there is the sense that the student is searching for “truth,” “authenticity,” and other intangible elements of artistry via the teacher’s interpretation. The teacher, in most cases, knows the piece that the student has brought to the masterclass and therefore, already has a sense of the major pitfalls and

interpretive features of the piece. Most experienced masterclass teachers make a point to touch on these familiar areas when they teach a piece they know well.

There are two major repertoire-related choices that commonly cause issues. The first, and generally most problematic, is when a student brings in a piece that is an early work in progress. Master teachers handle this issue in different ways. Some will use the moment as an opportunity to tell a story about their experiences learning the piece. The teacher might also be able to focus on some key concepts in the piece. At times, the teacher might get bogged down in details that only hours of practice can fix, or in some cases, they may berate, lecture, insult, or humiliate the student. It is possible that the student might have technical control over the flute part, but struggle with the ensemble, either out of perception issues or lack of thorough preparation. The teacher that responds with anger might feel that the student is showing disrespect for the teacher's time (as well as their "stage"), perhaps even undermining the teacher's authority and expertise. However, it may also appear that the student was taught a valuable lesson in preparation. The other common repertoire issue that comes up in masterclasses is the student who brings in a piece that is unfamiliar to the master teacher. While the master teacher might work brilliantly with the student "in the moment," they might also appear irritated, spending a substantial amount of time critiquing the piece itself as a composition worthy of masterclass time.

Despite these efforts to control the environment through predetermined pieces and preparation on the part of the student, the masterclass is a largely improvised teaching format. The teacher must react to the performance of the student, which can either divert the teacher from delivering their interpretation or offer a route to familiar pathways. Sometimes the teacher will react to the very first note that a student plays, creating an unsettling start to a session. For

the most part, the audience takes in the masterclass as if they were attending a lecture or a concert. It is an almost entirely passive activity for the audience; depending on the fame of the teacher, the quality of the teaching, the student's playing, and the attentiveness of the audience member, staying engaged in a masterclass (especially a very long one) can prove challenging. So much of the class is indeterminate and, in the end, the audience members must "get what they can" from the experience.

Inspiration

"Inspiration" as it is used here in the context of the masterclass is borrowed from the idea of "inspiration porn," a term coined by the late disability activist Stella Young (2014) in a TED talk (and adopted in the discipline of disability studies) to describe the mediatized objectification of disabled people—through Facebook memes in particular—as sources of inspiration for able-bodied people. In masterclasses, inspiration typically revolves around the onstage "transformation" when the student, after working with the master teacher, makes a sometimes-astonishing improvement by the end of the session. This is sometimes referred to as a "breakthrough." These moments often take on an atmosphere comparable to a Pentecostal congregation as the master asks the audience for confirmation and agreement of what they have "witnessed." In some cases, transformation events are ingrained into the history of the class through prizes that are awarded at the end of the course to selected students who have shown the most improvement, creating memories of success stories. According to Liddiard (2014), our culture craves bodies that have transformed or are in transition, and that "in Western neo-liberal cultures, an individualizing and disciplining of bodies takes place which ensures that they are always in progress, or are always *transforming*" (98). Entertainment franchises like *Biggest Loser*, *Extreme Makeover*, and *American Idol* exploit our fascination with transformation not

only of the body, but of ability and character. In these shows, emotional backstories facilitate the viewer's empathy towards the struggles and triumphs of contestants. These supercultural themes have been adapted with relative ease to flute masterclasses, with one prominent American teacher even going so far as to promote her class under the parodying title "Extreme Makeover: Flute Edition." The accompanying regimen of technical exercises, called "The Flute Makeover," is an admitted bricolage of adaptations of well-known exercises. These exercises are not trademarked or published as a book but are part of the experience of the class. This version of the inspirational masterclass offers one example of how recent consumer models have integrated with traditional masterclass practices.

Unlike the way the term is used in disability studies, inspiration in the masterclass is used not as a mode of objectification, but rather, as a spectacle that conceals objectification and the centrality of the master teacher. While historic models of the masterclass position the audience to focus on the authority of the master teacher to the point that the audience may choose to side with the master teacher over the student-performer, in the "inspiration model," the audience hopes for and expects to see and hear a noticeable improvement in the student-performer. They want to *feel* inspired as they relate to the student-performer's embodied experience and success narrative. This suggests that inspiration exists as an intangible commodity that adds value to both the masterclass and the master teacher through affectual means within a neoliberal value system.

Housed within the idea of inspiration are the supplemental activities offered in many multi-day masterclasses, which incorporate mind/body practices such as yoga, tai chi, Alexander Technique, and others. This idea of the "whole musician" extends the boundaries of masterclasses beyond measures of high-ability and instead draws focus inward towards self-improvement and subjective experiences. After such a masterclass, participants might publicly

describe the class as “inspiring,” sharing photos, videos, and other memorabilia on Facebook and Instagram. The combination of inspirational moments created in the masterclass and through supplemental activities generates user experiences that are shared publicly, strengthening the master teacher and masterclass as a brand.

Decentering mastery

With historic roots that go back to the development of conservatory training, masterclass traditions are far from immune to larger cultural shifts in everyday sociality and technology. These shifts influence masterclasses on every conceivable level, from the format and medium in which they are presented down to the authoritative position of the master. As a cultural, social, and ritual practice that is steeped in tradition while constantly adjusting to a changing world, masterclasses require “the analysis of two [or perhaps even more] world views in a single universe of symbolic action [...]” (Turner 1988, 26). We accept these shifts in values from one moment to the next as a master teacher might in one breath invoke the authority of Heifetz by demanding that the student remove their shoulder rest, the next, suggesting Alexander lessons to free the neck, all while extolling the ritualized practice of scales as virtuous behavior akin to daily prayer. The receiving student must negotiate these values against their own identity, through gender, race, ability, and other intersectional factors. Through this interpretive process, the student becomes a multiplicity of values, embodying an ever-expanding cultural practice.

Among the most recent cultural shifts to effect the masterclass is the social media-driven #MeToo movement, which, as it continues to oust some of the worst abusers of power, leads to questions of whether old systems are finally beginning to crumble. However, to write about power relationships in the masterclass as a discrete subject presents a faulty and distorted view.

According to Kingsbury (1984), “power relations are clearly a constraint on social performance skills, but at the same time it is skilled social interaction which reproduces relations of power” (198). In the masterclass, these relations are displayed onstage in a direct manner, with performance skill and skilled social interactions playing important roles. It is also important to consider the indirect power of historic narratives in the masterclass, which imposes the hegemony of the white male flutist. As flute pedagogy and lore is preserved through teaching and storytelling, it becomes possible to reproduce the power of the old masters.

Realistically, musicians today study with numerous teachers, not only learning from their private teachers but from coaches as well. As Jeremy Denk (2003) recalls, the contradicting information from multiple teachers can leave one “craving a guru.” Working with the same teacher for years can likewise leave a student feeling stuck, slowly building frustration and resentment. Sometimes it is the broad strokes of masterclass teaching that can help a student regain some confidence and control.

However, these potential benefits are undermined when a master performs with domineering authority over the student. When looking back at experiences that I would characterize as the “worst” masterclasses, the problem generally lies with situations that are inappropriate, offensive, and humiliating for the student. While I have never been the performer for the very worst cases, I have had many experiences from the audience perspective in which I only knew to sit uncomfortably and silently until the session was over. Through analyzing my observations of interactions in masterclasses as social performances and relations of power, I aim to decenter the position of the master and of mastery itself.

Professionalization

As a form of professional development, students participate in masterclasses in order to make an impression on the master teacher. While it is unlikely that a connection in a masterclass will result in the passing down of professional work, a positive impression could lead to a spot in the master teacher's studio. There are several flute teachers in the United States that have such a strong reputation and scarcity of openings in their studios that the majority of students in their summer masterclasses are there in the hopes of making it into their studio in the upcoming college audition season. Here, I adopt Granovetter's (1973, 1983) concept of "weak ties" to analyze this aspect of the master/student relationship in a masterclass. Essentially, such students are hoping to shift their dynamic with the master teacher from a 'weak tie' to a 'strong tie.' While these hard skills and strong ties are often a major focus for students, from a sociological perspective, 'soft skills' and 'weak ties' are equally important for professionals. 'Soft skills' in the context of participating in a masterclass may include the ability to empathize with other students, collaborating well with the staff pianist, engaging in positive feedback to other students after performances, as well as enjoying casual interactions during social periods. 'Weak ties,' on the other hand, refer to a casual network of acquaintances that may prove useful at some point in one's career. A benefit of building weak ties in the context of the masterclass might include recommendations, verbal or written, from master teachers or other students and the gradual building of one's reputation as a promising performer. To work on cultivating soft skills and building weak ties, students must be engaged with the social life of the masterclass. This is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three.

The relevance of masterclasses

If the masterclass is in fact, better framed as a cultural object than as an educational model, are masterclasses a tradition worth keeping? The typical passivity of masterclasses seems outdated and stagnant compared to collaborative and reflective styles of learning. However, even as an advanced student and early professional, I find that there is still much to gain from performing in a masterclass as the teacher still sees and hears what I cannot, usually finding something that is linked to my body use—a locked joint or tense muscles, the flute pressed too hard against the lip in the lower register. For anyone producing sound, especially those using their own resonating cavities, feedback from listeners is critical to improvement. The teacher, of course, supplies most of the feedback, but may on occasion request the audience’s input. It is also possible that without the presence of the audience, certain tensions in the performer would not arise, thereby making the audience an essential component in recreating a performance scenario, even if the conditions are somewhat artificial. In this sense, the ecology of the “live” masterclass still has value for the more experienced student.

For the students participating in masterclasses, both as performers and audience members, a great masterclass can be a life-changing experience. Early on in my work on flute masterclasses, my intention was to examine the benefits of participation. I intended to look to ideas in adult education, namely Mezirow’s “transformative learning theory” (1991) to relate my own positive attitudes towards masterclasses. Mezirow’s theory describes how “disorienting dilemmas”—information that contradicts and challenges one’s own assumptions and beliefs—can ultimately force the learner to reflect and transform their world view. In my personal development as a flutist, one of my most significant learning experiences included a masterclass I had attended in Italy as an undergraduate. Everything that I had been exposed to on that trip, from the teaching, the international group of students, the food, and the atmosphere of the

medieval Tuscan village, caused me to leave feeling like a different flutist. When I returned to school in California, my playing progressed rapidly in a way that would have been unlikely from a summer of practicing in isolation.

Considering the role this masterclass had on my development, it was easy to frame masterclasses as a major benefit and to want to focus on the factors that may have contributed to these successes. However, I soon found that there were some obvious problematic issues with forming a thesis around “why masterclasses succeed.” There were too many possible factors that could have contributed to my positive experience in the class. As I examined a handful of these factors from class content, to teaching, to location, it became clear that what I had was a case study of my own narration; the other students may have had entirely different experiences. To my thesis there was bound to be an antithesis marked by boredom, discouragement, and perceived regression. I have since noted that as much as classical music concerns itself with canonic composers and the pedagogies and interpretations of masterful players, I was naturally drawn to excellence and wanted to focus on any useful bits of information that would help in its promotion. As I have taken on the role of ethnographer, I have tried to avoid either extremes of overt enthusiasm or cynicism.

Designing the study and positioning myself as researcher

As a researcher and flutist with many past experiences of masterclasses, I am far from an unbiased, outside observer. Rather than attempt to “write myself out” of the study through bracketing methods used in phenomenology (Moustakas 1994) or adopting the position of an extraterrestrial visitor as Nettl does at “Heartland U” (Nettl 1992, 1995), I do not mask my position, but instead, present an ethnography interspersed with autoethnography, including

accounts of my perceptions, reflections, and reactions, all in an effort to make meaning of these practices.

For this study, I conducted ethnographic research at multiple sites: a masterclass with a world-renown British flutist, a 10-day masterclass in Italy, several different masterclasses at the National Flute Convention (which even included a masterclass on giving masterclasses), as well as the field of online masterclasses. While I had originally intended to perform in more than one masterclass, for issues of finances and time-management it was more practical to limit my performing to one masterclass (in this case, the masterclass in Italy). In choosing my research sites, I strove for a balanced representation of female and male teachers as well as a variety of flute masterclass types. Pseudonyms are used in the second and third chapters of this study to protect the identities of participants.

This study is divided into case studies, each of which highlight the major themes (artistry, authority, and embodiment) to varying degrees while also discussing themes and issues that are unique to the chapter. Chapter Two, which focuses primarily on the boundaries of authority against contemporary values as well as reimagined historical narratives is shorter than the rest, mainly because the masterclass itself only took place over a single day. Chapter Three, the case study of the masterclass that took place in Italy, has two major areas of focus: professionalization and aesthetics. As this class took place over 10 days, there is considerably more detail about the individuals and my own experience. While I debated whether there was too much narrative in this chapter, in the end I decided that I could not divorce my analysis from my memories, emotions, and sensations because without this reflection of my experience, I would never have arrived at the discussion of meaning-making that concludes the chapter. The amount of contemplation that such an extended masterclass enabled rationalized, in my mind, the purpose

of choosing such an extravagant research site. Chapter Four, which took place at the National Flute Convention, was the most challenging in terms of finding cohesion. I attended five different masterclasses which were each very short and I had a scheduled chamber performance (unrelated to this research) and rehearsal to work around. In the end, I think this chapter depicts the complexity of the annual flute convention. Chapter Five deals with the online world of masterclasses as they are experienced through social media. While much of this dissertation felt like uncharted territory, this chapter was a particularly enjoyable exploration of what the future could bring for the long-held tradition of masterclasses.

For me, a large part of this study involved retaining the feeling of participating as a student and as an audience member while also taking on a critical position as a researcher. As a classically-trained flutist, performing in and observing masterclasses is a ubiquitous part of my musical training, making it hard at times to take a step back. During my research, I have found myself constantly reexamining my position in relation to the master teachers, students, and audience members. With the changes in my awareness about my own playing, moments of “masterclass magic” that I experienced as an undergraduate are increasingly rare. “Breakthroughs” are much harder to come by as unresolved issues are more elusive and time-consuming to address. Even when there is a sizeable gap between my own playing and professional accomplishments and that of the master teacher, my field of perception is now such that the instrument is rarely the biggest hurdle.

At this stage in my development I am also less prone to hero worship, but at the same time I still experience great admiration when I witness moments of brilliant teaching and what I perceive as artistry. The challenge of separating celebrity from artistry illuminates that celebrity, media, and discourse are all things to vigilantly read, analyze, and critique. There is also much to

consider in the way that dress, speech, and movements are tailored for the public gaze. For the knowledgeable audience member, the master teacher presents a dense web of significance, from the teacher's performance history, connection to other teachers and players, their recordings (both as sound and material object), published interviews, publicity photos, reputation, rumors and gossip. If a teacher's mystique is in any way part of the spectacle of the masterclass, it is easy to see why audience members are often in awe of what takes place on stage.

Chapter Two

Play it Like a Violin!: Charismatic Authority in the Flute Masterclass

In this chapter, using Max Weber's concept of "charismatic authority," I examine the role of the master teacher in creating aesthetic experiences for the audience. "Charismatic authority," unlike bureaucratic authority and patriarchal authority, is an authority that meets extraordinary needs which "transcend the sphere of everyday economic routines" (Weber 1976, 1111). Bearers of charismatic authority are considered to have "specific gifts of body and mind" that are seen in the eyes of their followers and are not accessible to all, allowing them to practice their art while exercising their authority (1112). From attending the masterclass of a well-known master teacher, I observed how his musical principles serve as aesthetic tools for engaging with the onstage interaction through which the master's artistry is transmitted. As I observed the behavior of audience members in this case study, I noticed that the teacher's true "followers" adhere to concepts in the master's teachings as if it were scriptural text. This relationship exists in other masterclasses to varying degrees depending on the status of the teacher. In this case the teacher's authority was particularly pronounced by his lifetime of teaching and performing and his fame within the flute community. Charismatic leaders of this caliber are cherished for their storytelling and their "pearls of wisdom," which in the case of an older master musician, connects students to a past that they can never know directly.

In his study of jazz in higher education, Wilf (2014) observed how departments were given "charisma infusions" through hiring faculty members who obtained their skills "from the streets" in the decades when jazz was still a popular genre. To alleviate the fact that many of the (mostly white) faculty members were trained exclusively in an academic environment, the

(mostly black) veteran jazz musicians who did not have degrees in music gave the students access to “authentic” jazz musicians. In a similar vein, classical musicians with ties to a distant, seemingly more robust past can momentarily give audience members in a masterclass access to their connection with the past.

Carrying on the French school of flute playing

As part of my fieldwork I decided to attend a masterclass taught by George Davis,¹ a teacher whom I consider a traditional, “old school” master flutist—someone of indisputable artistry and authority who serves as a living embodiment of flute-playing traditions. Out of the countless flute masterclasses available today, very few are actually taught by master teachers of a truly world-renowned status. After graduating with my bachelors degree, I studied with a flutist who had attended many of George Davis’ masterclasses and taken lessons with him. She had also invited him to give masterclasses to her own students so they could receive his teaching firsthand. Both she and Davis had studied with the legendary French flutist Marcel Moyse, someone who, in his lifetime, had given flutists around the world access to the so-called French School of flute playing. My teacher quoted both Davis and Moyse with regularity in lessons, making it clear that she considered them unquestionable authorities in flute playing and repertoire. Because she deferred to their interpretations, I often felt like I was studying with Davis and Moyse by proxy, rather than with my actual teacher.

The French School of flute playing is difficult to define precisely, an ambiguity that results in skepticism towards the term itself. In one definition, the French School is referred to as “the use of vibrato, emotional approach to musical line, technique, and tone of French flutists,

¹ This is a pseudonym that I will use throughout this chapter.

beginning with Paul Taffanel and the introduction of the silver Boehm system flute in the mid-nineteenth century” (Glick 2014, 7). According to this definition, the French School of flute playing does not include playing prior to recording technology and the modern Boehm flute, leaving out the influence of the first ten flute professors of the Paris Conservatoire as well as French flute playing prior to the founding of the conservatoire. Toff (1996), however, claims that the French School goes back to Hotteterre, who published *Principes de la flûte traversière* in 1707. His emphasis on “the expressive uses of varied articulations and vibrato” is arguably the cornerstone of the French style (Toff 1996, 101). In Toff’s conception, the preexisting style was institutionalized through the Paris Conservatoire (founded in 1795) and brought to its modern form through the move to the silver, Boehm system, and eventually open-holed, flute. It is not clear when the concept of the French School of flute playing became common, but it is known that in the early 20th century, French woodwind playing was highly sought after in American orchestras, with conductors recruiting French flutists to fill principal positions (102). While Moyses was not the first to bring the French approach to flute playing to the United States, his dedication to teaching made him the most influential French flutist of his time.

The directives I heard most often in lessons with Davis’ follower involved playing with greater variation in tone colors, an objective that she attributed to Davis’ teaching and playing. While Moyses’ exercises in *De la Sonorité* (which both teachers draw from) instruct that the flutist strive for a homogeneous tone throughout the range of the flute, it is understood that the flutist also needs access to a wide tonal palette to allow for greater expression. Davis is particularly adept at creating a range of tone colors, often utilizing unconventional fingerings to do so. Because this conception of tone colors was rarely demonstrated in my lessons with Davis’ follower, I had a hard time understanding the concept and creating the results that my teacher

was looking for.² At the time, this was elusive, mysterious, and frustrating. I tried changing the shape of my oral cavity and the direction of my airstream, but I rarely produced the results that my teacher had in mind. While I had performed for Davis once in the masterclass arranged by my former teacher, that was over ten years ago and, unfortunately, I have only a vague recollection of the teaching. I wanted to better understand these finer points of flute artistry through Davis' perspective, so I prepaid my tickets for both the morning and afternoon sessions of his class, guaranteeing a full six-hour day of masterclasses.

The charismatic authority of Marcel Moyse

Marcel Moyse was one of the most influential flute teachers of the 20th century. Students flocked from all over the world to attend his annual summer masterclasses which, beginning in 1964, were held in Switzerland and his final place of residence, Marlboro, Vermont. He also traveled extensively in Europe and Japan to give stand-alone masterclasses, some of which supposedly attracted crowds of over 1,000 (Estevan 1976, 79). There are a number of flutists who are world-renowned today who performed for Moyse at his masterclasses, some returning year after year. However, like Liszt's masterclasses, Moyse's masterclasses were not limited to the most promising players. Some observers felt that a substantial amount of the master's precious time was wasted on the less talented students and dilettantes (Walker 1996, Wye 1993). By extending the reach of his teaching, Moyse acquired several tiers of influence: those who had some degree of contact with Moyse, his "disciples" whom he kept close, and his "stars" who could further legitimize his teaching through their own success.

² I dealt with this issue later on through studying extensively with Robert Dick, who greatly expanded my range of tone colors.

While students may have hoped to have fruitful careers as performers and teachers, attending a seminar was not a direct path towards a career in the way licensure would, at least in theory, provide. Instead, there were “extraordinary needs” involving the seeking of “truth” in the form of beautiful and expressive flute playing—a type of artistry that only a charismatic authority could deliver.

As Weber stated:

...the power of charisma rests upon the belief in revelation and heroes, upon the conviction that certain manifestations—whether they be of a religious, ethical, artistic, scientific, political or other kind—are important and valuable; it rests upon “heroism” of an ascetic, military, judicial, magical or whichever kind. Charismatic belief revolutionizes men “from within” and shapes material and social conditions according to its revolutionary will (Weber 1976, 1116).

The narratives of Moyses’s life prior to his masterclasses carry this mythical quality. Moyses held numerous important positions in his early career, taking over Gaubert’s position at the Paris Conservatoire and performing in orchestras for premieres of historical significance including Debussy’s *Prélude à l’Après-midi d’un faune*. While teaching at Marlboro, he was known to speak “worshipfully” about his teachers and to tell stories about the many great musicians he worked with which, in addition to Debussy, included Stravinsky, Ravel, and Toscanini (McCutchan 1994, 187). Despite the weight of these academic and orchestral achievements, which certainly offered substantial professional authority, his charismatic power in his later years also came from his work on tone development. In his self-authored lore, Moyses, while suffering from pleurisy as a teen, was unable to play for 11 months (Estevan 1976, 80). During his recovery, he had to rebuild his playing, focusing on the very basics of tone development. This story of struggle and revelation resulted in the authoring of his tone-development books which serve today among the “bibles” of flute playing.

Flute and woodwind-centric periodicals also paved the way for building Moyses' mystique and the recognition of the French School of flute playing (McCutchan, 173). *The Flutist*, a North Carolina-based magazine that ran in the 1920s not only helped popularize the flute by encouraging the founding of flute clubs but established the superiority of French flute playing through articles about Barrère and Laurent, both of whom had arrived in the United States prior to Moyses. In 1950, *Woodwind Magazine* had published an interview and "ebullient" profile of the flutist which, as McCutchan notes, was accompanied by an editorial note which defended its "glowing tribute" as "an impartial estimate of the greatness of a man which can be objectively substantiated" (173). Through this, the magazine's readership was already led to view that Moyses was an authority of unquestionable stature.

While Moyses passed away in 1984, his legacy lives on today through his students and through his publications, becoming an example of what Weber called "institutional charismatic authority" through the "routinization of charisma." The routinization of charisma takes place when there is not a direct successor to a charismatic leader and when "the tide that lifted a charismatically led group out of everyday life flows back into the channels of workaday routines" (Weber 1976, 1121). In this case, this charismatic community centered around Moyses institutionalized in order to continue his legacy without picking a singular leader to replace him. The most obvious example of this institutionalization is the Marcel Moyses Society, founded in 1988, which is responsible for archival work, new publications, and sponsoring masterclasses taught by his former students at the National Flute Association Convention. Outside of the society some of his former students hold their own summer masterclasses, modeled after Moyses', and dedicate some of their masterclasses to Moyses' published studies.

In my fieldwork, I found that Davis frequently invoked Moyse, linking himself to the mythical status of the old master and further legitimizing his own teaching. In his invocations, he promoted Moyse as the greatest flutist of the 20th century. In one instance, Davis boldly criticized an edition of Mozart's Flute Concerto in G Major by Moyse's (much younger) contemporary Jean-Pierre Rampal, noting some missing accent marks saying half-jokingly, "Oh, well *he* was a lazy man. He'd rather go out and have a drink [*sic*]," later adding, "now Moyse, he was a real flutist." By stating this, he contrasted Rampal's well-known interests in life's pleasures with Moyse's religious devotion to music. Without doubt, Davis was the only person in the room with the authority to make such strong value judgements towards Rampal, but by doing so, he could instill a narrative of Moyse's greatness for the rest of the class.

While Moyse was a singularly charismatic teacher, he believed that he was carrying on a tradition that was rooted in the institution of the Paris Conservatoire. He spoke of his teacher Taffanel as "the supreme god of the flute" (Wye 1993, 13). Below, Trevor Wye illustrates Moyse's anxiety over the future of the so-called French School of flute playing while also expressing his perception of Moyse as a charismatic leader who took care of his students by sharing his artistic revelations:

Moyse often said toward the end of his life, "Who will carry on after I'm gone? Who will continue the tradition of Tulou, Dorus, Altès, Taffanel, Gaubert, Hennebains?" The answer must surely be that Moyse himself did not simply continue it; he created his own way of teaching and playing for his students; he revealed a whole new world; and he opened their eyes and ears to it. (Wye 1993, 82).

A new charismatic authority

While many of Moyses's followers claim that he did not have a direct successor, his more prominent students continue his legacy while also creating their own charisma-based communities. Like Moyses, Davis has a dedicated following of established flutists who are professionals in their own right. I was surprised to note that most audience members at the masterclass I attended appeared to be over the age of 50. The performers, however, ranged from high school students to young professionals. It became apparent before the class even started that many of the older attendees were Davis' long-time supporters. At the beginning of the class, he acknowledged some of the familiar faces in the audience ("I see my friend Paul is here with us today"), most of whom sat together in the back of the room. Throughout the day, he would ask for their feedback, particularly regarding artistic issues such as vibrato or projection. There was very much a feeling that he valued their presence (particularly the men) and that through their familiarity with his teaching and the length of their connections, they were members of his inner circle.

Davis made his authoritative position in the masterclass known by his command of the space on stage, particularly in the pianist's space. When he felt that he could better demonstrate an idea at the piano, he was quick to move the accompanist aside. There were also many occasions in which Davis appeared to be teaching the accompanist, who was called to fill in last minute. While teaching Doppler's *Airs Velaques*, Davis halted the performance when the accompanist, who was likely sight-reading, was both struggling to keep up and lacking the correct style.

"Here you're a Hungarian military band. This should be a cembalo effect. Have you ever heard a cembalo?"

“No.”

“Have you ever been to Budapest?”

“No.”

“I have been to Budapest several times. You see cembalo players everywhere there.”

There were numerous interactions like this in which the pianist was put “in his place” and expected to know the flute repertoire well despite the fact that the class was a single-day event. It was a futile struggle, but the message was clear that Davis was a master of the repertoire and possessed not only greater skill but had a deeper and more authentic connection to the music through his life experiences.

