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Being Touched by Music

A Phenomenological-Hermeneutical Approach to Understanding
Transformational Musical Experience

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty
of the
McAnulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts
Duquesne University

in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

by
Kurt Kumler

Spring 2006

Daniel Burston, Ph.D., Director
Leswin Laubscher, Ph.D., Reader
Russell Walsh, Ph.D., Reader

PREFACE

"Without music, life would be a mistake."
-Friedrich Nietzsche

Since my first experiences with piano lessons as a young boy, music has been a significant part of my daily life. I remember exploring my parents' extensive collection of records amassed during the early years of their marriage, long before my time. I would meander through their collection, listening with curiosity to the sounds of a wide range of musical styles. From 1950's popular music to country to jazz, the range seemed immense to me then. Through listening to their recordings I was introduced to a world of music that seemed rich and full of possibilities of sound and feeling. I was curious about the sounds themselves, but also the meaning I imagined the songs and artists had for my parents.

Later I began exploring my own musical tastes, seeking out music that touched me personally. Through my adolescence, like many, I sought out music that helped me feel good and make sense of my identity and personal struggles. I found my own music first through my older siblings' music collections, which included the moody alternative pop of the late '70s and 80's – the Smiths, REM, the Cure, New Order... During these years I spent many intimate hours with this music as my companion and commiserator, biking around my hometown hearing the music as an affirming soundtrack to my own life, or feeling intimately connected when listening with friends. Since then my musical taste has

meandered wildly, just like my parents, with some music forgotten that was at one time very important for me. I can look back on my own music history and see something about who I was at various moments along the way and who I have come to be.

In graduate school I started to wonder about my interest in music - What is it that I like about music? Is music as important for others? Sharpened by my studies in existential-phenomenological psychology, my curiosity led me to realize the obvious: that music had been a significant and meaningful part of my life. I came to realize that music had somehow supported me and changed me throughout my life as I began recalling many memories of moments of confusion and emotional pain when music seemed to understand me, offering solace, wisdom, and acceptance. Music is, for me, not just a hobby or pastime, but rather a means for me to connect with myself and the world around me, and to explore my emotional life.

This dissertation is an expression of my interest in exploring how it is that music holds such importance in my life. I chose to consider the phenomenon of experiencing personal transformation through listening to music because this particular kind of listening experience has been the most poignant in my life. Music touches us in many different ways and in many different contexts, but the moments when music is more than sound or entertainment, when it is a world I inhabit or something I become, I am most aware of the power it holds.

In this dissertation I offer an exploration of the literature that relates to the phenomenon of musical transformation, including natural-scientific research as

well as ideas from musicology, ethnomusicology, psychology, literature, and philosophy. The research herein is qualitative in nature, based on a phenomenological-hermeneutic methodology. Using written protocols and interviews, I analyze the personal experiences of four individuals during moments when they felt personally transformed by listening to music. This is done in order to generate a descriptive and interpretive understanding of their experiences, and sketch out an understanding of this kind of musical experience in general.

Throughout the research process, I maintain a reflexive stance, attending to my assumptions and preconceptions as the researcher. This is done to ensure that the understandings generated will retain a kind of self-consciousness and be open to reconsideration and change. Through this dissertation I have been able to deepen my understanding of music's power in my and others' lives and celebrate this wonderful thing that is music. While many questions are yet to be asked, this research has accomplished the goal of offering an understanding of how individuals experience musical transformation and the meaning that these experiences hold for them.

Completing this work marks the end of a long and wonderful journey through my doctoral education. For the last several years of the journey, this dissertation had been a constant companion and the process was both rewarding and trying at times. My love of the topic was tightly twisted with uncertainty and moments of despair as deadlines approached and myriad distractions paraded before me. At times I was not sure I would make it through, and I may not have, if not for the support of many people.

I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Daniel Burston, and my readers, Drs. Russell Walsh and Leswin Laubscher for their assistance and support. They were willing to work with me on this uncommon topic, and without their guidance I would not have been able to find my way. I would like to thank the faculty of the Duquesne University Psychology Department and my fellow students for providing inspiration and support throughout my entire doctoral education. I would like to give thanks to some dear friends who have sustained me throughout: Richard and Heather Innis, Kathy O’Keefe, Andrew Mendell, Dr. Cheryl Forster, and Laurie Smith. Thanks also to Brad Westall, Rob Griffin, Mike Melczak, Matt Dunegan, Kirk Adkins, Greg Malley, and other dear friends who have unwittingly assisted me in this project by sharing and creating music with me. I would like to thank Kimberly Hodge for her unending inspiration. I would especially like to thank my mother and family for their patience and support, despite their perennial question, “Aren’t you done yet?” And finally I would like to thank the participants of this study, who were willing to share their intimate experiences with us and who affirmed my sense of the beauty of music.

Abstract

Being Touched by Music:
A Phenomenological-Hermeneutical Approach to Understanding
Transformational Musical Experience

Kurt Kumler

This dissertation investigated the lived experience of being personally transformed by listening to music. The investigation started with an exploration of the literature that relates to the phenomenon of musical transformation, including natural-scientific research as well as ideas from musicology, ethnomusicology, psychology, literature, and philosophy. This research was designed to access the nuanced and subjective aspects of the phenomenon by attending to the experience *as lived* by the experiencer. The method was qualitative in nature, based on a phenomenological-hermeneutical methodology. Throughout the research process, the researcher maintained a reflexive stance, attending to assumptions and preconceptions held about the phenomenon. This was done to ensure that the understandings generated would retain a kind of self-consciousness, remaining open to reconsideration.

The data set included written protocols and conversations with four musicians about moments when they felt personally transformed by listening to music. From this data, descriptive and interpretive understandings of their

experiences were generated and an understanding of this kind of musical experience in general was articulated. Qualities found in this research to be integral to transformational musical experience include the following themes: *Attunement to the experience, Apprehending the beautiful, Inhabiting a musical world, Being sound, Embodying music's will, Connectedness, and Emerging transformed.* Transformational musical experience was disclosed as a phenomenon that involves the creation of personal meaning that is co-constituted by the music and the listener in the face of apprehending beautiful sound. The results were discussed in dialogue with ideas from the literature, with particular focus on the experience of embodiment of the transformational experience, the felt sense of connection to others and to the music, and notions of meaning and emotionality in music.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Disclosing Our Musical World

Music has been an integral part of human existence since before recorded history, and it is present in every culture around the world today. Music has been a part of human culture since at least 15,000 B.C., evidenced by the dancing sorcerer cave drawing of Les Trois Freres, in which a shamanic figure is seen dancing with a musical instrument (Storr, 1992). As for our contemporary culture, one need only glance to see the ubiquitous nature of music. Brown and Hendee (1989) reported that the average American high school student heard over 30 hours of pop music a week. In 1993, 98.5% of teenagers in the United States of America claimed to listen to music daily. A British survey by Kotsopoulou (1997) indicated that 75% of citizens aged over 30 listened to music for at least one hour everyday.

Despite the proliferation of music, or perhaps because of it, we often take it for granted and fail to realize the value it holds in our lives. Considering the range of musical forms and styles as well as the diverse contexts of musical experiences, it is no surprise that music is an enigmatic subject. From muzak in the elevator, to a sacred performance of Tibetan monks chanting in a temple, to a Walkman playing James Brown privately for a jogger, the variety of musical experiences is immense.

The effects of listening to music for individuals are as complex and varied as music itself. Taking a casual look at ourselves in *terra musica*, we see reactions to music of typical listeners ranging from disinterest and boredom to ecstatic rapture. In social settings where background music is played, we listen without directly attending to the sounds and rarely feel their impact consciously. But we may also listen to music technically, studying the chords and melody to learn how to play or sing a particular song. We may listen as we exercise, dance, or work and experience the music as facilitating our movement. Or we may focus our attention, listening intently to the music for enjoyment or reflection. Sometimes, when intently listening in any number of contexts (the car, at home, at a concert, alone, or with others...) music seems to have the power to touch and transform our everyday experience of life.

In this latter mode, in which we are absorbed or focusing on music, musical sound seems able to touch us, move through us, and animate us. It can bring us to tears, cause a shiver down our spine, or make us cheer in triumph. Perhaps this mode of listening is best articulated by T.S. Eliot's description in *The Dry Salvages* (1941): "Music heard so deeply / that it is not heard at all, but you are the music / While the music lasts." In these transformative moments, music confirms, challenges, witnesses, and teaches. It enlivens us, inspires us to move our bodies in celebration, and gives rise to deep emotional experience.

In my life I have experienced moments in which I felt deeply moved by music. In my car, at live shows, listening with others, and in seemingly countless other contexts I have been touched by wonderful sounds of music in ways that

have exposed me to new feelings, new understandings, and new appreciation for the beauty of sound.

On one occasion, for example, I listened to the song *Telephone and Rubber Band*, by the instrumental group Penguin Café Orchestra while sitting alone in my apartment. I had only recently been introduced to this band and had picked up their recording after hearing this particular song at a friend's house. I played the song on my stereo as soon as I got home from the music shop. I was immediately struck by the sounds in the song, an upbeat and quirky folk-style piece played by the small orchestra. I was particularly piqued by the droning sound of a telephone busy signal, which was incorporated into the song and repeated throughout. I had the volume high, and I was giving it my undivided attention. I was riveted to the sounds, and as the sounds in the song shifted with a change in chording and melody, the telephone tone continued unchanged. With the shifts in chording and melody, the tone moved from being in consonance to dissonance and back again. I felt a shiver and I chuckled out loud as I heard the tone continue, and I moved to sit on the floor as if to sharpen my focus on the music. As the music continued, I found myself crying and feeling a strong sense of comfort and calm. My mind was both active, moving to thoughts about my life and current difficulties I was facing, and open, as if I was considering my life with a new found calmness. I clearly remember feeling that I was the telephone signal in the song, and that I was traveling through the song – through the changes in the song, and feeling comforted by how I remained constant through the changes. Moreover, as the telephone signal, I continued to

blend beautifully with the changing environment of the chording and melody. The quirkiness of the telephone tone offered a lightheartedness that imparted a welcomed sense of levity in what was, until then, a difficult time. Through this listening experience, my life felt more tolerable and understandable, and the struggles I was facing were ameliorated by the support and confirmation I felt in the music. I hold this as a valuable and transforming moment in my life.

Individuals have described being healed by this type of musical experience, which suggests music listened to intently can have a therapeutic, transformative quality. Indeed, in the United States since the 1970's, music has been sanctioned by psychotherapists and other mental health practitioners as a form of treatment for a variety of mental illnesses (Heal and Wigram, 1993). Plato, quoting Socrates, noted the transforming quality of music, "Musical training is a more potent instrument than any other, because rhythm and harmony find their way into the inward places of the soul, on which they mightily fasten, imparting grace, and making the soul of him who is rightly educated graceful" (2001, book III, p. 88). Proust wrote that, "Music ...helped me to descend into myself, to discover new things: the variety that I had sought in vain in life and travel" (cited in Storr, 1992, p. 118).

It is clear that music has the power to facilitate deeply moving and very personal moments in which an individual is healed or transformed. My personal experiences are confirmed by and confirm the above quotes, and the use of music for healing in various cultures and eras are undeniable. The question of how it is that music touches us in these profound transformative experiences is

not so easily answered, however. How it is that we are moved personally by the cunning organization of sound? What is the meaning of these transformational music experiences?

Focus of the Research

Investigators and philosophers have pondered many questions about the nature of transformative musical experience, some of which will be discussed below. While ideas from various disciplines that address diverse aspects of the question have broadened our understanding, we still lack a holistic and integrated perspective on the way music affects us.

While replete with useful data and illuminating insights, the natural scientific research to date does not yet answer the aforementioned questions satisfactorily. I suggest this is because much of it attends to questions about how music affects particular components of the body, brain, or behavior, and this knowledge does not help us better understand the *lived experience* of being moved by music. In attending to the *lived experience*, we are fixing our gaze on the phenomenon as it is experienced, and made *meaningful* by the experiencer.

This focus, with its questions, 'How it is that we are moved personally by the cunning organization of sound?' and, 'What is the meaning of these transformational music experiences?' serves as an alternative discourse, or a different way of approaching an understanding of the phenomenon. The approach of much of the literature expands factual knowledge about discrete

effects music has on specific variables of human experience, but does not illuminate the subjective *experiencing* of the phenomenon.

The majority of the remaining research offers richer descriptive accounts than ones utilizing natural scientific methods, but likewise do not disclose an understanding of the subjective experience *as it is lived*. They offer descriptions and narratives of the phenomenon of musical transformation, but do so from the third person, observing perspective. Finally, philosophical ideas from various fields offer rich insights and points of entry for empirical study. In and of themselves, however, they lack the grounding of empiricism that allows for critical evaluation and further exploration through research. It is my hope that this empirical study will offer such a grounding. By remaining *near the experience* of the phenomenon through empirical investigation, our insights and theories are brought together and enter into dialogue with the experiential world we inhabit.

This project focuses on the personal meaning of transformational musical experience, looking at the experience of listening to and being deeply touched by musical sound, in contrast to “easy listening,” or other types of musical experience. The aim of this project is to provide a phenomenological description of this particular phenomenon with the hope that it will accomplish two tasks. Firstly, I hope to reveal the phenomenon of experiencing musical transformation *as it is lived* by an individual. Secondly, I hope to explore a more appropriate method of investigation, answering calls in the literature for an alternative methodological paradigm to better understand the elusive effect music has in our

lives. After reviewing the relevant literature, I show that by looking phenomenological-hermeneutically at the meaning of musical experience we allow musical experience to manifest itself on its own terms, nearest to the experience as *it is lived* by the individual as possible.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

In order to begin an investigation of the experience of being transformed by music, we must first survey the field and situate the question within the greater body of knowledge existent on the subject. The literature related to the subject of transformational musical experience is a diverse landscape that includes natural-scientific studies on the psychophysiology of music, studies in music therapy, and theories from psychology, musicology, and ethnomusicology. These various disciplines all lend understanding to certain aspects of the experience of being transformed by music, and as such will serve to help us with this investigation. Each discourse offers a point of view through which one can glimpse a limited perspective of the phenomenon, but the existent literature does not, for various reasons, attend directly to the question of this research. The lived experience of being transformed, that is, the experience of living through musical transformation, can be apprehended only by holding the entirety of the experience, but it requires more than a summation of discrete components or multiple perspectives. What is also required is a shift from observing the experience from a distanced stance, be it natural science “objectivism” or a philosophical analytic, to a position as near to the inside as possible, closest to the experience as it is lived by the experiencer. After offering a brief overview of psycho-physiological research, I address research on the topic of music therapy. Following this, I explore philosophical notions of the structure and meaning of

music, emotion and embodiment of music, aesthetic experience, and transformational experience. I will then offer a response to what is left unexamined in the literature by introducing the alternative approach that this dissertation will take to disclose the phenomenon at hand, lending a richer and more complete understanding to the existent literature.

Psycho-physiological effects of Music

There have been many natural scientific studies that investigate various and discrete effects music has on individuals. While little of this research attends to the *lived* experience of music, it offers a way to decipher the impact music has on particular components of human experience, giving us partial or fragmentary insights into music's ability to foster personal transformation. Research on an individual's psycho-physiological response to music can be gathered into categories that include physiological, motor, and cognitive effects.

The effects of music on heart rate, skin conductivity, respiration rates, blood pressure, muscular tension, motor and postural responses, skin temperature, blood volume, and stomach contractions, as well as others, have all been studied. One study that showed a beneficial physiological response to music (Charnetski and Brennan, 1998) concluded that music can strengthen immune activity and promote health after revealing that IgA (an antibody used as an indicator of activity in the immune system) was higher in subjects when listening to music. Other studies on these topics include McFarland (1985), who investigated effects on skin temperature, Skille and Wigram (1995), who

considered muscle tissue changes, Iwanaga, Ikeda, and Iwaki (1996), Vanderark and Ely (1993), and Bartlett (1999), who studied multiple effects like skin temperature, galvanic skin response, and cortisol levels. These studies all confirm that listening to music affects our bodies in certain measurable and discrete ways. Bartlett (1999) reviewed research relating to physiological responses to music, and considered both whether music has a measurable effect on human physiology, and whether such effects can shed light on music's power to activate and alter the human condition. His conclusion was that the literature supports the notion that music and sound stimuli in general certainly do influence bodily systems, but that the literature on physiological responses does not help us understand music's power to touch and alter us.

There is ample natural scientific research on the effect music has on more complex physiological phenomena like arousal and relaxation, and certain behavior for such activities as athletics, commercial consumption, work, and study. For example Reiber (1965) studied the activity of 5 and 6-year-old children under conditions of silence, fast music, and slow music. He found that activity rates were higher during the intervals when music was played, with fast music having the more marked effect. The work of Anshel & Marisi (1978), Beh and Hirst (1999), Hallam and Godwin (2000), and Ogata (1995) also serve as representative studies on music's effect on arousal for various populations. These studies clearly demonstrated music's impact on our level of activity by showing that with each population and with each task, subjects' behaviors were mediated by musical sound.

With regard to research on music's ability to assist relaxation, Robb (2000) and Davis & Thaut (1989) showed that music combined with progressive muscle relaxation had the largest effect on self-report measures of relaxation. Other studies examined the effect music has on an individual's reaction to stressful situations, like a visit to the dentist or doctor. For example, Robb, Nichols, Rutan, Bishop, and Parker (1995) and Winter, Paskin and Baker (1994) studied music's impact on pre-operative stress levels of patients, and Bateson (1996) considered live music's impact on distress of patients receiving injections. The findings in these studies were consistent: each concluded that listening to calm music does indeed reduce stress in the context of anxiety provoking situations.

As we have seen, research suggests that music can affect our general physiological state, but studies have also investigated ways that music can enhance intentional behavior, or performance in a number of contexts. An example of research in this area is Ferguson, Carbonneau, and Chambliss (1994) who asked volunteers to perform a pre-selected karate drill three times following positive and negative music and white noise. The authors concluded that performance with music was significantly higher than white noise. A study by North and MacKenzie (2000) tested the notion that fast music would improve employees' productivity in the work place. They found that fast music leads to 22.3% more productivity than slow music, and to 12.5% more productivity than silence. Likewise, in the context of consuming, studies have shown that in-store music impacts such things as shopping pace and spending rates of consumers (North, Hargreaves and Mckendrick, 1999; McElrea and Standing 1992;

Milliman, 1986, 1982). Other studies, e.g. Bruner (1990), Olson (1994), and Gorn (1982), have focused on music in advertising and consumer attitudes. The findings of these studies are consistent, suggesting that listening to music impacts our behavior in certain contexts, specifically, faster tempos are associated with faster behavior, and pleasing music is associated with more purchasing and positive evaluations of products.

Many researchers have investigated the impact music has on cognitive processes as well (Fisk, 1990; Rauscher, Shaw, Levine, Wright, Dennis, and Newcomb, 1997; Rauscher, Savan, 1999; Shaw, and Ky, 1995; Sloboda, 1991, 1990). Their findings suggested that music facilitates certain cognitive processes of memory, learning, and problem solving. There is a rich literature relating to the 'Mozart effect', which is the belief that by being exposed to classical music *in utero* one can hasten cognitive development resulting in higher post natal cognitive and behavioral abilities (Annis, 1978; Johnson, 1985; Olds, 1985; Shelter, 1985; Spelt, 1948). However, according to Hetland (2000), findings are inconclusive as to the long-term benefit of exposure to music at the early stages of development. He concluded that there is a short-term effect by which music enhances spatial-temporal performance for adults as well as children.

The research described above offers conceptualizations of how music affects particular aspects of human functioning and physiology. Based on the literature, it is clear that music impacts us physiologically, behaviorally, and cognitively. These contributions help us understand how we are affected by music in these specific ways, but do not address the subjective, lived experience

of the individual being touched by music that is the aim of this investigation. Next I turn to research that comes closer to this objective, namely music therapy literature.

Music Therapy

According to *The American Music Therapy Association*, music therapy is an established health profession using music and music activities to address physical, psychological, cognitive, and social needs of individuals with illness or disability. The profession was established in the US in 1950 as a result of work with patients in veterans' hospitals following World War II. Today, over 5,000 music therapists are employed throughout the U.S. in hospitals, clinics, day-care facilities, schools, community mental health centers, substance abuse facilities, nursing homes, hospices, rehabilitation centers, correctional facilities, and private practices. Nearly half a century of research in music therapy demonstrated its effectiveness in promoting health, such as facilitating movement and overall physical rehabilitation, motivating people to cope with treatment, providing emotional support for clients and families, and serving as an outlet for the expression of feelings. Music therapy is also used in process-oriented psychotherapy (Hodges, 1996).

Music therapy research supports the notion that music has rehabilitative value for certain physical and psychological ailments. Knoz and Jutai (1996) concluded that music is an ideal vehicle for improving attention in brain-injured individuals. They suggested that music is effective because it improves

concentration and attention. Edgerton (1994) found that music assists autistic children in developing communication skills. Caron, Donnell, and Friedman (1996) found that music helps to reduce bruxism in developmentally disabled individuals.

Sacks (1985, 1974) and Sacks & Tomaino (1991) discussed the use of music in improving the functioning of patients with a variety of neurological disabilities, e.g. strokes, Parkinson's Disease, and Alzheimer's disease. They described cases where music stimulated patients such that they were able to move, walk, and dance, when this was not possible before. In addition, they explored the power of music to assist in ameliorating symptoms of Alzheimer's disease. The authors argued that the music must be the "right" music for the patient, music that has significance and meaning for the individual, but that this music can restore the individual to him or herself.

In the literature on music therapy, the majority of studies focus on benefits for disabled populations, particularly dementia in geriatric and organically compromised individuals, individuals with learning disabilities, and mentally ill populations (Pollack and Namazi, 1992; Thomas, Heitman, & Alexander, 1997; Tang, Yao, & Zheing, 1994). Benefits cited in these studies include better coordination, enhanced memory, and relaxation. Tyson (1981), a music therapist, summarized the benefits that music therapy has in conjunction with psychiatric treatment. These include music's ability to, "command attention and increase its span; it's power of diversion and substitution; it's capacity to modify

mood, to stimulate pictorially and intellectually, to relieve internal tension, to facilitate self expression, and it's capacity to stimulate resocialization" (p. 10).

Tyson's summary and the studies mentioned above reveal something about music's therapeutic impact, but they also reveal the limited nature of the focus of attention held by the majority of music therapy research, which is fixed on discrete, isolated aspects of human functioning with specific populations. While these studies are useful, as far as they go, they focus on limited and discrete components of human behavior that are quantifiable and operationalizable, and as a result, construct an understanding that is limited in scope. One result of this is that we are left with an understanding of music's power that misses beneficial qualities that cannot be operationalized, like changes in meaning or felt experience. These more subtle and complex qualities of the phenomenon are left covered over. An additional limitation of the natural scientific approach of the studies above is that they do not address the lived experience of being transformed by music from the view of the *subjective experiencer*. In their effort to remain objective, they account for the experience of the listener in a limited way, and do not attend to their *experience* of being transformed by music.

Conceptions of Music as Subject

From the foundation of research on music therapy and discrete effects music has on individuals described in the previous two sections, we now turn our gaze toward the subjective experience of the phenomenon at hand. As our

attention shifts inward, to the *living through* of the experience, we will consider philosophical ideas and theories to deepen our understanding. We will first consider what music is – its definition and how we can distinguish music from other sonorous experience. We will then explore notions of meaning, emotionality, and embodiment to deepen our understanding and explore the foundation that informs the investigation at hand.

We know what music sounds like, though we might not be able to clearly articulate what music is. Music can be construed as an art form whose medium is sound. It separates itself from other sounds, the sounds of daily life, clearly and distinctly, as few people would mistake music for random sounds or vice versa. Perhaps, though, it is not music that separates itself from the sounds of everyday life, but the listener who hears a sound as musical. There is no clear consensus in the identification of good music, but more importantly, there is no consensus as to the identification of musical sound in general. This confusion is most readily seen in the avant gard music of such composers as John Cage, Steve Reich, Brian Eno, or various 'noise' artists, all of whom challenge our notion of what constitutes music. Cage gained notoriety in the 1950's as the composer of 4'33", an entirely "silent" piece, normally performed by a pianist who sits at a closed piano (Cook, 1990). The incidental sounds that make up the sonic experience of this composition (e.g. audience noises and sounds in the environment of the performance space) are made meaningful only by the designation of the '4 minutes and 33 seconds' of time that comprise the performance.

In Music as Heard (1983), Thomas Clifton offered a clear and sensible summary of musical phenomena based on the notion that, “music is an ordered arrangement of sounds and silences whose meaning is presentative” (p. 1). Music can be made with instruments, voices, and literally any thing that makes a sound. What makes it music is the *intentionality of the individual listener involved*. The salient point that Clifton made is that the meaning of musical experience is not given by the thing making the sound, nor the sound itself. Music emerges through the intentionality of the persons hearing certain sounds as “musical.” Clifton offered the following definition: “music is the actualization of the possibility of any sound whatever to present to some human being a meaning which he experiences with his body – that is to say, with his mind, his feelings, his senses, his will, and his metabolism” (1983, p. 1). Clifton then offered as a conclusion to his phenomenological project, “music is what I am when I experience it” (p. 297).

Clifton’s definition of music holds that individuals can hear music that is not composed or played – perhaps the music of crashing ocean waves or wind chimes. He did not attend to the intentionality of the composer or performer, which certainly deserves consideration. Music is the actualization of the performer through her direct expression as much as it is a product of the listener listening, and it is more accurate to hold that music as an intersubjective experience between performer and listener. Add to this, the *composer’s* intentionality and a richer and more complex understanding of the intentionality of music emerges that includes all of the roles: listener, performer, and composer.

While this investigation does not attend directly to the question of what constitutes music, ideas on the subject offer a foundation or starting point for the research. In our attempt to remain close to the phenomenon of musical transformation as it is lived by the listener, Clifton's conception of music seems fitting. Defining music by the intentional act of listening to something as music allows for a discourse that highlights the position, or experience of the listener.

Meaning in Music

Writers who have considered the question, 'what does music mean?' offer rich insights that allow us to focus our investigation and look more directly at the subjective experience we are hoping to illuminate. It is evident that transformational musical experiences are meaningful for the individual, but what is this meaning? What is it about the music that beckons the transformation in the individual? In our attempt to disclose the phenomenon, we will consider theories of music, the question of what music offers or communicates to us, and its meaning and emotionality.

Considering the basic structures of music, rhythm and tonality, we can see that music offers a wealth of psychologically significant phenomena. Rhythm, as a structural ordering of time, offers such things as pattern and repetition. Tonality in music, including melody and harmony, offers consonance, dissonance, texture, resolution, and pattern, to name a few. These aspects of musical structure have been described through a number of paradigms in the effort of deciphering what music means. They include the idea of music as 1) a language

or quasi-language, 2) metaphor, or 3) symbol, to name a few. All attend to music as an independent phenomenon from the listener, but all share the motive of asserting that music has and conveys meaning. In this shared project they all challenge Stravinski's claim, "Music is, by its very nature powerless to express anything at all, whether a feeling, an attitude of mind, a psychological mood, a phenomenon of nature, etc." (cited in Cooke, 1959, p. 11).

The notion that music is a language has been discussed for many decades. This analogy supposes that music is comprised of language-like structures that express or communicate as signifiers. For example, Cooke (1959) focused on structures claimed to be universal, like musical tensions set by "pitch, time and volume, and the setting up of such tensions, and the coloring of them by the characterizing agents of tone-color and texture" (p. 34). These structures are purported to express emotions like language.

Ferguson (1960) depicted music as metaphor, claiming, "Not only in the swiftness and vividness of its expressive suggestion, but in certain aspects of its expressive processes, music largely resembles metaphor" (p. 181). He also pointed to music's ability to communicate non-linguistically, through emotions and images to support his claim. Scruton (1997) saw music as metaphorical, suggesting that like metaphor in language, musical meaning is an analogy that is merely a vehicle, while the true impact is the resulting "transformation of the reader's experience" (p. 86). He felt that metaphor, like music, presents one with a meaning that necessarily involves both oneself and the object of perception. He wrote that in metaphor, the apparent object and the imagined meaning

combine causing one to “vibrate in sympathy with both simultaneously. I thereby make a connection between them – a connection that is real in my emotions, but only imagined in the objects themselves” (1997, p. 86).

Hindemith (1961) and Fiske (1990) disagreed that music is a language, but acknowledged that it expresses something meaningful nonetheless. These theorists supported the idea that music represents primitive archetypes and basic emotional states through sound symbols. Indeed, Kohut (1955) suggested, “music, as an extraverbal mode of mental functioning, permits a specific, subtle regression to preverbal, primitive forms of mental experience” (p. 17). This conception relates to Tolbert’s idea (2001) that musical meaning is related to our propensity for mimesis, or “supramodal motor modeling capacity.” From an evolutionary perspective, Tolbert considered meaning in music as a result of the development of the human capacity, prior to the development of language, to express symbolic meaning through embodied gestures and sounds.

Susanne Langer (1942) has written about meaning in music as communicative, but unlike language. She posited that music articulates forms, and can reveal the nature of feeling in a way that language cannot. She believed that a structural or literal understanding of music fails to express its sensual nature and its importance in our lives. “The real power of music lies in the fact that it can be true to the life of feeling in a way that language cannot... its significant forms have an ambivalence of content which words do not” (p. 206). Langer (1942) believed that music articulates forms that are ‘non-discursive’, yet evoke basic human experience like the rhythms and melodies of life: organic life,

social life, and our physiological and psychological 'inner life', all of which have properties similar to those of music: patterns of motion and rest, of tension and release, of agreement and disagreement, preparation, fulfillment, excitation and so forth. She suggested that the indeterminate meaning of musical "statements" encourages deeply personal interpretations. She posited that meaning in musical experience is given by the music itself, but in a form that lends itself to being taken up and made real by one's personal life meaning.

This idea is supported by Nass (1971), who, based on Langer's idea, conceptualized music as a projective on which the listener situates a personally significant meaning. He suggested that one of the characteristics of listening to music is that it facilitates the emergence of less structured states of consciousness, which allows a listener to attend to the music as a sort of projective stimulus, offering something on which our lives are dramatized and given meaning. Music offers a transposition of self and world.

In a similar vein, Copeland (1952) explained that, "Whatever the semanticists of music may uncover, [music] will always articulate subtle complexities of feeling that language cannot even name, let alone set forth" (p. 23). Whatever the paradigm, it is clear that music has a particular quality of structure that lends itself to imaginative interpretation, which allows a listener to experience intimate and intense psychological phenomena. Gadamer (1986) posited that music's structure does in fact contain meaning, but that this meaning is not available to us as it is supposed in language. He pointed out that, "music, perhaps the most sublime of all the arts, has taught us that such a thing is

possible. Every composition of absolute music possesses this structure of undecipherable meaning” (1986, p. 75). He added, “the dimension of sound and sense are inextricably interwoven [in lyrical poetry/music] ...where we confront an unconditional case of untranslatability” (p. 111). Nietzsche also heard music as meaningful, but unintelligible. In *The Birth of Tragedy* (1967), he wrote:

...music stands in symbolic relation to the primordial contradiction and primordial pain in the heart of the primal unity, and therefore symbolizes a sphere which is beyond and prior to all phenomena... Language... can never by any means disclose the innermost heart of music. (p. 42)

In its lack of clear meaning, music has been conceptualized as expressing or being pure will. Schopenhauer’s work (1969) is perhaps the most well-known on this idea. He stated, “...music is by no means like the other arts, namely a copy of the Ideas, but a copy of the will itself, the force that gives life to the Ideas. For this reason, the effect of music is so very much more powerful and penetrating than is that of the other arts, for these speak only of the shadow, but music of the essence” (p. 140). He supported a representational view of musical forms as indirectly depicting movements of the will. Like Langer (1942) he saw a correspondence between melody and what is distinctive of sentient life:

As rapid transition from wish to satisfaction and from this to a new wish are happiness and wellbeing, so rapid melodies with great deviations are cheerful. Slow melodies that strike painful discords and wind back to the keynote only through many bars are sad, on the analogy of delayed and hard-won satisfaction... (Schopenhauer, 1969, p. 260)

The theories described above hold a conception of meaning that suggest the listener perceives something in the music and grasps it's meaning in some intellectual way. Merleau-Ponty's (1962) ideas of embodiment seem salient to this question of the untranslatability of musical meaning and suggest a way to understand music as intelligible is ways other than intellectual. For Merleau-Ponty all knowledge is embodied. For him, knowledge is created in the unity between subjects and objects that is the direct result of having a body. His notion of "body-subject" suggests this unity involves a unique kind of knowing that is more than a mental or intellectual act. He held that knowing takes place in a realm beyond our cognitive or intellectual experience that includes what we "live through with operative intentionality and responsiveness" (1962, p. xviii). For him, acting and feeling precede mental knowing. His radical account of the mutual "sensuous recognition" of individuals emphasizes that it is the body that encounters others and the world, not an abstracted mind that somehow inhabits that body. Bodies have understandings of the world, which are independent of any sort of cognitive map. Speaking about body knowledge, Dufrenne (1973) stated, "As immanent in the sensuous, meaning itself must traverse the body. Meaning can be read by feeling or elaborated upon by reflection only if it is first received an experienced by the body" (p. 341).

Perception is not merely a passive reaction to sensory stimulation, but an active merging of one's knowing body and the world it inhabits. This union of self and world through perception was conceptualized by Merleau-Ponty (1962) as a

"creative receptivity." For him, this inseparability of inner and outer ensures that a study of the perceived ends up revealing the subject perceiving. As he put it, "the body will draw to itself the intentional threads which bind it to its surroundings and finally will reveal to us the perceiving subject as the perceived world" (p. 407). For this inquiry, Merleau-Ponty's ideas lend an understanding that allows for a broader conception of how music is rendered meaningful by the listener, and suggests that meaning is decipherable, but not by our intellect alone.

Emotion and Music

A secondary question arises as we consider music as communicating something meaningful: What is it that music communicates? Many of the discourses about meaning in music referenced above point to emotion as the thing that music communicates. In fact, many believe that music's nature is in fact essentially emotional, and that it is this quality of music that touches us so profoundly. Pratt (1952) succinctly stated, "Music sounds the way emotions feel" (p. 17). Nevel Willoughby (1978) asked Bob Marley about when he began his musical career, and he answered, "when I cried as a baby, man," pointing to the pure emotionality of musical communication.

