

A 'Dance suite' of Questions to Critics, from Anonymous

1. (Overture) Which one is more influential/powerful in today's culture, the artist or the journalist?

2. (Allemande) The Finnish music writer and disc golfer Jaani Länsiö has said that, typically, the harsher a critic the weaker they are themselves at handling criticism. On a scale of 1–10, how thick would you evaluate your proverbial skin to be regarding meta-criticism? (1 being a tender artistic soul, 5 the carefree layman with a monthly salary, and 10 being the Terminator)

3. (Courante – Double)

a) Are you familiar with the term 'microaggression'?

(For those who don't, a 0,43-second Internet search result informs us that "Microaggression is a term used for brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative attitudes toward stigmatized or culturally marginalized groups.")

b) What benefits (if any) do microaggressions – such as crude populist generalizations against certain aesthetics – offer to music lovers who only want to listen to album reviews on the public radio?

(A recent example of a this: "When postmodern texts are combined with a tonal language that expands the expressive language of a choir to its extremes, the audience typically goes away, and even I only stay because of the job.")

4. (Sarabande) We probably all know the age-old adage that beauty is in the eye of the beholder. That means that the spectator is considered beautiful when beauty is observed by them. In other words, verbal evaluation of beauty (or art) is, at its core, subjective. Objectivity is thus merely a noble objective (aim, goal), naturally limited by subjective qualities of the critic. (As we know, these subjective qualities "make or break" the critic when it comes to charm and credibility.) Why would 'beauty' or 'art' be privileged in regard to this golden principle against other things? For example, isn't "boring" also merely an indication that the spectator themselves is boring? Or conversely (and more positively), "interesting" being an indication that the person using this word to describe something is themselves interesting?

5. (Gigue) Why then fear being boring? Do you think your audience is boring, or easily-bored? Or in other words, can't you think of any other way of being interesting than being "polemical" (technically microaggressive) – like it's still the 1960s or something? It's not: 2021 and beyond is much too interesting to be silenced by such obsessively compulsive toxicity.