Davis’ followers were keen on showing their support. As he spoke, some who were seated in front of me appeared to hang on every word, leaning forward and nodding in agreement. Some followed along with their scores (I was unsure of how they knew which scores to bring ahead of time). As they listened for the students’ application of Davis’ directives, some of the followers were unable to stifle their bodily movements. Off to the side, I could see one woman move her torso and shoulders, her face animated and hopeful that the student would carry out Davis’ idea. At one point, a woman volunteered to Davis that the performer was not yet playing the main melody notes—using a term that is one of his well-known “principles.” These dedicated followers appeared to exercise their knowledge of Davis’ teaching tropes, using them as tools to judge the uninitiated performers against the master’s teachings. These were behaviors that I recognized from my former teacher, who also happened to be present.

This behavior draws from the tradition of Moyse, who in an interview given roughly twenty years after he settled in Vermont after World War II, stated with exasperation that the

students he observed in his seminars “don’t know what music is!” (79). While he never stated outright that only French flutists could play French flute music, he suggested that there was something lost in musical training from one culture to another and perhaps from one generation to the next: “Music is something we have to learn—and nobody learns music. They learn to play music, and they learn to move the fingers. They are too loud, or they push the flute” (79). In this statement Moyse suggests that “nobody learns music” because they do not understand culturally enforced ideas of musical expression. One paradox in Moyse’s philosophy was that there should be a “natural approach” to the flute and music, but at the same time, that music had distinct rules that one should follow. These elements of musical “language” were conditions of training and cultural knowledge that were not easily transmitted to younger generations. This thinking is not limited to the age of widely-distributed popular styles of music through advances in recording technology, but goes back as far as Quantz, who in his 1752 treatise observed that musical taste is something that must be taught and is not “natural”:

If, by much practice, a person has achieved great facility, he must not abuse it. To play very quickly, and at the same time distinctly, is indeed a special merit; as experience teaches, however, it may also cause great errors. These are particularly apparent among young people, who possess neither ripe judgement nor a true feeling for how each piece ought to be played in the tempo and style appropriate to it. Such young people usually play everything that they encounter, whether it is Presto, Allegro, or Allegretto, at the same speed. In doing this they even believe that they are excelling others. Because of this excessive speed, however, they not only mar and destroy the most beautiful part of the composition—I mean the intermixed cantabile ideas—but also, by precipitating the tempo, accustom themselves to executing the notes incorrectly and indistinctly. Those who do not soon correct this error, which is caused by youthful fire, will persist in it, if not for ever, at least until far into their mature years (Quantz trans. Reilly 2001, 199).

To counter these common issues in masterclass settings, Davis teaches through his principles (which my former teacher also referred to as Davis’ “tools” and Davis-ims) which are essentially mnemonic devices that have become trademarks of his teaching, consisting of often

humorous verbal phrases that are sometimes sung along with physical gestures. By linking tropes in music such as cadences and motives to these devices, students can internalize the concepts and project them in their playing. These trademarks of Davis' teaching are treated by his followers as specialized knowledge and as musical truths.

As the pieces performed at this masterclass were all standard flute repertoire, there is no question that Davis has taught each one countless times, developing his own methods of approaching common issues over the years. I recognized some of his teaching practices from other classes I had attended including the usage of text to codify certain gestures, cadences, and motives. Among the most common are text-based phrases to denote three-note motives with an upper neighbor tone or appoggiatura. These principles were used while he worked with a student on *Cantabile et Presto* by Enesco as he made sure that every note grouping was carefully inflected and treated with the right gestures. It was especially stressed that students bring out the climaxes of phrases where they should occur and remove artificial climaxes where they do not belong in the music, but are instead a result of the tendencies of the flute: "Don't play it like a police car!"

Object-oriented ontology

To analyze the engagement of Davis' followers with his teaching I have borrowed from Graham Harman's (2018) Object-oriented Ontology (OOO), in which aesthetics is considered the root of all philosophy. To paraphrase some of the basic tenants of OOO, firstly, everything is an object and all objects are of equal importance. Secondly, there are only two types of objects: real objects, which "exist whether or not they currently effect anything else" and sensual objects, which "exist only in relation to some real object" (Harman 2018, 9). There are also only two

types of properties (also referred to as qualities) of objects: real and sensual. Because, as Harman claims, objects are not identical to their properties, they exist in a tense relationship with their properties, a tension that is “responsible for all of the change that occurs in the world” (9). In this ontological framework there are four permutations of the “quadruple object”: real objects (RO), sensual objects (SO), real qualities (RQ), and sensual qualities (SQ).

Of particular importance to the discussion of Davis’ masterclass is OOO’s claim that art is a tension between real objects and their sensual qualities, the interpretation of which requires a degree of theatricality in order to have an aesthetic experience (82). As Harman points out, by viewing the metaphors of objects in paintings, we are not accessing the real objects that we know in everyday experience, but the object’s qualities, causing the real object to recede (82). Because OOO requires attachment between objects and qualities, the interpretation of art and its metaphors requires a type of “method acting” as one becomes the missing “real” object in order to access its qualities. If one is viewing *Girl with a Pearl Earring* by Vermeer, the “sensual object” disappears as we involve ourselves with its metaphoric sensual qualities. If this process was applied to the interpretation of performance as a work of art, Davis’ conception of the music would be conceived as the missing real object (to which we have no direct access). The audience must then take the place of the missing real object, comparing the sensual qualities of the students’ performances with their audiation of the music (in which they place themselves as Davis’ supposed ideal of the music). While what is taking place on stage is of course, really happening (with “real” people on the stage), for the perceiver in the audience, the only way to make the experience real, rather than passive, is by placing themselves in the performer’s body, the teacher’s mind, and in the music itself. This is not to say that there is only one correct performance rendition for Davis or his followers, but there are always Davis’ principles against

which the performance can be judged. This is more difficult to accomplish for the less experienced players who are not as familiar with the music and Davis' teaching (although they might be excited by the performance nonetheless), but for those who have intimate knowledge of the music and Davis' teaching a higher level of interpretation exists in which they themselves embrace the qualities of the music (83).

I propose that Davis' principles exist because technical description—whether in the sense of scientific explanations of acoustics, anatomy, or music theory—is not always ideal for communicating musical ideas, particularly in a masterclass setting where the goal is better-informed *performance* within a relatively short timeframe. Personally, I find that technical information is quite useful to technique, but it requires much more time than a single masterclass session to become part of the performer's understanding of how they approach their instrument, body-use, and musical analysis. This abstract musical data will likely enrich one's holistic understanding of music (and provide intellectual satisfaction), but such data is often removed from what is experienced “in the moment” on stage. The overemphasized abstraction and compartmentalization of music in institutionalized musical training creates a tension observed by Wilf (2014) between written music (and other abstractions such as theory) and orality. To this, I would add that there is a similar tension between these forms of abstraction and embodied musical performance.

The aphorisms, metaphors, tropes, and lore are all aspects of Davis' (and Moyse's) aesthetics, which contribute to his charismatic authority as: “The mere fact of recognizing the personal mission of a charismatic master establishes his power” (Weber 1976, 1115). In order to approach the music as an aesthetic object which is interpreted through bodily performance, it is useful when the desired sounds are demonstrated by the teacher's playing or evoked through

metaphors or tropes that evoke an embodied response. Through these tools, musical artists can transmit musical aesthetics in a masterclass setting.

Further applications of Davis' charismatic authority

In addition to his following of flutists, there were other markers of Davis' charismatic authority, one of which was his colorful choice of clothing. In the otherwise drab setting of a conference room filled with an audience mostly dressed in business casual, Davis was onstage fashioned in a bright blue sweater over a white oxford shirt topped with a grape blazer jacket. This choice indexed his artist status and his well-known sense of humor—one of his other markers of charismatic authority. This allowed him to get away with jokes outside of most standards of good taste, particularly those involving race, gender, age, and bodies. Physical humor which breached normal boundaries included mock-spanking of the student with Davis's flute and pretending to hit students on top of their head with his flute every time a bell-like motive occurred in the music. This produced surprised and uproarious laughter from the audience.

One particular moment that crossed the boundaries of sensitivity on race occurred while Davis worked with an Asian high school student, telling her to use the "Chinese E fingering" to achieve a timbral effect. It was clear that this was not a naive choice by someone of an older generation, because Davis scanned the room as if waiting for a reaction. Instead some members of the audience shifted uncomfortably in their seats (though without producing any audible reactions or objections). He repeated this phrase several times that afternoon as if waiting to receive the reaction he was after. When I later asked this student about her feelings on the comment, she responded that she was "used to it," that "he didn't mean any offense by it," and

that she didn't take it personally. As a relatively young and inexperienced student, she might have felt that it was required of her to show her respect to Davis by giving him the benefit of the doubt. Another instance of an uncomfortable joke took place when he tested the boundary with one of his middle-aged female supporters, who happened to be the organizer of the masterclass, replacing the words of one of his mnemonic devices with "Susan is a fat old cow." Susan, who was not sitting in the audience, but on her feet dealing with administrative issues did not acknowledge Davis' comment, but I perceived a slight tensing of her body. This one-sided interaction had a similar character to the way the host of a British quiz show might tease each of his celebrity guests when introducing them, as a sort of quick "roast." As Susan was someone that only a few members of the audience knew, the joke didn't "land" (while I did not speak to Susan about this afterward, she did not appear amused).

These occurrences of boundary crossing bear a resemblance to what Wilf (2014) observed in world-famous jazz musicians that were brought into institutionalized academic jazz settings. In teacher-student interactions that, in their misogyny, were outside of what would normally be deemed acceptable by the program, the instructors exercised an "immunity that is grounded in their charisma" (Wilf 2014, 85). Davis behaved similarly through his provocative jokes. He provided a connection to a "mythical past" through his lived experiences, performing in a way that some might call authentic and entertaining. Even if someone voiced their concern over Davis' more offensive jokes, it could be argued that they were "all in good fun" and that they served to teach musical concepts. If those reasons were not enough, they could argue that Davis is from a different time and place and is a living relic, therefore deserving of immunity.

The transmission of charisma

Once charismatic qualification has become an impersonal quality, which can be transmitted through various and at first purely magic means, it has begun its transformation from a personal gift that can be tested and proven but not transmitted and acquired, into a capacity that, in principle, can be taught and learned. Thus, charismatic qualification can become an object of *education*, even though at first not in the form of rational or empirical instruction, since heroic and magical capacities are regarded as inborn; only if they are latent can they be activated through a regeneration of the whole personality. Therefore, the real purpose of charismatic education is regeneration, hence the development of the charismatic quality, and the testing, confirmation and selection of the qualified person. (Weber 1976, 1143)

In this excerpt above from his discussion of charismatic education, Weber claims that charismatic qualities can be developed and taught to qualified persons through fostering and “regenerating” these qualities. For the performer, stage presence is an essential charismatic quality that is not innate in all who pursue music performance. One of the educational merits of masterclasses that does not exist in private lessons or chamber coaching is the opportunity to address issues of stage presence. While a student can receive feedback from their teacher after a performance, in a masterclass, the student can be interrupted and corrected on the spot. This is not to say that charismatic education creates an influx of charismatic leaders, but that degrees of charisma can be developed through training. In Davis’ masterclass, some of the students were asked to do rather unusual things in order to awaken their charismatic qualities. In one instance while working with a female high school student, he jumped into a wide-legged stance with his arms open and yelled: “take your clothes off!” He was obviously not giving instructions to the young woman, but was signaling her to play with a bold, uninhibited, and extroverted affect.³

Below I will recount some additional examples.

³ While the comment had its purpose as a teaching tool, the inappropriateness of an older man yell at an underage girl to take her clothes off was not lost on me. Like the comments mentioned earlier, it was of course, meant to be funny. It was certainly humorous, but in an uncomfortable, lewd way that would likely be condemned in many institutionalized, educational settings today.

The first student onstage was a young woman dressed in a black wrap dress with her hair in a simple updo. Around her neck was her orange name tag that she received when she signed in. I assumed by her professional appearance, and later, the level of playing, that she was an undergraduate performance major, but when I spoke with her after the class, I was surprised to find out that she was a serious high school student. As the audience anticipated the start of the class, Davis took his headjoint out of his case and started to make slide whistle sounds. There were a few nervous giggles in the audience. It was unclear whether he was breaking the ice or amusing himself in the spare moments before the class. When the student looked ready, Davis asked her in a solemn and stately cadence to state her name and the piece she would be playing.

“I’m Samantha Hamilton and I will be playing the Dutilleux *Sonatine*.”

Her voice was absorbed by the carpeting, the air conditioning, and the size of the space.

He asked her to state her name and piece again, this time louder and slower.

“I’m Samantha and I will be playing the Dutilleux *Sonatine*.”

“Is that clear in the back of the hall?”

“No!” shouted a woman from the back of the room. Samantha shifted uncomfortably.

“Again! What’s your name?”

“Samantha Hamilton.”

“That’s too quick.” Davis imitated Samantha, speeding up his speech intentionally.

“Samantha ‘What’?”

“Hamilton”

“Hannington?”

“Hamilton!”

“Oh, *Hamilton*.”

Davis asked her to announce her name and piece one more time after which he finally allowed her to get started. This exchange struck me as an uncomfortable way to begin the class. I was worried that Samantha would have a difficult time recovering, but she performed admirably well. When I asked her afterwards if Davis' questions made her nervous, she responded: "Yes. I kind of knew why he was telling me to do that, but I definitely have less experience with public speaking than playing." In this case, the student trusted that there was value to this uncomfortable and embarrassing exercise that could benefit the less obvious aspects of becoming a performing artist. While performers of classical music don't typically announce their name and piece before they play, the audience does benefit from getting a sense of the artist's personality, even if it is just a persona.

Davis continued to make the same request for each student. The younger female students had the most difficulty projecting their voice.

"I'm Ashley, I'm from Cincinnati, and I'll be playing the Poulenc Sonata."

"You're from Cincinnati? So bloody what?"

He asked her to introduce herself again, but this time, he pressed the end of his flute against her stomach to create resistance. This is a well-known technique for teaching students to inhale with an engaged abdomen, but this was the first time I had seen a flute teacher do this to work on public speaking. The second introduction by the student was louder, but Davis was still dissatisfied, taking pause. Suddenly he began to growl in a low and menacing tone like an aggressive dog, punctuating the growl with a loud bark. The audience erupted in laughter while the student looked confused. "Go on! Growl and bark." She proceeded to attempt what came across as a tentative growl punctuated by a yap. He had her repeat the exercise several times until

she achieved an acceptable volume. When he was finally satisfied, he allowed her to start the piece.

These moments of transmitting charisma on the masterclass stage are often what make a masterclass memorable and entertaining. On other occasions I have seen students asked to walk around the room and give eye contact with each audience member while playing from memory (I have also been asked to do this, which I illustrate in the next chapter). I have also seen students instructed to dance, sing, speak with an accent, and stand in power poses. These moments of theatricality go beyond the written score and even the musical performance (as in the instances of the repeated introductions in Davis' class) requiring the students to become less self-conscious and more charming.

While these actions by Davis might have had theatrical value, I also found them to be disturbing and bordering on misogynistic. While there were two male performers that day, there was nothing particularly striking about their sessions. Davis respected the physical boundaries of the male students and focused on their playing—even offering compliments. For the female players, with the exception of a professional who appeared to be in her 30s, Davis was inclined to make them perform physical actions that were meant to take them outside of their character and to adjust their vocality. When he yelled “take your clothes off (!)” at the female high school flutist, the non-suggestion of public nudity to a minor was jarring and inappropriate. It reminded me of a masterclass held by a regional flute club I attended in which the visiting flutist told the undergraduate female student, “Tell yourself: ‘if I don’t go flat, I won’t get pregnant.’” This instance with Davis was not nearly as offensive, but because the comments—aimed at young women—are made while the student is attempting to perform well, it is unlikely that they will have the opportunity to respond to the comment. In the case of Samantha and Ashley, when he

asked them to announce their name and the title and composer of their piece, he found the volume of their voices unsatisfying despite the fact that his own voice was often inaudible to the audience. Davis' aggressive growling and barking and his request for Ashley to reproduce this action might have had merits as method-acting exercises, but such actions were more entertaining than empowering and happened exclusively with the young female students.

Transcendence

In his ethnographic account of a midwestern university school of music, Nettle (1995) notes: "Hierarchical structure and struggles for hegemony [...] play a role among the instruments and the instrument families" (64). From his observations, there is a barely visible struggle between winds and strings, with the teachers of wind instruments receiving less artistic respect than their string playing counterparts (65). Similarly, the weighing of power and status among the instruments was something that preoccupied Moyse. His conception of musical expression emphasized emulating the phrasing and vibrato of singers and string players, partly influenced by his career as an orchestral flutist in Paris and as a touring flutist with the Australian singer Nellie Melba. Through his careful listening, he arrived at the conclusion that most flute players did not play with the same level of musicality as singers and string players and, in his playing and teaching, aimed to give the flute "the resources of the human voice" (Estevan 1976, 79). Moyse applied this condition to an overall musical hierarchy stating: "The violin, the piano, and the voice, they are Kings. The flute is just a Queen—a very beautiful Queen, but only a Queen" (Wye and Floyd, 1993). By referring to the flute as a "queen," Moyse points to the gendered quality of the flute. As a feminized instrument, the flute is unable to reach the status of the masculine "kings." He seems to suggest that in order for flutists to receive due respect from

composers through substantial repertoire, (which would raise the status of the instrument) flutists needed to earn it by performing at a level equal to their competition. In addition to the evidence of actual compositions by the “greats,” Moyses also witnessed the rise of recording technologies. The commercial value of recording artists gave musicians a new measure for success and prestige. Additionally, Moyses could study the inflections of star violinists and singers through repeated listenings. From this point onward, to play “like a flutist” or “flute music” was considered inferior.

Davis’ teaching explicitly underscores Moyses’ “flute project.” At one point during the masterclass, he yelled at a student: “That sounds like a flute recital! Play it like a violin!” For Davis and Moyses, flute playing should go beyond the physical aspects of flute playing (the player’s body, the instrument body, and the means required to create an intentioned performance), its limitations in repertoire, its generations of pedagogies, histories, and communities. Flute playing should go beyond the flutist’s musical, social, and cultural body. To achieve artistry, one must transcend the boundaries of the instrument and evoke the qualities of the superior instruments. To imitate a violinist, Davis suggests longer note lengths wherever a violinist would play the notes long. Additionally, he implored that the flutist should not over-staccato notes for the sake of staccato saying, “it’s not a bloody chicken.”

While Davis acknowledged moments in which he approved of a student’s performance, he was the sole bearer of artistry by virtue of his presence. Interestingly, there were no moments of transformation in the student performances that were witnessed that day. Transformation was instead, withheld. In fact, Davis’ core belief—as passed down from Moyses—was that the flute itself needed to transcend itself and become other. The flute is flawed—to become closer to the voice through singing, to the violin or cello through emulating the bow or their vibrato is not

only of musical but of ethical importance. On two occasions—during performances of Mozart’s Concerto in G and *Poem* by Griffes—Davis led the audience as a choir in singing the orchestral accompaniment as the performer played the solo part onstage. Davis looked directly out towards the audience while conducting and singing, occasionally calling out directions. On key rhythms in the Mozart, he would bellow the correct rhythm loudly. He asked everyone—“at least the men”—to sing the low pitched melodies of the orchestral opening of the Griffes. Not only did these instances feel like the most successful performances in the entire day of masterclasses, but they were the best use of audience participation. These moments in which we celebrated the flute’s repertoire through communal singing were our moments of transcendence.

Conclusion

This chapter provided insight into a specific type of flute masterclass—one that is representative of those taught by a charismatic authority who has their own community of followers that engages in self-referential ritualized and aesthetic practices through masterclasses. As the community’s charismatic authority, Davis not only controlled musical meaning-making (through the use of principles), but controlled the performer’s body, the performer’s voice, and the ethical dimensions of the instrument through its relation to the taxonomy of instruments. This right to yield so much power within the confined time and space of the masterclass was due to Davis’ authorization through his widely-accepted extraordinary ability as a performer and teacher and his distinguished lineage. A lesser-known teacher might be able to introduce an audience to their principles, but in this established charismatic community, the mostly middle-aged and professionalized followers actively participate in a practice mostly meant for the developing musician.

Through their position of power, a charismatic authority can sometimes get away with speaking and gesturing to students in a way that is offensive, sexist, or racist. What is difficult to capture and to come to terms with is that while Davis' actions in these situations are sometimes disturbing, as a flute player, I am admittedly still captivated by his sound and rich historical connections. Perhaps it is unsurprising that—despite the critique I have issued in this chapter—Davis as a whole comes across in personal interactions as both charming and kind, if irreverent, bringing to mind similar remembrances from Moyses' followers. It is this complexity of charismatic authority that requires dissection and contemplation rather than outright acceptance and glorification.

Chapter Three

Flutes Under the Tuscan Sun: Sociality, Professionalization, and the Pursuit of Artistry in a Ten-day Masterclass

In this chapter, I make meaning of a ten-day summer flute masterclass I attended in Italy during the summer of 2017 through utilizing my own perceptions of performance as well as my observations of faculty members and the other performers. My analysis will focus on how performers, in addition to following the pursuit of artistry, also received valuable professional skills through social engagement outside of the official masterclass. Two ideas from sociology were helpful in my analysis: Granovetter's (1973) theory of *weak ties* and the concept of *soft skills* which was invented by the U.S. Army in the 1950s and adopted and repackaged in countless sectors as a set of 21st-century skills (Larsen, Rand, et.al 2018). In examining my observations of other performers in the class, interviews with participants, and my own embodied experience of performing in this class, I also consider the subjective, aesthetic, and hermeneutic dimensions of participating in an extended masterclass.

Background

“Flutes Under the Tuscan Sun”⁵ was unique for its remote and idyllic setting and for the equal value that was given to instruction and socializing over meals. There were two flute teachers on faculty. Matteo, the organizing teacher, is an Italian flutist with multiple faculty positions, one of which is at an East Coast music conservatory. The other flute teacher, whom I will hereafter refer to as Steve, is a prominent orchestral flutist based in the Midwest. This was

⁵ The name of this class, along with the names of the faculty and students are all pseudonyms.

the first time Steve co-taught the course, replacing a major American female flutist who taught in previous years. A post on my Facebook feed brought this masterclass to my attention. While there are still comprehensive lists of masterclasses printed in *Flute Talk Magazine* and *The Flutist Quarterly*, most teachers, aside from inviting students from their own studios, utilize social media platforms to recruit students for their classes. If my own behavior is indicative of that of flutists around my age and younger, printed and even online flute-related journals often pile up unread, whether on my piano bench or in my inbox. However, I check my Facebook and my Instagram feeds many times a day, unfortunately sometimes from the moment I wake up. The Facebook post for Matteo and Steve’s masterclass included a digital flyer that featured their headshots, photos of the picturesque site of the masterclass, and a photo of the students from the previous year doing a “silly” pose with their flutes.

For Matteo, this annual summer masterclass has a strong autobiographical significance. It takes place each summer near his home village, which is located just past the sunflower and tobacco fields visible from the masterclass site. He had tried to create a similar environment in the early 2000s while assisting his mentor, an American flutist, in another ten-day masterclass. The classes had stopped abruptly for a number of reasons, one of which being that the proprietors who had housed and fed the participants decided they could no longer accommodate the class. Ten years later, Matteo sought out a site at a neighboring *castello* (of which one of the owners is a long-time friend) for a new ten-day masterclass of his own design. By leading his own course, he could further establish his identity as a teacher in his own right. While Matteo acknowledges his indebtedness to his mentor, this class, for him, was meant to break away from aspects of his mentor’s teaching style while promoting a quintessentially Tuscan attitude: a life lived slowly with good food and company. The new masterclass site—a medieval castle-turned-

traveler's inn—was ideally equipped for these aims as it had a kitchen that prepared traditional Tuscan meals and a recreation center where the masterclasses could be held. As someone who had participated in the former masterclass ten years ago as an undergraduate, I hoped to witness Matteo's personal approach firsthand.

After an initial email, I called Matteo to reconnect and to ask questions about the class. I was hoping to attend as an auditor to save on tuition costs, but he strongly encouraged me to sign up as a performer to get the “full experience.” This included one masterclass session with each faculty member, plus room and board. The prospect of having to find accommodations “in town” and taking a taxi into class everyday seemed too troublesome and removed from the very site I was trying to study, so I opted to stay at the castle as a performer. When our conversation turned to the philosophy behind his masterclass, he stressed that first and foremost, the class was about “breaking the teacher/student barrier,” mainly through sharing long and leisurely meals together. I recalled that in the class I had attended ten years ago with Matteo and his former teacher, we ate dinner together every night. This was an important feature for Matteo, because in the classes he had attended as a developing flutist, the students sat together while the teacher dined elsewhere. At most masterclasses I had attended, meals shared with the master teacher were a rare occurrence, usually reserved for an end-of-class party at the teacher's home.

As far as the actual masterclasses, Matteo explained that it was to be taught “in the Paris Conservatory style” with the students arranged in a semicircle towards the stage⁶. The format would be like a typical masterclass, with a student performing a piece or excerpt and the teacher stopping the student to address specific issues in the student's playing or interpretation. He strongly suggested that I bring in pieces that I had been working on for a while, rather than

⁶ In the actual class, the seats were at first arranged somewhat sporadically, but facing the stage. After the faculty recital (which was held in the same space), the chairs remained in straight rows for the duration of the masterclass.

works in progress.⁷ Finally, Matteo explained that the class was meant to “serve as an oasis” from day-to-day life while helping one to “find balance.” This undertone of wellness made me imagine a retreat-like setting and relaxed atmosphere. Personally, I was looking forward to ten days of authentic Tuscan meals, a change of scenery from Brooklyn, and some time to practice and write.

Going into the field, I had concerns about my role in the class as a researcher. My plan was to note my observations of the masterclass (including my own performances) and the unofficial class times such as meals and other social activities, and to conduct as many interviews as possible. How would the other students in the class react to knowing that they were being observed? How forthcoming would they be in interviews when asked about their experience in this masterclass? Would the master teachers adjust their teaching for me during my sessions? Another concern was my own engagement with the subject. Since I had already performed in many flute masterclasses, would I be capable of undertaking an analysis with fresh eyes and ears, or would I, from my position “inside,” risk “partial blindness and deafness to a world gradually rendered natural through the quotidian” (Gray 2013, 28)?

On the first day, Matteo introduced me to the class as a D.M.A. student and disclosed that I would be doing research for my dissertation. I was pleasantly surprised that I did not have any difficulty obtaining interviews or permission to observe the class. Because there was no pressure for students to participate in my study (nor did I offer any compensation), I believe that they genuinely wanted to help me as fellow flutists foreseeing their own likelihood of one day writing a D.M.A. dissertation. At the beginning of each interview, I reminded the interviewee that I

⁷ I had made the mistake ten years ago of bringing in a piece that was still a work-in-progress, which was something that the master teacher had encouraged us to do. After I was ripped apart onstage, I vowed to myself that any pieces I performed in a masterclass had to have had at least one prior performance.

would not identify them in my research or publish any full interviews. Instead I would find themes across interviews and intersperse quotes in the text. In case there were any lulls in conversation, I prepared a list of questions to have on hand. I brought along my Shure mv88 microphone to record interviews on my iPhone as well as a slim Moleskin that I planned to use for field notes during classes and periods of free time.

In the following sections, I will explain two sociological concepts related to professionalization which frame my analysis: the strength of weak ties and the importance of soft skills.