We can see evidence that musical sounds convey felt experience and emotion in our spoken language and in the behaviors of animals. As we use rhythm and melodic inflection in our language, we heighten the emotional expression of our words. A lover addressing his partner and a mother consoling

her child often speak melodiously, using higher tones and a greater range of tone to enamor and lull their listeners. In rhetoric we use short rhythmic punctuation to add certainty and power to our message. In anger we use low loud tones and may even drum our fists on a table to create force. Perhaps it is easier for us to recognize these ways of communicating emotionally with sound in animals, which use emotional sounds just as we do to communicate much information despite a lack of language.

Some research has focused on particular styles of music and particular musical components as inducing specific emotional reactions. These notions support a representational theory of musical meaning similar to the conception of music as a language described above. These studies posit that such musical structures as minor and major modes in western music, for instance, induce sadness and happiness, respectively (Gagnon and Peretz, 2003; Gowensmith and Bloom, 1997; Robazza, Macaluso, and D'Urso, 1994). This area has received considerable attention in theoretical works and has been a point of contention in the philosophy of music. Peter Kivy, in The Corded Shell (1980), offered a detailed explication of the idea that music conveys emotion. He concluded that music does not serve as direct expression of emotions, but rather music is *expressive of*, or suggestive of emotions. Kaelin (1970) pointed out that, "a composer does not symptomatically express his own feelings; nor does he arouse ours. His compositions present concepts of feeling which, indeed, may never be felt by anyone at all" (p. 198). He explained that we experience emotion in music, but that, "the reason for this phenomenon is the functioning of

tertiary qualities in the organization of an aural gestalt like agitation, pensiveness, longing, languor..." (p. 195).

Kivy (1980) articulated a more nuanced conception of how music expresses emotional meaning through its forms and structures. He provided an analogy, "the Saint Bernard's face is not expressing sadness, the face of the Saint Bernard is sad even when the creature is happy, it being at the other end that she expresses her emotions. The face, rather, is expressive of sadness" (p. 37). Though he denied that his is a "representational theory," he promoted a "contour theory" that holds, "the contour of music – its sonic shape, bears a structural analogy to the heard and seen manifestations of human emotive expression" (p. 40). Kivy's notion supports the idea that music communicates something about emotion, but like ideas of Nass and Langer discussed above, what is conveyed is believed to be vague forms or gestures that suggest or remind us of emotional experience.

Embodiment of Musical Experience

One can imagine that our bodies are central to the experience of music in ways more than being emotionally touched by the meaning of the sounds. Indeed, sonic vibrations that we encounter in music reach the entirety of our bodies rather than just our eardrums. One only needs to consider the call to movement and dance that many experience when listening to music to find evidence of music's impact on our bodies. Scarantino (1987) posited that our bodies are sonic receptors that respond at the cellular level to sounds from within

and out in the world. Likewise, Khan (1991) detailed Sufi notions of music vibration as 'breath' that touches our bodies and calls us to higher levels of embodied consciousness. Reimer and Wright (1992) described music's inherent ability to touch us as "musical sensuousity." they contended that, "underlying musical experience is an aspect that forms a kind of "grounding" for all that occurs above it – the sensuousity of tone. Sounds have a tangible effect on our bodies and our being; they are "felt" as much as they are heard" (p. 242).

Seashore (1939) believed that this quality of music allows for a deep enjoyment of musical experience and creates a beneficial effect for the listener. He said,

We love music because we have a physiological organism, which registers music and responds to it somewhat like a resonator... The response to music is beneficent, bringing about a feeling of well-being and body glow, which results in the physiological attitude of attraction and pleasure. Without this there could be no emotional love of music. (p. 378)

As distinct from visual media, we encounter sound with our sensual body, and this helps us understand the dilemma of deciphering emotional meaning in music. The visual communicates by an exterior "objectivity," in which understanding is in looking, thinking as seeing. In contrast, the aural communicates by an interior "subjectivity," in which understanding is in feeling, intimating the presence of Being in the vibration of the music. Merleau-Ponty (1962) described music as being too far beyond the world to be anything but certain movements of experience - its ebb and flow, its growth, its upheavals, its turbulence. This suggests that sonorous experience communicates movement

and dynamics that are more akin to embodied knowing rather than the distanced perception of vision.

Music listening involves both a reaching out and an opening up of the body, not just the mind. Perception, Merleau-Ponty (1962) contended, requires a certain reciprocity, sustained, on the one hand, by a directional attention or perspective that brings the object into focus and on the other hand, by a willingness to be guided by the object itself. In music, this reciprocity gives the moment a temporal thickness that makes it seem as if the music has become part of our bodily being. To paraphrase Merleau-Ponty, it is as if there is a breaking down of the external horizons that distinguish subject and object, ultimately resulting in a sense of "double belongingness," through which, for example, our knowledge of past experiences of motion enables music to be felt as moving.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1962) saw the experience of music, as he did all sense experience, as spatial. He said, "sensation as it is brought to use by experience is no longer some inert substance or abstract moment, but one of our surfaces of contact with being, a structure of consciousness," and ". . . as the universal condition of all qualities, we have with each (sensation), a particular manner of being in space and, in a sense, of making space" (p. 447). Later he added, "Music is not in visible space, but it besieges, undermines, and displaces that space..." (p. 452). As space is what the body inhabits, music seems to offer a unique experience in that it impacts our fundamental experience of embodied being.

These notions of embodiment broaden our investigation further, beyond conceptualizing music as being meaningful only as emotion. To summarize our investigation into philosophical ideas concerning transformational musical experience thus far, we have considered ways of defining music, attended to meaning in musical experience, considered the well-established notion that music has essentially an emotional meaning, then considered embodied experience as meaningful in musical experience. Next we will turn toward two topics that relate more directly to transformational musical experience, namely aesthetics and transformation, itself.

Aesthetic Musical Experience

It seems apparent that we should consider aesthetic musical experience in order to explore ways that musical taste and value may contribute to our understanding of the phenomenon of musical transformation. Though aesthetic reactions to music, like discovering the beautiful or enjoying the sounds, do not necessarily indicate transformation per se, we nonetheless discover additional insights and new points of access to the phenomenon we are investigating. The complexity of the idea of aesthetic experience is considerable, suggested by the variety and subtlety of reactions individuals have to what they find beautiful in music, from an appreciation of technical virtuosity to an ecstatic reaction to the sacred in music (Power, Collins, & Burnim, 1989).

Aesthetic reactions to musical experience have been described through discourses that gather around two general notions, one that focuses on

intellectual or perceptual experience, and the other, with a focus on embodied sensation or feeling. Nietzsche (1974) provided a compelling description of experiencing the beautiful in music in an embodied way:

What is it that my body expects of music? I believe its own ease: as if all animal functions should be quickened by easy, bold, exuberant, self-assured rhythms; as if iron, leaden life should be gilded by good golden and tender harmonies. My melancholy wants to rest in the hiding places and abysses of perfection: that is why I need music. (p. 324)

The embodied reaction to aesthetically pleasing music can be understood as a “peak experience,” which roughly speaking is a moment of feeling vibrantly alive. In a speech given in 1967 at a symposium for music, Abraham Maslow pointed out that, “music and sex are the two easiest means of reaching peak experience.” Maslow went on to say, “music melts over into dancing and rhythm. This includes a love for, and an awareness of the body” (Cited in Reimer, 1992, p. 109). Goldstein (1980) studied an aspect of this type of aesthetic reaction to music, framing it as a thrill reaction accompanied by tingling sensations while listening. He found that music, indeed, was an especially effective stimulus for the thrill response. Micky Hart (1990), a professional drummer and musicologist, offered a description of an aesthetic, embodied reaction to music that is commensurate with the idea ‘peak experience’ and a thrill response:

When the music is *right* you feel it with all your senses. The head of the drum vibrates as the stick strikes it. The physical feedback is almost

instantaneous, rushing along your arms, filling your ears. Your mind is turned off, your judgment wholly emotional. Your emotions seem to stream down your arms and legs and out the mouth of the drum; you feel light, gravity-less, your arms feel like feathers. You fly like a bird. (p. 231)

Related to embodied aesthetic reactions to music, aesthetic reactions to music have been described by some psychodynamic theorists as primitive and psychologically base experiences (Kohut & Levarie, 1950, Nass, 1971). Kohut and Levarie (1950) believed that in aesthetic reactions to music, one experiences mastery over one's own anxiety, as "fear is made unnecessary by the intelligible, though nonverbal, organization of sound" (p. 85). In this sense music offers us an encounter with our own ego strength. They posited that,

Unorganized sound symbolizes primitive dread of destruction. ...the coexistence of the understanding ego functions (which recognize orderliness in the essentially alarming nonverbal stimulations) with the ability to experience primitive id mechanisms (which bring about magical omnipotence and loss of ego boundary) appears to be the condition for the ecstatic enjoyment of music. (p. 86)

For these authors, this primitive reaction to music results from music's ability to represent the call to mastery through organization in the face of the terror experienced by us as infants, when we inhabit an unknown and disorganized sonic world.

As indicated, aesthetic reactions to music have also been conceptualized as more intellectual experiences, pertaining to our minds rather than our bodies.

Meyer (cited in Kivy, 2002) suggested that the aesthetic impact music has on the mind is apprehended in the form of narrative. By this he meant, “the way musical ‘plots’ [albeit plots without content] play with our hypothesis, expectations, surprises, and fulfillments” (p. 71). Like narrative, musical events unfold in time and are heard as a process of unfolding meaning. For him, music is considered ‘good’ when it’s narrative, “cuts a path midway between the expected and the unexpected, or at least stays far enough away from the one or the other not to become wholly either” (p. 74).

Csikszentmihalyi (1990) developed the idea of “flow” in his investigation of optimal psychological experience. Akin to “peak experience,” Csikszentmihalyi conceptualized flow as a mode of existence in which one is in tune simultaneously with one’s inner experience and outer environment, which allows for a positive, affirming feeling of oneself. His view of flow is more cognitive or intellectual than Malsow’s “peak experience,” however. Csikszentmihalyi believed that music encourages flow experience because it, “helps organize the mind that attends to it, and therefore reduces psychic entropy, or the disorder we experience when random information interferes with goals” (p. 109).

Scruton (1997) also focused on the intellectual aesthetic experience, but attended to the unique quality of sonorous experience distinct from other senses. He suggested that the world of sound presents a unique aesthetic because it is unlike the visual world:

The sound world is inherently other, and the other in an interesting way: it is not just that we do not belong in it; it is that we could not belong in it. It

is metaphysically apart from us. And yet we have a complete view of it, and discover in it, through music, the very life that is ours. There lies the mystery. (p. 13-14)

For him, an aesthetic experience of music a particular kind of intellectual experience:

It involves an organization of mental objects... that we know intimately from our own inner experience: the experience of life conscious of itself as life. The sounds become music when our own life speaks to us through the sound. What we hear then becomes something more than sound for us, something more urgent, and more intimately connected to processes that we know in ourselves. (1997, p. 36)

These theories of aesthetic musical experience offer a discourse that opens our exploration into the phenomenon of being transformed by listening to music. In general, they suggest that we experience the beautiful in music in ways that affect us deeply, whether through our minds or bodies. While they offer intriguing ideas, these theories and descriptions have not yet been supported by critical empirical analysis. This research will be guided by these notions, and will in turn deepen our understanding of the theories, themselves. It is worth highlighting that though ideas of aesthetic experience do not directly attend to transformational experience, each theory (particularly the ideas of 'flow' and 'peak experience') seems to suggest that a transforming benefit is offered with aesthetic music experience. We will next survey the literature that speaks directly to the phenomenon of transformational musical experience.

Transformational Musical Experience

The experience of being transformed by music has been considered directly by theorists in ethnomusicology, music therapy, and musicology, and their works has added rich descriptions of the phenomenon at hand. For example, Vagn Holmboe (1981) described the transformational effect musical experience can have on one's life:

You are pulled away from your usual state, from your daily problems; you forget time and place, experience through music a new dimension of existence, and thereby have the capacity to come to an insight that would otherwise have been closed to you. You are transformed, enriched and strengthened by the encounter with a reality different from the everyday familiar kind, but equally real. (p. 89)

Gaston (1968) agreed that music can be personally transformative. He wrote, "...music provides an ecstasy uniquely its own. Music permits and encourages one to participate dynamically in his own growth and change" (p. 26). These testimonials broaden our conception of transformation, lending to the research on music therapy described earlier. They suggest that music indeed affects us in ways that are subtler and more personally meaningful than what is revealed through natural scientific studies.

Considering studies in ethnomusicology, we see that musical transformation can be apprehended in a number of different ways based on the cultural significance of music for a given population. Campbell (1992) explored the transformational quality of Tibetan Buddhist chanting and found that for

monks, the sonorous experience itself, the vibration of the sound impacting the body, produces a transforming experience. In an interview with Khen Rinpoche, the Abbot of the Gyuto Tantric University, he explored the notion that when monks produce a certain chorus with particular overtones, their consciousness is made more receptive to enlightenment. In many regions of Africa, *ngoma* healing is used to treat an individual's ailments of body and spirit. *Ngoma*, translated as 'The Drum', is a ritualized practice of community healing that uses music, particularly drumming, as a central component of healing (Janzen, 2000). In Bolivia, Stobart (1990) studied the use of music in a rural hamlet finding that music is used exclusively in community gatherings for fostering both the health of individuals and the community as a whole. For this community, as well as for those that participate in *ngoma*, the rituals are understood to be unifying practices, fostering alignment with the spiritual world and the sentient world. Music is understood as the central force that promotes this alignment.

Some in the field of musical aesthetics, including Langer (1942) and Beardsley (1981) focused on the non-referential, untranslatability of music as the very quality that allows for the transformational aspect of these musical experiences. Similarly, Gaston (1968) wrote of the value of nonverbal, musical communication: "Music is communication... but more often than not it is, or functions as, nonverbal communication. It is wordless meaning of music that provides its potency and value" (p. 34). Kivy (1980) agreed that music's unique power to move individuals lies in the fact that "it does not represent, does not possess content at all" (p. 256). For this reason he sees music, particularly

“absolute music” as the only art form that is “liberating.” Beardsley (1981) stated this idea eloquently:

The music work does not need to refer to anything else besides its own aesthetically notable qualities in order to play its role in helping us understand our world and cope with it. Here is where the infinite subtlety, variety, and plasticity of music come into play. Music can make extremely delicate distinctions between kinds of continuation, between two slightly different forms of ambiguity or of headlong rushing or of growth. It thereby can sharpen our apprehension of such differences, and give us concepts of continuation that we might miss in ordinary experience. (p. 56)

These notions of the vagueness or untranslatability of music as fostering musical transformation, along with similar notions described in the section on musical meaning, suggest that it is the union of self and sound that is the ground on which individuals experience transformation and lasting psychological benefit. Gioseffo Zarlino believed that, “Human music is the harmony which may be known by any person who turns to contemplation of himself” (cited in Storr, 1995, p. 108). According to Draper (2001), we encounter ourselves in the music as it reflects our own inner and outer movements of our lives – “the tensions and releases, comings and goings, anticipations and arrivals, departures, disappointments and fulfillments” (p. 25). What is produced through this encounter with oneself in music is an experience that resonates with one’s life and one is rendered changed, emerging benefited in some way.

The ideas of musical transformation considered in this section, along with philosophical and theoretical notions considered in previous sections offer rich insights into the nature of the phenomenon being studied. Notions of music as communicating or expressing emotions, aesthetic reactions to the beautiful or pleasurable in music, and ideas from music therapy research all point to the transformational power of music in their own ways. These ideas will serve to situate our investigation into the lived experience of being transformed by music as we enter into the empirical investigation of the phenomenon at hand.

Summary of the Literature Review

As we have seen, there is a rich landscape of research and philosophy relating to transformational musical experience. The natural scientific studies mentioned explore specific ways in which music affects discrete aspects of our lives, be they physiological, behavioral, or otherwise. While they offer rich insights, they fall short of articulating an understanding of the *lived experience* of the listener who is impacted by music and offer only a limited conception of how we are affected by music.

Studies that offer *objective* descriptive accounts about the impact of music in the lives of individuals are more germane to this research, because they better incorporate the totality of an individual's experience and thus disclose a broader, if not richer understanding. However, they still do not reveal the "inner," subjective *experience as it is lived* by the individual. This research attempts to articulate the *lived experience* of individuals who experience transformation and

growth through listening to music in a way that remains open to and pursues this inner experience.

Finally, the theoretical ideas discussed above add rich and interesting insights into the power that music has to transform us, and they offer ways of conceptualizing how it is that music expresses this power. They do not, however, offer empirical data to support their claims. This research attempts to provide empirical support for various theoretical ideas by offering a rigorous exposition that can be in dialogue with other ideas, thus adding to the existent body of research on the topic.

Bartlett (1999) called for a new approach to understanding music's place in the lives of individuals. He pointed out that music psychology has failed to delineate a clear and concise understanding of musical experience thus far because there is a disjunction between musical phenomena and the natural scientific paradigms used to explain them. McMullin (1999) pointed to this lack in the research and indicated that empirical research in music psychology must adopt a more interpretive approach to understanding the power of music. Without this, McMullin argued, research misses the more subjective, ineffable aspects of musical experience – the very aspects that contribute to the power of musical experience.

By utilizing a phenomenological-hermeneutic approach in this study, I hope to remain close to musical phenomena *as experienced* by individuals and thus provide an understanding that remains open to the nuanced qualities of this type of musical experience. Before detailing the process of this approach, I will

explore preliminary understandings of the phenomenon, which, along with the literature explored above, serve as the foundation for the research.

CHAPTER 3

APPROACHING THE PHENOMENON PHENOMENOLOGICAL- HERMENEUTICALLY

This study considered musical experience from a phenomenological-hermeneutical perspective. The works of Martin Heidegger (1962) and Hans-Georg Gadamer (1995, 1986) provided the methodological foundation for this study. I will briefly describe basic tenets of phenomenology before turning to the hermeneutic ideas of Heidegger and Gadamer. Following these introductory remarks, I will detail the methodology for this study in Chapter 4.

Etymologically, a phenomenon is anything that appears to consciousness, or put more simply, anything of which one is conscious. Phenomenology can be generally understood as a study of phenomena as experienced, contrasted with other modes of inquiry, which attempt to subtract or to bypass human subjectivity and extrapolate an understanding solely from an entity's measurable characteristics.

At first glance, one might consider phenomenology to be a radically relativistic project, attending only to the subjective experience of the individual. It is important to note, however, that phenomenology holds that a phenomenon's essence is manifest in its appearance as experienced. Not that essences are simply given in experience, but that by patiently attending "to the thing, itself," we are eventually able to grasp the nature of a phenomenon. Heidegger (1962) explained that, "In the phenomenological conception of 'phenomenon' what one

has in mind as that which shows itself is the Being of entities, its meanings, modifications, and derivatives. And this showing itself is not just any showing itself, nor is it some such thing as appearing” (p. 60). He went on to say, “Behind the phenomena of phenomenology there is essentially nothing else; on the other hand what is to become a phenomenon can be hidden. And just because the phenomena are proximally and for the most part not given, there is need for phenomenology” (p. 60).

Heidegger’s hermeneutic phenomenology is largely based on Husserl’s (1931) theoretical project in his early career: the explication of subjectivity. Husserl suggested that an individual’s subjective experience is comprised of the object as perceived and the mental act of perceiving. These two components are named noesis and noema, respectively. The noetic consists of mental acts, which give sense to the immanent object of consciousness through the position that the transcendental ego maintains. Examples of such mental acts are imagining, remembering, hearing and so on. Noema are considered to be the things that are attended to in the noetic act. In the act of perceiving, there is the thing as it is perceived, in the act of hearing, the thing as it is heard, and so on (von Eckartsberg, 1986). The noema are not to be confused with the objects in some objective, or realist sense. For Husserl, both noesis and noema are aspects of subjective consciousness.

Martin Heidegger (1962) agreed with Husserl’s conception of subjectivity, but disagreed fervently with his methodology, which is based upon his conception of bracketing as a way to allow a phenomenon to reveal itself as it is.

The divergence appears as Heidegger asserted that the human kind of being is radically subjective, and as such is unable to bracket or put aside its subjectivity.

Heidegger showed in Being and Time (1962) that understanding guides and grows from our subjective preconceptions and assumptions. For him, all understanding is *interpretation*, which necessarily involves what we already know about a phenomenon. He stated, “In every case... interpretation is grounded in something we have in advance – a fore-having” (p. 191), and without this fore-having, one has no access to meaning. In his focus on interpretation, his phenomenology is hermeneutic.

The hermeneutic process involves a movement or relation between one’s forestructure and the phenomenon to be understood. This movement begins with the articulation and awareness of one’s a priori forestructure. Heidegger explained, “When something is understood but is still veiled, it becomes unveiled by an act of appropriation, and this is always done under the guidance of a point of view, which fixes that with regard to which what is understood is *in advance* – in a fore-sight” (1962, p. 191).

The hermeneutic process continues as a cycle of movement from forestructure to the phenomenon and back again, creating a circle or spiral of movement. Heidegger (1962) wrote,

It is not to be reduced to the level of a vicious circle, or even of a circle which is merely tolerated. In the circle is hidden a positive possibility of the most primordial kind of knowing, and we genuinely grasp this possibility only when we have understood that our first,

last, and constant task in interpreting is never having our [forestructure] to be presented to us by fancies and popular conceptions, but rather to make the scientific theme secure by working out these forestructures in terms of the things themselves. (p. 153)

For Gadamer (1995), who follows Heidegger's notion of hermeneutics, understanding is achieved when one is able to communicate with a text. For him, meaning is discovered by the dialogal interaction between the investigator and the text at hand. For understanding to be possible, the interpreter must be open to understanding, which means he must welcome the possibility that his preconceptions will be proven wrong. For understanding, one must be open to being transformed by the dialogal development of new ideas (Gadamer, 1995). This does not mean that in order to understand one must try to ignore or eliminate all preconceptions, as Husserl claimed. Gadamer showed that it is through our preconceptions that we are able to come to understanding, and that without them, we have no way of access into understanding. In the context of qualitative research methodology, Walsh (2004) emphasized the importance of maintaining a reflexive stance, which remains open to the preconceptions held by the investigator throughout the research process. He showed that understanding is generated through speculative language produced in true conversation, in which both investigator and participant reflect and disclose openly about the phenomenon *including* the meaningful inherent "noises." Based on Gadamer's work, he contrasted true conversation with "statements," which limit

understanding by covering over the speculative nature of language through the omission of the meaningful “noises.”

With this hermeneutic attitude, this study is intended to disclose a meaningful understanding of a particular kind of human experience. ‘Experience’ is understood to mean what the German language refers to as ‘*erlebnis*,’ which is an individual-living-through of an event. This idea is differentiated from ‘*erfahrung*,’ which is a term meaning experience in general. *Erlebnis* does not simply pertain to the object being studied, but rather to the thing experienced and the act of experiencing. For Gadamer (1986), music is understood exclusively as *erlebnis*. He wrote, “the dimension of sound and sense are inextricably interwoven [in music] ...where we confront an unconditional case of untranslatability” (p. 111). With this in mind, it seemed imperative that for the disclosure of any meaningful understanding of transformational musical experience we must focus on *erlebnis*.

Preliminary Understandings and Forestructure

The phenomenon being studied will be considered within the greater context of human experience in general, involving aspects of our psychological, spiritual, and social lives inhabiting a world with sound. This study attends to this greater context, utilizing existential understandings of the human experience and musical phenomena found in the discipline of existential-phenomenological psychology.

Firstly, the existential idea of intentionality will be stressed. This notion of intentionality can be generally understood as a quality of human subjectivity or consciousness. Husserl (1931) posited that human consciousness is always aimed at something, that is, consciousness is always a consciousness *of* something. Merleau-Ponty (1964, 1962) developed the idea of intentionality by incorporating embodiment into the fold, suggesting that intentionality includes “the life of embodied existence and interactive communication which precedes and is the foundation for explicit and thematic consciousness” (cited in von Eckartsberg, 1986, p. 13). This idea of interactive communication between self and world suggests that meaning is co-constituted in the interaction between a person and his or her world.

Other conceptions included in the forestructure are based on the work of Heidegger (1962), who explicated a phenomenological description of Dasein, or ‘being-there’, which is his term for the human kind of being. He showed that Dasein is always in the world, situated among things and others, in time. He showed that we can have no conception of human experience without regarding these fundamental qualities of existence. Being-in-time will be attended to particularly closely for this research because time is such an integral part of music. Heidegger’s seminal work, Being and Time (1962), revealed temporality and historicity as the fundamental grounding of human existence. This notion will be considered as the temporal qualities of musical experience, like movement, rhythm, and tempo are investigated.

In addition to drawing on existential-phenomenology, this study is informed by ideas explored above on the topics of music therapy, meaning and emotion in music, aesthetic experience, and any other constructs that emerge as salient to the hermeneutic process.

As I approach this research, I hold these notions of musical experience as aspects of the forestructure that will inform the understandings generated. Based on theories described in the literature review, I also hold that the structure of music *and* the listener's imaginative involvement with it comprise the basis for a transformational musical experience. It is also my sense that particular aspects of human experience and musical transformation will be particularly salient to our investigation. I hold that the centrality of time in musical experience allows a listener to engage with music in a psychologically meaningful way, based on ideas from Heidegger discussed above. Additionally, based on Merleau-Ponty's notions of embodiment, also discussed above, I hold that music impacts us bodily as much as it does intellectually or merely emotionally. As such, I will proceed with this research with the notion of lived time, embodiment, and lived space as central aspects of the experience of being transformed by music.

Conception of Transformation

In order to pursue a rigorous inquiry, the use and meaning of the concept of "transformation" must be rendered more explicit. While the experience of having one's mood brightened, or of one's heart rate increasing can both be construed as transformation of a kind, I am using the term in a deeper, more

dynamic way. My understanding of transformation begins with my own experience being changed through listening in a way that has been meaningful and long lasting. This transformation was not limited to a brief physiological response, or any other isolated aspect of my experience. Rather, the transformation affected my whole being.

The notion of transformation I hold to is one that involves a broad conception of personal change, and entails a shift in *meaning*, not unlike the transformation of meaning that results from successful psychotherapy or the experience of the sacred. The ideas of Gaston, Proust, and others (above) indicate the type of experience I consider transformational. This delineation is purposely broad, allowing for a range of qualities and contexts. For example, one may experience being transformed by music at a concert, alone in one's car, or during a religious ceremony, to mention but a few of the possibilities. The transformation may result in a new understanding of a particular situation like a relationship or life event, or more globally, like a shift in one's life-view, sense of purpose, or hope. The change I felt in the experience of listening to *Telephone and Rubberband* in my apartment was an affirmation of myself and my life path, which allowed me to feel more confident and hopeful in a lasting way. This serves as one example of the conception of transformation I hold.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

Method for This Research

The experience investigated in this research was accessed by way of written descriptions (protocols) of first-hand accounts of individuals' experiences and conversations conducted with those individuals. This data was interpreted phenomenological-hermeneutically, using methodology developed by von Eckartsberg (1986) and Walsh (2004). The first step in the process of this investigation involved the articulation of the a priori forestructure that is already at hand. This step and all that follow include a reflexive awareness of the research context, including the role of investigator and methodology.

The representative literature and preliminary understandings addressed above (Chapters 2 and 3) serve as this forestructure. I approached the research with these biases, assumptions, and expectations articulated in order to engage in discourse with the phenomenon encountered so that these ideas could be challenged and clarified.

From this forestructure, a guiding question was then generated that the participants were asked to address. The question reads as follows:

Describe an experience you had when listening to music, in which you felt deeply moved or transformed in some way by listening.

Please include both your inner experience (feelings, thoughts, memories) and whatever you noticed about the context involved (the environment, the particular piece of music, the events as they unfolded in time) in your description. Be sure to articulate as much detail as possible about the

particular aspects of the music (rhythm, tempo, phrasing, melody...) that seem important to you.

The participants were instructed to describe an experience that involved listening to instrumental music, but the musical style or particular piece was determined by the participants. The focus on instrumental music was an attempt to ensure that the phenomenon described was evoked by the music itself, staying clear of the issues of language and meaning in song lyrics. I agree with Hanslick's (1885) view, that for us to understand musical experience as such, we must make clear that "while sound in speech is but a sign, that is a means of expressing something which is quite distinct from its medium; sound in music is the end, that is the ultimate and absolute object of view" (p. 94). This did not preclude voice used in music in any way that does not include comprehension of language, such as "skat" or lyrics in a language unknown to the listener. This artificial restriction affected the nature of the findings, and as such, I was mindful of its impact, and will explore this in the discussion section.

After collecting the protocols, I completed an initial reading of each to get a general sense of the participants' experiences, then returned to each protocol to determine "meaning units." Meaning units are segments of the text that signify a meaningful component of the experience as a whole. This move to identify meaning units was the first move of interpretation, identifying structural components of the experience in order to generate a richer understanding of the essential qualities of the phenomenon.

After this first interpretive work with the protocols, I conducted in-depth conversations with each participant. The conversations provided an opportunity for the researcher and participants to clarify the experience described and to collaborate in discourse about both the experience as lived, and beliefs and ideas held about the phenomenon. The participants were invited to listen to a recording of the music from their experience with the researcher during the conversation. This was not intended to recreate the experience that the participants described, but rather to aid the participants' recall of the experience and focus our attention on particular qualities of the musical work.

These interactions were intentionally unscripted in order to facilitate an open forum for the exploration of ideas and biases of both researcher and participant. The term 'conversation' indicates that my position as researcher, replete with my own presuppositions and theoretical stance, was acknowledged, as was the position of the participant. Additionally, this attunement toward conversation was used to encourage the articulation of experiential accounts by participants, rather than "statements" generated (perhaps unwittingly) in an effort to give the researcher what he 'wants' (Walsh, 2004). Each conversation was guided by the protocols and the life experience of both participant and researcher, in the hermeneutic path from the ground of forestructure toward the phenomenon and back again. These conversations were audio taped and transcribed. The original protocols and the transcribed conversations comprise the body of raw data.

Each conversation was then reviewed and meaning units were identified, as was done with the protocols. In addition, beliefs and ideas about the protocol experience and musical experience in general for both participant and researcher were identified. The meaning units from the protocols and conversations were then synthesized and described as a "Situated Structure" for each participant. Von Eckartsberg (1986) explains that the articulation of this structure involves asking the question, "How is what I am reading revelatory of the meaning of the phenomenon in this situation?" The Situated Structure involves aspects of the phenomenon that are unique and particular to this individual experience. This Situated Structure is an interpretive summary of each experience, and was generated with an attempt to remain true to the original experience and open to the interrelatedness of each meaning unit with the experience as a whole. For this synthesis, I re-listened to audio recordings of the music in each participant's experience in order to attend more directly to the quality of the music and the particular aspects the participants found salient.

All Situated Structures were then considered carefully for commonalities in the effort of disclosing a "General Structure." According to von Eckartsberg (1986), the General Structure is revealed with the questions, "what does the situated structure tell me about the phenomenon in its generality and universality? What is its meaning essence" (p. 28). The explication of this structure was guided by the dialogal movement between the data and the set of articulated forestructures, or preconceptions held a priori by the investigator and participants. This General Structure is the final product of the raw data, which is

an explication of the essential components of the phenomenon of being moved by listening to music found in all the experiences considered in this research.

The final step in the analysis involved a reflexive consideration of the beliefs and ideas recorded in the conversations, which were considered with notions found in the literature to deepen insights and understanding of the phenomenon.

Participants

For this research I utilized protocols of four participants, based on the assumption that this number would allow for a broad enough range of experiences to provide a rich data set, which proved to be true. All participants were recruited informally by word of mouth or by myself, personally. I selected participants from a limited population of individuals who were over eighteen years of age, and known to me through direct relationships or who were suggested to me by people with whom I had an ongoing personal and/or professional relationship. Participants were selected based on the following criteria: Firstly, they were identified as individuals for whom music is an important and meaningful experience. Secondly, I felt it necessary to recruit individuals who have at least a basic understanding of the formal structure of music through professions or avocations in music related activities. This was decided because I wanted to ensure that each participant would have the ability to access a shared language about music, and have a knowledge of particular components of the music they heard that may be salient. This is in line with Kivy's (1980) notion that

the listener's intentional object will appear as a form that depends on what beliefs the listener has about music:

It will depend to a large extent on what musical knowledge, and what listening experience the listener brings to the music. The more knowledge and experience one brings, the 'larger' the intentional object will be: the more elaborate our description will be. (p. 81)

This does not suppose that individuals without this formal training cannot experience music as deeply or meaningfully. On the contrary, it is possible that the formal training is a limiting factor in one's transformational musical experience. This limiting criterion's impact on the findings will be considered in the discussion section. A range of musical backgrounds and vocations was sought to provide a diverse experience set. The particular backgrounds in music as well as some basic biographical information of each participant are as follows:

Chris: male; Caucasian; mental health/chemical dependency counselor who has played guitar and violin for many years as an avocation.

Syril: male; Indian-American from New York; concert trumpet player who has studied trumpet performance, works as a free-lance performer in large and small classical ensembles, and plays and composes Jazz.

Ron: male; Caucasian from Ohio; professional tour manager and sound engineer who has performed and recorded playing mandolin and guitar, and engineered sound for live shows and audio recordings for internationally known jazz and world music artists.

Donna: female; Caucasian from Ohio; music therapist who has studied violin performance, sat as Concert Master for a university symphony, and worked as a concert violinist.

I originally intended to work with five participants for this study but chose to remove the fifth participant's data before completing the interpretive analysis

and generating the General Structure. Terry, the fifth participant, wrote about his experience listening to the opera, *Turandot*. While he listened, Terry read a translation that described the story and music of the opera. Though his protocol met the selection criteria of the research in fact, it did not meet the criteria in spirit. Though he does not know Italian, the language of the opera, his experience was significantly influenced by language through the translation of the Italian lyrics. It was revealed in the protocol and confirmed in the interview that the experience, though meeting the research criteria that the musical experience be without recognizable language, it was in fact mediated by the language of the opera and was therefore removed from the study. This oversight, however, offers some interesting comparison data and the reader is invited to explore Terry's data and Situated Structure (see Appendix D).

For ease of reference, each participant will be referred to in the text using his or her fictionalized first name, provided above. Reference to specific quotes from the original data will be in the following form: (Donna, P12), which, for example, will indicate that the quote can be found in Appendix C, Donna, participant response number 12. Likewise, comments cited that I made in the conversations are indicated with an "I" for investigator: (Donna, I12).

