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# ***Maynooth Musicology***

Postgraduate Journal

Volume 2 2009

Edited by

Brian Carty, Pat O'Connell and Barbara Strahan

**N.U.I. Maynooth**

**11 NOV 2014**

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**Joe Kehoe** retired from the public service in 2004. He graduated from NUI Maynooth with an honours Bachelor of Music Degree in 2007, and he also holds an honours degree in philosophy from London University. He was the winner in 2008 of the first CHMHE Undergraduate Musicology Competition for his final year dissertation *The Place of Ethics in Musicology*, and on this basis was invited to present a paper to

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**Philip Kelly** commenced studies in NUI Maynooth in 2005 in the BMus degree programme and graduated in 2008. While studying, Philip participated in the NUI Maynooth Guitar Orchestra and in other ensembles within the college including Brian Bridges's Electric Guitar Array. He has played both classical and electric guitar for a number of years and is currently studying for a licentiate with Trinity College of Music London in electric guitar performance. Philip's research interests include areas of popular musicology, ethnomusicology and music technology. He is currently enrolled in the MA in Computer Music at NUI Maynooth.

**Aisling Kenny** was awarded a John Hume Scholarship in 2005 after completing her BMus at NUI Maynooth. She is currently pursuing doctoral research on the Lieder of Josephine Lang. She has presented papers at conferences in Ireland and the UK. She has written several articles on Irish singers for *The Encyclopaedia of Music in Ireland*. Her paper on Josephine Lang's Goethe settings was published in the *NUI Maynooth Musicology Journal* in 2008. Aisling, a Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholar of the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences, also holds performance diplomas in piano and singing.

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**Pat O'Connell** holds an MA in Anglo Irish Studies from University College, Dublin. After a career of thirty-five years in the Information Technology and Telecommunications industries, he was accepted as a

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**Jennifer O'Connor** has a degree in Music and English and an MA in Music History from NUI Maynooth. She is completing her PhD which focuses on the contribution of women to music in nineteenth century Dublin. She has spoken at several conferences both in Ireland and the U.K. and is a contributor to the forthcoming *Encyclopedia of Music in Ireland*.

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## **Acknowledgements**

Our primary thanks go to contributors and their respective supervisors for their high-quality work and commitment to this second edition of *Maynooth Musicology*. Our general editors, Dr Lorraine Byrne Bodley and Professor Barra Boydell, provided invaluable guidance for which we are truly thankful. We are very grateful to last year's editors who offered generous insights to the process. We would also like to express our sincere thanks to Professor Fiona Palmer for her support and commitment to research in the Music Department at NUI Maynooth.

The journal could not be published without the financial assistance of Professor Palmer and Dr Peter Denman, Dean of Arts, NUI Maynooth, which we greatly appreciate. Finally, our sincere thanks also go to Martin Hanley for photography, Brian O'Connor for artwork and Barry O'Brien and all at eprint Limited.

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Pat O'Connell  
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Editors  
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## Preface

The second issue of *Maynooth Musicology Postgraduate Journal* will be a memorable one for the student editors, and for me too as founder and general editor. Many of the young musicologists who have written these essays will embark on new journeys, leaving our department with MLitts. or PhDs, some bringing their experience at Maynooth to bear on studies further afield. It is to the students of this volume and to musicology students in general that this preface is directed, for what matters on such occasions is not so much the educational givens of your background but the state of readiness of your own spirit. In fact, the ability to start out upon your own impulse is fundamental to the gift of keeping going on your own terms, not to mention the further and more fulfilling gift of getting going all over again – never resting upon the oars of success or in the doldrums of disappointment, but getting renewed and revived by some further transformation.

Getting started, keeping going, getting started again – in life and in musicology, it seems to me that this is the essential rhythm not only of achievement but of survival, the ground of convinced action, the basis of self-esteem and the guarantee of credibility in our lives, credibility to ourselves as well as to others. This rhythm is something I would want each of my students in the department, each of the authors in this journal, all of you, in fact, to experience in the years ahead, and experience not only in your professional lives, but in your emotional and spiritual lives as well – because unless that underground level of the self is preserved as a verified and verifying element in your make-up, you are going to be in danger of settling into whatever profile the world prepares for you and accepting whatever profile the world provides for you. You will be in danger of moulding yourselves in accordance with laws of growth other than those of your own intuitive being.

The world, for example, expects the author of a preface for a postgraduate journal to issue a set of directives, a complete do-it-yourself success guide to musicology for one's students. The appointed role of such a writer is to provide a clear-cut map of the future and a key to navigating it as elegantly and as clearly as possible. But while this is what the world prescribes, the inner laws of this particular musicologist make her extremely anxious about laying down laws or mapping out the future for anyone. In fact, this musicologist believes that all those laws and directions have to be personal discoveries rather than prescribed routes; they must be part and parcel of each individual's sense of the world. They are to be improvised rather than copied, they are to be invented rather than imitated; they are to be risked and earned rather than bought into. Indeed, this very preface has been a matter of risk and

improvisation from the moment I agreed with my co-editor, Barra Boydell, that I would do it, because I kept asking myself how could I reconcile my long-standing aversion to the 'know-all' with a desire to write something worthwhile for musicology students.

This journal is about getting started as musicologists and editors. The Russian poet and novelist Boris Pasternak's definition of the art of writing is 'boldness in face of the blank sheet'. The sheer exhilaration of those words is already enough to convince you of their truth, the truth that getting started is half the battle. One of the great Sufi teachers expressed the same wisdom in a slightly different way. 'A great idea', he claimed, 'will come to you three times. If you go with it the first time, it will do nearly all the work for you. Even if you don't move until the second time, it will still do half the work for you. But if you leave it until the third time, you will have to do all the work yourself.

*Maynooth Musicology Postgraduate Journal* is about the importance of getting started from that first base of your being, the place of ultimate suffering and ultimate decisions in each of you, the last ditch and the first launching pad. The focus of this preface is to convince you as editors and musicologists starting out on new paths that the true and durable path into and through experience involves being true to the actual givens of your lives. True to your own solitude, true to your own secret knowledge, because oddly enough, it is that intimate, deeply personal knowledge in our writing and in our lives that links us most vitally and keeps us readily connected to one another.

When writing a preface one only has to get started and keep going. But for the editors and musicologists within the pages of this volume, starting again is actually what it is all about. By editing this volume, by publishing your articles, you have reached a stepping stone in your research, a place where you can pause for a moment and enjoy the luxury of looking back on the distance covered; but the one thing about stepping stones is that you always need to find another one ahead of you.

Dr Lorraine Byrne Bodley  
28 January 2009



## ***Introduction***

### **‘Attending to the Way Things Are’: Frankfurtian Reflections on Truth and Musicology**

**Joe Kehoe**

In his recent examination of *The Discourse of Musicology* Giles Hooper poses the question ‘What should one say about music?’ and it is clear that the use of the word *should* here covers a moral dimension.<sup>1</sup> Unlike, say, physicians and engineers, whose activities are assessed in terms of outcomes such as health of patients and robustness of physical constructions, what musicologists do must primarily be considered in terms of the words they produce. Given that this is the case, and that speech acts (understood to cover inscriptions – the normal mode of scholarly discourse – as well as utterances) may be examined for whether they are true or false, appropriately informative or deceptive, perspicuous or vague, questions of truth, honesty, and intellectual integrity, can become important issues for musicologists.

In the course of the twentieth century, the ‘hard sciences’ demonstrated dramatic success in the discovery of truths and in applications, both benign and otherwise, in medicine, information management, space exploration, and warfare. As a result, such sciences seemed to provide a model for any field of enquiry with pretensions to intellectual respectability. This is the background to Joseph Kerman’s assessment of the state of musicology in the early 1980s.<sup>2</sup> According to Kerman, musicology then was ‘perceived as dealing essentially with the factual, the documentary, the verifiable, the analysable, the positivistic’.<sup>3</sup> Two terms in that statement, *verifiable* and *positivistic*, invoke a philosophy of science, positivism, which had arisen in the early part of the century in Germany among the so-called Vienna Circle, a view that is now largely seen as discredited. This philosophy amounted

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<sup>1</sup> Giles Hooper, *The Discourse of Musicology* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), p.1.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Kerman, *Musicology* (London: Fontana Press, 1985).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p.12.

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to a Procrustean distortion of science to accommodate a philosophically misconceived conception of the way scientists actually operated.<sup>4</sup>

Postmodernism, in reaction to the weight accorded by some, to factual verifiability, substituted an emphasis on ‘indeterminacy and interpretive “play”’.<sup>5</sup> Such a substitution raises significant issues for any discipline. In this regard, Felipe Fernández-Armesto writes of his fears that the post-modern challenge would subvert historians’ traditional aspirations to the truth and he attributes to librarians in recent decades a worry that in the future they would be consigning history books to the fiction shelves.<sup>6</sup> Musicologists would seem to be vulnerable to a similar risk. The worry is that, convinced of the impossibility of attaining truth, they would, *faute de mieux*, resort to fictional narrative as the only appropriate musicological mode of discourse.

And, perhaps, a preference for the relaxed attitude of the fiction writer over the conscientious stance of the scholar is understandable. The allure of fiction is not confined just to readers; Amos Oz tells us how he was envied by his scholar father for the freedom that he enjoyed:

He always envied me my novelist’s freedom to write as I wish, unconfined by all kinds of preliminary search and research, unburdened by the obligation to acquaint myself with all existing data in the field, unharnessed from the yoke of comparing sources, providing evidence, checking quotations and installing footnotes: free as a bird.<sup>7</sup>

### Frankfurt on Truth

The scholar, unlike the novelist, must stay rooted in reality. A significant common theme of Harry G. Frankfurt’s two recent essays *On*

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<sup>4</sup> See entries under ‘logical positivism’ and ‘the verifiability criterion of meaning’ p. 514, and ‘Vienna Circle’ p. 956, in Robert Audi (ed.), *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

<sup>5</sup> Hooper, *The Discourse of Musicology*, p. 35.

<sup>6</sup> Felipe Fernandez-Armesto, ‘Epilogue: What is History Now?’, in *What Is History Now?*, ed. by David Cannadine (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p. 149.

<sup>7</sup> Amos Oz, *The Story Begins: Essays on Literature* (Orlando: Harcourt Brace & company, 1999), p.1.

*Truth and On Bullshit* is the importance (and against all kinds of postmodernists, relativists, and sceptics, the possibility) of ‘attending to the way things are’.<sup>8</sup> Frankfurt contends that objective truth is a coherent concept, and that it is an important element in both practical and theoretical thinking. He further contends that currently fashionable theories of relativism and postmodernism are inimical to humane living and are, in any event, self-refuting.<sup>9</sup> Noting that publicists and politicians typically display a relaxed attitude towards truth, Frankfurt is disturbed that such an attitude is now apparent among those, including academics, who might ‘reasonably have been counted on to know better’.<sup>10</sup> Such persons:

emphatically dismiss a presumption that is not only utterly fundamental to responsible inquiry and thought, but that would seem to be – on the face of it – entirely innocuous: the presumption that “what the facts are” is a useful notion, or that it is, at the very least, a notion with intelligible meaning.<sup>11</sup>

In this essay I propose to examine several examples of musicology under the Frankfurterian rubric of ‘attending to the way things are’. How do musicologists attend to the way things are, and what could the notion of so attending, understood as an obligation, mean for the practice of musicology?

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<sup>8</sup> Harry G. Frankfurt, *On Bullshit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), *On Truth* (London: Picnic, 2006). The quotation is from the earlier essay: ‘[...] a person’s normal habit of attending to the way things are may become attenuated or lost [by excessive indulgence in the habit of bullshitting]’. p. 60.

<sup>9</sup> ‘In any case, even those who profess to deny the validity or the objective reality of the true-false distinction continue to maintain without apparent embarrassment that this denial is a position that they do *truly* endorse. The statement that they reject the distinction between true and false is, they insist, an unqualifiedly *true* statement about their beliefs, *not a false one*.’ (italics in original) Frankfurt, *On Truth*, pp. 8-9. Similar considerations are proposed by Thomas Nagel in *The Last Word* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p.6. For a philosophical defence of the idea of objective truth against various forms of ‘veriphobia’ (that is challenges to the idea of objective truth), see Alvin I. Goldman, *Knowledge in a Social World* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), Chapter One, pp. 3-40.

<sup>10</sup> Frankfurt, *On Truth*, p.18.

<sup>11</sup> Frankfurt, *On Truth*, p.19.

## Gibbs on Schubert

My first example raises the fundamental question of whether there is, objectively, a 'way things are' which could make sense of the notion of an obligation to focus on the way things are. A flirtation with postmodernism, and an apparent conflation of objective fact with invented fiction, can be seen in the treatment by Christopher Gibbs of Schubert reception in his essay "Poor Schubert": Images and Legends of the Composer'.<sup>12</sup> In discussing the reliability of the legends surrounding the life of the composer, Gibbs warns against discounting "the aesthetic truth' of certain fictions'.<sup>13</sup> By way of explanation of this idea he states that anecdotes often arise from, and reflect the need to, create a legend in the first place.

While the contention that present concerns may lead to the creation of legends about the past may be true, the terminology used here is surely confusing. One might, in the context of a work of fiction, use the notion of 'aesthetic truth', for example, to claim that a character created by the author was a convincing figure that might well be encountered in real life. However, in the case of the portrayal of a historical character, this notion seems particularly inappropriate. The historian or biographer does not have the same latitude as the practitioner of creative fiction.<sup>14</sup> While it is necessary to recognize the difficulties in reaching the truth, there is no reason to believe that it is in principle impossible to reach, at least, some part of the truth. The human proneness to error is a reason for us to be cautious in the search for truth; a reason for us to be ready to scrutinize, and if necessary revise, our beliefs, in the light of new evidence; but it is no reason for the abandonment of that search.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Christopher H. Gibbs, "Poor Schubert": Images and Legends of the Composer', in *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert*, ed. by Christopher H. Gibbs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 36 – 55. Hereafter referred to as Gibbs, "Poor Schubert".

<sup>13</sup> Gibbs, "Poor Schubert", p.39

<sup>14</sup> Frankfurt points out that "There are important limits [...] concerning the range of variation in interpreting the facts that serious historians [...] may be expected to display." Frankfurt, *On Truth*, p. 26.

<sup>15</sup> At most, recognizing that our history has been shaped by many stories that we now regard as false must make us cautious, and always ready to call into question the very stories that we now hold as true, since the criterion of wisdom

Gibbs ends his discussion of Schubert on a thoroughly sceptical note. He suggests that the truth is elusive and that we are in thrall to images which may not reflect the reality of the composer's life. Significantly, he raises the possibility that scholarly discussion produces as many distorted images as supposedly less reliable sources of truth such as pictures, popular biographies, or operetta.<sup>16</sup> If Gibbs is proposing a position of universal scepticism the degree of pessimism is unwarranted, as it would seem to call in question the very enterprise of objective music scholarship. Such scholarship can aim at the objective truth, while at the same time recognising the difficulty of attaining it.

Our attitude to the world of fiction has to be different to our attitude to the real world. No matter how interesting, engaging, or lifelike, fictional characters cannot engender moral demands to which we must pay heed: their interests cannot be advanced by any of our actions; their rights cannot be vindicated by any of our interventions; nor can we do anything to relieve any burdens that they may bear. Fictional events are similarly insulated from any of our moral concerns: nothing that happens in a fictional world can oblige us to act in a certain way or adopt a certain policy.<sup>17</sup> However, the real world, which is the domain of the scholar, does make moral demands on us, and in order to satisfy these demands we must attend to the way things are in that world.<sup>18</sup>

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of the community is based on constant wariness about the fallibility of our knowledge.' Umberto Eco, *On Literature* (New York: Harcourt, 2004), p. 299.

<sup>16</sup> Gibbs, "Poor Schubert", p. 55.

<sup>17</sup> This is not to deny that fictional works can help to make us more morally sensitive and aware. See Martha Nussbaum, *Poetic Justice: The Literary Imagination and Public Life* (Boston, Beacon Press, 1995), and Katherine Elgin, *Considered Judgment* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996), pp. 179-96.

<sup>18</sup> The way things 'are' should, obviously, be interpreted to include historical realities. The realities of the past can create moral obligations. For example, we may have duties to dead persons, including dead composers. See Peter Kivy, *The Fine Art of Repetition: Essays in the Philosophy of Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), Chapter V, 'Live performances and dead composers: On the ethics of musical interpretation', pp. 95-116. For the notion of posthumous harm See Thomas Nagel, *Mortal Questions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), Chapter 1, 'Death', pp. 1-10, and Joel Feinberg, *Harm to Others: The Moral Limits of the Criminal Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), pp. 80-86.

## Shelemay and the Case of the Beta Israel

Such demands were clearly apparent to Kay Kaufman Shelemay once she began to reflect on her research project. During the 1970s Shelemay studied the liturgical chant of the Beta Israel or Falasha, an ethnic group from north-western Ethiopia.<sup>19</sup> From the late nineteenth century, due to outside influence, this group began to see themselves not merely as a religious minority in the country of their birth, but as co-religionists with the Jews, and the perception of their own identity changed accordingly. Following a campaign to ensure their acknowledgment as Jews, the rabbinic authorities in Israel gave the group full recognition, with consequential rights of entry to, and citizenship of, that state. However, the research carried out by Shelemay cast doubt on any connection between the liturgical music of the group and a supposed ancient Jewish origin, and showed, to the contrary, that the church music of the group bore marked similarities to extant Christian Ethiopian music.

These findings could have harmed the interests of the subject group, whose sense of identity had been shaped around a presumed Jewish lineage and whose material interests were served by a right of entry to Israel as a means of escape from their own war-torn homeland. This posed an ethical dilemma for the researcher: whether to publish her findings, thus serving the interests of scholarship, and indeed her own interest as a musicologist who had invested significant time and energy in the project; or to keep confidential the outcome of her research in the interests of the subject group who had extended her their cooperation.

After considering her options, she decided to restrict her findings to scholarly publications, and to steer clear of publicity that might compromise the position of members of the ethnic group at the centre of her study.<sup>20</sup> One may query the efficacy of these actions. The world of academic writing is not somehow hermetically sealed off from the world of politics, and there is no guarantee that something written in a scholarly journal will not be given a wider circulation.

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<sup>19</sup> Kay Kaufman Shelemay, 'The Impact and Ethics of Musical Scholarship', in *Rethinking Music*, ed. by Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 531-44.

<sup>20</sup> Shelemay, 'The Impact and Ethics of Musical Scholarship', p. 542.

Whatever reservations might be had about the way that Shelemay dealt with her problem, that problem was at least partially defined by a concern for, and a specific understanding of the nature of, truth. The most plausible explanation of her attitude to her research is that she takes seriously the notion of truth as something that should constrain what she may appropriately do and say. We can infer from her report that for her truth is 'out there', something to be discovered, something that obtains irrespective of her view or her interests, or the shared opinion of any community or collective to which she might belong. For those who think like Shelemay, truth is 'of the world, rather than 'for' the individual inquirer or community. Consequently she feels obliged to attend to the way things are in a real world which exists independently of her research or of the views or thoughts of others.

### **Eric Werner on Mendelssohn**

The issue of how musicologists do not have the freedom of the writer of creative fiction, and how they must be constrained by the relevant historical evidence, is poignantly raised in Jeffrey Sposato's examination of Eric Werner's writings on Mendelssohn.<sup>21</sup> Werner (1901–1988), a German musicologist who fled to America in 1938 to escape the Nazi regime, portrayed the composer as someone who had, despite superficial assimilation into German society, retained a conception of himself as essentially Jewish.

Sposato believes that the common post-war depiction of Mendelssohn – shared by Werner and others – as 'a man with a passion for his [Jewish] heritage [which] was strengthened by the severe episodes of oppression that he faced throughout his life' is little more than 'creative writing'.<sup>22</sup> He links this to the shadow of the Nuremberg laws which provided an unambiguous and inescapable categorization for Jews. Such laws did not recognize assimilation. Compensating for the denigration of Mendelssohn, who was effectively expunged from music history by Nazi musicologists, and converting the Nazi 'badge of

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<sup>21</sup> Jeffrey S. Sposato, 'Creative Writing: The [Self-] Identification of Mendelssohn as Jew', *The Musical Quarterly*, 82/1, (1998), 190–209. I am grateful to Dr Lorraine Byrne Bodley for bringing Werner's treatment of Mendelssohn to my attention.

<sup>22</sup> Sposato, 'Creative Writing', p. 204.

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shame' to a badge of honour, the composer was now seen as essentially Jewish.<sup>23</sup>

Sposato demonstrates that Werner was, to say the least, wayward in the manner in which he argued his case. To portray the composer as a victim in a hostile anti-Semitic environment Werner cites actual instances of insulting behaviour but exaggerates the degree of virulence involved.<sup>24</sup> He also imputes anti-Semitic motivation to the decision not to make Mendelssohn Director of the Berlin Singakademie, where this decision could quite plausibly be explained by other factors, such as the composer's youth and lack of experience compared to the appointee.<sup>25</sup>

However, the clearest example of bias is Werner's translation, from the German, of a letter written in London by the composer in July 1833 commenting on the Jewish Civil Disabilities Bill which had just passed the House of Commons (as in the case of the Catholic Relief Act passed four years previously, this was an ameliorative measure, benefiting the Jewish community in England by removing restrictions, including prohibitions on voting and on entry to public office). Sposato shows how this translation omits parts of the text of the original and interpolates elements not found in Mendelssohn's letter.<sup>26</sup> The omissions and interpolations are quite clearly intended 'to show the composer as emotionally involved in the event because of his self-identification as a Jew. A strict translation and analysis of the letter shows that Mendelssohn viewed the passing of the bill with cool detachment; there was 'no expression of Jewish pride, but rather amusement at the irony that five days after the Prussian government should issue an edict restricting the rights of Jews, the English Government should emancipate them'.<sup>27</sup>

There is something clearly wrong with the manner in which Werner dealt with the historical reality to which he should have been attending. Either carelessly or (which is more likely) deliberately, he misrepresented the facts of the matter. Werner's treatment of the

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<sup>23</sup> Sposato, 'Creative Writing', p. 192.

<sup>24</sup> Sposato, 'Creative Writing', pp. 193-94.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 192-93.

<sup>26</sup> Sposato, 'Creative Writing', pp. 194-204.

<sup>27</sup> Sposato, 'Creative Writing', p. 200.



Mendelssohn question certainly represents a complete abandonment of proper standards of scholarship.<sup>28</sup>

It is relevant here to mention what philosopher Susan Haack has written about scholarly inquiry. Haack takes it as a tautology that inquiry aims at the truth.<sup>29</sup> She contrasts ‘genuine inquiry’, carried out by those with intellectual integrity, with ‘pseudo inquiry’ which is motivated, not by a desire to arrive at the truth whatever that is, but to make a persuasive case for some proposition which is determined in advance of any careful scrutiny of evidence.<sup>30</sup>

By distorting the evidence Werner neglects attending to the way things are. However, there are other ways in which scholars do not pay appropriate attention to reality. By taking a narrow disciplinary view, salient facts, which arguably should not be ignored, may be left out of consideration.

As pointed out by Stephen Toulmin, historically, the development of disciplines necessitated a deliberate narrowing of the field of enquiry of their practitioners. The ensuing intellectual division of labour, which obliged those in a specific discipline ‘to focus *exclusively* on the things they knew best and did best’, resulted in a blinkered view.<sup>31</sup> As part of this historical process, abstract concepts, appropriate to each field of inquiry, were developed. While these concepts facilitated the achievement of certainty in specific disciplines, their use involved, in effect, a cultivated and deliberate shutting off from

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<sup>28</sup> In an editorial comment on the Sposato article, Leon Botstein accepts that what Werner did was ‘criminal’ (214). However he also warns against assuming an attitude of moral superiority (215). In the context where scholarship had been recruited to the service of Nazi ideology, and anti-Semitism had been given a pseudo-scientific gloss (214), he points out that Werner and other émigré intellectuals ‘never experienced anything approximating “normalcy”’ (218). Leon Botstein, ‘Mendelssohn and the Jews’, *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 82, No. 1, (Spring, 1998), 210-219.

<sup>29</sup> Susan Haack, *Manifesto of a Passionate Moderate: Unfashionable Essays* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1998) p.189.

<sup>30</sup> Susan Haack, *Manifesto of a Passionate Moderate*, p. 189. See also Frankfurt: ‘[...] higher levels of civilization must depend [...] on a conscientious respect for the importance of honesty and clarity in reporting the facts, and on a stubborn concern for accuracy in determining what the facts are.’ *On Truth*, p.16. For Frankfurt, a lack of deference or respect for the truth is facilitated by current views such as postmodernism and relativism. *On Truth*, pp. 17-20.

<sup>31</sup> Stephen Toulmin, *Return to Reason*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2001) p. 41.

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view, aspects of reality deemed to be outside the proper area of concern.<sup>32</sup> The adoption of a narrow perspective also excluded questions of ethics.<sup>33</sup> Taken to extremes, this tendency could relieve the scholar of any obligation of attending to the realities outside his own ivory tower. In this connection Northrop Frye sums up a widely held view of academics in the following way:

the disinterested pursuit of knowledge acquires, for its very virtues, the reputation of being unrelated to social realities. The intellectual, it is thought, lives in an over-simplified Euclidean world; his attitude to society is at best aloof, at worst irresponsible; his loyalties and enmities, when they exist, have the naïve ferocity of abstraction, a systematic preference of logical extremes to practical means.<sup>34</sup>

A desire to escape the restraints of a specific scholarly discipline, as such constraints are conceived at any particular time, need not be the same as a desire to retire to the world of fiction, and neither need it represent an unprincipled abandonment of all responsibilities. Indeed the opposite may be the case: dissatisfaction with the perceived limits of a discipline such as musicology may be an assumption of responsibility.

In his paper *Musicology and/as Social Concern: Imagining the Relevant Musicologist*<sup>35</sup> Ralph P. Locke reports on various fears raised on the electronic discussion list of the American Musicological Society about the social relevance of the discipline. Amongst these qualms is a worry about how musicology might 'help to draw attention to or even in some way alleviate one or another of the many seemingly intractable

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<sup>32</sup> Toulmin, *Return to Reason*, p. 147.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>34</sup> Northrop Frye, 'The Knowledge of Good and Evil', in *The Morality of Scholarship*, ed. by Max Black (New York: Cornell University Press, 1967), p. 9. See also Ogden Nash's verse, *The Purist*, which nicely lampoons a type of disengaged objectivity: I give you now Professor 'Twist,/ A conscientious scientist./ Trustees exclaimed, "He never bungles!"/ And sent him off to distant jungles./ Camped on a tropic riverside,/ One day he missed his loving bride./ She had, the guide informed him later./ Been eaten by an alligator./ Professor Twist could not but smile./ "You mean," he said, "a crocodile". Ogden Nash, *Candy is Dandy: The Best of Ogden Nash* (Guildford: Methuen, 1983), p. 145.

<sup>35</sup> Ralph P. Locke, 'Musicology and/as Social Concern: Imagining the Relevant Musicologist', *Rethinking Music*, ed. by Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 499.

national and world problems'. Such unease is surely misconceived: the activities of musicologists, as such, would seem to offer little in the way of remedies for the relevant evils. However, that is not to say that it is always appropriate for a musicologist to take a narrow disciplinary view.

### Feld on Schizophonic mimesis

When music, regarded purely as sound structured in a specific way, is perceived as a disembodied reality, the ramifications, in the wider human context, of musical composition, performance, analysis, and scholarship may remain unacknowledged. Such disciplinary inattention may be a productive stance, but it may also be inappropriate, and a denial of responsibility. In his paper *Pygmy Pop. A Genealogy of Schizophonic Mimesis* Steven Feld does not hesitate to engage with moral considerations.<sup>36</sup> Feld's examination of particular commercial practices should be seen in the context of the structural economic differences which exist in today's globalized world, with intellectual property laws shaped by the most powerful actors on the world stage, and with some multi-national companies almost on a par with, or more powerful than, some sovereign states.<sup>37</sup>

Feld has coined the term *schizophonic mimesis* to describe the practice whereby, by means of sound recording, music is torn from its cultural context and put to uses not envisaged by its creators.<sup>38</sup> In this regard he instances the use of the music of the Ba-Benzélé pygmy tribe of the Central African Republic, which has found its way, via Herbie Hancock's *Watermelon Man*, into the *Sanctuary* track of the Madonna CD *Bedtime Stories*.<sup>39</sup>

Feld refers to a 1970 interview in which Chicago-born Hancock, replying to a question on whether he had ever been to Africa, responds, 'Naw. Africa is where I am. Africa is here'.<sup>40</sup> By so responding, Hancock

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<sup>36</sup> Steven Feld, 'Pygmy POP. A Genealogy of Schizophonic Mimesis', *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, 28 (1996), 1-35. Hereafter referred to as Feld, 'Pygmy POP'.

<sup>37</sup> Manfred B. Steger, *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 48-51. The World Trade Organization TRIPS Agreement of 1994 on intellectual property rights has been described as 'the most effective vehicle of Western imperialism in history'. Marci A Hamilton, 'The TRIPS Agreement: Imperialistic, Outdated, and Overprotective', p. 243.

<sup>38</sup> Feld, 'Pygmy POP', p. 13.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

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seems to be assuming a generic 'African' identity, distinct from the specific national identity he gained by virtue of his birth, and also distinct from the specific ethnic identity of the tribe whose music he had appropriated. Such thinking seems to provide a basis for the appropriation of the music in question by reference to the reciprocal give-and-take relationships characteristic of families (for Hancock the use of the music was a 'brothers kind of thing').<sup>41</sup> However, as pointed out by Feld, such rhetoric, made more acceptable by viewing the schizophrenic practices as 'purely musical forms of encounter', masks the asymmetric power and economic differences which characterize the relationships between the Western music industry and Western musicians, the takers, on the one hand; and the peoples whose music is appropriated, those taken-from (not givers) on the other.<sup>42</sup>

Feld suggests that the ethnomusicologists who first researched the music for academic purposes must take some responsibility for the use and abuse which their initiatives have facilitated:

Ethnomusicologists and anthropologists could once claim innocence about the activities of recording and marketing what was variously called tribal, ethnic, folk, or traditional music. Now there is little doubt that this whole body of work, since the time of the invention of the phonograph, has been central to complex representations and commodity flows that are neither ideologically neutral, unfailingly positive, or particularly equitable.<sup>43</sup>

The *hindewhu* music which was used by Hancock and Madonna is characterised by alternation between multi-pitched vocal sounds and single pitched sounds produced by the vocalist on a papaya stem whistle.<sup>44</sup> Feld deplores the 'caricature' of the original music contained in 'pygmy pop' such as the Madonna track, and the richness and sophistication of the music which is referenced:

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<sup>41</sup> Feld, 'Pygmy POP', p. 6.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 15, 23.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

The documentary records emphasize a vast repertory of musical forms and performance styles, including complex and original polyphonic and polyrhythmic practices. Yet what of this diverse musical invention forms the basis for its global pop representation? In the most popular instances it is a singly untexted vocalization or falsetto yodel, often hunting cries rather than songs or musical pieces. This is the sonic cartoon of the diminutive person, the simple, intuitively vocal and essentially non-linguistic child.<sup>45</sup>

Although some of the commercial organizations which had profited from the use of the music indicated a concern for the peoples whose music was being used, and expressed an intention to assign funds for the benefit of the peoples in question, Feld's inquiries seemed to suggest that this was merely lip service, and that the implicit promise was not, in fact, honoured.<sup>46</sup>

Differences between the developed and underdeveloped economies cast a shadow even on the world of academia. And scholarship can be commandeered for ideological purposes in the maintenance of such differences. In a paper written some forty years ago, Conor Cruise O'Brien remarked on how the agenda of some Western scholars seemed to be subordinated to the requirements of global capitalism and how at least some works of scholarship manifested a 'consistently selective myopia' which rendered invisible how Western capitalist domination worked against the interests of populations in Asia and Africa.<sup>47</sup> It is not at all clear that the situation has changed radically over the four decades since O'Brien produced his analysis. In this context it is interesting to see that Feld has not ignored the relevant issues and has adverted to global economic and power disparities, and has drawn out the relevance of this for the practice of musicology.

### **Taruskin and Fink on *The Death of Klinghoffer***

Global realities also form the backdrop to a controversy which is the subject of my next example. At times of perceived national crisis, a

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<sup>45</sup> Feld, 'Pygmy POP', pp. 26-27.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>47</sup> Conor Cruise O'Brien, 'Politics and the Morality of Scholarship', in *The Morality of Scholarship*, ed. by Max Black (New York: Cornell University Press, 1967), pp. 59-74 (p. 72).

collective 'groupthink' may emerge which pervades even the realm of scholarship. At such times the values of disinterested inquiry, objectivity, and a sole concern for truth may be seen by some, including some members of the scholarly community, as luxuries which cannot be afforded until the emergency is resolved. And of course, in the case of a crisis such as the 'War on Terror', a resolution may be assumed not to be achievable in the foreseeable future.

Questions of attention and inattention arise in the conflicting responses of two musicologists, Richard Taruskin and Robert Fink, to the opera *The Death of Klinghoffer* by John Adams (libretto by Alice Goodman).<sup>48</sup> The former emphasizes the necessity, as he saw it, to 'focus resolutely on the [terrorist] acts'<sup>49</sup> which constitute the historical context of the work, while the latter suggests that Taruskin was, in relation to the work, suffering from 'critical deafness'.<sup>50</sup>

In an article published on 9 December 2001 in *The New York Times*,<sup>51</sup> Taruskin commented favourably on the cancellation, by the Boston Symphony Orchestra, of a performance of excerpts from *Klinghoffer*. The opera, which was based on the 1985 hijacking of the cruise ship *Achille Lauro* by Palestinian terrorists and the subsequent assassination of one of the passengers, the Jewish wheelchair-bound Leon Klinghoffer, had attracted considerable negative publicity on account of what was seen by some as its bias in favour of the Palestinian hijackers. Using as a hypothetical analogy the inappropriateness of 'shov[ing] Wagner in the faces of Holocaust survivors in Israel',<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Richard Taruskin, 'Music's Dangers and the Case for Control', *The New York Times*, 9 December, 2001, <<http://nytimes.com>> [Accessed 26 July, 2008], Robert Fink, 'Klinghoffer in Brooklyn Heights', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, 17/2 (2005), 173-213.

<sup>49</sup> This quotation from Taruskin's article is provided in Fink, 'Klinghoffer in Brooklyn Heights', p. 176, although it is not included in the article on the web.

<sup>50</sup> Fink, *Klinghoffer in Brooklyn Heights*, p. 181.

<sup>51</sup> Taruskin, 'Music's Dangers and the Case for Control'.

<sup>52</sup> Almost certainly Taruskin is here referring to the performance in Jerusalem, under conductor Daniel Barenboim, of the Prelude from *Tristan und Isolde* on 7 July 2001. This performance, which broke the convention banning live performances of Wagner's music in the state of Israel, caused a storm of outrage. Barenboim makes a distinction between Wagner's anti-Semitism ('monstrous and despicable'), and Wagner's music (Daniel Barenboim and Edward Said, *Parallels and Paradoxes: Explorations in Music and Society* (London: Bloomsbury, 2002). pp. 79-110 and pp. 175-184). In any event, Taruskin's analogy is less than apposite: Wagner was a rabid anti-Semite, and

Taruskin contends that it is gratuitous to offend ‘people stunned by previously unimaginable horrors’ with works like the Adams opera.<sup>53</sup>

The ‘previously unimaginable horrors’ referred to are clearly the events of 11 September 2001, when Al Qaeda terrorists caused the destruction of the World Trade Center in New York, with loss of life running into thousands. Taruskin refers to that event explicitly twice, and suggests that the opera manifests ‘reprehensible contempt for the real-life victims’ of the atrocity. He does not call for a ban on the work, but suggests that musicians, such as members of the Boston Symphony, act responsibly by refusing to perform it.<sup>54</sup>

Here we see a musicologist prepared to widen his perspective to include more than just the music itself. However this is achieved in a somewhat selective manner. The easy invocation of the ‘War on Terror’ is questionable:<sup>55</sup> the currency of that particular shibboleth has had the effect of drawing attention away from problematic realities. By using it Taruskin evokes a stark Manichean dichotomy between two global forces: on the one hand there are ‘civilized states’, who pursue legitimate wars with unfortunate but unintended, and therefore – so the argument goes – morally permissible, ‘collateral damage’<sup>56</sup> involving citizens; on the other hand, there are terrorists whose actions in destroying life are abominable.

In a careful and detailed analysis of the opera, Robert Fink takes issue with Taruskin’s analysis. Rejecting the contention that the Jewish characters are demeaned, Fink suggests that this perception is based on a faulty interpretation of a scene, featuring the fictional Jewish family of the Rumors, which was included in the first performance of

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the fact that his music was appropriated by the Nazis created painful associations for those who had survived the Nazi persecution. On the other hand there is no evidence of anti-Semitism on the part of Adams or Goodman – the librettist was of Jewish extraction – and Taruskin cannot use the analogy in support of his thesis of anti-Semitic bias, as that contention is the very point at issue. I am grateful to Dr Mark Fitzgerald for bringing this issue to my notice.

<sup>53</sup> Taruskin, ‘Music’s Dangers’.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> In a quotation from Taruskin’s article in Fink, ‘*Klinghoffer* in Brooklyn Heights’, p. 176, there is explicit reference to the need to defeat terrorism. The paragraph in which this reference is made is omitted from the edited web article.

<sup>56</sup> A convenient euphemism which tends to veil the grisly realities of modern warfare.

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the opera but subsequently deleted. According to Fink, the Rumors are ‘admirably, engagingly funny and self-aware, in their own *haimish* [Yiddish for ‘homey’ or ‘folksy’] way’.<sup>57</sup>

Fink provides an alternative understanding of the contrast between the heroic (exemplified in the opera by the Palestinians) and the domestic (exemplified by the two Jewish families, the Rumors and the eponymous Klinghoffers). In effect Fink argues cogently that the distinction between the heroic and the domestic should not be identified with a distinction between the noble and the ignoble.<sup>58</sup> And this stance is entirely plausible. In her examination of the topic, Lucy Hughes-Hallett reminds us of the problematic nature of heroism. Among the heroes included in her survey are Alcibiades (‘an arrogant libertine and a turncoat several times over’), El Cid (‘a predatory warlord’), Wallenstein (‘a profiteer’), and Drake (‘a pirate and a terrorist’). Clearly heroism is not to be equated with virtue or moral worth.<sup>59</sup>

Both critics deal with the music in the opera. Taruskin points out that ‘numinous’ tones (‘long, quiet drawn-out tones in the highest violin register’) accompany almost all of the utterances of the Palestinians; that this is a musical analogue to a halo in a painting; and that such musical representation is absent, apart from one instance after Klinghoffer’s death, in the case of music accompanying utterances of the victims.<sup>60</sup> Rink suggests that ‘Taruskin’s critical deafness’ has left him unaware of similar characteristics in several scenes in which the same kind of numinous music accompanies statements by Jews: the soft lamentation in the Chorus of Exiled Palestinians in the Prologue; the tender moment in Act II where Leon Klinghoffer attempts to distract his

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<sup>57</sup> Fink, ‘*Klinghoffer* in Brooklyn Heights’, p. 186.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 201-07.

<sup>59</sup> Lucy Hughes-Hallett, *Heroes: Saviours, Traitors, and Supermen* (London: Fourth Estate, 2004), p. 3. For the relationship between notions of heroism, the cult of sacrificial death, and the rejection of Western values, see Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit, *Occidentalism: A Short History of Anti-Westernism* (London: Atlantic Books, 2004), Chapter 3, ‘Heroes and Merchants’, pp. 49-73. Buruma and Margalit point out the contrast between the cult of sacrificial death, and the recognition, ‘as witnessed by seventeenth-century Dutch painting and English novels [that] the unexceptional everyday life has dignity too and should be nurtured, not scorned.’ p. 71.

<sup>60</sup> Taruskin, ‘Music’s Dangers’.



wife from their terrible predicament; and Marilyn Klinghoffer's lament in the final moments of the work.<sup>61</sup>

In the previous examples the realities which claimed attention were historical and biographical facts about composers, and the possible undesirable effects of scholarly activity on informants who provided evidence for ethnomusicologists; these realities were not purely musical; they did not primarily concern, in Kerman's phrase, 'the music itself'.<sup>62</sup> In the case of *The Death of Klinghoffer* both Taruskin and Fink do deal with 'the music itself'. Can the idea of attending to the way things apply to music ('objects of delight'), seen in isolation from the social realities in which it is embedded?<sup>63</sup> Frankfurt points out that evaluative judgments 'must depend on [...] statements about facts'.<sup>64</sup> The delight of the listener is subjective, but the objects which cause the delight, the musical works, are outside the mind of the perceiver, and these works have objective features which render them unsusceptible to a radically unconstrained subjective interpretative

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<sup>61</sup> Fink, 'Klinghoffer in Brooklyn Heights', pp. 177-81. According to Fink (p. 181) 'a decade-long pattern of journalistic reception' had the effect of drawing Taruskin's attention away from the philo-Semitic aspects of the opera.

<sup>62</sup> Kerman, *Musicology*, p. 18.

<sup>63</sup> Kerman had insisted, against the narrow positivism that he saw as dominant at the time, that 'Among the primary "facts" about pieces and repertoires of music (past and present) are their aesthetic qualities (past and present)'; he saw the primary focus of musicology as 'objects of delight'. Kerman, *Musicology*, pp. 18, 32 (Kerman took the phrase 'objects of delight' from Arthur Mendel).

<sup>64</sup> Frankfurt, *On Truth*, p. 29. The facts are physical facts. In philosophical terminology, aesthetics facts supervene on physical facts. Using the example of sculpture, Jaegwon Kim explains the concept of supervenience thus: Imagine a sculptor working on a statue [...] When the physical work is finished, his work is finished; there is no *further* work of 'attaching' desired aesthetic properties, say elegance and expressiveness, to the finished piece of stone. The aesthetic character of a sculpture is wholly fixed once the physical properties are fixed; that is, *aesthetic properties supervene on physical properties*. If a sculptor is unhappy with the aesthetic quality of his creation and wishes to improve it, he must get out his chisel and hammer and do more physical work on the stone; it is only by changing its physical character that its aesthetic character can be improved or otherwise altered. Jaegwon Kim, 'Supervenience, Emergence, Realization, Reduction', in *The Oxford Handbook of Metaphysics*, ed. by Michael J. Loux and Dean W. Zimmerman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 558 (Italics in original).

Applying this to music, we can say that the aesthetic qualities of a piece of music supervene on its sonic qualities.

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licence. So the significance of truth, and of the way things are, pervades musicology.

## Conclusion

Musicologists are engaged in inquiry; it is a tautology that inquiry aims at the truth.<sup>65</sup> It follows, as a matter of logic, that if she is to retain her scholarly status, the musicologist must be concerned with truth. Frankfurt makes explicit what a concern with truth would amount to in practice. It would mean:

finding satisfaction [...] in recognizing and in understanding significant truths that were previously unknown or obscure; being eager to protect, from distortion or discredit, our appreciation of those truths that we already possess; and, in general, being determined to encourage within society, insofar as we are able to do so, a vigorous and stable preference for true beliefs over ignorance, error, doubt, and misrepresentation.<sup>66</sup>

The examples that I have described demonstrate, in the field of musicology, degrees of attention and inattention to the way things are, and how musicologists can care for truth. For Gibbs, attending to the reality of Schubert's life is a precarious venture at best, and the words he uses seem to suggest - although this may not be his intention - that a retreat from fact to fiction is permissible. By contrast, Shelemay is acutely aware of the way things are for the informants who contributed to her research, and how their situation might be affected by dissemination of her findings. The case of Eric Werner illustrates that sham and fake reasoning can infect scholarship, and how evidence for a thesis can be manipulated so that the relevant realities are ignored. Feld's essay is the product of a scholar who, not paying undue deference to the limits implied by disciplinary boundaries, cares to comment on the global realities of the music business, and who is also critical of other scholars in his field for their myopia. The clash between Taruskin and Fink demonstrates how ideology and group-think may lead to a narrowing of vision with consequent ignoring of salient moral realities.

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<sup>65</sup> Haack, *Manifesto of a Passionate Moderate*, p. 189.

<sup>66</sup> Frankfurt, *On Truth*, pp. 96-97.

The importance of truth for the musicologist can be placed in a wider context of the importance of truth for all individuals. Frankfurt points out that truth has a profound significance which goes much further than mere practical utility: each person's sense of his own individuality can emerge only in the context of a real world, and recalcitrant truths about that world, independent of the self.<sup>67</sup> These considerations provide an explanation for the claim made by Bernard Williams, in his last major work *Truth and Truthfulness*, that 'to the extent that we lose a sense of the value of truth, we shall certainly lose something and may well lose everything'.<sup>68</sup>

## Acknowledgments

I am very grateful to Dr Lorraine Byrne Bodley and to Dr Mark Fitzgerald for reading and commenting on drafts of this article.