Building social ties between students and teachers

In December 2017, subscribers of the FLUTE listserv discussed changes they observed in their private flute studios in recent years. The teachers engaged in the thread taught all levels of flute-playing and while mostly American, also represented the U.K., Canada, and Israel. The changes they noticed in their studios included lower enrollment and higher turnover rates, as well as changes in behavior from students such as taking a single lesson from one teacher to “brush up” on skills before an exam or taking single lessons from many different teachers. This sort of behavior from students, of course, can cause great financial instability for the teacher. But why were students in 2017 less likely to dedicate themselves to a single teacher than they were in 1960? The most common reasons the users suggested related to shifts in values, namely that students were involved with too many activities, making it difficult to focus on the study of an instrument. Students also expected results too quickly, making them easily discouraged and more likely to quit before they made any significant improvement. One rather well-known British flute

teacher replied to the thread: “it seems that young people now want an instant-brilliant-flute-playing app.”

A teacher based in upstate New York wrote:

And of course, those who ask ONCE to be excused from lessons [...] [for] a SPORT need not ask again. I tell them that they can leave - and I WILL NOT take them back. I felt bad at first - but not anymore! I [...] know times have changed, but standards have not - not ours, and not those of WORTHY college programs, or valued competitions - not the *everybody gets a certificate* ones. So we now have by far, the tiniest studio we have ever had - and far less headaches than we have had in the last few years.

These comments point to tensions that flute teachers experience between character traits valued in the Information Age such as well-roundedness and efficient learning from a wide range of viewpoints and dominant values held under craftsman traditions such as loyalty and work ethic. While it is common for a flutist to have studied with several teachers in their musical development, the strong connection of tutelage under the master/apprentice system is a long-held foundation of training for musicians. These sentiments of obligation found in one-on-one training, which may have seemed outmoded even after the Second Industrial Revolution, are arguably even more difficult to maintain today.

Whether consciously or subconsciously, it is possible that recent generations of flutists are more aware of the importance of what sociologist Steve Granovetter (1973) termed “weak ties” for social and professional mobility. Weak ties are essentially acquaintances or informal relationships that serve to bridge clusters of tightly knit social groups. According to Granovetter’s theory, the weak ties we form are more likely to provide links to employment than our strong ties. The master/apprentice dyad, however, is a very strong tie that is defined by the student’s focused tutelage in the master’s studio. While these relationships vary, in the strongest master/apprentice dyads, the ties can go so far as to resemble a parent/child relationship. In the most guild-like studios, students tend to closely mimic the master teacher, resulting in similar

tone quality and performance styles. This type of reproduction through mimesis is sometimes critiqued for limiting the student's individuality, but in the case of an especially strong studio, may result in students that appear to dominate the competition circuit. Students may try to get closer to a teacher by building a strong tie, but this inclination may have limited professional benefits aside from exceptional cases (such as the opportunity to sub in the teacher's orchestra). In many ways, it seems that classical music training is still stuck between these two world views, a problem that is further compounded by the small number of professional offerings for classical musicians and the demand for classical music in our society.

Attending masterclasses expands participants' social networks, creating the pathways for mobility across multiple social networks. Ironically, many students attend masterclasses with the intent of changing their relationship with the teacher from a weak tie to a strong tie and are under the misconception that this social movement can occur from participating in the masterclass rather than from gaining entry into the teacher's studio. As membership in a well-known teacher's studio is a coveted and hard-won position, teachers are often annoyed when students mistake or misrepresent their closeness to the teacher by calling themselves a student of "X" after a single lesson or masterclass. Forming a connection could potentially help a student get into the master's studio, build the reputation of the student, or strengthen the ties between the masterclass teacher and the student's "home" teacher, but do not constitute the "strong" master/apprentice ties. Some students challenge or ignore this limitation by attending the same masterclass year after year. Through the gradual strengthening of this relationship and their position as a "regular," this connection may serve as a proxy for the studio-based teacher/student relationship, but in a way that still lacks the bond of studio membership.

In an interview I conducted with Matteo, it was noted that students need to enter masterclasses with the right expectations:

Masterclasses are a one-time deal, two-time deal that [sic] you play for that teacher in a ten day/two week period, and in the ones that are three or four days or shorter, you play once. I don't know if it's conscious or subconscious, but people expect that you're that person's student or that automatically, a lot more will come from it, where *I* think more will come from it if, at the masterclass, you click on any aspect. It can either be musically, personally, or both, which is ideal. If both click, I think it is guaranteed that a relationship continues because perhaps, you consider going to school where they teach or doing another class, or sort of establishing a regular relationship of lessons and of contact with that person. I think that if you just go to a class, and even if it's fabulous and you get a lot out of it, everything stays at the surface. As a student you see what that person's about. What they stress, what they don't stress. You see them play, but the real depth and important work can come if you come [to the class] again, and again, and again. I don't just mean that masterclass itself, but if you have private lessons...

Matteo's comments expressed what he felt were the limitations of the relationship between a master teacher and a masterclass student, noting that "everything stays on the surface," suggesting a relationship existing between acquaintances. He also made it clear that he believes that students can get more from a masterclass if they and the teacher "click on any aspect" on a musical or personal level rather than enter with the expectation that they will (or have) become a student of the master. Here it is important to remember that despite a masterclass' feeling of a closed, finite event, it is in itself a relationship-forming node.

Matteo's attitude reflects his years of returning to the Nice Academy to take masterclasses and lessons with Maxence Larrieu. The quality of Larrieu's teaching and his connection to the French flute-playing traditions were what initially drew Matteo. After his first masterclass with Larrieu, Matteo began taking infrequent private lessons with him over the span

of four years. Matteo recounted a later incident with Larrieu in which he describes their close connection that he cultivated:

One time he came to New York maybe 10 years ago for the New York convention and I picked him and his wife up at the airport [...] and he says, “my wife wants to go shoe shopping, but I don’t want to go.” So, someone’s taking her and showing her around and he says “I want to hear you play [...] and then we go have dinner together [after the lesson].” And I said, “well I don’t have my flute with me.” And he snapped “my flute isn’t good enough for you? Just play my flute.” And silly me, I’ve known him for so long, but I’m wondering what I am going to play, I don’t have any music. And he’s like, “what, you don’t know Mozart? You don’t know Bach?” He ripped me apart at age thirty-something.

While Matteo does not consider himself an “official” pupil of Larrieu, his contact over years of summer classes depict a closeness that it seems unfair to label as “weak.” While masterclass participation might constitute a weak tie from a professional standpoint, perhaps there is a third space in-between the weak/strong binary that is developed over time. His anecdote reminded me of accounts I had read about Liszt’s refusal to take money for lessons and “actively seeking to surround himself with young disciples whose homage was the price of admission to the class” (Walker 1996, 243). This suggests Mauss’ (1925) ideas about gift exchange and reciprocity as ways of building relationships. I imagined that in the case of Matteo’s relationship with Larrieu at this later stage in the master’s life, as long as the master and pupil distinction is maintained, the usual exchange of money could be replaced with favors and companionship. Matteo’s relationship with Larrieu was an unusual case as most students do not return to the same masterclass year after year.

Expanding technique: soft skills in the masterclass

In music conservatory training, the “hard skills” needed as a professional musician are often emphasized. These include: proper and agile technique, good intonation, knowledge of solo

and orchestral repertoire, score analysis, sight singing, etc. In other words, hard skills are the skills required to do well “on the job” as a performer. Soft skills, on the other hand, are “not about skills in the traditional sense” but rather, are “character traits, attitudes, and behaviors” (Robles 2012, 457). They are the “intangible, nontechnical, personality-specific skills that determine one’s strengths as a leader, facilitator, mediator, and negotiator” (457). These skills are just as important to musicians as they are to corporate employees. However, while vital, these skills are rarely taught in conservatory training. One exceptional space where soft skills might be cultivated over time might include student-led chamber ensembles, which—with enough practice—can cultivate social graces often lacking in the cutthroat orchestra environment.

In a study that investigated conservatory students’ perceptions of masterclasses, the most frequently cited areas that students hoped to improve on from attending masterclasses were technique and musical interpretation (Creech, Gaunt, Hall, and Robertson 2009, 322). I found this to be equally true when interviewing students at *Flutes Under the Tuscan Sun*—most wanted to work on the deficiencies in their hard skills. While the students I spoke with acknowledged that the sociality of this class far exceeded what they experienced in their college music department or conservatory flute studio, with the exception of one D.M.A. student, they did not view the social aspects of the class to have equal value to the instructional portions. Most viewed these as entirely separate components of the class rather than part of a holistic experience, as was Matteo’s intention. In my observations, the social portions of *Flutes Under the Tuscan Sun* granted the opportunity to foster the development of soft skills in a collegial environment.

While some didn’t seem to mind, others struggled. This was an exceptionally hot summer in Italy, with weeks on end of over-100-degree weather. The residence not only lacked air conditioning, but electric fans as well. Windows left open brought in hornets, bumble bees, and

scorpions. While everyone was suffering from the heat, some students complained frequently. This complaining was brought up in interviews with the faculty members. It seemed that the ability to persevere and maintain graciousness through the discomfort brought on by the heat was noted by faculty members as showing maturity and gratitude for the class organizer. Another sensitive subject was the students who complained about the size and length of the meals. The collaborative pianist on faculty noted that settling into the culture of this region where the class took place, and where music is such a big part of the culture, is “going to work on you as a person and is going to shape your music.” This meant sitting through the long meals, enjoying the company, and not leaving the table until everyone else had finished eating. For this faculty member, maintaining the social atmosphere was more important than rushing off to the practice room after eating. It was comments like this that made me realize that we were being critiqued just as much on our social graces during our family-style meals as we were for our flute playing during the official class time.

Arrival at the research site

Minutes after my train arrived in Arezzo, Matteo picked me up from the parking lot in a small blue sedan. He stepped out of the car dressed in a polo shirt, cargo shorts, and athletic shoes. A pair of sunglasses rested on top of his head.

“Sarah! It’s so good to see you—It’s been so long! What has it been, 10 years or something like that?”

“Probably more—I would say twelve years.”

“I’m so glad to have you in the class. You’re going to have a great time. We’re going to make it just in time for dinner.”

Matteo drove us along the somewhat windy path that took us to the castle—the curves in our route dictated by the lush, mountainous topography. For the half an hour it took to get to the castle, we caught up and recounted our last meeting a decade ago in a town only six kilometers away from where we were heading. Matteo conveyed his excitement that I would be there to observe him run his own class.

We pulled up onto the driveway. The property was quite charming, with the medieval castello making up the main residential quarters. Adjacent to the castello were the dungeon (overfilled with torture devices to shock visitors) and the chapel, an underutilized and earthy space with cobwebs in every corner. We were up on a hill with views of tobacco fields and hay bales, the perimeter of the property lined with thin cypress trees and evergreens. Across a semicircular path was the restaurant where all of the meals were to be held. Flute playing drifted out from an open window. For some reason I was surprised that someone could be in their room practicing instead of enjoying the beautiful surroundings.

By the time I walked over to the restaurant, many of the participants were waiting on the deck, conversing. Matteo introduced me to Steve and Chris, letting them know that I was the D.M.A. researcher that he had told (or perhaps warned) them about. Steve, a well-groomed middle-aged white male with light-framed glasses and white hair, was seated at a two-top cafe table and drinking a beer. Chris, the staff pianist, asked me some questions about my research. As someone who had attended and accompanied many masterclasses, not only for flutists but also for opera singers, he seemed genuinely excited that someone was finally investigating the topic. One of his main issues with masterclasses was that very few of them taught technique, believing that this would surely benefit many of the audience members. He also recommended

that I read *Master Class*, a play by Terrence McNally.⁸ Somewhere in the middle of our conversation, we were invited by the proprietor to enter the dining room for our first dinner.

Class structure

The days were divided into two masterclass sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, each with two students scheduled for one-hour sessions. While the first sessions adhered to the one-hour time limit, as the week went on (and as the heat became more unbearable), the sessions were somewhat shortened. Attendance was perfect, a contrast to the class taught by Matteo's teacher twelve years earlier where some sessions had somewhat spotty attendance.⁹ While "Flutes Under the Tuscan Sun" took place over ten days, only eight of these days included masterclasses. This had to do with the fact that there was no class on our arrival date (we had dinner together on that first night) and we had a scheduled day off which we spent together as a group visiting a cultural landmark in a nearby town.

Everyone had to squeeze in their practice sessions. There was a little time in the mornings after breakfast, an hour between the first session and lunch, and an hour before the afternoon session if you could practice on a full stomach. There were also the hours after dinner, but most drank too much wine with dinner for this to be practical. Around the limited practice schedule, students also made time to Skype and Facetime chat with their friends and family back home (although the Wi-Fi was horrendous), take naps, and go on excursions around the property. Some evenings were marked with special events such as recitals and evening trips to "town" for gelato and aperitivos.

⁸ A year and a half later I enjoyed reading this play about a hysterical fictional masterclass given by Maria Callas, wishing that I had seen something so dramatic during my fieldwork.

⁹ This was likely due to the surroundings—unlike the masterclass in the neighboring town, there were no shops or cafes within walking-distance.

In contrast to the convivial atmosphere of mealtimes, the instructional portions of the masterclass maintained a sense of formality between the teachers and the students. This was most evident in the way that students dressed to perform. Apart from myself, another doctoral student, and a high school student, all of the performers dressed for their sessions as if they were taking an audition or a job interview. The first performer of the week, a male undergraduate from the Midwest, was possibly the most formally dressed in black slacks, dress shoes, a dress shirt, and a tie. Another performer, a female Asian American embarking on an orchestral career, also dressed quite formally in both of her sessions, wearing mid-length dresses, dress flats, and tasteful jewelry. The clothing choices made by most of the students were professional and respectful, but were in stark contrast to the utilitarian recreational center in which our masterclasses were held. The casual dresses I wore for my sessions, while not as informal as shorts and flip flops (which the other D.M.A. student had dressed in for one of her sessions), was essentially my everyday summer wardrobe. Perhaps my position as a mostly professionalized player working on a terminal degree had some bearing on my clothing choices. Also, while I acknowledge my actions “on stage” as a type of performance, I was under the impression that the instructional aspects combined with the laid-back setting permitted a more relaxed presentation. While my clothing was not an issue in the class, I sensed the difference in my attitude. The teachers and the staff accompanist dressed even more casually—Matteo always in cargo shorts, a polo shirt, and running shoes and Steve usually in a black t-shirt and dark jeans.

Dinner and socializing

While I find myself referring to my notes to recall specific masterclass sessions, I remember the meals quite vividly, with conversation and wine flowing in numerous directions.

Between platters of pasta, meat, and vegetables, conversations around the banquet table were often divided two or three ways, depending on the placement of faculty members. Sitting next to the faculty members was an opportunity to hear firsthand stories about playing for famous conductors, life as a symphony player, and other musicians that they admired. Luckily, the seating arrangements varied each meal, so it never felt like there were favorites or cliques. All around, conversations oscillated around school, relationships, the music business, and of course, flute-talk: teachers, makers, design, materials, and headjoints. Some seemed to enjoy or at least tolerate participating in flute-talk, while others avoided it at all costs, having had more than enough flute for one day with four hours of masterclasses.

Performing bodies

I perform with my body. Posture, breath, embouchure, tongue, oral cavity, finger-work, and expressive gestures are all applications for performance. My sound is equally a concept in my mind's ear and my body. There are biomedical names for each of the facial muscles used in sound production. I've tried committing these to memory many times, but I prefer the opaque all-encompassing term 'embouchure.' Like most flutists, my embouchure did not come naturally to me. It is a project with proposed redesigns by every new teacher; each version required weeks and even months for the full transformation. Is it strange to say that it is still a work in progress? Next to my flute, it is the most important piece of "technology" for my playing. With it, I form my very self.

I wrote the reflection above to preface my discussions of the masterclasses themselves. No matter what is addressed by the teacher, as a performer I find the whole experience to be a struggle with my body, working on getting it to perform with more ease and less tension. As I

observed other performers in the class, I tried to remember this struggle and how it emerges even in seemingly low-stakes environments.

The first performer was Gerald, an undergraduate Filipino-American flute major at a small midwestern college. Dressed in the formal clothes described earlier, Gerald looked somewhat tense as he turned to Chris and quickly tuned, not quite settling on the pitch. Chris began the opening flourish of the first movement of *Suite* by Widor, but once Gerald made his entrance, there was a struggle to stay together. After hitting a major arrival point, Steve signaled for him to stop. “I would like to talk about how to practice performing,” he said while facing the audience. After making some initial comments about the placement of the music stand, and where the performer should position themselves in relation to the stand, he launched into a discussion about communication. Steve stressed that it is not just the performer’s communication with the audience that matters, but the performers’ communication with each other. To work on these communicative aspects of chamber music, Steve addressed Gerald’s motions. He pointed out that instead of giving excessively large motions to communicate to Chris, he could move in a way that flows with the beat.

Gerald played some more and was then stopped again by Steve: “how do you feel about the intonation?” From the back, Matteo interrupted: “everybody please keep in mind that the piano is tuned at 442.” Steve continued, “Poor intonation can ruin a perfectly good performance. When you go sharp, you need to relax. On the other hand, going flat when you play soft—that is a more common disease. You need to figure out the maximum velocity you can use playing soft without altering the dynamics. To play soft—you cannot just dream it. I see a lot of flutists raise their head or stand on their toes. Instead, use a mirror.”

Steve then changed the subject to tuning on stage. “Your tuning sounded a bit careless, actually. In a recital, you should never tune with your back towards the audience, nor should you be searching for a reaction to the tuning from the accompanist. The only person responsible for tuning in the end is the soloist. Look to violinists and cellists for examples—they don’t get embarrassed about tuning. Listen for the texture and blend of sounds between the flute and the piano. Don’t play your tuning note carelessly. I’ve been to so many recitals where everything is sharp. Also, be honest with yourself. If you think you sound worse when you play soft...you probably do.” Steve smiled in reaction to some chuckles in the audience.

After this rather long discussion of intonation and dynamics, Steve moved on to the topic of vibrato. “We tend to sound good on long notes, but on short notes, vibrato becomes problematic. I’m not convinced by the mood. Vibrato has a rhetorical and conversational quality to it. It gives the music text, painting the phrase a certain color. Define what the profile of that idea is with your vibrato. We might find that it’s hard to keep vibrato moving when we are changing notes because with each note change, we want to re-establish things. You should make sure to always use vibrato—in fact when you start a note without vibrato, that is an effect in itself. In general, seven pulses per note is good. You don’t always want to play like that, but it is a good place to start. It doesn’t have to be artistic mumbo-jumbo with the vibrato.”

The second flutist to perform in the morning session was Sandra, a twenty-three-year-old flutist with a masters degree and artist diploma from a prominent music program on the East Coast. She had recently won an audition for an orchestra position in East Asia and would be relocating for her new job soon after finishing this masterclass. Sandra went up to the front of the class, placing her flute part to *Fantasia* by Gabriel Fauré on the stand. She wore a black cocktail dress that hit just above the knee, clear rhinestone earrings, and black flats. As she settled in,

Steve offered some general comments that he had in light of Gerald's performance: "You want to make sure that you are listening for the harmony...don't be a tone junky. If you play melodies focusing too much on tone, you end up playing it the same way every time. I don't get sick of Mozart...you should derive your inspiration from the piano part and think about the composer's process. The performer's job is to think of the composer's process in reverse. The mistake of most flute players is that we tend to start from the melody instead of the harmony and structure."

Steve continued his monologue even after Sandra was ready to perform. After what felt like several minutes Matteo cut off Steve, "I want to hear her first time!" This was the last time that Matteo sat through one of the student performances. It seemed that he was there in the first morning session to get a sense of Steve's style and perhaps to also show support. He was in the back of the class and alternated between standing and sitting, sometimes pacing back and forth. He looked as though he was listening intently to Steve and the students, but at the same time he carried a nervous energy, perhaps out of excitement for his first teaching session in the afternoon.

With Matteo's interruption, Steve carried on with the session, inviting Sandra to begin her performance of Faure's *Fantasia*. It was an interesting choice for a player of her level; while it is a fine Paris Conservatory *concours* piece, it is often assigned to undergraduates because it demonstrates tone and technique in a relatively straightforward package. As Sandra performed the piece from beginning to end without interruption, she captured the correct qualities of both brilliance and polish. At the end, she was met with an enthusiastic applause. "That was great. With you, we can talk about what you're doing right. I could listen to you play all day. There's so many things in your playing that are authentic. You don't look like you're trying." Steve then paused for a moment, looking as though he was struggling to put together his thoughts. He

decided to address Sandra's stance. "Your feet always have to be right if you want success. You have your feet together, which is not a bad way to stand." He then addressed both Sandra and the audience, "But what's the textbook way to stand?" She adjusted her stance into the classic eleven and two o'clock position. "I think you could have spent more time in that stance. You can move, shift your weight more, be emphatic. Why do we use the textbook stance? Because we can shift and rotate at the pelvis. You never want your right foot forward, though. An open stance is also good."

Steve also critiqued Sandra's performance of the opening for being too proper. He pointed to a specific part in the score and said that it could be more improvisational. He also addressed breathing. "I'm not totally convinced about your breathing. When you breathe, I feel like you take apart the fabric of the music a bit. It could be deeper, more natural and organic. Your attitude, your approach to breathing—it doesn't have to be so aggressive. What's required for that? You have to release at the jaw. Do you press the instrument? I keep it floating. My flute is placed on the lip, but you have a very full lower lip...use a yawning position. It requires a low position in the throat. Do this as if you're using a low speaking voice. When you teach breathing, it's all about sensation. You can try various exercises and mental games. One example: fill up the flute gently with air and when you inhale, imagine you are taking the same air back in. Gradually work on getting that breathing faster."

With these first morning sessions, Steve worked with performers at two very different levels. In both instances, he wanted to be further convinced by their artistry. With Gerald's performance, there were immediate issues that began with his process of tuning with the piano. While Gerald's issues with intonation could have easily been the result of nerves and his "embarrassment" about tuning, Steve's strategies required Gerald to take a more commanding

position. By looking to Chris for a reaction to his intonation, Gerald deferred the responsibility of judging his own pitch to the more experienced musician. This pointed to his need to be more confident in his ability to hear discrepancies in pitch and to blend with the piano. By facing the audience while tuning, he could also avoid mistakenly appearing as though he is looking to the pianist for a reaction, showing that he trusts his own ability to adjust the pitch if necessary. In this sense, the process served more than the correction of tuning, but in maintaining an authoritative position as a performer. Another issue that Gerald faced was communication in a chamber music context, communicating to the audience and the other musician. This involves knowing how to cue an entrance with the body, how to indicate changes in tempo, and how to stay “locked in” in during more intricate parts of the music. These are all skills that cannot be learned within a one hour masterclass, but must be learned over years of rehearsal and performance experience. For less experienced flutists, it also requires a shift in attitude that the pianist is not a hired accompanist, but a collaborator. When I spoke with Gerald after his performance, he expressed how he struggled interlocking his part with Chris’ and appreciated Steve’s strategy of going straight to the most significant problem in the student’s playing.

In Sandra’s session, the first thing that caught my attention was when Steve dubbed Sandra’s playing as “authentic.” This was the first of many times that Steve would make statements that had “New Age” or spiritual connotations. While in classical music, “authenticity” generally refers to performance practice in “period music,” in this case, Steve was addressing Sandra as a performer. Even though he addressed fundamental technical issues such as Sandra’s stance and her breathing (I later found that Steve always addressed technical issues), he used the term “authentic” to signify that Sandra possessed “something else” in the same way that other teachers might use the words “talent” or “artistry.” Despite any perceived technical issues, Steve

recognized that Sandra embodies the markers of the seasoned artist beyond skillful and well-executed playing. For the audience member, this authentic artistry is recognizable; it needs to convince the audience member in their overall aesthetic experience. The whole is worth so much more than the sum of its parts: audiation, rhetoric, gesture, vibration, and “stage presence.”

Later that day after our long and leisurely lunch break, we met for the afternoon session with Matteo. I noticed that Steve was seated in the back of the class. Jay, an African American undergraduate flute major studying in the Midwest, was about to perform. He was dressed as formally as Gerald with slacks and a dress shirt, topped by a blazer.

As Jay performed the first movement of Bach’s Sonata in G minor BWV 1020—a work for many years attributed to Johann Sebastian Bach, but now thought to be composed by his oldest son Carl Philipp Emanuel—Matteo restlessly paced the back of the room with his arms crossed, sometimes stopping with one hand placed on his chin. The play-through was rough. Jay seemed not only nervous, but like he didn’t have a handle over the technical passages quite yet. Occasionally, notes were dropped in a tangle. With each stumble, I wondered if Matteo would stop him. Instead, Jay made it to the end of the movement. There was tentative applause. Jay smiled sheepishly, and his shoulders slumped forward as Matteo walked up to the stage. Matteo moved in closely, turned-in slightly towards Jay and momentarily rested a hand on his upper back. This warm gesture was both familiar and paternal. In his first utterance, Matteo announced to the class that he had been working with Jay on this piece for a couple weeks at a festival in France immediately prior to this masterclass. This disclaimer seemed almost apologetic, but it was difficult to tell on whose behalf he was apologizing.

After this opening remark, Matteo attended to specific tasks, which were delivered in a cascading manner. After general comments about intonation and Baroque performance practice,

Matteo addressed Jay's knowledge of the score. Matteo suspected that one of Jay's missed entrances following a piano solo could be attributed to the fact that he relied on counting measures rather than listening to, and knowing, the piano solo. Meanwhile, as Jay attempted the entrance once again, it seemed clear that his intonation had not improved. For a while, Matteo continued his train of thought without revisiting the issue. When he finally did, he gave an exaggerated demonstration of Jay's sharpness ("I'm exaggerating, of course"). Offering a suggestion to correct the problem, Matteo pointed to the speed of the air stream. "Blow. I know you're sweating and it's hot, but..." I noticed that Jay began to look defeated. "We can't make our interpretation depend on what we are able to do. It's not very technically solid but the thing that is really bothering me is that you haven't really thought about it. Once it's in your heart and soul, you won't forget it." Matteo ended the session by saying "I'm being a jerk, but it's late. Overall, it's good. Think a lot more. I know you're scared of this—you told me you were."

I was surprised by this final comment by Matteo because this was clearly something shared privately prior to performing in the masterclass. Jay took weekly lessons with Matteo when he was in high school (at the time of this class, he had graduated high school three years prior) and this was his third time attending this summer masterclass. It was clear that Matteo cared about Jay's success and wanted him to perform well in the masterclass. However, instead of working with Jay as he was in that underprepared moment, he pushed Jay beyond what he could produce at that moment so that he struggled through—but not past—his limitations. Was Matteo nervous because Steve was in the audience?

When I asked Jay how he felt about the masterclass session, he acknowledged that there was some tension: "Well...being like, the relationship I already have with him, he'll pick on me a lot more than I would say [he picks on] others, [...] but I remember that, mostly because I was so

distraught with myself, [...] I mean it's not like he was abusive toward me, but it's just like it's very cut-throat, like 'no you need to do it this way' and I thought I was doing it the way he wanted it to be... and it wasn't, but that's fine." Jay told me that he was not bothered by the interaction, but that he was honored because Matteo cared. He described the interaction instead as having an "edgy feeling":

"Well the edgy feeling, I mean like, not to put it lightly, but I mean just breaking my back over every single detail [...] at times that can be a little bit harsh."