Consent and Confidentiality

Upon being approached by me to participate in this study, prospective participants were made aware of the subject of the study and that this research was being done for partial fulfillment of the Ph.D. requirements for a degree in

Clinical Psychology at Duquesne University. Upon agreeing to participate, each participant was asked to read the Cover Letter, Protocol Question Form, and read and sign the Informed Consent Form (see Appendix A). Each participant was informed of his or her right to confidentiality and of precautions taken to ensure confidentiality as detailed on the Informed Consent Form. Participants were also informed that they would not directly benefit from participating, and could terminate their participation in this research at any time.

Flow Chart of Method

1. Participants were identified through personal relationships or word of mouth and given initial participant information (see Appendix A, Participant Cover Letter).
2. Participants initiated contact with researcher and were given detailed information about the study and their obligations should they agree to participate. Interested participants were sent copies of the Cover Letter, Informed Consent Form, and Protocol Question Form (see Appendix A), and asked to return the signed consent form to the researcher before submitting a written protocol.
3. Written protocols were collected from all participants and initial analysis and generation of meaning units completed for each (see Appendix B).
4. Audio-recorded conversations were conducted with each participant at times and locations chosen by participants. These conversations included open dialogue about the protocol experience and personal views of both the participant and researcher.
5. Conversations were transcribed and analyzed along with protocols (see Appendix C). Meaning units were formulated from the conversations and combined with meaning units from the protocols. Additionally, beliefs and ideas of researcher and participants articulated in the conversation were considered.
6. Situational Structures were articulated for each protocol to disclose the particular lived experience of each participant. These structures were

based on the combined meaning units and reflexive considerations of the researcher. The researcher listened to recordings of the music from each protocol to deepen and enrich the descriptions.

7. The General Structure was then articulated for the phenomenon in general by comparing all situational structures and identifying aspects found throughout, with a reflexive consideration of the research and researcher.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

The results are articulated as four interpretive descriptions combining each participant's protocol and interview in the form of a Situated Structure and then as a General Structure of the experience of being moved by listening to music. The Situated Structures offer an experience-near description of each participant's unique, lived experience, which allows for a contextualized and grounded understanding of the General Structure. They are organized in narrative form, accenting the lived, psychological qualities of the experiences. These are followed by an exposition of the General Structure of the experience of being moved by music. The General Structure is presented as themes, with quotes from the original protocols and transcripts referenced to illustrate each theme and provide a way for the reader to access the interpretive movement of the research.

The Situated Structures are presented in third person to reveal their interpretive nature, but the content remains true to the experience as described by the participants. Participant's original language and direct quotes were included to remain as near the original experience as possible for each participant. Each Situated Structure has a title, which serves as a descriptor of the setting, and a subtitle, which is an interpretive description of the transformation experienced by the participant. Additionally, each Situated Structure begins with a short music biography of the participant. The particular music in each experience is described in the narrative, with particular detail

provided on passages and aspects of the music each participant found salient in their experience. This is in lieu of direct reproduction of the scores in order to make the descriptions easily accessible to the reader who may not read musical notation.

Situated Structures

Chris's Situated Structure

Prokofiev in the Car on the Way to Work *The Gift of Affirmation of His Love for Wife and Son*

Chris has played the guitar, both solo and in ensembles, for several decades as an avocation. He has been playing the violin for four years, and he has studied privately with both instruments.

Several months ago Chris was in his car on his way to his job as a therapist and chemical dependency counselor. He decided to listen to Prokofiev's Concerto No. 2 in G minor for violin. Chris knew this concerto, but he had never "sunk into it" before. He had heard this piece several times, but "hadn't really heard it, hadn't lost [himself] in it." As Chris was driving along listening to other selections, he noticed that he was in a state of mind in which he was "really feeling the music." Chris felt that his car is his "little haven" appreciating the privacy and high quality sound from his car stereo. This "all packages in." He decided to put the Prokofiev because it "stuck out" for him among his collection of CD's. Chris didn't particularly love this piece. It is not even one of his favorite concertos. He felt he had to attend directly to Prokofiev's

music to appreciate it, and if not focusing, he finds it a bit irritating and aggressive.

Chris felt urged to listen to Prokofiev's concerto like needing a 'fix'. He had a feeling that he would be moved by the piece, as if God had his hand in the moment. He started the recording with this heightened awareness and intention.

The Concerto, written by Prokofiev in 1935, features the violin with a full orchestra. It is marked by beautiful melodies along with darker challenging moments with dissonance and strong, foreboding sounds. The concerto starts quietly with solo violin, which is soon followed by a darker sound introduced by the orchestra. As the music continues, Chris noticed the upbeat tempo, and techniques and phrasings of the violin that were unique to him.

The music builds through the first movement, growing darker, but with moments of a brighter violin solo coming through. Chris attended to the violinist, Heifitz, who performs on this recording. He finds him to be one of the best players. Chris listened with an awareness of his own violin playing, considering the technique and tone of the master violinist's music.

As the music continued, Chris felt increasingly aware of his surroundings, noticing the beautiful weather and the sun shining through his windshield. He felt the heat of the sun along with the warm and light quality of the music. Chris felt increasingly content and tranquil as he enjoyed this experience.

Though he had heard this concerto before, he felt as if he was listening for the first time, noticing new phrasings and tones. Chris had a powerful feeling that he was "really getting it." It made sense to him despite not knowing details

of the structure of the music. He was in awe. Chris fantasized about the composer imagining that he was with him during the act of composing. He was watching the composer write, and sharing the experience of creating the music with him.

Chris found the next section of the first movement slow and absolutely beautiful. He knew something “supernatural” was happening, and he anticipated his experience of the upcoming second movement would be powerful. Chris notices the plucking strings (pizzicato) and anticipates the transition to the violin melody.

At the start of the second movement the music suddenly becomes very quiet and serene with pizzicato strings and sparse horns. After several bars, a solo violin starts with a slow and beautiful melody with long arching bowing. Chris heard the pizzicato of the strings to be pure and childlike, and found the bowing violin to be absolutely beautiful. He found the violin to sound nurturing and enveloping. Chris felt that he could “touch the music” and was “bathing in it.”

Chris felt his breath taken away and he began to cry. He noticed that he could not understand what brought his tears, and felt them as a reflex, or an unfiltered response. He felt the “music was directly speaking to [his] heart.” Chris felt startled by his tears, which surprised him, and considered this experience to be “pretty wild.” He opened himself to this new experience and let go of his trepidation.

At this moment in the music, as the sweeping melody enveloped the playful pizzicato strings, Chris had the most vivid mental image of his wife and

son dancing in slow motion. He saw them as smiling, with an “angelic glow.” Chris envisioned his wife and son dancing in front of him, represented by the playful pizzicato and the nurturing violin. They were floating together with his son in his wife’s arms. They circled to the music as she held out their son’s arm. Chris felt he was seeing pure love, and feeling it within himself.

He continued to cry as he thought that this image must be what heaven looks like, and that this is the “embodiment of purity.” Chris felt like he was in heaven with his wife and son, though no harm had come to them. He saw an angelic glow in his wife and son, and he found the experience beautiful. Chris felt he was conducting the music and the dance. He felt like he was floating himself while watching them. He was no longer aware of the task of driving.

Chris felt the experience was a gift from God, allowing him to feel closer to Him, and appreciate his family as a blessing. Chris’s faith and love were affirmed by the experience. He felt it was special kind of peak moment that just “fell on” him, as he was “bathing in [it], how wonderful it is.” He was aware of how wonderful the experience was, and felt he “was riding a wave – I knew it was happening, and that it wouldn’t last forever.” This experience was of the kind of peak moments he craves in life, and the kind that inspires him.

Chris “woke up” after the second movement and shifted his awareness back to his surroundings. He noticed that he had been driving without paying attention to his task. He slowly refocused his attention to the road and the task of driving just as he approached his exit. His thoughts moved to daily concerns as he regained his composure.

Chris felt unable to describe the experience in words, and had not spoken with anyone about this experience before this research. He appreciated the opportunity to reflect on his experience with someone who appreciates music in this way. This experience is one he will never forget.

Syril's Situated Structure

Kind of Blue Straight Through with a Friend Being Connected to Others Through Silence

Syril has studied and played trumpet for many years. He studied trumpet performance in graduate school, and has worked as a free-lance ensemble player for orchestra and chamber groups. In addition, Syril composes and performs jazz in small ensembles.

Eight years ago Syril was living in a garage apartment in Texas, studying trumpet performance in college, when he decided to listen to Miles Davis's *Kind of Blue* with a good friend. *Kind of Blue* is a seminal jazz album recorded by the trumpet player in 1959. The entire album, recorded in a single studio session, has a sparse feel, with slow tempos and without the aggressive note-filled style of bebop, marking a significant shift in Davis's style.

Both Syril and his friend were studying trumpet performance, and decided to listen to this album because they both enjoy Miles Davis and knew this album to be one of his seminal works, though both had not listened to the album intently. They listened to a recording of the album in Syril's apartment on a quiet evening. They intentionally chose a quiet setting to minimize distractions and fully appreciate the experience. They sat down with the lights dimmed intent to listen to the entire album with concentration.

Syril did not anticipate he would encounter the experience that would follow. He had been curious about the album in a technical way, and expected to listen, as he usually did, for technical aspects of the trumpet playing. Syril knew Davis's playing style, and found his music to be magnificent and genius, beyond his own technical comprehension. He anticipated that he would attend to the music as a trumpet player, and not be open to being moved personally by the music.

Syril and his friend start the album and Syril was readily struck by the tone and quality of the music. He noticed the slow tempo and the open space in the music created by fewer notes filling in space. He appreciated the subtle and sparse playing of the musicians, and he associated this with his own trumpet style, and stylings of innovators in jazz. He noticed that Miles' style was ego-less and true.

Syril found himself attending to the moments of silence in Miles solos as the music continues. He found them to be new and unfamiliar to him. He felt somehow transformed by the interaction of the instrumentalists during silences in these solos, with his attention deepening as he listened.

At the start of Blue and Green, the third track on the album, Syril noticed the song had a different quality than the previous songs. *This is a ballad, quieter and slower than tracks one and two, with a deeper and more reflective mood.* He was struck with the sound of the trumpet, now muted with a Harmon mute, giving it a subdued and very subtle tone.

At a point during Davis's first solo, Syril felt the music coming into him, and

he could feel every vibration. *The quintet is playing quietly, with piano, drum and bass behind Davis' muted trumpet. As Miles finishes a slow and melodic phrase, he pauses in silence for a moment with only the bass sounding quietly below.*

Syril felt like he was with Miles Davis as he played the music, "that sound [came] into me... I could feel every vibration in the mute.... I could hear every iota of sound... like I was with him in the studio at the time he recorded it."

Syril felt his reaction flowing in waves throughout the musical experience, starting with a peak during this moment in "Blue and Green." *As the song continues, the quiet and slow solo is played over bass, piano and drum.*

The saxophone, played by John Coltrane, starts to solo after a break in the melody. Syril heard the two soloists as talking to each other. He cannot understand what they are saying, but he heard them interacting in communication like they are humming a conversation. He felt they were communicating directly with him as well.

As the saxophone and trumpet converse, Syril experienced the music as surreal and unlike any experience he had had before. He felt joyous and enthusiastic, and he got, "so into it that time disappeared [and he didn't] know where [he was] actually."

Syril felt the communication touch him, connecting him to his good friend, feeling like he, his friend, and the music became one experience, "I felt connected with that person... like a matter of this music, this person, all becoming like one experience." He relates this experience to being spiritually connected with family at a funeral or wedding.

The song continues and Cyril is struck once again by the last trumpet solo of the song, noticing a silent moment in Davis' solo mid-phrase in the melody with only a quiet bass sounding. He once again feels the space transform him.

Cyril found it difficult to understand this unique experience. He found that his formal knowledge of music did not prepare him for the actual experience itself, "It was like the first time you have sex, but you're just listening to music." Cyril felt a strong emotion during the experience, but could not identify the feeling. He felt the music was passionate, and he felt contemplative himself.

This experience was unique for Cyril. He felt changed as a person and musician as a result, "it was an experience that was way different than anything I had experienced before. It changed me as a person, as a musician..." Through this experience, Cyril was open to a new way of listening to music that was beyond technical or critical, "in a way that was beyond listening for what [he] could do on the trumpet. It was beyond jazz. It was beyond genre."

Cyril felt that this experience presented him with a new layer of music. He likened this to seeing a familiar painting "but seeing something quite new." He felt this layer was a deeper connection to everything around him; a spiritual connection that goes deeper than words. His connection to his good friend and the music deepened their relationship. Cyril continued to have vivid memories of this important personal experience.

Ron's Situated Structure

Bulgarian Women's Choir on the Golden Gate *Connected to the Web of Beauty*

Ron works as a sound engineer and tour manager for international jazz and world music artists. He has been nationally recognized for his sound engineering talents on several recordings. Ron has also played guitar and mandolin professionally, with recordings of his own bluegrass and fusion music.

Ron was living in San Francisco several years ago when he visited a friend and colleague. His friend invited him to listen to a recording of the Bulgarian Women's Choir to decide whether he wanted to work with them as a tour manager on an upcoming US tour.

Ron was driving from his friend's toward the Golden Gate Bridge in a heavy fog when he started listening to the tape in his car stereo. He felt the music take his breath away immediately when it started, and he could not believe what he was hearing. Ron was struck by the sound of the a cappella female voices as they sing the opening song. *The music sounds bold and austere, with resonance from the performance space adding to the otherworldly sound. This group of 20 women sings Bulgarian folk songs with many voices in unison interspersed with rich harmonies, creating a very sharp and loud sound. The music is dynamic with changes in loudness and tone.*

Ron first noticed the vocal harmony, which he found incredible. He had never heard this type of music or the sound of the harmony before, but he felt like he somehow recognized it. Ron was "flipped out" by the music. He found the multiple harmonies to be otherworldly and amazing, and felt them "connected straight to [his] heart." As he headed onto the bridge listening intently to the

music, he noticed that the fog cleared suddenly and revealed a clear and beautiful sky.

Rob found the music to be both beautiful and unique. He felt this beauty is open to him regardless that it comes from a different culture, “It was crazy to my suburban ear. It’s different... and it’s so beautiful.” Ron felt the accurateness of pitch, and “stunning, otherworldly” harmonies had a meaning. He felt this was more meaningful for him than the melody. He was attending to the fact the music was recorded live, at moments listening as a sound engineer for the quality of the acoustics while being touched by the wonderful sounds.

Ron felt particularly grabbed by the third song on the recording. He noticed the unison voices with added voices in harmony, “when they start stacking these lines it’s really amazing.” *The loudness of the chorus comes in boldly as the quartet soloists finish the melody.* Ron noticed his senses “heightened,” particularly his hearing and vision at a particular moment in the song. He noticed the beauty of the clear sky and the San Francisco Bay. He felt goosebumps all over his body, and felt the need to pull off to the side of the road and try to understand what was happening. *The bold voices build to a loud and sharp sound with the addition of multiple harmonies creating a full and rich sound. The rich harmonies sung by the chorus end and the solo quartet starts the melody quietly and with fewer harmonies.* Ron felt the music “coming from the inside out. It’s already all the way in. It’s as far in as you can go and it’s coming back out. It’s a connection, as if I’d heard it before in the depth of my genetic experience.” Ron began to cry as he listened. He feels this experience is one of

the most powerful moments in his life, and one that he will remember. The tears he shed felt like tears of beauty. He felt happy.

As Ron sat listening in his car, he found the beautiful harmony to be a giant web that becomes a unity totally connected to him, "it's this giant web that becomes one thing. It's already connected. Totally connected to me at least." Ron felt a connection between the hearts of the musicians and composers, and his own heart, forming a web of connecting threads, "I am able to recognize... that the musicians themselves, or the composer, or the artists...are making these connections with all those guys in the choir, they've got a web, this little thread that's going right to the center of my heart, a giant web of beauty that they're weaving." Ron felt the web to be deeply connected to everything on the planet, and was aware that his experience is a component of this greater whole. He felt the music enter him and come up "through all your senses." This experience is likened to harmonies found in the earth and in life through things like beautiful vistas or relationships.

As Ron listened to the music, he felt like he was experiencing something he already knew, but had forgotten, like "going home and you didn't even know what home looked like." Ron felt that he somehow already knew the music, as if the harmonies were already in his DNA and heart "waiting for the right moment to reveal themselves." He imagined that there are mathematical or spiritual aspects of music that correlate to our inner experience.

Ron felt the music was in direct relationship to him, "It's like they were speaking to me." He felt that the music was interconnected in his life. He feels

that it “shines a flashlight on oneself, illuminating one’s life if one is ready.” Rob felt that the experience was informed by his own life and current state, and is created “from the inside out. All you from the inside out.... You’re accepting what parts in understanding and wherever you are in life, whatever you’re going through, whatever you may be thinking emotionally, every part of your being [is a part of the web], that goes much further beyond music.” Ron was mindful of his current position on his life path, living and working in San Francisco. He thought about his professional work, and the opportunity to work with this musical group. He was looking forward to meeting the group and hearing them live.

Ron remained at the side of the road for the remainder of the third song. He dried his eyes and felt his experience fade before driving on. He was left feeling a sense of contentment and happiness as he continued to listen.

Ron felt that this experience, like others, was magical, beyond intellectual understanding, and found himself wanting to remain free of intellect in the experience, “These magical experiences... it’s beyond the intellect. I’ve been working hard to put my intellect in my back pocket” to remain fully open to these experiences. After the experience he resisted analyzing it until participation in this research.

Donna's Situational Structure

Sibelius at Lincoln Center *Entering the Gates of Heaven*

Donna works as a music therapist as she studies music therapy in graduate school. She has studied and played the violin for many years, and sat as the first violin and Concert Master for a university orchestra. Donna worked as a free-lance ensemble player before beginning work in music therapy.

Donna was visiting New York City with friends several months ago during summer break while she was studying music therapy in college. They went to see the New York Philharmonic Orchestra perform at Lincoln Center. The music included Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op.43 by Jean Sibelius (1865-1957), a late romantic composer. *It is a grand and romantic symphony noted for its innovative melody and use of harmony marking a transition away from the romantic style, toward a more modern form.*

Before the concert, Donna wondered if her education and background in music had desensitized her to the wonder and beauty of classical music. She had spent many years studying technical aspects of music, and was well acquainted with the work involved in preparing a piece for performance. She anticipated she would attend to technical aspects of the performance this night rather than the pleasing aesthetic of the music.

Donna felt excited for the show nonetheless. She was visiting Lincoln Center for the first time, and she appreciated the mystique and grandeur of the legendary concert hall. She was excited to hear a live performance, "that's what it's all about." She knew the New York Philharmonic Orchestra well, but had

never heard them in a live performance. She anticipated with excitement this opportunity to see a world-renowned orchestra perform live.

Donna was not familiar with this symphony, though she knew of the composer's works. She did not hold any preconceptions or expectations of the music. Donna did not anticipate she would be moved during the concert, and she was surprised by the experience that would follow.

Donna enjoyed the first three movements of the symphony. She recognized the composer's style, and found the music to be pleasant. She was sitting with her friends attending to the music, but she was not emotionally attached to the music.

Donna was first struck by the starting melody in the transition to the fourth movement. Her attention was captured by the music for the first time during the performance, and she found herself focusing on the sound. *In this section, the melody is introduced with bold brass building in loudness and with rising melody. The tempo slows and the music rises to a climax in loudness creating an anticipation.* She found the brass to be "triumphant," and she felt that this part of the music expressed an entry or "waiting period" in the piece. Donna noticed the "hymn-like" phrasing of the string section and the low brass sounds. She felt hit "like a ton of bricks" as this moment as the triumphant brass gives way to the melody of the fourth movement.

The melody of the fourth movement, introduced loudly by violins, is sweeping and romantic. It rises over low brass playing harmonies forming chords in an even waltz cadence. Donna attended to the instrumentation and the

registers during the experience. *At the start of the first repeat of the first phrase of the full and romantic melody (played by violin), different lower-register chords are played by brass.* Donna was struck by these different chords, which are richer in texture than the first set of chords behind the unchanged violin melody. She found this to be “bright and beautiful.” Tears came to Donna’s eyes suddenly during the repeated melody with the changed harmony.

Donna’s friends, on either side of her, noticed she was crying and expressed their concern, asking if she was okay. She worked to remain open to the experience for the first time, instead of stepping out of the experience to analyze it. She was not concerned about her friends’ worry, and this did not distract her from the moment. Donna could not articulate what was happening in the moment. She felt she “had to go through this [herself]” and she felt taken aback.

Donna saw images in her mind as she listened and cried. This visual experience feels natural and good to her. Donna closed her eyes and felt the strings soaring upward. She thought that this music is what she wants to hear when she “dies and goes to heaven.” As she envisioned ascending to heaven, she saw brightness and heaven’s gate like in cartoons she had seen.

She felt that the music was all around her. She felt that no one was near her, though she felt a wonderful presence. She imagined the presence was of angels and God. She was floating in this space, “almost conducting with the music.” This gave her a really nice and great feeling of being, “up in the clouds. [She] was feeling light.” Donna had her eyes closed and wasn’t aware of the

people around her, “The people I was sitting with, on either side of me, they weren’t there, the chairs weren’t there. It was just me and the music. Yeah.”

Donna felt that the vision came from thoughts about the music and her own life, particularly her spiritual life, her violin playing, and her emotional self. Donna was struggling with her professional identity when she had this experience. She had committed to becoming a music therapist, and was moving away from violin performance, which was a strong part of her identity. She was uncomfortable in the educational program, adjusting to new students and a new professor, and having started late in the program. She felt unsettled about this life change.

The melody ends and brass play a transition, building with a shift in key and quietness. The transition begins to build again with loudness and anticipation as the violins begin the melody again. Donna felt like she was “soaring above or beyond the worries at that time in [her] life, the new program and adjusting to all that” with the angels and God in heaven. Donna felt the different harmonies to be sweet and poignant, “It’s like we found what we were looking for and it’s what we thought it was in the beginning and it still is.”

Donna’s vision continued as the fourth movement becomes more subdued and quiet. *The strings play low quiet tones as the woodwinds play a light and sparse melody. This movement is less dramatic than the transition, and with different instrumentation.* She imagined she is exploring heaven, “the wandering part.” At that moment the woodwinds take over the melody for a time she thought of her friend sitting with her who plays clarinet. She felt her friend joined her in

her vision of heaven and she thought, “wouldn’t it be something if everyone came and joined me. I want to take you and you and you.” Donna relaxed her focus on the music and noticed that she was attending less directly now that violins were not playing the melody.

Donna felt the transition was gorgeous. She did not notice the rest of the movement that followed. She continued to imagine that this music would be the most beautiful sound to hear when entering the gates of heaven. Donna experienced a “deep and intellectual epiphany” as the music continued. She thought about her relationship to classical music, and her passionate beliefs deeply rooted in God and something bigger than her. She realized that “the important parts of [her] life were connected in there.”

Donna felt a profound presence of God in the music. She thought about how many of her important life experiences had involved music, and she felt that Sibelius and all the great composers had been given a powerful gift by God that touch people throughout history. Donna felt that music as a strong force bigger than the composer, timeless and immortal, existing outside of human phenomena. Donna’s spirituality was affirmed by the experience.

Donna became more emotionally engaged in classical music. She has a greater love and new respect for the music, which confirmed her reason for being a music therapist. She was left feeling that music is bigger than humankind, and transcends barriers.

Donna felt that she could now understand her life choices, her reason for being a music therapist, and for being a violinist. She realized that playing the

violin is still an integral part of her new professional life. She felt better able to approach the violin differently, putting less pressure on herself. She felt stronger and more confident about life afterward, “It made me feel like it’s okay. I’m not afraid to do what I need to do, and grow up and old and die.... The experience made me stronger as a person.”

Donna “came out of it” slowly over time, before the music ended.

Donna did not remember the music that followed the transition. She became aware of the music again only when the concert was ending, as she emerged from her fantasy of her exploration of heaven.

After the concert, Donna felt overwhelmed, and unable to understand what had happened to her. She only knew that she had had a wonderful experience, but did not know why. She decided to let the experience be with out analyzing it for several days. She then listened to a recording of the symphony to reflect on what she had experienced.

General Structure

The General Structure is a compilation of aspects of the experience of being moved by listening to music found throughout the Situated Structures in this study. The aspects are organized into themes, and will be articulated in a more psychological and phenomenological language. This process includes an additional level of interpretation, which requires the same hermeneutic attitude, reflectively returning to the phenomenon as the themes are articulated. The

themes are an abstraction of the original experience, in that they are lifted from the overall gestalt of the experience and held outside their greater context. This is done to allow for an articulation that is clear and understandable, however each theme is considered to be an integral component, closely connected to all other themes in the General Structure. This rich data can be interpreted from many perspectives yielding a wealth of interesting conceptualizations. What follows represents a selection of salient aspects found in the data I chose intentionally because they were figural for me. These themes include *Attunement to the experience, Apprehending the beautiful, Inhabiting a musical world, Being sound, Embodying music's will, Connectedness, and Emerging Transformed*. I include an additional quality of the experience found in a data subset: *Fore-having*. This quality, though not found in all experiences, was particularly salient in most of them, and seems to enrich our understanding of the experience in general. I encourage the reader to review the protocols and conversations to appreciate the richness of the data and explore additional interpretive possibilities (see Appendices B and C).

Attunement to the Experience

One quality found in all participants' experiences was an attunement that involved openness and willingness to participate in the musical experience. They were interested in the music and attended to the particular sound experience with investment. This attunement was an entering into the experience of both the musical event and the experience of being moved. This quality of the experience

may seem obvious, but upon closer inspection, it seems to be one of the most salient in the General Structure. Without this willingness or openness to the experience, the participants would not have encountered the transformation at all. Participants' interests varied from a particular moodedness to an intellectual curiosity, and from delightful anticipation to an apprehensive, cautious approach. Whatever the attunement, each was clearly interested in the music they listened to, and were attending closely to their experience. That the participants are musicians themselves, clearly informed their particular points of access to the experience. Donna, Chris, and Syril all purposely listened to music they selected largely because it highlighted the instrument they play.

"I had listened to maybe a couple of pieces first and was really feeling music that day, and I was like 'you know, I'm going to listen to that Prokofiev violin concerto'..." (Chris, P2).

In this experience, they also remained open to the transformational moment, even in the face of trepidation (for example, Chris and Donna). This openness appeared with awareness that something new and at times unsettling was happening, and a willingness to embrace the experience.

"Don't be afraid to let yourself do what you need to do. That was the first time I followed that advice for myself. I was comfortable enough with the people I was with to let myself do that" (Donna, P7).

"Yeah, you've got to be open to it. I think that these magical experiences ... it's beyond the intellect. That's the good news" (Ron, P31).

"I remember thinking, 'wow, this is pretty wild.' I went with it though wholeheartedly" (Chris, protocol).

For most participants, the context and setting of the experience was a salient component of their attunement to the experience. This at times included an awareness of the surroundings, and for some, a gestalt of sensations including sights and tactile experiences. It seemed as if the gestalt of the experience - not just the sounds themselves, but the world around them became more vivid as they entered the transforming experience. Interestingly, the participants' awareness of their surroundings seemed to precede the transformation, which was marked by a shift toward attunement to their inner, felt experience.

“As I listened to the first movement I became increasingly aware of my surroundings. It was a beautiful late winter morning and the sun was shining through the windshield of my car. The heat from the sun on my body seemed to directly coincide with the warmth and the light of the music” (Chris, protocol).

“There was a lot of fog over Marin and as I reached the bridge the fog cleared away completely as I headed onto the bridge. Everything (my perceptions) became immediately heightened. My vision and hearing focused to a very high level” (Ron, protocol).

“The venue too – just the grandeur of...the aura about Lincoln Center. I’m in the big time, the Big Apple, and we’re having a good time. There’s something about being in that building, listening to that particular orchestra, and listening to a live performance” (Donna, P24).

It is important to note that each participant's particular musical background was a significant factor in not just their access to the experience, but also their particular way of moving further into their transformational experience. They clearly were interested in the music and approached the experience with intention and purpose, listening actively. As indicated, most either decided to listen to the music because it featured the instrument they play, or found

themselves focusing on their instruments at times during the experience. Their attention was sustained by noticing technical aspects of the music or instruments they found new and interesting. This quality of accessing the experience must be considered with the participant criteria of having a background in music. Each participant, however, experienced a shift away from this initial intentional listening, toward a deeper, more emotional and personal listening when they were being touched or moved by the music.

“It has an upbeat tempo and is filled with what I would describe as some unique violin techniques and unorthodox and unpredictable phrasings” (Chris, protocol).

“When they start stacking these lines, it’s really amazing. They have a row of girls standing in front of them, the soloists. You hear them presented like that. This is a live record. There is this quartet in front, and then you’ll get these pulses from the chorus behind” (Ron, P2).

“Yeah – hearing what he was doing with silence was something that I had never been open to, you know for a trumpet player aspiring to improvise, imitate the ways of the bebop era, the hard bebop era especially – playing fast with lots of notes – like ‘higher, faster, louder’ is a term that we use jokingly in the jazz world describing – those things that impress people” (Syril, P13).

Apprehending the Beautiful

The experience of being moved by listening to music included an encounter with beauty. Profound aesthetic experiences inspired awe and glee in the listener, and to my surprise, this reaction to beauty seemed to be the quality that the participants were most attuned to. Clearly, throughout all participants’ experiences hearing the sound as beautiful was a figural feature. Each participant expressed their encounter in unique ways, but all participants

experienced the beautiful in the quality of the sound and were struck by the encounter.

“It’s different but it’s beautiful. It’s new for me and it’s so beautiful. I think that’s beautiful” (Ron, P11).

“The next movement started, this absolutely beautiful slow movement. I knew I was in for a real treat because I had listened and enjoyed this piece before...” (Chris, protocol).

“All I could still think about is that if I were to die that very day and enter the gates of heaven, I could not imagine a more beautiful sound waiting for me” (Donna, protocol).

Most participants described being affected emotionally by beautiful sound. Their emotional experience seemed most closely related to apprehending beauty, though in most experiences becoming emotional was a pervasive aspect of the gestalt of the experience, not easily abstracted out of the context of the greater whole. Tears came to Chris, Donna, and Ron as they listened to the music. They described feeling overwhelmed and deeply moved by particular aspects of the beautiful sound. All participants felt a strong emotional reaction whose meaning was not readily available to them in the moment. Supported by Merleau-Ponty’s understanding of embodiment discussed previously, the participants’ emotional reaction to the beautiful seemed to involve an embodied knowing that was not intellectually comprehensible for them.

Inhabiting a Musical World

The experience involved a shift in time and place, with the individual leaving the corporeal existence for the space and life of the music. Each

participant's lived world was transformed in the listening experience, shifting awareness from the experience of him or herself as a listener, in this seat, in this theater..., to an awareness of the beauty and meaning of the music. As if transported to a different place, he was not aware of time and events in the immediate surroundings. Interestingly, this shift often followed a keen awareness of the world around them as if their transportation required first a heightening of sensory awareness of the world around them before moving toward the world of music they came to inhabit.

"I was, I felt like... I was floating too, but watching them. I know I wasn't paying attention to the road. I was on auto-pilot or something" (Chris, P18).

"I was feeling light, and I remember, I had my eyes closed and I don't remember there being people. The people I was sitting with, on either side of me, they weren't there, the chairs weren't there, it was just me and the music. Yeah" (Donna, P29).

"I didn't know of the possibilities of being able to experience music in this way. Similarly if you watch a movie you just get so into it that it nothing else – sort of like time disappears, like one of these things where you don't know where you are actually" (Syril, P7).

Participants experienced the musical lived world with differing meaning and significance, but all found themselves inhabiting a world with space and context. For Chris and Donna, both active in the Christian church, they inhabited the musical space of Heaven.

"It sort of felt like I was in Heaven. We were all three there, but not like we had died. We were just up there in the clouds in Heaven" (Chris, P20).

"It was like... it was very bright. Like you see on the cartoons, like Bugs Bunny goes to heaven and there are the gates. There is music all around. There is nobody really with me physically, but there is this presence, this wonderful presence. If I were in heaven, it would be of course, angels and God. I was just floating in this space, ...It was really nice. It was great" (Donna, P12).

This musical space occasionally took a form involving the act of creating the music, be it in the composer's world as he created the music, as was the case with Chris, or the world of the performer, as it was for Cyril. This particular manifestation of place may well be informed by the fact that the participants play music themselves.

"To hear that in a way I had never before where actually I felt like I could hear every iota of sound, beyond a second of sound, like, really, I was almost like with him in the studio at the time he recorded it" (Syril, P8).

"I started thinking about Sergei Prokofiev composing the piece and felt like I was sitting down beside him and he was talking through the piece and explaining to me his thoughts and emotions while composing" (Chris, protocol).

This transformation of place was also articulated in a returning to the everyday world at the conclusion of the experience. This returning involved a shift in awareness, back to the corporeal life of the listener and the listening space.

"This second movement came to a close and I "woke up" if you will, and became more aware of my immediate surroundings and the fact that I was still driving. My car must have been on automatic pilot because I was to my exit off the highway" (Chris, protocol).

"I remember when it was over, but I don't remember a whole lot about the rest of the piece. It was surprising to me when I went back to listen to the entire thing again... I was hearing the rest like I hadn't heard it before" (Donna, P30).

Being Sound

The transformational musical experience included a sense of being personally involved in the sound. The experience included an awareness of the

music as object, but also an awareness of the music as ‘me’ along with a sense of being an active agent in the music. Participants experienced this in several distinct ways, most commonly by imagining an image or fantasy born from their personal lives and concerns. Participants also experienced this by way of directly moving or controlling the music in their lived experience, by conducting or composing it, for instance. In these ways, the musical experience is co-constituted by both the musical sounds and the listener listening.

“It seems like they’re talking./ Maybe it’s more like...they’re humming. They are singing, and it just so happens they are playing instruments./Yeah, to each other, to [me]” (Syril, P21-23).

“I was, I felt like I was almost conducting them, but I was floating too, but watching them” (Chris, P18).

I was just floating in this space, almost conducting with the music. (gesturing with arms outstretched) It was really nice. It was great” (Donna, P12).