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<sup>67</sup> '[...] our recognition and understanding of our own identity arises out of, and depends integrally on, our appreciation of a reality that is definitively independent of ourselves. In other words, it arises out of and depends on our recognition that there are facts and truths over which we cannot hope to exercise direct or immediate control.' Frankfurt, *On Truth*, p. 100.

<sup>68</sup> Bernard Williams, *Truth and Truthfulness* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2002), p. 7.

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# **Benjamin Britten: art song, a synthesis of words and music – issues and approaches to text-setting**

**Paul Higgins**

The clarity of verbal expression evident throughout Benjamin Britten's (1913–1976) art songs serves to highlight the central role which the setting of pre-existing written poetic texts occupies in his compositional process and in the aesthetic appreciation of his interpretation. For Britten, text acts initially as a source of musical imagination, but it also provides the composer with a framework with which to express musically his selected, literary-based ideas.

To place Britten's contribution against the backdrop of an important musicological debate, it is necessary to clarify a number of key issues. Firstly, text-setting is often loosely perceived as the composition of music of a pre-existing written text, yet in Britten this approach has been expanded to incorporate the process whereby music and text are simultaneously generated. A good example of this is Britten's close collaboration with W.H. Auden in the song cycle *Our Hunting Fathers* op.8 (1936),<sup>1</sup> in which Auden not only wrote two poems but also selected and modernised three other poems, specifically for Britten to set to music. Secondly, that text-setting is a broader concern than the activity of mere text underlay and is significant to all text-based vocal music: its study also involves syntactic and semantic considerations. Syntactic concerns make reference to the musical response of the work to the structure of the source text, at both the level of overall form, and sentence and word patterns. Semantic questions relate to the response of music to the ideas and underlying meaning contained in the text.<sup>2</sup> The practice of word-painting is primarily, yet not exclusively, concerned with syntactic issues while tone or mood painting, again not solely but primarily, engages with semantic issues.

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<sup>1</sup> Britten: *Our Hunting Fathers* op.8 (London: Boosey and Hawkes, 1936).

<sup>2</sup> Jonathan King, 'Text-setting', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. by Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, 29 vols (London: Macmillan, 2001), xxv, 319–20.

## Text setting

Bearing in mind such current musicological criticism this chapter seeks to identify Britten's syntactic and semantic approaches to text-setting and to consider the relative significance of the specific elements he employs in his setting of words to music.<sup>3</sup> Firstly, this will involve an exposition of specific theoretical issues of vocal music as highlighted by Lawrence Rosenwald in his 1993 article 'Theory, Text-Setting, and performance' published in *The Journal of Musicology*.<sup>4</sup> I then propose the application, to Britten's art song repertory, of the model developed by Peter Stacey in his 1989 article: 'Towards the analysis of the relationship of music and text in contemporary composition.'<sup>5</sup> This later article is contained in a special edition of *Contemporary Music Review*, entitled 'Music and Text', which is devoted exclusively to issues of text-setting and which represents a significant single contribution to the study of texted music. This publication is, in fact, dedicated to the memory of Benjamin Britten, an indication of a general acceptance of the relative significance of these issues to his songs and other vocal compositions. Examples from my own engagement with Britten's songs will then support the application of Rosenwald's theoretical and Stacey's analytical approaches and will serve as a general model for text-setting.

This chapter attempts to identify aspects of Britten's compositional practices and approaches which are evident in his setting of selected texts. Though not my focus in this chapter I am, however, cognisant of the significant insights to be gained from the specific application to art song, of musicological and other more widely held theories of texted music, many of which have their origins in such

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<sup>3</sup> See also: David Nicholls, 'Narrative theory as an analytical tool in the study of popular music texts', *Music and Letters*, 88/2 (2007), 297–315, and Donald Ivey, *Song: Anatomy, Imagery, and Style* (New York: The Free Press, 1970), pp. 232–52.

<sup>4</sup> Lawrence Rosenwald, 'Theory, Text-Setting, and Performance', *The Journal of Musicology*, 11/1 (1993), 52–65. Hereafter referred to as Rosenwald, 'Theory, Text-Setting, and Performance'.

<sup>5</sup> Peter F. Stacey, 'Towards the analysis of the relationship of music and text in contemporary composition', *Contemporary Music Review*, 5 (1989), 9–37. Hereafter referred to as Stacey, 'Towards the analysis of the relationship of music and text in contemporary composition'.

literary studies as: narrativity,<sup>6</sup> as espoused by Jean-Jaques Nattiez (1990)<sup>7</sup> and Lawrence Kramer (1990)<sup>8</sup>; the hermeneutics<sup>9</sup> models of Carl Dahlhaus (1977)<sup>10</sup> and Joseph Kerman (1985)<sup>11</sup>; and semiotics<sup>12</sup> in the work of Nattiez (1989) and Kofi Agawu (1991).

### **Lawrence Rosenwald's specific text setting concerns**

Rosenwald has been taken as a starting point for this research as he identifies issues that apply specifically to art song as a literary based or inspired musical genre. He is concerned at the propriety of the application of a body of musical theory and analysis, to song, which has been developed 'exclusively or at any rate normatively on a model of text-less music'.<sup>13</sup> He considers that one approach undertaken by music theorists has been to develop a 'specifically musical language [...] to describe music that does not need to translate musical data into, say psychological data'.<sup>14</sup> This approach contributes to the belief that a musical work should be self-contained and that external references serve to diminish its aesthetic value. Yet, art song is by its very nature referential and its analysis cannot be approached in the same way as

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<sup>6</sup> For further discussion on narrativity see: Fred Everett Maus, 'Narratology, narrativity', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. by Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, 29 vols (London: Macmillan, 2001), xvii, 641–43.

<sup>7</sup> Jean-Jaques Nattiez, 'Can one speak about narrativity in music', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 115 (1990), 240–57.

<sup>8</sup> Lawrence Kramer, *Music and Poetry: The nineteenth century and after* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

<sup>9</sup> For a discussion on hermeneutics see also Ian D. Bent, 'Hermeneutics', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. by Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, 29 vols (London: Macmillan, 2001), xi, 418–26.

<sup>10</sup> Carl Dahlhaus, *Foundations of Music History*, trans. by J.B. Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, Ger. orig. 1977), pp. 71–84.

<sup>11</sup> Joseph Kerman, *Musicology* (London: Fontana, 1985).

<sup>12</sup> For further discussion on semiotics see: Naomi Cumming, 'Semiotics', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. by Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, 29 vols (London: Macmillan, 2001), xxiii, 66–69.

<sup>13</sup> Rosenwald, 'Theory, Text-Setting, and Performance', p. 53.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

instrumental or absolute music. Rosenwald goes so far as to say that it is now common for texted-music to be viewed as an 'anomaly' in musical analysis. He expects of any theory of music that it should be sufficiently general to consider text as well as music in addressing the 'poetic, formal, semantic and aesthetic complexities of a song'.<sup>15</sup>

In relation to texted music, Rosenwald also suggests that a rhythmic-centred analysis of this music may prove more insightful than an exclusively harmony-centred approach as there is no 'evident way to move from terms of harmony to terms pertinent to the text, whereas the movement from terms of musical rhythm to terms of textual rhythm is relatively easy'.<sup>16</sup> This suggestion does highlight the particular difficulties in analysing vocal music, but the weakness of this argument stems from the presumption that composers will in general respond in detail to the actual source text. This is not always the case however: composers may use the text as catalyst only, as with Arnold Schoenberg who argues that the initial impact of the opening words of a poem provide sufficient inspiration for song composition.<sup>17</sup>

Rosenwald notes the criticism made by Joseph Kerman<sup>18</sup> of Heinrich Schenker's failure to examine 'the surface features of the music' in his analysis of Robert Schumann's 'Aus meinen Tränen sprießen'.<sup>19</sup> Rosenwald takes this a step further in claiming that Schenker ignores 'in particular such surface features of the music [which] lend themselves to being explained by reference to the semantic aspects of the text'.<sup>20</sup> I would go even further than Rosenwald and say that it is essential to consider in song how the composer's musical decisions are made in relation to the text's poetic form and structure. This aspect is of particular relevance in an evaluation of Britten's art

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<sup>15</sup> Rosenwald, 'Theory, Text-Setting, and Performance', p. 53.

<sup>16</sup> Rosenwald, 'Theory, Text-Setting, and Performance', p. 58.

<sup>17</sup> Arnold Schoenberg, 'The relationship to the text', *Style and Idea*, ed. by Leonard Stein (London: Faber, 1975), pp. 141–45, cited in *Contemporary Music review: Music and Text*, 5 (1989), iv.

<sup>18</sup> Joseph Kerman, 'How we got into analysis and how to get out', *Critical Inquiry*, 7 (1980), 311–31, cited in Rosenwald, 'Theory, Text-Setting, and Performance', p. 55.

<sup>19</sup> Rosenwald, 'Theory, Text-Setting, and Performance', p. 55.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

song. Examples of this are evident in his adherence to the formal structures and versification, of the source poetry of his song-cycle *The Holy Sonnets of John Donne* op.35 (1945)<sup>21</sup> as highlighted by Barbara Docherty (1989),<sup>22</sup> when compared with the freer structural treatment of his later cycle, *The Songs and Proverbs of William Blake* op.74 (1965).<sup>23</sup> This relative formal treatment of structure, highlighted at the level of the work's title, may be considered as one of Britten's personal responses to poetic genre.

### **Peter Stacey's approach to text-setting**

Peter Stacey's article goes some way to addressing the deficiencies as set out by Rosenwald, in relation to the analysis of song. Stacey commences with a succinct overview of the historical development of theoretical approaches to text-setting, paying particular attention to changing attitudes to textual primacy, and the mimetic relationship of music and text. This development can be characterized by a continual relative shift from low-level word-painting to higher-level mood representation.<sup>24</sup> Britten's art song output occupies a relatively stable and conservative position, in terms of Stacey's historical development, when compared to the 'explosion of activity and innovation in the field of vocal music' in the mid-twentieth century, in which tonal experimentation is widespread and the expansion of vocal techniques are evident in works such as Berg's opera *Lulu* (1937).<sup>25</sup>

The remainder of this chapter will focus on my selective summarised exploration of Stacey's analytical method for discussing vocal music, which has a poetic or prose source and my application of

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<sup>21</sup> Britten: *The Holy Sonnets of John Donne* op.35 (London: Boosey and Hawkes, 1946).

<sup>22</sup> Barbara Docherty, 'Syllogism and symbol: Britten, Tippett and English Text', *Contemporary Music Review*, 5 (1989), 37–63 (p. 37).

<sup>23</sup> Britten: *Songs and Proverbs of William Blake* op.74 (London: Faber and Faber, 1965).

<sup>24</sup> Stacey, 'Towards the analysis of the relationship of music and text in contemporary composition', pp. 9–16.

<sup>25</sup> Stacey, 'Towards the analysis of the relationship of music and text in contemporary composition', p. 14.

this theory to Britten's approach to art song (see table 1. for a summary of Stacey's analysis headings).

**Table 1. Peter Stacey: procedures for examining music based upon poetic or prose texts<sup>26</sup>**

1. The Text
2. The Condition of the Text
3. The Vocal Style
4. The Intelligibility of the Text
5. The Techniques of Relating Music and Text
- Direct Mimesis
- Displaced Mimesis
- Non-mimetic Relationship
- Arbitrary Association
- Synthetic Relationship
- Anti-contextual Relationship
6. The relative Status of the Media

Part of the attraction of Stacey's approach to the consideration of the relationship between music and its source text, poetry and prose in the case of Britten's art songs, is his identification of the separate aspects and procedures of this analysis. Each constituent element may be assessed individually while also contributing to a more complete evidence-based appreciation of the response of song to text. It should also be noted that there is significant overlap between many of the categories; for example, the prescribed vocal style will impact upon an

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<sup>26</sup> Stacey, 'Towards the analysis of the relationship of music and text in contemporary composition', p. 20.

assessment of the intelligibility of the source text and thereby directly effect an evaluation of the relative primacy of music or text. It is necessary, for the purpose of clarity, therefore, to first explain the meaning which Stacey attributes to each procedure as summarised in table 1.

### **1. The text**

Consideration of the text involves an assessment of the following: firstly, the meaning of the text including a review of the symbolic use of ideas and imagery; secondly, the poetic form of the text which may vary from conventional forms of poetic versification to free form; and finally consideration of the sound of the text. This last element also takes into account the innate rhythmic musical character of words, their metre and word stress patterns, and also identifies and phrases with phonic attributes, such as assonance and onomatopoeia. The identification of these elements in the source text enables one to consider the relative extent of their corresponding representation in the final musical work.

### **2. Condition of the text**

This aspect assesses the composer's treatment of textual detail. For a song to be in what Stacey defines as 'prime condition', all original formal and structural detail should be intact.<sup>27</sup> A 'fragmented condition' applies where either high-level structural aspects are removed or where 'lower-level' sentences and words are altered or repeated, often for musical reasons. Partial fragmentation arises most frequently in Britten's songs; he does however tend to respect the integrity of the poetic source, but not to the extent of Hugo Wolf's reverence of the original poetic form in works such as his 53 *Mörike Lieder* (1888).<sup>28</sup> Again, this aspect of evaluation reveals the relative importance of the structure of the poem in shaping Britten's art song.

### **3. Vocal style**

The variation in styles available to a composer range from lexically- to musically-dominated vocal styles in which 'speech, music and gesture'

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<sup>27</sup> Stacey, 'Towards the analysis of the relationship of music and text in contemporary composition', p. 23.

<sup>28</sup> Hugo Wolf: *The Complete Mörike Songs*, ed. by Stanley Applebaum (New York: Dover Publications, 1982).

may be combined.<sup>29</sup> In practice this extends from recitation in melodrama, through the *Sprechgesang* of Schoenberg, Berg and others, to conventional syllabic and melismatic singing. In general Britten's art-song vocal style is to mix syllabic and melismatic singing in a declamatory manner. The identification of the selected vocal style will allow an assessment of the extent of its response in the music of the text set.

#### 4. Intelligibility of the text

This aspect of Stacey's model considers whether the work is audible and can be readily understood. Articulation may be clear, over-articulated or under-articulated. At all times Britten intends his song texts to be clearly audible and intelligible, thereby emphasizing the direct nature of the relationship of these songs to their poetic source. In each of his foreign language settings Britten provides an English language translation in the score for performers and in the concert programme notes for his audience. An example of this is the performance translation, commissioned by Britten and provided by Elizabeth Mayer and Peter Pears, for the *Sechs Hölderlin Fragmente* op.61 (1958),<sup>30</sup> which reveals the importance Britten places in providing a translation of these settings of the original German poems even though recognised translations, such as Michael Hamburger's, were readily available. The following table shows the original Hölderlin German text of 'Die Heimat', the third song from *Sechs Hölderlin Fragmente* op.61 (1958) (A), together with Hamburger's poetic translation (B) and the Mayer's and Pears' performance translation (C).

**Table 2 (A). Friedrich Hölderlin: 'Die Heimat'**<sup>31</sup>

Froh kehrt der Schiffer heim an den stillen Strom  
Von fernen Inseln, wo er geerntet hat.  
Wohl möchte auch ich zur Heimat wieder;  
Aber was hab' ich, wie Leid, geerntet?

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<sup>29</sup> Stacey, 'Towards the analysis of the relationship of music and text in contemporary composition', p. 21.

<sup>30</sup> Britten: *Sechs Hölderlin Fragmente* op.61 (London: Boosey and Hawkes, 1962).

<sup>31</sup> Hölderlin, *Hölderlin: His Poems*, ed. and trans. by Michael Hamburger (London: Harvill Press, 1952), p. 104.



Ihr holden Ufer, die ihr mich auferzogt,  
 Stillt ihr der Liebe Leiden? Ach gebt ihr mir,  
 Ihr Wälder meiner Kindheit! Wann ich  
 Komme, die Ruhe noch einmal weider?

**Table 2 (B). ‘Home’: trans. by Michael Hamburger<sup>32</sup>**

To quiet waters homewards the boatman turns  
 From distant islands, where he has harvested;  
 I too would gladly now turn homewards;  
 But is now sorrow my only harvest

O blissful shores that reared me and sheltered me,  
 Do you relieve the sufferings love inflicts,  
 O forests of my childhood, will you  
 Give me back peace, when I come to seek it?

**Table 2 (C). ‘Home’: trans. by Elizabeth Mayer and Peter Pears<sup>33</sup>**

With joy the fisher steers into the quiet port  
 From distant islands, where he has harvested.  
 So too would I be turning homewards;  
 Ah, but what have I, save grief, for harvest?

Ye blessed shores, the guardians of my youth,  
 Can you not ease my longing? Then give me back,  
 You forests of my childhood, at my  
 Coming, that peace which once you gave me!

**5. Techniques of relating music and text**

This step in Stacey’s analysis identifies the types of relationships which exist between music and source text, being: (i) direct mimesis (ii) displaced mimesis (iii) non-mimetic relationship (iv) arbitrary association (v) synthetic relationship (vi) anti-contextual relationship. I

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<sup>32</sup> Hölderlin, *Hölderlin: His Poems*, ed. and trans. by Michael Hamburger (London: Harvill Press, 1952), p. 105.

<sup>33</sup> Britten: *Sechs Hölderlin Fragmente* op.61 (London: Boosey and Hawkes, 1962), iii.

will firstly clarify the meaning assigned, by Stacey, to these terms and later identify examples which are evident in the chosen Britten setting. The first three of these aspects relate to the form and degree of the imitative gesture evident in the music.

Direct mimesis arises when music audibly imitates any subject, idea, image or tone contained in the text. If the mimesis relates to the overall tone or mood of the text it is termed 'high-level', while if it is localised and refers to a single word or phrase it is termed 'low-level'. Rosenwald also makes use of a similar distinction but cautions on the dismissal of word-painting as superficial imitation as it may serve a dual purpose, whereby it also contributes to the creation of the mood of the work.<sup>34</sup>

Displaced mimesis occurs when sound elements, which derive from the text, are used, but the linkage is no longer immediately audible.

A non-mimetic relationship may arise in a composition in which the composer does not intend any imitation of text but the listener constructs a chance connection.

Arbitrary association occurs not by an imitation of the text in the music but rather is created through the repetition of a musical feature or motif which then becomes associated with a word, phrase or idea.

In a synthetic relationship the text and music are so closely related that a synthesis arises. Stacey cites the conjunction of text and music in 'Concrete Poetry and text-sound composition' as examples of this aspect of relationship, the former providing a typographical interpretation.<sup>35</sup>

Anti-contextual relationship occurs when music is composed which deliberately contrasts with, or apparently contradicts, the source text.

## **6. The relative status of the media**

The balancing of both the textual and musical media utilized may be identified as having 'textual primacy', 'musical primacy' or oscillating

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<sup>34</sup> Rosenwald, 'Theory, Text-Setting, and Performance', p. 56.

<sup>35</sup> Stacey, 'Towards the analysis of the relationship of music and text in contemporary composition', p. 22.

between the two. Philip Rupprecht's view that it is 'Britten's tendency to place the burden of musical expression in the voice line itself, and not in the accompaniment' provides a very clear pointer as to Britten's preferences.<sup>36</sup> The experience of listening to a song will lead to an overall general impression of the dominance of text or music but throughout the duration of the performance the relative shift of primacy is likely to be in constant dialogue. This evaluation may differ in response to the subtlety of a specific performance experience of individual interpretations, so that an assessment of relative primacy of the same song sung by Pears and Britten<sup>37</sup> differs for that of say Robert Tear and Philip Ledger<sup>38</sup> or Anthony Rolfe Johnson and Graham Johnson.<sup>39</sup>

### **An application of Stacey's method to an art song by Britten**

For the purpose of this applied analysis the sixth and final song, entitled 'Die Linien des Lebens' (The Lines of Life) has been selected from the song cycle *Sechs Hölderlin Fragmente* op.61 (1958).<sup>40</sup> The following analysis utilizes the categories as identified by Stacey in his approach to text-setting (as seen in table no. 1.):

1. The poetic text concerns a retrospective view of life which draws on images of nature, such as rivers and mountains, as symbolic representations of the progression of life's journey. Britten appropriately selects this complete poetic fragment from the poet's later period of mental illness. This poem takes a traditional form of two phrases each in two rhyming couplets ending with the assonances *verschieden*, *Grenzen*, *ergänzen*, and *Frieden*.

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<sup>36</sup> Philip Rupprecht, *Britten's Musical Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 2.

<sup>37</sup> Britten, *Winter Words* op.52, Peter Pears (T), Benjamin Britten (pf) (CD Decca 476–849, 2006 [1956]).

<sup>38</sup> Britten, *Winter Words* op.52, Robert Tear (T), Philip Ledger (pf) (CD EMI 73997, 2000 [1973]).

<sup>39</sup> Britten, *Winter Words* op.52, Anthony Rolfe Johnson (T), Graham Johnson (pf) (CD Hyperion 55067, 2001 [1985]).

<sup>40</sup> Britten: 'Die Linien des Lebens' (London: Boosey and Hawkes, 1962), pp. 20–21.

2. The poem is in 'prime condition' in this setting and there are no alterations or additional repetitions of the text (see table no.1 and example no.1).

3. The vocal style is almost exclusively slow syllabic-minim movement with the exception of the additional passing notes at the end of each second phrase highlighting the repeated sound quality of the text *Grenzen* and *Frieden* (see example 1). There is a trance-like quality in the voice and the limited tessitura of the first and third phrases contrast with the expanded ranges of the second and final phrase.

4. With regard to intelligibility of the text, the poem is markedly audible and can be understood at all times. Britten's concern for the provision of an English language translation has already been noted above.

5. In relation to the techniques of relating music and text, there is an abundance of direct mimesis in this Britten song. The categorization of high and low-level mimetic relationships is, however, problematic as much of the word-painting contained in this song also contributes to presentation of the overall poetic meaning. High-level imitation is evident in both the canonic piano and the vocal line (bar 3) in which the introductory piano motif is augmented in the vocal line, these entries are a direct musical response to the text 'Die Linien des Lebens' (The lines of Life), and also in the first incidence of four-part texture on the words 'Mit Harmonien' (with harmony). Low-level direct imitation arises in the piano line's depiction of a meandering river or path (bars 7-9) and the ascent and descent of the subsequent phrase which has its source in the text 'Berge Grenzen' (Mountain ranges) (see example no.1). In fact this song could be considered a study in direct mimesis.

One might consider that the first alteration from the opening repeated canonic phrase, at the word *verschieden* ('different'), to be an example of non-mimetic relationship whereby the initial musical line only starts to change or differ on the word 'different'. However, as this is almost certainly Britten's musical intention, this observation should be reclassified as an illustration of a direct high-level mimetic response.

Not all of the techniques as identified in Stacey's method will be present in any given musical setting and I have not identified displaced mimesis, arbitrary associations or synthetic relations in this song.

## Example 1. Britten: 'Die Linien des Lebens'

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## Die Linien des Lebens

*Lines of Life*

Slow and solemn (*langsam und feierlich*) (♩ = 66) *pp*

Voice

Piano

*ppp*

(without Ped.)  
(ohne Ped.)

Die Each

Li - men des Le - bens sind ver - schie - den,  
line of life is diff - erent from an - o - ther;

Wie We - ge sind, und wie der Her - ge  
As ri - vers are, or like the moun - tain

*always pp*  
*(immer ppi)*

slow cresc  
(långsamt cresc.) 21

*pp*

Gren zen Was hier wir sind, kann  
 mu get ges What we are here is

slow cresc.  
(långsamt cresc.)

with Ped.  
(mit Ped.)

dort ein Gott er - gan - zen Mit *f*  
 there by God com - ple - ted. With

Har - mo - nien und ew - gem Lohn und Frie -  
 har - mo - ni - en re - ward and peace and ter -

den  
 mal

*ff* *poco dim* *f* *mf*

An anti-contextual relationship exists in the last line of the song when we hear Britten's dissonant piano accompaniment which is in stark contrast to the textual questioning of the value of earthly toil and that 'peace eternal' which is exclusive to the next life, the musical resolution of which is delayed until the piano postlude. This contrast between musical response and text takes on even greater importance given that this is the last song of this six song cycle and represents a clear appropriation by Britten of the poetic meaning — he has made his own of this poem.

6. The text may be considered to have primary status in this song. This is in spite of the structural importance of both the piano opening statement of the canon and the dynamic climax of the piano postlude, both of which are direct musical responses to the selected text.

### **A way forward**

This chapter highlights certain of the specific concerns which are particular to vocal genres including art song and reiterates the need for and relative absence of specific models for use in the analysis of texted music. My account of the application of Peter Stacey's analysis method to Britten's song '*Die Linien des Lebens*' in this chapter provides a useful framework for the assessment of the multifarious possibilities for text setting in song. Though developed primarily as a comparative model, it does, however, offer an insightful interpretation of art song, thereby providing an entry route into the nature of the relationship of music and text in this genre. Stacey does not claim that his approach amounts to a fully developed theoretical and analytic model, but it is, in my opinion, an important step in achieving that end. A more complete understanding of the function of the extra-musical nature of text on the musical activity of text setting will enhance our appreciation of art song.

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# **Music of a lesser genre? Schubert's development and transformation of the piano duet medium**

**Barbara Strahan**

## **Prelude**

Schubert's gift for transforming smaller genres into greater ones is not unique to his Lieder: the formal, stylistic and aesthetic innovations in Schubert's piano duets reveal an authentic development of this genre. Schubert's four-hand piano repertoire enjoyed the same performance setting as his songs, but in reception history have not enjoyed the same level of popularity. This chapter therefore seeks to examine why the duets have been misrepresented in scholarship and criticism, and also how Schubert's contribution differed radically to that of his predecessors. Firstly, the significance of the social milieu of the early nineteenth century in cultivating the duets shall be considered as also the many negative associations accompanying this musical setting. Key issues of reception history, which have contributed to the neglect of Schubert's piano duets within Schubert scholarship, will also be addressed. Following an exploration as to why these works have been neglected within scholarship, the history of the duet genre will be considered in order to place Schubert's contribution in a broader context. Finally, Schubert's own contribution will be assessed, alongside how traditional musicological approaches to the duets have begun to be overturned.

## **Cultural contexts: the Viennese salon**

In her discussion on Viennese salon music during the nineteenth century, Alice Hanson acknowledges how musical activity during this era moved away from the support of aristocratic patrons to the salons of the affluent middle classes.<sup>1</sup> These prosperous middle class families played an intrinsic role in this salon culture as they purchased pianos which in turn supported both instrument makers and music

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<sup>1</sup> Alice Hanson, *Musical Life in Biedermeier Vienna* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 109. Hereafter referred to as Hanson, *Musical Life*.

publishers.<sup>2</sup> It was in this private sphere that musical performances co-existed alongside literary readings, entertainment and receptions, where the Viennese salon was the prime venue for a larger cultural phenomenon of which music was only one part. However, was the salon merely a venue for light entertainment or did this setting conceal a more profound function? Firstly, in terms of the musical output, it is important to emphasize that different musical levels existed in the bourgeois salon culture.<sup>3</sup> A dichotomy of style also existed within Schubert's own four-hand piano works revealing how he engaged with both the entertaining and serious within this one context. In fact, Christopher Gibbs acknowledges that it can be difficult to classify Schubert both musically and functionally even within a single genre.<sup>4</sup> In line with this, David Gramit recognizes how during a Schubertiade both Schubert's close friends and society at large 'shared culture through conversation and dancing, as well as through a serious interest in music.'<sup>5</sup> This 'serious interest in music' included Schubert's Lieder and many of his piano duets, which were both frequently practiced musical genres at such musical gatherings.<sup>6</sup> The presence of influential members

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<sup>2</sup> Howard Ferguson, *Keyboard Duets from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 5. Hereafter referred to as Ferguson, *Keyboard Duets*.

<sup>3</sup> Hanson, *Musical Life*, p. 119.

<sup>4</sup> Christopher H. Gibbs, 'Introduction: the elusive Schubert', in *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert*, ed. by Christopher H. Gibbs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 1–11 (p. 4).

<sup>5</sup> David Gramit, "'The passion for friendship': Music, cultivation, and identity in Schubert's circle", in *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert*, ed. by Christopher H. Gibbs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 56–71 (p. 65).

<sup>6</sup> A pivotal article in this regard is Otto Biba's 'Schubert's Position in Viennese Musical Life', *19<sup>th</sup> Century Music*, 3/2 (1979), 106–13, which reveals Schubert's wealth of activity as a composer, being widely published and performed during his lifetime. An insightful article regarding Schubert's reception in Victorian England argues how perceptions are influenced by stereotypes based on society's ideals of what are considered masculine and feminine activities. David Gramit, 'Constructing a Victorian Schubert: Music, Biography, and Cultural

of society as well as musicians at a typical Schubertiade evening are supported by the table below.

**Table 1. Schubertiade guests at the home of Josef Spaun<sup>7</sup>**

<b>Government Officials</b>	
Eduard Bauernfeld	Official in the Lottery Administration; writer
Ignaz Castelli	Librarian & secretary to: the Lower Austrian County Council; writer
Anton Doblhoff	Austrian minister
Karl Enderes	Conveyancer for Ministry of Finance
Josef Gahy	Secretary of Court Chamber; pianist
Franz Grillparzer	Director of Court Chamber archives; writer
Josef Gross	Secretary to Court Exchequer
Josef Kenner	Magistry official in Linz; poet
Anton Ottenwalt	Assistant to Chamber procurator
Johann Mayerhofer	Austrian censor; poet
Martin Perfetta	Official in Court War Accountancy
Karl Schönstein	Counsellor in Ministry of Finance
Michael Rueskäfer	Examiner of excise affairs (custom official)
Josef Spaun	Official in Lottery Administration
Josef Witticzek (& wife)	Conveyancer to Privy State Chancellory
<b>Army</b>	
Ferdinand Mayerhofer	Lieutenant Fieldmarshal; military surveyor
Johann Senn	Teacher in military academy
<b>Professional/self-employed</b>	
Karl Enk	Private tutor
Ernst Feuchtersleben	Physician; poet/philosopher
Karl Pinterics	Private secretary to Prince Josef Palffy
Franz Schober	Secretary to Franz Liszt; Actor
Romeo F. Seligmann	Physician; professor of medical history
Johann Steiger von Amstein	Mining expert in Gmunden
Ferdinand Walcher	Timber dealer
<b>Musicians</b>	
Franz Lachner	Conductor at Kärntnerthor Theatre (beg. 1829)
Ignaz Lachner	Organist; theatre conductor
Benedict Randhartinger	Kapellmeister at Court Chapel
Franz Schubert	Composer; school teacher's assistant
Michael Vogel (& wife)	Retired opera singer

Values', *19<sup>th</sup> Century Music*, 17/1, Schubert: Music, Sexuality and Culture (1993), 65–78.

<sup>7</sup> Alice Hanson: *Musical Life*, pp. 205–06.

Gramit's mention of 'Schubert's close friends and society at large' reveals a communicative element (and leads us to an additional possible meaning within these musical gatherings) which is addressed by another eminent Schubert scholar, Leon Botstein, in his article: 'Realism transformed: Franz Schubert and Vienna.'<sup>8</sup> In his discussion Botstein identifies three functions of music in Vienna during Schubert's time: that music acted as a private communication for individuals; that musical gatherings, such as the Schubertiades, provided a safe means of communication in a supposedly politically neutral event; and finally that these events were an aspect of domestic living between family and close friends.<sup>9</sup>

The varying communicative elements, which are at the core of Botstein's theory, can be directly applied to Schubert's works from the four-hand repertoire: his proposal, for example, that music functioned as an escape from the negative aspects of Viennese political and social life tie in with the struggle between the inner and outer Schubert as has been suggested by William Kinderman in his discussion of the F minor Fantasy (D940).<sup>10</sup> In his critique of this work, Kinderman asserts how the inner (unrealistic) self, full of optimism, is broken by the harsh realities of the external world – both aspects of the man being represented by thematic, modal and tonal contrasts.<sup>11</sup> What Botstein's argument proposes is that beneath these frivolous soirees existed meaningful musical activity amidst many codes of communication.

Although the salon was the primary forum for musical activity during Schubert's time, changes in how music functioned in society and the negative connotations of the salon resulted in the decline of the popularity of the piano duet. As music making in Vienna moved from

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<sup>8</sup> Leon Botstein, 'Realism Transformed: Franz Schubert and Vienna', in *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert*, ed. by Christopher Gibbs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 15–35. Hereafter referred to as Botstein, 'Realism Transformed'.

<sup>9</sup> Botstein, 'Realism Transformed', pp. 31–32.

<sup>10</sup> William Kinderman, 'Schubert's piano music: probing the human condition', in *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert*, ed. by Christopher H. Gibbs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 155–73. Hereafter referred to as Kinderman, 'Schubert's piano music.'

<sup>11</sup> Kinderman, 'Schubert's piano music', p. 171.

the salon and into the public sphere, the once popular duets gradually faded into the memories of a drawing room culture. Public concerts became more prevalent and the rise of the solo virtuoso overshadowed music for two performers at one piano. Other aspects of the drawing room culture, such as it being a venue for women – something long construed as a negative element – had a direct consequence on the reception of Schubert. The negative associations of women and the salon are discussed by Marcia Citron in her book, *Gender and the Musical Canon*.<sup>12</sup> Citron highlights how the reputation of female composers and musicians at the beginning of the nineteenth century, although popular at that time, were damaged because of their association with the salon.<sup>13</sup> Schubert's association with the salon has, in older musicology, been viewed in a similarly negative way, which encouraged perceptions of Schubert as a composer of feminine and therefore lesser genres.<sup>14</sup>

A further aspect of the salon culture during the nineteenth century, the popularity of transcriptions, has also had negative repercussions for Schubert's four-hand repertoire. In fact, when discussing the music culture of the bourgeoisie in the nineteenth century, Dahlhaus observes how piano transcriptions of chamber and symphonic music were a 'cornerstone of bourgeois music culture.'<sup>15</sup> Although this cannot be disputed, the close connection transcriptions had with domestic musical activity has to some extent, influenced

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<sup>12</sup> Marcia Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon* (Urbana & Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000). Hereafter referred to as Citron, *Gender*.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 108.

<sup>14</sup> The renowned critic, Robert Schumann, in relation to the Grand Duo, discussed Schubert as a feminine character in comparison to Beethoven in Robert Schumann, *Robert Schumann on Music and Musicians* (London: Denis Dobson 1947/reprinted 1956), pp. 116–17. Christopher H. Gibbs explores, and argues against, past perceptions of Schubert, for example, Schubert as feminine versus Beethoven as mighty in his article: "Poor Schubert": Images and legends of the composer', in *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert*, ed. by Christopher H. Gibbs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 36–55. Hereafter referred to as Gibbs, 'Poor Schubert'.

<sup>15</sup> Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth Century Music* (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989), p. 42.

perceptions that four hands at one piano merely provided a utilitarian function. However, in his seminal work on Schubert and his four-hand music, Brian Newbould differentiates between the utilitarian character of so much duet music in the nineteenth century and Schubert's realisation of the 'intrinsic values of the four-hand ensemble.'<sup>16</sup>

### **Issues of reception history**

Just as the duets faded into the memories of the drawing room culture, these works remained absent for a long time from serious consideration in Schubert scholarship and systematic musicology. The rather complex nature of Schubert's reception history has most certainly played a role in this context. The long-standing perception of Schubert as an unknown composer during his time has been overturned in recent revisionist Schubert scholarship and Gibbs states that Schubert experienced 'coexisting fame and neglect'.<sup>17</sup> The fame mentioned by Gibbs most certainly includes the duets which, as outlined earlier, were an inherent part of the salon experience. However, the discovery of a wealth of instrumental works after Schubert's death completely overshadowed his unique development of the piano duet genre. Although some of Schubert's biggest achievements in the duet genre were published and performed after his death, they were few in number in comparison to the significant number of chamber and orchestral works discovered and published posthumously.

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<sup>16</sup> Brian Newbould, *Schubert: The Music and the Man* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1997), pp. 234–49 (p. 234). Hereafter referred to as Newbould, *Schubert: The Music and the Man*. Other revisionist readings which support Schubert as an innovator of the duet genre include: (a) Frank Dawes, 'Piano Duets', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. by Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, 29 vols (London: Macmillan, 2001), xix, 653–55. Hereafter referred to as Dawes, 'Piano Duets'. (b) Robert Winter, 'Schubert, Franz (Peter)', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. by Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, 29 vols (London: Macmillan, 2001), xxii, 655–729 (p. 684). Hereafter referred to as Winter, 'Schubert'.

<sup>17</sup> Gibbs, 'Poor Schubert', p. 48.



**Table 2. Key Schubert duets published posthumously<sup>18</sup>**

Work	Year Composed	Year Published
Sonata in C, "Grand Duo" D812	1824 (June)	1838
Allegro in A minor, 'Lebensstürme' D 947	1828 (May)	1840
Fantasy in F minor D940	1828	1829

In terms of musicological reception history since the twentieth century, it is only in approximately the last thirty years that approaches to the duets have begun to change. Laurence Petran's short article (1945) again highlights how perceptions of the medium have suffered from the abundant use of arrangements of instrumental works.<sup>19</sup> Although Petran does briefly acknowledge Mozart and Schubert's exceptional contributions to the genre (one work each)<sup>20</sup>, he refers to duets in general as being in a 'lowly estate.'<sup>21</sup> In a much later article, however, Frank Dawes (2001) acknowledges that some interesting contributions to the genre were made prior to Schubert, but that it was he who fully utilized the possibilities of the duet medium.<sup>22</sup> Another recent article by Robert Winter (from the same year) makes a similar claim that Schubert's piano duets could be considered the composer's most unique works for keyboard.<sup>23</sup> It is, therefore, only relatively recently that these four-hand works are being viewed as a revolutionizing of a domestic genre. Consequently, such re-appraisals have encouraged further research in this area.

The social context, being so central to the duet genre, has been discussed within older musicology though frequently with negative

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<sup>18</sup> Christopher Gibbs, 'German Reception: Schubert's "journey to immortality"', in *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert*, ed. by Christopher H. Gibbs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 241–53 (p. 248). Hereafter referred to as Gibbs, 'German Reception'.

<sup>19</sup> Laurence Petran, 'Piano Duets', *Bulletin of the American Musicological Society*, 8 (1945), 10.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, Mozart: Sonata in F Major K497 and Schubert: Andantino Varié in B Minor op.84 no.1.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>22</sup> Frank Dawes, 'Piano Duets', pp. 653–55 (p. 654).

<sup>23</sup> Winter, 'Schubert', p. 684.

implications. In Arthur Hutchings (1973) discussion of the works he referred to the duets as a 'sociable branch of music [and as] some of Schubert's best light music'.<sup>24</sup> Although Hutchings remark appears complimentary on the surface it automatically indicates that these works are 'non-serious' by referring to them as his 'best light music.' Eric Sams (1976) praises Schubert's duets as being original as well as simultaneously profound and trivial, yet comments that 'much of the music was simply designed to make and keep friends [...] [and that some of the duets] bring total expressiveness within the grasp of the home music-maker'.<sup>25</sup> Although this music *was* designed to 'make and keep friends', this was only one aspect of the duets and categorizing them in this way offers a limited perspective on these works. Furthermore, the implication that Schubert had to limit himself artistically in order to produce accessible music for the domestic household automatically degrades the duets as quality works.

Schubert's achievement in combining the serious and the sociable in his duets has been recently addressed by the scholar Margaret Notley, where she focuses on duets such as the A flat Variations on an original theme (D813), composed in 1824, and the Allegro in A minor (D947), composed in 1828. Notley's argument overturns traditional beliefs regarding this aspect of Schubert's music for four-hands. In past histories Einstein placed a distinct divide between the sociable Schubert, for example in his duets, and a serious Schubert as in his late sonatas and string quartets. In response to this, Notley requests that the sociable quality should not be underrated.<sup>26</sup> In this context, she discusses the 'orchestral massiveness' of the Allegro in A minor and also its abrupt modulations which add an immense intensity to the piece.<sup>27</sup> The sociable side, Notley argues, is revealed towards the end with its entertaining brilliance. Similarities are

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<sup>24</sup> Arthur Hutchings, *The Master Musicians Series: Schubert* (London, New York: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1973), pp. 152–53.

<sup>25</sup> Eric Sams, 'Schubert's Piano Duets', *The Musical Times*, 117/1596 (1976), 120–21.

<sup>26</sup> Margaret Notley, 'Schubert's social music', p.146.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p.148.

highlighted between his duos and his chamber music (with piano) in terms of expressiveness with some similar pianistic textures.<sup>28</sup>

### **The piano duet as a domestic activity**

Prior to Schubert's engagement with the genre, the domestic nature of the duets has remained an influential element in our perception of these works. As early as the seventeenth century, the English composer Nicholas Carleton (c.1570–75–1630), credited with one of the earliest keyboard duets ever composed, indicated that his 'Verse for two' was to be played on one virginal or organ,<sup>29</sup> which, according to Dawes, suggests a domestic context. Despite the presence of such early works as Carleton's duet and Thomas Tomkins (1572–1640): *A Fancy for two to play*, it wasn't until the eighteenth century that music for keyboard four hands became popular. From approximately 1760 onwards this domesticity was reinforced as the keyboard duet was frequently employed as a pedagogical tool, thus ensuring its status as a 'lower' genre. In Dr Charles Burney's Preface of *Two sonatas or duets for two performers one piano-forte or harpsichord* (1777), he discusses these works in a pedagogical context referring to two students playing them in a domestic setting. A further example is Haydn's duet composition, a theme and variations for four hands entitled: 'Teacher and Student (1778),'<sup>30</sup> which reveals a very simple compositional approach where the teacher begins a melodic idea and the student merely imitates exactly.

The domestic character of the duet and the production of pedagogical works dictated the style of the duets, and an examination of the compositional approaches of eighteenth century composers proves to be an insightful tool in ascertaining the common style of the duet shared by composers at that time. The duets produced during this period were typically light entertaining works, attractive and appealing

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<sup>28</sup> Here Notley argues that the "Trout" Quintet (D667), the B flat Trio (D898) and the E flat Trio (D929) use the pianistic texture of doubling a melody at the octave as is frequently practiced in both hands of the primo player of Schubert's duets.

<sup>29</sup> Dawes, 'Piano Duets', p. 653.

<sup>30</sup> Cameron McGraw, *Piano Duet Repertoire – Music Originally Written for One Piano, Four Hands* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981).

Hereafter referred to as McGraw, *Piano Duet Repertoire*, x.

to its designated market. Such composers as Johann Christian Bach (1735–1782) and Muzio Clementi (1752–1832) were important figures in this respect.<sup>31</sup> The former, also known as the London Bach, produced mainly sonatas for four hands which are generally ‘elegant, refined and controlled pieces.’<sup>32</sup> Clementi wrote a considerable number of duets, among them seven four-hand sonatas. Some of the chief characteristics of the duet, which Schubert later developed, are found in his works of this kind: counterpoint, orchestral styles and also the expressive possibilities of the genre.<sup>33</sup> Due to the availability of four hands on one piano, counterpoint was frequently employed and Schubert exploited polyphony fully in his later duets.

Many of Mozart’s early duet compositions subscribed to this light and entertaining style, as was typical of the drawing room aesthetic at that time.<sup>34</sup> However, his most mature work for the piano duet, the F major sonata K.497 (1786), has been described as an ‘almost uncomfortably great piece of domestic music’<sup>35</sup> thereby pointing to its departure from established norms. Donald Tovey even admitted ‘being tempted to arrange the sonata as a string-quartet in G with two violoncellos.’<sup>36</sup> It is very likely that Schubert would have been familiar with this work, as it was both composed and published in Vienna. Schubert had studied and performed works by Mozart during his school days at the Stadtkonvikt and with the family orchestra and would have been aware of his significance as a composer. It is therefore very likely

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<sup>31</sup> Additional duet composers of the eighteenth century include: Muzio Clementi (1752–1832), Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778–1837), Carl Maria von Weber (1786–1826) and Carl Czerny (1791–1857).

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, xi.

<sup>33</sup> Marianne Stoezel, & Mary Applegate, ‘Review, A Selection of Four-Hand Duets Published between 1777 and 1857; Works for Two Pianos Published between 1778 and 1860 by Nicholas Temperley’, *Music and Letters*, 70/2 (1989), 306–08 (p. 307).

<sup>34</sup> Mozart’s duet output included six sonatas, a theme and variations, two fantasies and a fugue.

<sup>35</sup> Eric Blom, *Mozart* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd; New York: Farrar, Strauss & Cudahy, 1962), p. 273.

<sup>36</sup> Tovey, Donald, *Essays in Musical Analysis Vol.1 Symphonies* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 199.

that this pivotal work had a significant impact on Schubert and alerted him to the possibilities of this genre. These possibilities are especially realised in the duets from 1824 and onwards – from Schubert’s middle to late periods – examples of which will be discussed later in this chapter.