Regardless of whether Jay was bothered by his session, as an audience member, I didn't feel like I had directly benefited from the hour. The episode felt much more like an uncomfortable-to-watch private lesson than a masterclass. Perhaps what Jay's session clarified was the disadvantage of bringing a piece to a masterclass that is not in performance condition (I am not sure if Matteo had instructed Jay to bring in pieces that were ready to perform as he had done with me months earlier). I had to look at my notes to later recall Matteo's comments related to phrasing and Baroque articulation because I was overtaken by the tension in this student and teacher interaction.

My session with Matteo

After a long lunch followed by an hour of resting and catching up with a friend on Skype, I made my way to the recreation center for the afternoon masterclass session. Already three days into the masterclass, I was the only participant left to give my first performance. I chose to perform Frank Martin's *Ballade*, a popular competition and recital piece for its uninterrupted high drama, brooding themes, and cathartic moments that take the listener beyond the usual expectations in flute repertoire of beauty and elegance. It was also a piece that I had performed

before in recitals as well as other masterclasses. Additionally, I had analyzed the piece for my D.M.A. Oral Comprehensive Exam and wrote a paper on my analysis as a revision requested by my committee. Whether the piece could be described as conveying more of a programmatic narrative or a psychological journey, its clear structure has an immediacy that is exciting for both the player and audience.

Before the masterclass, I decided that I needed to change into something nicer than the t-shirt and shorts I wore to lunch, but I didn't feel the need to wear business casual (nor did I pack anything that could be deemed as such). I settled on a casual dark grey dress with cap sleeves that hit just above the knee paired with black leather sandals. It was a minimal effort, but I felt that it was presentable. Matteo wore shorts and a t-shirt to each session, so there was no need to get carried away.

I was second to perform. When it was my turn, I collected myself and walked up to the designated stage at the front of the room. I noticed that the music stand was set too far away from Chris, our collaborative pianist, so I moved it closer to the crook of the piano. Even with the adjustment, I was still farther away than I would have liked, but the piano was situated so drastically to stage right that it would have looked bizarre to position myself all the way in the crook. After quickly tuning, I gave Chris a small cue to indicate the tempo. The opening section began without too many issues, but I was in a bind as soon as we reached the *Allegro Vivace*. I had chatted with Chris about the *Ballade* during lunch, making the mistake of sounding uncertain about my ability to perform some of the sections up to tempo. This tendency toward self-deprecation clearly backfired when Chris, in a thoughtful gesture, pulled back to a remedial tempo at the start of the *Allegro Vivace* section. The flute rests during these introductory measures so there is not much that can be done once the tempo is set. Despite the futility of the

situation, I found myself trying to push the tempo forward in my entrance, which proved difficult to execute smoothly. Instead I noticed tension building in my neck and shoulders as I tried to show Chris the tempo I wanted him to take.

Despite the discomfort of this setback, this was not the biggest issue I would confront in my overall performance. Instead, the problem I had was the same one I face every time I perform this piece: managing an excess of adrenaline in my body. The entire first half of the piece builds energy without much opportunity to recover. Moving from the brooding motives of the opening *molto eguale* section, to the war-like theme of the Allegro Vivace, to the dizzying climax in the cadenza, there is no time at all to rest when the music momentarily winds down. As I took the exit out of the cadenza—a descending scale that leads into a slurred triplet figure in the flute’s lower range—I had to negotiate my pent-up energy while conveying a sense of relaxation in the music.

The low register triplet figure, a transposition of the Allegro Vivace theme, lurches towards the lowest note in the piece (the “nadir”) which is also the lowest note on the flute, a low B. This cathartic point is momentary and serves as a pivot, as the flute and piano move together through an otherworldly *Tranquillo* section, the piano moving one chord per measure in smooth voice leading. The flute stays in the low register, playing a single phrase of the slow-moving melody which is centered around E.

As I made my way through the cadenza, I observed myself playing the rapid passages with relative ease. However, when I began the infamous descending line, I felt a familiar inflexibility in my lips and loss of sensitivity. My muscles that control the shape and size of opening of my lips began to feel weak and ineffective. These small muscles are indispensable in shaping a flute player’s tone and controlling the air stream. When I sensed this loss, directions

began firing through my consciousness: Relax your neck! Squeeze your aperture! More air! Somehow, despite these directions, all I could sense in my body was gripping and tightening. I was feebly grasping for musical subtlety with large muscle groups. If control and the ability to shape sound and phrases with sophistication is one of the goals in achieving a high level of performance, for those few measures of the triplet figure and the beginning of the *con moto* section, I had reverted to a younger version of myself that struggled too much with technique to effectively communicate musical ideas. Luckily, once the melody shifted up to the next register, I was back to a comfortable place.

After the final notes and the applause that followed, Matteo walked up to the stage. As I braced myself for critique, his first utterances—some quick obligatory praise—hardly registered. Not only because I am unfazed by praise in a masterclass setting at this point in my musical development, but because he mumbled in a low-pitch that I could not easily decipher right after performing. I was still adjusting my perception from the role of musical performer to the role of performing student. It took me a moment to be ready to receive the other person. Before continuing, Matteo hesitated briefly as if collecting his thoughts.

“The first thing I want to address is your posture. Your sound is...very compressed.”

With this critique, I felt momentarily defensive. This judgement on my sound—a personal characteristic of my playing conflated with not only my pride and vanity, but my sense of artistry—was a type of feedback that I had not heard in some time. I wondered momentarily if my playing had regressed in recent years. Furthermore, what exactly was wrong with my posture? I’m normally hyper-aware of my posture when I play. Also, why was my sound

compressed and why couldn't I hear it? Was it my new headjoint? Maybe this was a matter of taste.

At this point, Matteo began to address various aspects of my body-use that he attributed to the brightness in my sound. First, he drew attention to my knees, which he observed were sometimes locked, quickly adding that when I unlocked my knees during performance, my sound seemed to open. In a similar vein, he suggested that my shoulders should loosen. Next, he addressed my stance. Rather than play with my feet pointed straight towards the audience, he thought that I should play in a more traditional stance with my left foot forward and my right foot back, both rotated outward (a comment that Steve had given Sandra on the first day of masterclasses). Lastly, he commented that my back was too straight, giving the appearance that I had a board strapped to my back. This was a comment that I found particularly surprising, because I am often concerned that I slouch when I play.

After these comments, Matteo began to demonstrate in a somewhat improvisational way, inventing an exercise in which I was to play the opening section of the piece while keeping all my joints absurdly loose. At this point, I was feeling open and receptive to Matteo's suggestions, so I went for it. I must have really given in to the instructions—the audience laughed immediately when I started playing. I was only a few measures in when Matteo stopped me. He pointed at my toes, which were visible in my sandals, instructing that I needed to release them (apparently in my loosening up, I still needed a place to grip). Matteo moved to the back of the room as he listened to my second attempt. He thought that I not only looked more relaxed, but that my tone was less bright and my movements more “organic.”

The next issue that Matteo addressed were my note lengths in the beginning of the piece, marked in the score to be played *molto eguale*. He then asked Chris to play the first few

measures to demonstrate what was going on underneath the flute part [“it’s just uninflected weirdness”]. In learning the *Ballade*, I have struggled in choosing between possible approaches to the phrasing. When first learning the piece, I tried to stay as true to the score’s instructions as possible, playing the continuous eighth notes with equal note values rather than bringing out interesting intervals or motivic changes through a slight lengthening of pitches. When I brought the piece to a lesson, my teacher insisted that despite the score’s indications, the performer needs to add these extra inflections to make the flute line more interesting (he was not a fan of the piece to begin with). Having taken the comments of my teacher seriously, I had maintained this interpretation years later. Matteo’s interpretation, however, was one that was committed to the indication in the score. The part of me that wanted approval and praise wished that I had stuck with my initial feelings about the opening of the piece, but I was also relieved to be given license to return to my original inclinations.

“It should be catatonic but unblinkingly aware.”

Matteo’s next improvised exercise combined the goals of staying loose, keeping the notes at equal length, and playing “out” to the audience. I was asked to walk around the room, playing the beginning of the piece from memory while approaching members of the audience with eye contact. After getting through the first few bars, my first attempt was interrupted by a fit of laughter—one of the students I approached raised her eyebrows with a dramatic arch.

“Now you are beginning the presentation of an incredible work of art. You can’t be worried about the fact that your poem might not be liked. Instead—here it is. I’m going to start playing—it’s for you. If you don’t like it, it’s still for you. That idea and that communication to

the audience calms you down physically. You don't seem like a nervous person about playing—it doesn't look like it—but you're concerned about doing this really well. Just think about the artistic part of what you're about to present emotionally. That's why, when I step away from the music for a second and look at them [points to the audience], it's just as if we're going for a walk through the fields [Matteo links his arm with mine and we start strolling around the room]. I really want to show you these amazing sunflower fields. I like you so much, that I want to walk arm in arm with you, and I want to talk to you while we're like this [at this point, I recall feeling a bit embarrassed and looking down at my feet. My posture shifts awkwardly to one leg]. Ten minutes into our walk, I realize that you're such a cool person. That's the first time we've really talked—I've known you for years and you know, it's that kind of feeling, and that's when you get back here [by then we are back in front of the music stand] and now, you do it again.

In my second attempt, I was able to maintain my composure as I walked around the room and gave eye contact to different people in the audience. As I was playing, Matteo instructed me to walk back to my original position, coaching me with comments and hand gestures: “Don't get tired. Breathe. Don't push. Let it be. Make this part sound hollow.”

After I reached the end of the section, Matteo turned to me:

That's playing that would make me want to buy a ticket for the next night. You know, it's just better sound and better intonation...a better duo ensemble-wise and timbre-wise. You're also listening. Playing from memory, the number one thing you're forced to rely on is your ear. You were much more relaxed and when you got to more of the high note stuff—Jay knows exactly what I'm going to say because I say this to him a lot—don't show that you know you messed up. Going 'ugh' [heaves], we all do it...it's not very nice for the audience to see that, but it's

more for you. The more you do that...you know—you squint. The thing with squinting, and I do it too, sometimes I watch videos of myself play and I go, ‘I do that?’ But squinting your eyes when you go high is such a flute technique thing to do [Matteo demonstrates]. Let the sun in for that kind of thing. You have a much better chance not to mess up something like that when you let the sun in and you let people in.

Going into the masterclass with Matteo, I was skeptical that I would get much out of it because I had already analyzed the *Ballade* down to the very last note and I had already performed the piece several times. I felt that I was coming into the masterclass with a defined point of view about the piece, even though I had some misgivings about the *molto eguale* section. Also, after watching Matteo teach a number of masterclasses over the last few days, I was beginning to have a hard time focusing on the classes and relating to all of the issues that were being discussed. Some things were so specific to the player that I began to lose interest. However, during my own performance for Matteo, my awareness shifted, and I suddenly felt acutely interested in what he had to say once the directives were addressed towards me. Perhaps he didn’t involve the audience enough in the other sessions, but in my session, the amusing exercises that Matteo asked me to do connected me in new ways to the audience and to my body. I was surprised that he managed to give me what I realized I wanted out of the experience—to be acknowledged and “seen.” By this I do not mean that I simply want to be noticed or to receive attention, but I expected him as the master teacher to perceive what I could not simply by playing in front of the mirror or listening to a recording of myself.

My performance for Steve

By the day of my masterclass performance for Steve, we were deep into the worst heat wave I had ever experienced, with temperatures of 100 degrees Fahrenheit and higher for days on end. We sweated while we sat through masterclasses, while we ate, and in our sleep. There were no electric fans on-site, so we left the windows open during the day, hoping for a sudden breeze. Mosquitos buzzed in our ears at night, while wasps made their mud huts near every window, threatening to encroach into our practice spaces. Sleep deprivation was becoming a real issue for me; I found myself trying to put myself to sleep with my favorite podcasts, instead listening all the way through hour-long episodes and moving on to the next. For a short time, my roommate and I agreed to close our windows at night to keep the mosquitoes out (they still managed to find me), so we lay in the oppressive heat until we decided it was unbearable.

That afternoon I was scheduled to perform the first movement of the Prokofiev Sonata. After lunch, I found no use in practicing or warming up before class. What I needed more than anything was a nap. I had taken a large dose of melatonin the night before and was intensely drowsy all morning. With my earplugs in, I drifted off to sleep. What seemed like moments later, my roommate nudged my arm. “Sarah...Sarah...class is starting in 5 minutes.” In the next few adrenaline-spiked minutes, I scrambled to put on slightly better clothes, grabbed my flute and music, and splashed some water on my face.

I went into the rec center, still dizzy with sleep. Once everyone was in the room, I pulled myself together, pushing through intense mental fog as I placed my music on my stand and nodded at Chris. I gave a downbeat. “Wait, wait—what movement are we doing? Don’t you want to tune?” After picking myself up after this false start, I gave Chris another downbeat. As I

began playing, I thought that the opening measures felt secure. As I moved through the exposition, I felt that my phrasing could have flowed a bit more naturally, but I knew what I wanted to smooth out in the repeat of the exposition. However, halfway through the repeat, Steve stopped me.

“You seem very tense, like you’re putting yourself through some sort of trial up there. To me, I can almost hear how loud the messages are coming out of you that are telling you to exaggerate this and exaggerate that, now do this and sort of jumping at the music, like attacking it. I think you just need to chill out. You’re fine. You’re doing really well. There’s a lot of good stuff, you know...and maybe, don’t freak out. If it’s not exactly what you want, then it’s ok. No one’s going to die. So, there’s no reason for panic and everything is ok. Some things might not sound the way you want it, but that always happens. That’s life. So maybe try to do a little work with yourself mentally on your process and your messages...internal messages about what you hear and perhaps not...it’s good to be self-critical, but perhaps not negatively judgmental of yourself as you’re playing, and I have a strong sense of that from you when you play. That’s what comes to me. I don’t actually know what goes on in anyone’s head, but I do know that you...part of this is a balance between being self-critical to achieve something greater and being self-nurturing, giving yourself credit for what sounds good. Enjoying music, enjoying playing music and I think...so everyone work on your balance of internal messages. Try not to give yourself messages that are self-defeating at any time. Whether you’re practicing for the big audition or whether you’re in front of the big audience and it’s your big piece, negative messages

never achieve the desired result anyway, because it comes from negative energy.

As a performer, you have to convert negative to positive, that's what we do.

That's what makes the music sound good. That's what's attractive to others.

That's what people like to listen to...that's what turns them on. Nobody likes a negative performer. An angry performer. Nobody likes that. So, practicing negatively, practicing angry...it achieves the same result, it achieves nothing. It just makes the world worse. Just try to flow a little bit more, so for example, when you started [Steve plays the phrase with the dotted eighth note figures], the second time around when you didn't try to adjust your headjoint was quite nice and I thought ok, now we're going to catch a different mood, but then suddenly you sort of lunged at the music, as if you wanted something desperately from it that it wasn't giving...and I didn't understand it. It sounded fine, I want you to just flow with it."

After this, Steve addressed my intonation which he kindly acknowledged was likely due to the "crazy temperatures." As I tuned once more with Chris, Steve instructed me not to tune "angry" but to tune "beautiful." He was pleased with the result when I used a more relaxed air stream. While we worked on the dotted-eighth note section, Chris gave me instructions as I played using single word directives and comments: "Good. Lovely. Relax. Simple." After this, we worked on my "set up" which he thought could have been more relaxed. This involved gently relaxing the jaw, embouchure, and tongue while raising the soft palate. I was instructed that I had to be careful not to "over-fix" the problem as well. In the last few minutes of the session, Steve asked me to play a low D, focusing on lowering my air column, blowing less air than I was used to, and relaxing the corners of my lips. As I began to do this, I wondered if the rest of the class

was even remotely interested in what felt more like one-on-one work in its minutiae. Letting go of the corners of my embouchure, my lips began to shake.

“This is good work. This is really difficult work that we’re doing here...and this is the worst setting to do it in.”

Steve’s comments, which were directed at my sound and phrasing, were a reflection of his aesthetic experience with my performance. Guided by his senses and perceptions, he was led to distinct conclusions about my thoughts and emotions. While correct to assume that I was going through “a trial,” when he interpreted what he heard as “angry” playing, he incorrectly linked my unintended affect and expression to my actual emotions and reactions. Despite this, I found it helpful to hear him articulate what he perceived and to learn about the difficulty he experienced as he tried to empathize with my performance state. As I played through sections of the music again, his one-word directives gave me clues as to the ways that I could alter my playing to meet the aesthetic experience that he wanted to have. While I understood that “things happen” that might comprise a performance, I felt a moral obligation to overcome my performance struggles in the future. In my interview with the other D.M.A. student, I listened as she recounted her performance in her masterclass session with Matteo. Because she had trouble breathing from the time she had arrived at the masterclass site, she continued to have major problems with breathing during her performance. Matteo’s response when she verbalized this discomfort was: “no one cares that you can’t breathe.” It was a statement that was difficult in its truth and its cruelty.

My experience at *Flutes Under the Tuscan Sun* was a complex one, requiring time and distance for perspective. As I listened back to interviews and read over my fieldnotes, I thought about how each student came to this masterclass to work on their selves, but in the end also formed invaluable social relationships “offstage.” Perhaps because I was older than most of the students there, I thought it was fascinating that many of the participants saw the social aspects of the masterclass as “extras” rather than as essential parts of the experience as was Matteo’s intention. I saw that we were each in constant negotiation between interiority and exteriority, the self and others, subject and object. In an effort to articulate what I saw as the overlooked benefits of sociality in the masterclass, I later sought out and applied the concepts of *weak ties* and *soft skills*. By analyzing my own performances and the performances of others, I saw the dividing nature of perception and subjectivity and was reminded how difficult it can be to perform and to receive comments in front of an audience.

Meaning-making

In addition to issues of performance and embodiment, much of this chapter has dealt with the under-acknowledged professional benefits of masterclasses, focusing on soft skills and weak ties. The theme of professionalization was appropriate for this case study because the attendees at this masterclass were either aspiring to become professional flutists or were already newly-minted professionals. However, professionalization is not an end-goal of masterclasses in general, rather, it was the reality and preoccupation of those involved in this particular class at this time. Prior to the need to professionalize is the need to engage with music in terms of both performance and aesthetics. Returning to his conception of the hermeneutic circle, Heidegger (2002, 1936) writes in *The Origin of the Work of Art*: “to enter upon this path is the strength, and

to remain on it the feast of thought—assuming that thinking is a craft. Not only is the main step from work to art, like the step from art to work, a circle, but every individual step that we attempt circles within this circle” (2). Neither the mind nor the body are primary in the process of meaning-making, nor are these divisions valid. This is because the embodied actions of performance are thoughtful even if they are not expressed through words (Elliott 1991, 26). Referring back to Heidegger’s quote, to get the most out of masterclasses, performers need to continue “feasting” in thought about the pieces they performed, their embodied performance of the music, their approach to the instrument, and their general attitudes and philosophies of music. While audience members enjoy the satisfaction of an immediate onstage transformation of the performer (or what appears to be onstage transformation) as a ritual element of the masterclass, I found that taking in what I learn in a masterclass is a much slower process and never really feels complete. This process takes place both inside and beyond the practice room, as I draw from the accumulation of experience from my body, verbal instructions from the teacher, and from auditory memory. Reviewing the video and audio of my sessions, transcribing the interactions, and reading over my transcriptions has contributed a valuable textual element, adding another layer to my embodied and sensual knowledge. Even so, this does not mean that the information necessarily “clicks in” or absorbs, as the performer may only adopt a single idea from the whole masterclass and discard the rest.

Meaning-making through embodied aesthetic engagement

My performance for Matteo demonstrated that masterclasses offer an opportunity to address issues of performance through what I will refer to as “embodied aesthetic engagement”—a process that integrates the performer’s prior knowledge of the music (in terms

of historical background, theoretical knowledge, and the printed score's particularities) with their musicianship through the act of performing and receiving feedback from the master teacher. Musical performance itself involves the presentation, interpretation, and understanding of the musical work through intentional behaviors while also being subject to indeterminacy. The oft-used, but rarely discussed term "musicianship" is defined by Elliott (1991) as "both the horizontal range of capacities that constitute procedural musical knowledge and the vertical sense of competency, proficiency, or artistry we intend when we say that someone 'really knows how' to make music" (29). Procedural knowledge—as opposed to propositional knowledge—is knowledge that is part of a body of practice or is a form of rational action, often referred to colloquially as "know-how" (27). Through the process of embodied aesthetic engagement taking place on stage, the performer engages in meaning-making both during and after the masterclass performance.

I entered my performance of Martin's *Ballade* having studied its note-for-note workings and its historical context, and had already performed the piece several times. While this prior knowledge served as an "input" to my performance, the indeterminacy and ephemerality of performance added unforeseen variables such as a slower tempo set by the pianist and a fallback into old habits in my body at the end of the cadenza. This output, perceived by the audience, teacher, and performers, was interpreted and critiqued by Matteo, starting first with my knees and my back before moving to my eyes. Matteo not only expressed what he observed in my body-use, but judged my conception of the work against his own, taking over the role of interpreter. When Matteo told me to think of what I was presenting as an "incredible work of art" and to not worry if the audience would like it, he ascribed an aesthetic component to the act of performing. He expressed this state of being rather abstractly through his talk of walking through

the sunflower fields arm in arm. At the time, I had difficulty interpreting this action along with his speech as it didn't seem to reflect the mood of the music at hand (in fact, an audience member later told me that he thought that Matteo was "hitting on me"). In ascribing poetry and allegory as the essence of art, Heidegger (1936, 2002) states that "allegory and symbol provide the conceptual framework from within whose perspective the artwork has long been characterized" (3). When relating the idea of performance to the presentation of an artwork as Matteo suggested, his aside about walking through the sunflower fields took on an allegorical meaning, perhaps of love or friendship applied to presenting music as works of art in a more general sense. At the same time, Matteo wanted me to play with more openness and vulnerability by performing while giving eye contact to the audience members, bringing the body into a state of poetic performance and heightened stage presence. By performing on the masterclass stage for Matteo and receiving his feedback, I was able to participate in embodied aesthetic engagement that I could analyze and reflect on for future performances of this work, thus better understanding myself as a performer in relation to the work of art.

Meaning-making and authority

Despite the performer's internalized process of meaning-making, in the bounded and public time and space of the masterclass, meaning-making always reflects back to the master teacher and the score and is aimed at correcting the performer's interpretation, approach to the instrument, and body. Through the master teacher's charismatic authority, the meaning of the piece is often derived from their experience, musical principles, or their embodied mastery of the instrument and music. The position of power between the master and student is maintained by virtue of the class taking place on the master's "stage." Aside from the most remarkable

circumstances, the interpretation never rests with the performer, but must circle back to the master teacher before the performer attempts the music again using the master's suggestions.¹⁰

Sandra's performance, which Steve admired and found to be authentic was challenging for him to critique. As he struggled to make a suggestion about her interpretation of the *Fantasia*, he first commented on the positioning of her feet, suggesting a "textbook" stance even though her stance did not seem to hinder her in performance. He may have needed more time to think of something to address that was more immediate, but in the meantime, he could always make an offhand comment about her body-use to establish his position through his mastery of the flute-playing body.

In Steve's critique of my performance, he focused on his perception of my inner psychological state, suggesting a metaphysics of embodiment in which the performer's inner and outer states needed to be in agreement as an aesthetic and ethical dimension of performance. From my perception, having a teacher tell me—rather than ask—what was going on in my mind based on my outward appearance was uncomfortable, if not an act of domination. While it is possible that he felt that my inner state was obstructing the "truth" of the music, based on his comments, it seemed that for him, the "truth" at that moment was not in the music itself so much as it was located in my body, suggesting the concept of authenticity which he referred to in Sandra's performance. While his specific assumptions about my inner state was incorrect, his recognition of a performer in struggle was accurate. However, the lack of dialogue in his "psychoanalysis" made me feel powerless to address my individual intentions and circumstances. As a result, I was pulled away from engaging with the musical score and lost a sense of

¹⁰ The only instances I have seen this happen are when the performer is already a professional who has won major competitions or holds an orchestral position. In these exceptional cases, the master lets the performance stand out as an example for the students in the audience.

autonomy in my own performing body. In this sense, the master's performance of authority can obstruct the student's engagement with music-making. If the performing body is being used as a source of knowledge, then the performing body should be allowed to speak.

Impermanent transformation

Going back to Royce's definition of artistry which I presented in the first chapter, perhaps if she were to take masterclasses into account, her definition would include "the qualities that make an artist able to transform someone else into an artist." Through the entanglement of artistry and authority, the master teacher drives moments of clarity, articulating insights and pushing the student as they perform to look and sound more convincing. Due to the liminality of the masterclass, the student does not need to change permanently, but only in that moment. When Matteo instructed that I make eye contact with individual audience members while performing *Ballade*, he permitted me to perform with more connection to the audience, freeing me from the separation caused by the music stand. This demonstration had theatrical value while also presumably making a very clear visual change in my performance style. For the audience, such moments create the impression of transformation. While Matteo's experiment is impractical to replicate in performance, in the moment, it had the power to make me feel as though I were suddenly lighter, more relaxed, and open. Afterwards, if I am able to detect, remember, and replicate the sensation of the internal changes that were made, I can choose to apply these to future performances or when teaching lessons or masterclasses. Transformations to a player's performance style and presence are clearly more difficult and time consuming to incorporate because they require the condition of performance. Technical issues such as breathing and lip position can be worked on in the practice room, but it generally requires ample time to replace

the old approach with the new one. Due to the impermanence of masterclass time and the limited bond between masterclass teacher and student, the student has the freedom to choose what is integrated into individual performance practice after the masterclass. Just like someone who has transformed their body through working with a personal trainer, it is really up to the student to make the transformation stick. The student needs to have the inner motivation to do the work, which requires that the change is meaningful to the student. However, the social element of the masterclass offers help in convincing the student to take on the task. The positive feedback and reactions of the teacher and audience—elicited through the spectacle of onstage transformation—can stoke feelings of inspiration and motivation for the student. After my first masterclass in Italy as an undergraduate, I returned to Long Beach, California with a new sense of confidence in my inner musical voice. I attribute the large margin of growth potential, the stimulating social environment, my performances and interactions on the masterclass stage, and my observations of other performers as factors involved in this dramatic change. I see a resemblance of my former self in Gerald, the Filipino-American undergraduate student. Aware of the gap between himself and the more experienced players, he was highly motivated to bring his experience in Italy back home. Following his social media posts, I saw that he had been admitted to a prestigious East Coast conservatory for his masters in performance.

This chapter dealt with two aspects of being a musician that are difficult to reconcile: professionalization and music-making as an art form. The length of the masterclass allowed me to observe participants over a long stretch of time in comparison to the other masterclasses in my fieldwork. The following chapter is quite the opposite—instead of investigating a single masterclass in detail, I gathered data from several masterclasses that took place at the 2017 National Flute Association Convention. While masterclasses are in many ways focused around

the master teacher, my analysis of the convention revealed how masterclasses can also serve as a community activity in which identity is expressed among various subsets of flute players.

Chapter Four

For the Love of the Flute: Community, Identity, and Modes of Conduct in Masterclasses at the National Flute Association Convention

This chapter examines how masterclasses at the National Flute Association Annual Convention serve as a platform for performing identity across the organization's diverse subsets through embodied performances of artistry and authority. Here I frame the National Flute Association as an "imagined community," a term which, coined by Benedict Anderson, (2006, 1983) designates the concept of a nation as "imagined" because the members "will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them" (6) and as a "community" because it is conceived as a "deep, horizontal comradeship" (7). The tension between identity and organizational unity within the flute association is evident through performed modes of conduct observed at the annual convention—the value-laden behaviors comprising of gesture, musical meaning-making, and self-presentation. The masterclasses held at the convention demonstrate how these modes of conduct are modeled by the master teacher and communally practiced by the audience spanning professional, student, and amateur flutists across numerous genres and specializations. Based on fieldwork from the 2017 National Flute Association Convention, I analyzed five masterclasses, each representing a different subset of the flute community. The condensed and bountiful nature of the convention offers a vantage-point into flute masterclasses of a different scale from the previous chapters, giving an almost bird's-eye view of this activity within a larger community of practice. In this work I also note the convention's material dimension which is given the appearance of containment and separation through the exhibit hall.