Many of the participants experienced a kind of transposition of their personal meaning, revealed through particular aspects or qualities of the music itself. For these participants, the union of self and music can be seen in a precise attunement to a specific quality of the music. Chris, for example, had a vision of his wife and son suggested by sounds in the music that seemed representational of them. Donna, likewise, had a felt-sense she was soaring above or beyond worries of her sentient life, and her soaring was represented by a melody she found to be soaring above the music. I had anticipated this focus on discrete aspects of the music heard, but I had expected this would be a central part of each participant’s experience, and for that matter, a key component of transformational musical experience in general. It is important to

note, however, that this was not how all participants experienced *being sound*.

Some identified with more global aspects of the music, like the overall tone or feelings stirred by the composition as a whole.

“All of a sudden I saw my wife, Jennifer, holding our three-year-old son’s hand, and in slow motion they were dancing around in a circle. They had big smiles on their faces. They had this angelic glow to them” (Chris, protocol).

“I was seeing my wife holding my son. They were floating and spinning slowly in front of me. I was struck with this overwhelming feeling. The pizzicato strings were my son, you know, like a kid just bouncing around. The violin, it was so beautiful, I thought this is pure love, this child and mother, and my love her them” (Chris, P19).

“For me, it felt like I was soaring above or beyond the worries at that time in my life, the new program and adjusting to all that” (Donna, P27).

Embodying Music’s Will

The experience involved a sense of having one’s body acted upon by the music. There was a shift of will, with one being taken, hit, or grabbed by the music. Participants described giving themselves over to the music, often at the moment they experience a shift in their awareness and feel a change begin. Many describe a resulting loss of breath, while some describe being filled by the music, or that the music enters and comes out through them. This is distinct from the quality of feeling that one becomes the music, and indicates that the participants felt the music as other, and as impacting them from outside their own psychological experience. It is worth noting that ideas from the literature review that focus on music as a sonorous experience that touch our entire bodies speak to this quality of the experience for the participants.

"I remember that sound almost coming into me so to speak, and I could feel every vibration in the mute (Syril, P8).

"I felt like I could touch the music and like I was bathing in it" (Chris, protocol).

"The hymn-like phrasing by the string sections, supported by the low brass hit me like a ton of bricks" (Donna, protocol).

"Immediately my breath was taken from me and tears came down my face. ...It was like an unfiltered response to the music because the music was directly speaking to my heart" (Chris, protocol).

"It's coming from the inside out. It's already all the way in. It's as far in as you can go, and it's coming back out.... Here it's through your ears but it gets into your soul and then comes up through all of your senses, you know?" (Ron, P5).

Connectedness

The experience of being transformed also included a significant sense of connectedness, or being-with for all participants. In these experiences, this was revealed in many forms and meanings, including being connected to God, to loved ones, to humanity, the world, and to the music, itself. Feeling connected appeared as figural for the participants, and is regarded as a central aspect, closely related to many other themes in the general structure. For each participant, a sense of connectedness seemed to emerge as meaning from the powerful experience of being touched by the music. The experience unfolds from an embodied, emotional reaction to a spiritual sense of the reaction as a profound connectedness, as if being touched connects us to the music and to a greater world of significance. This unfolding is best articulated in Ron's experience.

“Yeah, just the harmony is so beautiful, the dynamics ... it’s this giant web that becomes one thing. It’s already connected. Totally connected, to me at least. I had never really heard such a thing” (Ron, P4).

“What I think is triggering the effects in me is that I am able to recognize through some sense -- maybe not my ears -- that they, the musicians themselves, or the composers, or the artists themselves are making these connections between their heart and my heart. It’s like a web of connections with all of those guys in the choir, they’ve got a web, this little thread that’s going right to the center of my heart” (Ron, P36).

For three participants, the salient connection was with particular people in their lives for whom they had great affection and care. Syril felt connected to his good friend, who was listening with him, through the listening experience.

“I felt connected with that person, not in a very, not in a sexual way at all, it was just like a matter of this music; this person; all becoming like one experience. That was unique. Of course you’ve experienced stuff like that before in different settings – with family, or like something very poignant that happens like a wedding or a funeral that’s beyond the everyday type of things that we do” (Syril, P8).

Donna felt connected to several loved ones in her life. As she inhabited the musical world of heaven in her experience, she imagined that she would be joined by friends and family. She first imagined being with a friend who plays clarinet, represented for her by the clarinet in the music. She was then joined by other loved ones.

“I was thinking, “wouldn’t that be something if everyone came and joined me. I want to take you and you and you and you” (Donna, P34).

Finally, Chris felt connected to his wife and son, as he apprehended them dancing with him in heaven.

“It sort of felt like I was in heaven. We were all three there, but not like we had died. We were just up there in the clouds in heaven” (Chris, P20).

The experience of being connected was closely associated with other aspects of the overall experience for all the participants. Connectedness to others flows from being connected to the music, as mentioned above. Additionally, the sense of connectedness is embedded in the experience of apprehending the beautiful and being emotionally affected. While all themes are components of an overall gestalt, the interrelatedness of these aspects with being connected was particularly notable. This quality of connectedness was not anticipated as being such a central aspect to the experience. Indeed, the literature does not attend to this quality, and I did not hold this as an important part of the forestructure with which I entered this research.

Emerging Transformed

The experience leaves one with something psychologically valuable and lasting. Participants were left feeling benefited by the experience in some significant way. This benefit can range in quality and meaning, be it finding courage, deepening appreciation of loved ones or life, or affirming love or spirituality. Each participant found the experience memorable and regarded it as important and pleasing, which underscores the significance of the impact these experiences hold. Despite this being a central tenant of my forestructure and the premise of the research as a whole, I was not sure that the participants would experience an awareness of being transformed and articulate this quality so clearly. It is worth noting, however, that not all of the participants were aware of

being transformed during the actual experience, as some discovered this upon reflection afterwards.

“It really affirmed my faith. It made me feel closer to God. And it felt like my wife and son were a gift too. I felt really thankful for the love that we have. And really appreciate everything” (Chris, P24).

“I think it makes me appreciate my life. I’m not afraid to do what I need to do, and grow up and old and die. It’s not something that I am really afraid of, but there is apprehension no matter what it is, about doing what you have to do in life, and knowing that is always going to be with you. The experience makes me stronger as a person” (Donna, P39).

“Or focus, when you feel in any way, these things are somehow heightening your level of focus, where when you bring things in focus, you’re able to appreciate them more fully and expand on your levels of appreciation of life” (Ron, P45).

“It was the first time that really changed me like as a person, as a musician, and it changed the way I listened to music thereafter” (Syril, P4).

It is worth pointing out that a particular type of lasting change was indicated in all Situated Structures, that of feeling one’s appreciation for music itself growing as a result. This must be considered in the context of the research design, with participants being selected for having a deep appreciation for music.

“Miles gave us a catalyst that helped me to listen to music just for sound – simply” (Syril, P16).

Fore-having

For most of the participants, there was a sense of latent knowledge, as if they knew it all along, or had heard it before, but had no awareness of their knowledge. Most participants felt they had heard a new piece of music before, or were hearing it again as if for the first time. This sense of having already known

something new was regarded as uncanny, and perplexing to most participants who had the experience.

This minor theme of 'Forehaving' disclosed in this study is rendered intelligible through Merleau-Ponty's notion of the body knowing. Perhaps the untranslatability of music is limited to the realm of reflective, analytical knowing, but that it is our bodies that know, and this knowledge is powerful, emotional, and real. Thus the experience of knowing without knowing that one knows, or the 'de ja vu' that accompanies music that one has never heard before.

"It seems to me though, that the deepest stuff somehow I feel like it's already there and I already know it. That's a really ... I don't know if it's unique to me, but it's ... even when I read words by a great writer presenting something in a way, when those words register with me, I somehow feel that I always knew them and somebody just showed me and I forgot" (Ron, P35).

"In many ways I felt like I was listening to the piece for the first time. I was aware of phrasing that I had not recalled remembering before and was in awe of the piece (Chris, protocol).

"It's like going home, you know? It's like going home and you didn't even know what home looked like" (Ron, P36).

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

In this section I attend to particular aspects of the findings in the General Structure to further explore their significance, and attend to issues that arise from the particular way I chose to investigate the phenomenon of musical transformation. I begin by attending to the following particular issues: embodiment, meaning in music, and connectedness. Throughout the discussion, I have pointed out instances in which my preconceptions seemed to be confirmed as well as instances when I was surprised by the findings, in order to disclose the reflexive nature of this study. I then consider issues related to the research design and possibilities for future study that seem to be suggested by the findings of this research.

Embodiment of Musical Experience

In my attempt to understand the experience of being transformed by music, one's bodily experience demands careful consideration, for it is apparent that much of the experience involves our bodies. The emotional aspect of the experience vividly reflects one's bodily involvement, but the body is also implicated in such aspects as perception and in the apprehension of beauty and of meaning in the experience.

Beginning with the perception of sound, we can see from participants' experiences the tangible impact that music had on their bodies. Described in many ways by participants (including being hit, entered, or having one's breath

taken) it is clear that one's body is touched by the music in these transformational experiences. Furthermore, the participants' bodies were changed in the experience, suggested by the themes of *Embodying Music's Will* and *Being Music*. Participants experienced a musical embodiment that included flying, floating, conducting, and merging with the sound and with others. It is as if their corporeal bodies transformed into musical bodies through the experience.

In addition, the theme of *Fore-having* suggests that participants experienced a kind of embodied understanding of the musical experience. Many described feeling they somehow knew the music, though they had not heard it before. Based on Merleau-Ponty's (1962, 1964) notions described above, this knowledge can be understood as not housed in the intellect, but held and comprehended by the body. This sense of embodied knowing seems to color all of the themes generated in this research, particularly *Apprehending the Beautiful* and *Connectedness*.

It is significant that participants in this study had experiences that did not involve dance, or any physical movement of their bodies. I anticipated discovering this more active involvement of one's body through movement as a salient component in the experience of being transformed by music, and I am left imagining that for many, particularly those of us who listen to music in the context of dance, movement would be even more salient. In any case, the experience of the participants seemed to be embodied, and none described feeling "out of their body," however much their bodies were called to feel and express rather than move and dance.

In considering the findings in this research, I was surprised that the emotional experience of the sort we connect with our everyday cares and concerns was not figural for the participants. One example of this is presented in the movie, *Casablanca*, in which the song 'As Time Goes By' is held as emotionally meaningful from an association it has with a relationship in the world. This type of emotional experience was not articulated by participants. While each participant's experience was an emotional one, a common feature of their experience was that their emotions were quite *unlike* emotions experienced in everyday life. They experienced the music emotionally, it seems, though they did not experience emotion per se. By this I mean that their tears (of those participants who cried) were not for a certain loss or sadness, but more complexly intertwined with their aesthetic encounter and their personal meaning. Also, for many the emotive aspect of their experience was difficult for them to articulate and assign meaning. This notion is supported by the ideas of some who hold a "representationalist" view of emotion in music, like Hanslick (1985), Kivy (2002), Langer (1951), Nass (1971), and Schopenhauer (1967) who saw music as suggestive not of emotions themselves, but of the movements or dynamics of emotional experience.

Meaning in Music

The findings of this research offer an opportunity to enter into dialogue with established theories about the meaning of music and deepen our understanding of the phenomenon of musical transformation. Each of the

participants in this study experienced something meaningful in musical transformation, and each apprehended this meaning in ways that involved an emotional and embodied involvement within an aesthetic experience. The meaning of their experienced was personal, that is, grounded in their own lives and experiences, but clearly in relation to, or guided by the music. For instance, Chris's meaning involved beautiful string arrangements as his love for his wife and son, and Donna heard a calming reassurance in the second movement of the symphony.

Based on the phenomenological-existential notion of intentionality described earlier, this connectedness of self and world is considered to be a fundamental quality of human experience. Many writers like Gadamer (1986), Nietzsche (1967), Hanslick (1985), Kivy (2002), Langer (1951), and Nass (1971) saw music as unique in its ability to foster and make immediate this transposition of self and world. They suggested that music's indeterminate and vague nature encourages this immediacy, and the meaning created is *felt* as coming from both within and without. This creates a unique aesthetic experience that brings the co-constitutionality of everyday experience into awareness as a part of the *lived experience*.

Perhaps Nass's (1971) notion that music serves as a projective on which we situate our personal meaning aptly describes the nature of the participants' experiences. The meaning that each participant took from the experience involved, or was mediated by the music in an intimate way, but the musical sounds seemed to contribute less to the articulated meaning than the

participants' lives and feelings. It is as if the person listening guides the music instead of the music guiding the listener. For instance, when Chris envisioned his wife and son dancing, he was listening to a moment in the music that not instructing or even suggesting he do so. Likewise for all participants, the meaning manifested itself through visions and feelings that came from their lives.

Perhaps the most clearly identifiable influence the musical sounds had on the creation of meaning for the participants was the aesthetic experience of apprehending the beautiful. All participants felt a profound reaction to hearing what they found to be beautiful, whether it was silences, melody, vocal harmonies, or triumphant brass arrangements. This experience of the beautiful seems most obviously to be the thing that music offers in these transformational experiences. Perhaps in the contact with a beautiful sound with indeterminate meaning, we are invited to place ourselves, our personal meaning into the beauty that we experience.

Connectedness

The literature does not address fully the quality of connectedness found in the participants' experiences of being transformed by music. This quality of the experience of musical transformation was perhaps the most pervasive and significant, and it seems appropriate to revisit the literature which attends to this quality of connection. A few accounts of this quality of musical experience can be found in the literature, however there is little reflection on this aspect in music psychology, and few hypotheses as to how music fosters connectedness.

Merritt (1990) suggested that music does promote an awareness of and appreciation for togetherness. She felt that musical experience alters our attunement to the outside world, allowing us to feel, through empathy, that we share our human experience with others, and with all of humanity. Reimer and Wright (1992) agreed, adding that “Music manifests powerfully this fundamental reality of human consciousness – that we exist in a world of meanings we experience alone, in our own skins, while also being capable of recognizing and being influenced by the co-experience of those with whom we share the world. Every act of musical experience expands our inner world” (p. 159). Likewise, Ihde (1976) suggested that music reminds us of our total beings, and the inseparable connection of our bodies, our souls, and our community.

It appears that many aspects of transformational musical experience bring forth this feeling of connectedness. The primordial quality, the deep resonance we feel with our bodies gives forth a sensation of openness, taking in the music with our whole beings. This affords us an intimacy with the sound, and with others. Additionally, sound, itself, has a primary occurrence in the lives of rational beings as instruments of communication, according to Scruton (1997):

It is in the form of sound that language is normally first learned, and it is through sound that we communicate most immediately.... Every sound intentionally made is instinctively taken to be an attempt at communication... In the presence of sound intentionally produced and organized, we feel ourselves within another person's ambit. (p. 18)

In our intentional act of hearing sounds as music, we take the sonic vibrations as intentional, that is, made by someone in order to communicate something. It seems likely that this inference facilitates an intimacy and a sense of connectedness, as if the music is communicating intentionally to the listener.

Cook (1990) suggests that there is an immediate and mutual interaction between the performer and listener through the shared musical experience. He saw both as, “tuned into one another, are living together through the same flux, are growing older together while the music process lasts” (p. 131). This idea, which also indicates a sense of connection as experienced by listeners, was salient in the accounts of participants in this study. Many felt as if the performer and composer were speaking or communicating directly to them as listeners.

Regardless of ways we might conceptualize the experience of being-with, or feeling connected, it is apparent that participants in this study described this aspect of the experience as figural and formative. Ron described the connectedness in this way: “...whatever you may be thinking emotionally, where your life force is, every part of your being ...the web goes much further beyond music. In my opinion, it’s connecting everything on the planet anyway. This is a very deep web” (Ron, P40). This experience of connectedness is intimately tied to all aspects of the experience, including the experience of being transformed by music.

Issues Pertaining to the Research

This research, being qualitative and hermeneutic in nature, has been conducted with a reflexive attitude. It is important to note that the results are offered with the intention that they be taken up with this same reflexive attitude. The results found here are situated and perspectival, which calls for us to dwell with the data along with other ideas found in the literature with a sustained openness. We are called to engage in a continual dialogue with the phenomenon, always considering findings reflexively and allowing our knowledge to change as it grows. In our conversation, Ron described this attunement to knowledge, "...let's push the door open a little wider. If you don't search, you'll never find anything. There's a great Wayne Shorter quote from a documentary. ...he says [paraphrasing], 'I use the very best of the past as my flashlight'" (Ron, P9). It is with this spirit that these results are put forward.

In attempting to illuminate the experience of being transformed by listening to music, I encountered limitations, some of which were intentional for issues related to the design, while some were accidental, revealed through the developing process of the study. I will discuss those issues that seem most salient for me, first briefly considering my protocol question and my collaboration with participants, then looking more closely at my decisions to investigate instrumental music, and to work with musicians.

The protocol question I used (see Appendix A) proved to reveal a struggle to pinpoint the conception of musical transformation that I intended to hold for

this research. In instructing participants to describe an experience in which they felt “deeply moved or transformed,” I allow for a lack of clarity. I am vague about the experience I want to pinpoint; do I mean being personally moved or being transformed? Are these the same thing? When I designed the question, I consciously decided to allow this vagueness, figuring that the two descriptors, “deeply moved,” and “transformed” would help the participants see an openness to my conception of transformation. As I look back from this point, having worked through and dwelled with my research, it seems that the vagueness is also an indication of the subtlety of the phenomenon, itself. Even now, after interpreting the data, I am left with a sense that the vagueness continues, and was only perhaps lessened by the understandings generated in this study.

A second issue worth mentioning about this research concerns the limited nature of the collaboration between the researcher and participants. Collaboration was an integral part of this research design, but upon reflection, I see that further interaction and a closer collaboration would enrich the findings. I entered into dialogue with participants (revealing my developing ideas and eliciting their personal views) during a single conversation. I later showed them the Situated Structure I generated from their protocol. In hindsight, an additional step of returning to participants to have a dialogue about the General Structure and overall findings would allow further collaboration, and possibly richer results.

Considering Instrumental Music

I made the decision to attend only to Instrumental music for this study in an attempt to remain focused on the significance of sound while avoiding the likely complication of language. This was not done with a presumption that music with lyrics does not offer a transformational experience. Indeed, feeling deeply touched by lyrics in a song may be a richer, more powerful experience available to a wider audience. I anticipated that meaning given through lyrics would add an additional quality to the experience that might leave hidden the meaning that the sounds themselves gave forth. This decision seems to have been the right one here, but it is surely a limitation of the research.

As noted above, one participant, Terry, was excluded from this research because his experience included *languaged* meaning. He read an English translation while he listened to the Italian opera and as a result, attended to the music *through* the story of the opera. His experience was significantly influenced by the languaged story of the opera. For instance, he described various moments in the music by recounting the story, "I had gotten through four sides, I'm into the fifth side and then Puccini continues this sad tone all the way and then the three, Ping, Pang, and Pong are standing around saying, 'Oh, this is horrible. This young girl's killed herself,' and the King's saying, 'You will pay for this, this life. You will pay for this.'" (Terry, P18).

Interestingly, Terry's experience did share certain aspects of the General Structure generated from the remaining 4 protocols. Most notable, his

experience included a sense of personal involvement in the music found in the General Structure. But it was mediated by the story of the opera, and as a result, Terry's personal involvement was articulated as him being in the story itself, as a member of the chorus within the opera, "I feel like I'm one of the crowd. Like I said, the crowd is in the scene a lot, and the crowd has seen all this... I feel like I'm just sucked into this and I'm looking at these people who are involved... (Terry, P47-P48). While excluded from this research data, his experience offers a rich comparison to the experience of listening to truly non-linguaged music (See Appendix D).

Participants as Musicians

The decision to investigate the experience of musicians was another important limitation of this research. The data and conclusions drawn must be considered in this limited context, which included participants who know music technically, through specialized training and/or professional backgrounds. All participants could read music, play at least one instrument, and appreciate music in its greater historical context. This decision was made in order to ensure that the participants would be able to articulate their experience in a shared discourse of music. This undoubtedly skewed the findings.

In considering the participants' experiences, it seems that this artificial limitation was not necessary as I anticipated it would be. I thought that the participants as musicians, themselves, would attend to particular technical aspects of the music, and find these aspects to be the sources of transformation.

Akin to my experience of listening to 'Telephone and Rubberband', where aspects like the interplay of consonance and dissonance were of a central focus for me, I anticipated that participants would attend to the music similarly. I anticipated that this would require the participants to have access to a specialized language to be able to describe their experience. As it turns out, this was not the case for most of the participants. They articulated their experience using non-technical language, and it seems as though their backgrounds in music only served to frame their attunement or interest in the music they heard.

I was concerned that individuals who know music – its structure, history, and technique – may attend to these qualities as technicians and would not have access to a deeper, more personal experience. Donna, in fact, entered her experience with this same concern, "it can be hard for me to separate listening to a piece for enjoyment and not sitting and analyzing it measure for measure" (Donna, protocol). This, however, did not prove to be true for the participants. To be sure, each participant's access to the experience was informed by his or her knowledge of music, and his or her attunement was mediated by this knowledge. Nonetheless, each participant experienced a shift away from listening technically to listening deeply and holistically.

Future Study

This research has attended to the experience of being moved by listening to instrumental music for musicians. The findings certainly suggest that music does, indeed, offer a unique and significant transforming experience for musically

educated individuals, and offers an understanding of the qualities of the experience. As indicated above, however, the findings are limited to this population of musicians, and can only suggest that this experience may be a part of the lives of individuals who are not musicians. Future study of this experience for individuals who are not musicians will greatly enrich our understanding of music's transformational power overall. Likewise, by attending to other variants of the population and differing the nature of the listening context our understanding will grow richer still. We will further our understanding by researching the experience as apprehended by people of different ages, cultural backgrounds, and musical backgrounds, for instance, and by investigating the experience of being moved by such subsets as songs with lyrics, sacred music, or dance music.

The investigative method in this study succeeded in disclosing the experience of being moved by listening to music in a way that remains true to participants' *lived* experience, or *erlebnis*. This research design answers the call in the literature for a methodology that preserves the subtle aspects of the phenomenon that elude discovery using objective, natural-scientific methods. By attending to *erlebnis* in accounts of individuals' musical experiences, and reflecting on findings hermeneutically, researchers will illuminate a wide range of depthful understandings on such topics as aesthetic experience, music and emotional experience, and quite importantly, music therapy. In conjunction with natural-scientific research, this human-scientific approach will grow our overall understanding of the phenomena of music.

Music therapy has developed a sizeable literature on various aspects of the therapeutics of music, both concerning the intrinsic transformational power of music, and its use in the field of music therapy. As stated earlier, the literature focuses overwhelmingly on music's power to alter discrete aspects of human experience within limited contexts. With the methodology applied in this research, we are able to investigate the phenomenon more broadly, allowing the experience, itself, to reveal its nature. We are given deeper access to music's ability to change and help us in our lives, and thus, we can better understand how to foster its power in the clinical setting. Donna makes a distinction between 'music as therapy' and 'music *in* therapy'. She observes, "With 'music as therapy', music is the primary way to get to the client. Whereas with 'music *in* therapy,' say, I'm working with an adult with mental retardation and I'm helping them with their ADL's and we are working on learning the steps for brushing teeth. Music is *in* the therapy" (Donna, P22). With this idea in mind, the broader, more depthful understanding given by this methodology will enrich our understanding of *music as therapy*.

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Appendix A – Participant Information

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

- TITLE:** Being Touched by Music: A Phenomenological-hermeneutical Approach to Understanding Transformational Musical Experience: Toward a New Therapeutics of Music
- INVESTIGATOR:** Kurt Kumler, M.A.
13965 Custer's Point Rd
Thornville OH 43076
(614) 403-1870
- ADVISOR:** Daniel Burston, Ph.D.
Psychology Department, Duquesne University
(412) 396-6514
- SOURCE OF SUPPORT:** This study is being performed as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the doctoral degree in Clinical Psychology at Duquesne University.
- PURPOSE:** You are being asked to participate in a research project that seeks to investigate the nature of musical experiences in which individuals feel personally transformed. Your involvement is invited because you are over 18 years old, have been identified as an appropriate participant and have expressed a willingness to participate. Participants will be asked to provide a written description of a personal experience in which they were listening to music and felt moved or touched in a personally meaningful way. In addition, you will be asked to allow me to have a conversation with you in person or via telephone about your description. The interviews will be taped and transcribed.
- These are the only requests that will be made of you.
- RISKS AND BENEFITS:** There are few immediate benefits to participating in this research. Participants may feel enriched by the opportunity to reflect on and discuss their experiences, but their participation is not intended to offer any tangible benefits. There are few risks involved in this research, but there exists the chance that participants will feel traumatized or otherwise psychologically distressed by possibly recalling and discussing negative experiences. In the event of any negative effect of participation, or for any reason whatsoever, you are free to immediately discontinue your participation. If you experience any distress, please contact me immediately and I will assist in a referral to a helping professional or counselor who can offer support and assistance in coping with your distress. You are free at any time to contact me should you have any questions or concerns about your participation.

COMPENSATION:

There will be no compensation for participation in this research, monetary or otherwise. However, participation in the project will require no monetary cost to you. Envelopes are provided for return of your response to the investigator.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Your name will never appear on any research instruments. No identifiable information will be made in the data analysis, including address, or any information that may reveal your or any others' identity or personal information. All written materials and consent forms will be stored in a locked file in the researcher's home while the research is being conducted. Your response(s) will only appear in statistical data summaries. All written materials, tapes of conversations, and transcripts will be destroyed at the completion of the research.

RIGHT TO WITHDRAW:

You are under no obligation to participate in this study. You are free to withdraw your consent to participate at any time.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS:

A summary of the results of this research will be supplied to you, at no cost, upon request.

VOLUNTARY CONSENT:

I have read the above statements and understand what is being requested of me. I also understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw my consent at any time, for any reason. On these terms, I certify that I am willing to participate in this research project.

I understand that should I have any further questions about my participation in this study, I may call Dr. Paul Richer, Chair of the Duquesne University Institutional Review Board (412-396-6326), or Dr. Daniel Burston, Dissertation Advisor (412-36-6514).

 Participant's Signature

 Date

 Researcher's Signature

 Date

Participant Cover Letter

Kurt Kumler
13965 Custers Point Road
Thornville OH 43076
614-403-1870
kumler.1@osu.edu

Dear Prospective Participant –

Thank you for your willingness to consider participating in my doctoral research. Enclosed you will find a complete packet of materials that pertain to your involvement: an Informed Consent Form, a Protocol Question Form, and two envelopes. Please look through the material, and closely read the Informed Assent Form, which details your rights and protections as a research participant. If you have any questions about the assent form, or what is expected of you, please give me a call or email before you sign. When you feel comfortable, please sign and return the assent form using one of the enclosed envelopes.

I am requesting that you reflect on an experience you can recall in which you were listening to music and felt personally and meaningfully moved or transformed by the listening experience. Your experience should involve music that does not contain lyrics you are able to comprehend, such as instrumental music, music using voice without words, or music with lyrics sung in a language you do not speak. By reflecting on listening experiences that do not involve language, we will more clearly focus on the effect of the musical sounds, themselves. You will be asked to simply describe the experience as you remember it – what you felt, though, heard, and experienced. I encourage you to recall an experience you remember more clearly, and one that feels personally meaningful. This description can be hand written or typed, and can be any length. After completing the description, please send it to me using the second enclosed envelope, or by email. Further directions are located on the Protocol Question Form.

Following the submission of the description, I will contact you to schedule a phone or in person conversation at a time and place of your convenience. This conversation will allow me to learn more about your experience, and provide us an opportunity to discuss ideas pertaining to the subject of this research. It is my hope that we will share our views in order to deepen our understanding. This conversation will take approximately 30 to 60 minutes, and will be audio recorded and transcribed for use in the dissertation. This conversation will mark the end of your participation in this research.

Every effort will be made to protect your confidentiality. To this end, any identifiable information you provide will not be included in the dissertation text, and all paper and audio tape materials identifying you will be protected during the research, and destroyed at the conclusion. You will find details about confidentiality on the Informed Consent Form.

Thanks again for taking the time to participate in this research project. I am excited about the opportunity to deepen my appreciation for music by sharing ideas and experiences with you about one of the greatest of the many ways that music touches and tickles our lives. I hope you find this experience to be interesting, enjoyable, and enlightening. Let me know if you want a copy of the results of the investigation.

Sincerely,

Kurt Kumler, M.A.

Protocol Question Form

Please provide a typed or written response to the question below. Your response can be of any length, but it should be long enough to include all details of the experience as you recall it. I ask that you describe your experience *as is was*, so to speak. Ideas about the nature of music in general, unless a part of the actual experience, are not requested for the written description. You are encouraged to discuss these ideas during our conversation. If you have any questions about these instructions, please contact me by phone or email.

The question:

Describe an experience you had when listening to music, in which you felt personally moved or transformed in some meaningful way by listening.

Please include both your inner experience (feelings, thoughts, memories) and whatever you noticed about the context involved (the environment, the particular piece of music, the events as they unfolded in time) in your description. Be sure to articulate as much detail as possible about the particular aspects of the music (rhythm, phrasing, melody, style, ...) that seem important to you.

Appendix B – Participant Protocols

Chris: Prokofiev in the car on the way to work

One day while I was in my car driving to work I had a wonderful experience while listening to a Prokofiev violin concerto (Concerto No. 2 in G minor).

[Chris was in his car driving to work when he listened to the concerto.]

I was familiar with this piece of music, and liked it, but had never sunk into it like I did this day.

[Chris knew and liked this concerto, but he had never “sunk into it” until this experience.]

The first movement started. It has an upbeat tempo and is filled with what I would describe as some unique violin techniques and unorthodox and unpredictable phrasings.

[As the music started, Chris noticed the upbeat tempo, and techniques and phrasings of the violin that were unique to him.]

As I listened to the first movement I became increasingly aware of my surroundings. It was a beautiful late winter morning and the sun was shining through the windshield of my car. The heat from the sun on my body seemed to directly coincide with the warmth and the light of the music.

[As the music continued, Chris felt increasingly aware of his surroundings, noticing the beautiful weather and the sun shining through his windshield. He felt the heat of the sun along with the warm and light quality of the music.]

I became increasingly content and tranquil.

[Chris felt increasingly content and tranquil.]

In many ways I felt like I was listening to the piece for the first time. I was aware of phrasing that I had not recalled remembering before and was in awe of the piece.

[Though he had heard this before, he felt like he listened for the first time, noticing new phrasing. He was in awe.]

I started thinking about Sergei Prokofiev composing the piece and felt like I was sitting down beside him and he was talking through the piece and explaining to me his thoughts and emotions while composing.

[Chris fantasized about the composer imagining that he was with him during the act of composing.]

What was so powerful was that I was really getting it. I do not have a great understanding of music or music theory but it was all making sense. I felt like I could touch the music and like I was bathing in it.

[Chris had a powerful feeling that he was “really getting it.” It made sense to him despite not knowing details of the structure of music. Chris felt that he could “touch the music” and was “bathing in it.”]

The next movement started, this absolutely beautiful slow movement. I knew I was in for a real treat because I had listened and enjoyed this piece before, but knew something supernatural was happening at this time and I was about to really experience the piece in a powerful way.

[Chris found the next movement slow and absolutely beautiful. He knew something “supernatural” was happening, and he anticipated this experience would be powerful.]

This piece begins with the violins in unison playing a powerful pizzicato that has the purity of a young child. This continues for 5-6 bars then begins the solo violin playing this absolutely beautiful long bowing legato.

[Chris heard the pizzicato of the violins to be pure and childlike, and found the bowing violin to be absolutely beautiful.]

Immediately my breath was taken from me and tears came down my face. This was the first time I had ever cried and was not able to recall some thought process that preceded the tears. It was like a reflex. It was like an unfiltered response to the music because the music was directly speaking to my heart.

[Chris felt his breath taken away and he began to cry. He noticed that he could not understand what brought his tears, and felt them as a reflex, or an unfiltered response. He felt the “music was directly speaking to my heart.”]

The tears actually startled me because I had no idea I was about to cry. I remember thinking, “wow, this is pretty wild.” I went with it though wholeheartedly.

[Chris felt startled by his tears, which surprised him, and considered this experience to be “pretty wild.” He opened himself to the new experience.]

What followed was probably the most vivid visual image or daydream that I have ever had. All of a sudden I saw my wife, Jennifer, holding our three-year-old son’s hand, and in slow motion they were dancing around in a circle. They had big smiles on their faces. They had this angelic glow to them. Two dominant thoughts came to my mind. This must be what heaven looks like and feels like, and this is the embodiment of purity. The tears continued to flow as I watched the two people I love the most in this world dance and swing back and forth to this beautiful music.

[Chris had the most vivid mental image of his wife and son dancing in slow motion. He saw them as smiling, with an “angelic glow.” He continued to cry as he thought that this image is what heaven looks like, and that this is the “embodiment of purity.”]

This second movement came to a close and I “woke up” if you will, and became more aware of my immediate surroundings and the fact that I was still driving. My car must have been on automatic pilot because I was to my exit off the highway. During the 3rd and final movement I lost the intensity of my connectedness with the music as my mind began thinking about getting to my office and starting my day.

[Chris “woke up” after the second movement and shifted his awareness back to his surroundings. He noticed that he had been driving without paying attention to his task. His thoughts moved to daily concerns.]

At first I was excited to tell someone of this experience and the profound impact it had on me, but I decided the experience would get lost in words so I kept it for myself until now. It was an experience I will certainly never forget.

[Chris was excited to talk with someone about his experience, but felt he could not express it in words. This experience is one he will never forget.]

Syril: *Kind of Blue* straight through with a friend

Though it has been eight years since the first time I listened to Miles Davis album “Kind of Blue”, many of those vivid memories have shaped the way I listen to music now.

[Syril had this experience eight years ago. He has vivid memories of the experience, and feels it has shaped the way he has listened to music since.]

I was in my senior year of undergraduate study in music while living in Texas in a garage apartment. Along with a friend, we had decided to listen to the album in its entirety. The setting was extremely quiet (in a residential area), but perhaps more importantly, we were able to listen at the end of our day with our full

attention on the music (no TV on, no phone calls, etc.).

[Syril was studying music and living in a garage apt in Texas when he decided to listen to the entire album with a friend. He noticed the setting was quiet, and they listened with their full attention.]

