

## A. TECHNIQUE AT THE SERVICE OF ART

One of the major concerns in mastering an instrument has always been *technique*. Rather than being a mere outcome of the activity of the fingers, technique should be conceived as a process that is under the complete control of the voluntary system of the cerebrum: it should never be an unmeditated state.

There is one thing that has to be learned: the trade; but there is something else that is our very own and that no one can teach us.

A performer is always faced with two problems. One concerns the purely mechanical difficulties contained within a musical work, the other the interpretative and expressive aspects of the music. It is highly advisable to tackle the latter problem first, for the artistic domain should be entered from the very beginning. Is it conceivable to plunge into a piece before knowing what is to be expressed? This is a point that should never be lost sight of since without it would come the risk of distorting the very nature of art. Were the trade, in its literal sense ever to become the main goal, the outcome would be devoid of art itself.

It is a fact that a performer could never be a great interpreter without a solid technique. Nevertheless, the starting point is what counts: that which comes from the spirit goes to the spirit; all other things belong to the laboratory. The mere player basically differs from the true performer in that he orients himself primarily around the mechanics of playing and keeps apart from everything else in order to highlight his digital juggling (which he treats as if it were a precious gift) and gives his technique personality, autonomy and value, characteristics that clearly do not pertain to it. Through this power of which he is proud, he hopes to obtain the desired traits of the virtuoso.

It can even be asked, What purpose would a technique that requires so much sacrifice serve? What possible justification could such hypertrophy have? It is absurd to pretend to be making music this way. With technique as the main goal, void of all else, art can be only dehumanized. Beware of that monster! Once created, it must be tamed and made to serve the pure values of art, for otherwise, only the contrary and irreversible effects would be obtained.

Spirit and substance are two forces that must be joined in the creation of art. In this way, substance would become somewhat spiritual and the spirit would somehow take on material form. Art pertains to the realm of the soul, and technique belongs to that of reason. Through the happy union of these two elements is born an artistic manifestation, a real symbiosis created by man.