In Anderson's conception, the nation imagines its shared origin and feeling of kinship through a common secular language (18). This was further aided by the eighteenth-century innovations of the novel and newspaper, two "forms of imagining" which allowed its readers to imagine themselves as members of a society experiencing simultaneous events through "homogenous empty time" (25). In its analogous relationship to the nation, the flute community has its own means through which it imagines itself, namely, its links to the French School, its legacies of great flutists, and through its common "language" of the flute itself as a social, familial, and material body. However, just as the selection of a common language wipes out many dialects, the modern Boehm flute is the main language here, with "other" flutes included for diversity or recreated for historical preservation. Despite the American leadership of the National Flute Association and its home base in the U.S., the N.F.A., founded in 1972 is global in its reach, with a transnational membership including approximately 5,000 flutists from more than 50 countries, 3,000 of whom attended the 2017 convention (nfaonline.org). Many of the N.F.A. Lifetime Achievement awards have been given out to non-American flutists (although only one Lifetime Achievement award has been granted to a jazz flutist and none have been granted to flutists of non-Western traditions). The convention's exhibit hall, on the other hand, reflects emerging global markets for western-classical flutes. While Chinese and Taiwanese flute makers have yet to find acceptance in the professional flute market, makers like Jupiter, Di Zhao, and Dean Yang have garnered respect as beginner and intermediate level flute makers, as well as affordable alto and bass flute makers. Many of the American, Japanese, and British flute makers have also moved production to China and Taiwan for their beginner and intermediate flute lines.

The N.F.A. has made efforts to improve its attention to diversity and inclusivity. On the Mission and Values page of their website, the N.F.A. states in its Core Values that it "honors,

values, and respects the contributions of all members equally” and “draws strength from [...] diversity and provides meaningful experiences to all members.” On the same webpage, their Statement of Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion reads: “the N.F.A. is an organization in which flutists from all backgrounds can come together for inspiration and for cultivating personal, professional, and artistic excellence” (nfaonline.org). One of the ways in which the N.F.A. addresses these values is through its programming at the annual conventions. In selecting proposals, they typically include some events for non-classical and non-professional flutists including representations of jazz, Native American, Baroque, and other styles of flute playing, as well as events that are catered towards amateur and young flutists. The robust contributions of flute choirs grant spaces for communities to find meaning in flute-playing outside of professional avenues. These efforts towards creating a more diverse convention gives members a chance to have their interests supported, while also offering exposure to other areas of flute playing.

The N.F.A. has committee chairs that represent areas targeting the aims of diversity and inclusion such as jazz, cultural outreach, “world music,” new music, youth engagement, and amateur resources. At present, the upper levels of leadership within the organization have yet to reflect the full gamut of the flute-playing world. In addition, the convention programming, while showing attempts of addressing diversity, does not always utilize the resources of its membership to do so in tasteful ways. Such was the case in a panel title at the 2017 convention: “Embracing our Races: Connecting with Communities of Color.” The obvious “other-ing” of non-white flutists in this title is loaded with assumptions about race, socioeconomic status, and “urban culture.” Another problem faced at the flute convention is cultural appropriation in the case of white flutists performing “ethnic flutes” without any deep knowledge of the traditions behind the

instruments (while positioning themselves in an expert role)—something that is widely practiced, but not yet openly discussed. Ultimately, the core of the organization is still centered on the Western Classical flute, while all “other” flute playing is welcome, but peripheral. It is a difficult problem that will require continuous reflection and effort within the organization’s leadership to improve.

The National Flute Association Annual Convention

The convention, held every August over four days in a major U.S. city, fulfills a number of different needs for its members including opportunities to perform, socialize, network, self-promote, present ideas, learn, shop, and sell flute-related goods. For the N.F.A. itself, the convention is a time to hold meetings, publicly present awards that recognize its most outstanding members, and to host competitions and panel discussions. For anyone attending the convention for the first time, the experience can be both exhilarating and intimidating. Events start as early as 8 A.M. and run as late as midnight for “after hours” jazz concerts and traditional Irish music sessions. The production of the convention schedule, printed in the 300+ page program book (including advertisements) and available as a smartphone app, is the crowning achievement of the convention organizers. This jigsaw puzzle of values, politics, and economics is determined through a year-long process that involves a call for proposals (there were over 500 submissions for the 2017 convention), announcing competition deadlines and repertoire, the overwhelming review and selection of submissions, and the elaborate process of piecing it all together. Amazingly, not only do events take place all day, but for the most part, there are multiple events going on at any given time (the most extreme case that I found during the 2017 convention was a half hour in which there were seven overlapping events). For convention-

goers, this means thoroughly reviewing the program book, circling events, and oftentimes leaving one event halfway through to stop in at another. Before delving into a discussion of the masterclasses, I will briefly describe two additional thematic elements that framed my convention experience: an animation of a dancing flutist and the exhibit hall.

The dancing flutist

Throughout the convention center were television monitors that displayed information about events. Mixed into the rotation was an animated graphic that I couldn't stop thinking about—a silhouette of a svelte dancing flutist with long, straight hair. I was intrigued by this new embodied piece of iconography which was quite different from the NFA's official logo—a white, nondescript non-keyed flute within a blue rectangle. The feminine figure's skin tone and facial features were ambiguous because the animation was rendered as a darkened silhouette against a white background. Through my own confirmation bias, I assumed the figure was of a youthful cisgender white or Hispanic woman. The figure was wearing a form-flattering sleeveless dress that hit just below the knee paired with stiletto heels. It danced with swaying, circular movements, a splattering of nonsensical musical notation coming out from the end of the flute and filling up the negative space on the monitor. Appearing in rotation with static pages, the dancing flutist was both innocuous and mesmerizing. I tried to convince myself not to dwell on this detail (after all, I didn't want to make something out of nothing), but the animation seemed to follow me. How was this image supposed to be a visual representation for an event involving the entire flute community? If anything, this projected fantasy was an inversion of the typical convention-goer—blissfully unhurried, unselfconscious, and unaware of competitions, auditions,

and colleagues. As this visualization hung over me throughout my writing and reflection, I will return to this image at the end of the chapter.

The exhibit hall

For some, the exhibit hall is reason enough to attend the convention.¹¹ Open for a large portion of each day from 10 A.M to 5:30 P.M. (usually on the convention center's lower level), the exhibit hall features vendors' displays of flutes, sheet music, and accessories while also offering flute-related goods and services such as repairs and instrument insurance. As a whole, the exhibit hall represents the material aspects of the flute-playing world as well as its modes of production and consumption. Master teachers turn into brand ambassadors as they convert their expertise into sales for flute manufacturers, publishers, software programs, and acoustical enhancement devices. Banners displaying brand logos and photos of their affiliated artists are scattered throughout the space. Similar to the exhibit halls at other music conventions I have attended (such as the famous NAMM show in Orange County, California), the NFA convention's exhibit hall can be described as "sensory overload," particularly in the auditory sense. Flute playing sounds of all kinds overlap one another in absolute cacophony as convention goers try out different models, brands, and types of flutes and piccolos. "Shredding" is just as common at the flute convention's exhibit hall as it is at one of the many amplified areas of the NAMM show, but here one mostly hears the most virtuosic orchestral excerpts such as the flute solos from Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloe* or Prokofiev's *Classical Symphony*. One might even hear the actual shredding of a Latin jazz flutist. While a typical attendee can take in the exhibit hall in doses, for the vendors, this environment forms nearly the entirety of their convention experience.

¹¹ The 2017 convention had 66 exhibitors.

While catching up with an old friend who works as a brand representative in the exhibit hall, I noticed dry tones of sarcasm and snark as she exchanged a few words of small talk with another vendor. While the two worlds inside and outside the convention center are overlapping rather than separate, there is certainly a different range of experience and behaviors among those who work primarily as vendors.

More recently, the exhibit hall has also begun to reflect the influence of social media creators. In 2005, the arrival of YouTube afforded opportunities for young and charismatic performers and educators to build an audience for future performing engagements. These early “YouTubers” are now sponsored by intermediate level flute brands, head joints, and accessories. As these first-generation YouTubers have entered their 40s, Instagram has become an equally vibrant, but more opaque medium for Millennial flutists. These social media ‘natives’ understand how to promote themselves and their products in a visual and surface narrative. Instagram “influencers,” like “YouTubers,” use their social influence to generate income through the sale of merchandise. However, Instagram’s limited video capabilities have made it more difficult for flute “influencers” to use the medium to establish their expertise. As a result, they have not yet received the same endorsement deals as the early YouTubers (some of them are “artists” of various flute brands, but I have yet to see a flute model named after them). Instead, Instagram influencers mention products in their posts and include offer codes for discounts to flute accessories and extended instrument trials. While it is not clear if any flute influencers have written “paid posts,” the offer codes allow them to make small commission fees.

In some ways, social media has enhanced the material culture of the flute playing world. Instagram, with its catalogue of filters, can grant a backdrop of #mood to a flute polishing cloth, while a flutist can index their personal identity and artistry through a vinyl flute bag in

“cedarwood.” A post might display an artful arrangement of sheet music in a decorative pile on a piano lid, on top of which lies a 14K gold flute and a carefully-placed single peony. These posts by current and aspiring influencers both birth and cannibalize aesthetic trends, creating a common visual language; purchasing these items and then reposting them is a way of gaining entry into the conversation.

Just as much as the convention is about the gathering of a community and sharing ideas, it is also about commerce. Debord (1983, 1967) states that the culture of commodity fetishism—dominated by “intangible as well as tangible things”—is fulfilled by the spectacle (36). In this sense, the communion of celebrity with commodity in the exhibit hall makes for a spectacular space. Some booths host mini-events with performances, presentations, or book signings by celebrity flutists to attract a crowd of attendees. Outside of the exhibit hall, the programmed exhibitor showcases (typically 25 minutes long) allow individual brands to demonstrate the specifications and innovations of their products in the booked conference rooms, while the exhibit hall condenses these competing brands. In a time when the number of physical storefronts is in rapid decline, the exhibit hall allows for the materialization of goods that are normally coveted through the slick surfaces of online shopping. While this aspect of the convention is kept at the basement level, away from the scheduled events, this clear separation is largely dictated by the space itself. The branding of instruments and the visibility of ambassadors and star performers are inescapable throughout the convention center.

Masterclasses at the National Flute Convention

The diverse sampling of masterclasses at the National Flute Convention showcase a range of membership styles and values in the flute community. A spectator can observe an orchestral

piccolo player embodying the professionalized musician, the culture of warmth and acceptance in a masterclass for amateur flutists, the convincing artistry of an established artist, and a Baroque flutist's emphasis on rhetoric and text. The separation of flute players by interest and degree of professionalization, while practical, creates a false sense of compartmentalization. The convention audience is often a mix of flutists who identify with the class-type and those who are simply curious. Master teachers play the part of their given role, demonstrating how to behave, move, and emote through sound as professionals while also establishing modes of conduct through their dress, posture, and attitudes. In a local context, however, there is sometimes an ambiguity in terms of which musicians are professionals and which are amateurs (Finnegan 1989, 12). Instead, amateurs, professionals, and semi-professionals exist on a continuum (16).

I attended a range of different masterclasses at the convention, from typical masterclasses which focused on standard flute repertoire to classes tailored for amateur and baroque flutists. Additionally, there were classes combining masterclasses with competitions and panel discussions. In these short-format classes, most of which lasted 90 minutes, the masterclasses proved to be rather adaptable and useful for conveying a master teacher's concepts to large audiences. As both ethnographer and flute player, I admired the way each masterclass variation offered snapshots of different pedagogies, while providing clues about different social circles within the flute playing world. With the time constraint of a convention masterclass, the teacher must focus their message on a few key points rather than pressing a student to transform their playing onstage. On an occasion where a noticeable difference is heard, however, the audience may feel that they have experienced something special.

Piccolo Orchestral Audition Masterclass

The Piccolo Orchestral Audition Masterclass taught by Sarah Jackson, Principal piccolo player for the Los Angeles Philharmonic, had an unusual two-part format, consisting first of a mock audition with a panel of judges, followed by a masterclass with the auditionees and the master teacher.¹² Based on Sarah's comments for the participants, I found that clarity and precision were the dominant aesthetic values. Additionally, Sarah's dress and overall decorum served as models for professionalism, a code which the participants already seemed to have internalized in their own presentations. Below are my observations.

The Mock Audition

The Piccolo Orchestral Audition Masterclass was held in Ballroom A. There were probably 200 people seated when I arrived, but because the room seated 2,500, the room was far too big for the event. I sat down in a cushioned metal conference chair, looking for familiar faces. No luck, though. It seemed like many of the audience members were local teachers and their high school students while others appeared to be undergraduate college students. The room was heavily carpeted, and the air conditioner created a blanket of white noise. A woman who sat down in the row in front of me asked her colleagues, "Why is everyone so quiet? It's so unsettling!" Personally, I felt just a little bit nervous for the students who were about to compete in this competition. Even though the stakes were relatively low, there were some cash prizes involved, and I'm sure they wanted to impress the panel and master teacher.

The disquiet soon let up as a steady stream of attendees trickled into the theater, raising the noise to a rumbling murmur. An announcer walked on stage, speaking into a microphone to explain the protocol for the mock audition and masterclass before thanking the flute

¹² The convention also had a Flute Orchestral Audition Masterclass, which I was unable to attend because it took place during another masterclass that I have covered in this chapter.

manufacturer Burkhart for sponsoring the cash prizes. The three “auditionees” were assigned as candidates 1, 2, and 3. Just like a real orchestral audition, the judges were blocked by a screen and the candidates were not allowed to identify themselves. Sarah Jackson was to sit alongside the judges behind the screen to take notes on each candidate. After all three candidates finished their auditions, the judges would deliberate then leave prior to the masterclass so that they would not be influenced by the candidates as they worked with Jackson. The competition results would be announced later that evening along with other competition results prior to the evening Gala Concert.

When the mock audition officially began, the first candidate was called to walk on stage. She appeared to be in her 20s and was dressed both conservatively and comfortably in black ponte leggings, black flats, a white t-shirt, and a muted green cardigan. Her hair was pulled back away from her face in a no-nonsense ponytail, the expression on her face stone-cold and focused. What became clear immediately was that the candidate was not playing to the audience as a performer. I felt that we in the audience also understood our role as quiet observers in this simulation. The last thing we wanted to do was distract any of the candidates. No sooner was the first candidate onstage than she proceeded to execute the required excerpts from the Vivaldi piccolo concerto. After concluding the Vivaldi, she paused for a moment before launching into the next excerpt, the march from Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9. After finishing all seven excerpts, some members of the audience, forgetting themselves for a moment, began to applaud. The candidate signaled a “thank you” as she made her exit, like a pedestrian acknowledging a driver at a crosswalk. Once she stepped down off the stage, the proctor opened the auditorium doors so she could make her exit out of the ballroom.

The room was momentarily still before the proctor let in the second candidate. As she walked onto the stage, I noticed that her sartorial style was similar to that of the first candidate with tight, stretchy slacks with black flats, and a black shell topped with a practical blazer with white mock cuffs. She seemed a bit more nervous than the first candidate, but she proceeded to perform her excerpts. The third candidate, dressed similarly, took slightly longer to set up. Her tone was perhaps the most mature out of the three, but in this cold space her fingers, at first, struggled to cooperate. Without having a score in front of me or in-depth knowledge of the excerpts, it is difficult for me to make a confident guess to the winner. To my ear, the three candidates were evenly matched in skill with only small variations. After hearing the same seven excerpts three times, I was worried about losing interest during the masterclass.

“The judges will now leave the theater to deliberate. I would now like to welcome Sarah Jackson to the stage.”

The Masterclass

Sarah Jackson walked onto the stage, carrying herself with the confidence of someone about to give a well-prepared presentation at a board meeting. As the first candidate joined her on the stage dressed in slacks, a white button up shirt, and a blazer, it was apparent that there was a clear visual continuity in the unspoken dress code of business attire. In this space, you will not find the stereotypical markers of performed femininity that are often seen in women performing in solo repertoire masterclasses such as flowing skirts, dresses, or silk scarves. Sarah angled herself slightly towards the student while maintaining a respectful distance and an open stance toward the audience.

Among the first issues that Sarah Jackson addressed were the length of time the first candidate took to prepare before playing (“It was not enough time for you and it was also not enough time for the judges.”) and swabbing the piccolo in between excerpts. The sessions for the following two candidates provided a similar utility and, in some cases, there was an overlap of information. There was quite a bit of rhythmic work including “chunking” and rhythmic variation. Overall, this orchestral audition masterclass brought up common issues that arise in a real audition and the information was directly applicable to anyone learning these excerpts. Every bit of advice given by Sarah was in the service of audition success, from rock-solid rhythm, to excellent technique, a dynamic range “that works,” and thoughtful intonation. Her reminder to the first candidate about swabbing the moisture out of the piccolo as a crucial audition technique was a reminder that the audition process should be treated somewhat like a sport. At one point in the discussion however, Sarah mentioned that in an actual audition, promising auditionees are usually given a chance to redeem themselves if they make an error. It was a reminder that judges want to hear auditionees succeed and that they were usually sympathetic.

Unlike a flute and piano repertoire masterclass that inspires students through the teacher’s charismatic authority, this orchestral audition masterclass was a professional workshop that dealt with hard skills based on real-life scenarios that impact job placement. While hearing the same excerpts many times became tiresome, even when well-executed by the candidates, Sarah’s demonstration of the excerpts astonished members of the audience, generating sounds of genuine approval at her perceived artistry. For women in the audience, Sarah modeled professional modes of conduct from the way she was dressed, to her posture and her tone of voice and facial expressions. On stage, her demeanor was just friendly enough; the information conveyed took

precedence over presenting an artist's mystique or inspiring the audience through momentarily transforming the competitors with quick fixes. Overall, there was an underlying tone that the road to an orchestra job was paved with hard work, commitment, and repetition.

Building natural musical gestures in a high school masterclass

Half an hour after the piccolo masterclass, I attended a masterclass for high school students taught by Nina Perlove, a familiar face from the exhibit hall best known for her early YouTube instructional videos and her involvement in the experimental YouTube Symphony Orchestra. While she remains an active flutist today, for some time the banner on her WordPress website has read "The Internet Flutist," a relic of an earlier phase of the Digital Age. Her self-built online reputation has helped forge her career as a clinician, teacher, and performer.

The masterclass was held in a mid-sized auditorium with stadium-style seating, the stage positioned below the audience. Looking around, I felt somewhat out of place as most of the audience members, fitting the description of the masterclass, were high school students and adults that were perhaps teachers and parents. There were three students scheduled to perform, each playing pieces from the standard flute repertoire: *Andante Pastorale et Scherzettino* by Paul Taffanel, *Sonatine* by Henri Dutilleux, and *Poem* by Charles Griffes (unfortunately, I was unable to hear the last performer as I had to leave for a scheduled rehearsal with my trio). Having just come out of the 90-minute piccolo masterclass, I was initially struck by the difference in presentation and deportment. As the first student performed, Nina conducted along to the opening flourishes of the *Andante Pastorale*, giving verbal directives along with her gesticulations. My eyes were drawn to the ictus carved by the tips of her acrylic nails, which extended slightly past her fingers. While keeping her heeled sandals planted to the floor, her

floral skirt flowed with her as she swayed along to the student's playing. Her limbs and her torso combined in conducting and dance while her directives urged the student to emote even more. "Good!" "Isn't it fun to play that way?" "Oh yeah, go on!" Her arms moved in and out with each sweeping gesture.

For many high school flute students who have limited experience with classical music beyond private instruction and if they are lucky, youth orchestras, the gestural information encoded into Perlove's body was meant to serve as an expressive tool. As the student's "conductor," Perlove's movements served to visualize her artistic and authoritative position as the master teacher. One could argue that the gestures exceeded their utility as instructional content, creating a gestural excess. At the same time, this embodied style of transmission went beyond the limits of musical notation and terminology towards intangibles that connect musical expression with dance. The elegant and flowing conducting gestures matched with uttered phrases and keywords to convey "natural" phrasing and even more elusive ideas such as tone color. While one could always listen to a recording or copy a live demonstration, these directives encouraged individuality and authentic displays of interiority. What mattered was that the music was understood and felt in the body.

She stopped the student in the ascending runs: "Can you give more of a Middle Eastern quality there? You know what I mean." After Nina pointed out some of the intervals that she ascribed this Middle Eastern character to, the student played the line again, exaggerating the intervals. In a particularly *cantabile* moment, she pleaded "more loveliness!" The student eagerly returned the instruction with a larger range of movement and a wider vibrato. A few measures later she stopped the student to point out the cadences in the flute line. While one of the most basic grammatical elements of Western classical music, cadences are frequently taken for

granted as “natural,” when in fact they need to be conveyed through metaphor and demonstration, especially when young players are struggling with the mechanics of the instrument. Similarly, Nina asked for the student to bring out the appoggiaturas by associating these dissonances with pain. In a moment of self-authorization, Nina asked the student to emulate Rampal’s articulation, then gave a quick summary of the Bel Canto style. This historical reference point linked Nina and the student to a musical lineage for a brief moment, if only as keyword metadata for the student to refer to at a later point.

As the second student, a male high school flutist, performed the *Sonatine* by Dutilleux, Nina listened from the front row, following along with a flute part in her lap. The student had some momentary struggles with the notoriously tricky opening, which is in a 7/8 time signature. When Nina got up to work with him, instead of addressing technical issues, she worked on guiding his ear to the piano. Helping the pianist to lift the lid of the piano, she advised keeping the piano at “full stick” to create what she referred to as an “acoustic shell.” Instructing him to stand closer to the piano, she asked him to listen to the color created between the flute and piano sound. Without pointing to specific moments in the score, her instruction was simply meant to heighten his awareness while performing in a configuration of which most high school flutists (and even undergraduate flutists) have limited experience.

Overall, Nina’s masterclass introduced high school students to concepts in phrasing and listening by relating these ideas through her body and speech to create a gestural excess. The markers of femininity in her presentation worked in tandem with her body movements in a manner that further illustrated the music’s phrasing and affect. Through this method of internalization, high school students who might otherwise find classical music to be a relatively

foreign idiom can become better acquainted with its syntax and structure, making the culturally “unnatural” obtain a constructed naturalness.

Finding acceptance in the Open 30+ Masterclass

The following day, I was once again seated in the auditorium where the high school masterclass with Nina Perlove had been held. There were around 50 audience members, all of whom appeared to be adult amateur flutists. The master teacher was Katherine Borst Jones, a flute professor and former President of the National Flute Association, based in the Midwest. Dressed in a floral faux-kimono wrap with black pants, Katherine warmly invited the audience members to come to the stage with a piece, scale, or etude, adding that they were welcome to ask questions at any point in the class. Unlike the two previous masterclasses I had attended, the Open 30+ Masterclass was only scheduled for 60 minutes. The first volunteer, a woman who appeared to be in her 30s, walked to the stage with her flute and score. As she was getting settled, Katherine asked her, “how do you warm up?” The volunteer answered by playing a Bb major scale. After making some general comments about breath support, Katherine instructed the volunteer to blow into the flute with a sustained airstream while allowing Katherine to finger the notes of the scale. This is a well-known teaching “trick” that demonstrates the sensation of playing with good breath support. Katherine asked the volunteer to play the scale again, this time controlling her own air and fingers. The noticeable improvement made the audience react with cheers and applause at the completion of the scale. I was surprised by the unfettered enthusiasm that unified this audience. “You see, the air should flow like a river. One of the most beautiful and difficult aspects of flute playing is getting the air moving.” This statement frames both the

flutist's warmup ritual and the flutist's airstream as aesthetic and ethical dimensions of flute playing.

After this interaction, the volunteer began to play *Three Preludes*, an unaccompanied flute piece by Robert Muczynski. As the volunteer played, Katherine made some small conducting gestures to keep time and emphasize certain inflections. Following a supportive applause, Katherine asked "First, what did you like? Start with the positive." After this exchange Katherine followed with several more questions: "What is the mood of this piece? The energy? Emotion? I want you to think about that." The student played another phrase in the movement but struggled to give it shape. Katherine instructed the student to sing the passage to find natural inflections and phrasing. "By finding the motives you can prevent run-on sentences." Throughout this session Katherine guided the volunteer with questions and strategies to make her own meaning of the piece. While this is the case in any healthy student-teacher relationship, in my experience working with adult amateur students, there is common tendency for the student to become over critical of themselves in such a detrimental way that it leads to them eventually quitting out of frustration. Katherine's strategy of teaching adult amateurs what questions they should ask themselves gives them a sense of agency and the tools to become more independent.

Katherine thanked the first volunteer and invited another. An African American male in khaki shorts and a plaid button-up shirt walked to the stage. He had prepared the second movement of Mozart's Flute Concerto in G.

"What would you like to work on in your playing today?"

"Consistency in the sound."

Katherine's question acknowledged that the volunteer, as an adult student, might be entering the masterclass with his own objectives. Despite his initial declaration, because he

already possessed a consistent and full sound, the session was mostly focused on the volunteer's phrasing, articulation, and style. In fact, he had belted out the low D's in the opening phrase with such robustness that Katherine, while acknowledging his "glorious" tone, pointed out that the D's didn't quite fit in with the phrasing.

"Say it: Save it!"

The audience laughed as he repeated back the phrase.

Before she took her last volunteer, Katherine realized that she was running out of time. She announced that she wanted to continue the class half an hour past its scheduled time as there were no events in the room immediately after. She wanted to have time not only for another performer, but to give audience members a chance to greet and ask questions afterward.

The final student, a Caucasian woman in her 30s, came up to play the slow movement of the Taktakishvili Sonata. After the performance, which was well-performed and heartfelt, Katherine first commented that the performance was beautiful and that she didn't have much to say. Even the pitch, which is usually a problem in this piece, especially for students with inadequate air support, was actually well-managed in this performance. When Katherine asked the volunteer if there was anything she didn't like about her performance, she stated that she was "concerned about using the correct vibrato." Katherine replied, "I don't like the word 'correct.' To quote native Minnesotan Libby Larsen, "Play the air in the room." She then added: "Too much vibrato in the sound is like too much makeup on a woman."

In these comments, Katherine addresses the volunteer's aesthetic concerns about vibrato. While she earlier said that she does not like the word "correct," as an intangible element of artistry, one can do something as mystical as "play the air in the room" which when done correctly, keeps the vibrato within the bounds of acceptable taste. Additionally, the analogy of

makeup on a woman's face implies that vibrato is cosmetic and an outward-facing aspect of a flutist's playing, despite its production inside the flutist's body. Just like a player's tone, the player's vibrato, according to Katherine is evaluated as a projection of beauty rather than expression.

After Katherine wrapped up with the last student, several members of the audience rushed up to the front of the stage to talk to her. Some of them had their flutes out and wanted to get a quick diagnosis. Overall this masterclass provided a time and space for a sometimes-overlooked part of the flute community to engage in an aesthetic praxis. It is likely that for many of these amateurs, this is the only masterclass they are invited to perform in all year.