Beethoven’s engagement with the piano duet took place early in his career and comprises merely a two-movement Sonata in D, two sets of variations and three marches. These pieces, which were intended for the middle-class market, are attractive and sometimes playful pieces, staying true to the typically light, entertaining style of the piano duet genre. His variations on a theme by Count Waldstein, for example, are incomparable to Schubert’s A flat Variations on many levels. Beethoven’s repeated use of the melody by the primo in many of the variations, undisguised, is nowhere near as sophisticated as Schubert’s development of his subject, for example in the final variation, in his A flat Variations on an original theme (D813).

### **What further ways then did Schubert add to this genre as it was at the beginning of the nineteenth century?**

Composing his first duet at thirteen years, Schubert’s three earliest attempts at this genre were all fantasies – an early indication that the composer realised new expressive possibilities within the genre. Schubert’s time in Zseliz as a tutor for the Esterhazys in 1818 produced further duets – Four Polonaises (D599), Three Marches Heroiques (D602), Sonata in B flat (D617), Deutscher and Ländler (D618), and Eight Variations on a French song (D624) – but it was Schubert’s second stay at Zseliz in 1824 that marks a genuine elevation of the piano duet with his Grand Duo Sonata in C. (D812).<sup>37</sup> In fact Christopher Gibbs acknowledges 1824 (and here he includes the Grand Duo in his argument) as a period when ‘Schubert’s instrumental music [...] shifted from amateur to professional’.<sup>38</sup> The elevated and symphonic style of Schubert’s Grand Duo created a debate led by Schumann and Tovey,

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<sup>37</sup> Duets composed in Esterhazy in 1824 include: the Grand Duo Sonata in C (D812), Eight Variations on an original theme, A flat (D813), Four Ländler (D814), Divertissement à l’hongroise (D818) and Six Grandes Marches (D819).

<sup>38</sup> Christopher Gibbs, ‘Poor Schubert’, p. 41.

regarding the accepted criteria that a domestic piece of music was expected to fulfil. Both authors struggled to consider this work as a duet on the grounds that it was outside the norms of the domestic duet style. The influence of the arguments presented by such eminent critics should not be underestimated and three attempts<sup>39</sup> were made to orchestrate the work including Joseph Joachim who orchestrated the work in 1855.<sup>40</sup> However, his attempt to arrange the work as a symphony required tempo changes which, ironically, proved its compositional intention as an independent piano duet. In line with this, Jeffrey Kallberg observes that the mixing of genres was a common modification of style in the early nineteenth century.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, the orchestral style in which Schubert composed the Sonata in C may have been unorthodox for the piano duet but not untypical of what was occurring in art music across the board. Brian Newbould also points out that when it comes to style in a work, piano, quartet and orchestral styles often overlap: an orchestral style is also found in other piano duets by Schubert, an example of which is the Allegro in A minor (D947) written in the final year of his life.<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, that Schubert referred to the Sonata in C as a work for piano four-hands in his correspondences from Zseliz in 1824 to his brother Ferdinand<sup>43</sup> and his friend Moritz von Schwind,<sup>44</sup> seemed to be ignored by any sceptics that this was an original work for piano four hands:

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<sup>39</sup> Ernest G. Porter, *Schubert's Piano Works* (London: Dennis Dobson, 1980). Other attempts to orchestrate the Grand Duo were made by Antony Collins and Karl Salomon, p. 154.

<sup>40</sup> Ferguson, *Keyboard Duets*, p. 11.

<sup>41</sup> Jeffrey Kallberg, 'The Rhetoric of Genre: Chopin's Nocturne in G Minor', *19<sup>th</sup> Century Music*, 11/3 (1988), 238–61 (p. 245).

<sup>42</sup> Brian Newbould, *Schubert, The Music and the Man*, p. 241.

<sup>43</sup> Schubert to his brother Ferdinand, (16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup>) to 18 July 1824, cited in, Otto Erich Deutsch, *Schubert A Documentary Biography*, trans by Eric Blom (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1946), pp. 362–64.

<sup>44</sup> Schubert to Moritz von Schwind, August 1824, cited in Otto Erich Deutsch, *Schubert A Documentary Biography*, trans by Eric Blom (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1946), pp. 369–70.

I have composed a grand sonata and variations for four hands, which latter are having a particularly great success here [in Zseliz]; but as I do not wholly trust the Hungarians taste, I leave it to you and the Viennese to decide.<sup>45</sup>

This quote not only indicates the certainty that the Duo was intended as a piece for four hands but reveals these works as serious compositions by the composer.

Liszt's assertion that Schubert was the most poetic composer who ever lived can surely be applied to the beautifully expressive seventh variation of his A flat Variations (1824) which reveals a deliberately uncertain chromaticism as the music travels between F minor and C minor.<sup>46</sup> This variation reveals a new depth of expression for the duet and is indicative of Jim Samson's assertion that piano works at the beginning of the nineteenth century, influenced by vocal music and contemporary literature, subsequently encouraged an increasingly expressive aesthetic.<sup>47</sup> It was this expressive aesthetic, which was found in Schubert's later duets, that troubled Carl Dahlhaus in his discussions of genre where he asserted that genre was relegated a subordinate position in favour of aesthetic autonomy.<sup>48</sup> Here, Carl Dahlhaus' theory which states that after 1800 there was a transfer of emphasis away from the importance of 'genre' to the concept of an 'individual work' is surely applicable to this sonata, which was considered outside the norms of the duet style. That musical genres ceased to have a function in the early nineteenth century, as proposed by Dahlhaus,<sup>49</sup> has been contested by recent scholars such as Samson and Kallberg. One of the central criticisms of Dahlhaus' theory, when he asserts that function in music was 'obliterated entirely or relegated to

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<sup>45</sup> Schubert to Moritz von Schwind, cited in Otto Erich Deutsch, *Schubert A Documentary Biography*, trans by Eric Blom (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1946), p. 370.

<sup>46</sup> Notley, 'Schubert's Social Music', p. 147.

<sup>47</sup> Jim Samson, *Chopin and Genre, Musical Analysis*, 8/3, (1989), 213–31 (p. 214).

<sup>48</sup> Carl Dahlhaus, cited in Citron, *Gender*, p. 126.

<sup>49</sup> In the eighteenth century Dahlhaus highlights how a genre had a specific function such as liturgy or dance, cited in Citron, *Gender*, p.126.

the backstairs of music',<sup>50</sup> is that his interpretation of function is too limited. To adopt Dahlhaus' view is to subscribe to the belief that genre was completely fixed and predictable which denies the possibility of it developing and expanding and also dismisses the importance of the expressive aesthetic in works of this period.

Schubert's unique compositional approaches in his duets provide further evidence that he strove to create unique and enduring works for this genre. Schubert's sudden modulations and free handling of form, which are abundant in the duets, were initially considered a compositional weakness by such musicologists as Theodor Adorno who likened Schubert's thematic structure to musical "pot-pourri."<sup>51</sup> This criticism proved damning in consideration of Schubert's innovative handling of form. Contrary to traditional readings of Schubert's mishandling of the patterns of modulation within the framework of sonata forms, Charles Rosen was one of the first to acknowledge that the shift of a semitone is common to duets such as the final of the Six Grande Marches (D819), composed in 1824, and furthermore is the major structural principal in the Grand Duo Sonata.<sup>52</sup>

Schubert's complex nature as a person (especially after being hospitalised in 1823 with syphilis and the accompanying recognition

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<sup>50</sup> Carl Dahlhaus, *Foundations of Music History*, trans by J. B. Robinson (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 149.

<sup>51</sup> Theodor Adorno, cited in Kinderman, 'Schubert's Piano Music', p. 155.

<sup>52</sup> Charles Rosen, 'Schubert's inflections of Classical Form', in *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert*, ed. by Christopher Gibbs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 72–98. A pivotal publication regarding piano literature, although outside the piano duet, is Charles Fisk's, *Returning cycles: Contexts for the Interpretation of Schubert's Impromptus and Late Sonatas* (London: University of California Press, c.2001). Important analytical studies which are welcome revisionist literature on Schubert's handling of large-scale forms include: David Beach, 'Schubert's Experiments with Sonata Form: Formal-Tonal Design versus Underlying Structure', *Music Theory Spectrum*, 15/1 (1993), 1–18; John M. Gingerich, 'Remembrance and Consciousness in Schubert's C Major String Quartet (D 956)', *The Music Quarterly*, 84/4 (2000), 619–34; and Gordon Sly, 'Schubert's Innovations in Sonata Form: Compositional Logic and Structural Interpretations', *The Journal of Music Theory*, 45/1 (2001), 119–50.



that he was terminally ill) produced increasingly profound works in and beyond this genre. That he created three duets in 1828 is significant for the genre's status: Fantasy in F minor (D940), Allegro in A minor 'Lebensstürme' (D947), and the Rondo in A (D951). The F minor duet, for example, is a profound work that has invited serious investigation within Schubert scholarship and some scholars have identified influences of previous composers on this work.<sup>53</sup> The unanimous conclusion of these articles reveals how Schubert absorbed influences of his predecessors and recognizes the originality he brought to his own composition. In his article, 'Something Borrowed'<sup>54</sup>, which argues that Schubert's F minor Fantasy was influenced by Mozart's F minor Fantasia duet for mechanical organ (K608), Humphreys raises a valid point of difference between the two composers' treatments of the duet when concluding his article: where Schubert treats the duet as a serious genre, Mozart's style is 'archaic' in his duet due to the constraints of the mechanical organ. Furthermore, Humphreys identifies the duet as typical of 'the highly personal poetry of [Schubert's] late style'.<sup>55</sup> An important revisionist article by William Kinderman discusses a deep-seated psychological symbolism in relation to the F minor Fantasy duet.<sup>56</sup> In this work, Kinderman identifies a striking similarity between the Fantasy and *Winterreise* with both works journeying towards the same tragic destiny. In this belief Kinderman asserts that the thematic, modal and tonal contrasts with the lyrical theme represent an 'air of unreality', which are cruelly broken by the second theme.<sup>57</sup>

## Postlude

Certainly, Schubert's duets are being acknowledged in more recent scholarship as significant works in his overall output as can be seen in the following testaments. Although the seminal work of William

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<sup>53</sup> (a) David Humphreys, 'Something borrowed', *The Musical Times*, 138/1853 (1997), 19–24. Hereafter referred to as Humphreys, 'Something borrowed'. (b) Elizabeth Norman McKay, 'Schubert and Hummel: Debts and Credits', *The Musical Times*, 140/1868 (1999), 30–35.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, (a).

<sup>55</sup> Humphreys, 'Something borrowed', p. 24.

<sup>56</sup> Kinderman, 'Schubert's Piano Music', pp. 155–173.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 171.

Kinderman and Charles Rosen has inspired a re-questioning of traditional perceptions, their focus on one or two specific works merits a more comprehensive evaluation and interpretation, both of which would reveal further insight into Schubert's contribution to this genre and perhaps even our understanding of Schubert himself. Current opinions in Schubert scholarship appear to support the view that Schubert brought an originality and profound expressive character to the duets and the evident popularity of the Grand Duo and the Fantasy in F actively encourages new perceptions of the duets – especially the later works. And so we are left asking: to what extent did other genres and/or musical practices of the early nineteenth century influence Schubert's expansive style in the duets? Is it possible for the serious and the sociable to co-exist within one musical work? Can compositional features such as the abrupt modulations also found in the Allegro in A minor 'Lebensstürme' (D947) represent a latent psychological meaning?

Gibbs defines the ever-changing perception of Schubert's works most aptly:

The history of Schubert's musical reception charts not only the changing evaluations and interpretations of his individual works, but also the broader revaluations of his overall artistic stature.<sup>58</sup>

These words support the basic premise of this chapter as the journey of re-assessing Schubert's four-hand repertoire and simultaneously raising his stature as a serious salon composer begins. Many musicologists, when discussing Schubert, often refer to his journey, whether it be the ever-changing journey of the reception of his works or the journey that occurs within his actual musical works. Exploring Schubert's duets composed over the entire span of his life, the significance of their context, and how he developed this genre so significantly, opens up a voyage of discovery within Schubert scholarship.

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<sup>58</sup> Gibbs, 'German reception', pp. 241–42.

## Acknowledgements

This chapter was funded by a Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship from the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences and a John and Pat Hume Scholarship from NUI Maynooth.

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# Dialectic process and sonata form in Schubert's A minor String Quartet, D804

Adam Cullen

This chapter contributes to the growing number of studies that aim to disabuse Schubertian literature of the myths regarding Schubert's competence in large-scale instrumental forms.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, some relatively recent claims by Stephen Hefling (which will be detailed below) in relation to the A minor String Quartet resonate with more dated approaches to Schubert's output, particularly approaches which readily see deviations from standard norms of form and harmony as compositional failings rather than attempting to understand what inspired those changes.<sup>2</sup> This chapter is concerned with Schubert's approach to sonata form as it appears in the first movement of this string quartet.

First, a note on sonata form in general is warranted. An article by Hali Fieldman demonstrates how sonata form, as we traditionally encounter it in major-key works, is essentially a dialectic played out between the tonic and dominant and, in keeping with the Hegelian notion of dialectic, closure and synthesis are brought about using only the elements that stirred the initial conflict.<sup>3</sup> Fieldman observes that the dialectic function does not apply so well to the traditional tonal plan of

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<sup>1</sup> Carl Engel, 'Schubert's Fame', *The Musical Quarterly*, 14/4 (1928), 457–72 (p. 458). Herbert Antcliffe (1910) cited in L. Michael Griffel, 'A Reappraisal of Schubert's Methods of Composition', *The Musical Quarterly*, 63/2 (1977), 186–210 (p. 187). Arthur Hutchings, *Schubert*, The Master Musicians Series (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1973), p. 88. Samuel Laciár, 'The Chamber-Music of Franz Schubert', *The Musical Quarterly*, 14/4 (1928), 515–38 (p. 537).

<sup>2</sup> Stephen E. Hefling & David S. Tartakoff, 'Schubert's Chamber Music', in *Nineteenth-Century Chamber Music*, ed. by Stephen E. Hefling, Routledge Studies in Musical Genres, gen. ed. R. Larry Todd (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 39–139 (pp. 79–81). Hereafter referred to as Hefling, *Nineteenth Century*.

<sup>3</sup> Hali Fieldman, 'Schubert's *Quartettsatz* and Sonata Form's New Way', *Journal of Musicological Research*, 21 (2002), 99–146 (pp. 106–108). Hereafter referred to as Fieldman, 'Schubert's *Quartettsatz*'.



minor-key sonata forms.<sup>4</sup> In minor-key sonata forms the second key-area is normally the relative major. This key shares the same diatonic pitch collection as the tonic and therefore does not serve as a proper antithesis. The end of the development in a minor-key sonata form tends to use the major dominant to effect closure and so a key-area outside of the two terms of the dialectic is introduced to create synthesis. Schubert's sonata forms in minor-keys, however, manage to conform to the notion of dialectic by making use of a *Grundgestalt*.<sup>5</sup>

Schubert uses the *Grundgestalt* to raise the issue of conflict on a smaller scale rather than the large-scale key-areas of the tonal plan, and yet that small-scale involvement carries with it far reaching repercussions which ultimately influence decisions on the grandest scale. This chapter will examine the first movement of the A minor String Quartet to show how Schubert reconciles the inherent difficulties of dialectic in the large-scale traditional tonal schemata of minor-key forms with the use of a *Grundgestalt* on the small-scale. Furthermore, he overtly makes efforts to highlight where engrained attitudes would lead us to expect rhetorical and tonal events that may not be necessary for the individual dialectic confronted by an individual work, albeit on the global stage of a specific genre. It will be found that acknowledgment of the *Grundgestalt* explains features of the A minor String Quartet that Hefling had difficulty accepting and elements that appear to run contrary to sonata form will be shown to adhere strongly to a dialectic process that is truly at the heart of that form.

Compared with the *Quartettsatz* (D703), the form of the first movement of the A minor String Quartet (D804) appears to be far more conventional. Some elements, however, still stand out as unusual for a sonata form movement and despite the work's lauded quality they have

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<sup>4</sup> Fieldman, 'Schubert's *Quartettsatz*', p. 107.

<sup>5</sup> A *Grundgestalt*, as used in both Fieldman's article and the present chapter, is understood to mean a defining or disruptive 'moment' that sparks off debate and explains the salient features of an entire movement rather than the alternative, more literal interpretation; 'motive'. Fieldman, 'Schubert's *Quartettsatz*', p. 118 footnote 41.

not all escaped criticism.<sup>6</sup> The exposition contains a passage from bar 91 to 96 where the second subject group modulates into A flat major, a key that is far removed from the second key area, C major, and that undermines the tonic (see example 3 below). Stephen Hefling criticizes this passage and the bars leading up to it as an ‘evasive shift [at bar 81] to [a] very quiet rehearsal of the pastoral lied [which] remains less than fully persuasive, as does the surprise foil of a variant in flat–VI (mm. 91ff)’.<sup>7</sup> Hefling then notes that following a turn to F minor in the development section the ‘cello and first violin become enmeshed in a canonic web of the theme’s second phrase leading nowhere but louder’.<sup>8</sup> His appraisal of the recapitulation is even more unforgiving when he claims that it ‘alters very little’ and ‘resolves nothing’.<sup>9</sup> These criticisms, as well as Hefling’s description of the piece as a ‘fundamentally lyrical work,’<sup>10</sup> will be reconsidered below.

### **Unifying devices and identifying the *Grundgestalt***

Hali Fieldman writes that ‘in works of Schubert that contain a *Grundgestalt*, the event always stands out in some way, although sometimes it takes a rather close, contextual reading to reveal it fully.’<sup>11</sup> In the A minor String Quartet this *Grundgestalt* is to be found in bar 9 (example 1) but to be recognised as such it must be clearly interpretable as an event marked out by features in the music. The first of these features which singles out bar 9 for interpretation is a French sixth chord in the second half of the bar. It progresses as expected to the chord of V but has several disruptive features which contribute to marking bar 9 as an event. For a start, the French sixth is not a commonly used chord in Schubert; he is much more likely to use a German sixth. The latter chord would not stand out so strongly by virtue of both its commonality in Schubert and its less dissonant make-up (a

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<sup>6</sup> Hefling, *Nineteenth Century*, p.79. In the paragraph which opens his analysis of the A minor Quartet he describes the work as ‘extraordinary’ and ‘cast in a satisfying succession of movements.’

<sup>7</sup> Hefling, *Nineteenth Century*, p.81.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 79.

<sup>11</sup> Fieldman, ‘Schubert’s *Quartettsatz*’, p. 118 footnote 41.

German sixth contains an interval of a perfect fifth in its vertical constitution but a French sixth contains an augmented fourth, here illustrated in example 1 by the F naturals in the lower voices struck against the B naturals in the second violin). A German sixth would normally supersede the B naturals in question with C naturals and it will be of use when examining the course of the movement to note the use of both the pitches C and B in relation to each other and the *Grundgestalt*. The augmented fourth of the French sixth also helps draw our attention to bar 9 as an event even before the obviously chromatic note D sharp enters.

The pitch D sharp draws attention to bar 9 not only for its chromaticism but because of its rhythmic effect on the piece: from the beginning of the exposition the third beat in each bar has been severely undermined until D sharp enters. The lower voices in the first eight bars consistently employ dotted minims for the first three beats in each bar while the first violin line uses a combination of dotted minims, rests, and ties to avoid stressing the third beat. In bar 9 this changes and the first violin plays two minims, the second of which is the chromatic D sharp. The melody thus far has managed to almost give the illusion of being in triple time. Bar 9's undeniable clarification that the piece is indeed in duple time virtually has the effect of syncopation and we hear the D sharp (and by extension bar 9 itself) all the more loudly as an event.

### Example 1. Schubert: String Quartet in A minor I, bars 5–10

The image shows a musical score for Schubert's String Quartet in A minor, first movement, bars 5-10. The score is in 3/4 time and features four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The first violin part is marked with a '3' above the first measure, indicating a triplet. The lower voices (Viola and Violoncello) play dotted minims, while the first violin plays a combination of dotted minims, rests, and ties. In bar 9, the first violin plays two minims, the second of which is a chromatic D sharp.

The image shows a musical score for four instruments: Violin I (Vln I), Violin II (Vln II), Viola (Vln), and Violoncello (Vc). The score is divided into three measures. The first measure (bar 6) shows the beginning of a phrase. The second measure (bar 7) is the start of a new hypermetric unit. The third measure (bar 8) is the end of the unit. The score is written in treble clef for Vln I and Vln II, and bass clef for Vln and Vc. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is 3/4. The Vln I part has a long note in bar 6, a quarter note in bar 7, and a quarter note in bar 8. The Vln II part has a series of eighth notes in bar 6, a quarter note in bar 7, and a quarter note in bar 8. The Vln part has a series of eighth notes in bar 6, a quarter note in bar 7, and a quarter note in bar 8. The Vc part has a series of eighth notes in bar 6, a quarter note in bar 7, and a quarter note in bar 8.

Hypermetric division in the work begins with two-bar units but at bar 7 the unit is lengthened to a four-bar unit. Bar 9 is the third bar of this new unit (that is, it is the first bar to break the established pattern) and so is burdened with all the attention of this change. The raise in dynamic at bar 8 drives us into bar 9, clarifying the extended phrase length as well as highlighting the bar that contains the foreign pitch. Consequently both dynamic and hypermetric features also draw our attention to the contents of bar 9 as an event and with all these elements put together we can legitimately consider this point a potential *Grundgestalt*.

Perhaps Schubert's goal is not to highlight D sharp itself as much as the major dominant of A minor which, it could be argued, D sharp points to. But as the development of material signals, this is not the case. If the D sharp is there to highlight the dominant pitch E, that end would have been served better by the note B; the first violin's melody from bar 6 through to bar 10 establishes a rising sequence of dropping thirds, but the D sharp clearly interrupts that pattern. The sequence, if left alone, would have had D natural in bar 9 drop to B, which would then proceed to E in bar 10. B, the dominant of the dominant, would have made a more convincing melodic statement of the importance of E (the second violin sounded the D sharp pitch anyway, so the harmonic colour of the French sixth chord could have been maintained). We may ask if the D sharp could be *intended* to emphasize the E anyway but this is not the case. If we look to the same moment in the recapitulation, bar 176 (example 10), where we find Schubert decorating the reappearance of this bar with B quavers between the D and the D sharp, it is demonstrated that he consciously omitted the B from the melody in the exposition. In bar 9 the pitch D

sharp is the focus, not the hint at the dominant and its presence is there to highlight bar 9 as an event that will itself set a dialectic in motion.

The cello and viola lines move in parallel octaves from an E in bar 8 to an F in bar 9 and back to an E in bar 10. This pattern offers the most pronounced example up to this point in the movement of a chromatic neighbour-note motif that is to be found throughout the piece and draws even more attention to these bars, particularly bar 9 in which it provides the F natural that strikes the augmented fourth against B natural in the French sixth.<sup>12</sup> The unexpected F natural in bar 9 is a call to attention in a bar that otherwise suggests it is setting itself up, harmonically, for a move to the dominant. Whether that dominant is major or minor it requires an F sharp in bar 9 to be effective and this, in turn, sets up F natural as a contentious pitch holding us back in the tonic. Recognising a skirmish between F natural and F sharp in this movement will be important to understanding the dialectic at play.

Two more motivic devices which merit comment have appeared in the music by this point. One is the sense of chromatic line which first appears in the first violin in bars 9 and 10 and will prove to be a hugely important device throughout the piece for making connections and resolving conflicts (example 1). The second is the sense of triadic movement, or at least strong arpeggiation; the main theme is highly characterized by descending thirds, often spelling out triads, e.g. see bars 3 and 4 in example 1.

## **Exposition and three consequences of the *Grundgestalt***

### **1. The passage from bar 15 to bar 22**

In bar 15 we are introduced to the chromatic chord II7M (example 2) which contains the *Grundgestalt's* D sharp and an F sharp. F sharp here is to be considered a foreign pitch because it does not progress to G sharp as would be expected of the melodic or harmonic conditions associated with that pitch in its present context. II7M is an attempt to harness the D sharp of the *Grundgestalt* and correct the F natural of that same moment, pushing both more convincingly toward the

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<sup>12</sup> Michael Graubart, 'Integration in Schubert: Themes & motives 1', *The Musical Times*, 144/1884 (2003), 40–42. Hereafter referred to as Graubart, 'Integration in Schubert'.

dominant. However II7M does not resolve properly here: we expect to hear a chord of V, or a I6-4-V progression, but instead II7M progresses to the chord of I6-3. The French sixth chord of bar 9, note for note, is in fact a II7M chord with a lowered fifth; therefore F natural appears in one and F sharp in the other. The II7M chords from bar 15 on exist solely to balance the F natural of bar 9 but they themselves do not resolve as correctly as the French sixth did.

**Example 2. Schubert: String Quartet in A minor I, bars 14-22**

Musical score for Example 2, bars 14-17. The score is for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature is one flat (A minor), and the time signature is 3/4. The music is in a 3/4 time signature. The score shows four measures of music. The first measure (bar 14) starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The second measure (bar 15) has a dynamic marking of *fp*. The third measure (bar 16) has a dynamic marking of *fp*. The fourth measure (bar 17) has a dynamic marking of *fp*. The Violin I part has a melodic line with a slur over the first two measures and a fermata over the last two. The Violin II part has a rhythmic accompaniment. The Viola and Violoncello parts have a rhythmic accompaniment.

Musical score for Example 2, bars 18-20. The score is for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature is one flat (A minor), and the time signature is 3/4. The music is in a 3/4 time signature. The score shows three measures of music. The first measure (bar 18) starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The second measure (bar 19) has a dynamic marking of *fp*. The third measure (bar 20) has a dynamic marking of *fp*. The Violin I part has a melodic line with a slur over the first two measures and a fermata over the last. The Violin II part has a rhythmic accompaniment. The Viola and Violoncello parts have a rhythmic accompaniment.

Musical score for Example 2, bars 21-22. The score is for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature is one flat (A minor), and the time signature is 3/4. The music is in a 3/4 time signature. The score shows two measures of music. The first measure (bar 21) starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The second measure (bar 22) has a dynamic marking of *fp*. The Violin I part has a melodic line with a slur over the first measure and a fermata over the second. The Violin II part has a rhythmic accompaniment. The Viola and Violoncello parts have a rhythmic accompaniment.

G sharp is the most notably absent pitch from the chords that succeed the II<sup>7</sup>M chords of bars 15 and 17. G sharp *does* appear in bar 16 in the same voice as the F sharp in bar 15, but it is in the wrong octave and is a non-harmony note. No G sharp appears in bar 18 at all, leaving the second appearance of II<sup>7</sup>M even less resolved than the first. The tension is harnessed by a Neapolitan sixth chord in bar 19, but this arrives all too late at bar 22 where it leads us to A major and not the A minor that would have given the piece more stability.

Between bars 15 and 22 the first notes in the melody on every hypermetric downbeat form an arpeggio linking the foreign pitches of the work with the minor dominant of the home key. The downbeats are marked with *fp* dynamics on bars 15 and 17 cementing a two-bar hypermetric unit. The calculation of the hypermetrically dictated arpeggio operates as follows: F sharp and D sharp are heard together in bar 15. The appeal to hypermetric downbeats suggests that only the F sharp, the note on the first beat of the bar, should be counted toward constructing this alleged arpeggio but the relationship between F sharp and D sharp is repeated verbatim on the next hypermetric downbeat at bar 17 and the notes become audibly inseparable. It is because of this that both pitches will be counted. The next hypermetric downbeat sounds a B flat in the melody (first violin), a note a third down from D sharp and evidently continuing an arpeggio. The accents placed on bar 20 encourage us to seek the next note of the arpeggio in that bar where we will find a G natural (example 2). Whether one hears bar 20 as a new hypermetric downbeat or as hypermetric syncopation will determine whether one considers bar 21 or bar 22 to be the next downbeat. Either way, each bar begins with an E natural, the next note in the arpeggio. The arpeggio thus spelled out runs, from top to bottom, F sharp–D sharp–B flat–G–E or, with their enharmonic equivalents, G flat–E flat–B flat–G–E. It is not clear whether this arpeggio is more closely aligned with E flat or E. The significance of this observation will be revealed below.

## **2. The A flat major passage at bar 91**

At bar 91 five bars of A flat major are inserted into a C major section (example 3). A flat major entirely undermines both tonic and dominant and does so in the immediate presence of the second term of the

dialectic, C, a key that by virtue of its dialectic function in the harmonic plan as an antithesis<sup>13</sup> to the tonic, is our only way back to either the tonic or the dominant of the home key. It is this passage which Stephen Hefling described as a 'less than fully persuasive [...] surprise foil of a variant in flat-VI.'<sup>14</sup>

**Example 3. Schubert: String Quartet in A minor I, bars 90–97**

The image displays two systems of musical notation for Schubert's String Quartet in A minor, I, bars 90-97. The first system includes parts for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The second system shows Violin I and Violin II. The notation includes various accidentals, dynamic markings such as 'pp' and 'tr', and a complex rhythmic structure with many notes.

As stated earlier, the passage at bar 15 was unstable because the II7M chords failed to have their F sharps progress to a G sharp. A flat, the key of the passage at bar 91, is the enharmonic equivalent of G sharp and is an attempt to supply that balance. The first three notes of the enharmonic rendition of the arpeggio spelled out by the hypermetric downbeats in the passage from bar 15 to 22 provided the dominant of A flat major (E flat–G flat–B flat). Hefling comments on the passage in A

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<sup>13</sup> How the relative major can serve as an antithesis to the tonic in light of the problems with minor-key dialectics discussed in the opening paragraph will be made clear below.

<sup>14</sup> Hefling, *Nineteenth Century*, p. 81.



flat major as though it were merely a harmonic gimmick employed for no reason other than to show off Schubert's fondness for distant key-relationships.<sup>15</sup> What is more, if one wishes to explain A flat major as the flattened sixth of the second key area (as Hefling does), one should notice that the French sixth that was the *Grundgestalt* was built off the flattened sixth of the first key area, F natural. It is no accident that the A flat music from bar 91 is heard in the recapitulation in F major, as shall be discussed later.<sup>16</sup>

### 3. The second subject

The second subject, which is stated in bar 59 (see example 4), is in the relative major, C major. Where the *Grundgestalt* introduced the foreign pitch D sharp in the melody and the contentious pitch F natural in the harmony, the second subject inverts this, in bar 63, with an F sharp in the melody and a D natural in the harmony. In the same bar Schubert reverses the *Grundgestalt's* chromatic line of D–D sharp–E by drawing a chromatic line from C major's dominant, G, downwards to spell the line G–F sharp–F natural–E. This line, it will be noted, connects the root pitch of the dominant of the second key area, G, to the root pitch of the dominant of the first key area, E.

#### Example 4. Schubert: String Quartet in A minor I, bars 59–64

<sup>15</sup> Hefling, *Nineteenth Century*, p. 81.

<sup>16</sup> For an interesting discussion of Schubert's use of the flat–VI consult Peter Pesic, 'Schubert's Dream', *19th-Century Music*, 23/2 (1999), 136–44 (pp. 142–44) and Jeffrey Perry, 'The Wanderer's Many Returns: Schubert's Variations Reconsidered', *The Journal of Musicology*, 19/2 (2002), 374–416 (p. 380).

Musical score for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello, bars 68-73. The score is in A major. Violin I and II have long notes with slurs. Viola has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. Cello has a chromatic line starting on D, moving to E flat, G, and A.

A chromatic cello line, rising from D, starts at bar 69 (see example 5). That the line starts with D but does not strike a note foreign to the local key area until D moves to E flat may mean that the line does not actually *become* chromatic until bar 70 when E flat is introduced and upsets the C major modality. E flat, which begins the chromatic line, anticipates the key area to follow (A flat major at bar 91). G, the dominant of C, is highlighted in the chromatic line by a change of register in the cello but it is also made significantly more stable by a disruption in the chromatic progression immediately thereafter. The G in the bass rises a major second to A natural rather than the semitone we would have expected; in this way the chromatic line bypasses G sharp (or A flat).

**Example 5. Schubert: String Quartet in A minor I, bars 68–73**

Musical score for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello, bars 68-73. The score is in A minor. Violin I and II have long notes with slurs. Viola has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. Violoncello has a chromatic line starting on D, moving to E flat, G, and A. Dynamics include *f* and *tr*.

## Antithesis

We may ask in what way C major, the second key area, can be considered an antithesis to A minor since, as mentioned by Fieldman in her criticism of minor-key sonata form tonal plans, the relative major shares the same diatonic pitch collection as the tonic.<sup>17</sup> Fieldman also, however, proved that Schubert could make a similar key-relationship antithetic in the *Quartettsatz* and we can do likewise here.<sup>18</sup> The fact is that C major negates the *one note* available to A minor that is required to resolve the II<sup>7</sup>M chord that appears in that key: the pitch G sharp. Therefore, Schubert chooses the relative major as the second key area entirely on the basis of what suited his dialectic process. He is constructing the familiar sonata form tonal plan very much from within rather than imposing a predetermined plan on his music.

At bar 75 in the second group, the arrival of D minor sparks a sequence through A minor, E minor and back to the relative major, C. It is significant that the second key area, C, should follow the dominant key area, E, in this passage. It makes a statement against us hearing the second key area of this piece as a tonality *on the way to* the dominant (A through C to E). C is the antithesis in this dialectic, not a path to some yet-to-be-revealed polar extreme.

## Agent of return

Traditionally the major dominant is expected to act as an agent of return at the end of the development section containing, it is expected, all that is required for synthesis. E major certainly does contain the G

<sup>17</sup> Fieldman, 'Schubert's *Quartettsatz*', p. 106.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 99–146.

sharp required by the bar 15 passage and it is the dominant of A minor. It can be argued that such a tonal plan detracts from a work as a dialectic when the agent of closure, in this case the dominant, is an element outside of the initial terms of the argument. This criticism does not apply here, however, because the dominant key itself does not introduce any new information to effect this closure. G sharp, the pitch required for synthesis, is already part of the minor scale of the tonic and therefore already existed within the opening terms of the argument. E major is simply a vehicle in which G sharp may be presented formally and the effect of structural closure in this work owes more to the pitch G sharp than to the dominant key. We may wonder if Schubert is paying homage to tradition or if his dialectic is not strong enough to effect closure efficiently without the vehicle of the dominant to afford his argument some gravity. This too will be considered below.

### **Development section**

D minor moves to its minor-mode mediant, F minor, which is the minor submediant of the tonic. Significantly, it becomes minor via the superseding of A natural with A flat, the enharmonic pun on G sharp so important in the exposition. At bar 128 there is a German sixth chord in A flat major. This puts an F sharp into an abbreviated sequence at A flat major (example 6) and fortifies the relationship between the F sharp of the II7M chords and A flat as the enharmonic equivalent of the G sharp discussed earlier.

### **Example 6. Schubert: String Quartet in A minor I, bars 122–29**

The image displays a musical score for four string instruments: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The score is for Example 6, Schubert's String Quartet in A minor I, bars 122–29. The key signature is one flat (F major/A minor), and the time signature is 3/4. The score is divided into four measures. The first three measures show the instruments playing a sequence of chords. The fourth measure, bar 128, features a German sixth chord in A-flat major, which is an enharmonic equivalent of the G sharp discussed in the text. The chord is labeled 'GERM' in the Violin I part, 'GERM' in the Violin II part, 'GERM' in the Viola part, and 'GERM' in the Violoncello part. The score is written in a standard musical notation with stems and beams connecting notes across measures.

Note how the F sharp of bar 128 resolves up to a G natural, not the G sharp we required earlier. At bar 139 a second augmented sixth chord has a G sharp as the upper note of the augmented interval. It is a response to the F sharp of the augmented sixth chord in bar 128 and dramatises the F sharp to G sharp movement missing from the bar 15 passage (example 7).

**Example 7. Schubert: String Quartet in A minor I, bars 139–42**

At bar 141 the G sharp in the cello is paired, as the root of the diminished seventh chord, with D natural and F natural. This diminished seventh chord, held for several bars, is a halfway point between A minor and C major. If the G sharp bass note drops a semitone we will have the dominant seventh of C major. If the G sharp bass should rise a semitone it will give us the harmonic minor scale of A minor, with which the other voices may fall into line. Schubert takes neither option but surprises us at bar 146 by respelling the G sharp as A

flat, overtly endorsing an analysis of the piece in terms of enharmonic equivalents, and bringing us into E flat major (see example 8). E flat major is the dominant of the A flat episodes and so G sharp, which fundamentally does not change at bar 146, has temporarily won out over D natural and F natural (as opposed to being reconciled with them) and kept the development section in motion.

**Example 8. Schubert: String Quartet in A minor I, bars 145–60**

Musical score for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello, bars 145-149. The score is in A minor. Violin I has a melodic line with a fermata over the first two bars. Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello play a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The key signature changes to E-flat major at bar 146.

Musical score for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello, bars 150-154. The score continues in E-flat major. Dynamic markings include *fp* (fortissimo piano) and *pp* (pianissimo) for Violin I, Violin II, and Viola. The Violoncello part has a *fp* marking at the end of the system.

Musical score for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello, bars 155-159. The score continues in E-flat major. The Violoncello part has a *pp* marking at the beginning of the system. The Violin I part has a melodic line with a fermata over the first two bars.

The image shows a musical score snippet for measures 160-161. It includes staves for Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Cello (Vc.). The Cello part features a chromatic line descending from G sharp to A flat, which is the focus of the analysis.

The enharmonic change in the cello from G sharp to A flat gives us a dominant seventh chord that could be the dominant of E flat major or E flat minor. Schubert maximises on this ambiguity by giving us a chord of E flat major in bar 148 and then a chord of E flat minor in bar 149. However, the ambiguity permeates deeper than the question of whether E flat is major or minor to the question: are we in E flat at all? The enharmonic change to A flat is something that can be appreciated on paper but in listening we do not hear the change from G sharp. If the enharmonic change had not taken place the G sharp spelling would have made for an augmented sixth chord still in D minor at bar 146. Regardless of what we hear, Schubert's choice of note spelling clearly intends for us to interpret these chords in accordance with an A flat in the cello. However, even understood as that, bar 146 might be heard as the II<sub>7</sub>M chord in A flat major resolving appropriately to its dominant E flat major. Close consideration shows the passage is indeed in E flat major but the possibility for several interpretations has been enabled. This entire passage is repeated a semitone higher in E major and all the same ambiguities apply. Thus the dominant, while it appears in the place where convention would suppose, is made obscure and played down as an Event.

Curiously, A minor seems to return at bar 165, a few bars before the recapitulation begins at bar 168 (example 9). Admittedly it does not sound like we are in the home key until bar 168, but when we examine the chords in the final three bars of the development we can see that the dominant has already relinquished its role as an agent of closure before the event of the double return. It is, rather, the chromatic line in the second violin that has been in motion since the dominant was established at bar 158 that continues to suspend our sense of arrival

until the double return and constitutes our true last moments in the development. Technically the chromatic movement in the second violin ceases by bar 167 when the B flat we would expect to follow the B of bar 166 does not arrive and the second violin contents itself to remain at B natural for a bar before changing direction and rising a semitone to the third of the tonic in A minor at the recapitulation. The reason is to further highlight how the home key has been reached before bar 168.<sup>19</sup> To maintain the momentum a sustained chromaticism would have afforded this bar, the first violin introduces a chromatic pitch of its own: the leading note of A minor. This G sharp appears between two A naturals and spells out the chromatic neighbour-note motif. Chromatic lines and neighbour-notes, essential elements of the *Grundgestalt*, are the agents of closure and though they achieve this in the context of the dominant, the dominant clearly passes the torch before the recapitulation arrives. Schubert appears to be making a statement: he can use the tonal plans traditionally thought essential for sonata form but he does not need them; it is the fruit of the *Grundgestalt*, the dialectic process, that effects closure here.

**Example 9. Schubert: String Quartet in A minor I, bars 163–68**

The image shows a musical score for four string instruments: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The score is for Example 9, Schubert's String Quartet in A minor I, bars 163-68. The music is in A minor and 3/4 time. The score begins at bar 163 with a 'dim' (diminuendo) marking. The Violin I part features a chromatic line with a G sharp (leading note) between two A naturals. The other parts provide harmonic support with various rhythmic patterns and textures.

<sup>19</sup> B flat or A sharp, since these pitches are not part of the scale of the home key, would have made this less clear.



The image shows a musical score for four instruments: Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The score begins at bar 167. The Violin I part has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The Violin II part has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The Viola part has an alto clef and a key signature of one sharp. The Violoncello part has a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamics. The dynamic marking 'pp' (pianissimo) is visible in the Viola and Violoncello parts.

The key areas passed through from bar 135 to the end of the development are worth noting here. The progression of root pitches in these tonalities is the enharmonic equivalent of the D–D sharp–E motif of the *Grundgestalt*. This, combined with the triad-themed inspiration for the third-related modulations and the dialoguing of various contentious pitches against their more innocuous counterparts pool together to create a development section that confronts the issues raised by the exposition, shows the full extent of their disruption on the music, and brings them together into a motivically derived harmonic shift to the dominant. In doing so Schubert has not only furthered the dialectic, he has brought it into line with common views of form, by utilising that form to highlight his own dialectic processes. This understanding of the development as part of the dialectic process surely shows it as something significantly more than a ‘canonic web of the [opening] theme’s second phrase leading nowhere but louder’.<sup>20</sup>

## Recapitulation

Stephen Hefling gives a very harsh summary of the recapitulation: when he states that the reprise ‘alters very little’ and ‘resolves nothing’ he fails to recognize that when Schubert ‘alters very little’ we must pay extra close attention to what alterations he does make.<sup>21</sup> When we do so we will see these alterations go a long way towards disproving Hefling’s opinion that nothing gets resolved.

At bar 176 in the recapitulation we have the equivalent of bar 9 where the *Grundgestalt* appeared and at this point less has been changed than might have been expected. This chapter proposes that

<sup>20</sup> Hefling, *Nineteenth Century*, p.81.

<sup>21</sup> Hefling, *Nineteenth Century*, p.81.

there is only one *Grundgestalt* and that it contains several features which draw attention to it as such. In short, while several disruptive points have been highlighted earlier, they are all contained within bar 9, within one ‘moment’. Thereafter I highlight instances in the music that, though intrusive, are very much results of that one disruptive moment at bar 9 and are dependent on it. Consequently I consider bar 9 and all the harmonic, rhythmic, melodic, and motivic elements definitive of that bar to be one *Grundgestalt*. The line D–D sharp–E in the first violin now contains interjections of B natural (example 10). At bars 177–78 the repeat of the opening theme is omitted, as is the entire passage with the II7M chords, and we skip right to the A major rendition of the theme.

**Example 10. Schubert: String Quartet in A minor I, bars 175–79**

The image displays two systems of musical notation for Schubert's String Quartet in A minor I, bars 175-79. The first system, labeled '175', shows four staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The Violin I staff features a melodic line with a D–D sharp–E motif and interjections of B natural. The Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello staves provide harmonic accompaniment with rhythmic patterns. The second system, labeled '179', shows the continuation of the four staves. The Violin I staff has a 'cresc' marking, and the Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello staves also have 'cresc' markings, indicating a crescendo in the music.

At bar 222 the second subject group returns in the tonic major. At bar 226 the melodic quirk from bar 63 that played on F sharp and F natural as a response to the D natural and D sharp of bar 9, when transposed into the tonic key, uses the pitches D sharp and D natural for that very

same melodic idiosyncrasy, thus pulling a consequence of the *Grundgestalt* into line with the *Grundgestalt* itself.

The first destabilising element in the second group in the exposition was the E flat at bar 70, the dominant of the subsequent A flat passage at bar 91. At bar 233, the equivalent point in the recapitulation of bar 70 in the exposition, a C natural destabilises A major (example 11). C natural is the dominant of F natural (which the major tonality deprived us a proper reprise of) and when the equivalent of bar 91's A flat material comes around at bar 254 it is in F major. This takes care of the problems with F sharp in the exposition's second group and resolves the difficult position of the A flat section in the recapitulation by presenting the A flat section in the submediant of A minor and hence turning the passage towards the tonic's aid.

**Example 11. Schubert: String Quartet in A minor I, bars 232–34**

In the exposition Schubert stresses F sharps in the II7M chords in bars 15 and 17 to give us what was 'missing' from the *Grundgestalt*. Once either the F natural or its abetting company in the *Grundgestalt* have been resolved or justified the *raison d'être* for the II7M chord passage at bar 15 will have been removed. The II7M chord passage is a consequence of the *Grundgestalt's* F natural and the A flat passage of bar 91 is a consequence of the II7M chord's search for a G sharp. When the recapitulation comes around the II7M chord passage is omitted but the A flat passage remains, only this time it is in F major (example 12). Now the chief consequence to the mutiny against bar 9's F natural in the II7M chords has sided entirely with the *Grundgestalt*. This explains why the passage containing the II7M chords was omitted from the recapitulation; by giving us the A flat major section in F major Schubert

not only takes away the II7M chords' support but converts that support into an affirmative statement of F natural over F sharp undermining the reason for the II7M chords' existence to begin with.