What struck me in the music that night was Miles Davis' use of silence while improvising. Familiar to my ears were the fast noodling lines of the hard bebop era that preceded Kind of Blue. But his playing was very subtle as was the players in the jazz combo he was collaborating with for this recording project.

[Syril was struck by silences in the solo. He found them to be new and unfamiliar to him. He appreciated the subtle playing of the musicians.]

So also transforming was how the players during the songs would interact musically during the "silences" I mentioned before.

[Syril felt transformed by the interaction of the instrumentalists during silences in the solo.]

This listening experience was one of many where a new "layer" of music presented itself to me. Much akin to looking at a familiar painting, but seeing something quite new.

[Syril felt that this experience is like others he has had, in that it presented him with a new layer of music. He likened this to seeing a familiar painting "but seeing something quite new."]

Ron: Austrian Women's Choir on the Golden Gate

I was living in the San Francisco area and stopped by a music-booking agency in Mill Valley. The owner, a friend of mine, gave me a cassette to check out by a new group that she was representing The Bulgarian Women's Choir. I work in the music business as an audio engineer and tour manager, AnnMarie

asked me to check out the music and if I was interested, I could go on tour with them.

[Ron was living in San Francisco when he was given a tape of a choir by a friend. He understood that he could work with them if he chose.]

As I left Marin county for San Francisco I put the cassette on just as I was approaching the Golden Gate Bridge. There was a lot of fog over Marin and as I reached the bridge the fog cleared away completely as I headed onto the bridge.

[Ron was driving his car in fog approaching the Golden Gate Bridge when started the music. He noticed that the fog cleared completely as he headed onto the bridge.]

The music came on and simply took my breath away. I couldn't believe what I was hearing.

[Ron felt the music take his breath away when it started, and he could not believe what he was hearing.]

The first thing that flipped me out was the incredible harmony. I had never heard those harmonic relationships before.....or had I?

[Ron first noticed harmony, which he found incredible. He had never heard this harmony before, but wondered if maybe he had.]

Everything (my perceptions) became immediately heightened. My vision and hearing focused to a very high level.

[Ron noticed his senses "heightened," particularly his hearing and vision.]

I got goose bumps all over my body and had to actually pull off of the road at the SF end of the bridge to try to process what was happening to me.

[Ron felt goosebumps all over his body, and felt the need to pull off to the side of the road and try to understand what was happening.]

I then began to cry as listened. It was one of the most powerful moments of my life and I will never forget it.

[Ron began to cry as he listened. He feels this experience is one of the most powerful moments in his life, and one that he will remember.]

I believe that the accurateness of the pitch of each of the voices, the stunning (otherworldly) harmonies had a deeper meaning for me than the melody itself.

[Ron felt the accurateness of pitch, and “stunning, otherworldly” harmonies had a meaning. He felt this was more meaningful for him than the melody.]

This music does have lyrics but as they sing in Bulgarian it had no meaning for me. It was as though I somehow knew this music. Somewhere in my DNA and my heart these harmonies had always been there waiting for the right moment to reveal themselves. I believe that there are mathematical/spiritual formulas and relationships that can appear in music that allow us to remember them from somewhere inside of our selves.

[Ron felt that he somehow already knew the music, as if the harmonies were already in his DNA and heart “waiting for the right moment to reveal themselves.” Ron thinks that there are mathematical or spiritual aspects of music that correlate to our inner experience.]

Let's explore!

Donna: Sibelius at Lincoln Center

Having a degree in music and being an orchestral performer, I have often wondered if I might be desensitized to the wonder and beauty of classical music. When looking back on all of the symphonic works I have listened to, but not

performed, I tend to think about the blood, sweat and tears that might go into preparing the piece more than I do the pleasing aesthetic result. Therefore, it can be hard for me to separate listening to a piece for enjoyment and not sitting and analyzing it measure for measure.

[Donna wondered if her education and background in music had desensitized her to the wonder and beauty of classical music. She was aware that she is mindful of the work involved in preparing a piece and attends to technical aspects rather than the pleasing aesthetic.]

That being said, I was pleasantly surprised to have had a life changing experience this past spring when I heard a performance of Symphony No. 2 by Jean Sibelius. The performance was by the New York Philharmonic at Lincoln Center.

[Donna was surprised by the experience, and found that it changed her life. She listened to a live performance by the New York Philharmonic at Lincoln Center.]

I had never really sat down to listen to the entire work, and could not recall any famous themes, so I did not have any preconceived notions about the performance.

[Donna was not familiar with the work she heard, and she did not hold any preconceptions.]

Up until the end of the third movement, I thought the symphony was great and very Sibelius-esque, but I was not about to form an emotional attachment to the music. Then came the transition from the third to the fourth movement, and all of a sudden, I began to cry.

[Donna enjoyed the first three movements. She recognized the composer's style, but was not emotionally attached to the music. Then during the transition to the fourth movement, Donna began to cry suddenly.]

The hymn-like phrasing by the string sections, supported by the low brass hit me like a ton of bricks.

[Donna noticed the “hymn-like” phrasing of the string section and the low brass sounds. She felt hit “like a ton of bricks.”]

I closed my eyes as the strings soared upward and I thought to myself, this is the music I want to hear when I die and go to heaven. An odd thought, maybe, but something that several music therapists I know actually think about, not just me.

[Donna closed her eyes and felt the strings were soaring upward. She thought that this music is what she wants to hear when she “dies and goes to heaven.” She thinks this is an odd, but common idea among music therapists.]

The rest of the transition was so gorgeous that I don't even know how the last movement of the work actually sounds. All I could still think about is that if I were to die that very day and enter the gates of heaven, I could not imagine a more beautiful sound waiting for me.

[Donna felt the transition was gorgeous. She did not notice the rest of the movement that followed. She continued to imagine that this music would be the most beautiful sound entering the gates of heaven.]

For the rest of the concert, it was as if I was having a deep and intellectual epiphany concerning my relationship with classical music and the passionate part of my beliefs that are deep rooted in God and something bigger than myself.

[Donna experienced a “deep and intellectual epiphany” for the rest of the concert. She thought about her relationship to classical music, and her passionate beliefs deeply rooted in God and something bigger than her.]

My experience at Lincoln Center helped me to pinpoint and give reason to why I do what I do. The best way to explain this is that there is just some music that is

bigger than humankind. Whether it is for the people who wrote it, or how it sounds, or even why it was written, it simply transcends so many barriers.

[Donna feels the music helped her clarify and understand her reason for being a music therapist. She feels that music is bigger than humankind, and transcends barriers.]

Some of my life's greatest events have taken place and been immersed in the grandeur of music by the likes of Mozart, Beethoven, Bach, and now Sibelius, just to name a few. These people, I feel, had a gift given to them by God, a gift that is so powerful that even 200 years later, men and women weep at the beauty of their masterpieces.

[Donna was aware of many important life experiences have involved music. She felt that the great composers had been given a powerful gift by God that touch people throughout history.]

The music is bigger than them and is not something to be shoved in a bottle and put in a back pocket for a rainy day. It is a strong force that can't be diminished in any way. For me, the music is immortal. It has been here before any of us were even thought of, and it will be here long after we have left this earth.

[Donna felt that music is a strong force bigger than the composer, and should not be limited or contained. She felt that music is timeless and immortal, existing outside of human phenomena.]

Since my experience at Lincoln Center, I have found it easy to become more emotional about classical music and have proven to myself that I am not desensitized to great orchestral works. If anything, I have an even greater love for them and new respect when I am listening or performing.

[Donna feels that this experience allowed her to become more emotionally engaged in classical music. She has a greater love and new respect for the music as a result.]

Appendix C – Participant Conversations

Conversation with Chris

(We met in Chris’s office for our conversation. We listened to a recording of the music on Chris’s computer sound system.)

I1: I enjoyed reading your description. I feel like you were offering a very private experience and I really appreciate that. For our conversation today, I’m not sure what we’ll talk about. There are some things I am sure I will ask about, but beyond that, I am going to work to be clear about what I am thinking, and it’s my hope that you will feel no obligation to agree with me. It’s my expectation that after this conversation I’ll end up thinking differently about things.

P1: Okay. That sounds good.

I2: I would like to get a general sense of the piece in your description. I understand from your description that you had heard it before. How well do you know it?

P2: I had heard it probably several times before but I hadn’t really heard it, hadn’t really lost myself in it. I had figured that I probably could, but you know, I listen to music at home, in my car, when I’m on my bike, um, I’m listening to it, but I’m not uniting with it, I’m not bonding with it or absorbing it. It just so happens that in my car that day I was in a state of mind where – I had listened to maybe a couple of pieces first and was really feeling music that day, and I was like ‘you know, I’m going to listen to that Prokofiev violin concerto, because I really, I don’t know, I was ... I had a lot of CD’s in my car but that one was really stuck out for me.

[Chris had heard this piece several times before, but “hadn’t really heard it, hadn’t lost myself in it. Chris was listening to music in his car, and he noticed that he was in a state of mind in which he was “really feeling the music.” He decided to put the Prokofiev because it “stuck out” for him among his collection of CD’s.]

I3: You picked it out intentionally?

P3: Oh yeah. It was like. It was almost like - often music is a drug for me when I think I need that certain fix, I have to listen to that piece of music or else I have a general uneasiness.

[Chris felt compelled to listen to the piece like he needed a fix of a drug.]

I4: Did you have any indication that you might be, that you might have this experience when you were getting this out?

P4: Oh yeah. I'm not going to say there was some sort of higher calling that God had a hand in this, but I'm not *not* saying it either.

[Chris had a feeling that he would be moved by the piece, as if God had his hand in it.]

I5: Was this a spiritual or Christian experience for you?

P5: Yeah. I'd say it was a gift. It wasn't eye opening, I wouldn't necessarily say I learned more, but maybe I did learn somewhat about God – but I guess I just look at it like it was a gift. Life is full of, I think, those special kinds of peak moments. Sometimes they're self-created, you know, for me racing – doing really well in a race or times when my body is really working – running well or biking... with friends – rich experiences, or doing therapy. And then there's just those moments that kind of fall on us, and were bathing in them how wonderful it is, but this one, I was aware of how wonderful it was – like I was riding a wave – it sort of felt that way – I knew that it was happening, and that it would not last forever.

[Chris felt it was a gift from God, and that it helped him learn about Him. He felt it was special kind of peak moment, different from times that he feels are “self-created” like athletic performance. This moment “fell on” him, “bathing in [it] how wonderful it is.” He was aware of how wonderful the experience was, “like I was riding a wave – I knew it was happening, and that it wouldn't last forever.”]

I6: You're describing what reminds me of Maslow's 'peak experience' In this situation it sounds like you knew the piece fairly well, you were sort of in the mood, and you selected the piece and played it. And then...

P6: I gotta tell you, I didn't particularly love the piece. Even right now, other than the adagio movement, it's not necessarily, it's probably not one of my top ten favorite violin concertos.

[Chris didn't particularly love this piece. It is not one of his favorite concertos.]

I7: Wow, yeah

P7: And when I listen to it again, it doesn't happen again. Something happened that moment.

[Chris has not had the same reaction when he has listened after this experience. It happened only in that moment.]

It's a piece I really... it's not good background music. Prokofiev as a whole, or at least what I've listened to is kinda – if you're not listening to it and it's just kinda there and you're trying to think or have a conversation or something, it demands your attention. It's going to be annoying. It annoys me if I'm not really listening to it. You gotta listen to it. It is not elevator music. People would be very anxious on that elevator – there would probably be fights and stuff (laughs) I don't know. It's very aggressive music.

[Chris feels he has to attend directly to this music to appreciate it. When he is not attending directly, he finds it irritating and aggressive.]

I8: It sounds like it is similar to the Hermeto music that I had you listen to earlier. It's not your favorite piece, but it felt right then. In your car... you listen a lot...

P8: Yeah. That's my little haven. It has a great sound system, it was a great ride, it all packages in.

[Chris felt that his car is his “little haven” that has a great sound system and it ‘all packages in.’]

I9: There are a few things in your description I would like to punctuate. But I'm also really curious about the piece itself. Can we hear a bit of it?

P9: Sure. Do you want to hear... (Chris moves to start the music) This is Heifitz, probably one of the greatest violinists ever to live.

I10: Heifitz?

P10: Heifitz. Yeah. He's up there with Mintz, the violinist who plays the caprices you heard.

I11: Wow, so another hot shot.

(music starts)

[The Concerto, written by Prokofiev in 1935, features the violin with a full orchestra. It is marked by beautiful melodies along with darker challenging moments with dissonance and strong sounds. The concerto starts quietly with solo violin, and soon a darker sound is introduced by the orchestra.]

P12: I was enjoying this opening part, but I didn't feel anything special yet. The technique is amazing. Heifitz is such a good player, it's amazing. If only I could play like that (laughing).

I13: Yeah, well keep practicing.

[The music builds through the first movement, growing darker, but with moments of a brighter violin solo coming through.]

P13: That is a little prelude to the violin that comes in at the next movement. And the pizzicato here, that's just getting started.

I14: So was this the part of the music that you wrote about?

P14: Yeah, it's coming up here.

I15: So why don't you tell me what you were experiencing here.

[Chris notices the plucking strings and anticipates the transition to the violin melody. The music suddenly becomes very quiet and serene with pizzicato strings and sparse horns. After several bars, a solo violin starts with a slow and beautiful melody with long arching bowing.]

P15: I remember it very clearly. I was feeling that something was coming but I didn't know what. Here, this pizzicato is beautiful, and it felt child-like to me for some reason.

[Chris was feeling something was coming, but wasn't sure what. He attended to the pizzicato and found it to be child-like and playful.]

I16: Yeah. It does sound child-like.

P16: And the beautiful violin, so nurturing and enveloping.

[Chris found the violin to sound nurturing and enveloping.]

I was seeing my wife holding my son. They were floating and spinning slowly in front of me. I was struck with this overwhelming feeling. The pizzicato strings were my son, you know, like a kid just bouncing around. The violin, it was so beautiful, I thought this is pure love, this child and mother, and my love her them.

I17: You had a vision of them?

P17: Yeah, they up there floating and dancing. [Jill] was holding [Cobe] in her arms, sort of holding his arm out with hers. They were dancing in a circle in front of me.

[Chris envisioned his wife and son dancing in front of him, represented by the pizzicato and the nurturing violin. They were floating together with his

son in his wife's arms. They circled to the music as she held out their sons arm. Chris felt he was seeing pure love, and feeling it within himself.]

I18: Did you have a sense of yourself during this part? I mean, were you aware of yourself and where were you?

P18: I was, I felt like I was almost conducting them, but I was floating too, but watching them. I know I wasn't paying attention to the road. I was on auto-pilot or something. I kind of came out of it right when my exit came up.

[Chris felt he was conducting the music and the dance. He felt like he was floating himself while watching them. He was not aware of the task of driving.]

I19: Wow, yeah. What do you mean, 'came out of it'?

P19: I wasn't paying attention to the road at all. I was floating with the music and my wife and my son. When the second movement ended, I came to slowly and just at the right time, too.

[Chris found himself coming to after the end of the second movement. He slowly refocused his attention to the road and the task of driving as he approached his exit.]

I20: You mentioned an angelic glow, and thinking about heaven.

P20: It sort of felt like I was in heaven. We were all three there, but not like we had died. We were just up there in the clouds in heaven. It was so beautiful, and [Jill] and [Coby] had this angelic glow to them, like they were angels.

[Chris felt like he was in heaven with his wife and son, though no harm had come to them. He saw an angelic glow in his wife and son, and he found the experience beautiful.]

(music stops)

I21: No doubt, that is really beautiful. I can imagine your vision, and what a beautiful one it must have been. I really appreciate you sharing the experience with me.

P21: I crave those types of experiences; peak moments like that. When I'm racing or competing, or even practicing... That's what I love about classical music. It's so expressive and dramatic.

I22: Yeah, histrionic. (laughing).

P22: But other music too, I was down in Miami with a friend and we had a couple beers and we were listening to blues, and we shared this moment. We were on the beach and we thought, "Man, this is it." It may have been the beers (laughs). But no, the beach, the sun, the music. I live for those moments, I'm addicted I think. I do have an addictive personality (laughing). They make it all worth it, that's for sure.

[Chris craves peak moments like this, and he finds they inspire him to live life.]

I23: So, I wonder what you were left with from this experience in the car that day.

P23: I really felt like it was a gift. A gift from God.

I24: How did that affect your spiritual life?

P24: It really affirmed my faith. It made me feel closer to God. And it felt like my wife and son were a gift too. I felt really thankful for the love that we have. And really appreciate everything.

[Chris felt the experience was a gift from God, allowing him to feel closer to Him, and appreciate his family as a blessing. Chris's faith and love were affirmed by the experience.]

I25: I bet she got a big hug that day (laughing).

P25: I went to work, and just went on with my regular routine at work.

I26: Have you ever mentioned this experience to her?

P26: No, I haven't. It's something I didn't think I could talk about, put into words. This has been a great thing for me to talk about it with you like this. You have a respect for the experience, and you care about it.

[Chris felt unable to describe the experience in words, and had not spoken with anyone about this experience before this research. He appreciated the opportunity to reflect on his experience with someone who appreciates music in this way.]

I27: Too bad we don't...

(tape ends due to mechanical failure)

Conversation with Syril

(We met in a residence where Syril was staying during a week-long engagement for the orchestra at the Lancaster Festival. We listened to a recording of the music on a high quality home stereo.)

I1: ...has always been a hard thing to talk about – being moved, or touched, or really getting into music – how can one explain that? This is what I am trying to get to here.

P1: Okay.

I2: For this conversation, I am hoping that we will talk about your experience, sharing our thoughts and ideas. I have not prepared questions in advance purposely so that we will be open in our exploration. Please don't feel obligated to agree with my ideas. I expect to have new ideas and different understandings through this conversation.

P2: Oh, no problem.

I3: So maybe to start out I can ask how well you remember this experience. This happened a while back.

P3: Yeah, right. It was 8 years ago, yeah, but I remember it well enough that it was the first experience that popped into my head when you had initially asked me about it. And I knew that could definitely be this or like one of two or three experiences that came to mind immediately.

[Syril remembered this experience vividly several years after it happened.]

I4: Why do you think this one sticks out in your mind so well?

P4: Because it was the first time that really changed me like as a person, as a musician, and it changed the way I listened to music thereafter. It wasn't just like – it was definitely like an experience that was way different than anything I had experienced before.

[This experience was unique for Syril. He felt changed as a person and musician as a result, "it was an experience that was way different than anything I had experienced before." "...changed me as a person, as a musician..."]

I5: Yeah. You listened to the whole album?

P5: Yeah. In its entirety.

I6: I wonder if during the experience you had some awareness that – if you knew you were being touched, or moved, or that this was unlike any other experience while it was happening.

P6: Well, yes, because I was hearing the music in a way I had never before – it was somehow clearer.

I7: What do you mean by 'clearer'?

P7: You know, if you're performing some music or something there are points when it becomes very surreal, for lack of a better word. Surreal, just meaning that it just became part of, I don't know, my reality in a way that I had never experienced before. So while I was listening, I was enthusiastic. It was a very joyous type of thing. I didn't know of the possibilities of being able to experience music in this way. Similarly if you watch a movie you just get so into it that it nothing else – sort of like time disappears, like one of these things where you don't know where you are actually.

[Syril experienced the music as surreal and unlike any experience he had had before. He felt joyous and enthusiastic, and his awareness of time and environment disappeared, "get so into it that time disappears [and] you don't know where you are actually."]

I8: Well, yeah. Some of the people I have spoken with point to other forms of art – movies, as you point out, visual art as well and suggest similar experiences, and it is that stuff that I am really curious about – how our experience of being changes – something happening to time be it slowing, speeding, disappearing. To whatever degree you remember, do you have a sense of, what about your awareness of yourself at that moment of listening in this very unique way?

P8: yeah. I guess that my friend, who I was with, we were experimenting with stimulants, but they weren't psychedelics, we were just high. And I felt connected with that person, not in a very, not in a sexual way at all, it was just like a matter of this music; this person; all becoming like one experience. That was unique. Of course you've experienced stuff like that before in different settings – with family, or like something very poignant that happens like a wedding or a funeral that's beyond the everyday type of things that we do.

[Syril felt connected to his friend, feeling like he, his friend, and the music became one experience, "I felt connected with that person... like a matter of this music, this person, all becoming like one experience." He relates this experience to being connected with family or when at a funeral or wedding.]

But when you initially asked me about this and I thought about this experience, what came to mind was the sound of a part in *Blue and Green*, and I just remember hearing Miles, he was using a Harmon mute, and of course the Harmon mute brings out the higher overtones in the sound, and I remember that sound almost coming into me so to speak, and I could feel every vibration in the mute. That's one reason why that sound of his was so unique – something like, if you listen to a singer they use vibrato and you can sort of feel the pulsations of that sound. To hear that in a way I had never before where actually I felt like I could hear every iota of sound, beyond a second of sound, like, really, I was almost like with him in the studio at the time he recorded it.

[At a particular point in *Blue and Green*, Syril felt the music coming into him, and he could feel very vibration. He felt like he was with Miles Davis as he played the music, “that sound [came] into me... I could feel every vibration in the mute.... I could hear every iota of sound... like I was with him in the studio at the time he recorded it.”]

I9: Yeah. That sounds powerful, like a very exciting and wonderful moment.

P9: Absolutely. Part of it was the setting, and part of it was induced by a stimulant, but it was something that even when I was sober I remembered it so that's why I valued it.

[The setting was an important part of Syril's experience, as was being under the influence of a psychoactive drug.]

- something that every time I've listened to it, that began this sort of like journey of listening to music in a way that was beyond listening to what he could do on the trumpet, you know from a virtuosity level, or something on a technical level. It was beyond jazz, it was beyond genre.

[Through this experience, Syril was open to a new way of listening to music that was beyond technical or critical, “in a way that was beyond listening for what he could do on the trumpet. It was beyond jazz. It was beyond genre.”]

I10: So in that moment it wasn't that you were listening as a trumpet player, imagining what he was playing, thinking, “I can do this.” It was something else?

P10: Exactly. It was something else all together. It's difficult to put into words because it was like nothing I had ever experienced before; kind of like the first time you have sex, but your just listening to music. You know, you've heard about it, read about it, but then once you are really in it then it becomes a different sort of experience.

[Syril found it difficult to describe the experience in words because it was unique. Formal knowledge of the experience does not prepare one for the actual experience itself, “It was like the first time you have sex, but you’re just listening to music.”]

I11: Is it the case that before this experience listening to Kind of Blue you hadn’t been consumed by music in this way?

P11: Not for like an extended period. Of course there’s like “wow, that was really cool,” and you get goosebumps, but to have it for an extended period of time – it lasted about an hour. Of course it sort of went in waves. This one part in Blue and Green that I was talking about – that’s the third or fourth track or something. When it got to that it was like a new level or layer like I mentioned in the description.

[Syril felt his reaction flowing in waves throughout the musical experience, peaking during one part in “Blue and Green.”]

I12: I have a copy of Kind of Blue. I wonder if we were to take a listen, would you be able to find a selection that might serve as an example?

P12: Oh really? Absolutely.

I13: First, I’d like to ask about silence. You mentioned that in your description, that part of this experience for you was about hearing silence in a different way, or hearing what Miles was doing with silence.

P13: Yeah – hearing what he was doing with silence was something that I had never been open to, you know for a trumpet player aspiring to improvise, imitate the ways of the bebop era, the hard bebop era especially – playing fast with lots of notes – like ‘higher, faster, louder’ is a term that we use jokingly in the jazz world describing – those things that impress people. This has to do more with the notoriety of the musician rather than the actual... more about the ego of the playing rather than your own personal sound. Miles was very different in that he changed the way we listen to music similar to the way John Cage did. Those things were happening at the same time. So with Miles, if you listen to a recording of his from the ‘40’s when he was pretty young, you know, he could play fast, he could play bebop. He would play with Dizzy and people like that. He could do that, but he went on to develop his own style, and it was unique, for me, in that he would use silence just as much as he would use notes. I’m sure other players did, but he did it in such a way that it touched me personally. I began to listen to him using silence. Of course when he’s not playing, the rhythm section is still playing, there is still this continuous sound, but it seems like his playing was so sparse – that’s when I began – “okay, so you don’t have to play a whole bunch of notes really fast and really high.” You can just do these really subtle things and they are just as powerful as like, Dizzy Gillespie playing in an

extremely high register playing all sorts of fast – pole vaulting trumpet playing. What Miles was doing was a different take.

[Syril heard silences in Miles' solo that were unique to his ear. He associated this with his own trumpet style, and stylings of innovators in jazz. He noticed that Miles' style was ego-less.]

I14: I know this album pretty well, but I don't know about its place in the culture of jazz, and I didn't know of it's place at that time, in the development of the music.

P14: Well, take it anyway you want. That was just sort of – Miles was a sparse player, but I'm not speaking for the whole culture of jazz – there was all sorts of different things going on.

I15: I think you can speak to your sense of it, your understanding.

P15: Sure.

I16: I wonder if you had that understanding when you approached the album. Did you know what you were getting into when you and your friend set to listen?

P16: Not really. Because it was just – you know, I had heard about the album, and I had wondered what it was about and stuff like that, but I had never made it a point to sit down and listen to music like that – just to listen. Maybe I had as a kid or growing up, but it was more like investigating the music, “whoa, what are they playing here, how high are they playing, what are these trumpet players like, always listening for the trumpet aspect of it. Miles gave us a catalyst that helped me to listen to music just for sound – simply.

[Syril had not anticipated the experience. He had been curious about the album in a technical way, and expected to listen, as he usually did, for technical aspects of the trumpet playing.]

I17: Maybe that's his genius, that his sound can be so sparse it sounds simple. But boy, for me it is too magnificent to be comprehended by me.

[Syril finds Miles' music to be magnificent and genius, beyond his technical comprehension.]

P17: Absolutely. Do you remember the first time you listened to this album?

I18: Not the album, but I remember hearing this era of Miles for the first time. It was, I think, a song or two from the album. What struck me was how quiet and slow his playing was. It made me think, “this is romantic, and sexy.” That's how I was first touched by it.

P18: Oh yeah.

I19: I had known a bit about Miles' persona. You know, I had heard about the culture's sense of him as a super cool cat, like, too cool for his own shoes. A man with a very cool and smooth style. So I heard this album that was slow and quiet, and it was a surprise, yet it gave me an understanding or an experience of him as cool.

P19: Exactly. You know he was a boxer. Yeah. So add that into the whole equation as him as a player he's a really subtle person but he's a boxer. So it's like this very, people describe his playing as like walking on eggshells. That's fine because there is this sort of burning intensity within him, but he's showing this restraint.

(Music plays: Miles Davis "Blue and Green")

[*Kind of Blue* is a seminal jazz recording by the trumpet player, Miles Davis. The entire album, recorded in a single studio session, has a sparse feel, with slow tempos and without the aggressive note-filled style of bebop, marking a significant shift in Davis' style.]

P20: Right here.

[Syril is struck by a moment in Davis' opening solo in the third song on the album. The quintet is playing quietly, with piano, drum and bass behind Davis' muted trumpet. As Miles finishes a slow and melodic phrase, he pauses in silence for a moment with only the bass sounding.]

I21: I have never heard this listening for the silence. It sounds different, much more intense. You pointed to one moment. Are there others that stand out for you in this song?

P21: It's always changing all the time. New ones occur. It seems endless with this album. (John Coltrane's saxophone solo starts) It seems like they're talking.

[The saxophone, played by John Coltrane, starts to solo after a break in the melody. The quiet and slow solo is played over bass, piano and drum.]

I22: What is their conversation?

P22: Maybe it's more like, I don't know if it's about something in particular as much as it is just - they're humming. They are singing, and it just so happens they are playing instruments.

I23: To each other?

P23: Yeah, to each other, to the listener.

[Syril hears the two soloists as talking or humming to each other and to him as a listener.]

I24: If a conversation of humming, it almost feels like a lover's conversation.

P24: Oh yeah.

I25: I mean, they are not debating.

P25: (laughs) Right.

I26: Is there any emotional sense you have of this song?

P26: Yeah, there is, but it's like I can't – there are no words that come to mind. Once I try to put it into words it... it's definitely passionate. And here, too. (falls silent as he listens to a start of Miles' solo)

[Syril is struck by the last trumpet solo, noticing a silent moment in Davis' solo mid-phrase in the melody with only a quiet bass sounding.]

I27: I feel it as sad, but that doesn't do it. Wistful, maybe, for me.

P27: yeah. If I say 'well it's wistful,' or 'sad,' or 'passionate,' then that sort of presumes that that's what their intention was behind playing it, but it seems as though when were playing it they were just like "okay, let's just play."

I28: Maybe the better question is what are the feelings you experience as you listen.

P28: Contemplative.

[Syril felt emotion during the experience, but cannot put it into words. He felt the music as passionate, and he felt contemplative himself.]

("Green and Blue" ends, "So What" begins)

I29: I remember hearing this song for the first time, and thinking it is really groovy – it's pulse – like rhythmically groovy. A lot of people have a lot to say about emotions in music. People have debated whether the creator – composer or performer intend a certain emotion, but listeners do have an experience that is often very different than what is intended, if anything is intended. Some has suggested that music is like a language that communicates emotions and that within our culture we have a shared understanding of this language – minor key representing something sad, angry or dark, major key is happier and bright.

Some people have taken this idea so far as to say certain notes, tones have a definition, an emotional definition. I think that also doesn't consider how we all may listen differently.

P29: Absolutely.

I30: So were left with some people, who have said that music is like emotional metaphor – music sounds the way certain emotions feel to us. I don't know how helpful that understanding is either.

P30: If you take three pieces – one by Bach, one that Miles plays on, and like a rock song or something, all in the same key – let's say they're all in A minor. Depending on how you listen to it, how you are moved at that particular moment, that day, or whatever it is – it all seems to have a bearing. But if I'm playing the trumpet, on my own, you know, I do tend to gravitate towards certain keys, depending on what it is I am trying to play or intending to express. Instead of playing C sharp minor, which is a little brighter minor key than F minor on the horn, so then I'd, if I wanted a darker sound, I would – maybe as a result of how I play personally or how it lies in the horn, I'm going to chose F minor. But it varies so much that it's hard to put your finger on it. With the right intention, you can make F minor sound brighter than C sharp minor. Then you get into dynamics and articulation – the way that you are playing the notes.

I31: I wonder what you think about this: Let's say you are intending, as a performer, a certain mood, whatever the key you might choose. What is your sense of how close your audience's, or your listeners' perception is to what you're intending. Do you think they are getting what you're giving, or are they getting something that is all their own – not so much what you are intending?

P31: Yeah. You feel it. It seems like you know it sometimes.

I32: That they are getting what you are giving.

P32: Oh yeah. Because the audience is feeding you and your giving back. It's hard to play for certain audiences if you know they're listening for your technical virtuosity rather than, like a bar in Brooklyn where they are just drinking and listening – truly listening. You know, it's a much different atmosphere. When I was in school in New York I found it difficult to play sometimes the way I truly wanted to sound because there was this sort of critical listening that was going on. I remember this instance in Hamburg. I was listening to the National Dresden Radio Orchestra, a wonderful orchestra – really powerful. The trumpet player “kacked” a note, which means he sort of “huonk” instead of “ba.” The couple in front of me looked at each other sort of laughingly. I thought, “Is this why you came to the concert?”

I33: That seems cruel.

P33: It's cruel. And it's unfortunate for the listeners who paid that money. The music was sort of like long, expansive sounds, and if you're listening for "kacks" you're missing out. You're limiting yourself. But to each his own, I guess. If I'm on stage, especially in chamber groups it's easier to feel that energy with the audience.

I34: With a smaller group?

P34: Yeah, like 5 people or something, like a brass quintet. You just know something is happening. It's nothing I can say I intended to do, these notes, or these phrases, or colors. As we went along it came to this. And when you listen back to it it's different in some ways. It's hard to listen back, actually, sometimes, because it's not the same. If you're trying to hear what you heard at the concert then you get into trouble.

I35: Yeah. I've listened to enough live music to know that for me, live music is almost always more palpable and more powerful than recorded music.

P35: Maybe that comes back to the vibrations. The idea that you are literally with the instruments in the same room as compared to some speakers that restrict and artificially direct the sound.

I36: Well, I think this will have to be it for our conversation, though I could go on. This has been interesting and fun. Thanks for letting me talk with you today. It's great to get a chance to get to know you a bit better, as well.

P36: Sure. I'm glad to be able to help out. I wish you luck with the project. You'll have to let me know how it works out for you.

Conversation with Ron

(Before the tape starts I spoke with Ron about the collaborative style of this conversation and encouraged him to express his own ideas about his experience. He started a live recording of the Bulgarian Women's Choir as we sat in his sound studio. We listened to a recording of the music on his studio sound system.)

[Rob is struck by the sound of the a cappella female voices as they sing the opening song. The music sounds bold and austere, with resonance from the performance space. This group of approximately 20 women sing Bulgarian folk songs with many voices in unison creating a very sharp and loud sound. The music is dynamic with changes in loudness and tone.]

P1: That's it.

I2: Yeah, so, I'm taping now, so let's hear that and we'll just see ...

P2: I'm ready. It's the Bulgarian Women's Choir. Might flip you out too. This is the first thing I ever heard. Let me know if you think this is too loud or anything. It's otherworldly, and it's only Bulgaria. When they start stacking these lines, it's really amazing. They have a row of girls standing in front of them, the soloists. You hear them presented like that. This is a live record. There is this quartet in front, and then you'll get these pulses from the chorus behind. Fuel for the fire.

[Ron notices the unison voices with added voices in harmony, "when they start stacking these lines its really amazing." The loudness of the chorus comes in boldly as the quartet soloists finish the melody.]

I3: Wow.

P3: Tell me that that isn't connected straight to your heart.

[Ron was "flipped out" by the music. He found the multiple harmonies to be otherworldly and amazing, and felt them "connected straight to your heart." He was attending to the fact the music was recorded live.]

I4: Yeah, and that's the choir, that power, the piercing ...

P4: Yeah, just the harmony is so beautiful, the dynamics ... it's this giant web that becomes one thing. It's already connected. Totally connected, to me at least. I had never really heard such a thing.

[The bold voices build to a loud and sharp sound with the addition of multiple harmonies creating a full and rich sound. Ron found the beautiful harmony to be a giant web that becomes a unity totally connected to him, "it's this giant web that becomes one thing. It's already connected. Totally connected to me at least."]