A masterclass on giving masterclasses

On Saturday afternoon I attended a panel called "Masterclass Skills 102: The Art of Giving a Masterclass for the College Interview Process." The class was hosted by the NFA's Pedagogy Committee, the panel composed of three veteran master teachers: John Bailey, Carol Wincenc, and Molly Barth. The room, while fairly limited in seating compared to the other masterclasses, was packed to full capacity with an audience that appeared to be comprised mostly of teachers and graduate students (I recognized some of the professors in the audience from our social media connections). The NFA began offering this workshop the previous year because of recent trends in the academic search process for performance faculty that involve asking the prospective faculty to give a masterclass for the studio. Structured loosely by this process, the three candidates were chosen based on their submitted C.V.s and were each asked to give a "mini" masterclass to an undergraduate student. After each session, the panel addressed the candidate with comments and feedback.

In the front of the conference room, there was a slightly elevated platform on which the masterclass was to take place. From the podium, the masterclass coordinator from the pedagogy committee addressed the audience with issues that were seen in the C.V.s that were submitted for the competition. Then, after going over the protocol for the session, the first pair walked onto the stage. Side by side, there was not a noticeable age difference between the pair, but the candidate established her position by introducing the student and her piece to the audience. The student began to perform the “Allemande” from J.S. Bach’s Partita for solo flute. It was possible that the student had just begun learning the piece because it was drastically under tempo and there were some wrong notes. As I listened, I wanted desperately for the candidate to jump in and stop the student, but instead she allowed her to play to the end of the movement.

After complimenting the student’s sound, she demonstrated the “finger breath,” a technique coined by the New York City-based flutist Keith Underwood. After working on the finger breaths together, she asked the student to play the opening again. She might have played the phrase with more breath support, but the issues of the tempo and wrong notes were unresolved. This time she stopped the student: “I notice a little bit of tension in the shoulders. Do *you* notice any tension in the shoulders?” She then worked on aspects of the student’s posture including the height of the sternum and her stance. This entire time, due to the dead acoustics in the space, I found myself straining to hear. I was frustrated with this as an audience member, yet as a peer, I was sympathetic. Would I do any better under the circumstances? Someone behind me whispered: “It’s more of a public private lesson, it’s not really a masterclass.”

Carol Wincenc stood up, effectively marking the end of the session. As a renown soloist, chamber musician, and Professor of Flute at both Juilliard and SUNY Stony Brook, Carol is one of the top living flutists in the world. Possibly dressed for a performance later that day, she was

wearing a regal pink taffeta gown. She began with a story about her father, who while concertmaster of the Buffalo Philharmonic, played in a masterclass for Isaac Stern. According to the story, in the beginning of the session he had stated, “I am neither a master, nor is this a class.” With this, Carol aligned herself with a past authoritative figure of a “superior” instrument, while also positioning herself as part of a musical lineage via her father. By first denying that he was a master, Stern deferred to other figures of authority such as the other great violinists before him and the composers of the repertoire—a similar position of humility was also used by Marcel Moyse in claiming that Taffanel was the true master of the flute. This point is heightened by Stern’s rejection of the masterclass as a class. This could take multiple meanings, but if the point of a typical class is to gain knowledge about a subject, then the masterclass differs in its emphasis on performance as well as artistry, authority, and embodiment.

After Carol concluded, Molly Barth stood up to speak. At the time, Molly was the Professor of Flute at the University of Oregon¹³ as well as the original flutist of the multiple Grammy-winning new music ensemble Eighth Blackbird. Addressing the room in a measured and projecting tone, Molly said that as she viewed it, the purpose of masterclasses in the context of the college teaching position hiring process was not so much to impart knowledge, but to build students’ confidence in the prospective candidate’s teaching. Part of this involved incorporating the audience in teaching moments like the breathing exercise. John Bailey, Professor of Flute at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and principal flutist of the Lincoln Symphony Orchestra rose and stated that he was starting his 33rd year of college teaching and had been on many search committees. He first commented that he liked the fact that the candidate “didn’t make this like a public execution.” However, he felt that when she addressed

¹³ At the time of writing this, Molly Barth holds the Assistant Professor of Flute position at Vanderbilt University.

the student's posture, she could have related it to the music itself, linking the physical with the musical instead of getting "bogged down in the small details."

When the second student/teacher pair went on stage, the candidate, after introducing the student, asked her how much of the first movement of the Prokofiev Sonata she would like to play. The student responding that she would play the movement without repeating the exposition. Perhaps due to nerves and the lack of piano accompaniment, the performance had a shaky start. When she reached the dotted-eighth note figure, a famous problem-area, the figure began to sound more like triplet figures. At this point, the candidate stopped the student immediately. First complimenting the student on her tone, she then asked, "do you get nervous?" This rather odd question was a set-up. After the student admitted that she was nervous, the candidate asked the student to take a power stance, citing the technique as something she learned from a respected pedagogue. Here she invited everyone in the audience to stand up with their feet shoulder-width apart and knees slightly bent. When the audience stood up, there were a few moments of chatter as audience members interacted with their neighbors. Once everyone sat back down, the candidate addressed the rhythm in the passage, requesting that the student internalize the pulse. To do this, she had the student march in place while playing the phrase. This seemed to have a positive effect on maintaining the pulse, but the rhythm was still problematic. The teacher's solution was to have the student play the subdivisions while also playing the phrase an octave below.

This time, John Bailey was the first to comment. He congratulated the teacher on her enthusiasm, but told her that she made a few tactical mistakes, the first being when she asked the student how much she wanted to play. Similarly, at one point she had asked the student what she would like to do next. "You have a tendency to overuse hyperbole," meaning that the candidate

had a tendency to give too much praise, rendering it meaningless. With this point, Molly stood and reiterated that the candidate's enthusiasm "was wonderful to see." Here, Molly's comments took a different turn as she addressed the candidate's decorum, pointing out that as the candidate went on, her use of "uhms" eventually went away. Yet, Molly added, when the candidate asked the student if she was nervous, her immediate thought was, "well are *you* nervous?" Molly's final point was that younger or less experienced teachers tend to "overcite" when they credit another teacher with the information they are sharing. "We are the product of many teachers, but once you integrate it into your playing, it's yours and it's valid. You don't want to over-cite because it's you that they're hiring."

Carol stood up and said, "You never have a second chance to make a good first impression. Everything I do is from a musical departure." By this, she was referring to when the candidate asked the student to march in time. Carol noted that it was ironic that the candidate had the student march in time without addressing the fact that in this wartime piece, composed in 1943, you could "practically hear the tanks roll in." With this, the candidate could have used this moment to impart her knowledge of the history of the piece.

Carol applauded the candidate for being kind to the student: "I am just enthralled that we are now seeing more empathetic teachers. There used to be a style of masterclass where it was black and white, where you would absolutely discard the efforts of the player." In response to the moment when the candidate asked the student if she was nervous, she recalled an icebreaker she uses: "is this your first time playing in a masterclass?" Molly added that another way to put the student at ease is to sit in the audience while the student plays. Carol chimed in that as someone who has attended many sexual harassment seminars, she has learned that if the teacher wants to

ask if they may put their hands on the student for demonstration purposes, the correct question is “Is it ok if I put my hands on you?”

While this masterclass served the purpose of preparing candidates for the college teaching market, it was also a fascinating articulation by three master teachers of their approaches to masterclasses. What was striking was the contrast between the authority of the seasoned master teachers and the simulated authority of the candidates. It was interesting to see the candidates use “tricks” that they had learned from attending other masterclasses in the hopes of transforming the student onstage. Based on the panel’s comments, it seemed that part of becoming a convincing and authoritative masterclass teacher at times required deferring to other sources of authority such as the score and past masters in order to demonstrate one’s knowledge and personal connections while also steering clear of “over-citing” sources, thus undermining one’s authority. Also, when it came to technical issues such as rhythm and posture, the panel felt that it was important to link these issues to the music, rather than taking an overly clinical approach and getting “bogged down” by details. The discussion of present-day ethics of masterclass teaching also highlighted the need for reform. Avoiding “public executions,” making nervous students feel more at ease, and asking for permission before placing hands on the student brought to attention issues that teachers are aware of, but aside from this rare instance of a masterclass about giving masterclasses, are rarely taught.

Baroque Flute Masterclass with Jed Wentz

Later that day, I was sitting next to my undergraduate flute teacher at the masterclass for the winners of the NFA Baroque Flute Competition. Onstage, Jed Wentz, an American traverso player, conductor, and expert in 18th-century acting placed a pair of peculiar antique bow-eyed

spectacles on his nose. “How far was that from your idea of how this piece should go?” The NFA Baroque Flute Masterclass Competition winner had just played the opening of C.P.E. Bach’s Concerto in D minor. The performer seemed taken aback by the question. More questions kept coming: “How do you think you might achieve that? What I’m asking is—do you have a strong imagination? Do you have a very strong idea before you start to play of what you want to come out?” The performer appeared flummoxed. Jed spoke rapidly and for a moment he almost sounded exasperated. He continued to interrogate the student to see if she had a point of view about her interpretation of the piece, asking her if she had a burning desire for it to sound one way; if so, he wanted to help get her ideas across. Jokingly admitting that he was being somewhat mean, he said that most people “stand up here and start playing without having a clue what they want to come out of the instrument.” He said that this is because flute players are more worried about being correct than communicating. Then, he asked her to imagine what she would like to communicate, how she would go about communicating her ideas, and after playing, to ask herself if there were places where that had not been achieved.

Jed was quite earnest about the performers’ interpretation, in general holding them to a higher standard and demanding more. While this was a more intense approach than I had seen at other masterclasses at the convention, it seemed fitting with the sentiments behind early music performance practice. After all, if you do not bother to explore what the music is supposed to communicate, why attempt to specialize in playing esoteric music on such an outdated instrument? As Jed worked with the winners of the Baroque Flute Masterclass Competition, he asked them about the affects that they attributed to the music, the meaning behind different interval sizes, the dynamics associated with dissonance and consonance, and the change of

energy during sequences. While these performers had won the competition, these essential ideas at the heart of early music performance practice were still at a formative stage.

I also found it interesting that Jed did not always stick to “the rules” of early music performance practice. While he referred to various treatises and texts such as “the Quantz,” *Chironomia* by Austin (1806), and a recent dissertation, he stated at one point that while the notes imply a performance practice, it doesn’t mean that they only and always mean what they say. He insisted that you can express yourself by finding a way through these rules. This was in contrast to other masterclasses on Baroque music I had intended in which individual expression was not valued. He also stressed that it was important to the performer’s aesthetic to be convinced both by how their interpretation sounds as well as how it feels, marrying the intellect, heart, and body. Rather than telling the performers how to perform a given piece, he wanted the performers to be able to play it how they heard it, stressing that he was not there to tell them what they want (with of course, the option for him to disagree if he found the interpretation questionable).

Overall, this masterclass was more focused on interpretation than the other masterclasses I had attended at the convention. Despite the authoritative texts that are the foundation of early music performance practice, Jed always expected the performer to locate the meaning of the music. If anything, he was frustrated by the performer who was too docile—who appeared to answer questions in a way that was merely trying to appease him. The ideas of gesture, rhetoric, and affect that are paramount to this style create a source for authenticity that derives from the body. Towards the end of the class, Jed commented: “We don’t have a hotline to Handel, although some people act as if they do, but Handel isn’t here. You are here! He is dust. You’re a real person and I trust you.” The “real person”—the actor/musician—must embody the music

through their own interpretations and understandings of its meaning. Without the composer's presence, the performer is where the music is "located" as they activate the notated music. While Jeb was not interested in telling the student precisely how to play, his feedback was aimed at the performer's conviction, their clarity of thought, and their own meaning-making.

Unity and Divergence

Despite a hegemonic model of flute playing derived from a lineage of the French School of flute playing, there are many divergent and adjacent paths that do not fit neatly into this mold; yet, all are situated within a larger community of practice united by the flute-playing body and imagined through the concept of the flute-playing world. As a cultural event, the annual convention gives its members the opportunity to see, feel, and hear their connection as a community. At the same time, the convention masterclasses afford the space to perform identity across different subsets, spanning the professional/amateur spectrum, age, and genre. Difference is embodied by participants through gesture and articulated through dress and pedagogy. Alongside the performance of identity, artistry and authority still function as essential qualities of the masterclass, albeit with variations in emphasis and approach. Below are a few generalizations on these themes based on my findings in this case study.

First, moments of artistry and transformation will not be accessible to performers unless they are permitted by the master teacher and perceivable by the audience. The master teacher must allow the performer's transformation by creating its conditions; it is not a naturally occurring event. The Baroque masterclass was an instance at the convention in which artistry was withheld by the master teacher. Compared to other masterclasses I had attended, Jed Wentz's approach was atypically Socratic, leading the performers through questions about the

works they were performing. This procedure established an attitude of hermeneutic relation between the performer and the meaning of the text, drawing attention away from the more typical goal of onstage transformation facilitated by the master teacher. The performer was expected to have already spent ample time thinking about the music in order to have *a priori* knowledge of how it should be delivered. None of the students in the Baroque masterclass seemed to have deliberately considered the questions asked by Jed Wentz beforehand, so to this standard, artistry was not achieved.

Second, artistry and transformation can be withheld from the performers, but embodied by the master teacher's performance. In the piccolo orchestral audition masterclass, the students all performed the excerpts well, but due to Sarah Jackson's methodical approach it was clear that there would be no instant "breakthroughs." However, when Sarah Jackson performed one of the excerpts, the audible reaction in the audience in favor of Sarah Jackson's playing made the distance between her own skill and the students so apparent that transformation could in effect, take place in the ears of the listeners. This reaction, however, was not only due to a qualitative difference measured through encultured ideas about piccolo timbre, but resulted from the entanglement of artistry and authority. Because performance success in orchestral auditions is quantifiable (and the "winner" of the masterclass competition was not revealed until later that evening), Jackson's artistry was already proven through her professionalization in one of the world's top symphony orchestras. Her performance only confirmed what was understood—that artistry could only be achieved by working as long and hard as Sarah Jackson, a possibility that exists outside of the time and space of the class.

When transformation is orchestrated by the master teacher through their authority, they must feed something to the student—whether it is a physical adjustment, metaphor, gesture, or

an action to perform. Sometimes only small adjustments (such as the performer's air stream) are required to make a noticeable difference in the player's tone. Metaphors connect performers with their body, sound, or musical interpretation in an abstract and indirect way ("air should flow like a river"). Gesture (and what I referred to earlier as "gestural excess") works to transmit what is known in the master's body to the student's body. This information goes beyond simply watching the master perform because it takes place while the student performs—the master's gestures coded with their understanding of the repertoire's musical-meaning. As the master moves their limbs to the performer's playing, their body pulls "something more" out of the players to move them beyond their prior understanding of the music. When the master gives the performer an action—whether or not it involves the instrument—the performer uses their body in order to create a new sense memory. Many of the well-known techniques involving actions performed by students were utilized in the masterclass on giving masterclasses for the academic job search. The popularity of these techniques in flute masterclasses is likely due to their being easy to replicate, their entertainment value (such as the spectacle of having the student take a "power stance" or lay on the floor to perform sit-ups), and their known effectiveness in producing a noticeable difference in sound, appearance, or sensation when the student returns to the music.

For the master teacher to have command of the stage, they need to have command of the room. The aspiring masterclass teachers had to convincingly perform the authoritative role of master teacher in front of established masters, flipping roles from masterclass performer to masterclass teacher. The presence of the "real" masters in the audience made it difficult to suspend disbelief. With their limited authority, their behaviors had the appearance of mimicry which drew from years of observing rather than being. The efforts of the participants made more

apparent the skill involved in teaching a masterclass. These included the abilities to quickly diagnose an issue, to propose an effective solution, to gracefully improvise and experiment, to draw from and share your personal experience, and above all, to command presence on the stage.

Postlude: “The Dancing Flutist”

While working on this chapter, I found a photo slideshow on the 2017 page of the NFA’s “Convention Chronicles.” One of the snapshots featured the silent, feminine silhouette of the animated “dancing flutist.” At that moment, I found that what was on one hand, a gender-stereotyped image, also fell into a recognizable iconographic category of the lone solo flutist. This carefree, untethered solo flutist was solid fiction against the dynamic, socially variegated and interwoven convention space. I imagined that the dancing flutist stood in as an allegory for a pure “love of flute playing” outside of concerns for professionalization or public performance. She could simply enjoy her embodied connection to her instrument as an extension of self and a means to self-expression. In the final chapter of *Musicking*, Small (1998) describes an imaginary solitary flute player who is a herdsman for his flock.¹⁴ Even though he plays alone, his music-making is never truly unlinked to society because he exists within a complex set of social relationships between the design of his instrument, its tuning and sound quality, the norms of musical style within his culture, and the tones and rhythms which he chooses to play (202). Perhaps the dancing flutist did not exist in a vacuum after all and was as socially situated within the flute-playing world as the real flutists at the convention.

¹⁴ Small notes that he was advised to omit this chapter due to its problematic “other-ing” and essentializing of this fictional African herdsman. I have chosen to include this here because it is from these problematic imaginary spaces that unexamined iconographic images of flutists are used in the first place.

In the next chapter, I look to both the present and the future, analyzing masterclasses as they are experienced through social media. I will examine how artistry and embodiment manifest online masterclasses and the resultant shifts in authority through the disciplining lens of our online social interactions.

Chapter Five

Mirrors and Edges: Flute Masterclasses on Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube

The internet does not exist. Maybe it did exist only a short time ago, but now it only remains as a blur, a cloud, a friend, a deadline, a redirect, or a 404. If it ever existed, we couldn't see it. Because it has no shape. It has no face, just this name that describes everything and nothing at the same time. Yet we are still trying to climb onboard, to get inside, to be part of the network, to get in on the language game, to show up on searches, to appear to exist. But we will never get inside of something that isn't there. All this time we've been bemoaning the death of any critical outside position, we should have taken a good look at information networks. Just try to get in. You can't. Networks are all edges, as Bruno Latour points out. We thought they were windows but actually they're mirrors. And in the meantime we are being faced with more and more—not just information, but the world itself. And a very particular world that has already become part of our consciousness. And it wants something. It doesn't only want to harvest our eyeballs, our attention, our responses, and our feelings. It also wants to condition our minds and bodies to absorb all the richness of the planet's knowledge.

Aranda, Julieta and Brian Kuan Wood, Anton Vidokle. 2015. "Introduction" from *The Internet does not Exist*.

The rise of the internet and new media have created opportunities to reconsider what had previously behaved as solid spatial and temporal boundaries. As I write this, masterclasses are experienced by participants through new media forms practically as much as they are experienced face-to-face. Participants who are physically present at a masterclass may post a digital trail of photos, videos, and comments on social media, while those who are not physically present, in addition to following digital artifacts, may take advantage of live-stream features on Facebook or watch filmed masterclasses on YouTube with relative anonymity. This anonymous gaze, commonly known as "lurking," is silent, but not without presence. For one, Facebook's current "Live" feature displays the number of users viewing the stream at any given time.

Viewers who wish to participate by posting comments or selecting “Facebook reactions” give up their anonymity in the process.

Gitelman (2006) states that “all new media emerge into and help to reconstruct publics and public life [...] this in turn has broad implications for the operation of public memory, its mode and substance” (26). In the public arena of the masterclass, the permanence of digital media artifacts can effect the way masterclasses are presented. In the case of a live masterclass that is recorded for live-streaming or later uploading, the master teacher may, in their awareness of the camera and online audience, show greater restraint in their speech and movements. Student performers may also feel additional pressure with the knowledge that an unflattering moment may end up permanently on the web. Some master teachers, in what appears to be an effort to present a rehearsed and controlled image, have rebranded online tutorials on YouTube as masterclasses, removing the unpredictable complications of the student and audience. For these reasons, the most basic definition of the masterclass as a public lesson involving a master teacher, a student performer, and an audience evolves in meaning along with the restructuring of public life through new media.

This chapter considers the implications of the changes brought by social media on the qualities of artistry, authority, and embodiment in the flute masterclass. One issue that looms over this discussion is the antagonism between the concepts of the “real” and the “virtual” or “online” and “offline”—distinctions that are problematic due to the nearly full integration of the internet into our daily lives (Berry and Dieter 2015, 3). As with most discussions of digitization and the internet comes the issue of loss. For the online masterclass, this comes in the forms of the loss of presence (i.e. artistry, authority, and embodiment), the loss of transformation, and the loss of fidelity (a nonissue for an in-person masterclass). I have limited the discussion to the three

major social media platforms: Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube. In the section on Instagram, I interpret representations of flute masterclasses, using actor-network theory as a metaphoric framework. In the section on Facebook, I analyze the mediation of a masterclass streamed on Facebook Live. Lastly, the discussion on YouTube considers the platform's tutorial genre as a disruptor to the masterclass format.

In our awareness of the construction of online identity and persona, it is easy to see why we question the truth-value and realness of things that exist on the internet. Is an online masterclass a “real” masterclass? What becomes of artistry, authority, and embodiment in online masterclasses, particularly through the gaze of social media? The platforms themselves take on authorizing roles in online masterclasses. For one, platforms can no longer pretend that they are merely neutral tech companies, when they are in fact, media companies that shape and create content (Burgess and Green 2018, 10). The distinct style of YouTube videos and the output of new media stars has “redefined what ‘professional media’ looks like,” producing video genres unique to YouTube (11). If online masterclasses continue to have an increasing presence, it is likely that future master teachers will need to develop their skills at delivering masterclasses through all of the popular platforms. Below I will briefly introduce several themes unique to this chapter, after which I will discuss and analyze each platform in detail through the larger themes of artistry, authority, and embodiment.

The post-internet

As suggested in the opening excerpt by Aranda, Wood, and Vidokle (2015), the internet is no longer a thing to get “on” or “inside.” Owing to the reconfigurations and opacity of Web 2.0, social media, and digital design, the internet has shifted from existing in metaphorical spaces

to becoming deeply intertwined with our day-to-day reality. The present moment is one of specificity within the Digital Age, coined by Marisa Olson as the “post-internet,” or in aesthetic terms, the unhyphenated “postinternet” (Olson 2018). What this means is that the internet has moved offline into reality, rendering the world, instead of recreating it, through the use of postproduction tools (Gosse 2018, Steyerl 2015). Its impact affects not only all media, communication, and commerce, but also art, architecture, transportation systems, “nature,” education, security, and surveillance. This applies just as much to what was once thought of as the “online flute world,” which is now simply, the flute world. Rather than focusing on the fear that machines are taking over our lives, today our day-to-day concerns are of our privacy, security, and the amount of screen time our retinas receive. As a result of this shift—along with improvements in streaming and video technology for web-based platforms—more masterclasses and masterclass-related content is available online, particularly on social media.

Actor-network theory

Developed in the field of technology studies by leaders such as Bruno Latour, Michel Callon, and John Law, actor-network theory (ANT) is an approach to social theory that, since its inception in the 1980s, has been used profusely to understand agency within shifting networks (Latour 1996). While ANT was not developed with the internet or computer systems in mind, it is highly translatable to the postinternet world, as a way of analyzing the internet’s all-encompassing nature through attributing agencies to the scientific, social, and semiotic (1). Part of its appeal, which is alluded to in the opening quote, is ANT’s collapsing of multiple divides: nature/society, far/close (meaning that distance is irrelevant), small scale/large scale (relating not only to size, but to hierarchies and order relations that, according to Latour, “plague” social

theory), and inside/outside (meaning that networks are “all boundary” without an inside or outside) (Latour 1996). As a result, this allows for multiplicities and heterogenous associations, in other words, ties beyond what are generically labelled as social relations (Latour 2005, 5). Like Object Oriented Ontology (which was developed later), ANT is a “flat ontology,” meaning that all objects are considered to have equal value. When this framework is applied, it gives modern societies a “fibrous, thread-like, wiry, stringy, ropy, capillary character” that cannot be described with “levels, layers, territories, spheres, categories, structure, systems” and other visualizations that hearken the usual divides of sociology (Latour 1996, 3). Another important factor of ANT is that it is not anthropocentric, allowing nonhumans and concepts to have agency as actors as long as they are mediators, meaning that they are capable of “making someone do something” (Latour 2005, 58; 1996, 9).

In my analysis, I found that Latourian networks are especially conducive for conceptualizing masterclass-related content on social networking platforms—Instagram in particular. Its rigidly defined visual-semiotic schemes and webs of association seem to beg for this flat ontology in which values like “branding” and “wellness” can be linked in equal importance with color schemes and visual content. What this means for online masterclasses on social media is that they are about much more than just “the social,” dealing with networks involving both human and nonhuman mediators.

Constructing the online self

In recent discourses about identity, autobiography, and selfhood, there has been an interest in discussing the notions of the online self and online identity, particularly as they are performed and perceived through social media. Essential antecedents to these discussions are

Foucault's late writings on the technologies of the self (Foucault 1988). This work created a point of entry for scholars of the internet and popular culture studies to link social media use and public expressions of self-care. He defined technologies of the self as techniques that permit "individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality" (Foucault 1988, 18). He located two Greco-Roman principles for the technologies of the self: to "take care of yourself" and to "know yourself" (19). Today, both of these principles are exercised publicly through social media as users project their online identities through their profiles, posts, comments, and other digital content.

Poletti and Rak (2014) claim that social media's basis on personal identity can be attributed to classic liberalism's value of subjectivity. However, through this media and under late capitalism and celebrity culture, personal identity has transformed into a commodity that can be "traded legally or stolen," thus requiring guarding through passwords and PINs (11). This commodification of self has led to the renaming of personal identity as one's "brand." As ubiquitous as this may seem, from the perspective of users, the online self extends beyond the commercial. To reflect the intentionality through which users present their identities online, Barbour (2017) uses the term "online persona" to designate "the presentation of the self on and through digitally networked spaces, where the self that is presented is a reflection of a particular individual" (58). This perspective distances the constructed online self from a true self by indicating the selective process involved, differentiating three "registers" at which users perform their identities online: the professional, personal, and intimate (57). By issuing three different registers, Barbour gives agency to the user beyond the narrative of the commercialized self.

Similarly, a study on student use of Facebook identified a “curated self” and a “commodified self” as two unique forms of self-presentation (Kasch 2013). Within the concept of the curated self, three layers are identified: personal curation, social curation, and spectacle curation (ii). He describes the commodified self as an amplified version of the curated self—an “identity surrogate that was a resource and object for production, consumption, and distribution” (iii). When parsing the elements for creating the curated self on Facebook, Kasch is guided by the application’s features including: photos, status updates, comments, Likes, and About Me pages (94).

Online ethnography and the centralized web

Of all the challenges of online ethnography, designing a study around the internet’s ambiguous time and space boundaries are among the most frequently cited (Tunçalp and Lê 2014). Digital artifacts such as videos, instant messages, comments, and posts occur at different times, allowing them to be treated later as archival data (65). To filter the endless amount of online data, I have limited my focus to three social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. While there are additional locations for online masterclasses, some of which are websites produced by musicians behind a paywall, I have chosen to focus on online flute masterclass-related content that must conform to the constraints of our most influential world-shaping platforms. Run by Facebook and Google, these three major platforms are appendages of the centralized web. Centralization has moved the internet away from peer-to-peer networks, forcing users to rely on services that deeply mine users’ data while also posing security and privacy risks. In an innovative effort, new technology such as blockchain is based on a decentralized, P2P network, while old P2P systems such as torrent sites still exist.