**Example 12. Schubert: String Quartet in A minor I, bars 253–60**

The image displays two systems of musical notation for Schubert's String Quartet in A minor, Example 12, bars 253–60. The first system, labeled '253', spans from bar 253 to 260 and includes staves for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The second system, labeled '259', spans from bar 259 to 260 and includes staves for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The notation is in treble clef for the violins and bass clef for the viola and cello. The music features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes, and dynamic markings such as 'pp' and 'tr'.

A difficulty is created by the F major rendition of the exposition's A flat section in that it undermines A major in the recapitulation as the final destination of the piece. However, A major would not work as a final key area anyway because it undermined the second key area of the exposition, C major, rather than absorbing it in any way. C natural is an important pitch in the exposition as it is the root pitch of the second key area and the note that would have changed the *Grundgestalt* from a French sixth to a German sixth, thus mollifying the difficult F natural. Added to this, A major absorbs F sharp but does not truly resolve it. A major can have an F sharp in II7M lead to a G sharp but F sharp is not dissonant in A major. It is no longer the chromatic element in II7M and therefore it does not generate the same tension as it did in its first appearance. Consequently a move to G sharp does not sound so much

like a resolution, more a normal progression. A minor must return to close the piece; even if a C natural leading to a passage in F major did not appear in the recapitulation to undermine the major key.

### ‘Coda’

At bar 275 we appear to come across a coda. The material is essentially the opening music in the opening key but at bar 285, the equivalent moment that had the *Grundgestalt*, Schubert has made some changes (example 13). He avoids the D sharp in the melody (indeed, it is omitted from the harmony) and follows the originally anticipated melodic line discussed earlier by moving to a B instead of creating a chromatic line from D to E. The lower voices are also different. They do not move to F natural, nor do they move to F sharp. Rather, they maintain an E pedal setting us up for a large final cadence. The second violin contains a G sharp which, at every other bar, resolves to an A. Effectively both contentious notes in the *Grundgestalt* have been neutralised and the G sharp that was so important to soothing the damage those notes created has become enmeshed in the resolved music.

### Example 13. Schubert: String Quartet in A minor I, 282–93

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

The image shows a musical score for four instruments: Violin I (Vln I), Violin II (Vln II), Viola (Vla), and Violoncello (Vc). The score is divided into three measures, with the first measure starting at bar 289. The first measure features a forte (ff) dynamic. The second measure features a pianissimo (pp) dynamic. The third measure features a forte (ff) dynamic and includes trills (tr) in the violin parts. The Vln I part has a trill on the final note of the third measure. The Vln II part has a trill on the final note of the third measure. The Vla part has a trill on the final note of the third measure. The Vc part has a trill on the final note of the third measure.

The melodic line continues its ascending pattern past the dominant and further acknowledges the dialectic by peaking at an F natural. At bar 287 the melodic shape is greatly similar to the II7M material from bar 15 but with all diatonic pitches. This melody which echoes the II7M chords is repeated just as they were (although this time highlighting the relationship between F natural and D natural) only it skips the bars that followed each chord with inappropriate resolutions in the exposition. This omission justifies the exercise undertaken earlier in this analysis of using the first notes of every hypermeter strong-beat to identify an arpeggio. The melodic line even descends another third in bar 290 to a B, this time a B natural as opposed to the B flat in bar 19.

The music halts on a diminished seventh chord like the one that was heard halfway through the development (bars 140–45) but this time it is sounded over an E pedal. Consequently we have an extended E major chord, a chord the II7M chords (which have just been mimicked) had longed to resolve to in the exposition. In this form the chord is decorated with a ninth, F natural, which further undermines the II7M chords' existence in the first place. This chord, one will recognize, is also a chromatically normalised version of the arpeggio that was spelled out by the hypermetric downbeats in the bar 15 passage. Even the rhythm of the melody that was interrupted by the *Grundgestalt's* intrusion onto the third beat of the bar has been removed at bar 285 to continue the dotted minims up until the final cadential bars of the movement.

One partially disruptive quality in the *Grundgestalt* has yet to be dealt with: the use of the French sixth. The unusual form of that augmented sixth (for Schubert) is acknowledged and overridden at bar

291 where a German sixth chord is sounded (example 13).<sup>22</sup> It is surrounded by rests so that it is made conspicuous. Where in bar 9 the F natural was dissonant against a B natural it is in bar 291 stabilised by a C natural (the note that was the root of the antithetical key area is again the note that restores order to the thesis).

A German sixth appeared in bar 21 but Graubart regards that chord part of a 'Phrygian cadence employing an augmented sixth [that is] a German sixth with French spice'.<sup>23</sup> Therefore it is a chord that is something of a hybrid between the French sixth that identifies the problematic nature of the *Grundgestalt* and the German sixth that would resolve much of the associated problems therein. This makes bar 21 an interesting dramatisation of the dialectic's struggle. The German sixth in bar 291–92 is an entirely different entity thanks largely to its new context. It is placed in a very different atmosphere, underscored by methods just mentioned and yet to be discussed, and comes at a point when the issues that distracted from its first appearance in bar 21 have been dealt with.

The German sixth at the end of the work reintroduces D sharp to the palette, though in a very different way to D sharp's introduction in the *Grundgestalt*. Where it once was part of a chromatic line causing disunity, it is now part of an arpeggio which strives to show concurrence among various contentious pitches in the dialectic, thereby illustrating how the issues in this work were resolved using material inherent within the original terms of opposition. Furthermore, in this way two of the three motivic elements (chromatic line and arpeggio), identified in this work, are commented on in one move with the use of this chord. We will find, however, that the third motivic element is also present at this moment. When we consider the chords that precede and succeed it we find the bass line spells out a chromatic neighbour-note motif with the notes E–D sharp–E. This virtually unites the three motivic devices that were useful to my interpretation of this work.

The arpeggios in the upper and lower lines of the German sixth of bar 291–92 connect the root pitches of the exposition's two key areas with the pitches that were originally contentious. In the upper voice, C

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<sup>22</sup> Brian Newbould, *Schubert: The Music and the Man* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1997), p. 397 discusses Schubert's preference for the German form.

<sup>23</sup> Graubart, 'Integration in Schubert', p. 41.

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# **Tensions between the ‘serious’ and the ‘popular’ in music: Josephine Lang’s compositional environment**

**Aisling Kenny**

## **‘High’ and ‘low’ culture in the nineteenth century**

In her seminal book, *Gender and the Musical Canon*, Marcia Citron highlights the existence in art of a dichotomy between ‘high’ and ‘low’ culture.<sup>1</sup> By the nineteenth century ‘high’ art, in a general sense, had come to be associated with the masculine and ‘low’ art with the feminine. Examples of this kind of division may be observed in the artistic output of both sexes, namely in literature, painting and music. This generally accepted ideology of ‘high’ culture as masculine and ‘low’ culture as feminine manifested itself in many respects within the musical world of the nineteenth century. The perceived connection, for example, between such composers as Chopin, Schubert and Mendelssohn with feminine genres such as song and miniature piano works has indeed been a negative component in reception of these composers. This traditional linkage of these genres with the feminine in effect undermined the public’s perception of these composers as purveyors of ‘high’ art music. ‘Serious’ music was indeed predominantly linked with male musicians and in the nineteenth century it became increasingly valued for its aesthetic qualities. Paradoxically, this music began to occupy a more valuable position in society as it began to be stripped of its social function. In contrast, women’s musical activities, which were limited to the home, were viewed as trivial. Unlike public concerts mostly given by male performers, women’s music often served a particular function, either as a pedagogical tool or as entertainment in

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<sup>1</sup> Marcia Citron relates that this hierarchy within art did not always exist, but resulted from changes in the economic structure of the family around 1700. Such revisionist social structures led to a feminising of art forms that has endured to the present day. According to Citron, ‘the principal hierarchy in art has been a division into fine arts (high) and decorative or applied arts, or crafts (low).’<sup>1</sup> These lower art forms as a result suffered a diminution in their artistic worth. See Marcia Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 127. Hereafter referred to Citron, *Gender*.

the salon.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, there lay many subtle and not so subtle boundaries within the musical *milieux* of the day: the whole range of music covered in the *Gesellschaftslied*, as discussed by Byrne Bodley, provides a fitting example of the tensions embodied in this genre.<sup>3</sup>

The standard of musical performance varied extensively in the different salons, ranging from the musically mediocre to the sublime: Clara Schumann, for example, gave private recitals in the salons of Berlin.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, Fanny Hensel's salon which hosted the weekly *Sonntagsmusik* was considered 'one of the most important sites for music-making in Berlin'.<sup>5</sup> The cases of Hensel and Schumann, however, proved to be the exception to the rule and the common association of women's music with light entertainment in the home had a negative impact on society's perception of the music of many female composers. Although Josephine Lang's Lieder aspired towards the *Kunstlied* revolutionised by Schubert, her musical environment was found wanting. It appears that the repertoire of the typical salon in Munich left much to be desired. To the disapproval of Felix Mendelssohn, Lang

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<sup>2</sup> Citron, *Gender*, p. 104.

<sup>3</sup> Lorraine Byrne Bodley explores the context of the *Gesellschaftslied* at length in her paper, 'Schubert's Literary Genius and Eclectic Imagination: Questions of Musical Inheritance.' Guest lecture, Department of Music, University College Dublin, 1 November 2001. Hereafter referred to as Byrne Bodley, 'Schubert's Literary Genius'. See also the chapter entitled 'The Dilemma of the Popular, The Volk, the Composer and the Culture of Art Music', in *Cultivating Music, The Aspirations, Interests, and Limits of German Culture*, ed. by David Gramit (California: University of California Press, 2002), pp. 63–91 for a comprehensive discussion of the schism between 'serious' and 'popular' music.

<sup>4</sup> David Ferris, 'Public Performance and Private Understanding: Clara Wieck's Concerts in Berlin', *Journal of the American Musicological Association*, 56/2 (2003), 351–407 (p. 351). Hereafter referred to as Ferris, 'Public Performance'.

<sup>5</sup> Emily D. Bilski and Emily Braun, 'The Music Salon', in *Jewish Women and their Salons: The Power of Conversation*, ed. by Emily D. Bilski and Emily Braun (New York and New Haven: Jewish Museum and Yale University Press, 2005), pp. 38–49 (p. 44).

gave many performances in these salons.<sup>6</sup> In stark contrast to these mediocre musical activities, however, the songs Lang composed and performed in this context transcended the limitations of the Munich drawing room.

Within the high/low cultural divide many connected dichotomies existed: public vs. private, professional vs. amateur, non-functional vs. functional and, the 'serious' vs. the 'popular'. The aim of this chapter is not to negate such tensions but rather to explore their impact on such female composers as Josephine Lang and her musical environment. The public musical arena, where music was published, performed, and critically received, was generally dominated by professional male musicians. Women's musical pursuits, on the other hand, normally occurred in the private domain,<sup>7</sup> which was largely associated with amateur musical performance. The American musicologist Nancy Reich argues that with the rise of an increasingly prosperous middle class more women took part in amateur musical activities during the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>8</sup> While this was positive with regard to women's participation in music in general, it certainly had an adverse effect on women composers, placing their music in the category of musical amateur. Essentially it meant that it was much more difficult for a female composer to distinguish herself in musical circles. Reich also states that, no matter how talented they were, women musicians were restricted to musical activities in a domestic setting,<sup>9</sup> thus pointing to the confinement of women's musical endeavours by social conditions and ideologies. That Lang's performances took place largely in the salons is evidence of this. Lang

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<sup>6</sup> Harald Krebs and Sharon Krebs, *Josephine Lang Her Life and Songs* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 43. Hereafter referred to as Krebs and Krebs, *Josephine Lang*.

<sup>7</sup> Marcia J. Citron, 'Women and the Lied 1775–1850', in *Women Making Music*, ed. by Jane Bowers & Judith Tick (Illinois: Macmillan Press, 1987), pp. 224–48 (p. 224).

<sup>8</sup> Nancy B. Reich, 'European Composers and Musicians, ca. 1800–1890', in *Women and Music: A History*, ed. by Karin Pendle, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), pp. 147–74 (p. 147). Hereafter referred to as Reich, 'European Composers and Musicians'.

<sup>9</sup> Reich, 'European Composers and Musicians', p. 172.

did, however, enjoy the success of getting many of her songs published in her lifetime, a remarkable achievement for a female composer at that time. This success, however, did not translate into a lasting imprint in music history and musicology (although this has begun to change in recent decades). This lack of longevity does not reflect a dearth in the quality of Lang's music but rather the judgement of women's music in the past as being dilettantish and unworthy of scholarly examination.

### **Gendered implications within genres**

Josephine Lang, for the most part, composed songs and piano pieces. Typical of female composers of that era, she did not experiment with large-scale genres or 'masculine forms'. This was in part due to a lack of sufficient education in musical composition but also perhaps a fear of violating the boundaries that were considered 'proper' for a woman at that time. The association of women with such 'minor' genres was also linked to the hierarchy of genre<sup>10</sup> which existed in the domains of the 'public' and 'private'. The music of the public arena, namely the concert hall, consisted of more complex, large-scale works such as symphonies or in the world of music theatre, opera. The salon, on the other hand, a musical sphere largely associated with women, comprised smaller genres, mainly songs and piano pieces which were not heard in the concert hall.<sup>11</sup> Women tended to compose music for other women to perform, deliberately simple in style and easily performed by amateur musicians in this salon context. Such songs were regularly published in almanacs intended specifically for women, a good example of which is found in the songs of Luise Reichardt. Some female composers were able to break free from these limitations: Josephine Lang's songs were published by many leading publishing houses in Germany including Falter und Sohn in Munich, Kistner, Breitkopf und Härtel, and Schlesinger among many others. She was at times criticized, however, for the difficulty of both the piano and vocal parts of her songs. An

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<sup>10</sup> For a more detailed evaluation of the hierarchical nature of genre, see Citron, *Gender*, pp. 120–32.

<sup>11</sup> Valerie Woodring Goertzen, 'The Eighteenth Century', in *From Convent to Concert Hall A Guide to Women Composers*, ed. by Martha Furman Schleifer and Sylvia Glickman (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2003), pp. 91–152 (p. 91).



important example of this is found in a letter from Franz Hauser, a famous baritone of the day and a key figure in the Bach revival.<sup>12</sup> Although he was an admirer of Lang's songs, Hauser believed they were far too difficult for the average performer. On 30 October 1847 he wrote to Lang:

You know well what an interest I have taken in them [your songs], and how highly I value everything you write, and therefore you must permit me to tell you as well when I do not agree with you. [...] Do you know with what I am not in agreement? With your piano playing. You play too well and you expect other people to do the same, and it is too much. With your singing it is the same thing. There are very few singers who can handle their voice the way you can – at least, I know of no one else besides [Jenny] Lind – for her, too, nothing is too high or too low.<sup>13</sup>

Hauser's comparison with Jenny Lind, the most prominent diva of the day, is telling as it acknowledges Lang as a skilled performer, but Hauser's comments also serve to illustrate the instability of Lang's position as an aspiring professional female composer. For whom was she writing her songs? Even if she herself did not take this into consideration, publishers, keenly discerning of their market, were acutely aware of their potential audience. Therefore, it was difficult for women composers like Lang to find a market for their songs. In April 1878 the renowned British composer Ethel Smyth confided to Clara Schumann: 'He (Dr. Hase) told me that a certain Frau Lang had written some very good songs but they had no sale.'<sup>14</sup> The relative technical difficulties and intricacies of Lang's songs suggest that they were not intended for the average amateur musician. In the nineteenth century, a woman's ability to play the piano was viewed as a social

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<sup>12</sup> John Warrack and Douglass Seaton, 'Hauser, Franz', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. by Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, 29 vols (London: Macmillan, 2001), ix, 146–47 (p. 146).

<sup>13</sup> Letter from Franz Hauser to Lang, 30 October 1847, cited in Krebs and Krebs, *Josephine Lang*, p. 133.

<sup>14</sup> Letter from Ethel Smyth to Clara Schumann, April 1878, cited in *Women in Music: An Anthology of Source Readings from the Middle Ages to the Present Day*, ed. by Carol Neuls-Bates (New York: Harper & Row, 1982), p. 105.

accomplishment and increased desirability for marriage.<sup>15</sup> Over-achievement in music, however, was considered unattractive and women's musical education suffered because of this invisible ceiling which was placed on the musical education of the vast majority of women in the nineteenth century.

As alluded to earlier, women's music tended to possess a 'function', but the implications of such functionality demand further discourse: the 'functional' role of women's music in the contemporary social climate implied that this music, namely the music of the salon, lacked a higher aesthetic function. Citron describes the distinction between the two domains: 'Lower art has tended to stress practicality, the present, and plurality of class [whereas] [...] the higher arts have prided themselves on timelessness and non-functionality.'<sup>16</sup> High art music or men's music therefore was valued for its transcendent quality whereas the music of the drawing room, that is, women's music, had an immediate social function. This distinction between the functional and non-functional highlights the subordinate position of music in the woman's domain, which made it difficult for aspiring female composers to draw serious critical attention to their musical compositions.

### **Women's music: 'serious' or 'popular'?**

The focus of this chapter is on one of the corresponding hierarchies mentioned earlier, namely the 'serious' and the 'popular' and its bearing on female composers. This related configuration manifested itself in the inherent association of the professional, public, and most likely male composer with 'serious' music and the amateur female musician with the 'popular'. Linda Whitesitt observes the close connections between popular music and the family,<sup>17</sup> implying that women's music, to a large extent, became inseparably bound up with the 'popular'. According to popular music scholar Simon Frith: 'in the nineteenth century the equation of the serious with the mind and the popular with the body was indicative of the way in which high culture was established in

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<sup>15</sup> Reich, 'European Composers and Musicians', p. 98.

<sup>16</sup> Citron, *Gender*, p. 128.

<sup>17</sup> Linda Whitesitt, 'Women's Support and Encouragement of Music and Musicians', in *Women and Music: A History*, ed. by Karin Pendle, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), pp. 481–94 (p. 485).

Europe.<sup>18</sup> The creativity and cultural productivity of the male mind was revered whereas females were valued for their reproductive qualities, and deemed to be incapable or unworthy of creating serious art.<sup>19</sup> This conservative ideology had an adverse psychological affect on women composers – an affect that can be readily observed in evaluation of women's attitudes to their art. Citron argues that this manifested itself in the lives of female composers through an 'anxiety of authorship'<sup>20</sup> which can often be detected in 'ambivalence, and contradictory statements about one's activities.'<sup>21</sup> Like Clara Schumann, Lang reveals embarrassment at her attempts to compose, constantly referring to her Lieder as 'Unkraut'<sup>22</sup> (weeds). Referring to a new collection of songs she has written, she says 'the 'weeds' again began to run wild!'<sup>23</sup> Also, when asking Mendelssohn for his agreement to dedicate her op.12 to him, Lang asks: 'Would you be embarrassed to accept this lowly dedication?'<sup>24</sup> This question unveils Lang's obvious lack of confidence with regard to her compositional abilities. Nancy Reich points out another possible cause of embarrassment to women composers:

The emphasis on the home as the proper sphere of woman and the subsequent 'cult of domesticity' that developed during the first half of

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<sup>18</sup> Simon Frith describes how these constructed connections between the mind with the 'serious' and the body with the 'popular' have manifested themselves in the way audiences participate in 'classical music' concerts where the physical is completely restrained. See Simon Frith, *Performing Rites on the Value of the Popular* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 124.

<sup>19</sup> For more information on women's relationships to creativity, see Citron, *Gender*, pp. 44–79.

<sup>20</sup> Citron discusses the implications of this 'anxiety of authorship' in *Gender*, pp. 54–78.

<sup>21</sup> Citron, *Gender*, p. 54.

<sup>22</sup> For one example of Lang's designation of her songs as 'weeds', see Marbach, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, letter from Lang to Eduard Eyth (undated, but probably 1861, according to Harald and Sharon Krebs) Eyth 28801.

<sup>23</sup> Letter from Lang to Ferdinand Hiller, 27 February 1870, cited in Krebs and Krebs, *Josephine Lang*, p. 190.

<sup>24</sup> Letter from Lang to Mendelssohn, 10 June 1844, cited in Krebs and Krebs, *Josephine Lang*, p. 126.

the nineteenth century must have caused considerable conflict for and perhaps even embarrassment to professional women musicians.<sup>25</sup>

Reich's perceptive comments reiterate that women's intrinsic connection to the private, domestic sphere had the affect of limiting their musical experience. Women's ambitions in music were placed against society's expectation of how a woman should behave resulting in this feeling of unease at their professional inclinations.

Women, indeed, were not the only sex to endure the ramifications of the dichotomy that existed between 'serious' and 'popular' music. Indeed the term 'popular' immediately invokes the notion that this music must not be serious and indeed that the intentions behind its creation are not conscientious. As stated above, the broader domain of gender studies shows how the association of 'female' genres of music with composers such as Chopin and Schubert has triggered negative criticism of these composers.<sup>26</sup> Despite this adverse reaction, however, Schubert's revolutionising of the Lied, a genre previously considered to be inferior to instrumental music, both highlighted the dichotomy between serious and popular music but also served to narrow this dichotomy. It is also interesting to consider the repositioning of the Lied from the drawing room to the concert hall in the later nineteenth century, which suitably illustrates the fluidity and instability of this dichotomy but also a reclaiming of 'song', or more specifically the 'art song', as a 'serious genre.' Conversely, the rise of the étude from a 'technical exercise' to a concert piece also highlights the changeable nature of this dichotomy between 'major' and 'minor' genres.

One instance in Josephine Lang's early musical career convincingly unearths the tensions between the 'serious' and the

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<sup>25</sup> Nancy B. Reich, 'Women as Musicians: A Question of Class', in *Musicology and Difference: Gender and Sexuality in Music Scholarship*, ed. by Ruth Solie (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 125–46 (p. 130).

<sup>26</sup> Jeffrey Kallberg refers to the devaluation of the nocturne as a genre which occurred as a result of its association with the 'feminine' realm. See Jeffrey Kallberg, 'Gender', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. by Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, 29 vols (London: Macmillan, 2001), ix, 645–47.

‘popular.’ Until her marriage to the poet-lawyer Christian Reinhold Köstlin (1813–56) in 1842, Lang was based in Munich. Years earlier as an eleven-year old child Lang performed publicly in Munich. This debut recital was in 1826 with the Munich Museum Society, a private society for which attendance at concerts was limited to its members. As a gifted child, Lang was probably invited to perform because of her *Wunderkind* status – a phenomenon which was highly fashionable at the time.<sup>27</sup> Amidst the conventional repertoire she performed was a set of variations by the popular contemporary composer, Henri Herz (1803–88). Characteristic of the Leipzig composers’ attitudes to ostentatious virtuosity, Robert Schumann publicly criticized such Parisian virtuoso-pianist composers as Herz, Thalberg and Kalkbrenner, who were extremely popular in Munich on account of the virtuosic style of their compositions.<sup>28</sup> In Schumann’s opinion, such virtuosity and empty showmanship lacked real musical depth. Schumann was also highly critical of their ‘mercenary’ attitude to composition. Leon Plantinga points out that ‘there was a strong commercialism about the Parisian virtuosi, and that the pianists themselves did nothing to dispel it.’<sup>29</sup> Steve Lindeman, however, challenges Schumann’s criticism claiming that many of Herz’s works are of ‘considerable merit.’<sup>30</sup> Schumann, it should be added, had once been an admirer of Herz’s piano music and modelled his unfinished piano concerto in F on Herz’s first piano concerto. Byrne Bodley points out that ‘in ‘high art’ music it is sometimes difficult to differentiate between popular music and popular musicians and in the nineteenth century the cult of the star was extensively, but haphazardly practiced.’<sup>31</sup> This argument serves to

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<sup>27</sup> Roberta Werner, ‘Josephine Lang: The Expression of Life’ (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1992), p. 39.

<sup>28</sup> For an example of Schumann’s ongoing criticism of Herz, see Schumann’s review of Herz’s Second Piano Concerto in: Robert Schumann, Schumann, Robert, *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker*, ed. by Marin Kreisig, 2 vols (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1914), I, 153–54.

<sup>29</sup> Leon Plantinga, *Schumann as Critic* (New York: Da Capo, 1976), p. 19.

<sup>30</sup> Steve Lindeman, ‘Herz, Henri’, in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. by Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, 29 vols (London: Macmillan, 2001), xi, 452–53 (p. 453).

<sup>31</sup> Byrne Bodley, ‘Schubert’s Literary Genius’, p. 5.

highlight that the boundaries between the 'serious' and the 'popular' were not always so clear. Connected with this cult of the star were the varied perceptions of virtuosity in the nineteenth century, over which there was an ongoing contemporary debate. Mendelssohn, Schumann and Brahms believed that virtuosity was evident in the development of musical ideas and not the type of showmanship prevalent in performances, even by such eminent musicians and composers as Liszt and Paganini. While Schumann's criticisms are musically valid, they also open a grey area as to the tensions of the 'serious' and the 'popular' in art music at that time.

Felix Mendelssohn also criticized the repertoire of the salons in Munich and complained about this in a letter to his brother Paul:

Even the best pianists had no idea that Mozart and Haydn also composed for the piano; they had just the faintest notion of Beethoven and consider the music of Kalkbrenner, Field and Hummel scholarly [...] The young ladies, quite able to perform adequate pieces very nicely, tried to break their fingers with juggler's tricks and ropedancer's feats of Herz's.<sup>32</sup>

While Mendelssohn's and Schumann's shared criticism points to the inadequacies of women's musical activities in Munich, it also reveals the underlying friction that existed between the 'serious' and the 'popular'. This kind of elitist attitude essentially fostered an unintentional negative attitude towards the very repertoire that women performed. My intention here is not to vilify Mendelssohn or Schumann in highlighting their criticism but merely to point out that these tensions did exist and were part of the cultural climate of their day. Through their criticism, both Mendelssohn and Schumann were trying to raise the level of performance in the private domain. Therefore, although it is a testament to Lang's musical ability that she was able to master Herz's difficult piano music at the age of eleven, criticism of Herz and the virtuoso-composers serves to highlight the limitations even on female performance because of the kind of music education they received. We

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<sup>32</sup> Letter from Felix Mendelssohn to Paul Mendelssohn, 27 September 1830 in Felix Mendelssohn, *Letters*, trans. by G. Selden Goth (London: Paul Elek, 1946), p. 84.

gain a clearer picture if we realize that this criticism is intended to be constructive, and yet it reveals the commonplace belief that ‘genuine value could not be discovered in the popular’,<sup>33</sup> a perception with which such female composers as Josephine Lang had to battle with both socially and internally.

Munich was an active musical city in early nineteenth-century Germany, but like Vienna, however, ‘preference was for the familiar and not the new and demanding.’<sup>34</sup> Although the quality of concert life in Munich would not have equalled that of Berlin, interesting parallels can be drawn between the two. David Ferris’ article on the private performances given by Clara Wieck in Berlin illustrates how she and Robert Schumann were indeed trying to raise the level of private performance in opposition to the public concert life of the day.<sup>35</sup> It is indicative of these tensions that they were using an environment, typically associated with the performance of ‘popular’ music as a forum to showcase their own ‘serious’ music. This reversal of roles, in that the public arena now comprised a more popular style, highlights once again the fine dividing line between the ‘popular’ and the ‘serious’ within music at the time.

### **Josephine Lang’s compositional environment**

In Munich, Lang taught piano for up to eight hours a day from the time she was a teenager until her marriage in 1842. In another use of the term ‘serious’, it could be argued that women’s activities in composition were not viewed as ‘serious’ enough to allow them dedicate themselves to it fulltime. Many female composers were very much occupied with other musical activities such as teaching and performing in salons, which left little time for composition. Therefore even before her marriage to Christian Reinhold Köstlin brought about a virtual hiatus in her compositional activity, Lang’s active role as a pedagogue and performer in Munich detracted from the time she could spend

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<sup>33</sup> Byrne Bodley, ‘Schubert’s Literary Genius’, p. 1.

<sup>34</sup> Byrne Bodley, ‘Schubert’s Literary Genius’, p. 5.

<sup>35</sup> Ferris, ‘Public Performance’, 351–407.

composing.<sup>36</sup> In his article on Lang in *Aus dem Tonleben unserer Zeit*, Ferdinand Hiller, a prominent composer and close friend of Felix Mendelssohn – and a composer who did much for women’s music education – makes reference to the little time Lang had for composition. Sympathetically he states: ‘Only in the quietude of the night and on important walks, could she listen to the inspiration of her creative genius.’<sup>37</sup>

Artistically sophisticated composers such as Josephine Lang were affected by these conflicting factors as they were situated at the very core of the dichotomy between ‘public’ and ‘private’ and indeed the ‘serious’ and the ‘popular’. How was Lang capable of achieving professionalism in her career in the face of such tensions and obstacles? Being surrounded by a wealth of female professional role models – her mother and grandmother were professional opera singers – certainly inspired confidence in her abilities. Yet they were not composers and the lack of a female compositional tradition left many women composers feeling isolated by their choice of profession. Lang’s famous encounter with Mendelssohn in 1830 doubtlessly inspired a positive affect on her compositional career. As Harald Krebs believes, ‘she realised she was destined for something more than teaching piano and entertaining in Munich salons.’<sup>38</sup> Lang’s discerning choice of the poetry she set which included poems by Goethe, Schiller, Heine, Uhland and Wilhelm Müller, reveals her attempt to set herself apart from the realm of typical drawing room song aesthetic and associate herself with a higher musical aesthetic which composers like Reichardt and Zelter had worked so hard to establish.<sup>39</sup> Features of Lang’s musical style also betray a desire to break free from the confines of the salon. Her sophisticated use of harmony for example, and the intricacy of her piano parts reveal that these songs were not intended for the average amateur musician. Granted they are not ferociously taxing, yet they

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<sup>36</sup> Harald and Sharon Krebs make reference to the ‘obstacles’ of teaching and performing that curtailed Lang’s compositional activity somewhat during her youth. See Krebs and Krebs, *Josephine Lang*, p. 223.

<sup>37</sup> Ferdinand Hiller, *Aus dem Tonleben unserer Zeit*, 2 (Leipzig: H. Mendelssohn, 1868), p. 124.

<sup>38</sup> Krebs and Krebs, *Josephine Lang*, p. 22.

<sup>39</sup> Byrne Bodley, ‘Schubert’s Literary Genius’, p. 10.



present their own challenges to the performer: the Goethe settings, 'Sie liebt mich' op.34, no.4, and 'Frühzeitiger Frühling' op.6, no.3, for example, possess relentless piano figurations which are to be played in an *Allegro tempo*.<sup>40</sup>

Referring back to Franz Hauser's criticism of Lang's songs, interestingly, Schubert was faced with the same criticism of his Lieder by a number of publishing houses. In both cases such comments poignantly illustrate the tensions composers faced: namely those between the public/private, professional/amateur and of course the 'serious' and the 'popular'. In the case of such composers as Josephine Lang, this dichotomy was blurred. An obscuring of these divisions is also evident in the career of Fanny Hensel, who carried on the tradition of her mother's salon in Berlin. Music-making in the Mendelssohn salon went way beyond the confines of conventional drawing room song in the standard of performance and the range of repertoire performed. Barbara Hahn speaks of the absence of a clear distinction between professional and amateur within the Mendelssohn salon,<sup>41</sup> illustrating once again the blurring of boundaries between the public and private realms that these composers experienced.

Where did talented composers like Josephine Lang, who were indeed 'serious' about their compositions, fit in this musical context, in the presence of such debilitating tensions? Lang's compositional endeavours lay *between* the areas of the 'serious' and the 'popular' quotes, but into which realm she fitted is suggested through the publication of her songs. As stated earlier, most female composers of the day were published in women's almanacs intended specifically for a female readership. Josephine Lang's songs, on the other hand, were published by many leading publishing houses of the day. Her songs were also widely reviewed, the most notable of these being a favourable

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<sup>40</sup> Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Josephine Lang, 'Frühzeitiger Frühling', MS Mus. fol. 54c, (pp. 6r–6v). For a printed edition of these songs see *Josephine Lang Selected Songs*, ed. by Judith Tick (New York: Da Capo Press, 1982).

<sup>41</sup> Barbara Hahn, 'A dream of living together: Jewish Women in Berlin around 1800', in *Jewish Women and their Salons*, ed. by Emily D. Bilski and Emily Braun (New York and New Haven: Jewish Museum and Yale University Press, 2005), pp. 149–58 (p. 167).

review in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* in 1838 by Robert Schumann, who also published her song 'Das Traumbild' in a supplement to the journal.<sup>42</sup>

### **Josephine Lang's lieder: transcending limitations**

What is there to be learned from this glimpse at the social context of Lang's compositional environment and what significance has this in our contemporary musicological world? Indeed in the case of Josephine Lang, the dichotomy between the 'serious' and the 'popular' is beginning to be transcended and she is beginning to be considered an important exponent of the German Lied. Her contribution was unique and yet serves as a reflection on the situation for women musicians at the time. In examining Josephine Lang's career, we gain a deeper insight into the effects of pedagogical limitations on women's music in the nineteenth century. Josephine Lang attained recognition in her day that went beyond the confines of the private musical world and her musical achievement is being unearthed and justified today. An exploration of her experience as a composer adds to our understanding of the social situation for female musicians in the nineteenth century. Like many women composers of the day, Lang was deprived of a proper musical education; of those women who did receive an education, it was decidedly less thorough than that received by their male contemporaries. Fanny Hensel is a good example of such gendered musical practice. Lang achieved professional standing as a composer in her day,<sup>43</sup> not least through the musical sophistication of a large share of the Lieder she composed. Despite these achievements, however, her experience typifies that of many female composers in the nineteenth century which was in various ways rooted in the dichotomy between 'serious' and 'popular' music. Her musical output was limited to songs and piano pieces. Perhaps a fear of breaking with genres which were deemed proper to her sex or lack of musical education prevented her from experimenting with larger genres. Furthermore, while Lang attained the status of professional at certain points throughout her

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<sup>42</sup> The review is reprinted in Robert Schumann, *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker*, ed. by Martin Kreisig, 2 vols (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1914), II, 334.

<sup>43</sup> Krebs and Krebs, *Josephine Lang*, p. 25.

career, her marriage and the demanding roles of wife and mother had a drastic effect on her compositional output. Considering Josephine Lang in the musical context of her day is important in allowing us to build on our perception of the complex social fabric of the nineteenth century but also to consider its relationship to the present day. In conclusion, it is fascinating to think that if we were to consider the current dichotomy between the 'serious' and the 'popular' today, how the music of composers like Lang would be firmly situated on the 'serious' side, revealing the ever fluid, volatile, complex and fascinating ways which we continue to think about and appreciate music.

## **Acknowledgements**

This chapter was funded by a Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship from the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences.

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# **Time as a circular spectrum and the retrospective device in Gustav Mahler's Symphony no. 3 (1895–1896)**

**Jennifer Lee**

The function of this chapter is to examine Mahler's philosophical concept of time and the embodiment of this within the programmatic and structural model of his six-movement Symphony no. 3. This chapter shall argue that the composer's newfound concept of time was borne out of Friedrich Nietzsche's fundamental doctrine in his book *Also Sprach Zarathustra*<sup>1</sup> (*Thus Spoke Zarathustra*) of 1885, from which Mahler drew directly in the fourth movement of his third symphony. It must be stated at this initial stage, however, that the contextual significance of Nietzsche's work extends far beyond the borders of the fourth movement, instead radiating from this crucial midpoint in both directions and acting as the central anchor from which all contributory philosophical expressions in the symphony evolve. The subject of Mahler's concept and treatment of time with regard to Nietzschean principals is but one of the ingredients exhibiting a contextual and often disguised correlation between the literary and musical works mentioned above.

In examining the composer's conscious reconditioning of philosophical thought as a result of his comprehension of Nietzsche's aforementioned book, I draw upon three interconnected spheres of time, whose dimensions, as I will illustrate, are addressed within the various philosophical-programmatic layers of Mahler's third symphony. These are the consideration of a universal quantity of time, the measured lifetime of man, and finally, the significant juxtaposition of night and day scenes respectively in the fourth and fifth movements. Within the compass of these three dimensions of time, the composer's concentrated awareness of self as an element of the larger whole of Mankind will be examined in four transitional and symbiotic parts: the process of *becoming*, what has now *become*, *what we have in us to*

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<sup>1</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for Everyone and No One*, trans. by R. J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin Books, 1969). Hereafter referred to as Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.

become or the 'prospective self', and finally, the manifestation of a transcendent joy in *having been*.

The immediately apparent sympathetic association between Nietzsche's book and Mahler's third symphony is the extract from the concluding part of *Thus spoke Zarathustra*<sup>2</sup>, *Zarathustra's Roundelay*, the so-called *Mitternachtlied* (Midnight song), which Mahler adopted to introduce the first vocal element into the symphony. The fourth movement, entitled 'What Night Tells Me', is representative of 'Mankind' within the ascending structure of the various stages of being in the work, and it is here that Nietzsche's words appear. A single alto voice opens with a foreboding call: 'Oh Mensch, gib acht' ('Oh Man, Take heed.').<sup>3</sup>

A brief examination of the programmatic contents of the original sketches of the symphony reveals an all-embracing passage of time, subdivided into six progressive stages of being, whose titles reveal an ascent characterized by an increasing complexity of consciousness and the eventual achievement of self-consciousness and retrospect, epitomized by the fourth 'Mankind' movement. (table 1)

First, it is worth considering what these titles alone disclose as an overall exercise in existentialism, propelled by an intrinsic necessity within the composer to fathom the truth of all things, including the nature and consequence of time and the profound consideration of its beginning and potential end. The very act of categorizing himself, along with the entire compass of all things, demonstrates Mahler's conscious endeavour to appease the symptoms of what David Holbrook appropriately terms the composer's 'existence-anxiety'.<sup>4</sup> It is significant to consider the irony in the fact that it is our intellectual inability to fathom the very magnitude of the universe that causes us to shrink back into the limits of our intellectual capacity, causing the symptoms of our 'existence-anxiety' to inevitably heighten.

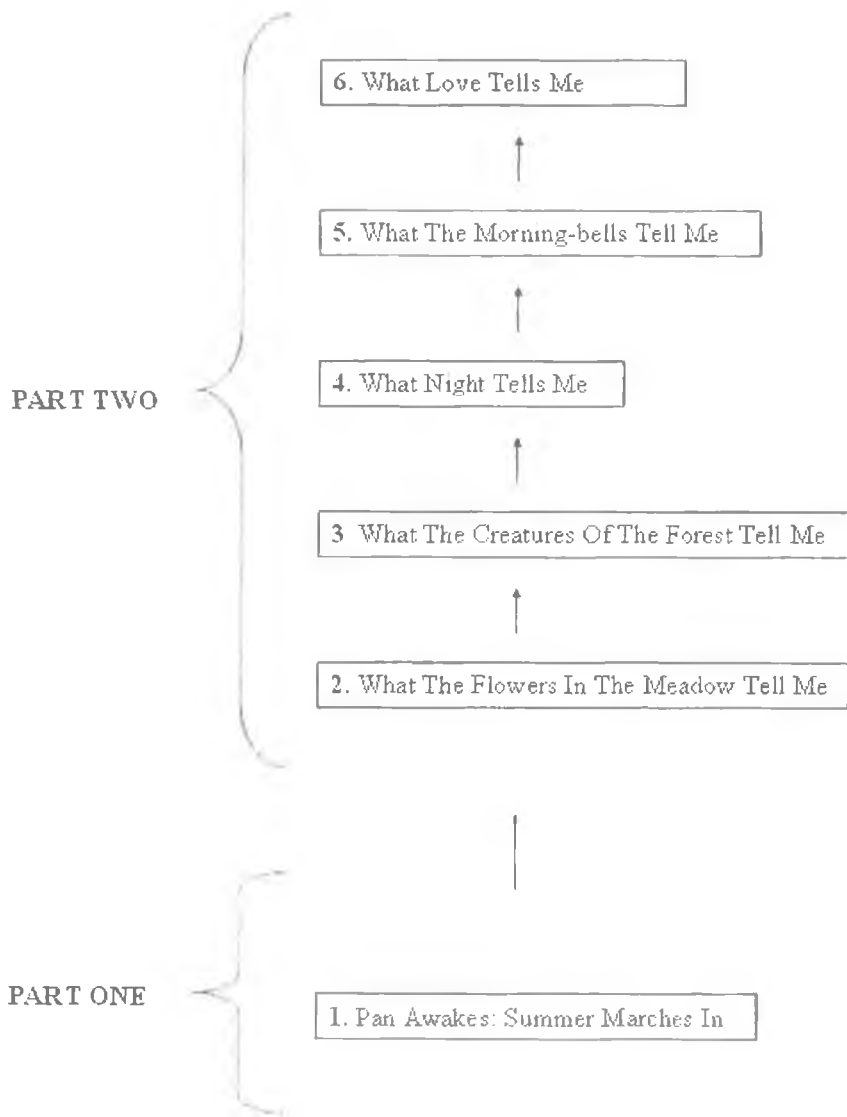
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<sup>2</sup> Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.

<sup>3</sup> Gustav Mahler, *Symphony no. 3* (New York: Dover Publications, 1987), p. 92.

<sup>4</sup> David Holbrook, *Gustav Mahler and the Courage to Be* (London: Clarke, Doble and Brendon, 1975), p. 20. Hereafter referred to as Holbrook, *Gustav Mahler*.

**Table 1. Programmatic movement titles I–VI. Gustav Mahler: Symphony no. 3.**





It is therefore conceivable that man's most instinctual intellectual activity is to put into categorical order the truths he does possess, or those at least by which he chooses to abide. The symptoms of the composer's 'existence-anxiety' originate, I believe, in a scepticism shared with Nietzsche towards the 'solutions' provided by Christian teachings regarding the problems of existence. With the rejection of these solutions comes an inherent need for a replaced or renewed doctrine. For Mahler, this meant consciously instilling in himself a denunciation towards all truths previously ingrained upon his perception of the world. This act enabled the composer to strive towards the intellectual achievement of what Nietzsche termed 'sublimation',<sup>5</sup> which is the process of self-overcoming and the ultimate affirmation of self. What attracted the composer to the idea of such a radical disposal of all truths and values, which included the rejection of Christian principals, was his ultimate quest for renewed truth, which would inevitably enhance his confirmation of self, or his *Dasein*.<sup>6</sup>

At the turn of the nineteenth century, when some of the world's most controversial debates in religion, philosophy and science were taking place, this is exactly what Nietzsche's unprecedented philosophical reasoning offered the composer, who was essentially plagued by the unyielding hunger and drive of existential enquiry. First, in considering the relationship of Mahler's philosophical inclinations to the general *Zeitgeist* of the *fin de siècle*, we may draw upon Peter

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<sup>5</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo: How One Becomes What One Is*, trans. by R. J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin Books, 1973), p. 10. Hereafter referred to as Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*.

<sup>6</sup> In German, *Dasein* is synonymous with existence: (*sein*) to be there/present; to exist. It is important to note that my use of the term *Dasein* does not conform entirely to Heidegger's context of the term, but instead is used here to represent Mahler's awareness and comprehension of his own 'being' in the world. Heidegger generally characterizes the term as the 'affective relationships with surrounding people and objects' (Simon Blackburn: *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), p.94).

Franklin's reference to the 'metaphorical circle' in relation to the self-affirming expressive function he endows to the various art forms:<sup>7</sup>

The completion of the circle comes most finally during the period I have designated as the 'late nineteenth century': The deeply rooted 'instinctual' artistic activity now joins with the fruit of conscious, rational and 'scientific' experience to produce large-scale works in which we see intense and basic emotional expressions of desire and awe, of awareness and the fear of Death, often in the light of a rational feeling that there is no 'God', that man is mortal.<sup>8</sup>

Nietzsche's philosophy imparted new solutions to the questions Mahler so frequently posed rhetorically to his contemporaries:

Why do we exist? [...] Have I really willed this life before I ever was conceived? [...] What is the object of toil and sorrow? [...] Will the meaning of life finally be revealed by death?<sup>9</sup>

The philosopher's topics of concern directly penetrated the very core of man's intellectual inquisition by continually addressing the fundamental question: Does existence have any meaning at all? For the composer, the confronting of such a question involved the consideration of his own mortality as the inevitable termination of physical identity, playing upon the possible pointlessness of man in the totality of things. This concept naturally intensified Mahler's symptoms of 'existence-anxiety' and in turn fuelled the procedure of creative reflection as a way of re-establishing his severed sense of *Dasein*. In addition to the process of creative reflection as a way of overcoming this concept, Nietzsche's

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<sup>7</sup> Peter R. Franklin, 'Mahler and the Crisis of Awareness' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of York, 1973), p. 41. Hereafter referred to as Franklin, 'Mahler and the Crisis of Awareness'.

<sup>8</sup> Franklin, 'Mahler and the Crisis of Awareness', p. 42.

<sup>9</sup> Bruno Walter, *Gustav Mahler*, trans. by James Galston (London: Severn House, 1975), p. 72.

theory of 'Eternal Recurrence of the Same'<sup>10</sup> served as an affirming alternative to this existential despair.