I5: I'm wonder is there anything that you have as a way of understanding in that web, where you are in that experience. Do you know what I mean? Are you aware of yourself when you are being touched by this? Are you a part of it, or is it something over there?

P5: It's coming from the inside out. It's already all the way in. It's as far in as you can go, and it's coming back out. That's the deal. It's a connection. It's as if I'd heard it before in the depth of my genetic experience. I don't think that I can ... I don't think ... when people are being exceedingly creative, not saying you couldn't come up with new things, but the finest things have always been there

and will always be there – the most beautiful relationships, the most beautiful flowers, the most beautiful vistas.

[The rich harmonies sung by the chorus end and the solo quartet starts the melody quietly and with fewer harmonies. Ron felt the music “coming from the inside out. It’s already all the way in. It’s as far in as you can go and it’s coming back out. It’s a connection, as if I’d heard it before in the depth of my genetic experience.”]

You know when you walk out in the mountains or at the sea and you just see this incredible sky. It’s all this harmonic relationships – the earth’s color and feel and touch and smell. Here it’s through your ears but it gets into your soul and then comes up through all of your senses, you know?

[Rob felt the music enter him and come up “through all your senses.” This experience is likened to harmonies found in the earth and in life through beautiful vistas or relationships.]

I6: Yeah. Wow. And that’s a wonderful way to describe an aesthetic experience, the experience of the beautiful, but I wonder how, for you, these harmonies are beautiful?

P6: I don’t know. I just thought they were for everybody. I feel for sorry for people that don’t appreciate that, but maybe they get the same charge out of a perfect touchdown pass. But I would hope that they would be a part of it rather than just being a spectator. In life, I think you get a lot more of a charge ... you can really get a charge from witnessing things, but better to be involved in the creative experience of it on some level.

I7: That’s right. In a football game, I am a disinterested spectator, so I don’t care.

P7: If you’re a player, it’s another story.

I8: Yeah.

[Rob felt that being involved as an active listener made his experience possible.]

P8: Some people get goosebumps from a stock quote, I guess. It’s not my thing, but I have very much the same experience from certain pieces of art that I’ll see. It’s just, it goes through me and I’m very interested in the relationships, the mathematical relationships for example. See right here, a good one on the golden ratio which is just so extraordinarily interesting. I think that all of it, at the highest level, it’s beyond human comprehension and the ability of my brain to be able to intellectualize it. I’m not so egotistical as to think that the human mind can understand everything that happens in the universe.

I9: Do you find any value in seeking an understanding?

P9: Sure, let's push the door open a little wider. If you don't search, you'll never find anything. There's a great Wayne Shorter quote from a documentary on him where they're asking him about how he can continually compose and search and find new music. I don't know if I mentioned this to you, but he says, "I use the very best of the past as my flashlight."

I10: Yeah.

P10: It's about exploring but with intelligent direction. So I don't know, there's something about these relationships – rhythmic, harmonic ...

I11: As I'm listening to this particular piece, when the chorus comes in, in such a piercing way, that's when my body is reacting.

P11: It affects me equally when they get really soft and taper off and do a quiet thing. Now I know the piece of music now, but that was the piece that I heard across the Golden Gate. When I first heard the harmonies, the stacking of the harmonies ... Let me just run through and see if I just can find the beginning of a track to give you an example of some of the stunning harmonies.

(*music*)

It was crazy to my suburban ear. It's different but it's beautiful. It's new for me and it's so beautiful. I think that's beautiful. I didn't need to be from Bulgaria to find that beautiful. I'm finding that beautiful, even though I live in California. I believe that if you play that for an Australian, a Canadian, a lot of people, they're just going to get knocked out.

[Rob found the music to be both beautiful and unique. He feels this beauty is open to him regardless that it comes from a different culture, "It was crazy to my suburban ear. It's different... and it's so beautiful."]

I12: So, for you, it's universal.

P12: I think it's universal. Or African music. That's often more of a rhythmic element but also melodic with a melody, not so often with a depth of harmony. Here you have 20th Century modern classical depth of harmony.

I13: Well I guess the quality would translate, would be universal, but then what about different cultures of music with different scales, Indian stuff ...

P13: Well I think a lot of that, a lot of people close themselves off from the experience because ... so many people close themselves off from so many

experiences in life because they have to put a name on something and they have to ... for some reason they feel like they need to define whether they like it or whether they don't like it. So you have someone that says, "I don't like classical music."

I14: Yeah.

P14: Well, in reality they've likely had very limited experience with classical music, and they may have heard something that did not catch their fancy, it bored them to tears, and who knows what else is going on in their life, and they might very well have another experience. Say they went with that girl they've been trying to go out with for 10 years and they finally went out with her, and I'll bet that music might mean more to them that night and have a better experience. It's all interconnected with your life. Music's kind of ... it's almost like what Wayne was saying, that the music can shine a flashlight on you too. It illuminates your life, but you've got to be ready.

[Ron feels that the music is interconnected in his life. He feels that it can "shine a flashlight on oneself, illuminating one's life if one is ready.]

I15: Yeah. That's a great idea, the idea that I have really tried to wrestle with. The sense that it's all from you and from the day you're having and what's going on. In your description, you at one point ... tears came to you when you pulled over. So I'm wondering if you have a sense about if those tears were yours or the music's or something else?

P15: Oh, I see. They were absolutely a relationship to me. It's like they were speaking to me.

[Ron felt the music was in direct relationship to him, "It's like they were speaking to me."]

I have another experience kind of related, different experience. Let me just relate one thing about the Bulgarians. What's quite amazing is that this woman Anne Marie gave me that tape, flipped me out, and then inside of six months I'd heard that, and then I was able to tour with them for six weeks, which was an amazing experience as you might imagine.

I16: Yeah.

P16: And a similar thing happened, I was on the road with an Italian pop act as a sound engineer. I don't know when it was. Her name was Alice, spelled like Alice. We were touring and some of the guys on the crew had ... One of the guys on the crew was a total freak for the Paco de Lucia Sextet. My friend Pierre told me about Paco Sextet, but I'd never heard them. And Pierre, who hipped me to a lot of music, he's a great guitarist himself, he hipped me to Hermeto Pascoal. He

hipped me to Javon. He hipped me to all Brazilian music, and told me about Paco and other really great artists, Wayne Shorter really. So Pierre was my connection to a lot of this music, and the Bulgarian Women's Choir. Pierre was hip, touring French guitarist/singer, world-class musician. Oh gosh, what was my point? Oh. So I'm on the road with these guys and one of the sound crew, his name was Stefano, and he was just nuts for the Paco De Lucia Sextet. I said, "I've never heard them. I hear they're fabulous." He said, "Well I'll make you a cassette." So he made me a cassette. We were on tour in the south of Italy. It was a very otherworldly place, and it was a place that's called Matera. It's exceedingly dry there, and the rocks and outcroppings of the low mountains are just pockmarked with hundreds and thousands of caves. And actually the town blends right in it where you're walking down a stone street, cobblestone street, and some of the houses are caves. Many of the houses are caves. It's like cave, cave, house, you don't really know if people are living inside the caves, very mysterious place. And they gave me this tape, and I socked in my cassette, Walkman, put on my headphones and was gazing out over these caves. It just blew my frigging mind when I first heard that group.

I17: This is Paco?

P17: Paco de Lucia Sextet, and they've played together for about 20 years. It was a live record, and ... if you want, do you want to stop that and put it on?

I18: Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

P18: It'll just take me a minute to find it.

I19: Yeah, that's great. And Paco no doubt.

(break)

(*music*)

P19: Being a guitar player, I'm always interested in the rhythm, the rhythm, and Carlos the bass player, Carlos does the same thing. He goes right into my heart. He's already in there. He's just waiting. He plays two notes and I'm sold.

I20: So tell me what you remember about being in the caves.

P20: So this was the music I was first hearing. It was really, the combination with Carlos playing the bass and the flute. Find a piece similar to what I was hearing.

I21: In this experience did the place, the environment make a big difference?

P21: Yes, of course. The caves and the area around Matera were magical and beautiful. The music seemed to fit perfectly with the setting. Okay, we're about

to get to the end of this. This concert where they recorded this record was the first time I ever saw them, and then six months later I was touring with them for 12 years. So that bass player, he's already got me. He already grabbed my heart strings. It's the passion in their playing. In this element, it's not harmony particularly, it's the passion, what they're putting into it.

I22: Yeah. Could you describe what you're hearing in the music that is the passion? Is it the rhythm or strumming style...

P22: Well, for him, this bass player, it's where he places the beat exactly where I want it, where I'd never expect it. Here he's playing between things. Nobody else in the world does that, only him. I love that. A deep arrangement, but like Wayne [Shorter] It's in the tradition of flamenco, but pushing it into the future. You get a lot of traditionalists who say it's junk, but they're just pushing the future using the best of the past. That's exactly what they're doing. It's about what the bass... his vibrato, the way that he attacks a note, the enthusiasm.

I23: Yeah.

P23: It's a groove you can't help but move your body, and he's just playing it, propelling the music forward.

I24: I feel the drive in his attack, his punctuation.

P24: And like the Bulgarian Women's Choir, it was totally unique to me ... listening to bluegrass music. I'm like, "No way!" Another example of totally world class music. I've been so fortunate to get to be able to actually work with these guys and then really suck it into my life where I can own a lot of that stuff.

I25: Do you remember what you did when you listened to that artist?

P25: I remember physically getting goosebumps all over my body, and feeling this wonderful sense of awe.

(break)

...forever linked in my experience with that. I'll never forget where I was when I first heard that record and the experience ... The new Nick Kershaw, I was driving around the north shore for a couple days and then driving to Canada by myself, and I was listening to it a hundred times, those songs. Those three new songs, I probably listened really a hundred times. So, eternally in my experience those images are welded together like the first time I ever heard Paco de Lucia, I can tell you exactly where I was.

I26: And what do you think of the fact that all three of those experiences were you alone, like with a walkman at the cave and in a car for the other two?

P26: I would say that it very often is, but is not necessarily so. It could absolutely happen at a live concert. I could be sitting there with a thousand people, and I think if you're sitting there with a thousand people, you might get 999 of them having the same experience. You get the one guy who's not going to have any fun no matter what.

I27: Right.

P27: He's got the wall built up so high.

I28: Right.

P28: Or he's ... People get so distracted they miss the whole point. Let me give an example like that at a concert. You may have one person who's sitting in front, and say there's a lighting instrument for the stage show which is a little in his eye or making a buzzing sound off to his right, it might destroy the entire concert for him. For me, I can turn that sucker off.

I29: Yeah. Yeah.

P29: I just go beyond it. I won't let that ... So, I'm going to try. If the music captures me quickly, then I'm going to give it all my attention and open myself up. I think a lot of it has to do with how open to new experiences you are. A lot of people would hear that, they'd hear three songs and say it all sounds the same. Well it will all sound similar until you begin to get well versed in it. Then you notice the distinctions. For someone who only listens to symphonic music to listen to hard rock music, they're going to say in five minutes, "It all sounds the same. It's all garbage. Blah, blah, blah."

I30: Unless you show interest and get into it?

P30: Show interest. You couldn't possibly have the experience if you weren't interested in it in the first place.

I31: And I believe that. In fact, most that I've been speaking with say that "Yeah, you have to ... I give myself over to it."

P31: Yeah, you've got to be open to it. I think that these magical experiences ... It's beyond the intellect. That's the good news. And I've been working hard to put my intellect in my back pocket a lot of times because a lot of times you question a lot of these physical realities that happen, and I don't know why, and I'm not going to ... My lifetime's busy spent working on music, so I haven't ... I'm very interested in it in the physiological elements. It would be very interesting to have monitors connected to you to see what's actually happening in your body when you're having those experiences.

[Ron feels that this experience, like others, is magical, beyond intellectual understanding, and finds himself wanting to remain free of intellect in the experience, “These magical experiences... it’s beyond the intellect. I’ve been working hard to put my intellect in my back pocket” to remain fully open to these experiences.]

I32: Yeah, and this project has been difficult for that reason, because this is kind of outside these experiences I think of music or any kind of art forming any kind of a aesthetic experience are outside language and intellect, but we only our language and intellect to try to share ideas and talk about and generate an understanding of something. The good thing is that in this project, the question of why is it happening, I’m not asking.

P32: Uh huh.

I33: I’m just trying to get a sense of what it’s like when it’s, for us, when we’re experiencing it.

P33: I think it’s happening ... Can I answer your question maybe? Because life is a beautiful thing and there’s some exceedingly beautiful elements in life yet even to be revealed.

I34: Yeah.

P34: And there’s a lot of stuff that we miss because somebody did it 800 years ago. Some guy out there in the shed 200 years ago in downtown Philly, man he had the shed of the wagon parts and he knocked them all over and man, those harmonics just happened to hit that day, and if you would have been there Kurt, it would have gotten you too. So ...

I35: And I like that, actually I love to co-opt that as a kind of guiding metaphor for this work, just kind of revealing a beautiful thing - something I really love in my life.

P35: It seems to me though, that the deepest stuff somehow I feel like it’s already there and I already know it. That’s a really ... I don’t know if it’s unique to me, but it’s ... even when I read words by a great writer presenting something in a way, when those words register with me, I somehow feel that I always knew them and somebody just showed me and I forgot.

I36: Yeah, that is interesting ...

P36: It’s like going home, you know? It’s like going home and you didn’t even know what home looked like.

[Ron felt like he was experiencing something he already knew, but had forgotten, like “going home and you didn’t even know what home looked like.”]

For me, these different elements of music, there’s many kinds of Brazilian music. Hermeto Pascoal, first time I ever heard that, oh my lord! I was like, “What are you talking about?” So, it helps to open and give you a bigger window on the world and experience. So, in my profession with making records and also touring and listening to music and loving music myself, it’s lots of different levels of inspection of the music, because sometimes when you’re making a record, you’re really taking out a magnifying glass or even the microscope or getting out the electron microscope and getting in there deep. But for me, it’s never technical. It’s all about goosebumps, emotion, and the connection. I think one thing with all of this is also, it’s not just the rhythm, it’s not just the time, what I think is triggering the effects in me is that I am able to recognize through some sense -- maybe not my ears -- that they, the musicians themselves, or the composers, or the artists themselves are making these connections between their heart and my heart. It’s like a web of connections with all of those guys in the choir, they’ve got a web, this little thread that’s going right to the center of my heart.

[Ron felt a connection between the hearts of the musicians and composers, and his own heart, forming a web of connecting threads, “I am able to recognize... that the musicians themselves, or the composer, or the artists...are making these connections with all those guys in the choir, they’ve got a web, this little thread that’s going right to the center of my heart.”]

I37: Right from them to you.

P37: From them to me with the composer, he was directing the hookup I guess.

I38: Well, and I wondered about that. Do you also imagine a line direct to all of the audience members who are touched?

P38: I’m guessing it would. I would say yes, it’s certainly mutually involving. I would say first, before that, I would say the effect of the relationship between each of the artists with themselves, with each other, which is the core elements. It seems to me a giant, well, web of beauty that they’re weaving. And there’s some people in the audience they’ve got their Kevlar suits ... they ain’t going to get hooked up, because they would need to know what it is first, and we can’t quite tell them what it is. So if they’d quit worrying about what it is, they might just let it, experience it.

[Ron felt this “giant web of beauty that they’re weaving” connecting him with all audience members as well.]

I39: Well, and then what about this idea? And this is something that I've been wrestling with, if music is meant to do a certain thing, make us sad for instance, is it the composer?

P39: Oh, I don't think so.

I40: So if whoever wrote that piece and then the choir as they're singing it, they're weaving a web, but you as a listener might hear a web that they didn't intend.

P40: Absolutely, because you're creating your reality, all you from the inside out. So you're accepting what parts in understanding and wherever you are in life, whatever you're going through, whatever you may be thinking emotionally, where your life force is, every part of your being is going to be ... it's a very ... a similar web goes much further beyond music.

[Ron feels that the experience is informed by his own life and current state, and is created "from the inside out." "All you from the inside out.... You're accepting what parts in understanding and wherever you are in life, whatever you're going through, whatever you may be thinking emotionally, every part of your being [is a part of the web], that goes much further beyond music."]

In my opinion, it's connecting everything on the planet anyway. This is a very deep web. We can never check out all those lines, so you sort of make your own experience. I know that people you could ... It would be very simplistic and easy to say that yes, somebody wrote something, oh it's so sad, but there also can be a beauty in it. It's all sort of in the ear of the beholder, and what you bring to it.

[Ron felt the web to be deeply connected to everything on the planet, and was aware that his experience is a component of this greater whole.]

I41: Yeah, and that's actually the moment or the dynamic that I've been curious about with this project, and that is that the choir and the composer, they're weaving a web, and it's beautiful and it's out, directed towards you and then you're there with your life coming from you, your meaning and being touched by it, and somehow both of those things are happening together for this experience to happen for you to be moved. So I was asking you earlier about when you listened to the choir in the car and you pulled over and tears came, I wonder if you were sad, if you were happy?

P41: No, that's happy sad. That's happy, that's not sad.

I42: Yeah, it was a happy.

P42: That's good. Beauty, that's the tears of beauty.

[The tears Ron shed were tears of beauty. He felt happy.]

I43: Yeah. Yeah.

P43: If I was in the right mood, the sunset could get me too if it was a good one.

I44: Yeah.

P44: Or a moon, or the relationship of the color on some buildings and the relationship of the shadow, the light. That's very similar to me. I get the same sort of deep internal peace from aspects of light absolutely as well.

I45: Wow, yeah.

P45: Or focus, when you feel in any way, these things are somehow heightening your level of focus, where when you bring things in focus, you're able to appreciate them more fully and expand on your levels of appreciation. That's why some things, there's some pieces of music that I can hear time and time again and I'm going to have a similar experience. I'll get goosebumps almost every time I hear certain things.

[Ron felt that his focus on the experience helped him to appreciate it.]

I46: Yeah. Well, it does seem like you have ... you're open. You take in. You use your senses.

P46: Yeah, I'm open to a lot of things. Once you've had some experiences in life that allow to sort of question the unknown ...

...Look back in 30 years, and I just can't imagine ...

(tape ends)

Conversation with Donna

(We met at Donna's home for this conversation. We listened to a recording of the music on her home stereo. Before the tape started we introduced ourselves and discussed the nature of this conversation. Donna was encouraged to speak openly about her ideas.)

I1: I have had a chance to read through your description several times – sounds like you had a really nice personal experience. I really appreciate your willingness to share something so private and personal.

P1: Great. I'm happy to be a part of this research.

I2: There are several things that sparked my curiosity in your description. You wrote about a particular moment in the music when you were moved...

P2: Yeah, I actually have the CD right now. It's one of those things you kind of – I didn't know the work, I hadn't heard it before that day, so it's one of those things you don't really prepare for, and it just kind of hits you. And you don't really know why, and you kinda have to figure that one out. It was very moving.

[Donna did not know the work before this experience. She felt she hadn't prepared for it, and "it just kind of hits you."]

The people I was sitting with were asking, "What's wrong?" I said. "I can't tell you right now. I'm going to have to go through this myself. Everything I do, I'm one of those people who have to know why I'm doing it for me to be able to make sense and go through with it. When things like that happen, and I wasn't prepared for it, it kind of takes you back. Like a little setback somewhere in your mind or whatever you're thinking about just kind of..."

[Donna could not articulate what was happening in the moment. She felt she "had to go through this myself." She felt taken aback by the moment.]

I3: So how did you go about making sense of it?

P3: I'm not sure. Afterwards I said I just need to put it out of my mind, totally forget about it – it was a great experience, couldn't figure out why. I actually went back and listened to a recording of it to analyze for myself what was going on and I think the important parts of my life were all connected in there. The emotional part, which is very music therapist role, you really have to be in touch and in control of your emotions, - that dealt with it, and the music part of course – it was the violins that made me start crying, you know, I'm a violinist. And then the whole scene I had of me dying and going to heaven – I'm pretty religious, so the three aspects. I tied them together and that is what I came up with. I didn't think about those things until after I went back to listen to the recording. It took me awhile.

[Donna intentionally put the experience out of mind, understanding only that it was a great experience, without knowing why. She later listened to the music trying to understand what she was experiencing. She realized that "the important parts of my life were connected in there." She identified an emotional component, personal interest in violin, and her spiritual life that were all a part of her experience.]

I4: So you were not aware of those things in the moment, but only later after you reflected on the experience?

P4: Yeah, definitely.

I5: You said in our description that you were hit with a ton of bricks. I do get that sense that this wasn't something you were anticipating.

P5: No, not at all.

I6: It seems that even through the first two movements you weren't expecting, nothing was building...

P6: No, no.

[Donna was surprised by the experience. She did not anticipate she would be moved during the concert.]

I7: I didn't know that you were with others, and it sounds like they noticed you were being moved to tears.

P7: My friends were like, "Are you okay?" They were really concerned and I said, "I'm fine." I just needed to be in the moment. Something that I always tell my clients, you know: you are in the moment. This is where it's important now. Whatever happens, happens. Don't be afraid to let yourself do what you need to do. That was the first time I followed that advice for myself. I was comfortable enough with the people I was with to let myself do that.

I8: How did their concern or their asking affect you?

P8: It didn't stop the experience. I didn't worry about them.

[Donna was listening with friends, who noticed she was crying and expressed concern for her, asking if she was okay. She worked to remain open to the experience for the first time. She was not concerned about her friends' worry, and this did not distract her from the moment.]

I9: Were you with music therapists? I wonder why your companions assumed there was something wrong? (laughing)

R9: Right. If they had been music therapists, they probably wouldn't have said anything. At least my friends in the field. (laughing)

I10: I guess I would probably be a little surprised if I saw my buddy crying during a concert. You mentioned that with your analytic style, your need to make sense of things, that after taking a break from it you listened to a recording. In listening

to it again, was there anything like the first experience? Were you trying to recreate the experience?

P10: I wasn't necessarily trying to recreate the experience. I was trying to be as objective as I could be to understand something that wasn't there before. But I did have the same kind of feeling. I wasn't as emotional, but I had the same vision. I was thinking about what I thought about and I could definitely see how it was the same in some aspects. Things that I could be thinking about at that point came back to me, like that vision.

[In returning to the music later, Donna was not trying to recreate the experience. She found that she did experience some similar feelings, and she remembered what she was thinking during the concert.]

I11: You're saying that idea that this is the music I want to hear when I enter heaven – in the moment, at Lincoln Center, you were imagining that? Tell me more about that.

P11: Yeah. It was... I love to imagine, no matter what kind of music it is, even when I'm playing, I have to have some kind of scene in my head to really make sense of the music. If it's something maybe... for example the piece that I played last year in my recital – I imagined it was like a swan on a lake. It was very smooth and very calm, and then there was a storm. I have to have things like that in my head when I'm playing so I think it wasn't unnatural for me to have a scene in my head especially during an emotional part. That's something natural that I do anyway. It wasn't weird. It was good.

[Donna saw images in her mind as she listened, as she often does. This visual experience feels natural and good to her.]

I12: Can you describe the vision for me?

P12: Sure. It was like... it was very bright. Like you see on the cartoons, like Bugs Bunny goes to heaven and there are the gates. There is music all around. There is nobody really with me physically, but there is this presence, this wonderful presence. If I were in heaven, it would be of course, angels and God. I was just floating in this space, almost conducting with the music (gesturing with arms outstretched). It was really nice. It was great.

[Donna had a vision of ascending to heaven. She saw brightness and heaven's gate like in cartoons. She felt that the music was all around her. She felt that no one was near her, though she felt a wonderful presence. She imagined the presence were angels and God. "I was floating in this space, almost conducting with the music." This gave her a really nice and great feeling.]

I13: This moment seems to be of the type that I am most curious about and trying to focus in on with this research. You've described this vision, and I wonder if you had a sense of where the vision came from? You? Your life? The music, or what?

P13: I think it was a combination of everything. I can't pinpoint a specific place it came from except the three things I mentioned before: my religion, playing, my therapist self all working together.

I14: Three important aspects of your life?

[Donna felt that the vision came from the music and her own life, particularly her religion, her violin playing, and her emotional self.]

P14: Yeah.

I15: Wow. Sounds like a great experience.

P15: Yeah, it really was.

I16: You mention that you have thought before about a particular piece striking you in a way that has you think it's something you want to hear when you die and go to heaven.

P16: (laughing) It's almost a joke for music therapists, "this is what I want at my wedding, and this is what I want at my funeral." One of the things that we do, especially with gerontology and end of life, is help clients prepare music for their own funerals. I've had that experience several times before. It's like a lasting tribute from the family member to the family kind of as a way to say it's okay to let go. It's something that if we can record it, pick the songs for the funeral, it helps ease the transition for the family. For myself, I think, "what would I pick?" For the longest time, I thought I'd want to hear Mozart (laughing) because Mozart is just not very earthly music at all. I used to think, "Yeah, that would be it." After hearing this, though, I don't know (laughing).

[Donna has thought about other songs in a similar way. She finds that music therapists commonly imagine that a particular piece is what they want to hear when they go to heaven or when they get married.]

I17: I, too, have had songs in mind that I would want to hear when I die, but as I look back, I can see how much my musical tastes have changed. I wouldn't want to die to the same music now, as what I wanted when I was a teenager (laughing). Before we listen to a bit of the music recording, I wonder if you could tell me a bit about how this experience affected you, I don't know, maybe your identity? One thing you mentioned is that something that came out of this

experience for you was an affirmation of sorts about your desire to play classical music and have music as a part of your life.

P18: You mean the part about me not wanting to be desensitized? I think where that came from as I was writing this... I was a violinist who was studying to be a music therapist. Violin was my identity, it was my thing and everyone knew it, including myself. And coming back to school, I had an identity reversal, because when I came back I started grad school late, a third of the way through already. It was really weird for me because I was now a music therapist and violin was second. I had a hard time seeing myself... this is what I went to school for, and this is what I am now, so where does performance and my violin fit in with this? It scared me for a while, I'll be honest. My professor had changed, there were new students...

[Donna was struggling with her professional identity when she had this experience. She had committed to becoming a music therapist, and was moving away from violin performance, which was a strong part of her sense of herself. She was uncomfortable in the educational program, feeling she did not fit in with new students and a new professor, and she started late in the program. She felt scared about this life change.]

I think listening and playing, they should always be the same thing because you have to listen to play and play to listen, it goes back and forth, and this... I just think I would not have had the same experience if violins had not been in the piece. I'm still trying to make violin as much a part of my life as I need it to be without being overwhelming. This experience this last summer said, "yeah, I still need to do this." Maybe look at it in a different light and not put so much pressure on yourself to be the violinist, but still it's important.

[This experience helped Donna realize that playing the violin is still an integral part of her new professional life. She felt better able to approach the violin differently, with less pressure.]

I19: Yeah. That helps me understand the part of your description, "helped me to pinpoint the reason why I do what I do." Here are you thinking about music therapy? Or violin?

P19: Everything. I can relate this experience to everything – the violin part of it, and the classical music part, or music in general, when I see a client being extremely affected I love it, whether they are crying or laughing, whatever it is, it's that change that I'm trying to get at as a music therapist. When I can bring that out in them and help them see it in themselves and help them feel better. There is an actual physical part of that that we can see – a measurable part. It makes me want to put up with all of those boards, IRB boards, and people who say, "so what, music therapy." It makes all that worth it.

[Donna felt that this experience helped her to understand her life choices, her reason for being a music therapist, and for being a violinist. She likened her experience to moments in music therapy in which a client is noticeably moved by music. She loves this experience, and finds that it allows her to accept frustrations she faces in the music therapy profession.]

I20: Can you tell me about how you see this personal experience as compared to what you experience as change or impact when you are working with clients?

P21: Yeah. I'd say it is the same to an extent. With me it was totally the music creating the change. It was what I heard causes feelings in me and has me think about myself. To an extent in music therapy you have 'music as therapy' and 'music in therapy.' If I was working with a client, and the client selected this piece, we'd play the music, talk about it, go through analyzing it with the client, but really it was the music as the initial part of the therapy that caused this change. So it definitely relates to that.

[Donna feels that her experience is very similar to moments in her work as a music therapist. She feels that in her experience the change was created solely by the music, which is different than most music therapy.]

I22: Help me understand the difference between 'music as therapy' and 'music in therapy'.

P22: With 'music as therapy' music is the primary way to get to the client. Whereas with 'music in therapy' is, say, I'm working with an adult with mental retardation and I'm helping them with their ADL's and we are working on learning the steps for brushing teeth. Music is in the therapy. The therapy is actually the relationship between – I use the music to learn the steps or remember.

[Donna makes a distinction between 'music as therapy' and 'music in therapy.' She described 'music as therapy' as an experience in which the music itself promotes therapeutic growth. She feels that her experience was of this kind.]

I23: So if your experience is anything like music therapy, it seems like it's more the case of 'music as therapy'.

P23: Right. And then, of course... an example of 'music as therapy' would be working with say, a woman who had a long history of spousal abuse and we were working on being able to trust and relationships - the whole emotional side of that. I said, "what's your favorite piece. What kind of music do you think about when we're talking about these problems. We'd pick a song, and we might play the song first and then analyze it, like I did with myself, but in that case, because it had words, we'd do a lyric analysis – "now, how does this relate to your life?"

How do you think this person in the song is feeling? Can you relate to those feelings? What's the message in this song?" or things like that. That's in essence what I did with myself.

I24: It's great to learn a bit about what you do in music therapy. Sounds like it would be a wonderful experience to approach music in this way for myself. What a great way to learn about yourself. I also wonder about the venue. Lincoln Center. What a great venue. And it was live music. I wonder if these aspects were salient for you in your experience.

P24: Yeah. Live music is amazing. You can hear a recording or someone playing like a machine, but who wants to listen to a robot? It's much better to listen, if you are going to get the full impact of it, listen to live music. And listen to high quality live music. Who better than the New York Phil, I mean, honestly. So the quality, and the live aspect of it... anything can happen in a live performance. For me that's what it's all about. The venue too – just the grandeur of...the aura about Lincoln Center. I'm in the big time, the Big Apple, and we're having a good time. There's something about being in that building, listening to that particular orchestra, and listening to a live performance.

[Donna attended to the concert hall. Lincoln Center has a mystique and grandeur for her that was important. She also feels that the live performance was important, "that's what it's all about." The live performance allowed her to "get the full impact." She found the New York Philharmonic Orchestra to be of high quality. She was familiar with the reputation and esteem of this orchestra before the performance.]

I25: Had you been to Lincoln Center before to listen or play?

P25: No. That was my first time.

I 26: You spoke about having a vision of going to heaven, and today you indicated that you are a religious person. Did your experience have a spiritual quality that seemed essential for you?

P25: I think it was an affirmation of my spirituality. And the vision was very spiritual for me, so yeah. My spirituality is usually a part of these experiences. I have had some without it, but those are less intense.

[Donna spirituality was affirmed by the experience. Her spirituality is typically an important part of experiences like this one.]

(break)

I27: So one idea that I hold as a presupposition is that when we are really touched by music there is a blending of ourselves and the music so that it's really

hard to say what's what, This thing that happens is more than a connection of the two. I wonder if this conception of your experience would make sense to you, and if not, how do you understand it. For you, being at Lincoln Center and having this moment when you are touched. You are there in a physical sense – your friends notice and ask if you are okay. But then you have this vision in which you are soaring and conducting with the music on your way to heaven. It's my sense that at that moment you were embodying the sounds – the strings and the low brass – you were *being* them as you were soaring. Just this basic idea, I wonder what you think?

P27: I think that is really interesting because just the other day I was having a conversation with someone about that similar thing. We embody the music, and that fact that there is always music going on. There is always music going on around us and we become one with it all the time, but we don't necessarily hear it until the moment when the music touches us really deeply. That has validity. That's not surprising to me. For me, it felt like I was soaring above or beyond the worries at that time in my life, the new program and adjusting to all that.

[Donna felt like she was “soaring above or beyond the worries at that time in my life, the new program and adjusting to all that” with the angels and God in heaven.]

I28: Victor Zuckerkandl has this idea that music is not a skill or aptitude, but is a fundamental or essential part of what it means to be a human being. His idea seems to fit here, as music as something that is all around us.

P28: Music can be what we think of when we go to a concert hall, but taking it in this direction, there is atonal music or music we don't recognize as music. John Cage's piece, “4 Minutes 33 Seconds” that piece. The pianist goes out and just sits there, and what you hear while that pianist is sitting there is music. Whether it's someone coughing, someone laughing, whatever. That's music too. We don't really think of it as music. Those are the sounds that we have all around us, but I wouldn't think of it as that until you are given that moment to think of it that way. Same idea, but on a different level.

[Donna feels that music is all around us all time. Only when we attend to it directly do we recognize it as such.]

I29: It is my hope that this research will get at that, but it will only go as far as our experiencing of these ideas. I wonder if while soaring and having this vision you had a sense of where you were. Strange question maybe, but were you in your chair listening?

P29: (laughing) I was up in the clouds, I am pretty sure. I was feeling light, and I remember, I had my eyes closed and I don't remember there being people. The

people I was sitting with, on either side of me, they weren't there, the chairs weren't there, it was just me and the music. Yeah.

["I was up in the clouds. I was feeling light." Donna had her eyes closed and I wasn't aware of the people around her, "The people I was sitting with, on either side of me, they weren't there, the chairs weren't there. It was just me and the music. Yeah."]

I30: You mentioned that after this transition your attention was shifted so that you don't recall much of the music that followed?

P30: I don't really remember... I remember when it was over, but I don't remember a whole lot about the rest of the piece. It was surprising to me when I went back to listen to the entire thing I had a hard time blocking... I was hearing the rest like I hadn't heard it before. I was like, "oh that's cool. That's how it ends." Another aspect to it that I was thinking about, is I though, "I'm taking the music for what it's worth just listening to it." But I started to wonder what's beautiful? Why is it beautiful? What's the chord structure? I didn't go through and analyze everything, like "this is a I chord, this is a V chord," but symphonies in D major, which is a great key anyway, good key for violinists, and this key was a part of it for me. I don't really know why. That's so weird for me. I got a Nora Jones score and I sat down to play it and I thought, "this is not the same." I was playing the right notes, what's the big deal. I didn't like it so I put it away. I read the fine print and find that the score was in a different key. It was originally in D flat major, and it was changed to make the piano part easier. That's totally what it was. So when I went through this piece, I said, "it's the right key, the key that I like, and it was the chord changes under the melody that got to me.

