

**Helsinki Baroque Orchestra
International Colloquium**

***Tempo Rubato*
Use, Flexibility and Modification of Time**

Research Snapshots and Discussions

2 May 2021, 15:00–18:00 CEST

**Alexander Bonus
Julia Dokter
Aapo Häkkinen
Domen Marinčič
Inja Stanović
Jed Wentz**

- **Charting Modern-Age Beliefs in the Metronomic Tempo**
- **Tempo Words in Late Seventeenth-Century Organ Praeludia**
- **Eighteenth-Century Tempo Indications**
- **Understanding Early Indications for Tempo Modification**
- **The Influence of Mechanical Recording Technologies**
- **Subjectivity, Flexibility of Tempo and Affect in the Light of Aaron Hill's *The Art of Acting* (1754)**

PROGRAMME

Charting Modern-Age Beliefs in the Metronomic Tempo

This presentation surveys the various, changing uses of metronome technologies over the long nineteenth century. Historical attitudes about these machines are contrasted with the musical-temporal values popularized through more current pedagogies and performance practices.

Alexander Bonus is Visiting Assistant Professor of Music at Vassar College. In addition to his teaching and publication projects, he maintains a professional career in early-music performance as well as electro-acoustic composition and improvisation.

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Interpreting Tempo Words in Late Seventeenth-Century Organ Praeludia

We will look at some of the basic functions of tempo words specifically related to *stylus phantasticus*. Do these verbal communications confirm or modify the tempo as already communicated through the time signatures and note values; what other functions could they have?

Julia Dokter has just published her book *Tempo and Tactus in the German Baroque* with the University of Rochester Press, and teaches at Georgia State University in the USA.

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Eighteenth-Century Tempo Indications

Tempo was primarily indicated by time signatures and, increasingly, by words. In many cases, these indications are arguably misinterpreted or ignored. Practical ways of putting a composer's 'tempo pyramid' into practice will be presented.

Aapo Häkkinen is Artistic Director of the Helsinki Baroque Orchestra.

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Understanding Early Indications for Tempo Modification

Nicola Vicentino remarks that varying the beat to express affect and provide variety cannot be written down, but his contemporaries occasionally suggest tempo changes by verbal instructions and changes of time signature. Other methods, some of them very idiosyncratic, appear at the turn of the seventeenth century.

Domen Marinčič is a freelance musician, broadcaster and concert presenter. In recent years his research has focused on tempo modification, resulting in conference papers, workshops and guest lectures.

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The Influence of Mechanical Recording Technologies on Performers

This presentation presents some of various research findings of the project *(Re)constructing Early Recordings: a guide for historically-informed performance* (2017–21). It focuses on two-minute wax cylinders and ten-inch discs, and the influence of mechanical technologies in context of tempo choice and tempo rubato.

Inja Stanović is a pianist and a musicologist, currently working as a research fellow at the University of Huddersfield. Her research focuses on mechanical recording technologies and historically-informed performance practices.

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Subjectivity, Flexibility of Tempo and Affect in the Light of Aaron Hill's *The Art of Acting* (1754)

Aaron Hill, the English playwright and acting coach, published various descriptions of his own method to help actors generate affect on stage. He encourages them to seek emotion in their own bodies and to observe and sometimes manipulate both their muscle tension and imagination. By comparing musical performance to the stage, one can propose possibilities of how changes of affect were achieved by musicians in the period, and what effect that would have had on the musical tactus.

Jed Wentz is Assistant Professor at the Academy of Creative and Performing Arts, Leiden University, and teaches at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague. He is Artistic Advisor to the Utrecht Early Music Festival.