The first movement of the symphony, an extended dramatic sonata structure, occupies 'Part One' of an overall two-part temporal symphonic structure, which is noticeably 'top-heavy' in proportion. 'Part One' is of particular importance to our consideration of Mahler's intellectual hold on the concept of the beginning of time and the consequent inception of evolutionary existence, which progressively follows in 'Part Two'. The title itself of the first movement, 'Pan Awakes: Summer Marches In', corresponds to the internal two-part structure of the movement with an introductory section, the initial awakening of Pan leading to the summer or 'life-force' march theme. The introductory programmatic association with the Greek mythological god of Pan establishes the first fundamental inception of what I believe is a Nietzschean-inspired hypothesis.

In Nietzsche's first book, *The Birth of Tragedy*<sup>11</sup> (1872), the philosopher laments the decline and eventual eradication of Greek culture and aesthetics, which once embraced the Dionysian world-view, that is, the continual affirmation of the 'infinite primordial joy in existence'.<sup>12</sup>

With the death of Greek tragedy there was created an immense emptiness profoundly felt everywhere [...] "The great god Pan is dead!"<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Nietzsche's theory of 'Eternal Recurrence' is central to the majority of his literary works and is the basic conception of his *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* of 1885. In Nietzsche's final book, *Ecce Homo*, the philosopher describes the idea of 'Eternal Recurrence' as 'the highest formula of affirmation that can possibly be attained.' Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, p. 69.

<sup>11</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy: Out of The Spirit of Music*, trans. by Shaun Whiteside, ed. by Michael Tanner (London: Penguin Books, 2003). Hereafter referred to as Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*.

<sup>12</sup> Patricia Merivale, *Pan the Goat-God: His Myth in Modern Times* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), p. 179.

<sup>13</sup> Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, p. 22.

Here, Nietzsche employs the image of 'immense emptiness' in his description of the nature of things following the annihilation of an aesthetic ideal, (the Greek artistic-aesthetic achievement of 'perfection'), while Mahler's interaction with the onset of existence, as revealed by the programmatic elements of the first movement, involves the conscious recommencement and reawakening of the acknowledged end of the Dionysian world-view. What is evident in this regard is a cyclical perception of time, where Nietzsche's metaphorical announcement of the death of Pan becomes the very origin for Mahler's conception of the onset of life, that is, the reawakening, or rebirth of the symbol of Pan. This ancient, symbolic and composite figure was essentially re-envisioned by the composer as a retrieval of the ideal 'life-force' from its previous state of 'non-existence' following its annihilation. This is where Mahler's contribution and indeed homage to Nietzsche's philosophical doctrine may be considered. Furthermore, it is significant to consider that the image of 'immense emptiness' generally tends to alleviate the intellectual difficulty one experiences in any attempt to comprehend the nature of things before the commencement of existence. Therefore, a cyclical theory of time can be understood as perhaps the most natural inclination of human reasoning with regard to such profound matters. In fact, these cyclical conceptions of time originate in ancient philosophical thought, particularly evident in the literature of the Pythagoreans. Part of the procedure of what Nietzsche affirmed as the 'revaluation of all values'<sup>14</sup> is the denial of the Christian explanation of the nature of time: its beginning, at the hand of a creator, and its everlasting essence.<sup>15</sup> Nietzsche solidly argued that the Christian teaching of the continuation of time in a life after death immediately relocates and depreciates the individual's 'will to power'

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<sup>14</sup> Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, p. 10.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* Nietzsche's use of the phrase 'Revaluation of all values' in the chapter entitled 'Why I am Destiny' (*Ecce Homo*) is followed by its definition: "This is my formula for an act of supreme coming-to-oneself on the part of mankind which in me has become flesh and genius. It is my fate to have to be the first decent human being, to know myself in opposition to the mendaciousness of millennia ... I was the first to *discover* the truth [...]". Friedrich Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, p. 96.

(that is, his most instinctual human drive) in his own living world with promises of eternal life in another.

At the heart of Nietzsche's philosophy of time, which is an alternative to the Christian concept, is his most fundamental theory of 'Eternal Recurrence of the Same', a theme that fervently resonates throughout *Thus spoke Zarathustra*.<sup>16</sup> Nietzsche first introduced the concept of 'Eternal Recurrence of the Same' in his book, *The Gay Science* of 1884<sup>17</sup> with the following image:

This life as you now live it and have lived it, you will have to live once more and innumerable times more; and there will be nothing new in it, but every pain and every joy and every thought and sigh and everything immeasurably small or great in your life must return to you – all in the same succession and sequence – even this spider and this moonlight between the trees, and even this moment and I myself. The eternal hourglass of existence is turned over and over, and you with it, a grain of dust.<sup>18</sup>

This idea must not be confused with the Christian principal of 'Resurrection'— a concept that concerned Mahler in his preceding second symphony – for the idea of 'Eternal Recurrence of the Same' which is not associated with the return to a new ideal or 'heavenly' life, but the repetition of the same life, is a recurrence of the same to every imaginable degree. The very acceptance and overcoming of this idea is the one element, Nietzsche argues, that delivers meaning to an otherwise (and arguably) meaningless procedure. Most importantly, the adhering to the concept of 'Eternal Recurrence of the Same' enables one to base every decision and evaluation on what one would find most preferable in the repetition of the same for all eternity. This idea actively promotes the self-renewal and continual self-overcoming Nietzsche deems necessary to advance towards that which we have in us to become (otherwise known as our 'potential state') of which his literary character of Zarathustra is the metaphorical epitome. The physical or

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<sup>16</sup> Nietzsche, *Thus spoke Zarathustra*.

<sup>17</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, trans. by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1974).

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 74.

scientific reality of the theory of 'Eternal Recurrence of the Same' was, I believe, to both Nietzsche and Mahler entirely irrelevant, as it is the intellectual interaction alone with the concept that grants one the greatest opportunity to achieve a heightened and most faithful affirmation of present 'being'. In addition to this, the concept directly engages with the philosopher's theory of the ultimate striving towards the *Übermensch* (or 'over-man'), that is, the conscious process of chipping away at one's self in order to continually renew one's self, an endless striving towards the 'ideal' self-image; that which we have in us to become or the 'prospective self'. Similarly, the metaphorical figure of the *Übermensch* was intended to be, to the figure of Zarathustra, what humans are to our ancestral apes. It is the understanding of this, I believe, that attracted Mahler to a conscious adoption of the Nietzschean concept of time, as expressed in the symphony, in order to reaffirm his own sense of being and meaning in the world, ultimately providing remedy to the ever-worsening symptoms of his 'existence-anxiety'. In keeping with the gradually foreshortening measurements of time within the symphony, from the universal totality of time to the measured lifetime of man, the next level of philosophical-programmatic connotations can be examined in Mahler's setting of the Night-time and Daytime scenes in the fourth and fifth movements. As previously mentioned, the fourth movement, representing 'Mankind' in the 'evolutionary ascent', acts as the midpoint anchor of a Nietzschean-inspired programme, whereby, with the advantage now of consciousness and retrospection, the narrative voice of the symphony is channelled into a single focal centre of acute nocturnal deliberation. From this point, with one of the most significant features of human consciousness now present, that of retrospection, a blueprint of the gradual process of *becoming* (in both physical and philosophical contexts) can be traced, while the movement as a whole itself marks the concentrated nucleus of the spectrum by regarding what has now become. The acute sense of Mahler's coming to awareness of his own self (the *Sich-seiner-selbst-bewusst-werden*) is achieved effectively in the opening of the movement with his employment of an extended static and oscillating introduction in double bass and harp before the monotone alto calls for our attention and the song of man at midnight begins.

Mahler's utilization of the theme of Night for the setting of the text, which is Zarathustra's 'Midnight Song', corresponds directly with Nietzsche's recurring theme of Night as the occasion and messenger of universal truths. In a chapter entitled 'The Night Song' in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, the philosopher states:

Night has come: now my craving breaks out of me like a well; to speak I crave. Night has come; now all fountains speak louder. And my soul too is a fountain. [...] Thus sang Zarathustra.<sup>19</sup>

The opening of the text, Zarathustra's Roundelay, set by Mahler in the fourth movement reads as follows:

Oh Mensch! Gibt Acht!  
 Was Spricht die tiefe Mitternacht?  
 Ich schlief, ich schlief  
 Und aus tiefem Traum bin ich erwacht:  
 Die Welt ist tief,  
 Und tiefer als der Tag gedacht.

Oh Man! Attend!  
 What does deep midnight's voice contend?  
 I slept my sleep,  
 And now awake at dreaming's end:  
 The world is deep,  
 Deeper than the day can comprehend.<sup>20</sup>

Here we see a two-fold expression demonstrated, whereby the immediately personal awareness of self takes the form of a warning, which is projected in the opening call of the movement with deliberate repetition towards the larger compass of mankind. While the 'voice of midnight' is acknowledged here as the metaphorical bearer of an undisclosed truth, the succeeding lines ('The world is deep, deeper than the day can comprehend') reiterate the recognition that what we strive

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<sup>19</sup> Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, p. 130.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 333.

to know: 'those questions which are every man's', are essentially beyond our intellectual and conscious limits and this, in itself, is something which must be overcome.<sup>21</sup>

The composer's intentional endeavour to juxtapose the matter of reality and illusion respectively is demonstrated in the adjacent setting of the Night and Day themes of the fourth and fifth movements. The idea of waking day as the generator of truth, and dreaming night as the occasion of illusion is hereby inverted when we experience the blatant disparity of the succeeding fifth movement, as it jolts us from the preceding Midnight realm of inward sober stillness to an ultimately outward and public daytime affair involving children and chimes. Finally, the lively nature of the fifth movement only serves to further intensify the tranquillity and repossession of stillness and consciousness achieved in the final Adagio movement, entitled 'What Love Tells Me', which returns to the purely instrumental medium.

Despite the movement's dissociation from text, in contrast to its two preceding movements, the composer described the work, according to Bauer-Lechner's records, as 'perfectly articulate',<sup>22</sup> while additionally, he classifies the Adagio movement as a specifically 'higher' musical form, validating its intentional condition of transcendence:

I concluded my [...] Third Symphony with [an] Adagio: that is, with a higher as opposed to a lower form. [...] What was heavy and inert at the beginning has, at the end, advanced to the highest state of awareness: inarticulate sounds have become the most perfectly articulate. Everything is resolved into quiet "being"; the Ixion wheel of appearances has at last been brought to a standstill.<sup>23</sup>

Mahler's confirmation that the Adagio ceases the ever-revolving Ixion wheel of punishment concludes my demonstration by metaphorically attesting to the point that the movement's eventual narrative voice resists and transcends the promises of a Christian faith by annihilating

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<sup>21</sup> Holbrook, *Gustav Mahler*, p. 72.

<sup>22</sup> Natalie Bauer-Lechner, *Recollections of Gustav Mahler*, trans. by Dika Newlin (London: Faber & Faber, 1980), p. 59. Hereafter referred to as Bauer-Lechner, *Recollections of Gustav Mahler*.

<sup>23</sup> Bauer-Lechner, *Recollections of Gustav Mahler*, p. 59.



the pursuit of what is eternally ungraspable. Instead, the exertion and expression of human love, for Mahler, as the final movement verifies, is the most fundamental and functional pursuit when the concept of 'The Eternal Recurrence of the Same' is adopted, while, furthermore, it achieves the greatest assertion of being alive and the most effective encapsulation of a sense of *having been*.

Based on the arguments provided, this chapter concludes that Mahler's symptoms of existential anxiety and torment were consciously pacified through his profound comprehension of Nietzsche's life-affirming philosophy and indeed through the composer's own contribution to this doctrine. In Nietzsche's own words from the concluding part of *Thus spoke Zarathustra*:

The mystery of the night drew nearer and nearer [...] "Was *that* —life?" I will say to death. "Very well! Once more!" I am content for the first time to have lived my life.<sup>24</sup>

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## A Wind-Band in Cork in the first decade of the 1800s

### Pat O'Connell

#### Assembly Rooms

The Nobility and Gentry are respectfully informed,  
that on Saturday next, the 25th of October

There will be a Grand Concert and Ball  
*In Commemoration of our Beloved Sovereign's  
Accession to the Throne*

The concert will begin with a troop composed by Mr. Attwood,  
and will be performed by the Galway Band.

Glee 'Peace to the souls of the Heroes'

A concerto on the Grand Pianoforte by Mr. Donovan

Glee 'Strike the Harp in praise of Bragela'

Haydn's Grand Overture 'The Surprise'

Glee (by particular demand) 'The Derby Ram'

A solo on the violoncello by Mr. Atwood [sic]  
in which he will introduce a medley of Irish Airs

The Concert will conclude with

'God save the King'

The above notice appeared in the *Cork Advertiser and Commercial Register* on 18 October 1800 informing readers that a 'Grand Concert and Ball' was to take place on Saturday, 25 October in the Assembly Rooms. The soloists in this concert were the cellist Francis Attwood and pianist Mr Donovan. Francis Attwood had moved to Dublin in 1800 with the Crow St Company.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter discusses the 'Galway Band', the band of the Galway Regiment of Militia, referred to in the advertisement and outlines the military and non-military repertoire that has survived in part-books in the Manuscript Library of Trinity College, Dublin. The chapter asserts that the band belongs to the English tradition of the European genre of wind-band music referred to as *Harmoniemusik*. The pieces in the part books correspond closely to the 'individual

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<sup>1</sup> O'Regan, Susan, 'Public Concerts in the Musical Life of Cork 1754-1840' (Unpublished PhD thesis, Cork Institute of Technology, 2008).

repertory of 'military divertimentos', long sequences of short movements which were a mixture of original, dance and military movements, sometimes with pieces taken from the works of other composers'.<sup>2</sup>

What was the 'Galway Band' and can we be sure that it was the band of the Galway Regiment of Militia to whom the part-books belonged? We can be certain that the Galway Regiment were in Cork in October 1800 from the paylists and muster rolls in the National Archive, Kew. These records list every serving member of the regiment for each month, what they were paid, where they were stationed and in many cases, their duties. These records are reinforced by reports in the *Cork Advertiser* in July of 1800, which state: "The Caithness Highlanders have marched from their garrison on their route to Waterford; they are to be replaced by the Galway Militia, lately stationed in that city"<sup>3</sup>, and "The first division of the Galway regiment of militia marched into the garrison early this morning."<sup>4</sup> The surviving paylists and muster rolls for the regiment confirm that the regiment moved from Waterford to Cork on this date and that in the regiment were bandsmen and their music master.<sup>5</sup>

The concert notice in the *Cork Advertiser* is informative and revealing in a number of ways. The appearance of a military wind-band at a 'Grand Concert and Ball' is unremarkable as many such notices appear in Irish newspapers of the 1790s. The popularity of glees is illustrated by the inclusion of arrangements of three of the genre in the concert programme. The description of Haydn's 'Surprise' symphony as a Grand Overture confirms that 'Haydn's symphonies constitute a single genre [...] they appear under the most heterogeneous collection of titles: *Sinfonia*, *Overture* (*New Grand Overture*), *Partita*, *Notturmo*, *Scherzando*, *Divertimento*, *Concertino*, *Cassation*, and so forth.'<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Roger Hellyer, in 'Harmoniemusik', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. by Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, 29 vols (London: Macmillan Publishers, 2001), x, 856.

<sup>3</sup> *Cork Advertiser*, 19 July 1800.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 July 1800.

<sup>5</sup> National Archives, Kew, WO 13/2890.

<sup>6</sup> Webster, James, 'Towards a History of Viennese Chamber Music in the Early Classical Period', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 27 (1974), 212-47.

The arrangement of the glee 'Strike the Harp in praise of Bragela performed at the concert is extant in the part books. This suggests that the band performed more than just the 'troop' composed by Attwood.

The repertoire in the concert and part books suggests that the musicianship of the Galway Band set it apart from those bands that provided purely functional music for ceremonial military occasions. It is now possible to identify some, at least, of the band musicians who served in the Galway Militia in 1800 and were stationed in Cork in 1800.

### **Historical Context**

The militias of the period 1793 to 1816, if remembered in folk memory at all, are associated with the suppression of the Rebellion of 1798. In some studies of the period the ill-discipline of the notorious North Cork Militia is cited as one of the causes of the particularly bloody nature of the insurrection in Wexford:

It is [...] clear that if, as most historians agree, the rising in Wexford was provoked by unbearable ill-treatment, the regular army cannot be held responsible, seeing that at the outset there was no party of regular troops in the county or within several miles of its borders. The odium of these offences must be laid to the charge of the half-disciplined militia and the partisan yeomanry.<sup>7</sup>

The Irish militias of 1793 were, as Ivan Nelson has chronicled in his 2007 history, the first army established in Ireland under British rule that recruited Irishmen of all creeds, Catholic, Protestant and Dissenter.<sup>8</sup> The force was set up, or to use the military term, embodied, in 1793. Its primary function was to defend Ireland against possible invasion by revolutionary French forces and not as an additional arm of the military establishment to suppress the majority. Allan Blackstock asserts that Ireland provided a suitable peacetime base for the English

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<sup>7</sup> Chart, D. A., 'The Irish Levies During the Great French War', *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 32, 497-516.

<sup>8</sup> Nelson, Ivan F., *The Irish Militia, 'Ireland's Forgotten Army'* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007).

army and overcame the distrust of Whigs to a large standing army in England.<sup>9</sup>

In February 1793 France declared war on Great Britain and the need arose to release British (English, Scots and Welsh) troops from Irish garrison duty. The Militia Act of 1793 stipulated that each county and a number of towns and cities should raise militia regiments. As a consequence of Hobart's Catholic Relief Act of 1793, the rank and file of the thirty-eight (later reduced to thirty-seven) militia regiments was predominantly Roman Catholic, whereas the officers were almost exclusively Protestant men of substance.

### Figure 1. Militia Regiments, 1793

1	Monaghan	20	Kilkenny
2	Tyrone	21	Limerick County
3	Mayo north	22	Sligo
4	Kildare	23	Carlow
5	Louth	24	Drogheda
6	Westmeath	25	Queen's County
7	Antrim	26	Clare
8	Armagh	27	Cork city
9	Down	28	Tipperary
10	Leitrim	29	Fermanagh
11	Galway	30	Mayo south
12	Dublin city	31	Roscommon
13	Limerick city	32	Cork south
14	Kerry	33	Waterford
15	Longford	34	Cork north
16	Londonderry	35	Dublin County
17	Meath	36	Donegal
18	Cavan	37	Wicklow
19	King's county	38	Wexford

The chosen method of recruitment, by ballot, immediately created unrest. Theoretically, the ballot, or drawing of lots, was a fair system of random selection from within communities. The problem arose when it became clear that not everyone was to be treated equally in the ballot and that those with the means to do so were 'buying themselves out' of the selection process. Widespread riots took place in the summer of

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<sup>9</sup> Blackstock, Allan, 'The Union and the Military, 1801-C.1830', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 10 (2000), 329-51.

1793 against the terms of the Militia Act but historians dispute the seriousness and extent of these riots.<sup>10</sup> Whether the ballot was abandoned as a result of these disturbances, or because a sufficient number of volunteers joined the force is unclear, but by the end of 1793 most units were in place and up to strength.

In organisation and membership the militias resembled the regular army rather than 'Grattan's Volunteers' of 1778. It is clear that opposition to the Militia Act within elements of the Ascendancy was based on the recognition that the establishment of the force was intended to assert control of the London government over military affairs. The structure of companies, battalions and regiments mirrored the regular army. The regiments' titular commanders were members of the landed gentry. In seventeen of the regiments in 1801, commanders held the title of Viscount or Earl. This is significant when we come to consider the establishment and financing of bands and the musical life of the regiments.

**Figure 2. Regimental Commandant-Colonels 1801**

Antrim	<i>Viscount O'Neill</i>	Limerick Co.	<i>Lord Muskerry</i>
Armagh	<i>Viscount Gosford</i>	Limerick City	<i>Vereker</i>
Carlow	<i>La Touche</i>	Londonderry	<i>Connolly</i>
Cavan	<i>Barry</i>	Longford	<i>Earl of Granard</i>
Clare	<i>Burton</i>	Louth	<i>Foster</i>
Cork Co. (North)	<i>Fitzgerald</i>	Mayo (North)	<i>Jackson</i>
Cork Co. (South)	<i>Viscount Doneraile</i>	Mayo (South)	<i>Browne</i>
Cork City	<i>Lord Longueville</i>	Meath	<i>Earl of Bective</i>
Donegal	<i>Viscount Clements</i>	Monaghan	<i>Leslie</i>
Downshire	<i>Marquis of Downshire</i>	Queen's Co.	<i>Coote</i>
Dublin Co.	<i>Vesey</i>	Roscommon	<i>King</i>
Dublin City	<i>Sankey</i>	Sligo	<i>King</i>
Fermanagh	<i>Earl of Enniskillen</i>	Tipperary	<i>Bagwell</i>
Galway	<i>Lord Kilconnel</i>	Tyrone	<i>Viscount Corry</i>
Kerry	<i>Earl of Glandore</i>	Waterford	<i>Earl of Tyrone</i>
Kildare	<i>Wolfe</i>	Westmeath	<i>Earl of Westmeath</i>
Kilkenny	<i>Earl of Ormond</i>	Wexford	<i>Viscount Loftus</i>
Kings Co.	<i>L'Estrange</i>	Wicklow	<i>Howard</i>
Leitrim	<i>Jones</i>	Drogheda	<i>Disbanded</i>

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<sup>10</sup> Bartlett, Thomas, 'An End to Moral Economy: The Irish Militia Disturbances of 1793', *Past and Present* (1983), pp. 41-64.



## Military Music

Turning now to the music of the militias, it is necessary to clarify the role of military musicians in late eighteenth-century Europe. To quote Grove:

The function of military music was threefold: to give signals and pass orders in battle; to regulate the military day in camp or quarters; and 'to excite cheerfulness and alacrity in the soldiers'. Military music in the form of bugle and trumpet calls together with drum beatings could identify friend or foe before the general adoption of national uniforms.<sup>11</sup>

It was the drum corps, consisting of fifes (later bugles) and drums, not the regimental band, that provided this day-to-day functional music.

The Militia Act of 1793 specified that for each company of fifty to sixty men there should be two drummers. These drummers were paid members of regiment and often gained promotion to the ranks of corporal or sergeant according to the extant paylists.<sup>12</sup> The muster rolls in the National Archives in Kew, formerly the Public Records Office, show that these drummers were routinely assigned to recruitment duties.<sup>13</sup> The broadsheet ballad 'Arthur McBride' of the 1840s alludes to these drummers:

*ARTHUR McBRIDE,*

*A new song*

I had a full cousin, call'd Arthur McBride  
He and I roved along the shore side,  
Looking for pastime, for what might betide,  
The day it was pleasant warm.  
Tan dan diddly dan dan de.

Just as I happen'd to be on my tramp,  
We met Sergeant Napper and Corporal Cramp,  
Saucy wee drummer attended our camp  
And beat the row dow in the morning.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> J. Montagu in 'Military Music', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. by Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, 29 vols (London: Macmillan Publishers, 2001), xvi, 683.

<sup>12</sup> National Archives, Kew, WO 13/2890.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Harding B 25(82) n.d., Bodleian Library, University of Oxford.

Interesting as it may be in terms of how the fife and drums influenced traditional music and reflected sectarian divisions, this aspect of military music is not the focus of this chapter.

### **Militia Bands**

As early as 3 September 1793, barely six months after the enactment of the Militia Act, the *Freeman's Journal* reports that:

Yesterday, the Hon. Colonel Foster, reviewed the Louth regiment of Militia, in the Right Hon. The Speaker's domain, near Dunleer, and presented the colours in front of the regiment to Ensigns Bellingham and Brabazon; – Colonel Foster addressed the regiment in an animated and manly manner – declared his perfect confidence in their courage, and that the colours he had then the honour to deliver up to them, would never be surrendered to an enemy but with their lives. The regiment is above 500 strong, and went through their manoeuvres much to the satisfaction, and to the astonishment of a numerous and respectable assemblage who attended the occasion. The regimental band which is supposed to be the first in the kingdom, added much to the brilliancy of the scene. 'God Save the King' was repeatedly played, and joy sparkled in every countenance. The Colonel returned his thanks to the officers for their polite attention, and particularly to Adjutant MacKneal, by whose indefatigable exertions the regiment were so forward in military discipline.<sup>15</sup>

The report confirms that some, at least, of the regimental bands were formed as the regiments themselves were embodied. Sir Henry McAnally in *The Irish Militia* (1949) draws attention to the fact that if a commanding officer wished to employ musicians over and above the two drummers per company permitted, the Act specified that the commanding officer should be willing to defray the costs.<sup>16</sup> The Downshire and Clements papers referenced by McAnally show that the bands of the Downshire and Donegal regiments were financed by their colonel commandants, the Marquis of Downshire and Viscount

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<sup>15</sup> *Freeman's Journal*, 3 October, 1793.

<sup>16</sup> Sir McAnally, Sir Henry William Watson *The Irish Militia, 1793-1816 : A Social and Military Study* (Dublin: Clonmore and Reynolds, 1949), pp. 65-66. Hereafter referred to as McAnally, *Militia*.

Clements, respectively. Not only did they pay the musicians but also purchased the instruments and uniforms. A painting of the band of the Fermanagh Regiment of Militia in the Regimental Museum of the Inniskillings, in Enniskillen, shows a band of over twenty-five musicians. Instruments include two types of serpent, bugle, horn, bassoon, flute and percussion. Turbaned black musicians play the percussion instruments.

Colonels vied with one another to increase the prestige of their bands by recruiting skilled music masters. Smollet Holden (Downshire), Joseph Haliday (Cavan) and Johann Bernhard Logier (Kilkenny) were militia bandmasters who later achieved some measure of fame in civilian life.

Apart from second-hand reports of a general nature, the repertoire of these Irish militia bands has been difficult to determine from contemporary reports. Newspaper reports refer to 'God save the King', 'St. Patrick's Day', 'Garryowen' and 'The Roast-beef of Old England' and to regimental bands playing at balls. What music was played at these social gatherings is rarely reported.

### **Galway Regiment of Militia Band**

This is the historical context of a set of four part books in Trinity College manuscript library.<sup>17</sup> The part books are leather bound. Three of the covers have red-leather inlays with gilded titles. The fourth has lost this title though the tooled lettering can be deciphered on the brown leather cover. The titles read 'Galway Regt. Of Militia' and specify the part contained in the manuscript. The parts are for: clarinet II, bassoon I, bassoon II and corno. Oboe parts occur in the clarinet II part book.

On folio 27<sup>v</sup> of MS 5893, the horn part book, the following inscription appears:

*Mr John Crozier  
Music Master  
Galway Regiment  
of  
Militia  
Limerick March 17th {1806} [sic]*

The Galway Regiment of Militia was embodied in 1793 under the command of Col. P.K Trench of Ballinasloe. Throughout the period 1793

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<sup>17</sup> Dublin, Trinity College, MSS 5890-5893

to 1816, the titular commander of the regiment was the senior member of the LePoer Trench family. Kilconnel, Dunlo and Clancarty are the hereditary family titles that appear in the paylists and muster rolls of the regiment.

Once the regiment had been established it was moved outside its county, in common with other regiments of militia. The *Freeman's Journal* and *Connaught Journal* of 1793 report movement of regiments out of their 'native' counties. Despite this displacement, there remained strong bonds between the Galway regiment and County Galway. In 1805 and 1806 the muster rolls record absences from quarters of lieutenants, sergeants, and drummers on recruitment duty in Co. Galway. The music master, John Crozier, and at least one other bandsman, despite their original places of birth, retired to Ballinasloe.

The barest details survive of the life of Sergeant John Crozier. Military records show that he was born in the town of Castleton in the county of Roxburgh, Scotland circa 1762. He joined the Galway Militia on 4 November 1793 as a sergeant and served in the regiment for forty-one years and 340 days.<sup>18</sup> On retirement his trade is described as 'musician'.

Figure 3. John Crozier's discharge form

Whereof *John Crozier* is Colonel.

No. *1000*

BORN in the Parish of *Castleton* in or near the Town of *Castleton* in the County of *Roxburgh* by Trade a *Musician*

ATTESTED for the *Galway* Regiment of *Militia* at *Ballinasloe* in the County of *Galway* on the *4th Nov 1793* at the Age of *31* Years.

BE SERVED AFTER the Age of 18 Years.

Regiment	Promotions, Reductions, &c	Rank	Period of Service in each Rank		Amount of Service	
			From	To	Years	Days
<i>Galway</i>		<i>Sergeant</i>	<i>4 Nov 1793</i>	<i>4 Nov 1834</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>340</i>

<sup>18</sup> WO 97/1095/45.

Two interesting questions arise, given that he was thirty-one years of age when he enlisted in Ballinasloe in 1793: how did he come to be in Ireland and where did he receive his musical training? A month before John Crozier joined the Galway Regiment, a Mr Crozier is listed, in a notice in the *Connaught Journal*, as master of the band at a 'Grand Concert of Vocal and Instrumental Music' in Tuam. Mr. Crozier is the violin soloist in the '4<sup>th</sup> Concerto' by Pleyel.<sup>19</sup> It is uncertain that this is the same John Crozier, but it seems plausible. That he never rose above the rank of sergeant may be accounted for by the income and property qualifications for officers under the Militia Act of 1793.

Who were his bandsmen? As the Militia Act had specified that bandsmen should not be on the payroll (and the evidence supports this in the case of more prestigious bands such as those of the Downshire, Fermanagh, Donegal and Kilkenny regiments), it is interesting to discover the names of the Galway band in the War Office pay list records.

**Figure 4. Crozier and Daly band duty**

Rank and Names	PAY						No. of the Band to which the Man is attached	Remarks
	1	2	3	4	5	6		
1. Wm. Crozier	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	
2. John Crozier	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	Ad. out
3. John Crozier	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	Ad.
4. John Crozier	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	
5. John Crozier	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	
6. John Crozier	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	
7. John Crozier	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	
1. John Crozier	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	
2. John Crozier	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	Ad. out
3. John Crozier	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	
4. John Crozier	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	
5. John Crozier	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	Ad. out

Concentrating on 1806, the date of the Crozier inscription, the following list of bandsmen by rank has been compiled. The 'Y' signifies that 'Band'

<sup>19</sup> *Connaught Journal*, 17 October, 1793.

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is entered in the 'Remarks' column against this person's name on the monthly regimental pay list.

**Table 1. Band Duty in 1806**

Name	Rank	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.
Alley, Charles	Cpl	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	
Alley, Thomas	Pvt	Y	Y	Y	Y			
Alley, William	Cpl	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	
Armstrong, William	Pvt		Y					
Barns, Willian	Drm	Y	Y	Y	Y			
Crozier, John	Sgt	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	
Crozier, William	Drm	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y
Daly, Joseph	Drm/Cpl	Y	Y	Y	Y			
Gardiner, John	Sgt	Y	Y	Y	Y			
Gardiner, Joseph	Drm	Y	Y	Y	Y			
Gregory, George	Drm	Y	Y	Y	Y			
Haverty, Owen	Drm						Y	
Hobart, John	Cpl	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	
Ke(i)vin, Denis	Drm/Cpl	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	
Kelly, Patrick	Pvt		Y	Y	Y		Y	
King, Edward	Pvt	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y
Silk, Francis	Drm	Y	Y	Y	Y			
Silk, William	Cpl		Y	Y	Y		Y	
Smyth, William	Pvt	Y	Y	Y	Y			
Walsh, Anthony	Pvt							Y

From this table a number of observations may be made. In this year, and in the records of other years, band duty took place during the spring and summer months. Regiments came together during these months for training and review, at the Curragh Camp, Ardfinnan (Clonmel), Loughlinstown, the Naul and Blaris (Belfast).<sup>20</sup> The muster rolls of the Galway Regiment record a number of sojourns at the Curragh Camp. Only eight of the twenty musicians listed held the rank of drummer. Almost half the strength of the band, nine musicians, is drawn from four sets of brothers or fathers and sons. The majority of the names are not

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<sup>20</sup> McAnally, *Militia*. p. 80.

native Irish names and the extant discharge papers show their places of birth as England, Scotland or Jamaica.

**Table 2. Musical pieces by part book**

Type	MS 5890	MS 5891	MS 5892	MS 5893
	Clarinet II	Bassoon I	Bassoon II	Horn
March	4	7	5	10
Slow march	2			3
Quick March	7			10
Quickstep	7		6	5
German March	5		6	6
Waltz	3		7	6
Pollacco	1	1	1	1
Glee	2		2	4
Song		10	1	2
Opera	2	1	1	1
Parthia	3	3	3	7
Divertisement [sic]		1		
Symphonie	8		10	10
Grand Overture	1	1	1	1
Overture		3		1
Allemande	1		1	1
Total Titled	46	27	44	68
Total untitled	28	0	8	3
Total Pieces	74	27	52	71
Military	25	7	17	34
Civil	49	20	35	37

### Galway Regiment Part Books

Returning to the part books it becomes clear that the band's repertoire was not merely military in nature. The pieces have been classified as 'military' and 'civil' and the military pieces have been broken down according to the title or type written in the manuscript. Manuscript 5890 contains a considerable number of untitled pieces. The manuscripts are not of equal lengths, with the Clarinet II and the Horn parts containing the most extensive collections. Given references in the horn part after folio 27, to the 82nd Regiment, the symphonies, which possibly post-date 1806, may not have been performed by the band as constituted in that year or at any other time. The handwriting used for these pieces is significantly different from the earlier folios.

What is clear, on the evidence of the part books, is that approximately fifty percent of the repertoire of the band was of a 'civil' nature. The 'military' music consists of marches of varying speeds. The slow march is timed for sixty paces to the minute, the march (at this time) was eighty paces to the minute, the quickstep was one hundred and eight and the double, or German, march was one hundred and twenty paces to the minute.<sup>21</sup> The predominance of the quicker marches reflects the transition that was taking place throughout the British Army at this time. Two marches are associated with historical figures: Lord Cathcart and Major Eyre. General Lord Cathcart was Commander of the Forces from 1803 to 1806 and Giles Eyre received his commission as a major in the Galway Regiment in 1803. Of the other marches, ten are credited to J. Barron, possibly the clarinetist of the Downshire Band.<sup>22</sup>

The glees are settings of published works by John Wall Calcot and Richard Stevens, both prolific composers of the form. 'Strike the Harp in Praise of Bregala' by Stevens mentioned in the advertisement for the Cork concert is one of the four glees in the part-books.<sup>23</sup> A setting of 'Henry and Jem' by Thomas Cooke is included in three of the four manuscripts. An arrangement of a song from the finale of 'The Bastile[sic]' as a yet unidentified theatrical work also occurs.

The waltzes (and the pollacco) confirm that the band provided music for balls and social gatherings. Dorothea Herbert in her *Retrospections* refers to the band of the Kilkenny Regiment 'reckond (sic) the finest in the Kingdom' playing in the 'lodgings' of Lord and Lady Barrymore in 1798:

When the Kilkenny Regiment went the South Cork came in its Place  
and with them Lord and Lady Barrymore - She was a beautiful little  
Woman whom he had married for Love in Youghal - Her Maiden Name

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<sup>21</sup> Kappey, J. A., *Military Music : A History of Wind-Instrumental Bands* ([S.l.]: Boosey & Co.

<sup>22</sup> 'On the Music of Ireland', *Cork Standard*, 18 March 1840.

<sup>23</sup> Stevens, Richard John Samuel, *O Strike the Harp in Praise of My Love. Trio for 2 Soprano's and a Bass, (the Poetry from Ossian.) with an Accompaniment for 2 Performers on One Piano Forte* ([London]: The Author, 1795), ———, *Strike the Harp. A Glee for Three Voices ... With an Accompaniment for the Piano Forte or Harp* (Dublin: Edmund Lee, 1799).



was Coughlan and she was distantly related to the Roes. The Noble Pair spent most of their time at our House - we often spent the Evening with them at their Lodgings and they had always the Band for us-It was reckond (sic) the finest in the Kingdom - There were besides great Amateurs, and we had most capital singing by Lord Barrymore Colonel Barry, and Mr Webb a Chorister - Besides this set we had Mr Hutchinson a recruiting Officer who was a universal Genius a little Hairbraind indeed but the pleasantest Creature possible - His chief forte was spouting Plays with which he amused his Acquaintance - We had also a Captain Forbes quarterd (sic) on us a long time whilst the troops were learning the New Hessian Exercise - He was no great Lady's Man but we contrived to pick amusement out of him. Altogether it was a very gay Jumble of Regimental Scraps - We had nothing but Band playing Singing, leaping, and cutting Apples with the sword's point on the Warriours (sic) Heads<sup>24</sup>

McAnally also quotes a *Faulkner's Journal* report of 21 October 1806 of a party in Wexford at which the Tyrone band 'contributed not a little in detaining the joyous party to a late hour next morning'.<sup>25</sup> The incidence of the waltz at such an early date in Ireland is also worthy of further research.

The longest pieces in the manuscripts are the parthias and symphonies. Grove defines the 'parthia [partie, partia, parthie]' as 'A term for a suite or other multi-movement genre in the 17th and 18th centuries' which describes accurately the pieces so titled in the manuscripts.<sup>26</sup> Each movement begins with an expression mark, key and time signature. In MS 5891, one of the parthias, numbered forty-five in the part books, is attributed to Mozart. In the same MS, the parthia that follows has the name of Keil as its composer.

The Mozart parthia does not appear in the Neue Mozart Ausgabe in 'Series VII: Orchestral Serenades, Divertimentos, and

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<sup>24</sup> Herbert, Dorothea, *Retrospections of Dorothea Herbert, 1770-1806* (Dublin: Town House, 1988), pp. vii,456p.,[2]leaves of plates., p. 339.

<sup>25</sup> McAnally, *Militia.*, p. 207.

<sup>26</sup> 'Parthia', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. by Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, 29 vols (London: Macmillan Publishers, 2001), xix, 175.

Marches'.<sup>27</sup> The three divertimenti for wind instruments that are published in the supplement 'Works of Doubtful Authenticity' do not correspond to the manuscript piece.<sup>28</sup> Leeson and Whitwell in their 1972 article 'Mozart's 'Spurious' Wind Octets' state that there has been uncertainty as to the authenticity of much of Mozart's published wind music and a paucity of surviving autographs. In the article they quote an advertisement from the Viennese music-dealer, Johann Traeg just one month after the death of Mozart that offers four Parthias for pairs of oboes, clarinets, horns and bassoons. These works, they argue, correspond to manuscript scores in the Prague University Library.<sup>29</sup> Further investigation will be required to verify the authenticity or provenance of the 'Mozart' Parthia in the Galway Regiment part-books.

The symphonies are of similar length to the parthias and four are identified as being the work of named composers: Pleyel, Druschetsky and (de) Mainzer (?). Both Ignace Joseph Pleyel (1757-1831), and Georg (Jiri) Druschetsky (1745-1819) composed and published works for wind-band. Haydn's Surprise Symphony, referred to in the *Cork Advertiser*, does not appear in the surviving part-books.

## **Conclusion**

This article establishes the military and historical context of the band of the Galway Regiment of Militia and identifies those musicians who were members of the regiment. The evidence sheds additional light on a facet of Irish musical life that has been of marginal interest to musicologists and historians in postcolonial Ireland.

To date, the marches in the Galway Regiment part-books have been classified by type. A comparison between the marches of these manuscripts and a contemporary source, MS 6 of the *Irish Music Manuscripts of Edward Bunting*, edited by Dr. Colette Moloney, which contains one hundred and twenty four marches, may reveal how much

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<sup>27</sup> *Neue Mozart-Ausgabe* Ed Dietrich Berke, Ed Wolfgang Plath, and Ed Dorothee Hanemann, (Hannover: Stiftung Volkswagenwerk, 1984).

<sup>28</sup> NMA X/29/2: *Works of Doubtful Authenticity* vol. 2: Divertimenti for Woodwind, Sonatas with Piano and Violin, Piano Music, Score (Hannover: Giegling/Plath/Rehm, 1993).

<sup>29</sup> Daniel N Leeson, Leeson, Daniel N.; Whitwell, David, 'Mozart's Spurious Wind Octets', *Music & Letters*, Vol. 53 (Oct., 1972), 22. 377-99 (p. 22).

of this repertoire was well known among military (and traditional) musicians.<sup>30</sup>

As a snapshot of one aspect of the musical life of the Ascendancy the part-books are a valuable primary source. The date of music master Sergeant Crozier's inscription, 1806, places these manuscripts at a time of transition in Anglo-Irish society. The rebellions of 1798 and 1803 were fresh in the memories of the authorities. The Act of Union had been in force for five years. The crucial naval battle of the Napoleonic War, Trafalgar, October 1805, had whipped up patriotic fervour in Britain and among the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy. The role of the Irish Militias was also changing as the threat of invasion receded.

There is clear evidence from the repertoire contained in the manuscripts that military bands contributed to the musical life of Ireland at the turn of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries not only as a training ground for musicians and as a market for instrument makers, but as medium through which European art music was introduced to Irish audiences. How wide an audience this music reached, how it was received and the influence it had on the wider music life of the aristocracy, the emerging bourgeoisie and the masses are topics for ongoing research.

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<sup>30</sup> Moloney, Colette, *The Irish Music Manuscripts of Edward Bunting (1773-1843) : An Introduction and Catalogue* (Dublin: Irish Traditional Music Archive, 2000), pp. xv, 719 p.

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# **The promotion of music in Dublin: women's lectures and articles supporting the city's musical development**

**Jennifer O'Connor**

In nineteenth century Dublin there was a desire for music to play a greater role in the cultural aspect of the city. Women contributed to achieving this as teachers and performers but also as promoters of the cause. Their participation in the promotion of music in Ireland was mainly through articles, lectures and the organisation of events such as the Feis Ceoil. This chapter will examine their attempts to improve musical standards and to increase the involvement in, and appreciation of, music by a larger section of society. Through a discussion of the work of Margaret O'Hea, Edith Oldham and Annie Patterson it will present an evaluation of women's involvement in the promotion of music around the turn of the twentieth century.

## **Music promotion and development in the second half of the nineteenth century**

The second half of the nineteenth century saw many developments in musical life in Dublin. However, the musicians active in the city were well aware of the need to continue to increase public interest and involvement if they were to move these musical developments past their foundational stages. There was also a need for teachers and musicians to strive to be of a standard that was comparable to their British counterparts and, to a lesser degree, to their European counterparts. As a result, musicians were eager to continue to promote higher standards of teaching and performance and to encourage the participation of the general public in musical life in the city. In many ways women were at the forefront of these promotional efforts and their involvement was never hindered, but always greatly appreciated. This was unusual for women in Irish society in the nineteenth century. However, throughout the century their involvement and treatment in music was progressive. Because women in Dublin were accepted in music they were keen to continue to advance its development, improve music standards and to increase the interest of the general public in the capital's musical life. They set about doing this through involvement in several organisations

and movements. One of the main outlets for the promotion of higher standards of music as well as its growth and development, was through the meetings of the Leinster branch of the Incorporated Society of Musicians.

### **The establishment of the Incorporated Society of Musicians in Ireland**

The Incorporated Society of Musicians was an organisation founded in the north of England in 1882.<sup>1</sup> It was founded as a result of the absence of an organisation to represent British musicians in the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> Its objectives were:

the union of the musical profession in a representative society; the improvement of musical education; the organisation of musicians in a manner similar to that in which allied professions were organised; and the obtaining of legal recognition by means of a registration of qualified teachers of music as a distinctive body.<sup>3</sup>

In 1893 branches were set up in Scotland and Ireland. There were three Irish divisions of the society: in Leinster, Munster and Ulster. Fleischmann refers to it as the first time professional musicians were organised in this country.<sup>4</sup> In Ireland, particularly Leinster, the main aims of the society were to provide an organisation representative of the music profession, to raise standards of teaching, to hold examinations and to confer a professional diploma.<sup>5</sup> In its early years it was very well supported by Irish musicians, especially in the capital, where nearly all

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<sup>1</sup> Edmund Bohan, *The ISM: The First Hundred Years* (London: The Incorporated Society of Musicians, 1982), p. 5. Hereafter referred to as Bohan, *The ISM*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Henry Raynor & Neil Hoyle: 'The Incorporated Society of Musicians', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. by Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 2nd edn, 29 vols (London: MacMillan Publishing Ltd., 2001), xii, 146.

<sup>4</sup> Aloys Fleischmann, 'Music and Society, 1850-1920', in *A New History of Ireland VI*, ed. by W.E. Vaughan (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996) p. 514.

<sup>5</sup> Bohan, *The ISM*, p. 8.

of the staff of the Royal Irish Academy of Music (RIAM) were members as well as a large number of the city's performers.