[Donna did not remember the music that followed the transition. She became aware of the music again when it was ending. When she listened to the song later, it was as if she was hearing it for the first time. Upon reflection, Donna noticed that the song was in her favorite key, D major, which is easy to play on violin.]

I31: In your description, you point to the hymn-like melody and the low brass beneath. Were you aware of these aspects of the music in the moment?

P31: I didn't think about the key at the time. The instrumentation and the registers were important. I had to go back and think later that it was in D. I was reluctant to do that because I didn't want to ruin the experience for myself.

[Donna attended to the instrumentation and the registers during the experience. It was only afterward that she considered the key of the song and other aspects of the structure of the music.]

I32: If you wouldn't mind, I'd like to listen to a bit of the piece. As we do, let me know anything that you remember being aware of during the experience back in Lincoln Center.

(music starts)

[Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op.43 by Jean Sibelius (1865-1957), a late romantic composer, is a grand and romantic symphony noted for its innovative melody and use of harmony marking a transition away from the romantic style, toward a more modern form.]

P32: That's the melody that it starts out with. That is what struck me. And the brass – very triumphant, and entry kind of thing – a waiting period is what I thought.

[Donna was first struck by the starting melody in the transition to the fourth movement. The melody is introduced with bold brass building in loudness and with rising melody. The tempo slows and the music rises to a climax in loudness creating an anticipation. She found the brass to be “triumphant,” and she felt that this part of the music expressed an entry or “waiting period” in the piece.]

There is the melody.

[The melody, introduced loudly by violins, is sweeping and romantic. It rises over low brass playing harmonies forming chords in an even waltz cadence.]

They are gearing up again, the harmonies underneath are different.

[The melody ends and brass play a transition, building with a shift in key and quietness. The transition begins to build again with loudness and anticipation as the violins begin the melody again.]

That's...right there. I can even picture it now – something bright and beautiful... right there.

[Donna experienced her vision at a precise moment in the melody. At the start of the first repeat of the first phrase of the full and romantic melody (played by violin), *different* lower-register chords are played by brass. Donna is struck by these different chords, which were richer in texture than the first set of chords behind the unchanged violin melody. She found this to be “bright and beautiful.”]

And the winds take over. And of course, even when I'm playing in the orchestra I'm like, "oh yeah, there's the winds. They are doing their job, I'm just sitting waiting now.

I33: Your experience as a violinist is important?

P33: Yeah, definitely.

[Donna relaxes her focus as the woodwinds take over the melody for a time. She attends to the music as a violinist.]

It's almost like we got ourselves up there, in the vision, and it's like exploration. This would be the wandering part.

[Donna's vision continues as the fourth movement becomes more subdued and quiet. The strings play low quiet tones as the woodwinds play a light and sparse melody. This movement is less dramatic than the transition, and with different instrumentation. She imagines she is exploring heaven, "the wandering part."]

I34: Do you recall the moment when tears came to you?

P34: Yeah, right at the beginning where the harmonies change. ...My friend, one who was there is an oboe player. I remember that much. I was thinking, "wouldn't that be something if everyone came and joined me. I want to take you and you and you and you."

[Tears came to Donna's eyes during the repeated melody with the changed harmony. At that moment she thought "wouldn't it be something if everyone came and joined me. I want to take you and you and you."]

I35: Were you still imagining at this point in the music?

P35: I was definitely imagining. Still that wandering sort of deal. I read the program notes after the concert and I read that the finale with the wistful melody played over the lower strings was inspired by Sibelius' sister-in-law, who had recently taken her own life. I had no idea.

I36: How did learning about that impact you?

P36: It was kind of freaky actually. I was like, "wow." Going back to this section, the flutes together kind of reminds me of Beethoven, the Pastoral Symphony. It's a great symphony, but I think of lambs, shepards, the flock, some puffy, billowy environment. I thought that was interesting. It's very much dance-like, slow, kind of shepard's waltz, dance thing. I was relating that to this, and I don' know where that came from, but whenever I hear the Beethoven I think of the same thing.

I37: It sounds like your imagination, your mind is really active when you listen and play. Even hearing this now with you, I can feel a sense of lifting. You mentioned the melody is repeated with different harmony underneath, and I really like that difference too. It's thicker, or richer then.

P37: Yeah, and I didn't sit down to figure it out, but the base harmonies were different enough to be poignant. That's really sweet. Then it builds up again. It's like we found what we were looking for and it's what we thought it was in the beginning and it still is.

[Donna feels the different harmonies to be sweet and poignant. "It's like we found what we were looking for and it's what we thought it was in the beginning and it still is."]

I38: I am reminded of the soundtrack at the end of the movie Brazil. (both laugh)
At this point of the music, what was going on for you?

P38: I was coming out of it, probably right after this. Here's the harmony again.
That's it!

[Donna "came out of it" slowly over time, before the music ended.]

(music stops)

I39: One other thing I am curious about is your sense of this experience as changing you.

P39: I think it makes me appreciate my life. My life as a musician... it's one of those things that you want to bottle up and keep it for a rainy day. I have enough of those built up and it's changing me because more and more I hear it, the more it makes me feel like it's okay. I'm not afraid to do what I need to do, and grow up and old and die. It's not something that I am really afraid of, but there is apprehension no matter what it is, about doing what you have to do in life, and knowing that is always going to be with you. The experience makes me stronger as a person.

[Donna appreciates her life and her love of violin more after this experience. She feels stronger and more confident in life afterward, "It makes me feel like it's okay. I'm not afraid to do what I need to do, and grow up and old and die.... The experience makes me stronger as a person."]

I40: That to me sounds like a great affirmation of these experiences – that music can make a difference. It sounds like this experience has given you a courage or a strength.

P40: Yeah. I tend to be really observant, looking at the little things. I've had clients on their last days, and I don't know if what I am doing is helping them, if they are enjoying it. So it's looking for the small things. If someone opens their eyes... An experience I had: I was singing the Hymn in the Garden and there is nothing happening, and I switched to the other side of her bed, and I sang these particular words and she opened her eyes. I looked up at the other music therapist and she smiled. I sang that verse again, over and over and this woman had her eyes open. She hadn't opened her eyes for several days. The light hurt her eyes, that's what they were thinking. So, opening her eyes – that's not a big deal, but for someone like this it was a huge deal. Her family was overjoyed when they learned that she had opened her eyes. The little things add up and can become great.

[Donna likens this experience to a breakthrough she had with a music therapy client, who opened her eyes for the first time in several days as she sang Hymn in the Garden for her.]

I41: Talking with you, this has been great. It's been eye opening and certainly helped me appreciate music even more. Is there anything else that you had on your mind you'd like to mention?

P41: The questions that you asked pretty much covered things, I think. It's been great.

I42: Great. Well, I want to thank you again for your help. I really appreciate it.

(end tape)

Appendix D – Terry: Participant Removed from Study

Background information

Terry: male; middle adult (aged 40-60); African-American from California; Ph.D. in music performance and education who has worked as a professional bassist, composer, conductor, and music educator.

Terry's Situational Structure

Turandot While Cleaning the House Being a Participant in a Beautiful Drama

Terry has studied and played classical bass for many years. He studied music performance, education, and composition at the graduate level, and has worked as a professor, composer and ensemble performer for orchestra and chamber groups.

Several years ago Terry was living in Hollywood, studying music in college. He had visited a friend and mentor who likes opera, and who encouraged Terry to challenge himself by exposing himself to opera. Terry had some previous experiences with opera, which were not pleasant for him. He had formed a negative view of opera, finding the language and “screaming sopranos” offputting. Nonetheless he borrowed several recordings and several days later listened to *Turandot*, by Puccini.

Terry set out to listen to the opera on one weekend afternoon while he was putting around his apartment cleaning and doing chores. He still felt reluctant, and had decided to force himself to listen to at least one side of a six-sided recording because “it would be good for [him] even if [he] didn’t enjoy it.”

Terry set out a translation of the opera as he started the first side. Throughout the experience, he occasionally read along with the music to

understand how the music related to the characters and story. Puccini (1858-1924) wrote *Turandot* in 1924 and died before it was completed. The 3-act opera tells the story of a princess in Peking who requires that her suitor answer three riddles to take her hand in marriage and risk being killed if he answers incorrectly. The opera, Puccini's last, is arguably his most grand and glorious. It is known for its mixture of varied textures and styles, incorporating Eastern instruments and melodies.

The opening of the opera is grand and bold, with pulsing sounds from the orchestra under a solo Baritone singing in Italian. This opera is typical of its style with a full orchestra and chorus, with many vocalists representing characters in the story. Terry found the opening big and interesting as he was puttering around his apartment. Terry's appreciation of the opera was informed by his background in music. He was struck by the style of the music and the chords, and recognized common melodic structures of pattern and movement. He thought that Puccini adds something else to these common structures that he found beautiful and difficult to articulate. Terry felt that good music contains the new and surprising within the traditional structure.

Terry felt a shift in his attention as his interest was piqued by the powerful sound of the opening chorus. The chorus sings loudly with low tones punctuated by loud percussion and brass. The sound is foreboding and dark. He was surprised that his attention was piqued so early in the opera. He loves the particular sound of the bold and loud chorus. He found all these aspects together as compelling him to listen further.

Terry felt taken in and left breathless by a quiet section that immediately followed the chorus. He felt compelled to learn what happens next in the storyline, and what sounds he will hear.

As he continued to listen, Terry attended to the story of the opera, noticing the characters and their role in the plot. Terry found the story to be interesting and “tight,” but found the music to be more salient in his experience. He found the melodies and harmonies to be interesting. He attended to the impressionistic quality of the music, which is a style he enjoys. He continues to putter around the house as the music continues.

Terry noticed that at times he was paying little attention to the meaning of the words in the songs. He was fascinated by hearing something new every few minutes. Terry attends to the various forms and styles in the opera with an acuity for influences of various composers. He found the flavor and colors of the melody to be really great.

As Terry continued to listen, he would intermittently putter around his apartment and sit with the translation listening intently. He found the third side lighter and comical. He continued to attend to the story and character development of the opera. He found the harmony of Ping Pong beautiful. Terry attended to the way Puccini uses quietness to show the mood of the story. He was struck by the slow change of mood demonstrated by a shift in key to minor and increasingly quiet moments. He finds this masterful, and likens it to good drama like Arthur Miller or Shakespeare.

Terry continues to listen in this way up to the first scene of the Third Act. It opens with the aria, *Nessun Dorma*, sung by a high baritone, with a grand and romantic feel. The solo is backed by strings bowing long, harmonic tones and quiet percussion. Terry attends to the shape of the melody, finding the rise and fall of the melody line exciting and beautiful. The music grows louder as the phrases progress in higher tones. The phrases end more quietly before they begin again.

Terry felt the melody lift him up, take him, and then bring him down, “it doesn’t really go to a high note, but it just kind of curves around and then lifts you up and then takes you, but it’s the bringing down that’s so great...” The soprano lifts in volume and tone, then returns to more quiet and lower tones. Terry finds the flow of building tension and energy, then the energy quickly dropping to be beautiful. He found this effect “crazy, like a perfect single line in a poem dazzling you.” Terry found the movement of energy, building then dropping to calm, along with the shifting mood to be perfect and complete. Terry found it hard to believe that the quality of the music could continue to increase as he listened. He decided to listen through the entire opera.

Terry continued to attend to the characters and the relationship of the quality of the music to the storyline. Terry felt that knowing the storyline helped him understand the opera. The music continues with bold and loud chords of the full orchestra, and Terry finds his attention growing sharper. Terry related the music to the character of the opera, and found himself invested in the characters,

caring what would happen to them. Terry felt like he was a part of the crowd of the chorus.

As he continued to listen to Act 3, Terry returned to a sense of apprehension as he prepared for the princess aria to be unpleasant like other arias he had heard. Terry expected to hear a shrill aria, and was taken by surprise to hear a sweeping, gentle, and beautiful aria. He thought the singer's voice was perfect for the song. Terry feels that his preconceptions of opera were being shattered, and he was being opened to the interest, beauty, and excitement of opera. He felt compelled to listen further.

A second aria follows soon after the first in this act. The second is sung by the slave character who refuses the princess, killing herself to hold a secret. The soprano solo is slow with a gentle and forlorn style. It is sung above quiet strings and winds in unison. Terry noticed the modal quality and an exotic, Eastern style, and he identifies the sound as typical for Puccini. He was struck with the song, which he found to be "the most exquisite, haunting, and beautiful" he had ever heard. He felt that it expresses the sorrow and tragedy, and he began to cry.

As the aria continues, it grows more quiet and somber. Terry felt the slow degradation of the melody "like the life has gone out of you as it's gone out of this poor girl who's about to kill herself." The singing grows quiet and slows to its end while the strings and brass play sparsely beneath. As the tragic music grows quiet Terry felt he was taken "all the way until you were breathless at the end."

Terry felt that he was hanging in mid-air as the aria scene ends quietly, which he finds perfect.

The scene continues with music in the minor mode, combining solos from principal characters as well as the chorus presented in a bold and austere style. Terry felt “sucked into it” looking over at the princess himself, as a participant as the chorus sings long tones with a forlorn style. Terry felt that being involved as a participant is required to be affected by the music. He was sad and angry along with the crowd as the slave kills herself. “I felt like I’m just sucked into this and I’m looking at these people who are involved. I even found myself looking over at the Princess, thinking, ‘Did you get this girl? Are you getting it now? This is how important love is’.”

Terry felt amazed at this moment in the listening experience, “My eyes were wide and wet.” He noticed that he appreciated this music more quickly than usual, and felt that he had known this opera already, before listening. Terry felt he was being “raised right up” by the composer, who sent the sound “right into [me] and through the roof.”

Terry noticed feeling emotionally drained, and he continued to listen. He felt that he had reached a pinnacle, and what remained was anticlimactic. Terry was left feeling overwhelmed.

Terry was left with the feeling that the music had “gotten into [my] soul.” He felt that everything in his life changed from the experience, that it fueled his desire for life and “let me know what it’s all about.” He felt the experience lightened his spirit, and found that it made daily life better. Terry felt more

connected to humanity through listening to the music. Terry feels that music is an integral part of his life, and feels compelled to listen and think about music.

Through this music experience, Terry felt connected to humanity through time, united by the music that is appreciated by many eras.

Terry's interest in opera grew from his experience. He has since sought out and enjoyed other operas by Puccini and other composers. He also appreciated music in general more after listening. Terry feels that his appreciation of music is greater the more he knows about music and its structure.

Protocol with meaning units

Terry: Turandot while cleaning house

I had already graduated from college with a BA in music when I visited a friend that I considered a sort of mentor, and borrowed some records. I took records of works I did not know, trying to expand my meager repertoire. One of these was the opera *Turandot* by Puccini.

A Saturday morning, a few weeks later, I decided I should try to listen to some of it. Like most Americans, I thought I did not like opera, even though I had seen a few and had even played for some. I thought they were long and boring and that I did not want to hear screaming sopranos. But I also thought that putting on this opera might be like spinach, good for me even if I did not like it. So I made a deal with myself: I would listen to at least one whole side of one record (the opera was 3 records, 6 sides total). No matter what, I would finish that one

side. Then my obligation to myself would be done. I did not know what was coming.

[Terry was introduced to opera, a form of music he has been reluctant to experience, by a friend and mentor. He was mindful of previous experiences with opera, which were not pleasant for him. He approached the project of listening as if it is something he should do because it might be good for him even if he does not enjoy it.]

Two hours later I had finished the entire opera, all 6 sides; I could not be telling this story if anything less had happened. At the end of each side I had found the music so astonishing, so beautiful, so enthralling that I had to continue to the next one.

[Terry listened to the entire *Turandot* opera in one sitting, and found this to be significant. He felt compelled to continue listening through each album side because he found the music enthralling, astonishing, and beautiful.]

It was all so new, I had not heard anything like this before.

[Terry was struck by the newness of this experience.]

I loved the melodies, the harmonies (a cross between romantic and impressionistic, plus an exotic, oriental flavor), the colorful orchestration and especially the chorus. I believe the first chorus of Act I, when the crowd is asking for blood, is what hooked me. One of the greatest choruses of all opera, it was dynamic and powerful and conducted with great excitement by Erich Leinsdorf.

[Terry loved the melodies and harmonies, which he associated with various musical styles, and then feels hooked by a particular moment in which the chorus sings that was “dynamic and powerful and conducted with great excitement...”]

The pianissimo ending of side 1 took me in and left me breathless. I had to know what happened next. I went on to side 2.

[Terry felt taken in and left breathless by a quiet section that immediately followed the chorus. He felt compelled to learn what happens next.]

Here I heard the magnificent aria's of Jussi Bjoerling, the comedy of Ping, Pang and Pong and grand finale to Act I. The light opening of Act II (side 3) was again something new and a wonderful contrast to the force of Act I. The lovely laments of Ping, Pang and Pong lead, eventually, to the appearance of the Princess Turandot, whom we had not heard from yet.

[Terry continued to listen, noticing the newness of what he was hearing. He followed the story of Turandot and attended to the characters in the story.]

Her aria opened side 4. I thought, "here it comes, the screaming soprano. I will try to listen, but this may be the end for me."

[Terry returned to a sense of apprehension as he prepared for the princess aria to be unpleasant like other arias he had heard.]

To my surprise, Puccini chose a gentle melody of sweeping beauty that did its job, creating sympathy for the hard-hearted ice princess. Birgit Nilsson sang it to perfection with tenderness and restraint.

[Terry was surprised by the aria, and found the melody to be gentle and beautiful, and the singer's voice to be perfect. Terry related the music to the character of the opera.]

Then there was the solving of the riddles and once again, Leinsdorf got every ounce of drama out of it. All my ideas about opera were being shattered one by one. It was not boring. It was alive, exciting, beautiful, interesting, better than movie music. A soprano was no longer something to be feared. I thought I had heard it all, but the best was yet to come. I had to keep going.

[Terry feels that his preconceptions of opera were being shattered, and he was being opened to the interest, beauty, and excitement of opera. He felt compelled to listen further.]

Side 5 opens with the most famous aria of the opera and one of Puccini's best, "Nessun Dorma." Never having heard it before, I instantly recognized it as a hit. It was a great tune; you could go home whistling this one. Even before the actual aria begins, Puccini sets the scene of nighttime mystery and intrigue with outstanding atmospheric music that, I am sure, has been copied by many film composers.

I might have thought that the peak of the opera, but, again, I would have been wrong. Liu's final moments, with her back-to-back arias, were the ultimate in opera for me, then and now. She tells the cold princess about the nature and power of love, then proves it by committing suicide to save her prince. Her second aria was the most exquisite, haunting and beautiful one I have ever heard. Nothing could show better the sorrow and tragedy of the situation. I am sure I began to cry at that point, I always do.

[Terry finds the two arias to be the peak in the opera. He feels the second one is "the most exquisite, haunting, and beautiful" he has ever heard. He feels that it shows sorrow and tragedy, and he began to cry.]

Puccini took the scene to a perfect quiet ending, which left me hanging practically in mid-air. I was emotionally drained at this point, but I went on to side 6 to finish the opera. By now it was anticlimactic, however. I had been to the pinnacle.

[Terry felt that he was hanging in mid-air as the aria scene ends quietly, which he finds perfect. Terry noticed feeling emotionally drained, and he continued to listen. He felt that he had reached a pinnacle, and what remained was anticlimactic.]

The entire event left me amazed. My eyes were wide, and wet. It usually takes time for me to get to know and appreciate a major work, but it was like I had known this one all along. I guess I had not really *heard* opera until this point.

[Terry felt amazed after the listening experience, “My eyes were wide and wet.” He noticed that he appreciated this music more quickly than usual, and felt that he had known this opera already, before listening. He feels like this experience was his first time really hearing opera.]

Suddenly I became hungry for more Puccini and started listening to and buying opera records. A new world opened to me, old stereotypes fell, and I began to understand why opera lovers are the way they are. To this day, *Turandot* remains my favorite opera, as well as my first love. I was overwhelmed.

[Terry was left feeling overwhelmed. He interest and appreciation of opera in general and Puccini specifically. This music became and remains his favorite opera.]

Conversation with Terry

(Our conversation started with introductions and a discussion of the nature of this research. Terry was encouraged to speak openly about his ideas and his experience. We met in my office, and listened to the music on a portable stereo system.)

I1: You seem to have found an appreciation for a wide range of musical styles. Opera and also, Dixieland or ragtime?

P1: Ragtime is what I'm working on now, which is different from Dixieland. Nothing against Dixieland, but that's the area I'm working in now. I don't love it any more than any other type of music. I just like a lot of kinds of music. That just happens to be what I'm working on right now, among other things. I also write music for the OSU flute choir.

I2: It sounds like you're kind of all over the place.

P2: Yeah, I do a lot of different things.

I3: And in addition to that, you take time out of your life to help out a young,

aspiring PhD candidate.

P3: I understand. I did that once myself.

I4: I really appreciate this, this project. I really enjoy music, and I'm thankful that I'm able to have the leeway to pick a topic that I'm inspired by and follow it.

P4: When you went out, in talking to musicians, were you also talking to artists?

I5: I am talking to all musicians but with various backgrounds, like players, composers, teachers.

P5: Oh, just musicians, I thought it was going to be dancers and people like that.

I6: No, my dissertation is focusing particularly on musical experience, but my expectation is that it would dovetail quite nicely with a whole range of artistic experiences. Particularly, my sense is that I want to look at being moved and try to have a sense about what happens when we're moved, when we're experiencing music, or by proxy, any kind of art that we expose ourselves to. Certainly sounds like you were moved by this opera.

P6: Yeah. Yeah. Still am.

I7: I do have a couple of questions about your description. I'm also hoping just to have a talk with you about what you think about what it's like to be moved, how you're moved, and what happens.

P7: To kind of expand on what I wrote you?

I8: Yeah.

P8: Is that what you'd like?

I9: Yeah.

P9: Well, I can do that a little bit, but also, if you have questions, just you know ... I'm (?) to answer anything that you might come up with. As I said, I had the standard opinion that all opera is boring. It's long and boring. It's confusing and boring, I mean, people speaking in foreign languages. I used to teach music appreciation for many years, and I had to try to explain why you should be listening to opera to students who were just taking a class that they basically hadn't had any background in formal classical music before. So I'm trying to explain to them ... so I know the list of reasons why most people think they don't like opera, and they may not like opera, but the language is one. The culture is different. They wear these costumes you don't even see in the movies anymore. Yes, they're doing a type of music that you can only hear if you listen to opera.

There's no counterpart for that really in popular culture. There's the screaming sopranos which just make you grind your teeth, all those kinds of things.

Well, I had heard a few operas. I remember I had heard *Così fan tutte*. This was in Los Angeles. I'd seen the UCLA opera company do that and maybe another one, and I played in the pit for operas that my school had done. This is Cal State, in Los Angeles. So I played for a few, and that's kind of interesting when you're playing for, but it's different when you're sitting out watching it type of thing. So I'd had a little experience with opera.

[Terry brought to the experience previous encounters with opera. He had formed a negative view of opera, finding the language and “screaming sopranos” offputting.]

I don't think I'd ever sat down and listened to a record before. So, I was visiting a friend and he had a decent record collection and I asked him, “Can I borrow these?” He was always encouraging me to learn more and do more. So, I said, “OK. Well, can I borrow some of these?” So I borrowed a bunch of them. This isn't the exact record, but this is the recording. I gave him back his, and I got my own later.

[Terry decided to listen to *Turandot* when his friend and mentor suggested he expose himself to opera.]

So I picked this out, and a week or so later I said, “Well, I'm just going to listen to one side. It's three records, I'm going to listen to one side. Whatever, hell or high water, I'm going to make myself do it.”

[Terry committed to listen to at least a portion of the opera. He was reluctant to do this, and felt he would force himself to listen.]

And I can't remember really if I had heard much Puccini before. I mean, there's some famous arias that everybody's heard a bit of. You know, *Madame Butterfly* and *(La) Bohème*, and a couple of really famous ones. I'd probably heard those. I don't know what was going through my mind, but anyway I just put this on. It opens with a big opening, and that was kind of interesting. It just kind of grabs you, you know? And then there's a big street scene and a few arias, a few bits and pieces, and then again, there's this big crowd scene and it actually turned out it's probably got as good a chorus part as any opera anywhere. There's a lot of chorus work, and it's really quality stuff. I remember thinking, “Boy, this is pretty good. This ... this is OK.”

[Terry found the opening big and interesting. He was struck by the chorus and was pleased with the music.]

And I had a little apartment up in Hollywood and I'm puttering around doing my Saturday morning stuff and thinking, "Hey, this ... this isn't so bad."

[Terry listened while he "puttered around" his apartment in Hollywood.]

So I listened to it and thought, "Well that wasn't so bad, let's turn it over and go on to the next side," and it just seemed to get better. The arias were good. There's these three characters called Ping, Pang, and Pong. Obviously they're comic characters, and they sing a little thing about how mean the Princess is. She's a hard-hearted cruel princess. Men vie for her love, and if they lose she cut's their head off. She's real tough, and they all lose of course, except our hero. And so they're explaining how cruel she is and it was really an interesting thing,

[Terry attended to the story of the opera, noticing the characters and their role in the plot.]

and harmonically I found this really fascinating too, because he actually uses actual Chinese folk tunes once in a while. He'll just actually throw them in, but they mix in so well you can't tell what's Puccini and what's folk tunes, like any good composer can do. So he mixes that all up. He's got a lot of impressionistic sounds, which I really like. He's got a little Ravel in there, you can hear some Debussy, along with the Italian sound of Verdi of his time and so forth. So he's a little crossover to the early 20th Century. A great orchestrator, just great use of orchestras: the different instruments, the sounds, the way he blends them all together, mixes the voices in, and of course he knows how to write for voice because he's one of the greatest opera writers of all time, so of course, the man knows how to use the voice. And no lack of melody here. It's not like you have to wait and wait and wait for the one tune or something like that. It seemed like they just came flying out all over the place with all this flavor and all this color in it, so I said, "Wow, this really great." And there's a big closing to Act II and that was the end of the first two sides.

[Terry attends to the various forms and styles in the opera with an acuity for influences of various composers. He found the flavor and colors of the melody to be really great.]

I'm gonna hold this up for you. Do you know much about records?

I10: No.

P10: OK, well records always come like this, up until the last years of records. They come so you can stack them. You ever see records stacked on a ...

I11: Uh huh.

P11: So, it's side one, record two, then side two is on record two, side three is on

record three. Then you turn them over and side four is on the back of side three, side five is on the back of side two, and six of the side of side one.

I12: Yeah, so you only have to flip once.

P12: Right. It's made to stack. Now any good audiophile will never stack records, because that's bad for records. So if you're buying quality stuff like an opera that, at that time, you could have paid 25 dollars for, you would never stack those records. Nevertheless, they're built that way. So here's record three, sides three and four, sides five and two, sides one and six. So the point is, you don't just turn the record over, you go on to the next record. That's how you had to do it, because I would never stack records. And I didn't even have that good of equipment, but I was around audiophiles. You'd cut your hand off before you'd stack records.

I13: Right, and my move into technology and love of music came kind of at the tail end of vinyl, so I didn't know that. That's great.

P13: Any more than one record set, any two record set or any three record set, they did that way. The last few years, they finally wised up and realized that nobody was stacking. They didn't even make stackers anymore. And then the vinyl was over.

So I switched to the second side, and then the third side. It starts off with much lighter tone, and it's real interesting how it's like almost comic, uh, flavor when these three Ping, Pang, and Pong are singing. First they sing about how crazy life has been since this princess took over, and then they long for the good old days when things were nice and calm. It's very pretty and they sing beautiful three-part harmony. This was good too, and I kept thinking, "This is great." So I hadn't heard a lot of sopranos. There's a second part of Liu who is a slave. She's a slave to the King, who is deposed, and he's just mixed in with a crowd. He finds his son, who is the Prince, who is our hero. Liu is slave to the father, and of course, she loves the Prince because she knew him back when they were in power in another land, so she's, of course, in love with him. She has a really good part, a great second part for a soprano. It's rare that an opera has two big soprano roles. This one does. And so you hear her -- but I'm up to side four now -- before you ever hear from Turandot.

[As Terry continued to listen, he found the third side lighter and comic. He continued to attend to the story and character development of the opera. He found the harmony of Ping Pang and Pong beautiful.]

I14: Who is the ... (?) to the princess?

P14: Yes. She gets top billing here, Birgit Nilsson, but you don't see her; you don't hear her. You see her walk by, but you never hear a note of her until

halfway through the opera. So the third side was interesting, and then there's this big fanfare before she finally appears at the end of side three, and so I turn it over to side four and then she finally comes on and she tells why she's so mean, and that her Princess ... ancestor several generations ago was defiled, I guess raped and murdered and stuff like that. So she is avenging her by killing everybody in sight, basically. But it's really not a hard, forceful aria. It's just sweeping, and beautiful, and very lovely, and gentle, and I was bracing, "OK. She's gonna start screaming," because Birgit Nilsson, she can sing Wagner. She can sing anything. She can get way up there, and just hang on, but she does a great job, and Puccini did a nice job of underplaying this whole role.

[Terry expects to hear a shrill aria, and is surprised to hear a sweeping, gentle, and beautiful aria.]

I15: And is this aria that in your description you mentioned tears came to you?

P15: Oh, no. No.

I16: OK, that's at the end.

P16: That's even further down the line. So she explains why she is who she is, and that's really a nice one. I was actually talking to a real operatic soprano years later. She doesn't like this opera because the main character, who is Turandot, really gets one aria and it's this one, and aside from that, she is pissed a lot. She does a lot of high stuff and forceful stuff, and the soprano didn't like that, so she'd kissed off the whole opera. "Stop, stop. You can't do that." So we had this debate. After she sings this aria she poses three riddles to these suitors who come, and if they can pass the three riddles they get her hand in marriage. If they don't, they get their head cut off. So everybody's had his head cut off until our hero shows up. So she lays out the riddles, and he has to think about it, and he finally answers all three of them, and the people rejoice because it means nobody has to die anymore. Then he goes one step further, and he poses a riddle to her, which is, "Who am I?" because nobody knows who he is. He's the unknown prince. In many scripts he's called The Unknown Prince. In some they call him Calaf, but you don't find out his name is Calaf until the very end. So that's how side four ends. So then side five opens with him sitting on the steps of the palace singing the most famous aria. It's one of Pavarotti's favorite. He always sings *Nessun Dorma*. You get any collection of Pavarotti, *Nessun Dorma* is on it.

[Terry continues to attend to the characters and the relationship of the quality of the music to the storyline.]

I17: There's maybe even a chance I've heard that.

P17: Yeah. And she sings that no one sleeps. The Princess has declared that no

one will sleep. Everybody must work to find out who this guy is by morning. No one really knows except the King and his slave, so they haul these people in because they saw the prince, and they threaten to torture the slave until she comes up with the name, and that's when she sings her two arias. She actually has back to back arias about ... one is ... I don't even remember what the nature of the first one is, but they both tell the Princess, "You don't know anything about love, or you wouldn't be doing this. I'm not going to give his name away because I love him and I will protect him no matter what." So, this is what her two arias say, and the second one is really beautiful – very modal and has that exotic kind of eastern flavor to it, but it's pure Puccini all the way, and at the end of it, she takes knife and stabs herself. She kills herself so she won't have to tell the name. She thought she might be weak if they tortured her, and she couldn't give up ...

[Terry finds the second aria beautiful. He noticed the modal quality and an exotic, Eastern style. He identifies the sound as typical for Puccini. Terry attends to the tragic aspect of the story at this point.]

I18: Tragic.

P18: Yeah, it's opera! It's opera, for crying out loud! And that's the one. I had gotten through four sides, I'm into the fifth side and then Puccini continues this sad tone all the way and then the three, Ping, Pang, and Pong are standing around saying, "Oh, this is horrible. This young girl's killed herself," and the King's saying, "You will pay for this, this life. You will pay for this." Then it just gets quieter and quieter and just takes you all the way until you're breathless at the end.

[As the tragic music grows quiet Terry feels he is taken "all the way until you are breathless at the end.]

That's why I said, "Aw man, this is ... how can it keep getting better and better?" So I had to listen to the end.

[Terry found it hard to believe that the quality of the music could continue to increase as he listened. He decided to listen through the entire opera]

Well, as it turns out, Puccini died before he finished it. He's finished that aria. He had sketches for the final scene, but he never actually finished it himself. His ace student finished it. So everybody does the ending. You can't do it without doing the ending. This is his last opera, I believe. It's supposed to be his masterpiece. I think it is, but it's not his most famous. So I went and I listened to the rest of it and the Unknown Prince and the Princess finally have their duet together.

I19: I have little experience with opera, and I wonder, what particular aspects of this musical experience moved you. In your description and recounting it today, the story seems important to you.

P19: Yes, no doubt. It helps you understand what's happening in the opera, why every one is carry about and making all that fuss. Of course I don't know the language, but they all come with a description. Any opera you buy comes with this. This is a book.

[Terry finds the storyline important as a way of understanding the opera.]

I20: OK.

P20: They give you background on the writing of the opera, the stars, the story. So this recounts, this is the entire recounting of the story, so that's the whole thing. And then, of course, there's the photos and the entire libretto. These are all the words.

I21: OK. Are they translated?

P21: Well, yeah. Both sides. Italian and English. I don't remember if I was ... I don't think I was sitting here reading it. I mean, you can do that. Italian's not that far from English, so you can kind of pick up some. You get into the Russian, that's tough. But I don't think I was reading it then. I've gone back and done it because I liked it so much, but I think I just read a quick summation of the opera. The story was really ... I thought the story was tight. You know, opera is sometimes set up with a real loose story so they can just throw in the music whenever they want, move it around. I thought this was a good story. They do background on the situation with Ping, Pang, and Pong explaining how life was before. The Princess, there's an excellent aria explaining why she is the way she is. You understand how everything fits together, and I thought the story was good. Then there's the riddles. The riddles are always interesting. There are three riddles that she poses that you have to answer. I won't waste your time with what they are, but the answer to the third one is something like, fire that ... ice that brings you fire, something like that and with all these words that are all mixed up like that. I was thinking of course, the answer is Turandot is the ice that excites the fire in him.

[Terry read a translation of the opera as he listened. He followed along with the music to understand how the music related to the characters and story. Puccini (1858-1924) wrote it in 1924 and died before it was completed. The 3 act opera tells the story of a princess in Peking who requires that her suitor answer three riddles to take her hand in marriage and risk being killed if they answer incorrectly. The opera, Puccini's last, is arguably his most grand and glorious. It is known for it's mixture of varied textures and styles, incorporating Eastern instruments and melodies.]

