

Reflection

Advice to pianists and composers

(more generally: what works and what doesn't)

(Piano safety also comes here.)

Here I write what I want to tell composers and pianists in particular.

I will not divide them into two categories: this is for composers and this is for pianists.

What is important to note when performing is good for the composer to know, and what is important to note when composing is good for the performer to know and keep in mind when collaborating with the composer.

With regard to the notation of microtones:

In my case, I prefer to have a *scolatura* writing style. I prefer to have the list of notes to be tuned on the preface and not use microtonal accidentals in the score. Alternatively, I prefer to add a score with microtonal accidentals on top of the regular staves (as illustrated in the picture).

When using harmonics:

- Never use the 6th harmonic. (see picture).
- The even-numbered harmonics are usually overlapped by a harmonics of the divisible number or the number multiplied by two, so it is best to avoid using them if at all possible.
- If you are a composer, try out yourself on the piano with the harmonics you have written. (Preferably on the same piano model that will be used on the concert.)

If you are touching or preparing any part of the piano other than the keyboard:

Let the piano technician/tuner know in advance what you are planning to do.

If they are not ok with the idea you have in mind, many of them will give you an alternative plan.

When using magnets:

When preparing the magnets, it is necessary to be careful because some strong magnets, they can fly into the piano beams with great force if one is not careful, leaving small marks. One should avoid the strongest magnets, but the point here is that of the placement of the magnets had to be adjusted for each instrument, as the angle of the beam differ from piano to piano.

In 'Use of the una corda pedal' mode, when you want to increase or decrease the number of strings sounded by using the una corda pedal. :

When I wanted to play with two right-most strings in the above-mentioned mode, I had to depress the una corda pedal to prevent the microtonal string on the left side from sounding. This had the disadvantage when I wanted to play fortissimo, as there were only two sounding strings, and I had to work very hard avoiding the piano sound too weak. In addition, not all keys on all pianos are reliable in this matter (touching only one string less), so it was necessary to adjust the position of the dampers, millimetre by millimetre, with the help of the piano tuner.

The performer's 'freedom':

The workshop with **Magalhaes** was a unique approach for me, as we were not aiming for a 'finished product', but rather aiming for new sounds and discoveries for each instrument.

F.ex. I placed the blu-tack by relying on my own ears, based on the suggested character. Within this freedom I enjoyed going into the details, so if f.ex discovered that it would work well to place a stripe of blu-tac around a multiphonic with the a certain harmonic number included, I took notes of this in my score.

Even though the piano model may be the same, each piano produces overtones differently. In the collaboration with **Bauck**, I delved into the nuances of each instrument's unique tonal qualities. Despite utilizing the same

piano model, variations in string age and condition led me to meticulously explore different overtones produced by each piano. Visiting the concert venue multiple times, I sought to uncover the most optimal sound for the upcoming performance, aligning with the composer's envisioned sound character. This process granted me the freedom to shape and refine my listening experience within the established framework, fostering a deep focus on auditory perception both during rehearsals and live performances.

To cultivate a sense of liberation in my musical expression, I adopted a practice of memorizing key passages, particularly those featuring solo sections. Recognizing that f.ex. identical strings with shared 11th harmonics could yield nuanced tones based on their manipulation, I dedicated myself to mastering these subtle variations during rehearsals in the actual concert hall. This deliberate preparation allowed me to embrace spontaneity and freedom in my listening approach during performances. At times, this involved adjusting finger placements or exploring alternative nodes on the same strings as indicated in the score, enabling my body to adapt to new movements and enhancing my ability to engage freely with the music unfolding before me.