In the society's early years in Dublin it held regular meetings for its members with many of the well known Dublin musicians such as James Culwick and T.R. G. Joze, giving regular lectures. It also supported Irish composers and their work. For example, between 1895 and 1898 the 'Toy Symphony', which was a collaboration between Culwick, Joze, Michele Esposito and Joseph Smith, received at least one Dublin and London performance a season because of the backing of the Incorporated Society of Musicians.<sup>6</sup> The Society welcomed and supported all aspects of music training, and although it has been criticised as a British organisation taking over, it was more a branch of a British organisation that was managed by Irish musicians. It was used as a means of communicating ideas with each other and supporting and developing music within Ireland.<sup>7</sup> For example, when the society met in January 1895, the occasion of Margaret O'Hea's lecture, the meeting was attended by all the prominent Dublin teachers, with two thirds of the crowd being made up of RIAM personnel.<sup>8</sup> That the organisation was Irish in its interests is further illustrated by an examination of the lectures of Margaret O'Hea and Edith Oldham.<sup>9</sup>

### **Margaret O'Hea: her early education and career**

Margaret O'Hea was the eldest daughter of James O'Hea, a circuit court judge. As a result of an unspecified accident in the 1850s, he was forced to retire and, while he maintained his position as a crown prosecutor until his death, his accident resulted in a big change in the financial

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<sup>6</sup> Richard Pine and Charles Acton, *To Talent Alone: The Royal Irish Academy of Music 1848-1998* (Dublin: Gill and MacMillian Ltd, 1998) p. 252. Hereafter referred to as Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*.

<sup>7</sup> Marie McCarthy, 'The Transmission of Music and the Formation of National Identity in Early Twentieth-Century Ireland', in *Irish Musical Studies 5*, ed. by Patrick F. Devine & Harry White (Dublin: Four Courts Press Ltd, 1996), p. 153.

<sup>8</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 252.

<sup>9</sup> Margaret O' Hea: 'The Responsibilities of a Music Teacher', Lecture given on the 4 January 1895 and reproduced in *The Irish Times*, 5 January 1895. Edith Oldham: 'Eisteddfod and the Feis Ceoil'. Lecture given in February 1898 and reproduced in *The New Ireland Review*, 8 (1898), pp. 349-361.

circumstances of the family.<sup>10</sup> This may have been an influencing factor in his children seeking their own financial independence. There were four girls and a boy in the O'Hea family. The son, John Fergus, was a political cartoonist who worked under the pen name 'Spex'. Of the four sisters, the eldest three all worked at the Royal Irish Academy of Music: Alice as a professor of singing, Mary as an elocution teacher and Margaret a professor of the pianoforte.<sup>11</sup> The youngest sister, Ellen O'Hea, was active as a composer and singer and her most popular work, a comic opera entitled *The Rose and the Ring*, was performed regularly in Dublin in the 1870s and 1880s.<sup>12</sup>

The eldest of the O'Hea family, Margaret, began piano lessons with an unknown teacher at the age of ten and then two years later she took lessons with Miss Henrietta Flynn. O'Hea attended lessons with Miss Flynn at the same time as Charles Villiers Stanford.<sup>13</sup> Under Flynn's direction O'Hea made her first solo performance playing Weber's *Invitation à la Valse* in the Antient Concert Rooms.

In 1865 Margaret O'Hea entered the Royal Irish Academy of Music where she was a student of Mrs Fanny Arthur Robinson. She also began to teach privately to support herself. However, this presented her with problems other than financial ones. Because she was spending so much time teaching and travelling long distances from house to house, it became harder and harder to keep up her own solo practicing; her teaching became her priority because, as Annie Patterson put it, 'professional engagements of native solo instrumentalists are few and far between, and will not make the pot boil'.<sup>14</sup> After a year as a student in the Academy, Joseph Robinson suggested that O'Hea should go to London for a season to hear as much good music as possible. From that point on she returned to the city most years throughout her career. Through her trips she encountered such musical figures as George Grove, John Ella and Anton Rubenstein.

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<sup>10</sup> Annie Patterson, 'Margaret O'Hea', *The Weekly Irish Times*, 10 November 1900, p. 4. Hereafter referred to as *WIT*.

<sup>11</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 246.

<sup>12</sup> *The Irish Times*, 11 November 1876.

<sup>13</sup> Patterson, 'Margaret O'Hea', *WIT*, 10 November 1900, p. 4.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.



In 1871 a position became available in the Academy piano faculty and it would have seemed that O'Hea was an ideal candidate for the job. However, the board of management were eager to engage a French woman and on the 18 May 1871 the board announced the appointment of Madame Gayrard to the piano faculty of the Royal Irish Academy of Music. Two years later, in 1873, Gayrard resigned and was succeeded by O'Hea.

Margaret O'Hea remained on the teaching staff of the Academy for fifty five years, but a letter from George Grove to Edith Oldham suggests that she may not have always been content in her position. In 1883 she wrote to Grove asking if there was an opening for her at the Royal College of Music in London.<sup>15</sup> Perhaps she longed to live in London to experience its musical culture to a fuller extent or to be closer to her sister Mary who was living there at that time. That there was not an opening for Margaret O'Hea was a stroke of luck for the Royal Irish Academy of Music, her many students and music in Dublin.

During her time in the Academy there were two main streams of teaching, that of Edith Oldham and that of Margaret O'Hea. Although they worked together in the same faculty for many years there seems to have been some friction between them. As well as having different approaches to their teaching, O'Hea seemed to have had, at the very least, a professional problem with Oldham. O'Hea was involved in the early stages of the Feis Ceoil, attending meetings and offering her support until Edith Oldham became secretary at which point she withdrew her involvement. Also, in 1902, when Oldham was to be promoted in the Academy, O'Hea, along with Elizabeth Bennett made a strenuous but unsuccessful effort to prevent her promotion.<sup>16</sup> In her article on O'Hea, Annie Patterson's first quote from O'Hea was the following: 'Bickering and jealousies among musicians are often spoken of - my experiences on the contrary are very pleasant'<sup>17</sup> but perhaps this was not always the case. One cannot help but wonder if she was jealous of the opportunities that Oldham had received or of her friendship with George Grove. Evidence of the latter could be seen in a letter of Grove to Oldham in which he tells her that he had a visit from O'Hea and that she

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<sup>15</sup> Letter from George Grove to Edith Oldham, 22 July 1892.

<sup>16</sup> Pine & Acton: *To Talent Alone*, p. 219.

<sup>17</sup> Patterson: 'Margaret O'Hea', *WIT*, 10 November 1900, p. 4.

was in 'a wonderfully glossy Sunday gown with a suspicion of rouge on her cheeks or was it naturally pink? We fraternized directly and laughed and carried on in a splendid style'.<sup>18</sup>

### **O'Hea's Lecture on the 'Responsibilities of a Music Teacher'**

Margaret O'Hea was the first female member of the council of the Leinster branch of the Incorporated Society of Musicians. In 1895 she was asked to give her first address to the Society and on the 4 January, Margaret O'Hea gave a lecture to Dublin's music teachers discussing her thoughts on the responsibilities of the music teacher.

Although the article's title alluded to her talking about all music teachers, in the opening paragraph she stated that she was 'using it in its more ordinary and general acceptance, that of teaching pupils to play instruments'.<sup>19</sup> Within the paper she aimed to the characteristics of a good teacher. She stated that she would 'endeavour to sketch an abstract portrait of a good music teacher, without [...] laying any personal claim to the topics'.<sup>20</sup> She commented that she chose her topic because it was one that was 'likely to provoke an interesting discussion'.<sup>21</sup> She began the paper by discussing music as a language of expression with technique as the alphabet. In the first place, she saw the teacher as being directly responsible for accuracy, method and style. She believed that the taste of the pupil had to be carefully cultivated even 'while the solid foundation of technique is being laid'.<sup>22</sup> She suggested that as well as the development of a student's skill on their instrument, knowledge of theory, harmony and the history of music should 'be regarded as a pleasure as well as a necessity'.<sup>23</sup> O'Hea voiced her worry that many young students thought of the 'science of music as dry and the time spent on it more or less wasted'.<sup>24</sup> On the subject of the students' practice, O'Hea believed that full concentration was essential

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<sup>18</sup> Letter from George Grove to Edith Oldham, 22 July 1892.

<sup>19</sup> Margaret O'Hea, 'The Responsibilities of a Music Teacher', *The Irish Times*, 5 January 1895, p. 5. Hereafter referred to as O'Hea, 'Responsibilities'

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

in order for anyone to progress and that every year many thousands of hours got wasted while students who were 'bodily present and seemingly engaged at their instruments let their thoughts wander off to every trivial distraction'; that from the point of view of the teacher, the importance of practice could not be too often or too seriously insisted on. She also felt that that all students should be encouraged to memorize the music because 'without the printed copy so much more freedom and expression could be thrown into the performance'.<sup>25</sup>

Through the course of her address, it becomes evident that O'Hea expected a lot from her students. In the next paragraph she said that as well as direct instructions, the musical tastes of the student should be cultivated. Her suggestion on how to achieve this would have been extremely time consuming and possibly expensive. She suggested that 'artistic benefits should be derived form the study of the great poets, of the best prose literature, by seeing fine pictures and sculpture and being present at high class dramatic performances'.<sup>26</sup> But this was a comment that earned her a round of applause. While her expectations of the students were high, so too were her expectations of the ideal teacher. She started on the topic of teaching by warning those present to avoid the career unless they had enthusiasm for it that was sparked by something other than its monetary value, as she warned that the arts were not lucrative. She saw the role of the music teacher as being one of great importance in the life of any young student. As an extreme example of this, she stated that she had even known teachers who had discovered physical defects in their students which had gone unnoticed in the child's home and that their discoveries often led to the limitation being helped because it was detected in its early stages. This comment was so well received that it earned her a round of applause from her audience. The position of the music teacher, she believed, was one that held many moral responsibilities, a characteristic she felt was often lacking. She listed the following as desirable qualities: to bear a high character, to have self control, a command of temper, to be reliable, patient and to possess courtesy of manner but also to be simple and unaffected, with any inclination towards priggishness, personal glorification or airs of superiority being completely avoided. Overall she

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<sup>25</sup> O'Hea, 'Responsibilities'.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

believed that 'lessons carelessly given, time unnecessarily cut short, anything deceitful, underhand or untruthful, have an influence for evil on the young'.<sup>27</sup> The address was brought to a close with O'Hea stressing the importance of enthusiasm as the final necessary characteristic.

In many ways Margaret O'Hea's address is comparable to the work of Annie Curwen in that it seeks to guide the music teacher.<sup>28</sup> The big differences, however, lay in O'Hea's thoughts on the subject and her audience. She was not trying to help with teaching methods so much as to guide and encourage all those present at her address, to cultivate a breed of students who would be above average. The students would be diligent and well rounded, and constantly committed and enthusiastic. While many might find her approach harsh, she was talking to some of the best teachers of Dublin at a time when music teaching had truly begun to develop and expand. She wanted her audience to think about all that was involved in their jobs, that they were not there just to teach the notes, and their role was to help develop the next generation of teachers who would continue the development of music education in Ireland. From her time spent in London, O'Hea was eager to see Dublin continue to improve as an Irish centre for music training, and one that could compete with its British neighbour. She realised that to achieve this, the standard needed to continue to improve. Her paper also led to a debate between many of the musicians present, thus creating an opportunity for her points to be further developed. After her address, O'Hea was thanked by Dr Ebenezer Prout, chairman of the meeting. He rejoiced at having heard 'such an admirable and suggestive paper' being read by a lady and one of the society's Irish members. Others who

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<sup>27</sup> O'Hea, 'The Responsibilities'.

<sup>28</sup> For more information on the work of Annie Curwen see Jennifer O'Connor, 'The Growth of Female Piano Pedagogy in Nineteenth Century Dublin and Annie Curwen's Pianoforte Method', *Maynooth Musicology* (2008), pp. 59-77.

commented on the paper included Dr Annie Patterson<sup>29</sup> and Madame Jeanie Rosse<sup>30</sup>, a singing teacher at the RIAM.

### **Edith Oldham: early education and career**

Three years later, in February 1898 the Incorporated Society of Musicians heard another address from one of Dublin's female musicians, Edith Oldham. She was an accomplished pianist and teacher and was also instrumental in the founding of the Feis Ceoil competition. For many she is remembered as the young Irish girl befriended by George Grove. Edith Oldham was born in 1865, the youngest surviving child of twelve. Her father, Eldred Oldham, was in the drapery business.<sup>31</sup> Her older sister, Alice Oldham, was one of the first nine female graduates of the Royal University of Ireland and she was also the leader of the campaign for the admission of women universities throughout Ireland, particularly Trinity College.<sup>32</sup>

Edith Oldham began her tuition at the Royal Irish Academy of Music where she was taught by Margaret O'Hea and Sir Robert Stewart. In 1883 she was one of three RIAM students who received a scholarship to study at the newly opened Royal College of Music in London.<sup>33</sup> Her scholarship and subsequent move to London led to the development of a close friendship with the director of the RCM, Sir George Grove. Evidence of their friendship exists in the form of five hundred and fourteen letters from George Grove to Edith Oldham from 1883 to his

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<sup>29</sup> Annie Patterson seconded the Chairman's motion regarding the importance of O'Hea's paper and its topic. She later commented in agreement with the suggestions of a Mrs Webster that teachers needed to know more concerning the science of education. (O'Hea, 'The Responsibilities')

<sup>30</sup> Madame Jeanie Rosse was in agreement with O'Hea's suggestions for teachers but added that she felt that vocal training should be the first step to a student's musical education because 'if children first learned to sing pretty songs they would be prepared to learn attractive tunes on the piano.' (O'Hea, 'The Responsibilities')

<sup>31</sup> Details on Edith Oldham's family are from e-mail correspondence with Ms Catherine Ferguson. Edith was her father's great aunt.

<sup>32</sup> Susan M. Parkes, *Alice Oldham and the Admission of Women to Trinity College, 1892-1904*. (Trinity Monday Discourse, May 2004.)

<sup>33</sup> Pine and Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 113.

death in 1900.<sup>34</sup> Although there has been much speculation about their relationship, the letters suggest merely a close friendship and mutual understanding. Grove was an important advisor to Oldham in her early career. In 1888 Edith Oldham returned to Dublin and took up a position as a professor of the pianoforte in the Royal Irish Academy of Music. She was the first female teacher in the establishment to be listed as a holder of a diploma in music.

Edith Oldham was an important member of the early Feis Ceoil committees and was instrumental in the competitions success in its early years. She was the first honorary secretary of the Feis and throughout 1895 and 1896 she gave several lectures promoting the competition. It was also through the Feis Ceoil that Oldham met her future husband, Richard Best, who was the competition's first registrar. Edith Oldham continued to teach at the RIAM until her death in 1950.

### **Oldham's comparison of the Feis Ceoil and the Eisteddfod**

In her lecture to the Incorporated Society of Musicians, Oldham chose to speak on the Welsh festival on which the Feis Ceoil was based, the Eisteddfod. Although the topic was very different the aim of her lecture can be seen as the same as that of Margaret O'Hea: to spark enthusiasm in her listeners, to send them home thinking and maybe to aid in the development of musical activity. Her address provided a comparison of the Feis Ceoil and Eisteddfod.

Her opening statement refers to her initial misconception that the paper would be an easy one to write but that upon her return from Eisteddfod she realised its difficulty; it was a topic more fit for a statesman than a professional musician because to adequately address the subject was to touch on great questions.<sup>35</sup> Her experiences of Eisteddfod were very positive: she saw it as 'the expression of ideals of a nation'.<sup>36</sup> In short, she saw it as an event that brought the people

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<sup>34</sup> The letters were donated to the library of the Royal College of Music by the executor of Richard Best's estate, after his death. The library possesses all the letters from George Grove as well as letters from Mrs Oldham to Edith between 1883 and 1888.

<sup>35</sup> Edith Oldham, 'Eisteddfod and the Feis Ceoil'. *The New Ireland Review*, 8 (1898), pp. 349-361.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 349.

together, it was an expression of their culture and their artistic ideals. In comparison, she described Ireland as a country that was severely in need of something similar but original because she felt that any attempts at organising a musical event up to that point had been merely an imitation of English standards and that Irish men and women could never be English. The Ireland that Oldham describes was dismal in many respects and her portrait would, most likely, have been a bold statement at that time, particularly for a woman. She believed that the nation had been deprived of legitimate outlets for its ideas and imagination:

Ireland, [was] once the home of a living art, [and although] still possessed of traditions of greatness in the higher things, still endowed with a spirituality and imagination which centuries of misgovernment and misunderstanding on the part of the ruling race has not eradicated [...] Ireland, the land of Song, sings no more. The happiness of her people is gone.<sup>37</sup>

She suggests that the nation needed an outlet for its artistic and musical endeavours to flourish, a means of expressing itself while meeting and supporting others so that the population grew together culturally and became happier and more contented as a result. Oldham believed that the Feis Ceoil festival was one such outlet. She commented on the influence Eisteddfod had on the founding and organization of the Feis. In giving a history of the Welsh festival, she pointed out that the Irish could not hope to adopt the programme straight off as it was one that had existed for hundreds of years in Wales and the Feis was only coming into its second year. To compare the two might 'almost be as reasonable as comparing our small cathedral of Christchurch to St. Peter's in Rome'.<sup>38</sup> The best they could hope for was that someday it would grow to the strengths that Eisteddfod had. In Oldham's words, 'we in the Feis have enough to do at present in getting the festival well established and a popular institution in the country'.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Edith Oldham, 'Eisteddfod and the Feis Ceoil', *The New Ireland Review*, 8 (1898), p. 350.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 357.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 354.

Edith Oldham then describes how the Feis compared musically to Eisteddfod and on this subject she commented that though we compared poorly in numbers our standards were higher. For example, the Feis had thirteen choirs entered in 1897, Eisteddfod had sixty-six but in Wales only one choir sang without accompaniment; in Ireland it was compulsory. The largest area of difference was within the treatment of composers and their music. In Eisteddfod only half the concerts were given to Welsh composers, whereas in the Feis all of the concerts had music composed by Irish composers. In reference to the compositional competitions, Oldham claimed the Feis to be far superior because it had performed the winning work, Esposito's cantata, *Deirdre*. On the topic of this work Oldham goes as far as to credit the Feis with sparking Esposito's compositional output in this genre:

We all know the talent of the composer of *Deirdre* in a purely instrumental music but I think it was a revelation to most of us that we had a composer with us in the person of Signor Esposito who could favourably compare with any of the large orchestral and choral works of the day. I say 'revelation' advisedly because had it not been for the Feis it might have been many years before that talent had been revealed to us.<sup>40</sup>

In her discussion of the Feis Ceoil, Edith Oldham takes a very nationalistic stance. She believed that Ireland as a whole had suffered and needed something to bring happiness and self-respect back to the people and she saw the competition as a means of doing this. A joining together of ideas, interests and talents to create an annual event that would illustrate the creativity of its musicians while also bringing people together in support of this cultural development. She saw as one of its main aims that of teaching the people to stand firmly on their own merits 'not to imitate the fashions and ideas of another race, but to lift its head among nations as a self respecting and self reliant entity in the civilisations of the world'.<sup>41</sup> Oldham brings her address to a close by stating that 'I have within me a conviction that the Feis will ultimately

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<sup>40</sup> Edith Oldham, 'Eisteddfod and the Feis Ceoil'. *The New Ireland Review*, 8 (1898), p. 358.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 359.



do more for the art of music in Ireland than anything that has yet been attempted'.<sup>42</sup> In this aspect Oldham was completely right. The Feis Ceoil is still going strong to this day. It continues to bring musicians from all over the country together, providing a forum through which our nation's talents can be expressed. Oldham envisaged this event long ago, and in many ways her lecture on the Feis may have been inspiration for many of the teachers and musicians present to get involved and attend the 1898 Feis, thus helping to promote the competition and allowing it to grow in its early years.

Her address seems to be a means of inspiring her listeners. She painted Ireland as a country that had neglected its music but that was finding its feet again and already at that point reaching higher standards than its Welsh neighbours. She encouraged others to attend or get involved with the Feis by presenting it in a positive manner, and equating it and the growth of music through it to happiness within the nation. It was appealing and one could not help but get caught up in her enthusiasm.

### **Annie Patterson: a woman of many musical talents**

The articles of Oldham's Feis co-founder, Dr Annie Patterson, for the *Weekly Irish Times* are along similar lines. They are filled with enthusiasm for Irish music, Irish musical events, Irish performers and Irish composers. They seemed to be constantly encouraging the reader to become more involved in the wonderful musical culture that was unfolding around them.

Annie Patterson began her musical education at the Royal Irish Academy of Music in 1875 where she was taught piano by Miss Kelly and elementary harmony by Sir Robert Stewart. She later went on to study the organ with Stewart and in 1887 she was awarded one of the RIAM's first organ scholarships. She was also a member of the Academy choir. She also studied music at the Royal University of Dublin, graduating with a BA in 1887 and a MusDoc in 1889, making her the first woman to receive a doctorate of music in Ireland or England. Between 1887 and 1897 she worked as an organist and an examiner of music at the Royal University of Ireland. She also had several articles on music published in the popular English magazine *The Girls Own Paper*

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 360.

on topics such as music in Ireland and music degrees for girls. In 1891 she founded the Dublin Choral Union and was conductor for that year.

Dr Annie Patterson's greatest achievement was the founding of Fees Coil. Patterson approached the Gaelic league in 1894 with the idea of reviving the ancient Irish Feiseanna. Between 1899 and 1901 Annie Patterson wrote articles on music for the *Weekly Irish Times*, through which she aimed to increase public awareness and appreciation of music. She continued to do this with many of her books, for example her volumes on *How to Listen to an Orchestra* and *Chats with music Lovers*. She also wrote a volume for the *Master Musicians* series on Schumann, and books on the oratorio and the native music of Ireland. Patterson was also an accomplished composer and her compositional output included songs, operas and choral works which were all based on Irish themes and myths<sup>43</sup>.

### **Patterson's articles for the *Weekly Irish Times*, 1899-1901**

Patterson's articles for *The Weekly Irish Times* appeared every Saturday from October 1899 until December 1901. Over the course of the articles she covered a wide range of topics but with one main theme evident throughout, that of evoking the interest of the public in the musical activities taking place around them. As Richard Pine points out, her writing in the articles is a 'noteworthy example of that extremely small group of writers on music who at that time embraced journalism as a way of creating an audience for the arguments of cultural nationalism.'<sup>44</sup> Her articles began with the general title of 'Music in the Home'.<sup>45</sup> The first article comments on the opportunities open to the public to enjoy music in their homes and gives points on when to practice. It also announces that the articles will contain an inquiry column 'on all matters musical'.

The second article is on how to practice. It points out in its opening paragraphs that there is a right and wrong way to do everything

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<sup>43</sup> William H. Grattan Flood and Patrick F. Devine, 'Patterson, Annie (Wilson)', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. by Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, 29 vols (London: MacMillan Publishers Ltd, 2001), xix, 237.

<sup>44</sup> Pine & Acton, *To Talent Alone*, p. 289.

<sup>45</sup> Annie Patterson, 'Music in the Home', *WIT*, 14 October 1899, p. 4.

and that people should realise that there is no 'royal road' to proficiency in music.<sup>46</sup> In terms of the inquiry column, the answers addressed topics as diverse as giving the meaning of the Welsh festival Eisteddfod, to giving suggestions on how to acquire a classical repertoire. In the following weeks Patterson covered a wide range of topics ranging from the pianoforte, singing, opera and concert engagements to the choice of music as a profession. Her final article for the year is on the 'Musical Prospects of Dublin for 1900'.<sup>47</sup> It considers all the organisations that contribute to music in the city, such as the Royal Irish Academy of Music, the Dublin Musical Society, the Dublin Orchestral Union and many more, as well as naming several important figures involved in music. She concludes by suggesting that Dublin is prepared for the new century as long as the public continue to support its musical activities. To close the article she comments that:

As New Year comes in next week, and with its advent most of us are full of new resolutions and increased activity for the undertaking of great things in the dawning future, I will have few words to say about How to Study Music Methodically.

It seems that Patterson was determined to make sure that the new year's resolutions of her readers included their music practice.

Over the course of 1900 her articles continue to cover a wide range of topics from the music surrounding the Queen's visit to the eminent musicians and composers in Dublin at that time. As promised the first article of the New Year discusses the methodical study of music. As we might expect of someone who had achieved so much as a doctorate at twenty-one, she does not approach the subject lightly. The articles open by telling us that:

If we would do anything really well, it is wise to set about it 'decently and in order' that is, we ought to approach the work undertaken in the right spirit of self-devotion and we should allot our time and energies

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<sup>46</sup> Annie Patterson, 'Music in the Home: How to Practice' *WIT*, 21 October 1899, p. 4.

<sup>47</sup> Annie Patterson, 'Music in the Home: The Musical Prospects of Dublin for 1900' *WIT*, 30 December 1899, p. 4.

to it in such a way that we may completely cover the field of thought or action which we propose to explore.<sup>48</sup>

It is as if Patterson is trying to train the nation, thus hoping to create a country full of musical enthusiasts and she aimed to instruct her reader in all aspects of their musical training.

She manages to find the musical element in every event or occasion. For example, her 17 March article is entitled 'Music and The Saints'.<sup>49</sup> In it, she covers music and Christianity, music associated with several saints and lastly, the music associated with St Patrick himself. She notes that she can find no indication 'whether St Patrick himself was "musical" in our sense of the term as many of his kind were not'. But she does acknowledge the music that honours him. On the 14 April her article is entitled 'The Native Music of Ireland' and in it she states that there is 'surely no Irish topic that should so deservedly be discussed [...] and made fashionable [...] as the matchless native music of Ireland'.<sup>50</sup> She speaks of the exquisite beauty of the melodies and the joy to be achieved in performing them. In discussing instrumental improvisation based on Irish airs her thoughts are that the best approach to displaying the charms of Irish melody through improvising on themes is by doing so in the most delicate and dainty manner possible so as not to take away from what is important, the melody.

For the rest of the year her articles are almost completely centred on music and musicians in Dublin. She has an article on the Royal Irish Academy of Music, the Feis Ceoil and its prize-winners and composers and a series on eminent Dublin musicians, with a mixture of both male and female musicians. In her first article on a female musician, Mrs Alice Adelaide Needham, she comments that centuries ago Irish women were as much to the front as Irish men but that 'modern ideas of civilisation have for a time had a repressive effect upon the development and evolution of the feminine Gaelic element but the daughters and sisters of heroes cannot be bound within the limits on

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<sup>48</sup> Annie Patterson, 'Music in the Home: How to Study Music Methodically' *WIT*, 6 January 1900, p. 4.

<sup>49</sup> Annie Patterson, 'Music in the Home: Music and the Saints' *WIT*, 17 March 1900, p. 3.

<sup>50</sup> Annie Patterson, 'The native Music of Ireland', *WIT*, 14 April 1900, p. 3.

conventionality.<sup>51</sup> And so, over the course of her articles she draws attention to several prominent female musicians such as Margaret O'Hea, Elizabeth Scott-Ffenell and Fanny Moody, to name but a few.<sup>52</sup> The later article bears the title 'A Charming Prima Donna: Madame Fanny Moody' and one cannot help but wonder if this was Patterson's way of pointing out from the beginning that the singer's surname was no reflection on her character.<sup>53</sup>

In 1901 the theme of promoting and advertising local active musicians continues with the articles from 26 January to 4 May being devoted to doing just that. Later in the summer she offers advice on topics such as seaside music and summer pianoforte music and for the last few months the articles return to reviewing Dublin music and its musicians. The article 21 September is entitled 'The prospects of musical Dublin', and is reminiscent of her final article of 1899. This article summarises all that Annie Patterson was trying to achieve through her work with Feis Ceoil, her articles, her compositions and her many publications. She describes the Dublin audiences as being the ones who predict what will be popular. She states that London managers gauge the success of their ventures based on the reaction it gets in Dublin. However, Patterson believed that the same Dublin audience is not as generous yet with its attention to music and drama that is home-grown. She questions, at the end of the first paragraph, if they have yet got over the 'odious principle of honouring all prophets but those of our own country and city?'<sup>54</sup> She suggested that Dublin was a musical city because the public have a keen sense and appreciation of a good music but that the problem was that Dublin audiences did not persevere to keep alive what was worthy of support. As an example she uses the Dublin Musical Society, which had cancelled concerts shortly before her article, due to lack of interest. She points out that there was not enough widespread support for music and that it was up to all classes of the community to become involved in the wealth of musical

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<sup>51</sup> Annie Patterson, 'Alicia Adelaide Needham' *WIT*, 9 June 1900, p. 3.

<sup>52</sup> Annie Patterson dedicated two weeks to Margaret O Hea, 10 November 1900 and 17 November 1900.

<sup>53</sup> Annie Patterson, *WIT*, 15 December 1900, p. 3.

<sup>54</sup> Annie Patterson, 'The Prospects of Musical Dublin' *WIT*, 21 September 1900, p. 3.

activities that were taking place. She praises the societies and organisations and the Academy, the music of the cathedral services, Protestant and Catholic, the theatre bands and the many active professional teachers. She refers to the Ireland of the past where music literature and art were the most treasured possessions of a rarely gifted people.

In this article Annie Patterson comments that she is doing her best to fan the spark of interest into a flame. This summarises what Patterson's work was all about. She wanted to make music an important part of Irish society as it had been in the past. She herself had an interest and appreciation for it from an early age and wanted to pass this on to others. Her articles were a means of bringing music back as an important element of people's daily lives, be it as amateur musicians or avid concertgoers. Through her writing she provided constant encouragement for every level of music enthusiast, making every reader feel like they could contribute to Dublin's musical activities.

The importance of the work of these women both through their articles mentioned above and their many other achievements is undeniable. As keen musicians themselves, they saw the benefits of music to everyday life and its ability to bring people together. At a time when nationalistic sentiments were strong they saw music as a means of uniting the people. They were eager to improve standards of music in Ireland, through music teaching, greater involvement and participation in musical events, such as Feis Ceoil and also through teaching the general public to develop a greater appreciation of music and of their own composers, performers and teachers. The topics for their lectures and articles were all nationalistic and in support of music in Ireland, and especially in Dublin. This chapter offers but a glimpse of the wonderful work of Margaret O'Hea, Edith Oldham and Annie Patterson in promoting music and assisting its development in the closing years of the nineteenth century.

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# Charles Villiers Stanford's Experiences with and contributions to the solo piano repertoire

Adèle Commins

Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924) has long been considered as one of the leaders of the English Musical Renaissance on account of his work as composer, conductor and pedagogue. In his earlier years he rose to fame as a piano soloist, having been introduced to the instrument at a very young age. It is no surprise then that his first attempts at composition included a march for piano in 1860.<sup>1</sup> The piano continued to play an important role in Stanford's compositional career and his last piano work, *Three Fancies*, is dated 1923. With over thirty works for the instrument, not counting his piano duets, Stanford's piano pieces can be broadly placed in three categories: (i) piano miniatures or character pieces which are in the tradition of salon or domestic music; (ii) works which have a pedagogical function; and (iii) works which are written in a more virtuosic vein. In each of these categories many of the works remain unpublished. In most cases the piano scores are not available for purchase and this has hindered performances after his death.<sup>2</sup>

The repertoire of pianists should not be limited to the music of European composers and publishers, like performers, are responsible for the exposure a composer's works receives. New editions of Stanford's piano music need to be created and published in order to raise awareness of the richness of Stanford's contribution to piano literature. While there has been renewed interest in the composer's life and music by musicologists and performers – primarily initiated by the recent Stanford biographies in 2002 by Dibble and Rodmell – the

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<sup>1</sup> Originally termed Opus 1 in Stanford's sketch book it was reproduced in Anon., 'Charles Villiers Stanford', *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, 39 670 (1898), 785-793 (p. 786). See also Paul Rodmell, *Charles Villiers Stanford* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2002), p. 28 for differing opinions on the chronology of this work.

<sup>2</sup> Publishers include Banks Music Publications, Stainer & Bell Ltd. and Cathedral Music.

intention of this chapter is to highlight Stanford's talent as a writer of piano music and to give a brief outline of his piano music which is worthy of systematic study and performance.<sup>3</sup>

This chapter, therefore, seeks to provide an introductory discussion of Stanford's compositions for piano in terms of the different styles which he employed in his writing for the instrument. It will address the genres employed by the composer in his solo piano music but will exclude a consideration of his piano duets. Reception of his piano works will be examined both during his lifetime and posthumously. I will also consider how changing events in Stanford's life affected the reception of his piano music and argue that, on account of the variety of Stanford's piano music and his skilful writing for the instrument, many of Stanford's works for piano deserve a place in the repertory. When concentrating on Stanford's contribution to the solo piano repertoire, some questions are central to gaining an insight into Stanford's composition of music for the piano: What was Stanford's experience with traditional genres for the piano? What continued to attract Stanford to piano music? Who influenced his compositional style? What aspects of his piano pieces exhibit traits of Stanford as a traditionalist? Did he build upon these traditions and did he make his own contribution to the genre? And most importantly, why does most of Stanford's writing for the piano remain virtually unknown?

### **Reception of Stanford's piano music**

Claims by Bernard Shaw and Joseph Bennett that 'Professor' Stanford was too much an academic were laid down in the later decades of the nineteenth century, a myth that has proved difficult to dispel.<sup>4</sup> There is no doubt that the reception of Stanford's piano music suffered at the hands of these early critics and what is most ironic about this ill-fated reception history is that it is probable that the music itself was not examined before it was dismissed. Stanford's role as an academic and his dedication to the work of his predecessor, Brahms, made him an unsuitable candidate for British musicians to accept as a great composer

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<sup>3</sup> Jeremy Dibble, *Charles Villiers Stanford: Man and Musician* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). Hereafter referred to as Dibble: *Charles Villiers Stanford*. See also Paul Rodmell, *Charles Villiers Stanford* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2002). Hereafter referred to as Rodmell: *Stanford*.

<sup>4</sup> See for example Bernard Shaw, *Music in London*, 2 vols (London: Constable & Co. Ltd, 1949), II, pp. 303-308.

of contemporary piano music. His conservative and traditional views on composition would not have helped dispel the opinions of the critics that played a defining role in the reception history of Stanford's music.<sup>5</sup>

Although works for the piano represent a sizeable part of the composer's output they have received little critical attention to date. And indeed one critic even stated that 'the piano works of [...] [Parry and Stanford] need not detain us long'.<sup>6</sup> To date, scholars who have included references to Stanford's piano music in their studies of music in England and music in the nineteenth century have focused primarily on Stanford's *Three Rhapsodies for Piano* op.92<sup>7</sup> and many writers have failed to acknowledge the corpus of his piano music which remains in manuscript.<sup>8</sup> Although Stanford's forty-eight preludes for piano (op.163 and op.179) were the focus of a survey article by Michael Allis in 1994 this did not seem to generate any real interest in the composer's piano music.<sup>9</sup> In addition, James Gibb's article 'The Growth of National Schools' in Denis Matthews's book *Keyboard Music*<sup>10</sup> failed to include Stanford as a composer for the instrument although Matthews did refer to the following composers: Sterndale Bennett, Frederick Delius, E. J. Moeran, Arnold Bax, York Bowen, John Ireland and Arthur Bliss. Gibb concluded that 'the nineteenth century was a bleak one for British music',<sup>11</sup> a statement which is unfounded as there were many composers

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<sup>5</sup> See comments by Hueffer and Bennett in Meirion Hughes, *The English Musical Renaissance and the Press 1850-1914: Watchmen of Music* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), pp. 169-170.

<sup>6</sup> John Fuller-Maitland, *The Music of Parry and Stanford* (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons Ltd, 1934) p. 24. Hereafter referred to as Fuller-Maitland, *The Music of Parry and Stanford*.

<sup>7</sup> See for example Fuller-Maitland, *The Music of Parry and Stanford*, p. 36, John Parry, 'Piano Music: 1870-1914', in *The Romantic Age 1800-1914* ed. by Nicholas Temperley (Oxford: Blackwell Ltd, 1988), pp. 424-434, John Caldwell, *The Oxford History of English Music*, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), II, p. 304 & Geoffrey Self, *Light Music in Britain Since 1870: A Survey* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), pp. 154-165.

<sup>8</sup> The manuscripts are housed at the Stanford archive at the Robinson Library, University of Newcastle and the British Library.

<sup>9</sup> Michael Allis, 'Another "48": Stanford and "Historic Sensibility"', *The Music Review* 55 2 (1994), pp. 119-137.

<sup>10</sup> James Gibb, 'The Growth of National Schools' in *Keyboard Music*, ed. by Denis Matthews (Penguin Books, Middlesex, 1972), pp. 259-315. Hereafter referred to as Gibb, 'The Growth of National Schools'.

<sup>11</sup> Gibb, 'The Growth of National Schools', p. 301.

actively composing for the piano in England during this period. In addition, among the composers of the English Musical Renaissance there are works that are worthy of examination and performance. In his 1972 review of *Keyboard Music* Frank Dawes was clearly disappointed that the author failed to acknowledge Stanford's greatness as a composer for the instrument as he believed that Stanford 'certainly knew how to write for the piano'.<sup>12</sup>

This neglect of English piano music from the English Musical Renaissance has led to negative perceptions of British piano music composed during this period. John Caldwell devoted less than one page to the composition of piano music in England during the period 1870-1914 stating that 'music for piano alone occupies only a small corner of the English musical garden at this period'.<sup>13</sup> Admittedly the English Musical Renaissance did not produce vast amounts of piano music; however, there are many works by Stanford which are certainly worthy of examination and performance and which are valuable and informative examples of English piano music from the period. One critic in 1901 commended the English school of composers but suggested that members of this school of composition 'from the greatest to the least, are not at their best in writing for the pianoforte'.<sup>14</sup> He further claimed that 'the paucity of first-rate English works published for the piano is undeniable'. The present author's work on Stanford's piano music aims to dispel this myth that piano music only occupied a small 'corner' of the English musical garden. It appears that writers were not concerned with the output of piano music by British composers during the English Musical Renaissance and this lack of interest in English piano music shown by writers in the twentieth century did little to encourage performances or publications of the music. Dramatic music and music with a literary focus seemed to interest the public more and the promotion of popular ideologies by such critics as Shaw had a negative impact on audiences at the time and future music enthusiasts.<sup>15</sup> Without

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<sup>12</sup> Frank Dawes, 'Book Review of Denis Matthews *Keyboard Music*, (Penguin Books, Middlesex, 1972) in *The Musical Times* 113 155 (1972), p. 560.

<sup>13</sup> John Caldwell, *The Oxford History of English Music*, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), (ii), p. 304.

<sup>14</sup> Anon., 'Miss Verne's Recital', *The Times*, 12 December 1901, p. 15.

<sup>15</sup> See for example Shaw's writings in G.B.Shaw, *The Perfect Wagnerite* (New York: Brentano's, 1911) & Bernard Shaw, *Music in London*, 2 vols (London: Constable & Co. Ltd, 1949), I, p. 71.

the support of the writers on English musical history, old myths, which commenced with the damning criticism of Shaw along with the continued emphasis on Stanford's role as a pedagogue, did little to encourage performers of the true value of Stanford's piano music.<sup>16</sup>

Before a consideration of some of these works can take place, it will be useful to examine Stanford's introduction to the piano and to the piano literature of the German masters to whom he would remain devoted throughout his life. As Dunhill claims:

the great masters of the past were again his guides, philosophers, and friends. He owed a good deal to Schubert and Schumann, and a good deal more to Brahms. He was evidently bent on writing not for his own day, but for all days, quite oblivious of the circumstance that most of those around him were experimenting with various interesting things which might or might not survive as permanencies.<sup>17</sup>

### **Musical surroundings**

Stanford's privileged upbringing ensured that he was exposed to standard classical repertoire from a young age. His father, John Stanford (1810-1880), was commended for his numerous appearances as a bass in Dublin musical circles.<sup>18</sup> In his autobiography Stanford described his father as 'a fair violoncellist of no mean merit, who could tackle the Beethoven trios and sonatas without disgrace'.<sup>19</sup> Annie Patterson noted that Stanford's mother was a 'distinguished amateur

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<sup>16</sup> See Adèle Commins, 'From Child Prodigy to Conservative Professor?: Reception Issues of Charles Villiers Stanford', in *Maynooth Musicology*, ed. by Barbara Dignam, Paul Higgins & Lisa Parker, 1 (2008), pp. 28-58 for information on issues affecting Stanford's reception history.

<sup>17</sup> Thomas F. Dunhill, 'Charles Villiers Stanford: Some Aspects of His Work and Influence', *Proceedings of the Musical Association*, 53rd Session (1926 - 1927), 41-65 (p. 51).

<sup>18</sup> See for example *Dublin Daily Express*, 20 July 1880, p. 2 *Saunders's Newsletter*, 10 Dec. 1847, p. 2, *Saunders's Newsletter*, 18 Feb. 1848 p. 2, *Saunders's Newsletter*, 18 April 1848, p. 2, *Orchestra*, 12 Dec. 1863, p. 166, F. A. Gerard, *Picturesque Dublin, Old and New* (London, 1898), p. 407 and Rodmell, *Stanford*, p. 18 & pp. 21-23 for excerpts from reviews of performances by John Stanford.

<sup>19</sup> Stanford, *Pages From an Unwritten Diary* (London: Arnold, 1914), p. 33. Hereafter referred to as *Stanford, Pages*.

pianist'.<sup>20</sup> Mary Stanford (1816-1892) had performed the solo part of Mendelssohn's *Pianoforte Concerto in G minor no.1* at a concert of the Dublin Musical Union,<sup>21</sup> while an advertisement in *The Irish Times* for the annual amateur concert at the Antient Concert Hall in aid of the Irish Academy of Music in 1860 listed Mrs J. Stanford as one of four performers who were to play some miscellaneous works by eminent composers.<sup>22</sup> It is likely that it was Mary Stanford who encouraged her son's interest in piano. Others also recognised his pianistic abilities and duly rewarded his talent. Although the Stanford home at no.2 Herbert Street possessed an upright piano, his great-uncle, Jonathan Henn, 'descended upon' his 'house with a full-sized grand pianoforte'.<sup>23</sup> The frequent existence of active music-making in the family home in addition to various musical experiences to which he was exposed nurtured a love of music in Stanford from an early age.<sup>24</sup>

During his childhood years Stanford was fortunate to have received instruction in the piano from an array of proficient teachers in Dublin, many of whom had received instruction in Leipzig with Moscheles and Mendelssohn.<sup>25</sup> These teachers, who included Elizabeth Meeke,<sup>26</sup> Henrietta Flynn<sup>27</sup> and Michael Quarry,<sup>28</sup> not only ensured that

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<sup>20</sup> Annie Patterson, 'Eminent Dublin Musicians: Miss Margaret O'Hea', *Weekly Irish Times*, 10 November 1900, p. 3.

<sup>21</sup> J. F. Porte, *Sir Charles V. Stanford* (London: Kegan Paul, 1921), p. 7. Hereafter referred to as Porte, *Sir Charles V Stanford*.

<sup>22</sup> Anon., 'Irish Academy of Music', *The Irish Times*, 29 May 1860, p. 1. The advertisement does not, however, list the piece(s) which she was to perform. Unfortunately no further details on Mary Stanford's musical talent were forthcoming from my research.

<sup>23</sup> Stanford, *Pages*, p. 5. Unfortunately as with many of the details presented by Stanford in his autobiography no date is given for this event.

<sup>24</sup> See Stanford, *Pages*, p. 6, p. 55, p. 82 & p. 86 for recollections of early musical experiences in Stanford's childhood.

<sup>25</sup> See Stanford, *Pages*, pp. 56-57, p. 71 & p. 75 for information regarding his piano instruction as a child.

<sup>26</sup> Elizabeth Meeke was Stanford's godmother and she had taken over his piano instruction at the age of seven. Meeke had studied with Moscheles. See Stanford, *Pages*, pp. 56-57 for further details on his period of instruction with Meeke.

<sup>27</sup> Henrietta Flynn was a Dublin-born pianist who had travelled to Leipzig in the early 1840s to further her musical education. Here she studied with both Mendelssohn and Moscheles and she was awarded a diploma from the newly founded conservatory of music in Leipzig. See Stanford, *Pages*, pp. 74-75 for details on his lessons with Flynn.

Stanford received a thorough grounding in piano technique, but they also introduced the young musician to a rich corpus of piano literature which included Chopin's mazurkas, works by Dussek and four-hand arrangements of Brahms's Hungarian Dances. Through such varied repertoire Stanford was equipped with a solid understanding of the compositional techniques employed by many eminent composers. In addition, Stanford's cultured surroundings allowed him to experience a wide range of fine music as he attended musical performances in Dublin and London.<sup>29</sup> On one such excursion to London in 1862 with his father, the young pianist was fortunate to receive piano instruction from Ernst Pauer who had studied piano with Mozart's son, Wolfgang. All respected as accomplished teachers and performers, these piano teachers equipped Stanford with a solid foundation in the piano.

### **Stanford and salon music**

Domestic music-making was a common form of entertainment in the nineteenth century and played an integral role in Stanford's musical education in Dublin, and as he became proficient at the piano he began to participate in musical gatherings, performing in at least two recitals in the family home when he was only nine and eleven years old respectively.<sup>30</sup> These two concerts, held on 13 May 1862 and 6 June 1864, were reviewed by Dublin press who highlighted his skills as a pianist.<sup>31</sup> While Stanford's choice of programme was indicative of the repertory played in the home by amateur pianists during the nineteenth century, it also emphasises that the young pianist had received thorough guidance in the canonical literature from his teachers which undoubtedly had a formative influence on Stanford.