I22: Oh, yeah, yeah. Well Tony, I can tell you that I'm going to be listening to Turandot. I've been inspired by your experience.

P22: You're welcome. Get the Zuban Mehta version. That's the best.

I23: Which version?

P23: Zuban Mehta.

I24: Zuban Mehta.

P24: Yeah, Joan Sutherland, Pavarotti. Just the one with Pavarotti. Get the one with him.

I25: OK. Well, and I guess I wondered, in the experience did this being moved or touched by the music and having that experience, was the story integral or important?

P25: Oh, well it is. I think the story's important and that was something I'd always thought was a really, really weak part of opera. A lot of people say ... it's like they see an action film, and sometimes you've just got these explosions in there because that's part of an action film, you know? Whether they've got to be there or not. It's the same thing. You've got this kind of funny story that may or may not make any sense. It's got to be there so that you can sing the music. But I thought the story was, like I said, tight. It moved along. It made sense. It covered a lot of bases. So I thought the story was good, but for me, I always go for the musical sound really: the harmony and the melodies that were really interesting that just kept coming. They kept being good and they just kept coming. Sometimes you can listen to an opera and you're lucky you get one good tune out of it. That's a lesser composer, of course, but even Puccini's lesser operas are just kind of boring. There's nothing to grab you, but he just grabbed me at the beginning. The great chorus work and then there's the melodies, some that he borrowed, the impressionistic (?). I'm just a big fan of Ravel. That may be my number one composer, and so touches into that kind of sound, if you know anything about Ravel.

[Terry found the story to be interesting and "tight," but found the music to be more salient in his experience. He found the melodies and harmonies to be interesting. He felt grabbed by opening chorus and by many songs in the opera. He attended to the impressionistic quality of the music, which is a style he enjoys.]

I26: A little.

P26: Beyond Bolero. Bolero's not the best example, sorry. Or Debussy, if you know any Debussy.

I27: Only a little with him as well.

P27: There's quite a bit of that sound, I think, in this. So, that was the thing that I kept thinking, because I didn't know what they were saying at this point. I knew a little bit, but I didn't know exactly what they were saying and I didn't really care. I just kept thinking, "Boy this is really musically fascinating. Something new keeps coming up every few minutes."

[Terry was paying little attention to the meaning of the words in the songs. He was fascinated by hearing something new every few minutes.]

I28: When I hear you say "fascinating," it makes me think that there's your musical background, your knowledge of music, your interest in the structure of the music, melodies and harmonies and all that, that that's part of your interest. It's good music.

P28: Yeah.

I29: The melodies are good. The way you talk about bringing in the eastern influence but still having his own character in the music.

P29: Yeah, that's the main thing. Even though I only had a bachelor's degree at that time, I hadn't gone to any graduate work, so I know more now than I did then, but even then without being able to name it I knew that, "Boy, this is a great sound. Those are really neat chords." The chords are really great.

[Terry's appreciation of the opera was informed by his background in music. He was struck by the style of the music and the chords.]

I30: And the question that I have is maybe one that's impossible to answer, and that is, do you have any way of knowing for yourself what makes it good or beautiful?

P30: Well, I could give you some kind of analysis if you give me a piece of music how this melodic line here has a certain curve to it or reaches the high note at the right time or something like that. I actually did bring a tape here and would be glad to play you that first big chorus. I'll tell you something that really grabbed me. He's building up to a spot and the chorus is screaming, "Blood! Blood! We want to kill these guys!" And so they build up to one point and he just (*makes falling sound*) drops it down like that, and then they build it up again, and when they just dropped it like that I said, "What an effect! That was just crazy!" It's like you're reading a great piece of poetry and there's just one line that just dazzles you because it's just like the perfect line or something like that.

[Terry finds the flow of building tension and energy, then the energy quickly dropping to be beautiful. He finds this effect "crazy" like a perfect single line in a poem dazzling you.]

I31: Yeah, yeah.

P31: Well, how he works that chorus, builds them up, drops down, builds them up again, and then it gets more and more exciting and then (makes whooshing sound) complete calm. There's a completely different mood altogether, and then he throws in one of those Chinese melodies, actual Chinese melodies near the end. Just the whole thing was a perfect setting. It had everything! I can't say it any better than that.

[Terry finds the movement of energy, building then dropping to calm, along with the shifting mood to be perfect and complete.]

So, the performance is important too. I didn't have a lot to compare it with, but Erich Leinsdorf is a very famous opera conductor. But, the whole structure of how he put that together, the excitement of the chorus, and the sound of the big chorus. I love the sound of a big chorus. So putting all that together was ... I'm sure that's the thing that said, "OK, now we're going to have to finish at least a bit of this because this is really coming along," whereas other ... many operas you don't get much chorus at all. Chorus is really not that big in opera.

[Terry attends to the performance of the conductor and orchestration. He loves the particular sound of the bold and loud chorus. He found all these aspects together as compelling him to listen further.]

I32: Huh. OK.

P32: It's just not. It shows up in bits and pieces but doesn't really do a lot of work. Here's it's actually another character that has the weight of a whole character.

I33: Which reminds me more of Greek drama and the way the chorus is integral to the story.

P33: Yeah. Yeah. It's almost like a Greek chorus in that it comments a lot on what's going on, so it's really important throughout the whole opera.

I34: And [Terry], I would really like to hear a little piece of that if you did bring a tape. That would be great.

P34: Yeah.

(break)

You could make millions. How many people try to write hit songs and can't?

I35: And that makes sense to me. I think a part of me has something that is much

more mathematical. Melody is much more artistic.

P35: Yeah. I mean, melody has certain things that they all do. They have to have some kind of form. They have to have a shape. There's usually a rise and fall. Often there's a high, a peak someplace, a climax that you're going towards. And Puccini will do that. Sometimes it will expand over a long period where Mozart's will be real compact because that's the way he wrote things in stricter two or four bar phrases. Whereas in the Romantic period, they can go over twelve, thirteen bars, or something like that. But Puccini really knows how to make the voice work to make its most beautiful sounds, its most dramatic sounds by, usually the shape. The shape is the most exciting thing. In *Nessun Dorma*, the big aria, it's the famous aria, though I think this show is way too good to rest on one aria. Nevertheless, he builds up, "Da da da da da da da da," and then he does the phrase again a little bit higher, "Da da da da da da da da" Then he goes to the top, "Ba da dee da." Something that Pavarotti can just kick back and let the high notes fly out, you know?

[The aria, sung by a high baritone, has grand and romantic feel. The solo is backed by stings bowing long harmonic tones and quiet percussion.]

I36: Yeah. Yes.

P36: That's what he does. It's not very long, but he builds it up and builds it up, "Da da da da da," and then comes back down again. It's almost like a firework thing. A great firework goes, (*makes launching then exploding sound*). Like that is how it should sound.

[Terry attends to the shape of the melody, finding the rise and fall of the melody line exciting and beautiful. The music grows louder as the phrases progress in higher tones. The phrases end more quietly before they begin again.]

I37: Yeah, and it makes a lot of sense to me as you describe that particular melody and its phrasing.

P37: I can fish around in here and see if we can find it. It's a tape. It's got the problem that tapes have, which is you don't know where you are in the cycle. But I wonder if you have any awareness of what happens.

Well, if you talk to anybody who does anything connected, I suppose, with art performance of any kind, you know there's the climax, right? What's important about going to the climax and reaching the climax and so forth. Whether it's in a book or a film or a play or anything like that, there's always dramatic high points that you're moving towards and away from, and that's what keeps everything really moving. Melody is the same thing on a very simple scale. All melodies have to be going someplace, and if they don't, then they're so boring you don't

want to hear them. They're always going someplace and they're rising and falling, and hopefully there's a point that you have to go to. If you take, say, one of the most famous melodies of all, Beethoven's Ninth, it's, "atta bada dada dada dada dada bada." A range of that many notes, it's a small range. And then he does it again. "Atta bada dada dada dada dada dada dada." OK, you stop there, but there's more. "Bada dada badadada da dadadada dadada." You're actually going to that spot. And then, "Ah dada dadadada badadadada." So you can actually diagram here to here, and then here, and it builds up to there, and that kind of progression, a good melody will have that. Now not every melody that does that is a good melody, but a good tune will have some sort of form that will carry your interest along and a line that makes sense musically, you know, that you can see why this note follows that note or why this phrase follows that phrase. There's some repetition in there always Puccini does all those good things, but he also adds something else that just makes that really work for the human voice.

[Terry recognizes common melodic structures of pattern and movement. He feels that Puccini adds something else to these common structures that he finds beautiful and difficult to articulate.]

I38: Yeah, yeah. And it seems to me that movement is always, at least in my experience of music, movement in terms of rhythm, also movement in terms of melody and resolution, movement always is a part of it.

P38: Right, resolution, that's really big. Suspending the resolution so that you feel you must go on or building on it so that you ... you know it's coming, but before you get to it, you've got to go through these other peak moments. Sometimes there's only one. Sometimes there's more than one. I'm thinking of arias from La Boheme right now, which is really his most famous opera. It's the one that's done the most and for good reason, because it's got all this great music. Any good tenor will sing, I don't know the title of that first big aria from Act One, any good tenor will sing that because it's great. And the soprano has an answer to it. Different character, but she too has great moments that she comes up to. It's like waves from the ocean come crashing in and they build up and then they crash in and they die away. Very much like that, especially, you remember that soprano aria from Act One of La Boheme. It just feels like waves crashing.

So those are the kinds of things that all art will, all performance are, will have is that movement towards, to and away from things. And those melodies can cover a lot of range too, because the human voice, it's got a pretty good range, but there's certain key notes that really zing through. You know, if you go too high ... no respected artist will admit it, but if you go too high, that doesn't work. If it's not high enough, it doesn't really resonate with a good voice. So you've got to work the range too. In the one that I love down in the middle of Act Three, the one that always sends me to tears, "La da da da." It's minor and sad in that way.

[Terry felt he was sent to tears by the aria in Act Three. He described it as sad and in a minor key. The soprano solo is slow with a gentle and forlorn style. It is sung above quiet strings and winds in unison.]

I39: It's minor?

P39: It is minor, yeah. And the line just, it doesn't really go to a high note, but it just kind of curves around and then lifts you up and then takes you, but it's the bringing down that's so great about that one.

[Terry felt the melody lift him up, take him, and then bring him down, "it doesn't really go to a high note, but it just kind of curves around and then lifts you up and then takes you, but it's the bringing down that's so great.... The soprano lifts in volume and tone, then returns to more quiet and lower tones.]

I40: What do you mean the bringing down?

P40: I mean instead of just going for a big high note that you can hold or something like that, she goes, "Dada dada dada da dada dada." Yeah, he uses a phrase and he will repeat it in a different range and so forth, but it will kind of go up to a medium point, and then slowly degenerates down again to the point where you just feel like the life has gone out of you as it's gone out of this poor girl who's about to kill herself. Even if you don't know opera, you know something bad's about to happen, because she's the final word.

[Terry felt the slow degradation of the melody "like the life has gone out of you as it's gone out of this poor girl who's about to kill herself. He feels that this feeling does not require knowledge about opera. The singing grows quiet and slows to its end while the strings and brass play sparsely beneath.]

I41: To play devil's advocate, I could say it's just vibration, sound. Yes, there's a story and there's meaning there, but tears come when you hear certain vibrations. How can hearing sound in a certain way make us, ourselves, sad? That might be an impossible question to answer, but I wonder.

P41: I can give you an answer, but I can't explain it. I'll put it that way. Just like a great speech will move you personally, even if you've heard it ... like "I Have a Dream." You weren't there when he made that speech. You may not know all the situation, but if you just heard a recording of it you know that it kind of stirs you that way. And so emotion can be engendered by any number of sources. Now, if you're ... And there's a caveat that we almost always accept, that we have to buy into the harmonic system we're listening to before it can touch us. For instance, if I brought in a gamelan band, or some eastern music, or African drums and flute, or something like that, you might not ... It doesn't matter how famous these

musicians are and so forth, you might not understand and get enough out of it, you know?

[Terry cannot articulate how he is made to feel sad by the vibrations of the music. He feels that being moved requires “buying into” the harmonic system in which the particular music is situated.]

I42: Well, yeah. Yeah.

P42: Brought in a great koto player, the greatest koto player in Japan. It's a big string instrument, you know? “Ding ding ding,” you know?

I43: Uh huh.

P43: You might say, “Well, all right, they're supposed to be great, but I'm not getting anything here.” But if you plug into a system that we know ... If Whitney Houston or somebody is singing a song and she's just laying it all on the line, then you can get into it because you already understand the system, the harmonic system, the sounds system that she's using. So, given that ...

I44: And that makes a lot of sense.

P44: Yeah. So, first of all, we have to do that. That's why a lot of people don't think they like opera, because they don't understand this as a system of sound. They don't get why these sounds are important. They're more used to having a bass and drums and a beat and a different kind of singer, even though many of your really famous singers who sing with all their heart all the time, are singing right at the top of their range, and they're really just letting it out, just like an opera singer. But people can handle that; can't handle opera.

I45: Right. Right.

P45: So given that we accept the system that we're in here ... Composers know how to do, I'll give you a simple example. Do you know the difference between major and minor?

I46: Mm hmm.

P46: OK. Well minor's supposed to be kind of sadder, right? Frequently when you want to create a sad situation, you'll put a song in minor because it has a certain poignancy -- that's the best word I can think of. There's a tragic element kind of built into minor that minor can play on a lot better than major can. And once you've been in minor for a long time, major just seems like brightness, like the sun came out, if you've been in a minor key for a long time. So, that's one big thing that people use to create sadness. And I think I knew what was happening in the opera at this time, so knowing about it is important. It's hard to appreciate

opera if you don't know anything about the story. You don't know the characters, you don't know the story, and you don't know the language. It's really hard to appreciate it if you don't have any of that that you bring to it.

[Terry feels that knowing the story in an opera helps him appreciate the music.]

But given all that, or some of that, I knew what was happening here but it wasn't even so much just that aria, but how he followed it, by others commenting on the death of this girl. And it got increasingly quieter and there were pauses. So, sing a little bit and then there'd be a pause and sing a little bit more. And so you could almost see this happening, this girl dying there. Well, she's dead, I guess. You don't want to mess around with technicalities, but she's dead there and suddenly everybody else has to pause. They're dying for blood. They said, "Give us the name! Give us the name! Let's torture her! Let's get the name from her!" And now all that yelling and screaming had to stop and everybody had to just ... because the music in the scene. A little pause here and there, it's getting quieter, it's got that minor sound to it. He's changing the orchestration so that it gets lesser and lesser, and you just see everybody just kind of stopping and being affected by the death of this one person, a slave! So it's masterful how he does this. Any good person who knows how to write drama, whether it's Shakespeare or Puccini or Wagner or Arthur Miller, anybody who knows how to write drama can do that.

[Terry attended to the way Puccini uses quietness to show the mood of the story. He is struck by the quiet pauses as the characters react to the death of the slave. He was struck by the slow change of mood demonstrated by a shift in key to minor and increasingly quiet moments. He finds this masterful, and likens it to good drama like Arthur Miller or Shakespeare.]

I47: I wonder ... your description is really poignant and it makes me wonder if, at that moment, after the aria when she's dead and everything gets quiet, if you have, if you can recall this time or any other time you've heard it, if you have any kind of images or fantasies about it. For instance, were you also someone who was witnessing this death and sad about it or was your sadness ..."

P47: I feel like I'm one of the crowd. Like I said, the crowd's in the scene a lot, and the crowd has seen all this. They're all there. There are the chief players, there's Ping, Pang, and Pong who are the deputies of the Princess.

[Terry felt like he was a part of the crowd of the chorus. He was sad and angry along with the crowd as the slave kills herself. The music during this part of the story is in the minor mode, and it combines solos from principal characters as well as the chorus presented in bold and austere style.]

I48: Even they were sad?

P48: Yeah. Even they were. There's the Princess. There's the Prince. There's a King, and so forth, and so I'm like a member of the crowd. I feel like I'm just sucked into this and I'm looking at these people who are involved. Suddenly they've stopped their fanaticism, or something like that. I even find myself looking over at the Princess, thinking, "Did you get this girl?" You know?

[Terry felt "sucked into it" looking over at the princess himself, as a participant as the chorus sings long tones with a forlorn style.]

I49: Like you're mad at her?

P49: "Are you getting it now? This is how important love is, which you haven't got yet." But of course, the Prince wins her over eventually ... breaks down.

I50: And it is my sense that, at least in my experiences and some of the experiences that I've spoken about with others, there's a sense of being personally involved when we're really being moved by something artistic, music or anything.

P50: Yeah. Well in any film, if you don't get involved in it then you're not affected by it. So any good director, any good actress or actor will just bring you right into the scene, like you're right there with them. The same thing in opera, you can't escape it. It's done mostly with ... everything is done with music in opera. Everything else just hangs on the music. If the music doesn't make it, nothing else is going to matter.

[Terry felt involved as a participant. He feels this is required to be affected by the music.]

I51: Well that makes sense. No doubt about it, this *Turandot* will be on my record player or tape player.

P51: Sure, but go to *La Boheme* too. If you like this, go to Number One Opera. Puccini's good there, *Tosca* is great too, also a very powerful story. The good ones are good. They just are.

I52: Yeah.

P52: And Puccini's not that long. I mean, he's not like ... Wagner's like four hours or anything like that.

I53: And [Terry], you did bring up something that I think is a potential can of worms, and that is the minor/major comparison. I do know minor/major well, and no doubt, I agree with you that minor has a sadness and major keys have a brightness. There's some theorists who say that there is either a universal

structure, or maybe a culturally specific structure – which is what I would tend to believe – but nonetheless a structure so that particular sounds, combinations of sounds stir in us very specific feelings or reactions, so that you would react to a minor key the same way that I would and so would everybody else. I wonder if you agree with that, and if so what's your guess on how a minor sound makes us all sad?

P53: Well, I would say that's good to some degree, and that's why Beethoven's 5th Symphony, which is minor. It starts out, "Dum dum dum dum. Bum bum bum bum." And that's why that has excited millions of people for all these years, has brought the same power to that presentation for all this time. As to why minor has that more than major, now that's something that you might have to ask a physicist or something like that.

I54: Yeah, or maybe a physiologist or something. Yeah.

P54: I'm just guessing. Or some sort of person who can actually analyze the effect of a certain type of sound on the body itself.

I55: To you it feels like a physical kind of thing.

P55: Well, yeah. And minor, like I said, can either have a sadness or a lot of power to it because it seems almost angry. Often times, angry music can be in minor. (*sings opening of them to Star Wars*) If it's not minor all the way, it starts that way.

I56: Right. Right.

P56: Whereas major is always bright, but it's considered bright if you've been listening to minor.

I57: By comparison.

P57: Then, by comparison, otherwise it's almost like your generic key. Most things are in major. The majority of things are in major. And major can do a lot of things too, not that major is any less emotional. Those two contrast each other in a standard harmonic system, which is what we're still dealing with in Puccini. About 10 or 20 years later, everything is going to pieces.

I58: Oh really?

P58: Once Schoenberg and his guys get working, everything just gets dropped by the wayside. I don't know if you've ever heard of serial music and atonal music?

I59: Atonal, yeah.

P59: Yeah, well that's the same thing, serial music. That's not breakfast cereal, that's series, serial, notes in a series.

I60: Oh, OK. Does that music do it for you?

P60: No, doesn't do much.

I61: OK, so that kind of shared structure is important.

P61: Yeah, and I can ... See, that's a soapbox. You don't want me to get up on that soapbox. I understand a lot about, and I've had to analyze atonal music, and I understand a bit about what it's about. It works in certain situations. I can't listen to it for a long time because I just need more of the traditional elements of music in it. All atonal music is not dissonant. All dissonant music is not atonal, but once you get into those structures, then everything about major and minor and all the traditional ways it affects are gone and you have to be affected in other ways if you're going to get affected, but once again, you have to buy into the system. That's what a lot of people 100 years later still haven't done.

I62: And that buying into the system, that seems to be a really important part of being moved. It fits with my experiences and it seems to be an important part of your experience, at least here, with this opera.

P62: Yeah, and I was able to do that here, because as I said, I wasn't really sure about opera, but I knew enough about music to be able to appreciate a good series of chords. I like a good series of chords, especially something that's a little different. In the impressionist period, you don't have just the standard set of chords. In fact, you had new notes, wider chords with more different notes to cover a wider range, that sort of thing. And that's what Puccini does, and his melodies fit right on top of that. So it's more interesting for me. You know, I'd say, "Here's a chord I haven't heard or don't remember it in this situation type of thing. I want to hear some more of that." When I hear something that's interesting, then I want to hear more of it.

[Terry attends to the structure of musical sounds, recognizing basic aspects of the structure that are found in a particular music culture (western music). He finds new forms within the traditional structure interesting and good. He wants to hear more of the new and interesting sound.]

I63: It strikes me as you're describing this, that structure is really necessary, kind of saying, "Yes, this resolution makes sense here. This phrasing – yes, I can anticipate it and it's sensible, that's important. But it's also nice to be surprised.

P63: Oh yeah, and any good composer will always want to surprise you. Nobody wants to be totally predictable. Sooner or later, there will be resolution if you're in a harmonic and tonal system. But they always want to just do something a little bit different to delay that, go on a different chord here, go in a different direction. Melodically, too, that happens. You're not always sure exactly what's going to happen next. You know, he'll come around it in a different way, something like that. So everyone wants to be surprised and if they're good, then the surprises are always good.

[Terry feels that good music contains the new and surprising within the traditional structure.]

I64: Yeah.

P64: I mean ... Beethoven may be an ultimate example of that. Beethoven, to me and people I've talked to about him, worked hard to make everything sound as though it was just organically that's the way it was. This section has to go to this section and there's no other possibility in all of music. And yet, when you look at his notepads, you see he had several different ideas about how one section fits into another. So it goes that way and just feels totally natural, but it's not so natural that it's boring or uninteresting. It's always interesting, and even though you don't know what he's going to do, once he does it you say, "Oh yes, that would normally be where this line would go, where this section would go." He just, he worked to make all this completely unified like that.

I65: Wow, yeah.

P65: And so ... that has to fit together with never be boring, and Beethoven with these basic ideas is not boring.

I66: Yeah, it just confirms my sense that you have to be a good, talented artist to create great music.

P66: Well, there's only one of those guys, only one Beethoven. And even he had to labor to make it up to his own standards. So that here we are 150, 200 years later still marveling at what he could do and how it all worked together.

I67: And [Terry], there's one other question that I think would be important for me to ask, and if you parked at 3:00, we'll get you out of here a little bit before your time is up. I would like to take at least a couple minutes to listen to at least the opening of Turandot.

P67: Oh yeah, no problem.

I68: But the question that is important in my mind now is the sense of being moved or being transformed. Do you think you were changed in any meaningful way by this experience of listening to the opera?

P68: Well, in the sense that I was now ready to listen to more whereas I hadn't really thought about having to listen to opera, or should I? Is it wrong that I don't know very much? And that went on for a while. I actually started buying records, checking records out; that was the fastest way to get to it of course. So I have a little collection that I picked up while doing all this. My uncle leant me some of his records ... I know that this experience has also helped me appreciate music more, all the times I am really grabbed by music, I love music even more.

[Terry's interest in opera grew from his experience. He also appreciated music in general more after listening.]

I69: Anything outside of your musical life?

P69: Everything. Music is in every part of my life. Hearing this opera, despite my resistance to it, fuels my desire to live. It lets me know what it's all about.

[Terry feels that everything in his life changed from the experience. He feels that it fueled his desire for life and "let's me know what it's all about."]

(break)

I70: Oh yeah. I bet there's more opera music that I recognize than what I would think.

P70: Yeah, and in the past they used to take famous arias and turn them into songs. So that's not unusual either.

I71: Let me ask that question about music in general. I wonder if music in your life, do you feel that music offers you something? Do you feel like if you were living the same life but without playing the trombone, without composing, without listening, how would your life be different?

P71: I couldn't be living the same life. Music's just ... I mean, it's important to me all the time. I listen to it all the time. We always have these discussions in my house about, "Turn on the music. Turn off the music." In the car ... it's just ... I guess ... I'll think of something, like a tune I haven't thought of, and then I've got to hear that. So, if it's in my own library, I'll go dig it up. If I've got to go to the library, I'll go dig it up. But there's always ... I'm always thinking of music and wanting to hear it, different stuff.

[Terry feels that music is an integral part of his life, and feels compelled to listen and think about music.]

I72: Do you have a sense of what it does to you to think about it, to care about it, to have it be such a big part of your life?

P72: I can say it lightens the spirit more than anything else. No matter what it is, even if it's highly dramatic music or if it's just good old Motown or something like that, whatever it is it basically just lightens your spirit. You know, like people singing along in the car type of thing, and they're always enjoying that. Nobody can sing along to music and not love it. You just can't do that. So I do that with instrumental music, I'll be singing along, la da da or whatever it is to an instrumental tune. And it's just nicer.

[Music lightens Terry's spirit, and finds it makes daily life nicer.]

I73: Would you say that your spirit's lifted even if you're listening to that sad aria or ...

P73: Oh sure. Nothing cleanses the spirit better than tragedy. Shakespeare, right?

I74: Yeah. Yeah.

P74: So, right. It brings the sound of the world to you. You're just connecting with ... I know millions of other people have heard what I've heard. I don't think about that consciously but, it's like, in one way, you're connecting to ... you know, when you hear a famous hit that you like. Well you know millions of people bought that album, bought that record. So you're connecting to that same interest and excitement that other people have, and I don't fight that. I go with that.

[Terry feels connected to humanity through listening to music.]

I75: Well that sounds great. That sounds great.

P75: So that's about the best I can explain. Like I said, just think of singing along to something in your car. Makes you feel better, right?

[Terry feels that music makes you feel better.]

I76: Yeah, like you said, I can't imagine singing along to a song I like and not feeling better as a result.

P76: Yeah.

I77: Yeah.

P77: So, that's ... I just do that to everything. I sing along with everything.

I78: Wow. Well then, boy, I'm glad you're around because I love music and I think that the more that we all acknowledge that music is a great thing, the better.

P78: People try to say it makes you smarter or something like that. It makes you do better in school.

I79: The Mozart Effect, yeah.

P79: They had all these studies to try to justify why to have music in school, but the biggest thing to me is that it's a great thing that human beings have that transcends so much of age, and location, and your financial socioeconomic situation. Music can just transcend all that and you're doing that when you're listening, especially to something that was written a hundred years ago, two hundred years ago, or even 50 years ago. Fifty years ago still takes you back to Elvis Presley. It's not that far anymore. Or the Beatles or something. And when you're listening to that, you're connecting to that time, those people, and everybody in between, everybody in between who's also listened to that. You're connecting to all that. There's nothing more exciting than going to a party, talking to somebody to find out they like the same stuff you like, right?

[Through music, Terry feels connected to humanity through time, united by the music that is appreciated by many eras. He is excited by discovering others who like the same music as him.]

I80: Yeah.

P80: "Oh, I got that album! Yeah, I loved that. That was great!" And they start talking about the music and how, "Wasn't that the best song?" "No, I like this one." You can compare because it's gotten into your soul is the best way to say it.

[Terry feels that music he loves has "gotten into your soul."]

I81: And the idea of music as connecting us to each other and to music and to different times, different cultures, that makes a lot of sense to me.

P81: Thanks heavens music is very immediate. A movie, you have to sit down to ... anything that you have to sit down and watch is not as accessible as something that's just on the radio or nowadays in your Ipod. You just plug it right in there. But I think that connection isn't why you listen to it, but it explains why you like it because it's been able to find that resonance that interest and excitement with all those other people and you're one of them. You're one of the people who finds that interesting. My son listens to heavy metal. I can't listen to it for a long time. A lot of people do, though. Stuff sells quite a bit. I haven't really

plugged into buying into that system. It's a system I haven't really plugged into yet.

I82: Yeah. I have a hard with that system too.

P82: But every once in a while I'll just hear something and say, "Now, see this is interesting musically." I need to know musically that it's interesting, that there's some form here, that there's a melodic line I can relate to, that kind of thing.

I83: It would be interesting to talk to younger folks about their interest in music, for instance, your son. I wonder what he ...

P83: Yeah, well, he can talk about it, but a lot of them can't. They can't really tell you what it is. They just say, "Man, that's the bomb, man," and that's it. That's all they can tell you. It's good. It's bad. I like it. I don't like it. He's actually ... because we have these discussions all the time. So I force him to articulate what he likes and what he doesn't like, and he understands that I'm not always with him, but sometimes I am. I'll say he's a very intelligent person, so he can articulate.

I84: Right. Right.

P84: That's one of the biggest problems with talking to a lot of people is that they just, they don't really know what they're thinking, why they like it.

I85: And in fact, I have spoken with people who both know music, are musicians themselves, and people who are not. Not completely, but most of the time the people who love music but don't really know anything about it couldn't really say much about it. They just say, "I love that. I don't know why. I don't know what's going on, but I love it."

P85: And I don't criticize that, but it's one of those things, the more you know really the more you can appreciate it. It's like anything, the more you read about it, more analysis of it, it's just like any book. The more you analyze it, the more you've discussed it and so forth, and you can see all the ins and outs, you can see how characters relate on a much more subtle level. You can see how this plot twist over here connected to what happened over here a hundred pages earlier. Once you get all ... the more you get into it the more you can appreciate it. For me, I like to know a lot more. I like to be able to be more aware of what's going on in the music as much as possible. But there's one point, after a certain point I can't tell you why something ... why the sound of the symphony orchestra at its peak just raises me right up, but it's a great sound. These sounds all work together, and any composer who is worth his salt, can send that sound right into you and through the roof. I like to go ... I like to hear the Columbus Symphony. It's a very fine orchestra. I like to go down and hear them, hear them do what orchestras can do, and that's a great moment.

[Terry feels that his appreciation of music is greater the more he knows about music and its structure. He feels his understanding fails at a certain point, and he is unable to articulate what he likes. Terry feels that he cannot articulate moments when music “raises me right up.” He feels the composer sends the sound “right into you and through the roof” when the composer is good.]

I86: I do think knowing a bit about music, allows you to appreciate it more. It also allows you to talk about it, which allows you and me to be here together and this greatly deepens my appreciation of music. So I really do appreciate you taking the time.

P86: Like I said, I’ll talk about music any time.

I87: Could I hear a little bit of that?

P87: Sure, let me put that on.

(break)

[The opening is grand and bold, with pulsing sounds from the orchestra under a solo Baritone singing in Italian.]

... that tells you what’s going on immediately. The Princess has decreed that she will marry anyone of royal blood who solves the riddles, and if they don’t solve the riddle, they will pay with their head. That’s the first thing that happens.

I88: Wow.

P88: And then there’s the big crowd scene, and then we meet the Prince. He meets his father, who he just finds in the crowd – they both have been deposed from the earlier kingdom – and their slave there. And the slave is singing something. She’s singing ... I think, “I’m glad I found you.” Once she stops the crowd is starting to sing. They’re saying, “Grind the stone! Grind the stone! We want his head!” They’re saying, “Grind it! Grind it!”

I89: Wow, yeah.

P89: “We want the head of this guy! He blew it! We want his head!” So that’s where we are right here.

I90: What a powerful start.

P90: Oh, it is.

(music)

[The music continues with bold and loud chords of the full orchestra.]

I91: That is very powerful.

P91: But that, that got my interest puttering around in my apartment. That came on and I said, "Yeah!"

[Terry's interest was piqued by the powerful sound of the opening chorus as he was puttering around his apartment. The chorus sings loudly with low tones punctuated by loud percussion and brass. The sound is foreboding and dark.]

And it wasn't a system much bigger than this. I've got a nice one now, but that was just right out of school. I didn't have a lot of money.

I92: As I was listening to this I was imagining that I would want it cranked on a good system.

P92: Oh yeah. Oh, you'll want to hear it live too.

I93: Yeah.

P93: The Columbus Symphony, they did it and their chorus, they must number about 200, so that's a good size chorus and they were just letting it fly, I tell you. It's good chorus work.

I94: And in my ignorance to opera, I have to say that my first association to hearing this little bit was Lord of the Rings. Especially the kettle drum.

P94: Yeah, I haven't seen Lord of the Rings, but I'll imagine that this stuff works real well in something epic like Lord of the Rings. I'm going to just imagine that.

I95: Yeah, that's right. Do you think you will see Lord of the Rings?

P95: That's my project this summer is to see all three of them.

I96: You know, I was quite impressed with the soundtracks for all three. Pretty good.

P96: My kids have seen it, and they loved it. So I said, "Oh, OK. I'll try and catch up with them." So here I am a year later or so, two years, whatever since they've seen them. I'm going to ... not in the same night, but over the course of the summer, I hope to see all three of them so I won't be left out in the cold. But sure, this is the kind of stuff that John Williams and all those ... James Horner and all

those guys who write those big scores, they get all their information from here. This is where they get their ideas.

I97: Yet another reason to take care of my own ignorance, to expose myself to opera. I'll just have to check it out.

P97: Yeah, maybe not the exact quotes, but you'll hear how certain moods are ones that work real well in films, all kinds, from love scenes to epic scenes to tragic scenes, great fights, a lot like this.

I98: And no doubt about it, Lord of the Rings, the music that represents the dark side, the evil guys and the evil army, kettle drum just like that, and it had a big chorus that had kind of high and screechy, very powerful vocals.

P98: Now I've got to go check it out. Shoot.

I99: Yeah, and I'm also open to the fact that there are many great operas, but I'm really inspired by your experience. *Turandot* will be my first.

P99: Good. Puccini is just the right sound for me, because like I said, he's a little early 20th Century, some ... a lot of traditional Italian opera. Verdi is good too, but I just like the sounds, the orchestration. Puccini's use of orchestra is much more modern than Verdi, even though they overlap a bit. Verdi's the great Italian opera composer. You back up earlier and then you get into Mozart and stuff like that, and that's a completely different sound. Mozart's smaller, but the use of the orchestra, the skill of orchestration had not been developed at the time of Mozart. You've got to get much later to get the kind of sounds that Puccini comes up with.

I100: Well it sounds like that era would be the right era for me.

P100: I think it's the most exciting era in all of music, early 20th Century. This was written in 1921, I think, 22.

(tape ends)