In writing this study, I concede that my analysis is “always already” behind the pace of technology. The interfaces we traverse, which grant us access to products in exchange for our attention and personal data, often shift right under our noses. In no time we adjust to these updates, quickly forgetting the past world and our outrage over its disorienting transformation. This volatility creates the inherent risk that the field can subtly morph or even disappear during the study. In fact, a YouTube video that I have analyzed in this study has since been removed by the owner of the video.

No matter how ubiquitous a platform seems, there are always people who are left behind or opt out. There are of course, some who are not on any form of social media, but most are simply selective about their social media use, choosing to hold an account with one platform, while refusing others. Whether for issues of personal taste, privacy, time management, or burnout from our hypermediated existence, some shift to the latest platforms, while others stick with old ones. Among my friends and colleagues, some are not on Instagram but are on Facebook and *vice versa*. While the universality of any medium is a myth, dominant narratives do exist. As this chapter’s opening quote suggests, to stay updated is to participate in the language game. On the other hand, sometimes those who opt out—and even those who did not live to see the internet—are still part of the “stuff” of the internet, with videos appearing online through posts by students, colleagues, and enthusiasts. Sometimes digital artifacts are not personal expressions of online individuation but are the result of another’s aesthetic experience with digital artifacts or their intention to link themselves with a master. From a metaphorical standpoint, this suggests Latour’s idea that “one does not reside in a network, but rather moves to other points through the edges” (Latour 2011, 46). In this sense, the internet proves itself to consist of mirrors rather than windows.

The mediated masterclass and (dis)embodiment

McLuhan's famous phrase "The medium is the message" communicates the shaping and transforming capabilities of media and the signifying capabilities from one medium to the next (McLuhan 1964). Social media platforms each have their own cultures of use brought on by their design. However, when it comes to streaming and online masterclasses, just as important to the design of the platform is the user behind the post and their technological equipment. While Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube make it easy for anyone to upload or stream a masterclass, there is a wide gulf in the quality of online masterclasses. Many of classical music's biggest institutions—namely, concert halls, conservatories, and music festivals—upload masterclasses and concerts as digital media content. These institutions have the equipment and staff to maintain a public online presence and record professional quality video. With properly equipped spaces, master performers passing through major cities can exhibit their artistry and authority in high definition with lavalier mics and stage lighting. Small businesses such as flute distributors also produce online masterclasses with a more visually modest outcome, benefiting from the exposure of having a famous flutist visit their shop. Another source of online masterclasses are companies that exclusively produce and sell their content as subscription services (Play with a Pro is an example of this model). The presentation and quality of paid masterclasses are often very high, and the messages direct and to the point. In less than ideal cases, of which there are many examples on YouTube, video is obtained through cell phone cameras with no external microphone input. The sound quality can be quite distorted, especially in the flute's upper register and sometimes the teacher is practically inaudible. However, the pairing of improved and accessible consumer technology with the abundance of tutorials on setting up video

recording and live-streaming may mean that free online masterclasses with high visual and audio quality will soon “bury” online masterclasses recorded on previous models of consumer technology.

The presence of camera lenses is nothing new to masterclasses. In the mid-20th century, great musicians such as Jascha Heifetz, Janos Starker, Marcel Moyse, and Jean-Pierre Rampal had some of their masterclasses filmed for television broadcast. Even then, the camera’s ability to discipline authority was evident. Heifetz’ longtime accompanist Ayke Agus noted that the violinist’s filmed masterclasses contained “a great deal of artifice.” Because the videos only showcased his best students, they did not reveal what she considered his most fascinating teaching, which usually happened when he worked with a student for the first time (Ayke 2001, 50). Masterclass teachers today, however, must constantly adapt to the disciplining presence of the camera. The ubiquity of mobile phone cameras means that teachers can be recorded at any minute for posting on YouTube, where users may comment with anonymity.

The unsettling idea that an online self is often heavily curated and even commodified seems to take away from—rather than add to—artistry and authority in masterclasses. A flutist’s online persona and media presence could take precedence for users over perceived artistry. The platforms themselves present boundaries and limitations in their interfaces that do not exist in unmediated masterclasses. The condition of web centralization, with its tendency towards heavy data-mining, surveillance, and security risks destabilizes the hierarchical structures that are traditionally in place in a masterclass. However, if we are comfortably residing in the post-internet era, aren’t the boundaries between the “real” and “virtual” already dissolved? Actor-network theory also seems to suggest, at the ontological level, that we divorce ourselves from conceptual binaries and put these differences on an equal plane.

A related and perhaps more disturbing issue is the disembodied nature of our heavily mediated lives, particularly with the gradual disintegration of physical presence and face-to-face contact. In terms of its impact on flute masterclasses, disembodiment caused by mediation can result in a loss of the quality of experience and perception, the shared community, learning, and performance. From a phenomenological standpoint, in watching online masterclasses I felt significantly less excitement and inspiration from watching a masterclass through a screen than I would have felt in a traditional in-person masterclass. To be in the presence of the master teacher and to be in the same room as the other participants was an integral part of feeling connected to the experience. Watching from home, I did not get the sense that I had gotten any “closer” to those that I was observing (although, of the three platforms I investigated, I felt that the live-streamed masterclass on Facebook was the closest experience to a face-to-face masterclass).

Despite this sense of disconnect, one thing that is gained from disembodiment is critical distance. Watching masterclasses online, I did not have to smile, nod, or sit still. If I was unhappy with the teaching, it is likely that other users feel the same way and have already articulated their discontent in the comments. Because I had no connection with the teacher or the other observers, I didn't have to make any personal adjustments to my attitude or behavior. I could simply discard what I deem unnecessary (without any financial loss) using my own, if flawed, judgement without the presence of looming authorities. The ability to rewatch video also revealed if I had misheard or misunderstood the teacher, which also aided me in making judgements.

Instagram

At the time of writing this study, Instagram is the fastest growing social media platform in the world, growing from 800 million users in September 2017 to 1 billion users worldwide in June 2018 (TechCrunch, n.d.). This mobile photo and video sharing site is especially popular with Millennials, with users between ages 18 and 29 making up more than half of its user base in the United States (Statista, n.d.). Every day, a staggering number of photos and videos are uploaded to Instagram (in 2016, this number was estimated at more than 95 million per day [Reuters 2016]) whether through users' regular feeds or their Instagram Stories. Advertising is Instagram's source of income and a major part of user experience, with 2 million monthly advertisers as of 2019 and brand engagement estimated as 10 times higher on Instagram than Facebook (Statistica, n.d.). While these statistics focus on the platform's sheer volume and traffic, as Heffernan (2016) notes, Instagram's success lies not in its artifacts, but in its system: "The name *Instagram*, it seems, does not so much play off *telegram* as *ideogram*. Instagram images have become units of speech, building blocks in a visual vocabulary that functions like a colonial patois, where old-school darkroom photography is the native tongue and digitization is the imperial language" (121).

As Heffernan suggests, Instagram's aesthetics have already become a dominant cultural narrative as a mode of visual communication. Its totalizing effects range through advertising, fashion, fine art, retail, food, hospitality, museum exhibitions, live music, and countless other sectors—framing the world in a square, bathing it in filters, and indexing it with hashtags. While Instagram filters were originally intended to correct bad photography, they serve today as "multimodal means of advanced experimentation and expression" (Poulsen 2019, 258). The technology behind the range of Instagram filters give users a finite, but customizable set of expressive tools through which they can make aesthetic choices. As I discovered through

autoethnography (which I will explain in the sections that follow), Instagram's aesthetics are visible through the surface of the medium and beyond the medium in the actual masterclass spaces.

Despite the possibilities for displaying originality, Instagram is rife with clichés, some of these regularly indexed objects include: neon signs, millennial pink, sunsets, inspirational quotes, latte art, workout selfies, “hotdog legs,” breakfast, food and beverages in general, the staged work desk, manicures, outfits, “no filter” selfies, views from outside an airplane window, and of course, pets. These banal objects carry everyday meaning for the curation of the self. Instagram and other social media technologies that use geolocation also reveal new performances of the spatial self, embodiment, communications of social distance or intimacy, and experience of place (Schwartz and Halegoua 2014, 1655-1656). The roles of taste-making through advertising and the “Influencer” also make Instagram the ultimate spectacle, an ocular display where users project spectacular fantasies of vacation, hipness, refinement, wit, and wealth, reproducing endless commodity fetishism through the guises of meticulous presentation, aspiration, positivity, and wellness.

Instagram is not yet a platform that easily affords the posting of full-length masterclass videos. Until recently, videos on user feeds were only allowed a maximum of 30 seconds. The limit has since increased to one minute. While this update has helped give video greater weight, it is still too short for experiencing music beyond short clips. Recently added features have given Instagram users new options beyond the feed, in turn, creating new levels of self-narration. For example, the Instagram Stories feature, which began in 2016, allows users to post a series of photos and 15 second videos (the app now automatically divides longer videos into 15 second increments) which remain posted for 24 hours. Users can mark their photos and videos with text,

gifs, music, and filter them with cute, funny, bizarre, hallucinatory, and mock-cinematic effects. Stories are published at the top of the screen with a left-to-right orientation, rather than up and down. Within the Stories feature is the option to go Live, which allows live video up to an hour long. Afterward, it can be posted to the user's Story. Because this live stream is only available for viewing 24 hours after the end of the broadcast, most users with a vested interest in posting masterclasses for purposes of promotion or perhaps sharing knowledge are less inclined to do so on this platform. Instagram TV, a feature launched in June 2018, allows users to post 10-minute videos in the user's "channel." At this time, I have not observed any flute masterclass activity through this feature. What I found on Instagram instead of full masterclasses is flute masterclass-related content, reflecting the aesthetics of Instagram while also making reference to the authority, artistry, and embodiment of the flute masterclass. Below is my autoethnographic account of searching for flute masterclass-related content on Instagram.

Autoethnography

I open the Instagram app on my phone and tap on the search button on the bottom of the screen. Because I know I will waste time if I start by scrolling through my feed, I stray from my normal habits to focus on a search of my subject. By default, I am in the "For You" tab so my screen is filled with selections that Instagram's algorithms have chosen for me. Mostly, there are pictures and videos of food, chihuahuas, manicures, and ceramics, as well as videos of people playing instruments. I select the first music-related video, a clip of a young girl playing the violin for an elementary school class. The child looks oddly mature in her disciplined movements, the restless audience of 8-year-olds seated on the floor exchanging glances of surprise at what the young girl can do. She is not astonishingly talented, but she has enough skill to impress her

classmates and the strangers in the comment section. I close this video realizing that I am already distracted from the task at hand. To the right of the “For You” button, I find other categories to choose from including: Style, Animals, Food, Shopping, Fitness, Decor, Comics, Beauty, Art, Nature, DIY, Science & Tech, and Music. I have never actually checked any of these areas before, so out of curiosity, I select them one by one. Generated from these categories are images that take me worlds away from my personal feed. After two taps through photos in the nature category, I stumble on a photo of a circle of African men posing with large assault rifles. Another image shows an ecstatic 30-something year old white American woman holding a large gun over her head at what appears to be a convention.

I move on to the fitness category and am confronted with what I can only describe as workouts meant to create exaggerations of bodies. I feel like I have entered Instagram’s dicey and lurid backroom where kitsch, sex, and whimsy fill my screen like distorted funhouse mirrors. It’s as if the images are all vying for my attention, but none of them are really my thing. I feel a tinge of disgust and fascination, wanting to purify myself in the comfort of my curated feed. Instead, I need to focus. In the search bar, I select the “Tags” tab and type in the hashtag #flutemasterclass. There are 506 results. After selecting the hashtag, I see that there is a button that allows me to follow it, which I promptly do. The first result from my search, a video posted from the account of an annual summer flute masterclass, is of an 8-year-old flutist from Singapore performing a solo. This video, which was originally posted on YouTube, has 2,167 views through the post. The next search result, posted by a flute magazine, is a repost of a well-known flute soloist performing Mozart. It becomes clear that these accounts sometimes use the masterclass hashtag as a remote sub-category to the content.

I continue scrolling through the search results to look for a post that is masterclass-related. There are a number of posts that advertise upcoming masterclasses, some of them displaying clips of the master teachers' flashiest performance videos. Looking for some evidence of teaching, I find a video posted by a male teacher. The video is tightly framed, and he is shown working with a middle age female amateur flutist. He is standing in very close proximity to her, conducting and snapping to urge her to quicken her tempo. The video seems to serve as documentation, proof that this local teacher had given a masterclass.

Another post features highlights from the first two days of a five-day masterclass with a world-renowned flutist. Most of the photos featured in this post are action shots. Some show the master teacher mimicking a musical gesture with her arm. One shows her placing her hand on the end of a student's flute, another with her hand on top of a student's head. Across these photos the teacher maintains at least an arm's length of space between her and the student. The students are shown either performing, or in a moment of engagement with the teacher. The recently-built concert hall that the masterclass takes place in practically seems designed for Instagram. Not only is it well-lit, but there is an aesthetic choice to the colors which subtly morph through variations of pinks, blues, and purples.

A video posted by a student shows her working with a famous flutist at a university recital hall. One clip, less than 30 seconds long, loops the climactic section of Liebermann's Flute Sonata. The teacher is shown conducting along as the student performs. The video, likely from a cell phone camera, is shot from the back of the room, showing the students in the audience as well. Another video, taken in a music conservatory studio classroom, shows a legendary flutist working with a student on an orchestral excerpt. Just as in the previous

example, the master teacher conducts and sings the orchestral accompaniment while the student plays.

Analysis

Because this autoethnography required that I stray from my usual routines on Instagram—which usually involves scrolling through my feed, and then, sometimes, swiping through my Stories—I realized that over time, my personal use of Instagram had created what Latour might consider “heterogeneous associations” found in an actor-network (Latour 1996, 9). When I began my search, I was distracted by unfamiliar territory before I could even type “#flutemasterclass” into the search field. The interest-based categories, especially, lured me in.¹⁵ If one reads the images at the semiotic level, the meaning production that I came across in the early part of this search was clearly outside of my usual “choices” and “selection” of “embranchments” in my network (8). While the posts coming from my account from which I produce my online persona requires an element of curation, my feed, consisting of the posts of users and hashtags I follow, as well as specially tailored advertisements is created at least in part, through my associations, making me an actor flowing through the network’s nodes. My actions transform this reality as I follow different users and hashtags while also posting content and occasional comments.

Once I began my focused search, I found that flute masterclasses and their related semiotic content on Instagram are greatly shaped by the medium’s use of hashtags. The

¹⁵ While editing this page on March 18, 2019, I found that the categories feature had disappeared from my Instagram app only to reappear several days later after an update. Only two weeks prior on March 4, *The Washington Post* published an article titled, “The Heavily Armed Millennials of Instagram: gun owners, social media and the rise of a new firearms culture.” It turns out that my shocking stumble away from my usual content was not coincidental.

#flutemasterclass hashtag does not always signify the presence of visual content directly related to a flute masterclass, but often indirectly indexes the masterclass' qualities of artistry, authority, and embodiment. In the most indirect encoding and manufacture of masterclass-like qualities, users repost existing content. This may include videos of performing young flutists from around the internet that are shared as markers of cuteness, inspiration, and youthful artistry. On the other hand, reposted videos of masters align flute-related commercial ventures with authenticity, authority, and refinement. Even though these two approaches are at opposite ends of the performance spectrum (from beginner to master), they both ultimately serve to grab more view counts, followers, and likes.

In the case of posts in which the #flutemasterclass hashtag is linked to a flute masterclass in action, the shortness of the allowable length of videos in the feed create a sense of disembodiment. Instead of posts that serve to inform, what remains for the viewer are fragmented representations of teaching, learning, and performing. The teachers that were featured working with students in video posts were shown performing the expected gestures and actions of authority and artistry, a common theme being a depiction of the teacher conducting as the student performs. This visualization implies a transference and transformation between the teacher and student that would not be easily conveyed in other scenarios, for example, depictions of the teacher talking, the student performing while the teacher is listening and observing (but relatively static), or the teacher performing while the student is listening and observing. This disembodiment of flute masterclasses on Instagram further supports the connection of Instagram usage with “all boundary” Latourian actor-networks (6).

Like the endless advertising in Instagram feeds, the official accounts of summer flute masterclasses promote themselves as commercial ventures, making them impossible to sell on

the virtuous grounds of art for art's sake. While masterclasses have always required some form of advertising and promotion, the constant reminders of encroaching deadlines have the potential to weaken the perceived authority of the master teacher by making the teacher's need for new recruits readily apparent (this is true for Facebook posts as well). Special offers for enrollment at a reduced rate and announcements about the number of available spots make the masterclass' prestige and demand questionable. At the same time, masterclasses that are fairly successful both for the popularity of the teacher and the well-attuned use of the platform are able to bolster their image. These posts offer authentic artifacts of the master at work as they inspire and transform students onstage.

The post that displayed an "Instagram-ready" space presented the possibility of a shift towards masterclasses in visually appealing spaces with post-internet aesthetics, perhaps even moving towards unconventional locations that "photograph well." As an example, the site of the masterclass I attended in Tuscany which I discussed in the third chapter, while beautiful, might be a less desirable option for a mediated masterclass because the room in which the masterclass took place was not as visually spectacular as the area outside of the masterclass. In the Instagram-optimized masterclass, participants who post their experiences to Instagram may combine indexed masterclass qualities while also combining all three registers of performed online persona (professional, personal, and intimate), creating an "authentic" cultural cachet through the well-known condition of our present time: the "fear of missing out."

Live-streaming on Facebook

Despite its declining popularity among teens and the intense scrutiny over privacy and fake news, Facebook is still the world's largest and most widely used social media platform. As

the company that owns Instagram, it can fulfill different needs between the two platforms while maintaining just the right amount of integration. For the flute community, it is Facebook's Groups and archival features that help the platform maintain its relevance. Through the creation of groups, flutists can interact in discussion threads, while its archival features allow users to save videos, photos, and files. Flute Forum, one of the biggest flute groups on Facebook, has over 12,000 members and holds lively discussions on a range of topics, serving a similar purpose to the Flutelist listserv. This built-in community of flutists makes Facebook the best platform for well-known masters in the field to engage with online audiences through masterclasses.

Since the launch of Facebook Live in April 2016, several major American flute distributors have begun holding masterclasses at their stores and streaming them live through their Facebook page. The Flute Center of New York, which has over 10,000 page likes, has a growing number of archived full-length masterclass videos which they had originally streamed live. Beyond the basic streaming of the masterclass, the interactive features of Facebook Live create an increased level of audience engagement. At the top of the screen, users can see how many people are currently viewing the video, while the names of individual viewers are visible for a moment once they join the audience. When users select a reaction emoji, the emoji (either like, love, funny, sad, or angry) floats up the screen over the video in real time. Users can also interact by posting in the comments, which are below the video in the mobile app and to the right side of the video on the desktop version. When viewers ask questions in the comments, they can be answered by other viewers or a designated person on the broadcasting end of the stream. Live videos with higher activity in the comments are more likely to show up on news feeds, making comments a valuable commodity. Unlike the media content on Instagram and YouTube, media on Facebook does not, at present, possess a distinct aesthetic (although there is crossover

between the platforms since users can post YouTube or Instagram content on Facebook). Instead, it is the viewer that has access to aesthetic tools through their comments and reaction emojis. Not only this, but the live-stream itself is the least curated version of the online masterclass. Once the live-stream is over, the video can be archived (and possibly edited in postproduction) on the broadcaster's account. As a curated object, this video becomes part of flute company's online identity.

The masterclass that I chose to write about was taught by Marina Piccinini, one of the most sought-after flute teachers and respected solo performers of her generation. Five years ago, I had attended and performed in her multi-day summer masterclass at Peabody Conservatory, the Marina Piccinini International Flute Masterclass. As I already had a frame of reference for the style and quality of her teaching, I felt that I was in a good position to judge the effectiveness of the live-stream version of her masterclass. Because live-stream technology is still relatively new and much of the quality of the stream depends on the connection and the quality of the broadcaster's equipment, many of the students I had interviewed while doing fieldwork in Italy had reservations about the value of live-streamed masterclasses. One student found that it was useful for getting a sense of the teacher's teaching style, but not useful for getting a sense of the flute tone of the teacher or the student. This response made me wonder if the technological issues of live-stream masterclasses had improved and what my aesthetic experience would be like watching this masterclass.

Autoethnography

I see an announcement on my feed from The Flute Center of New York that they are sponsoring a masterclass by Marina Piccinini at Opera America and that it will be livestreamed

on Facebook. Excited to know that I can watch the masterclass from home, I log in to Facebook through my phone the following day right at 3:30 p.m. I am surprised not to see the livestream at the top on the screen in my feed where I would usually find it. I try looking for it on The Flute Center's page, then again on my iPad with no luck. 15 minutes later, I check Facebook on my PC and find a preview of the live stream beginning at the top of my page. I click on this, creating a popup of the video. A woman who might be a representative of the flute distributor is giving a welcome statement, apologizing for the late start. Marina, dressed in all black, announces that she will play an arrangement of an aria from the opera *Eugene Onegin* by Tchaikovsky. I am excited that she is starting with an arrangement that I didn't even know existed and am further intrigued when she apologizes for starting with such a depressing piece. As she eloquently performs from memory, I notice that Marina is well-lit, and that there are three camera angles being used (after later investigation, I learn that there are multiple consumer software programs that makes this possible, such as Wirecast and Switcher Studio, as well as hardware such as SlingStudio). While it is unclear how many microphones are being used (one is clearly hooked up to the iPhone on stage), the sound is decent with both the flute tone and speech well represented. At one point in the performance there are some latency issues causing sound to cut out in one side of my headphones, but overall, I'm impressed by the quality of the livestream.

The first student walks onstage—a masters student I had met a few years ago at the Marina Piccinini International Masterclass and a former student of Marina. Like Marina, he is dressed in black from head to toe. He announces his name and the title of his piece, speaking clearly and loudly, but with a wavering of nervousness. He steps back a little too far into the crook of the piano outside of the stage lights, causing the shadow to fall on his face. As he plays the third movement of the Prokofiev Sonata, the view count starts in the low 20s, but steadily

rises during the student's performance to around 45 viewers. Above the area where the "likes" are displayed, I can see profile photos of my Facebook friends who are currently watching. A few users comment with "hello," while others cheer the student on. (Briefly, I check Instagram on my iPhone. In my Stories feed, I see that the Flute Center of New York is also live-streaming the masterclass on Instagram, however, it appears that there are only a few viewers.) After receiving his applause, he looks over to Marina as she jumps in to begin working with him. After praising him for his great sound, she makes a comment about the difficulty of starting with a movement that is both physically and psychologically challenging for its softness and delicacy. After this, she speaks a bit to the student's excitement and about maintaining the "endless lines" in the phrases to maintain a sense of buoyancy. Not long after the beginning of the fourth movement, Marina stops the student to share an anecdote about the violinist David Oistrakh, joking about how he had "caused a problem" for flutists by raising the performance standard of the piece. I see that in the comment section, someone has posted a question, asking for the title of the piece. A few minutes later, he is answered by one of the other users. As the student continues with the piece, several "likes" and "loves" float upwards on the screen.

Analysis

Above I included an account of what I observed as an online observer of Marina's masterclass. In addition to the student that I observed above, there were two more students who performed that afternoon. In terms of the quality of the audio and visual elements, this masterclass gave me a favorable impression of the future of livestream masterclasses. Unlike other live masterclasses I have viewed in which a single camera was placed in the back of the room, this multi-camera experience made it possible to see a close-up of the performers from a

side angle, which allowed me to observe their embouchures with even greater detail than sitting in a live audience. While there were some issues with the technology, including latency, a couple of disconnections, and the termination of the live stream before the end of the third performer's session, I found that the quality was high enough to sit through the entire masterclass and because I had not paid to view the masterclass, I found the technological issues forgivable.

Despite the availability of features that allow for more interaction than the traditional in-person masterclass, I found that user interaction was underutilized. I have yet to experience an instance of a live-streamed masterclass in which the video screen is visible to the master teacher, whether through camera placement or projection, allowing the master teacher to be able to interact with the viewers directly rather than through a designated person. Because audience interaction during in-person masterclasses is already quite low, the intervention of new technologies seems like a logical way to keep audience members and online viewers engaged. It is not difficult to imagine a savvy employee at a flute distributor developing an improved method of interaction to engage an international customer base through Facebook, but it is uncertain if the visiting master teacher would be willing to try a new setup for a one-time masterclass, especially given the possibility of embarrassing technological or human failures.

Because there was not an administrator to handle the comments section of the livestream, there was very little activity in this area. While I would enjoy having an interactive experience, the current setup did not compel me to leave a comment. I realized that seeing my Facebook friends who were viewing with me (of which, I only saw two) and knowing that they would see that I was viewing was not enough to make me feel "seen." If there was a reason to interact with other users beyond greeting them and asking basic questions, perhaps even a way to interact in a

meaningful way with the people in the room (particularly the master teacher), I would consider paying a modest fee to stream the masterclass to my mobile device.

In a feature unique to Facebook Live, the emoticon feature, which causes user reactions to float upwards over the streamed video in real time, users are able to send praise during a live performance. This aesthetic allows online viewers to be more expressive during a performance than audience members in the room (assuming the audience practices the present-day etiquette for classical music settings, however they could conceivably send reactions from their smartphones as well). Rather than waiting for conventional cues to applaud, users may react to the teacher's comments, or the performance of either the teacher or the student. As I have defined artistry and authority as perceived qualities of the masterclass, this feature allow those perceptions to be made visible. To bring back the idea of projecting the live feed, if a screen were placed so that the performer could receive feedback during the performance, one could imagine that viewers might be even more expressive. While this idea would likely backfire in a concert, and latency issues could pose a distraction, it could be an interesting experiment in a masterclass setting as it could show the student the most effective expressive moments in their performance. One potential issue with this hypothetical scenario is that if this feature is overused, the masterclass could rely on provoking reactions, driving teachers to heighten the spectacle. It is difficult to say if the further improvement of live streaming would impact the number of attendees as students often attend masterclasses to form a personal connection with the teacher.

Despite these issues, I found that this livestream was worthwhile to watch. In this case, I was willing to passively observe the teachings of a master teacher in the exchange for my personal data. The user data that is available to the broadcaster is the range of their view count, the time at which they hit their peak view count, and the age range and gender of their main

demographic. As mediated live masterclasses develop through improved technology and thoughtful changes in presentation, format, and interactivity between those on and off screen, master teachers with an awareness of the medium (either intuitively or through training) can present masterclass in a meaningful way that does not take away from their stature as artists and authorities in music. The unmonetized model of Facebook Live leaves some uncertainty in how such masterclasses will continue.

YouTube

Founded in 2005 and bought by Google the following year for \$1.65 billion, YouTube has revolutionized the way video is consumed. With most of its content uploaded by individual users, this form of participatory media has led to the development of new YouTube-specific genres. In addition to other popular video categories such as unboxing and haul videos, product reviews, and vlogs, the how-to or tutorial video is one of the most common YouTube categories. In its incredible scope, this genre spans user videos that cover virtually any skill imaginable. For the visual learner, the massive amount of data available on YouTube can demystify obscure skills that are normally limited to those with direct access to experts, advanced texts, or manuals, while also allowing repeat and selective viewing. This has deep implications in music learning, which traditionally relies on close, face-to-face relationships between teachers and students. Just as audio recording technology revolutionized music learning through providing an unlimited resource for listening (meanwhile resulting in the canonization of recorded artifacts), YouTube in its sheer abundance, exposes viewers to endless videos that allow them to mimic body use, tone, and phrasing. The student of YouTube is not limited to the approach of a single master teacher, nor do they need to form a bond with the video host. Instead, they can take what they

wish from a multiplicity of viewpoints, “liking” videos and hitting “subscribe” on their favorite channels while seeking new content through searches and suggestions.

