

The art and science of historical performance

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Daniel Türk's *Klavierschule* (1789) makes the important observation that "some musical effects cannot be described; they must be *heard*." Evidence for the art (as opposed to the science) of historical performance remains elusive, deliciously inexact, but potentially inspirational. Clearly, C. P. E. Bach's remarks about the importance of moving an audience are of special value; and no clarinettist can afford to ignore the reviewer who described Anton Stadler's clarinet as having "so soft and lovely a tone that no-one with a heart could resist it." Modern "period" performers each occupy a position on the spectrum from historical accuracy to practical expediency, not least in their choice of original instruments, copies, or replicas. "Authentic" performers have sometimes denied any form of glorifying self expression, but acted in the service of the composer by following "textbook" rules, with a strictly empirical program to verify historical practices. With no reference to personality, this was somehow magically transformed into a composer's intentions, with the performer dangerously close to infantile dependency. This workshop deconstructs period performances of music for clarinet and fortepiano by Mozart, Stadler, and Vanhal, distinguishing historical elements from those aspects of art and science that are arguably rooted in the twenty-first century.

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