According to de Val and Ehrlich, music in drawing-room settings had to be 'both effective and reasonably easy to play' and among many works suggested by de Val and Ehrlich one finds reference

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<sup>28</sup> Michael Quarry was a gifted pianist and regularly gave performances in the Antient Concert Rooms. Harry Plunkett Greene, *Charles Villiers Stanford* (London: Edward Arnold, 1935), pp. 32-34 gives an account of Stanford's time with Quarry. Hereafter referred to as Greene, *Charles Villiers Stanford*.

<sup>29</sup> See Stanford, *Pages*, p. 55, p. 61, & pp. 70-71 for accounts by the young boy of performances he attended as a child.

<sup>30</sup> Dibble, *Charles Villiers Stanford*, pp. 32-33. See also Rodmell, *Stanford*, pp. 29-30.

<sup>31</sup> For a review of the 1864 concert see *Orchestra*, 11 June 1864, p. 590 in Rodmell, *Stanford*, p. 29.

to Mendelssohn's *Lieder Ohne Worte*, one of which Stanford performed as a child.<sup>32</sup> In later years Stanford described his home as a 'great port of call for some very interesting visitors', many of whom he entertained on piano;<sup>33</sup> and it is clear that the young boy was accustomed to performing in salon concerts. During each of John Palliser's visits to the Stanford household in the 1860s, Stanford performed one of Bach's preludes and fugues for his visitor.<sup>34</sup> In 1870 Stanford earned a gold sovereign from his soon-to-be colleague at Cambridge University, William Sterndale Bennett, for performing all of the English composer's Preludes and Lessons op.33 from memory.<sup>35</sup> Although Stanford was eighteen by the time of this performance, it is likely that he may have performed this set or indeed one set of Bach's Preludes and Fugues from memory at an earlier age. Many details, however, regarding Stanford's childhood performances are absent from records so it is difficult to discount or prove this. The existence of this performance of Sterndale Bennett's thirty Preludes and Lessons is not dissimilar to performances by childhood prodigies in Europe, one example being Fanny Hensel Mendelssohn who had performed all of book one from Bach's Preludes and Fugues by the age of twelve. Other accounts of Stanford's performances in informal settings do exist;<sup>36</sup> however, the two aforementioned events are worth noting as Stanford himself later completed two sets of preludes for the piano: op.163 and op.179.

In addition to taking a leading role as soloist, Stanford accompanied his father singing. In his autobiography Stanford recounted the difficulty he had in this role on one occasion, when his 'very juvenile fingers could never get over the keys quick enough for his [John Stanford's] singing of "Is not His word like a fire?" from

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<sup>32</sup> Dorothy de Val & Cyril Ehrlich, 'Repertory and Canon', in *The Cambridge Guide to the Piano*, ed. by David Rowland (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 117-134 (p. 118).

<sup>33</sup> Stanford, *Pages*, p. 65.

<sup>34</sup> Stanford, *Pages*, p. 66. It is unclear the number of times which Palliser visited the Stanford home.

<sup>35</sup> William Sterndale Bennett (1816-1875) was Professor of music at Cambridge University during Stanford's time as musical director of the Cambridge University Musical Society. In addition Stanford's father was acquainted with Bennett.

<sup>36</sup> See Greene, *Charles Villiers Stanford*, p. 9 & pp. 33-34 for further examples of Stanford's involvement in informal music-making as a child.



Mendelssohn's *Elijah*.<sup>37</sup> These early performance opportunities on the piano surely instilled a love of the instrument in the young boy. Sigismund Thalberg, with whom Stanford had been fortunate to receive a piano lesson in 1862, acknowledged that while much musical entertainment had taken place away from the home, the greater part of musical amusement took place within the family circle with music on the piano.<sup>38</sup>

In later years Stanford continued his involvement in informal musical settings and both attended and gave performances at a party in Leipzig, in the houses of such eminent musicians as Marion Scott and Paul Victor Mendelssohn Benecke.<sup>39</sup> Stanford also hosted private concerts with the popular title 'At Homes'.<sup>40</sup> Stanford's familiarity with the intimacy of such musical gatherings helps us understand the nature of some of his compositions which are suitable for such entertainment. Music performed in private concerts in the early nineteenth century was often 'semi-classical'.<sup>41</sup> The works bore an array of fanciful titles,

<sup>37</sup> Stanford, *Pages From an Unwritten Diary*, p. 32.

<sup>38</sup> Quote in Edward Francis Rimbault, *The Pianoforte, its Origins, Progress and Construction*, (London, 1860), pp. 159-160 in David Rowland, 'The Piano Since c.1825' in *The Cambridge Guide to the Piano*, ed. by David Rowland (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp.40-56 (p. 49).

<sup>39</sup> Other guests at Marion Scott's party included Dunhill, Bliss, Harold Darke, Howells and Gurney. See Greene, *Charles Villiers Stanford*, p. 113. Scott (1877-1953) was a violinist and pianist who studied composition with Stanford at the Royal College of Music. She was a noted performer in London musical circles, having formed 'The Marion Scott Quartet'. Paul Victor Mendelssohn Benecke (1868-1944), grandson of Felix Mendelssohn, was senior fellow of Magdalen College and a prominent pianist in Oxford musical circles during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries performing regularly at the Oxford Musical Club. This particular event was also attended by Joseph Joachim and pianist Fanny Davies. See Susan Wollenberg, 'Three Oxford Pianistic Careers', in *The Piano in Nineteenth-Century British Culture*, ed. by Therese Ellsworth & Susan Wollenberg (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 235-261 (p. 249).

<sup>40</sup> Stanford gave little information on informal music settings in his home in his autobiographical writings. However, Percy Grainger noted that he performed in at least four settings hosted by Stanford. The dates for these 'At Homes' are 6 July 1904, 12 July 1907, 11 July 1912 and 11 July 1913. See Anne-Marie Forbes, 'Grainger in Edwardian London', *Australian Music Research*, 5 (2000), pp. 1-16 (p. 6). Greene also details a party which was given at Stanford's home at Lower Berkeley Street at which Sybil Eaton, Leonard Borwick and Plunkett Greene performed: Greene, *Charles Villiers Stanford*, p. 276.

<sup>41</sup> Arthur Miuton, 'Parlour Music', *American Speech*, 13/4 (1938), 255-262 (p. 255).

sometimes exotic, suggesting different moods and emotions, people and places. Of Stanford's piano works only three bear poetic titles: *Une Fleur de Mai*, *Night Thoughts* and *Scenes de Ballet*. Stanford's practice of including the genre in the title of the work, outlining his preference for the traditional, may have been an indication of his desire to elevate the tradition of salon music-making in Britain, while maintaining a musical content which would make them accessible to amateur musicians. While Shaw claimed that 'Mr Stanford is far too much the gentleman to compose anything but drawing-room or classroom music', this biting criticism, reminiscent of Wagner's diatribes against Mendelssohn, is clearly unfounded.<sup>42</sup> Stanford's piano music displays qualities which ensure that it should be treated as more than 'semi-classical' in design. Arguably there are piano compositions and also some songs by Stanford which are suitable to the salon context and also which fills a social and financial need. As with much of the serious music baptised in a serious salon context – Schubert, Brahms and even Mendelssohn lieder being obvious examples – much of Stanford's salon music is worthy of performance in more formal settings. It not only demonstrates the composer's elegant workmanship, his clear handling of form, his treatment of harmony and imaginative use of motivic development, but also redresses the misconception that the piano music of the English Musical Renaissance was only worthy of a cursory glance.<sup>43</sup> The simple form of many of the works in this category of composition demonstrates that he was able to shape his musical ideas into relatively small works.

### **Stanford's interest in the piano and piano technique**

As a child Stanford received thorough grounding in piano technique and in later years his own technique on the instrument was commended.<sup>44</sup> Although many details are omitted from Stanford's autobiography, *Pages from an Unwritten Diary*, it is interesting to note that he devoted much space to commentary on different pianists and their technique on

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<sup>42</sup> *Shaw's Music: The Complete Musical Criticism in Three Volumes*, ed. by Dan Laurence, 3 vols (London: Bodley Head, 1981), II, p. 69. Hereafter referred to as Laurence, *Shaw's Music*.

<sup>43</sup> John Caldwell, *The Oxford History of English Music*, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), II, p. 304.

<sup>44</sup> See Greene, *Charles Villiers Stanford*, p. 33 & p. 85.

the instrument.<sup>45</sup> As a pianist he himself understood the potential of the instrument and in his role as professor of composition at the Royal College of Music he insisted that all of his students become proficient keyboard players.<sup>46</sup> The expressive capabilities of the instrument fascinated him greatly and this undoubtedly contributed to his continued interest in writing for the instrument.<sup>47</sup> In addition, Stanford feared that many composers did not exploit the full range of the piano, preferring to write music which remained predominantly in the middle three octaves of the instrument.<sup>48</sup> Many of Stanford's own compositions for the piano exploit the full expressive range of the instrument in a Beethovenian attempt to achieve an array of different tone colours.

In view of Stanford's interest in piano technique, many of his pieces would be suitable as pedagogical material. For example, *Ten Dances for Young Players* op.58 (1894) was dedicated to his two children Geraldine and Guy, aged eleven and nine years respectively in 1894. Stanford's composition of these miniatures, with the inclusion of 'young players' in the title, is reminiscent of Schumann's *Album for the Young* op.68 and Tchaikovsky's *Album for the Young* op.39. Stanford's ten traditional dances in the set give students the experience of playing in different meters while at the same time experiencing dance music from a variety of European countries.<sup>49</sup>

Later works for children by Stanford would clearly appeal to the child's imagination in their use of child-friendly titles from *Six Sketches in Two Sets* such as 'The Bogie Man' and 'The Golligwog's Dance'. Most creative of all his pieces for children is *A Toy Story* in which each piece in the story has an evocative title; some examples being: 'Alone', 'The Broken Toy' and 'The Mended Toy'. Although not a substantial part of his piano output, Stanford's works for the younger pianist make an

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<sup>45</sup> See Stanford, *Pages*, pp. 56-60, p. 108, & p. 200 and Stanford, 'William Sterndale Bennett', *Interludes, Records and Reflections* (London: John Murray, 1922), pp. 161-209 (p. 163) for Stanford's comments on a selection of pianists and their technique.

<sup>46</sup> Geoffrey Self, 'Coleridge-Taylor and the Orchestra', *Black Music Research Journal*, 21/2 (2001), 261-282 (p. 262).

<sup>47</sup> Stanford, *Musical Composition: A Short Treatise for Students* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1911), p. 92. Hereafter referred to as Stanford, *Musical Composition*.

<sup>48</sup> Stanford did not refer to any specific composers in relation to this comment.

<sup>49</sup> The ten traditional dances included Valse, Galop, Morris Dance, Polka, Mazurka, Saraband, Gigue, Branle, Minuet and Passepied.

important contribution to children's musical literature. It is clear from Stanford's autobiography that his own lessons as a child were filled with 'classical' works which were aimed at developing his technique. Stanford believed that 'it is important that in music, as in other branches of education the teaching should be on the lines of interest and of charm, and not on those of mechanism: mechanism revolts; interest and charm never', which could also be attributed to his philosophy of music education in general.<sup>50</sup> Stanford's pedagogical music exposes the young player to many different challenges and provides experience in a range of musical expression, dance meters, rhythmic figurations and changes in hand positions. While the works would serve as studies in alberti bass, broken chords, contrapuntal playing and independence of hands, melody is of primary focus throughout the pieces, for Stanford maintained that 'melody is essential to all work if it is to be of value'.<sup>51</sup> Stanford's pedagogical music offers children an opportunity to have a greater understanding of music by allowing them to achieve a competent level of artistic understanding and technical facility.

Although the piano works for children from 1918-1920 were not assigned an opus number, Stanford would have recognised the financial potential of composing works of this nature.<sup>52</sup> Published with Joseph Williams, a company which 'had a strong interest in educational music', the two sets of *Six Sketches* were not unlike other works published by this publishing house.<sup>53</sup> Remaining piano miniatures were published with Stainer & Bell, the firm with which Stanford had strong connections in the later decades of his life.

Local centre examinations took flight in England in the late nineteenth century and Stanford's participation in the Associated Board

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<sup>50</sup> Stanford, 'Some Notes Upon Musical Education', in *Interludes Records and Reflections* (London: John Murray, 1922), pp. 1-17 (p. 4).

<sup>51</sup> Stanford, 'Some Recent Tendencies in Composition', in *Interludes Records and Reflections* (London: John Murray, 1922), pp. 89-101 (p. 97).

<sup>52</sup> See Rodmell, *Stanford*, p. 311 and letters from Stainer & Bell Ltd. to Stanford 23 May 1910, 31 March 1911 and 27 January 1913 housed at Robinson Library, University of Newcastle for examples of works which Stanford signed away royalties.

<sup>53</sup> Peter Ward Jones, 'Williams, Joseph', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* 2<sup>nd</sup> edition ed. by Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan Publishers Ltd., 2002), pp. 410-411 (p. 411).

bears testament to his interest in the promotion of music education.<sup>54</sup> Although Stanford's role as a pedagogue is largely associated with his work as professor of composition, he also took a keen interest in the musical education of the younger generation, as exemplified in the many lectures and articles he wrote on children's musical education.<sup>55</sup> In his role as pedagogue Stanford was keen to educate all ages through his compositions and his rich programming of concerts under his direction.

David Wright believes that the spread of the examination system in England gave colleges power 'to shape musical taste nationally and across the Empire'.<sup>56</sup> Stanford's participation in this enterprise is testament to his interest in the promotion of music across all strands of society in addition to raising the standards of music-making and music education across the country. Works included on the syllabus 'effectively determined what repertoire pupils should study, and so – by omission – what they would be less likely to encounter'.<sup>57</sup> Interestingly, a range of Stanford's compositions were chosen as test pieces on the graded examinations of various examination boards and his *Six Sketches* from 1918 featured most prominently of all his piano compositions.<sup>58</sup> Regrettably, the fact that many of Stanford's other works were never chosen for inclusion on the examination syllabi ensured that some students were less likely to be exposed to his piano music.

Early posthumous reception of Stanford focused on his pedagogical talents. Guy Stanford believed that 'too much emphasis [...]

<sup>54</sup> See for example Anon., 'The Associated Board of the R.A.M. and R.C.M. for Local Examinations in Music', *The Musical Times* 39/670 (1898), p. 785 for a list of eminent professors associated with the initiative of which Stanford was one.

<sup>55</sup> Stanford, 'Music in Elementary Schools', in *Studies and Memories* (London: Archibald Constable & Co., 1908), pp. 43-60 and Stanford, 'Some Notes Upon Musical Education', in *Interludes Records and Reflections* (London: John Murray, 1922), pp. 1-17.

<sup>56</sup> David Wright, 'The South Kensington Music Schools and the Development of the British Conservatoire in the Late Nineteenth Century', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 130/2 (2005), 236-282 (p. 258). Hereafter referred to as Wright, 'The South Kensington Music Schools'.

<sup>57</sup> Wright, 'The South Kensington Music Schools' p. 258.

<sup>58</sup> Examination of syllabi included those of Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, Trinity College London, Leinster School of Music and the Royal Irish Academy of Music.

[was] given to his teaching and far too little on his composition'.<sup>59</sup> If Stanford was noted as a fine educationalist, why then do examining boards in England and Ireland fail to identify the pedagogical value of his piano literature and include his music on examination syllabi? A wide-spread recognition of Stanford's talent as a writer of pedagogical music, is long overdue and it is time to award it the full prominence it deserves. In addition to their carefully chosen titles, the technical and musical challenges these works present to the young pianist make his music suitable for the standard repertoire employed by teachers and for inclusion on examination syllabi in both Ireland and England. For example the last appearance of a work by Stanford on the syllabus for the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music was in 1991. Although Stanford may not have consciously set out to reform piano pedagogy in England in the early decades of the twentieth century, his contributions to this sphere contributed to the culture of piano playing among the youth.

### **Stanford as performer and virtuosic piano compositions**

During his time as an undergraduate at Cambridge University, Stanford featured prominently as piano soloist and chamber musician. It was through his initial involvement with the Cambridge University Musical Society that he rose to fame as a solo pianist and chamber musician, performing a *Nachtstück* by Schumann and a waltz by Heller for his debut performance on 30 November 1870 only two months after his entry as an undergraduate to Cambridge University.<sup>60</sup> As well as performing much of his own chamber music, his repertoire was clearly dominated by the German school of composition which would have a lasting effect on his own piano compositions. Although Stanford's piano playing was received positively in the press, no reviews profess him a virtuosic pianist. The *Cambridge Chronicle* did comment, however, that 'this gentleman is so great a favourite as a pianist that his appearance

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<sup>59</sup> Letter from Guy Stanford to Susan Stanford 7 November 1952 quoted in Frederick Hudson, 'Stanford, Sir Charles Villiers', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, edited by Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan Publishers, 1980) pp. 70-74 (p. 72).

<sup>60</sup> Anon., 'Charles Villiers Stanford', *The Musical Times* 39 670 (1898), 785-793, (p. 788). Which *Nachtstück* or waltz by Schumann and Heller was performed by Stanford is unclear.

was hailed with delight'.<sup>61</sup> More importantly and perhaps most interestingly, his playing in the capacity of soloist, chamber musician or accompanist was never criticised and this helped to promote him as a young emerging pianist. Unfortunately, Stanford gradually discontinued from performing in public after his undergraduate years. Sterndale Bennett had been the last composer pianist from England to forge a reputation for himself as a performer across Europe and England. Although Bennett was Stanford's idol it seems that he did not want to emulate the Englishman in this capacity. After taking up the professorship at Cambridge University in 1856, Bennett ceased composing and performing out of the necessity to provide for his family. Although Bennett was noted as one of the finest pianists in Europe at the time, had he wanted to forge a career as a pianist he could not have survived in this capacity if he had remained in England. Stanford also had the responsibility of providing for his family and he succeeded in doing this through his roles as composer, conductor and pedagogue. Against this background, it was unlikely that Stanford could have become a concert pianist. Solo roles as pianist diminished after his undergraduate years at Cambridge. In addition, after his marriage to Jennie Wetton in 1878 Stanford's appearances were as accompanist and as a chamber musician. His role as pianist was, however, responsible for allowing him exposure in England to ensure success in these other capacities. Although the 1870s and 1880s were Stanford's most prolific years in terms of public appearances on the instrument, he did continue to make sporadic performances in the role of accompanist after this period.

As an accomplished pianist Stanford understood the demands of the instrument and it is clear that some of his compositions for piano were written with the virtuosic pianist in mind. The dedication of some of his works to eminent performers ensured at least one public performance. Eminent pianists to whom Stanford dedicated piano pieces include: Raoul de Versan (c.1875), Marie Krebs (1875), John Fuller-Maitland (1876), Fanny Davies (1894), Percy Grainger (1904), Moritz Rosenthal (1913) and Harold Samuel (1921). Other pianists including Leonard Borwick, Agnes Zimmermann, Adela Verne and Dora Bright programmed his piano music. Bright, Verne and Davies were

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<sup>61</sup> *Cambridge Chronicle*, 6 June 1874, 8 in Rodmell, *Stanford*, p. 39.

involved in projects aimed at proclaiming the greatness of piano compositions by English composers in 1892, 1901 and 1902 respectively. Unfortunately, there are few records which suggest that these pianists continued to include his piano compositions in their programmes. In her study on the piano sonata in Britain Lisa Hardy suggests that performers 'became inundated with compositions, all competing for an airing'.<sup>62</sup> Other viable issues such as the tensions between Stanford and Parry may have accounted for the lack of interest shown by students in performing Stanford's piano works at the college. Other performers may have been more inclined to support the music of the next generation of rising stars in England, Elgar, Dale and Bowen, to name but a few. As Stanford's music was suffering at the hands of the critics in England, this would not have won him many favours with pianists attempting to forge reputations for themselves. The programmes of some piano recitals outlines the continued programming of works by Beethoven, Liszt, Brahms and Schumann, and this demonstrates a view expressed by Plantinga in 2004:

there is no denying that a great deal more piano music of real consequence was written in the first half of the nineteenth century than in the second. The decline of the piano as a vehicle for the musical thoughts of the leading composers seems to have paralleled the general fall from grace of sonata-type pieces' [...] 'a general feeling in this arena, after that shorter keyboard works of Schumann, Liszt, and many others, such associations were already an old story.'<sup>63</sup>

This trajectory did not hold well for the promotion of Stanford's piano music in the twentieth century and may well explain the lack of interest in English piano music of the period.

An example of one of Stanford's more virtuosic compositions is his *Three Rhapsodies for Piano* op.92 which was dedicated to Percy Grainger. The work is moderately technically challenging: wide stretches, widely-spaced chords and the emphasis on arpeggiated

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<sup>62</sup> Lisa Hardy, *The British Piano Sonata 1870-1945* (Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2001), p. 4.

<sup>63</sup> Leon Plantinga, 'The Piano and the Nineteenth Century', in *Nineteenth-Century Piano Music* ed. by Larry Todd (Routledge, New York, 2004), pp. 1-15 (p. 13).



figures demand an agile hand. However, a convincing performance of the trilogy demands a skilful interpretation of the many mood changes throughout, from the portrayal of darkness to the more passionate and expressive sections of music. By far his longest composition for solo piano, this trilogy exhibits many characteristics of Stanford's expert handling of the piano in addition to his absorption of traditional elements of composition and demonstrates the influence of Schumann, Brahms, Schubert and Beethoven. In a tribute to his former teacher Vaughan Williams commented on Stanford's susceptibility to the music of other composers and noted: 'at times his very facility led him astray. He could, at will, use the technique of any composer and often use it better than the original'.<sup>64</sup>

Stanford's penchant for romantically inflected harmony also is evident throughout the set. A good example of this is found in the passages of augmented sixths employed in a Brahmsian manner. Although many standard progressions are traditionally employed, Stanford's harmonic palette, which includes a range of diminished seventh chords and chromatically altered chords, adds elements of musical colour and dramatic tension to the work. This harmonic palette is extended to include some modal progressions, for example VI – flat VII major – IV, which may reflect his parallel engagement with Irish folk melodies. Stanford's fondness for romantic inflected harmony is also evident in his use of a mediant pedal in the E flat section of *Capaneo*, which is reminiscent of the mediant pedal found in Brahms's Symphony no.2 in D major. Both passages involve the same chordal pattern, alternating from Ib to VIIIdim7, as the following musical examples illustrate. Stanford was familiar with the work having conducted the Philharmonic Society's performance of the symphony in March 1884, while the orchestra of the Royal College of Music performed it in 1887.

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<sup>64</sup> Ralph Vaughan Williams, 'Charles Villiers Stanford' in *National Music and Other Essays*, ed. by Michael Kennedy (London: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 195-198 (p. 195).

**Example 1. Brahms: Symphony no.2 in D major, bars 183-186**

Clarinet in A

Bassoon

Horn in D

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

Contrabass

*p*

*p sempre*

*p sempre*

*p sempre*

*p sempre*

*p sempre*

**Example 2. Stanford: Capaneo, bars 153-155**

*f*

*f*

Although some traditional means are employed for modulatory purposes, it is interesting that the composer's expert handling of chromatic chords leads to quick shifts in key-centre reminiscent of Wagner and Brahms in *Francesca* (bars 40-41). One tonal device which

appears to aid organisation in terms of the tonal design of the work is Stanford's penchant for mediant relations, which is reminiscent of Beethoven, Brahms and Schubert. Many modulations in *Capaneo* move to keys a third apart (bars 12 & 120).

Whether intended or not by the composer, the third rhapsody shows many similarities to the works of Johannes Brahms. The heroic element found in Brahms's Rhapsodies of op.79 and the rhapsody of op.119 both seem to have left their mark on Stanford's *Capaneo*. The opening block chord texture in C major, reminiscent too of Brahms's Piano Sonata no.1 in C major, calls to mind the opening of Brahms's rhapsody from op.119. Both opening themes hug their tonic closely with a feeling of extensively hovering around the one key. When compared to Brahms's Sonata op.1 in C major, there are similarities in texture, but here also closer connections in terms of the melodic contour. The contour of the melodic strand, from e' to a', is shared by both, as noted in the following examples:

**Example 3. Stanford: *Capaneo*, bars 1-4**

Allegro

**Example 4. Brahms: Rhapsody op.119, no.4, bars 1-7**

Allegro risoluto

**Example 5. Brahms: Piano Sonata no.1, bars 1-5**



Unity of musical ideas is achieved through Stanford's use of a musical trinity in his three rhapsodies. The inspiration for Stanford's *Three Rhapsodies* came from Dante Alighieri's *La Commedia*, or *Divine Comedy* as it is sometimes referred to. Dante had written the poem in honour of the Holy Trinity and this idea of a trinity re-emerges as a motif throughout the story. Divided up into three sections, the action takes place in three different settings, namely Hell, Purgatory and Paradise. In each section there are thirty-three cantos (excluding the introduction) and he uses a three-line rhyming scheme. The verse form created by Dante was named 'terza rima' and is a three-line stanza which uses chain rhyme. In particular scenes words are repeated three times for effect. Dante is helped on his journey by three guides: Virgil, Beatrice Pontinari (1265-1290) and St Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153).

A keen scholar of classics with an interest in the poetry of such poets as Robert Browning, Robert Bridges, Walt Whitman and Alfred Tennyson, Stanford had a keen literary sense and his songs and choral music bear testament to this. Stanford clearly realised the potential of replicating the literary trinity as a musical trinity throughout this work and there are many examples where Stanford is clearly influenced by the number 'three'. As a starting point he chooses to represent three characters, one in each rhapsody: Francesca, Beatrice and Capaneo. In *Francesca*, the opening introduction is extended and varied in three ways when it returns at the end of the work. In *Capaneo* many motivic ideas are presented three times and some recurring motifs are founded on three notes (bars 11-12 & 174-175). The interval of a third appears to be an important melodic cell used in the set and ideas are founded on this interval. In *Capaneo*, for example, some of the thematic material is based on the interval of a third (bars 1-2). Stanford's fondness for

mediant-based modulations also runs throughout the set. In *Capaneo* also the sections often end with three repeated chords as noted in the following musical example:

**Example 6. Stanford: *Capaneo*, bars 88-90**

An interesting textual reading is detected in Stanford's choice of keys for the three rhapsodies; namely A minor, B major and C major, forming an upward cycle of keys. This tonal ascent closely mirrors the poetic path in Dante's narrative which begins in hell, travels through purgatory and concludes with an ascension into heaven.

**Stanford the traditionalist**

One thread woven through much of Stanford's piano music is his association with the past. Stanford's knowledge of a variety of classical forms is evident in his piano compositions in which his use of baroque, classical and romantic models and romantic harmonic language indicate that he had a profound reverence for the composers of earlier generations. Dyson, Dunhill and de Versan have all commented on Stanford's engagement with the music of the past.<sup>65</sup> Dunhill noted that 'in the large amount of purely instrumental music which Stanford achieved he was seldom tempted to desert classical traditions. He clung to the orthodox forms with extraordinary tenacity'.<sup>66</sup> Fuller-Maitland shared a similar view, believing that Stanford was content with the 'classical patterns as they stood'.<sup>67</sup> Dyson shared a similar view:

<sup>65</sup> See for example R. C. de Versan, 'Professor Villiers Stanford', *The Irish Times*, 23 March 1896, p. 6.

<sup>66</sup> Thomas F. Dunhill, 'Charles Villiers Stanford: Some Aspects of His Work and Influence', *Proceedings of the Musical Association*, 53rd Session (1926 - 1927), 41-65, (p. 49).

<sup>67</sup> Fuller-Maitland, *The Music of Parry and Stanford*, p. 32.

'Stanford had an encyclopaedic knowledge of music, and this alone was a notable experience to those who came in contact with it. He had also been in close touch with all the finest traditions and all the most gifted exponents of his time'.<sup>68</sup>

Stanford's exceptional knowledge of different musical trends was acquired through the various activities in which he engaged throughout his work as a musician. As a pedagogue he was always keen to further his own knowledge. Through his visits to Germany, Italy and France he kept abreast of contemporary compositional developments and in his role as conductor he programmed a variety of works with the variety of orchestras and choirs with whom he worked. An examination of many of the works Stanford conducted and directed during his lifetime offers a definite image of a composer with an extensive knowledge of a broad range of music. Indeed, the range of music performed by Stanford on the piano also illustrates this point. And the range of traditional genres and dance forms chosen by Stanford clearly exhibit a broad interest in a variety of styles from a range of musical periods (see figure 1.)

The inclusion of at least one work written in a genre synonymous with composers of the past may have been a deliberate attempt by Stanford to add to the rich body of piano literature. Stanford may have believed 'that he could make even grander use of the devices' used by the composers, and contributed to a developing European tradition.<sup>69</sup> Chopin, for example, is represented by the ballade, mazurka and nocturne; Schumann by the novelette; Brahms by the intermezzo and rhapsody; Mendelssohn's presence is clearly felt in his *Lieder Ohne Worte*; and the 19<sup>th</sup> century revival of interest in the music of J.S. Bach is represented here by the Baroque dances.

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<sup>68</sup> George Dyson, 'Charles Villiers Stanford', *Music and Letters*, 5 3, (1924), 193-207 (p. 198).

<sup>69</sup> See Charles Rosen, 'Influence: Plagiarism and Inspiration', *Nineteenth Century Music* (1980), 87-100 (p. 90) for his discussion on the question of influence of the music of Haydn on Mozart.



'tread on the heels of his predecessors.'<sup>75</sup> Other composers have exhibited and still exhibit traits of the music of past masters in their compositions. Although Stanford is faulted for this he should be commended for his successful utilisation of past ideas.

Brahms was noted for his use of plagal cadences, one firm favourite being IVc-I, a progression which permeates much of Stanford's writing. Examples of final plagal cadences can be found in Stanford's Prelude nos. 29 & 36 op. 179. In addition, Brahmsian dense textures are widespread throughout much of the piano music. Some are noted in the following musical examples:

**Example 7. Stanford: *Five Caprices* no. 1 bars, 80-84**

It is also clear, however, that inspiration was drawn from a number of other sources. Stanford's Prelude no.15 from op.163 shares the same

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<sup>75</sup> Brahms, *Letter to Clara Schumann*, March 1870 in Korsyn, 'Towards a New Poetics of Musical Influence', p. 15.



harmonic structure as the opening as Schubert's *Ellens Dritter Gesang III* D839 op.52 no.6:

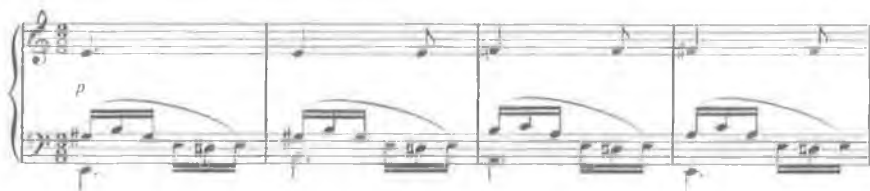
**Example 8. Stanford: Prelude no.15 op.163, bars 1-3**

**Example 9. Schubert: *Ellens Dritter Gesang III* D839 op.52 no.6, bars 3-4**

Beethovenian figurations are also evident in many of the piano pieces and some of Stanford's preludes are reminiscent of passages from Beethoven's *Pathetique* and *Appassionata* Sonatas. Some textual features in Stanford's music are especially reminiscent of Mendelssohn. Stanford's *Intermezzo* from *Six Concert Pieces* op.42 shares some similarities with Mendelssohn's *Lieder Ohne Worte*, for example a soprano melody is accompanied by an arpeggio-like figure in the alto line over a tonic pedal in the bass. Stanford extends the idea further by putting the arpeggio idea in the tenor line which closely resembles Mendelssohn's development:

**Example 10. Stanford: *Six Concert Pieces Intermezzo* op.42 no.4, bars 47-50**

**Example 11. Mendelssohn: *Lieder Ohne Worte* op.19 no.2, bars 29-32**



Moving away from the Germanic tradition, Chopin's Piano Sonata op.35 no.2 provides the inspiration for both Prelude no.22 op.163 and Prelude no. 44 op.179:

**Example 12. Chopin: Piano Sonata no.2 op.35 III, bars 1-4**



**Example 13. Chopin: Piano Sonata no.2 op.35 IV, bars 1-3**



**Example 14. Stanford: Prelude no.22 op.163, bars 1-4**



### Example 15. Stanford: Prelude no.44 op.179, bars /1-4

Allegro con fuoco    *To be played in one rush*

Stanford's modelling on the work by Chopin raises the issue of why Stanford borrowed from Chopin and not other composers?<sup>76</sup> In the case of Charles Ives's borrowings, Burkholder suggests that the borrowed music may have served a musical function.<sup>77</sup> For Stanford, using the opening of Chopin's 'Funeral March' as the basis for the opening passage of prelude no.22 obviously held some musical significance, particularly as he dedicated the work to one who had died during the war.

Stanford's use of traditional forms and genres in his writing suggests a reflective nostalgia. Riley attributes reflective nostalgia to a sense of loss and longing'.<sup>78</sup> Stanford revered the music of the Leipzig school of composition and it was widely known that Stanford disapproved of many of the modern advances in composition. His conservative views on modern trends in composition are evident in an address to the Royal Musical Association, entitled 'On Some Recent Tendencies in Composition'.<sup>79</sup> Although he took a very traditional stance on the use of consecutive fifths, over-crowding modulation and the neglect of diatonics in favour of chromatics, he did, however, admit that he welcomed innovations in music which made for the

<sup>76</sup> I have chosen the term 'modelling' as suggested by Burkholder's typology of musical borrowings. See Peter J. Burkholder, 'The Uses of Existing Music: Musical Borrowing as a Field', *Notes*, 2<sup>nd</sup> series, 50 (1994), 851-870 p. 854. Hereafter referred to as Burkholder, 'The Uses of Existing Music'.

<sup>77</sup> Burkholder, 'The Uses of Existing Music', p. 864.

<sup>78</sup> Matthew Riley, *Edward Elgar and the Nostalgic Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 16.

<sup>79</sup> Charles Villiers Stanford, 'On Some Recent Tendencies in Composition', *Proceedings of the Musical Association 47th Session (1920-1921)*, pp. 39-53. Hereafter referred to as Stanford, 'On Some Recent Tendencies'.

enhancement of beauty.<sup>80</sup> In Stanford's case such reflective nostalgia not only signalled his musical roots in the Leipzig school, but also embraced longing for his homeland which is evident in his use of Irish idioms, modal progressions, Irish dance rhythms and Irish dances in his *Four Irish Dances* op.89.

### **Conclusion**

Stanford was noted as one of the leaders of the English Musical Renaissance along with such composers as Hubert Parry and Alexander MacKenzie. Prior to the emergence of these leading musicians in England, few English composers had established international reputations. From the 1890s onwards some critics began to classify Stanford's music as being old-fashioned and dull and lacking inspiration, but many were following the lead given by the Wagnerite Shaw in his outrageous criticism of the Irish composer.<sup>81</sup> Stanford himself felt an allegiance to those composers whose music he had studied and performed. He wrote, 'the road (of orthodoxy) may be sometimes dusty and heavy, but it was made by the experience of our forefathers, who found out the best direction for ensuring our progress'.<sup>82</sup> Although he believed himself to be a Progressive, he only welcomed 'every innovation, however unfamiliar, provided that it makes for the enhancement of beauty'.<sup>83</sup>

Stanford's strong associations with the Leipzig school of composition ensured that he continued to assimilate the trends of the German tradition which remained with him throughout his compositional and pedagogical career. However, Stanford was not the only one of his generation to promote traditional forms used by European composers. Anthony Milner believed this to be problem among many of the British composers of the period and wrote:

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century many composers were still more attracted to Continental models than to developing individual styles. Imitation of leading composers has of course always featured in

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<sup>80</sup> Stanford, 'On Some Recent Tendencies', p. 39.

<sup>81</sup> See for example Laurence, *Shaw's Music*, II, pp. 59-60, p. 309, p. 427, p. 515, p. 613, pp. 876-877, & p. 879.

<sup>82</sup> Stanford, *Musical Composition*, p. 164.

<sup>83</sup> Stanford, 'On Some Recent Tendencies', p. 39.

musical development but where Britain was concerned such imitation, delayed the return to a native tradition.<sup>84</sup>

Harold Rutland's claim that Stanford did not show any true feeling for the piano does not hold up in any serious examination of Stanford's writing for the piano.<sup>85</sup> There are many passages in the Irish composer's piano music which exhibit a sense of melodic beauty, while many of his compositions bear witness to the work of a composer who clearly understood the instrument. When John Parry wrote that Stanford had a 'disdain for virtuoso display'<sup>86</sup> he obviously failed to appreciate the many Lisztian passages throughout Stanford's oeuvre for piano. Certainly, this is not the main focus of Stanford's writing for piano; however, his expert handling of motives and melodic content certainly make up for this apparent deficiency as noted by Parry. Contrary to Parry's criticism, the mixture of the two different facets to Stanford's piano writing is commendable. According to Hermann Klein, 'Stanford's versatility was extraordinary, and, once he had gained his equilibrium after an early predilection for Brahms, there was no school or style, old or new, that he could not easily assimilate and reproduce without plagiarism'.<sup>87</sup>

The appeal of composing works for solo piano in preference to other instruments was cultivated in Stanford's youth and his early exposure to a rich body of music served him well. With few compositional models in England or Ireland it is no wonder that he assimilated the trends of European composers in his piano compositions. Stanford's use of genres and forms by highly respected composers was a clear attempt to seek a place in the lineage of serious composers. His place as a composer of piano music was obviously significant to him and his continued composition of pieces using traditional forms and genres demonstrated his assimilation of European models while also confirming his status as an accomplished composer.

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<sup>84</sup>Anthony Milner, 'British Music – a Misunderstood Tradition? 3. The 20<sup>th</sup> Century', *The Musical Times* 133/1788 (1992), 71-72 (p. 71).

<sup>85</sup>Harold Rutland, 'Notes and Comments', *The Musical Times* 98/1368 (1957), 74-75 (p. 74).

<sup>86</sup>John Parry, 'Piano Music: 1870-1914', in *The Romantic Age 1800-1914* ed. by Nicholas Temperley (Oxford: Blackwell Ltd, 1988), p. 429.

<sup>87</sup>Hermann Klein, *Musicians and Mummies* (London: Cassell & Company Ltd.), p. 302.

In addition to such lineage, it also confirms that he was completely devoted to the Romantic aesthetic. Contrary to past reception histories his preference for writing in this vein should not continue to taint the reception and promotion of his piano music. On the contrary, his historicism makes his piano music accessible to musicians and concert-going audiences. In this climate of re-evaluation so richly reopened by Rodmell and Dibble, the significance of Stanford's piano music demands reassessment. New recordings and complete editions of his piano music are long overdue, for in terms of compositional output and diversity of genre, Stanford's contribution to the romantic piano tradition makes him one of the leading composers of piano music during the English Musical Renaissance.

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# Subjective identity in the operas of James Wilson

Eileen Brogan

In the words of Maynard Solomon:

Few would altogether deny the presence of a 'personal factor' in creativity. But many minimize its importance or assert that it cannot be adequately measured [...] the creative act unites extremes of subjectivity and collective experience, even the most inimitable of psychic materials—dreams and fantasies—belong to a common stock.<sup>1</sup>

Solomon further declares that:

biographical 'causation' of art takes place on many simultaneous levels. These are simultaneous only in the sense that the human psyche is historical, retaining the impress of archaic patterns of behaviour while constantly being reconstituted through its assimilation of present experience and its anticipation of future events.<sup>2</sup>

The concept of subjective identity and its expression in operas by Alexander Zemlinsky (1871-1942) is central to Sherry Denise Lee's research entitled 'Opera, Narrative, and the Modernist Crisis of Historical Subjectivity'.<sup>3</sup> Lee's thesis examines Theodor W. Adorno's (1902-1969) assertion that modern works of art are dialectical expressions of the individual creative artist alienated within the workings of modern society. Lee draws on Adorno's musical aesthetics, Freudian and post-Freudian psychoanalytical theories and on writers who have contributed to this concept. While having significant recourse to Adorno's appraisal of these operas in his 1959 essays on Zemlinsky,

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<sup>1</sup> Maynard Solomon, 'Thoughts on Biography', *19<sup>th</sup> Century Music*, 5/3 (1982),

<sup>2</sup> Lee, 'Opera, Narrative, and the Modernist Crisis of Historical Subjectivity', unpublished doctoral thesis, University of British Columbia, referred to as Lee, 'Opera'.

Lee challenges Adorno's views on both libretti and compositional style by examining both in terms of the issues of subjective identity, which they explore.

Lee's research into Zemlinsky's opera *Der Zwerg* (*The Dwarf*), asserts that both text and music convey the personal expression of two identities: the author Oscar Wilde and the composer Zemlinsky, both marginalized creative artists. Parallels are drawn between their historical situations and the issues of subjectivity explored in the text in order to provide a critical interpretation from this standpoint. Zemlinsky's libretto for *Der Zwerg* (1921) is based on Wilde's short story *The Birthday of the Infanta*, written in 1891. The tale is set in the imperial court of Spain on the occasion of the Infanta's twelfth birthday. The most popular performer is an ugly, deformed dwarf whose clumsy dance movements incite laughter and delight, particularly from the Infanta, who throws him a white rose and asks him to dance for her later. He is enchanted with her and takes the rose to be a token of her affection. Unaware of his ugliness, he later waits in the garden to dance for the Infanta. Within the garden, the birds and the lizards like him for his kind nature but the elegant flowers proclaim: 'He should certainly be kept indoors for the rest of his natural life'.<sup>4</sup> The dwarf wanders around the magnificent halls of the palace in search of the lovely Infanta. Unexpectedly, he finds a room with a large mirror. Gazing at his reflection, he gradually recognizes that the grotesque image is his own. He realises that everyone, including the Infanta, has not been laughing happily with him but heartlessly at him. This realisation breaks his heart and he dies.

In terms of subjective identity, the dwarfs' sensitive nature and sad plight is a biographical double of the author, Oscar Wilde. During his career, he was publicly disparaged for his behaviour, his views and his unique personal appearance. He was eventually imprisoned in 1895 for the crime of gross indecency, the term applied at the time to homosexual practices and speedily abandoned by a sizeable percentage of his friends and high society.

Lee's thesis further asserts the composer Zemlinsky to be the Dwarf's second biographical double. In 1921, it was Zemlinsky's

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<sup>4</sup> Oscar Wilde, 'The Birthday of the Infanta', in *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde* (New York: Barnes and Noble Books, 1994), pp. 234-247.

personal choice to use Wilde's tale as the dramatic subject for his opera, renaming it *Der Zwerg* (The Dwarf). Contemporary accounts of Zemlinsky's appearance describe him as 'chinless and small, with bulging eyes...'<sup>5</sup> His relationships with women were frustrating, most notably his love affair with his composition student Alma Schindler, who referred to him as 'a hideous dwarf' in her diaries and complained of his ugliness, his smell and his Jewishness.<sup>6</sup> When she became engaged to Gustav Mahler some weeks after the affair ended, it was 'the most shattering set-back of his life'.<sup>7</sup> Apart from his physiognomy, Zemlinsky identifies with the Dwarf's character in that he too was marginalized by society because of his '[...] Jewishness, the refusal of the Viennese public to accept his work, and his "exile" to Prague for the central years of his career'.<sup>8</sup> In terms of subjective identity, George Klaren, the librettist for the opera, made significant alterations to Wilde's text, manipulating the Dwarf's character to become a reflection of Zemlinsky and freely imbuing Wilde's text with sexual undercurrents: the Dwarf is transformed into a musician and has Jewish origins while the Infanta is now celebrating her eighteenth birthday. Consequently, the Dwarf's infatuation with the Infanta is no longer one of mere affection but is now 'erotic in nature' rendering the theme of sexual rejection palpable.<sup>9</sup>

Lee's study of subjective identity in the Zemlinsky / Wilde opera provides an intellectual backdrop for the present study, which explores three operas of Wilson: *The Hunting of the Snark* (1963) *Letters to Theo* (1982) and *Grinning at the Devil* (1986-1988).

As with Zemlinsky's use of a story by Wilde, it was Wilson's choice to use Lewis Carroll's nonsense poem *The Hunting of the Snark* (1874) as the dramatic subject for his children's opera. This fact alone is surprising since it has long been disputed whether Carroll specifically wrote this extraordinarily long poem for a young audience. The poem

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<sup>5</sup> See Beaumont, *Zemlinsky*, 27 and 74 ff., as cited in Lee, 'Opera' p.136.