For content-creators, YouTube offers the possibility of attaining celebrity-status, whether within the platform or through the mainstream media. YouTube’s own system of celebrity uses internal vernacular conventions and values to create the YouTube celebrity (Burgess and Green 2018, 35). For flute-based YouTubers, success on the platform (especially earlier in YouTube’s history) can help build a “real” career outside of the platform. Some of the early flute “YouTubers” like Greg Pattillo and Nina Perlove became professionalized by developing their “brands” through demonstrations and tutorials. Pattillo’s videos on flute beatboxing started a major trend in flute playing and composition. As of February 2019, his video “Beatboxing flute inspector gadget remix,” published in 2007, has 30 million views and 204,000 likes, while his channel PROJECT Trio has 112,000 subscribers. Through YouTube, Pattillo found an avenue to become a recognized expert in a type of flute playing that would otherwise stay “on the street” (by this I allude to his busking performances, which he continued after having achieved some YouTube status). Out of demand from his fans, Pattillo has since posted tutorials on flute beatboxing, visited numerous university and conservatory flute studios as a guest artist, and is a fixture at music conventions and expos. He has also composed and published beatboxing flute solos, including a flute concerto. Nina Perlove, who in February 2019 had 19,383 subscribers, also began posting YouTube videos in 2007, focusing on common flute playing issues in a friendly and approachable manner. The fundamental topics she covers like breath support and articulation are relevant for flutists of all levels. Both Nina Perlove and Greg Pattillo have endorsements by Gemeindhardt, a flute-maker that specializes in beginner and intermediate flutes.

Among the benefits of this mode of learning are its self-directed approach, its focus on specific topics, its appeal to individual tastes, and its room for creative expression. However, one of the major difficulties of learning through YouTube is that it is not designed for two-way communication in real-time. Some creators remedy this by diligently answering questions in the comments section of videos, but these are usually answers to general comments or questions rather than feedback on a student's performance. Between YouTube creator and user, the only viable alternative is to arrange an off-site lesson. While I have not seen flute teachers on YouTube solicit students outright, their video descriptions often have a link to their website where users can find a contact form to book a Skype or FaceTime lesson. These video chat applications can also be used for teleconferenced masterclasses, although I have yet to hear about one that was instigated by YouTube users. One unexplored technology for the purposes of masterclasses is the streaming site Twitch. By using the MultiTwitch feature, viewers can watch two broadcasts at the same time. If both the student and the teacher are streaming from the same channel, it is easy for other viewers to find both parties in the masterclass.

At present, there is no available data on the income generated by flutists through YouTube channels. It is particularly concerning that, due to the publicity given to creators who earn a living from YouTube (from non-flute-related channels), students might look to YouTube as a viable career path. In reality, YouTube's current content policy only allows monetization for creators with a total watch time of 4,000 hours in the last 12 months and 1,000 subscribers at minimum. Creators are paid for the number of "eyes" rather than the quality of the videos. For this reason, creators sometimes resort to topics with attention grabbing titles and content that is more entertaining than educational. Once content creators become monetized, YouTube takes 45% percent of their advertising revenue and the creator is left paying the taxes. Because most

creators cannot rely on ad dollars as a source of income, it is often necessary to ask for donations through third party services such as PayPal and Patreon, or to sell products—either their own merchandise or products on Amazon—by providing links in the description.

Beyond the how-to and tutorial, video documentation of in-person flute masterclasses are posted on YouTube for archival and promotional purposes. There are videos created by larger organizations such as festivals, concert halls, conservatories, opera companies, and symphony orchestras, as well as online masterclass companies who have uploaded sample content. In addition, there are videos whose production is paid for by the artist and videos taken by masterclass organizers and audience members. A third version are videos that were filmed prior to the existence of YouTube that were originally television broadcasts, archival, or intended for sale through VHS. These often-black-and-white videos are popular as posts on Facebook flute groups to celebrate the legacy of a past master. In this sense, authoritative figures and institutions can, to an extent, retain their authority presence through YouTube.

Disrupting the masterclass format

Yet, as mentioned before, YouTube is still a space for experts and their knowledge to be reassessed and held up to greater scrutiny. The observer's gaze is extended beyond the time and space boundaries of the class, giving viewers a vantage point for analysis without being directly subjected to the authority of the master teacher either as a performer or as an audience member. Through the user's ability to view the master at will, rather than being forced to sit through an entire masterclass, they can customize their knowledge, thus weakening the master's singular authoritative position. While public comments are sometimes of dubious value or in the worst cases, inflammatory, it must be noted that channel owners on YouTube have the right to remove

any comments they wish. While not all creators take the time to read the comments, it is impossible for the viewer to know if any dissenting or mildly critical comments were deleted prior to their viewing of the video.

In some instances, “how-to” or “tutorial” videos are titled by the uploader as masterclasses. This is where the masterclass reaches new ontological territory. Most how-to and tutorial flute videos involve speaking directly towards the camera and the online audience, rather than involving a teacher working with a student. By changing the triad of teacher/student/audience to a dyad of teacher/audience, the teacher can directly teach their ideas about particular aspects of flute playing and interpretation. In a conversation I had with an established male flutist about his approach to teaching masterclasses (of the traditional in-person kind), he revealed that he already knew exactly what he wanted to teach in certain pieces of repertoire—it was only a matter of time when the opportunity would arise to address these issues. For this type of teacher, eliminating the student component might help communicate the teacher’s ideas to the audience without the distraction of a student who is unable to execute them onstage. If the purpose of masterclasses, however, is to receive immediate feedback on the art of performance itself, then the in-person masterclass remains the best environment to achieve this.

One example from a YouTube video, described below, shows one of the possible limitations of a filmed masterclass. As an online viewer, I felt that I was in a better position to critique the instruction in the video than if I had been a member of the audience. My initial reaction of dissatisfaction was strengthened from multiple viewings and from writing a transcription of the video along with time stamps. In this case, the teacher had very specific ideas about the interpretation and execution of the excerpt which could have been more efficiently delivered in a tutorial format. The student, unable to perform the excerpt according to the

teacher's interpretation, was an unfortunate barrier between the teacher and the audience. The teacher, a prominent German orchestral flutist, worked with the student on the famous flute audition excerpt from Hindemith's *Symphonic Metamorphosis*. The concert hall that hosted and sponsored the masterclass originally posted the video to its own channel, but since the writing of the first draft of this analysis, the video has been removed from YouTube by the concert hall (a form of self-curation on the part of the concert hall).

A common technique used in masterclasses is something that is commonly referred to as the "start-stop" method. Typically, the master teacher has control over when a student stops playing so that the master can speak and make a suggestion or judgement. Occasionally, a student will get through a piece without being stopped (this is more likely if the piece or movement is short), but typically students are stopped mid-performance. This is sometimes done as early as the first note. The "start-stop" method takes this practice to the extreme. The student can hardly play a phrase without being stopped. Not only is it tedious to observe and fatiguing for the player, but it also reduces the role of the player to a puppet, the ultimate object of docility. The transcript outlined below is limited in verbal information:

0:12-0:17	Student: [plays]
0:17-0:41	Teacher: I think to play expressive is one side (?). I like this very much. But sometimes, it's a little too much here when you do: [sings exaggerated vibrato, then plays with exaggerated vibrato]. I think it's really: [plays his version], not: [exaggerated version]. Yah? Not too much.
0:42-0:46	Student: [plays]
0:46-1:18	Teacher: And the tempo's <i>much</i> faster [pauses]. Yeah? [Addressing the audience:] Only the beginning, uh, this transition: [sings while conducting and tapping foot]. And we have no chance really, to breathe long

or to make too... you can do some musical things, but it must really in time because the clarinet is playing besides, and the conductor is really don't care what you do. Mostly...yeah? [some audience laughter. M. turns to audience and laughs]

1:20-1:24 Student: [plays]

1:24-1:30 Teacher: No, even faster
Student: [with flute still on his face, murmurs:] Okay.
Teacher: [sings while conducting and tapping foot] This tempo.

1:32-1:40 Student: [plays]

1:40-2:11 Teacher: [explains that student should play louder than the part indicates]

2:13-2:18 Student: Okay. [plays]

2:19-2:24 Teacher: [shakes head] You don't have so much time [sings, conducts, taps]
Student: Okay. [plays]
Teacher: Yeah.

2:26-2:32 Student: [plays]

2:33-2:38 Teacher: [interrupts by playing]

2:39 Teacher: That's the dynamic you need.

2:40 Student: Okay...mmhmm

2:43-2:45 Student: [plays]

2:46-2:57 Teacher: A little shorter, yeah? [plays]

2:58-3:05 Student: [plays]

Despite the master teacher's expertise, I experienced some frustration towards his methods while watching this video. I found that the rate of interruption was quite oppressive for the student. This problem is quite clear from looking at the time stamps in the above transcription. There was very little opportunity for the student to speak and he was stopped immediately without being allowed to finish phrases. This approach requires absolute note-for-note docility from the student and encourages the normalization of singular musical interpretations. When a teacher feeds their interpretation to a student, they have not given the student any special tools in approaching musical interpretation as an autonomous musician,

rather they are only creating a temporary replica of themselves. When this style of teaching is enforced in music conservatories, it can famously result in a “factory” style studio that produces students with a similar sound and the same interpretations. As Wilf (2014) notes in his study of jazz programs in higher education, by standardizing musical interpretations through mimicking, spontaneity and individuality is lost.

While I may not agree with his teaching methods, I think that the problems in this masterclass could have been solved if the teacher gave a YouTube tutorial-style presentation directly to the audience (and camera), outlining his interpretation of the orchestral excerpt followed with a demonstration. This would allow him to qualify his interpretations with real-life experiences and insight. As someone who is clearly an authoritative performer, but perhaps not a charismatic masterclass teacher, taking a more direct route that does not require improvisational teaching would likely be more satisfying for the audience (in the concert hall and at home) and for the institutional presenter.

The Future of Masterclasses

While online masterclasses are not yet seen as a threat to the existence of traditional masterclasses, it is not difficult to imagine a future in which the old masterclass model struggles to demonstrate its relevance, as it likely already has for some. For one, online masterclasses make it easy for users to efficiently pare down information to essentials. The audience, no longer required to sit through an entire class may simply extract the information they need searching by topic, piece, or teacher. Over time, there may be enough interpretations of key repertoire on YouTube to become familiar with the existing interpretations without stepping foot in a traditional masterclass. Similarly, pedagogies may become more fluid and less firmly attributed

to key teachers or schools of thought. This does not mean that online masterclasses miss the key elements of masterclasses—creating the perception of artistry and authority through the body while also transmitting cultural knowledge and promoting professionalization—they simply do so in a manner that is more conducive to present-day modes of learning.

The turn towards materiality and consumerism in YouTube is no different from what many flutists resorted to make additional income and to build their career prior to social media. My teacher Robert Dick always stressed that I had to “create my own path” to a career in music, by making my own opportunities and, essentially, by hustling. However, the internal, centralized structure of today’s internet, most of which is run by technologies owned by tech giants like Google and Facebook, creates a disturbingly closed system. As more content is made on the web and for the web with the end goal of making a sale, the realities of the status of classical music in our culture (and thus the viability of music performance as a career) may become even more concealed for aspiring flutists.

Chapter Six

Concluding Thoughts: beyond surfaces

The Essence of Masterclasses

Throughout this dissertation, I have re-examined my prior assumptions about flute masterclasses, leading me to consider what they offer beyond what is advertised by teachers, magazines, and social media advertising—namely the promises of improved skill and gained social connections with respected artists. Masterclasses not only provide the opportunity for participants to reach upward in a careerist structure, but to branch outward horizontally, creating new nodes in the social network of a shared, but diverse cultural practice. Through attending masterclasses, participants observe the rituals, rules, and behaviors that have shaped the community socially and aesthetically, including those needed for career-minded participants to one day convincingly perform the role of master teacher. In this chapter, I provide some concluding thoughts as well as a summary of the aspects of masterclasses that are in fact, beneficial to performers.

This work pursued the claim that masterclasses are a historically reimagined practice in which authority and artistry are experienced through the body. In my fieldwork, I observed masterclass teachers connect their teaching to past masters through passing down techniques and storytelling, lending the classes added authority and legitimacy. Additionally, these practices reinforce the authority of the master teacher, score, and masterclass itself. Furthermore, students are motivated by artistry when they experience it in the class whether in a performance or in the invocation of artistry that is linked back to the master. I experienced this many times in my fieldwork, particularly when there simply wasn't enough time to address issues that would

significantly improve the student's playing. While I initially thought of such experiences as relegated to advanced-level flute masterclass with the most renowned master teachers, I found that the themes of artistry, authority, and embodiment are equally important to masterclasses for high school and amateur flutists, and are the essence of masterclasses. It is really only the online masterclass that undermines these qualities, potentially changing them over time.

The Monetary and Cultural Economies of Masterclasses

When I interviewed Steve (one of the teachers in the masterclass in Italy), he said that he did not always enjoy teaching masterclasses, and had only recently felt that he was “any good at it.” I was surprised by this comment because Steve is a respected authority in teaching. Many of the students I spoke with also stated that they signed up for the class specifically to study with Steve. In our conversation, he expressed frustration that he didn't always feel that there was enough time to make a major change in the student's playing. Masterclasses pose significant pressure for the teacher to transform the student. For multi-day masterclasses in particular, students spend a significant amount of money on tuition, room and board, as well as travel expenses—especially when the course is held overseas. This transactional aspect of masterclasses breeds a level of expectation in the student who is positioned as a consumer. The stakes are high for the teacher to quickly diagnose and offer tangible solutions to a student they have only just met, all in front of a paying audience. For this reason, no matter how the teacher's comments come across, there is an understanding that the teacher will critique the student's performance, even if the issues addressed are minuscule in relation to the overall quality of the student's playing.

In addition to the masterclass' monetary economy, is its cultural economy. While the student does not leave with a certificate or degree, they do leave with some connection to the master teacher and to the masterclass as a product. As I mentioned in Chapter Three, it can be problematic when students overvalue their new connection, thinking of themselves as students of the master teacher. However, it is well within reason for the student to consider themselves linked to the masterclass. Through their participation, they belong and are now part of the culture of the masterclass. It is common for students to list masterclass participation at the end of their C.V., even if admittance to perform in many masterclasses is not particularly competitive. Either way, they have gone out of their way to make the connection with the master teacher and to further embed themselves in the classical music world.

Another aspect of the cultural economy of the masterclass is the expectation that the student will gain positive feelings from their participation. Ensuring this is a challenge for teachers, as Steve noted: "each player is a different human being with a whole different set of assumptions, expectations, and everything else." As an example, he remarked that some students are unprepared to take criticism in a public setting while others may be very sensitive or nervous because they hope to have a position in the teacher's studio. The teacher needs to be aware of the atmosphere they are creating through their interactions with students. It is of course, in the teacher's best interest that students leave with an overall positive experience in which their basic expectations are met. For Steve, it seemed that these expectations are sometimes at odds with his priorities as a teacher, creating a tension to his attitude towards masterclass teaching. Despite this inner tension, I did not get the impression that it was sensed by the other students. This is to say that many students can handle and expect some toughness or struggle in their sessions. I think there is an implicit understanding that this leads to personal growth.

In Steve's masterclasses that I observed, he was careful to address and analyze each player's issues as individuals; overall, he made very few references to past teachers or historical topics while he was teaching. Even if there was an underlying school of playing behind his approach, it was not expressed verbally during the masterclass. This observation made me realize how "linking" is generally used in the overall presentation of a masterclass to maintain the teacher's position of authority when the teacher is unable to help the student (and when the student is unable to take the teacher's advice). While I personally found Steve's teaching to be excellent, it was at times inflexible to the possibilities of the masterclass format. By only focusing on improving the student's playing, then there is no reprieve from an "unsuccessful" masterclass session. This is why in the cultural economy of the masterclass, giving more of the teacher's self through storytelling adds value in the forms of artistry and inspiration.

Authority over the body

When dealing with the theme of authority, particularly as it is experienced through the body, it becomes clear that there is a broad spectrum that ranges from subtle to highly inappropriate or offensive. Such judgements are clearly subjective and reflective of the observer's own morals and ethics. Most instances are subtle and everyday, therefore easier to overlook. There were notable examples throughout my fieldwork in which the master teacher exercised their authority through the body of the student in a manner that was presumably meant to enhance the class. While some of the teachers I observed did not use physical contact, there were instances of teachers who either used a "hands on" approach in their demonstrations or used the flute as a prosthetic limb, sometimes without asking prior permission. The students I observed did not appear to resist when a master teacher crossed physical boundaries, whether or

not they wanted to be subjected to physical contact. Some students that I spoke with viewed these demonstrations as useful for teaching purposes and within the right of the esteemed artist. There were also moments in which the master exercised their authority through comments that I would characterize as overtly sexist and racially imbued—these also did not trigger negative responses from the audience, at least to my knowledge. Additionally, there were instances in which the student was pushed past their technical limit seemingly to prove a point about adequate preparation, but without any clear benefit for the student or audience. It seems that in practice, the master teacher's display of authority over the student's body physically and verbally is fully accepted as within the norm of conduct in classical music. Despite these sometimes troubling moments, Carol Wincenc's comments at the NFA convention (discussed in Chapter Four) reflect a growing awareness of the need to match the current standards of appropriate physical contact as more teachers (particularly those with institutional positions) receive training through sexual harassment seminars. From the same NFA convention seminar, John Bailey's comment—in which he thanked the candidate for not turning the masterclass into a “public execution”—reflected the contrast between old and contemporary approaches to the master/student dynamic on stage.

It is impossible to measure the extent to which teachers are in fact, acting with greater awareness of appropriate student/teacher boundaries. Masterclasses only reveal how master teachers behave publicly onstage. Behind closed doors in private lessons and through messaging features on smart phones, students are even more vulnerable to abuse, relying on “whisper networks” to know which teachers to avoid. Adding difficulty to monitoring teacher conduct is the fact that many masterclasses take place during the summer outside of institutional settings with minors often mixed in with adult students without chaperones or advocates. Sometimes it

takes a scandal uncovering years of sexual misconduct to take down a teacher. With rising public awareness of abuse and the changing norms of appropriate behavior between teachers and students, it is the uncovered actions of the worst abusers within a structurally fragile system that are most at risk of de-authorizing masterclasses as legitimate practices.

The Loss of Authority, Artistry, and Embodiment

In his famous essay “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” Walter Benjamin (1935, 1968) stated that “the existence of the work of art with reference to its aura is never entirely separated from its ritual function” (174). As understood by Benjamin, the “aura” is an intangible and sublime presence in an original (as opposed to mechanically reproduced) work of art, lending it its authenticity. In his conception, the manual reproduction of a work of art does not degrade the aura of the original, whereas the mechanical reproduction takes away some of the original’s aura. The masterclass—as a ritual function within a cultural practice which places the master in a central position of authority next to the composition itself—allows the “aura” of the musical composition to stay symbolically intact through the process of reproduction by way of performance. Rather than threatening the loss resulting from mechanical reproduction, the ritualized masterclass allows the continual renewal of a practice and of concepts that are otherwise outmoded from modern perspectives. In this mode of preservation, the ethics of classical music are practiced through ritual aesthetic practices using rules passed down from teacher to student to engage in aesthetic experiences, giving shared meaning to the music. However, by no means are aesthetics in the masterclass static or truly codified. Master teachers may also offer original insights to pass down, becoming “originals” themselves through their unique interpretations. These insights are not limited to verbal instruction, but extend to aesthetic

choices (such as the use of vibrato and the performer's tone quality), and the master's presence. One master teacher that I spoke with, when describing his experience performing for Jean-Pierre Rampal in a masterclass, described him as having an immediate "aura" and such an impactful tone that it did not matter what was said in the sessions. The "aura" and charisma of the master teacher, the ritualized inner meanings and outward behaviors of the participants, and the act of performance lend indeterminacy, interactivity, and life against the fixity of the score.

Yet, do masterclasses on social media, in their ability to be infinitely played and even pirated constitute the "mechanically reproduced" masterclass, resulting in a loss of the aura of the original? In the sense of loss in what is valued in the live masterclass—the authoritative presence of the master teacher as well as the element of ritual—I am willing to make this connection without hesitation. Just as painting as a medium has lost some of its authority in the age of photography (and the present digital age), I would argue that masterclasses have lost some degree of authority in the Digital Age. However, the loss of authority does not necessarily lead to extinction, as we can see in how both painting and music masterclasses are still very much widely practiced today.

Reconciliation

After returning from my summer of fieldwork, I experienced a few uneasy weeks as I looked over my field notes and began the tedious process of transcribing interviews. Where were the obvious connections and themes I was supposed to find? The masterclass in Italy was particularly daunting to analyze because it was significantly longer than the other masterclass I had attended; it seemed like I had too many details to sift through and perhaps not the right ones. There was also something that left me dissatisfied about the class in general—that it somehow

wasn't rigorous enough. I wanted to feel "blown away" and even intimidated by the other performers like I had been as an undergraduate attending my first overseas masterclass. What I found were performers who were very good, but like myself, very much in a state of becoming.

Despite these worries, once I settled back into my regular routine of teaching the Postmodern Music course at St. Joseph's College, private students, my part-time job at The Graduate Center's Interlibrary Loan office, stage managing at Elebash Recital Hall for work study, and rehearsing with The Parhelion Trio, it became clear that this time dedicated to simply enjoy playing the flute and making new musical friends was a valuable luxury and privilege. It was soon after this realization that I came across the concept of soft skills and learned about Granovetter's theory of weak ties, through which I found that there were indirect professional benefits to participating in masterclasses. The irony in this finding is that, despite the fact that this masterclass was intended by its organizer as a retreat from everyday economic routines, I was inclined to analyze it precisely through the values of late capitalism. I felt that it was important to balance my analysis with a discussion of meaning-making to show that there is much more than professional and economic value to the masterclass. In regard to my perception of the performance level of the class, I later recalled how Gerald—an undergraduate for whom this was his first experience in international travel—felt overwhelmed by the level of performance in the class (the high school student echoed Gerald in sentiment). As one of the youngest players, he felt that there were many experienced players in the class to look up to and sensed the discipline it would take to "catch up."

While the masterclass in Italy had taught me that there were mostly indirect professional benefits in attending masterclasses as a student, the masterclass at the NFA convention on giving masterclasses for the academic job search (titled "Masterclasses 102") demonstrated the direct

professional benefit of learning how to teach masterclasses. As I observed, convincingly switching roles from student to master is far from intuitive. Even with years of prerequisite knowledge from attending masterclasses, the ability to improvise and draw from one's experience masterfully as a teacher is just as much a process of mastery as becoming an artist on one's instrument. Some of the comments from the panel offered approachable basic techniques (such as speaking with projection), while other pieces of advice (such as avoiding "over-citing") required that the applicant learn the delicate balance of performing an authoritative role, even if it required going against the instinct of the job candidate. Perhaps the transformation from student to master teacher is the most significant artistic transformation available from attending masterclasses.

Looking forward: reasons to continue the practice today

From reading this work and some of the critiques I have put forth, one may wonder if face-to-face masterclasses are a practice worth continuing into the Digital Age. While the masterclass is essentially a 19th-century practice, there are many reasons why masterclasses are still, or perhaps even more, relevant today given the demands and distractions of the 21st century. Here I would like to reiterate, as clearly as possible, some of the benefits of participating in masterclasses that are sprinkled throughout, or implied in, this text. These benefits which I have observed and experienced firsthand make masterclasses unique and irreplaceable when it comes to advancing one's musical skills and embodied knowledge of the instrument and performance:

- 1) *Dedicated time with the instrument away from everyday routines.* There is nothing quite like attending a masterclass (especially one that spans several days) when it comes to assessing one's current state of performance. With the often hectic and

overwhelming pressures of 21st-century life—whether one is a student, amateur, or professional musician—masterclasses offer the valuable commodities of both time and space to focus on one’s individual performance.

2) *A face-to-face learning environment.* With the rapid growth of online learning, we are only beginning to understand what is lost when we learn through an interface.

Performing, as an embodied action, is particularly dependent on physical presence.

While an observer of an online masterclass may find that the distance and separation of the screen gives them some freedom from the teacher’s authority, their visual and aural perception of performance will be significantly altered through the limitations of the technological equipment and the medium.

3) *Feedback on performance in realtime.* In my opinion, this is the most unique benefit that the masterclass has to offer. By allowing the performer to receive feedback as they are performing, attention is brought to issues that only occur when in the heightened state of performance. They also see and hear some of what the student cannot. Some teachers feel the need to separate masterclass performance from “real” performance (by stating that “a masterclass is not a performance”), but I think that this distinction—while useful in easing potential performance anxiety—creates a lost opportunity and potentially disengages students from their performance.

Understandably, part of this distinction is meant to label the student’s interpretation as “in progress” and thus, open to shaping and redirecting by the master teacher.

However, opportunities for students to perform are all too rare, therefore the student should prepare for the masterclass as they would any other performance.

- 4) *Artistry and transformation.* The most exciting masterclasses give students glimpses of artistry through the master teacher and through onstage transformation. Students witnessing and experiencing these moments leave with lasting sensory and aural memories, as well as feelings of inspiration and focus that they can carry with them to energize their practice when they return to their regular routines. This implementation is required for lasting transformation.
- 5) *Wholistic learning.* For the multi-day format in particular, masterclasses offer an environment in which to learn about performance more globally (away from abstract, routinized learning) through being immersed in embodied performance and performance-related issues. Masterclasses with a mind/body focus and separate “technique” or “fundamentals” sessions are especially helpful in engaging students with their bodies.
- 6) *Colleagues as a useful measure of comparison.* Another benefit of masterclasses—especially for younger or less experienced musicians—is that they can be exposed to higher levels of performance. As long as the comparison does not lead to unhealthy levels of competition, jealousy, or negative self-talk, this exposure can widen one’s aural perception and understanding of the instrument’s repertoire. This ties into the inspiration and focus that can be gained from artistry and transformation.

It is important when critiquing masterclasses to always think about how to continue improving this practice to maximize its usefulness for the students who trust in their benefits. The more clearly masterclass teachers frame their expectations and their aims at the beginning of the masterclass, the better students can engage with the teacher’s unique point of view. It is also

helpful for students when they are allowed some space for self-expression, whether through being asked to verbalize their musical intent or by making room for individuality in the body—as long as it does not appear to hinder performance. Students appreciate being given the tools to build one’s self artistically, while also learning from the teacher’s lifetime of musical experiences. Feeding masterclasses with this basic level of interaction gives it potential for greater meaning-making.

This work aims to provide a more nuanced way for those inside the “flute world” (and classical music world) to think about our practice critically as well as offering some insights into potential changes on the horizon. While this was never intended to be a politicized work, I hope that by examining the roles of authority, artistry, aesthetics, embodiment, and modes of conduct in real examples within the flute world, this dissertation has at least been a small step towards dialogue on a more just and relevant practice that continues to evolve.

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