<sup>6</sup> As documented in Beaumont, ch. 5 "Alma gentil" (74-84), and ch. 6 "Alma crudel" (85-89), as cited in Lee, 'Opera, Narrative, and the Modernist Crisis of Historical Subjectivity', p. 137.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Lee, 'Opera', p. 139.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p. 143.

has no young protagonists, it does not end happily, the Baker disappears, the Banker loses his sanity and the original illustrations of the crew-members in the 1875 publication caricature them as middle-aged with disproportionate heads and unpleasant features.<sup>10</sup> Yet when Wilson received his first commission in 1963 to write the first Irish opera for children, he was immediately taken with Carroll's poem, which he insisted on adapting himself for a libretto that would satisfy his dramatic, aesthetic and, as argued here, subjective requirements.

According to Julius Portnoy, the artist can 'find himself subject to stimulus [...] which will bring into play associative memories and impressions that have long lain dormant in the unconscious faculty'.<sup>11</sup> Harry Slochower asserts that, 'In a work of many dimensions, such as [...] an opera, the artist symbolically enacts roles which are at once within and beyond his immediate experience'.<sup>12</sup> This article argues that Carroll's poem, *The Hunting of the Snark*, provided the perfect stimulus for Wilson to recall past memories and re-enact past experiences through artistic creation. The plot is essentially a long voyage in search of a Snark. It is nonsensical and fantastical, but represented for Wilson a means of re-enacting the memories of his earlier life in the Navy and his two years travelling on the yacht *Vistona* with his lifelong partner Lt. Commander John Campbell.

It was in 1937, aged fifteen, that Wilson first set sail on a school cruise up the coast of Norway. Two years later, in May 1939, he started work in the Admiralty. In 1941, he was transferred to the Navy and his home for the following four years was the ship, the *HMS Impulsive*. His predilection for this period of his life is palpable as he recalls in his memoirs:

I heard Roy Henderson sing Schumann's Dichterliebe. Next day, I was up the mast of the *HMS Impulsive*, lubricating the radar aerial. Suddenly I remembered Schumann's melody: 'Allnächtlich im Träume'

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<sup>10</sup> Martin Gardner: 'Introduction and extensive notes', in *The Annotated Snark*: (New York: Simon & Schuster 1962), pp. 30–36.

<sup>11</sup> Julius Portnoy: 'A Psychological Theory of Artistic Creation', *College Art Journal*, 10/ 1. ( 1950), pp. 23–29, (p. 24).

<sup>12</sup> Ralph J. Hallman, 'Aesthetic Motivation in the Creative Arts', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 23/4 (Summer, 1965), 453–459, (p. 457).

(Every night in my dreams, I see you). It was an illumination, the sun was shining, Schumann was there, and life was wonderful.<sup>13</sup>

During this period, Wilson sailed to places such as Normandy, Norway, Iceland and as far away as Russia. However, as a consequence of contracting tuberculosis, from which he eventually made a full recovery, Wilson was forced to take early retirement from the Navy in 1945. It was five years later, commencing 2 August 1950, before he could once again experience the freedom of sailing the seas. An entirely new experience was in store this time as he set sail with his partner of two years, Lt. Commander John Campbell, on a two-year voyage around the coast of Europe. As Wilson reflects: 'The first half of my education had been given to me by my mother. The second half started on John's yacht, *Vistona*, a thirty-ton gaff cutter, teak-decked and planked on grown oak frames'.<sup>14</sup> Recounting memorable events of this trip occupies four pages of Wilson's memoirs where he recollects his travels 'from Dun Laoghaire to Corcubion on the North-West tip of Spain, down the coast to Gibraltar via Vigo, Lisbon and Cadiz, Majorca, Cagliari and Ischia in the Bay of Naples'.<sup>15</sup> When they finally settled back in Monkstown, Dublin, circa 1952, Wilson and Campbell were inseparable until the latter's death in 1975. So taken was Wilson with this voyage, that, he wrote a long and detailed article recounting events which he submitted for publication to *The Rudder* magazine in 1951. The magazine published his seventeen-page article entitled 'Dublin to Athens in *Vistona*' over three issues between June-August 1951'.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> James Wilson, 'From the Top', (unpublished memoirs), p. 21.

<sup>14</sup> The *Vistona* was built in 1937 by Dickies Shipbuilders, Bangor, (Wales) and designed by MacPherson Campbell (no relation).

<<http://belleplaisance.blogspot.com>> [accessed 10 March 2008]

<sup>15</sup> James Wilson, 'From the Top', (unpublished memoirs), p.21.Ibid., p. 36.

<sup>16</sup> James Wilson: 'Dublin to Athens in *Vistona*', *The Rudder Magazine for Yachtsmen*, *The Rudder Publishing Company* 61/10/11/12 (1951) pp. 5-9, 50-56, 28-31, 20-23. Hereafter referred to as Wilson: 'Dublin to Athens'. *The Rudder* magazines were kindly supplied to Brian Grimson by the current owner of the *Vistona*: Duke Gian Battista Borea d'Olmo of Monaco.

### The Hunting of the Snark (1963)

In *The Hunting of the Snark*, there is much evidence to assert that the biographical doubles of Wilson and Campbell are reflected in the characters of the Baker and the Bellman. The first striking feature is Wilson's assignment of roles to the various characters aboard the ship. All of the vocal parts are entrusted to children with the exception of two male adult roles, the Baker and the Bellman. Ironically, Carroll's depiction of both characters in the poem is generally quite an accurate portrayal of how Wilson would have perceived himself and his partner aboard the yacht, *Vistona*. As Wilson recounts: 'John was responsible for the navigation and the brainwork. I did the cooking and gave a hand at whatever else was needed: painting, scraping, mending, cleaning, polishing or stowing away'.<sup>17</sup> Wilson's reflections reveal much about how he viewed their various strengths and abilities. According to Wilson:

John had been educated at Eton and King's College, Cambridge where he had studied engineering and chemistry. In 1924, he had taken part as a pole-vaulter in the Paris Olympics. He had been a naval officer throughout the war, [a rank that had not been available to Wilson given his educational background]... Campbell had planned the capture of General von Kreipe, the German officer commanding Crete. With these and other operations, he had won himself a Distinguished Service Order and a Distinguished Service Cross<sup>18</sup>

These honours were traditionally awarded for gallantry during active operations against the enemy.

In the opera, the Bellman, representing Campbell, is in charge of the crew and is very much the figure of authority. The crew respect and trust him. The role of the Baker, representing Wilson, powerfully reflects his personality, certainly as his contemporaries viewed him. The Baker is likeable, sociable, an excellent worker and, similar to the navy's rules, trusts the Bellman's ways of running the ship. In addition, he is also a cook, which was Wilson's favourite pastime. Furthermore, there is a parallel in terms of age since Wilson was approaching his forty-

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<sup>17</sup> James Wilson, 'From the Top', (unpublished memoirs), p. 35.

<sup>18</sup> Wilson, 'From the Top', p. 31.

second year when he finished the opera and was forty-three when it was produced. Carroll's original poem suggests that the Baker is forty-two years of age or thereabouts. Certainly, forty-two is significant in the plot. When the Baker is telling his life story, he relates, 'I skip forty years'.<sup>19</sup> In relation to the Baker's luggage, he had 'forty-two boxes, all carefully packed, with his name painted clearly on each', suggesting perhaps one box for every year of his life.<sup>20</sup>

Surprisingly, the age factor provides yet another biographical link, this time to the author Lewis Carroll, who was also forty-two years of age when he wrote the poem in 1874. Research conducted by Martin Gardner similarly contends that the subjective identity of Carroll is reflected in the Baker. In support of his argument, Gardner claims the text to be imbued with clues that suggest Carroll's conscious intention that the Baker should represent himself. In addition to the age parallel, the Baker forgets his name so his identity remains unknown to the other crewmembers, and the Baker's character, described in the first section, corresponds with other artistic representations of the author as himself.<sup>21</sup> Accordingly, as Lee's thesis asserts the character of the Dwarf in *Der Zwerg* to have two biographical doubles, this chapter contends that there are two biographical doubles involved: the author Carroll and the composer Wilson.

As Wilson's original intention was to create *The Snark* as a companion piece to Britten's *The Little Sweep*, he employs similar orchestral forces to those in the Britten score: string quartet, piano duet (one piano, four hands) and percussion. However, there is a clear divergence in relation to the adult roles. Britten includes seven adult vocal roles while Wilson includes only two, assigned to the Bellman and the Baker. Also, while Britten omits the baritone range, Wilson includes one baritone voice. This was Wilson's favourite range and he assigns this to The Bellman, which may be considered as an aesthetic imperative.

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<sup>19</sup> Lewis Carroll, 'Fit the Third, The Baker's Tale' in *The Hunting of the Snark* (Harvard, Massachusetts, The MacMillan Company, 1898), p. 28.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>21</sup> Martin Gardner: 'Introduction and extensive notes', in *The Annotated Snark*: (New York: Simon & Schuster 1962) pp. 30–36.



Wilson's recollections as published in *The Rudder* magazine for yachtsmen in the June, July and August issues of 1951, portray a busy ship of friends and deckhands arriving and departing, one arrival coinciding with the other's departure. Setting sail from Dun Laoghaire on 2 August 1950 were a crew of five, which Wilson recounts:

John, the owner, captain and navigator [...] Rory, a gynaecologist, Jim, a musician, the paid hand Ernie and Ronnie, an ex-naval officer. Ronnie and Rory were on their summer leave of a few weeks and the others free for the duration of the voyage.<sup>22</sup>

According to Wilson, the only female ever on board over the two-year trip was 'Anne, Ronnie's wife, who had been in Lisbon for some days.'<sup>23</sup> Wilson writes fondly of her, noting that although she 'joined the galley staff, [she] regularly could be seen in her swimming costume [...] drying her hair under the wind sail'.<sup>24</sup> This could account for Wilson placing all of the crew at various duties at the opening of Act 1, with the exception of the Bonnet Maker who is sunning herself under her parasol. It may also feasibly account for Wilson's major change in the adaption of Carroll's poem for the libretto by removing a full section entitled 'The Barrister's Dream' and replacing it with a complex ballet / pantomime section specifically for the only female on board. The following example is suggestive of the banter on board the *Vistona*. The Bellman has asked the Baker to tell them his life story, but he is impatient that the Baker's story will not become too long-winded.

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<sup>22</sup> Wilson, 'Dublin to Athens', pp. 5–9 (p.5).

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., pp. 5–9 (p. 5).

Example 1. Wilson: *The Hunting of the Snark* Op. 8, 'Fit the Second', scene i: 'My father and mother were honest, though poor', bars 1–30

Valse Lente

Baker *P*  
My fa-ther and mo-ther were hon - est, though poor

7 Baker *P*  
I skip for-ty years and pro-ceede with-out fur-

[Bellman] *mp* *parlando*  
Skip all that

12 Baker  
ther re - mark to the day when you took me a board of your ship to— help you in hunt

17 Baker  
ing the Snark A dear un - cle of mine Af-ter whom— I was

22 [Treble/Alto] *mp*  
Tr. A. Oh skip your dear un - cle oh skip your dear un - cle

Bak. named What,

Bell. *mp*  
Oh skip your dear un - cle oh skip your dear un - cle

27 *poco rall.* *mp* (spoken) I wish you wouldn't DO that!  
Bak. skip my dear un - cle?

### **Letters to Theo (1982) and Grinning at the Devil (1984/1986)**

*The Hunting of the Snark* has been examined in some detail from the perspective of subjective identity, for the purpose of this chapter. Observations with regard to Wilson's choice of subjects for his third and fourth operas also are considered broadly within this context. Though subjective identity can be exemplified as re-enactments of past experiences, another aspect of personal identification featured in the operas is Wilson's attraction to creative figures that are in some way isolated from their surrounding society. While Wilson openly admits to being drawn towards such peripheral characters, the question remains: what was his aesthetic purpose for engaging such figures as the principal protagonists within his dramatic plots? In response, this chapter contends that Wilson was implicitly marginalized and isolated both during his formative years and as an adult living as an exile in Dublin. Contemplating his youth, Wilson describes himself as 'a rather solitary child'.<sup>25</sup> Left fatherless at four years of age, his two brothers Alex and Rob, 'were separated from [him] by the vast gulf of four and five years'.<sup>26</sup> The one emotionally stable element during this period was the reciprocated, profound love and admiration for his mother. When Wilson moved to Dublin in 1948 to take up residence in Monkstown with his life partner Lt. Commander John Campbell, he left behind London, a city benefiting from a post-war boom, to enter an Irish culture and society that was submerged in the economic and cultural doldrums. Irish society in the 1950s and 1960s was conservative, illiberal and religiously orientated. As Diarmuid Ferriter notes: 'the laws relating to homosexuality were draconian, and dated from 1861, when section 61 of the Offences against the State Act stipulated: "whosoever shall be convicted of this abominable crime ...[shall] be kept in penal servitude for life."<sup>27</sup> David Norris's proceedings to change this law did not begin until 1977. As Norris recalled, the difficulty was not just a legal one, but also 'a barrier in terms of popular and political prejudice'. The High Court and the Supreme Court dismissed Norris's case in 1980. The then Chief Justice, Tom O'Higgins, asserted that 'the deliberate practice

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<sup>25</sup> Wilson, 'From the Top', p. 10.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Diarmaid Ferriter, '1970-2000', in *The Transformation of Ireland 1900-2000*, 1<sup>st</sup> edn, (Profile Books Ltd., 2004), pp. 623-759, (p. 715). Hereafter referred to as Ferriter, '1970-2000'.

of homosexuality is morally wrong, that it is damaging both to the health of individuals and the public and finally, that it is potentially harmful to the institution of marriage'.<sup>28</sup> Within the British Isles, homosexuality was decriminalised in England and Wales in 1967, Scotland, in 1980, Northern Ireland, in 1982 and, astonishingly, in the Republic, as late as 1993. Though Norris had succeeded in winning his case in 1988 at the European Court of Human Rights, it was the Catholic Church who had remained staunchly opposed. It is significant that, shortly after this, Wilson took out Irish citizenship in 1995 at the age of seventy-three. Senator Norris, acquainted with Wilson over a number of years, strongly supports the view that Wilson '[...] had been deeply scarred in his past by a feeling of rejection and unworthiness as a gay man' and he [Wilson] would categorically have seen '[...] himself as a marginalized creative artist living in Dublin as an English homosexual'.<sup>29</sup>

Within Irish society, he was viewed by all who knew him as a socialite, an absolute gentleman and a total conformist in every way that he could be. Wilson was certainly not known for exhibiting symptoms of cultural estrangement yet he was intrinsically a solitary person. His homosexuality was a taboo subject that he rarely discussed among heterosexual colleagues or friends, and he openly disparaged questions with regard to his cultural identity. Wilson and Campbell's social lives, in the 1950s, revolved around and within a small elite sector of what were then termed 'Anglo-Irish' society. This society itself, as a cohesive community, was a minority within Ireland who conceivably viewed themselves very much as a marginalized community. Though Wilson gradually integrated himself into musical life in Dublin by actively involving himself in improving conditions for musicians, composers and performers, it was fifteen years before he received any form of public attention.

In the language of Riesman: the 'inner-directed' type of person, whose motivation is provided by his own staunch values and convictions, is being supplanted by the "outer-directed" type, whose mirror-personality [endeavours] to reflect what is going on around

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<sup>28</sup> Diarmaid Ferriter, '1970–2000', p. 715.

<sup>29</sup> Correspondence with Senator David Norris, 1 May 2008.

him.<sup>30</sup> Fromm similarly points out that contemporary society is not so much concerned with how people are but how they seem. Hence, they become so intent upon playing roles that their inner life dries up.<sup>31</sup> Wilson's psyche establishes itself comfortably within this categorization: the desire to conform, be a wonderful entertainer, generous, caring, hard-working, a 'gentle' gentleman, a man of character, distinction and integrity: in short a model citizen, yet all the while always demonstrating a constant aversion to discussing on any level issues which would have him appear different or at odds within society. This assertion helps explain Wilson's subjective identification with the protagonists in his operas as an expressive creative outlet for his personal experiences and feelings of isolation, freedom, escapism and the struggle for selfhood of an artistic marginalized figure discordant within his society. These complex subjective themes purposefully pervade the plots of *Letters to Theo* and *Griming at the Devil*.

The gestation period of *Letters to Theo* was ten years. It was during the 1960s that Wilson [...] had read and been very moved by Vincent Van Gogh's letters to his brother Theo'.<sup>32</sup> The entire narrative essentially reflects an extreme case of the artist in isolation and reveals much about Van Gogh's creative and thought processes. Surfacing regularly is Van Gogh's struggle for a sense of selfhood through his desire to have his paintings accepted. The individual letters though moving are not unduly dramatic. It is more the cumulative aspect of the narrative that firmly establishes the opera's dramatic impetus. The chorus reflects his creative thoughts reciting Van Gogh's detailed discernments of light and colour and descriptions of nature, as only a true visual artist can perceive them. Intrinsicly embedded in the isolation theme is the concept of escapism, fantasy and freedom. Van Gogh withdrew from society and its conventions and retreated entirely into his creative imagination. Freedom of the mind eluded Van Gogh however and the image presented, of the caged bird bashing against the bars, is a powerful allegory for Vincent's thoughts, claustrophobic with

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<sup>30</sup> 'The Lonely Crowd' (New Haven, 1950), as cited in 'The Artist as Outsider', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 16/ 3 (1958), pp. 306–318, (p. 309).

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 306–318, (p. 309).

<sup>32</sup> Wilson, 'From the Top', p. 69.

inner turmoil and voices that crowd his perceptions. While the flute conveys the fragility of the bird, the narrow intervals and fragmented vocal line portray the artist's unquestionable anxiety, bursting into extreme agitation at bars 197–98.

**Example 2. Wilson: *Letters to Theo* Op. Act 1, scene ii, 'The Borinage', bars 183–201**

183 *delicato colla voce* ♩ = 63  
 Flute *p*  
 Vincent  
 A caged bird in Spring knows there is some rea-son for

187  
 Fl. *poco più f* *p*  
 Vin. *p*  
 hic What is it? He can't re-

190 *Animando*  
 Fl. *poco*  
 Vin. *poco*  
 mem - ber Then he says to him - self The o - thers make their

194  
 Fl. *p* *mf* *mp* *f*  
 Vin. *p*  
 nests and lay their eggs and bring up their chicks

197  
 Vin. *ff*  
 and he beats his head a - gainst the bars

199 *A tempn*  
 Vin. *pp* *mp* *spoken*  
 But the cage is still there

Colin Wilson's research entitled 'The Alienated Artist as a Product of Western Culture' deals with the type of artistic figure that feels estranged from the world and his own deeper self. Citing Van Gogh, he notes:

his loneliness drove him first to a kind of Christian communism, then, with unabated religious ardour, to painting of feverish intensity and finally to madness and suicide. Although suffering less extremely, many creative artists have felt at odds with their society.<sup>33</sup>

Wilson can plausibly be included within this collective group. As Brian Grimson, conductor of both productions of *The Hunting of the Snark* in 1963 and 1974 notes: 'Wilson was like a calm river beneath which were many undercurrents that were only expressed through his creative output'.<sup>34</sup>

When the prominent Danish writer, Elsa Gress, was commissioned by the Riddersalen Theatre in Denmark to write a libretto, she chose to write about the life of her friend and colleague, Danish writer, Karen Blixen. The first two acts are set in Africa with Blixen's partner, Denys Finch-Hatton. Act III is set in New York thirty years later. By the time of the work's conception, all of Blixen's literature was commercially available in both Danish and English including *Letters from Africa* (1981) a posthumous publication of over two hundred letters, sent predominantly to her brother in Denmark between 1914-1931, when she resided in the Ngong Hills in Africa.

Though reared within an aristocratic family in Denmark, Blixen led an isolated and unfulfilled childhood. Her father, a writer and army officer, hanged himself when she was just ten years old. She describes her formative years as 'unhappy', restrictive and constraining, with Victorian sensibilities that had to be observed.<sup>35</sup> She was also very much 'at odds' with her family's expectations of her.<sup>36</sup> Blixen's first escape

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<sup>33</sup> Melvin Rader, 'The Artist as Outsider', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 16/3 (March 1958), pp. 306-318, (p. 308).

<sup>34</sup> Interview with Brian Grimson, conductor of *The Hunting of the Snark*, 15 July 2007.

<sup>35</sup> <<http://www.english.emory.edu>> [accessed 27 February 2008].

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

route was into the world of her creative imagination. This began at eight years with fantasy stories, which she would narrate to her family, a selection of which were published in 1907 and 1909. Her decision to marry her first cousin Baron Bror Blixen and move to Africa to open a coffee plantation provided her with a second escape mechanism from the constraints of her culture and society to a romantic exotic retreat in the Ngong Hills. She speaks of her years in Africa as a relief from her former life: 'Here at long last one was in a position not to give a damn for convention, here was a new kind of freedom'.<sup>37</sup>

As Gress fashions the libretto, she engages with Blixen's identity as an isolated artist drawing on themes of loneliness, escapism, fantasy and freedom that permeate the opera in a series of complex and interwoven layers of fantasy within fantasy. Tania's solo 'Aria to Ariel' is imbued with symbolic representations of freedom that are powerfully transmitted in the narrative through bird imagery and mythology. In Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Ariel represents Shakespeare's creative imagination.<sup>38</sup> In Greek mythology, Ariel represents the spirit of the air. In *Grimming at the Devil*, Ariel represents the spirit of Karen's dead partner Denys, who experienced freedom through flying; like Icarus, who flew too close to the sun and fell to his death, Denys died when he crashed in his Gypsy Moth airplane. As Denys experienced freedom through flying, Tania's 'word wings' powerfully exemplify her gift to create literature through the flight of her imagination. Despite her isolation, her bereaved and destitute state, it is this freedom that will inevitably establish her sense of selfhood. While Wilson typically employs syllabic word setting, he exemplifies this symbolism by contrasting the vocal style and treating the word 'wings' melismatically over long sustained rising notes, which are then repeated to emphasize the significance:

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<sup>37</sup> <<http://www.english.emory.edu>> [accessed 27 February 2008].

<sup>38</sup> Peter R. Jacoby: 'Ariel: The Creative Spirit of Shakespeare'  
<<http://home.san.rr.com>> [accessed 27 February 2008]



**Example 3. Wilson: *Grinning at the Devil*: Act 1, scene I, ‘Aria to Ariel’, bars 355–361**

354

*poco*

*poco*

of wings

of wings

In both operas, freedom of the mind is inextricably linked to the creative imagination. As the image of ‘the caged bird’ in Theo exemplifies Van Gogh’s *deprivation* of freedom, the imagery of wings symbolically represents Tania’s *wealth* of freedom. Furthermore, as creative artists, it is evident that both Van Gogh and Blixen view this freedom as an essential prerequisite towards artistic creation. In terms of subjective identification, so too does Wilson who completely empathizes with their respective circumstances in this regard.

To draw parallels in terms of the aesthetic necessities of Van Gogh and Blixen, it can be argued that Wilson’s first route of escape to freedom from the constraints of 1950s Dublin was his two-year voyage around Europe. Demonstrably, his second escape route was his lifelong engagement with the composition of opera through his interaction with fantasy and the imagination. What began as the subjective identity of Wilson’s autobiographical re-enactment of past memories in *The Hunting of the Snark*, developed into a phenomenon of far broader scope. Wilson’s self-identification with creative artists: their inner solitariness, their desire for freedom and as a consequence their engagement with fantasy and the creative imagination as an aesthetic necessity, captivated Wilson’s psyche. In turn, the genre of opera offered him the opportunity to indulge in self-identification on a very deep level and provided him with a medium through which he could isolate himself, escape into a world of fantasy and be free.

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## **Towards analytical synthesis: folk idioms, motivic integration and symmetry in Béla Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra* (1943)**

**Cathy Byrne**

The Hungarian composer Béla Bartók (1881–1945), unquestionably the twentieth-century's most authoritative collector and analyst of Eastern European, Asian and Balkan folk music, composed the *Concerto for Orchestra* (1943) near the end of his career.<sup>1</sup> His output was consistently marked by a stylistic synthesis of Western art music and the folk music of Eastern Europe, along with techniques of his own invention, often incorporating musical geometry. He also turned to styles such as neo-Classicism (or more specifically, neo-Baroque) and Primitivism, which, in common with Stravinsky, he explored along with the compositional technique of bitonality. Bartók pioneered the technique of polymodal chromaticism, using diverse modes derived from art music and folk music simultaneously. His use of dissonance never extended to atonality, as his chromatic compositions retained a fundamental pitch, and from the 1930s his compositional style became more tonal. The *Concerto for Orchestra* has been described as 'the culmination of a process of simplification and crystallization of Bartók's style in terms of density of dissonance and increased use of triadic harmony'.<sup>2</sup> This increasingly consonant style developed after a decade in which the more dissonant aspects of folk music and contemporary art music were assimilated into his compositions. Bartók's exploration, in the 1920s, of techniques generated by the second Viennese School gave way to a style that incorporated the absorbed folk influences into a tonal, though often chromatic, sound world, frequently framed in the traditional classical forms of Western art music. Bartók himself stated at the time of the *Concerto's* composition that atonality and folk music

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<sup>1</sup> Béla Bartók: *Concerto for Orchestra* (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1946).

<sup>2</sup> D. Cooper, *Bartók Concerto for Orchestra* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 2. Hereafter referred to as Cooper, *Bartók Concerto*.

could not be reconciled.<sup>3</sup> His *Concerto for Orchestra* however is by no means a simple expression of an adopted folk idiom, but incorporates techniques developed throughout Bartók's career, such as implied mistuning (as described by Kárpáti), most often involving the alteration of the fifth scale degree, and also the pervasive use of palindromes in formal outline, rhythm, intervallic structure and melody.<sup>4</sup>

Many analysts, including Ernő Lendvai, Milton Babbitt, Elliott Antokoletz and Paul Wilson have focussed on pitch collections and the internal construction at intervallic level in the *Concerto*,<sup>5</sup> while some have explored parallels with Bartók's ethnographic collections. Antokoletz attributes individual themes and sections of the work to specific folk music sources.<sup>6</sup> Analysing the first subject theme of the *Concerto's* opening movement, he states that 'cyclic-interval interactions are again fused with the tempo *giusto* rhythm and tritone so characteristic of Slovak folk tunes'.<sup>7</sup> It must be noted however that the rhythmic style could also be attributed to a Hungarian influence. Halsey Stevens notes a Bulgarian influence on rhythm, especially in the first and fourth movements, but also perceives a Magyar (Hungarian)

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<sup>3</sup> Béla Bartók, 'Harvard Lectures', in *Béla Bartók Essays*, ed. by Benjamin Suchoff (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1976), pp. 354–92 (p. 376).

<sup>4</sup> János Kárpáti, *Bartók's Chamber Music* (New York: Pendragon Press, 1994), p. 188. Hereafter referred to as Kárpáti, *Bartók's Chamber Music*.

<sup>5</sup> Ernő Lendvai, *Béla Bartók: An Analysis of his Music* (London: Kahn and Averill, 1971). Milton Babbitt, 'The String Quartets of Bartók', *Musical Quarterly*, 35 (1949), 377–85. Hereafter referred to as Babbitt, 'The String Quartets of Bartók'. Elliott Antokoletz, *The Music of Béla Bartók: A Study of Tonality and Progression in Twentieth-Century Music* (California and London: University of California Press, 1984). Paul Wilson, *The Music of Béla Bartók* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992). Hereafter referred to as Wilson, *The Music of Béla Bartók*.

<sup>6</sup> Elliott Antokoletz, 'Concerto for Orchestra', in *The Bartók Companion*, ed. by Malcolm Gillies (London: Faber and Faber, 1993), pp. 526–37 (p. 527). Hereafter referred to as Antokoletz, 'Concerto for Orchestra'.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 528.

connection throughout.<sup>8</sup> While acknowledging the pervasive Hungarian elements, this chapter puts forward an analysis that reflects the plurality of styles that Bartók derived from folk and art music, and compositional techniques that he developed. It will be argued that the integrative and symmetrical devices, along with Hungarian stylistic features and rhythmic characteristics, reach a culmination in the work, and that Hungarian features come to prominence at dramatic peaks and in the universally accepted, alternative ending. It is also in the closing passage that the most complete motivic and thematic integration occurs. As the composer's output, including the *Concerto for Orchestra*, is characterized by synthesis, a combinational approach is adopted for this analysis.

As well as analysing correlations with folk music, this chapter will examine the many levels of vertical, horizontal and formal symmetry in the *Concerto for Orchestra*. The extent to which a single motif is central to the work's tonality will also be discussed, and also the ways in which motivic development and symmetry are combined, exemplified by two motifs from the first movement's exposition, which recur in many permutations and inversions.

The first of these motifs is an octatonic scale segment, spanning a tritone or six semitones. The second is a tetrachord of interlocking fourths; both are stated at the start of the sonata-form exposition that follows the slow introduction.

Following an introductory pentatonic passage of ascending fourths, which resumes in the third movement, the main theme of the 'Introduzione' consists of a varying motif of four semiquavers, interspersed by sustained notes (bars 39–63). The almost ubiquitous stepwise motion in this theme is characteristically Hungarian, as is the combination of long and short note values, with increasingly dotted rhythms towards the passage's conclusion. Concurring with Somfai's theory,<sup>9</sup> endorsed by Schneider,<sup>10</sup> that the 'Hungarianness' of the music

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<sup>8</sup> H. Stevens, *The Life and Music of Béla Bartók*, 3rd edn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 196, p. 283. Hereafter referred to as Stevens, *The Life and Music of Béla Bartók*.

<sup>9</sup> László Somfai, 'A Characteristic Culmination Point in Bartók's Instrumental Forms', in *International Musicological Conference in Commemoration of Béla*

increases at climaxes or ‘culmination points’ that occur just before the end of sections, the introductory *verbunkos* theme progressively ascends in pitch,<sup>11</sup> becomes more densely orchestrated and builds in volume towards its close.

Frequent contrary motion, a technique Bartók developed independently of the largely monodic folk music of his collections, accompanies the build-up, increases the tension, and contributes to the subsequent climax, in which imitative polyphony also features. Thus the Hungarian aspects of style are paramount, while additional forces heighten the orchestral drama. In this case, geometric techniques such as symmetry and diminution form part of the texture while the rhythm and melody are of Hungarian derivation.

It is possible that Bartók made subconscious reference to the folk music of his collections, especially to Hungarian music, and that the diverse scale structures and Eastern rhythms became inherent parts of his overall style. While composing the *Concerto for Orchestra*, he was working on transcriptions of Yugoslav folk music, including Dalmatian two-part chromatic melodies that he had discovered.<sup>12</sup> At this time he was also editing Romanian and Turkish material collected on his field trips. The *Concerto for Orchestra* was sketched in the Turkish field book, verifying this.<sup>13</sup> He had also transcribed Serbo-Croatian melodies from the Milman Parry collection, and all of his ethnographic transcriptions and analyses of music from other regions were by now complete.

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*Bartók 1971*, ed. by József Ujfalussy and János Breuer (Budapest: Editio Musica, 1972), pp. 53–64 (p. 59).

<sup>10</sup> D. Schneider, *Bartók, Hungary and the Renewal of Tradition* (California: University of California Press, 2006), pp. 243–45. Hereafter referred to as Schneider, *Bartók, Hungary*.

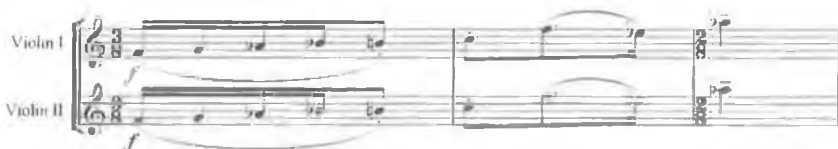
<sup>11</sup> *Verbunkos*, from the German word for recruitment (*werbung*), is a dance with music derived from Hungarian traditional folk music, performed largely by employed gypsy musicians for the purposes of encouraging Hungarian peasants to enlist for the Habsburg army.

<sup>12</sup> Antokoletz, ‘Concerto for Orchestra’, p. 526.

<sup>13</sup> L. Somfai, *Béla Bartók: Composition, Concepts, and Autograph Sources* (California: University of California Press, 1996), pp. 72–75. Hereafter referred to as Somfai, *Béla Bartók*.

The first subject theme following the introductory passage (bar 76) consists of a five-note scalar motif ascending in semiquavers, and a four-note motif in dotted rhythm (example 1). The five-note figure (motif A) is an octatonic scale segment, as noted by Antokoletz.<sup>14</sup> The motif spans a tritone, thereby dividing the octave in half. The tetrachord of interlocking fourths that follows has a regular pitch formation, its intervals in the semitonal ratio 5:2:5. This motif is closely related to the fourth progressions of the pentatonic opening passage of the 'Introduzione' (bars 1–29), and to the expanded fourth pattern at bars 35–41. In the third movement ('Elegia') the pentatonic material resumes (III: bars 1–9; bars 101–05).

**Example 1. Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra, I, bars 76–78: theme A**



After the first, ascending statement of theme A, the three-bar theme then descends in approximate inversion. The ascending motif is interpreted by Cooper as a group of six pitches that he refers to as a 'germinal motif' (example 2).<sup>15</sup> However, this designation, which he reinforces by referring to similar ascents in three Serbo-Croatian folk tunes that Bartók transcribed from the Milman Parry collection,<sup>16</sup> disregards the rhythmic structure and octatonic construction of theme A, as well as the existence of the first five pitches as a recurring figure that is repeated, varied and developed independently of the tetrachord.

**Example 2. Five-note motif and Cooper's germinal motif**



<sup>14</sup> Antokoletz, 'Concerto for Orchestra', p. 528.

<sup>15</sup> Cooper, *Bartók Concerto*, p. 36.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 35–36.



The five-note motif itself contains two minor thirds and is part of a scale of alternating tones and semitones: an octatonic scale. Another feature of this scale is that it consists of two adjacent diminished chords, thus containing eight of the twelve pitches.

The six notes described as ‘germinal’ by Cooper are not part of an octatonic scale due to the presence of two consecutive semitone intervals, and only rarely feature in succession. They could not be described as a pitch set in the same way as the often-recurring five-pitch scale. The rhythmic and tonal content itself suggests that a clear division exists between the octatonic five-note motif and the dotted tetrachord. This writer believes that the five-note and four-note motifs are manifestations of Bartók’s tendency to merge elements of different ethnic origins with geometric processes, but also that they are permeated by Hungarian rhythms.

### Example 3. Octatonic scales



There are two possible octatonic scales (example 3), commencing on C and C sharp, each of which consists of alternating tones and semitones. Thus the octatonic scale, like the tritone, divides the octave in equal proportions. According to Antokoletz:

One senses in Bartók’s total output an all-encompassing system of pitch relations [...] Certain fundamental principles are related to a larger system that has been referred to by George Perle as ‘twelve-tone tonality’ [...] Pitch relations in Bartók’s music are primarily based on the principle of equal subdivision of the octave into the total complex of interval cycles. The fundamental concept underlying this equal-division system is that of symmetry.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> E. Antokoletz, cited in Ivan F. Waldbauer, ‘Analytical responses to Bartók’s music’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Bartók*, ed. by Amanda Bayley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 215–30 (p. 228).

In addition to Cooper's six-note motif not taking account of transpositions by a tritone that the five-note motif undergoes, the 1:2:1 intervallic structure is disrupted.

Also contradicting Cooper's six-note germinal motif is the temporal gap between the pentachord and the tetrachord of Theme A. A feature termed the 'hiccupped pickup' by Schneider is implicit in the staccato quaver that halts the scalar semiquaver ascent.<sup>18</sup> This derives from nineteenth-century arrangements of Hungarian tunes, and is a recurrent feature of the *verbunkos*-style 'Intermezzo' of Zoltán Kodály's *Háry János* (1926) and also of Bartók's *Rhapsody for Violin*.<sup>19</sup> The 'hiccupped pickup' is a form of upbeat in which a rest separates a group of grace notes from the ensuing theme, and while 'motif A' does not occur as a metrical upbeat, it otherwise corresponds to the 'hiccupped' rhythmic layout. The ascending scale used as part of the *Concerto for Orchestra*'s first subject is typical of this style feature.

Despite the rhythmic contrast between the two motifs of theme A, it is argued here that both reflect *verbunkos* rhythms, but that Bartók's use of elements of the style is not indicative of a purist approach in this work. Dotted rhythms including the *scotch snap* (short–long) and Hungarian *choriamb* (long–short–short–long) are common features of the merged ancient Magyar and urban gypsy styles that constituted *verbunkos* music. This eighteenth-century dance style was used for military recruitment,<sup>20</sup> and was characterized by duple metre, fast stepwise movement and dotted rhythms, with alternate short–long and long–short note values. Also typical of the style was a progressively increasing tempo.

Bartók's use of triple instead of duple metre is the semiquaver theme's most obvious deviation from the *verbunkos* tradition. While supporting 'genuine' Hungarian peasant music over the 'contaminated' sources that included the ornamented gypsy style (which, through performance, was an element of *verbunkos* music), he also invoked

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<sup>18</sup> Schneider, *Bartók, Hungary*, p. 208.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 239.

<sup>20</sup> Schneider, *Bartók, Hungary*, p. 17.

'corrupt' influences as he deemed necessary.<sup>21</sup> The mixing of elements will also be shown to contribute to Bartók's structural devices, such as his frequently inexact use of intervallic symmetry and contrary motion. The dichotomy between geometric precision and the combined folk and art music influences will be examined in this analysis.

Hungarian rhythmic devices are integral to the entire first movement, with a *verbunkos*-style passage forming a large part of the 'Introduzione' and recurring, like the pentatonic opening, in the third movement ('Elegia'). Motivic material is integrated throughout the *Concerto*, with a marked Hungarian strand throughout. Even where musical gestures are derived from different regions, they are constantly interrelated. This differs from Antokoletz's view, which is of discrete influences on different sections and themes of the work. To counter his theory, it is necessary to show the inextricable nature of Bartók's ingrained influences. In the case of the first theme (Theme A) alone, elements of Serbo-Croatian and Slovak tonality, including the tritone-bound pentachord, are combined with Hungarian rhythms.

Antokoletz, Milton Babbitt and Ernő Lendvai have all identified internal pitch relationships within Bartók's compositional system. Regarding pitch sets, Antokoletz observed interval relations in groups of notes, and found that horizontal inversional symmetry often occurred, whereby a succession of notes, whether read forwards or backwards, would produce the same succession or alternation of interval types.<sup>22</sup> The concept had earlier been central to Lendvai's theory, especially the 1:3 distance model which he identified (example 4). Built on alternating minor thirds and semitones, the 1:3 model occurs in the *Concerto*'s central movement (III: bars 10–18; bars 22–28). This interval model shapes Bartók's major–minor tonality, as it contains two vital pitches from both the major and minor modes. It is therefore a cornerstone of his bimodality. Milton Babbitt found that Bartók's music was

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<sup>21</sup> Béla Bartók, 'Gipsy Music or Hungarian Music' in *Béla Bartók Essays*, ed. by Benjamin Suchoff (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1976), pp. 206–23 (p. 222).

<sup>22</sup> E. Antokoletz, 'Organic Development and Interval Cycles', *Studia Musicologica* 36 (1995), 249–61.

characterized by balance between tonal motivation and 'internally defined relationships' between pitches.<sup>23</sup>

#### Example 4. Lendvai's 1:3 distance model



Intervallic symmetry and inversion of motifs shape the *Concerto* and account for much of the orchestral texture. Before examining the tonality of the work in intervallic detail, the overall structure will be discussed.

Formally, the *Concerto for Orchestra* has a palindromic or arched structure. Its five movements form a symmetrical pattern, with the central slow movement (III: 'Elegia') framed by two dance-like movements (II: 'Giuoco delle Coppie' and IV: 'Intermezzo Interrotto'). The fast outer movements are in sonata form, with tonality based on F, and both contain fugues.

#### I: 'Introduzione'

Of the five movements, four have symmetrical structures. The first movement's sonata-form plan is modified by the reversed order of themes in the recapitulation. The movement's structure is outlined in the table below, and the main themes illustrated.

**Table 1. Structure of 1st movement**

Bars 1–75	Introduction
Bars 76–148	Exposition — first subject
Bars 149–230	Exposition — second subject
Bars 231–71	Development — first subject
Bars 272–312	Development — material derived from first and second subjects
Bars 313–95	Development — first subject
Bars 396–487	Recapitulation — second subject
Bars 488–521	Recapitulation — first subject

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<sup>23</sup> Wilson, *The Music of Béla Bartók*, pp. 9–10.

The slow introduction's theme, which is initially pentatonic, is built on interlocking fourths (example 5). Its opening is similar to a Hungarian melody of the Transdanubian region, 'Idelátszik a temető széle', a lament that refers to maternal death, the use of which Cooper relates to Bartók's grief at the death of his mother.<sup>24</sup> The interlocking fourth motif recurs in the movement's first subject, after the five-note octatonic motif is first stated, and is expanded and varied in this movement and the third (example 6). A variant of the five-note motif precedes the entry at bar 76 of the first subject theme; the pitches span a tritone but include the major instead of the minor third. Thus the theme is assembled from earlier fragments.

**Example 5. Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra, I, bars 1–6**

Andante non troppo

Violoncello

Double Bass

*p legato*

**Example 6. Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra, I, bars 77–78:**

**‘interlocking fourths’ motif**

The exposition's second subject (bars 149–230), led by oboes, provides total contrast to the first, by virtue of its undulating two-note range and slower, dotted rhythm (example 7). This theme has been likened to two-note Arab melodies, and to North African (Biskran) desert chants that are traditionally accompanied by the rabab, a two-stringed instrument.<sup>25</sup> Fifth harmonies, characteristic of Hungarian and Russian instrumental music, run parallel to the melody, and a string passage of

<sup>24</sup> Cooper, *Bartók Concerto*, p. 37.

<sup>25</sup> Lenoir, cited in Cooper, *Bartók Concerto*, pp. 40–41.

chords containing only C and G underlines the prominence of open fifths, using rhythmic palindromes (bars 149–50 and 151–52).

**Example 7. Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra, I, bars /155–58**



The development section, from bar 231, reintroduces the scale fragments and angular fourths of the first subject, which are then inverted. Rising and falling scale fragments are played against each other in contrary motion. A statement of the first subject theme, in canon (bar 248), is developed into a fugato (bars 254–71). Example 8 illustrates the fugato's opening bars (bars 254–58).

**Example 8. Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra, I, bars 254–58**

The image shows a multi-staff musical score for the opening of the fugato. The instruments listed are Oboe, Bassoon, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass. The dynamic marking is 'f, ben marc.'. The score shows the first five bars of this section, with each instrument part clearly delineated.

The central part of the development (bars 272–312) introduces material related to the first subject in its angular melody, and to the second subject in its slow tempo and even rhythm (example 9). This blending of themes and the subsequent return to the first subject for the remaining part of the development, supports the idea of symmetry in this movement's plan.

### Example 9. Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra, I, bars 272–77



This is reinforced by the second subject taking precedence in the recapitulation, reversing the traditional order of themes and mirroring the exposition.

## II: Giuoco delle Coppie

The second movement, *Giuoco delle Coppie*, ('pair-wise presentation'), consists of a series of folk-like dance themes, in regular 2/4 rhythm, dominated by paired woodwind parts. The 'chain' of dances (dance *A*, *B*, *C*, *D* and *E*) is followed by a central chorale-based section, which contrasts with the light, jocular mood of the five dance sections. The dances are then recapitulated with slight variation. The insertion of the chorale as a trio superimposes ternary form on the chain structure of the movement.

Being a short movement, the second appears to act as a structural counterpart to the fourth ('*Intermezzo Interrotto*'), which is similarly light in texture and mood, and whose material is also folk-related and led by woodwinds. These factors, and the placing of the second and fourth movements around the central 'Elegia' and between the fast, climactic outer movements, compound the perception of symmetry.

The five-note octatonic scale segment is outlined by paired bassoons with the fourth pitch omitted in the first of a chain of dances that make up this light second movement (example 10). The first theme (bars 1–24), a folk-style dance tune, 'has something of the character of a Yugoslavian round dance called a *kolo*'.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Cooper, *Bartók Concerto*, p. 45.

**Example 10. Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra, II, bars /9–12**

The image shows a musical score for two bassoons. The tempo is marked "Allegretto scherzando". The score consists of two staves, both labeled "Bassoon". The music is in 2/4 time and features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with various accidentals. The first staff has a treble clef and the second has a bass clef. The music is written in a key with one sharp (F#).

In the third phrase, the five-note octatonic motif is framed between two diminished-chord arpeggios in the first bassoons, first descending from A to B sharp (bar 17), and subsequently from G to A sharp (bars 18–19) (example 11). While the second phrase cadences on F sharp (bar 16), its inversion in the fourth phrase cadences on D major, setting the tone for the second dance in the chain.

**Example 11. Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra, II, bars 17–20**

The image shows a musical score for two bassoons, continuing from the previous example. It consists of two staves, both labeled "Bassoon". The music is in 2/4 time and continues the rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with various accidentals. The first staff has a treble clef and the second has a bass clef. The music is written in a key with one sharp (F#).

The melody of dance B (bars 25–44), played in parallel thirds by oboes, appears to be suggested by dance A, and shares its use of sequence (example 12). The theme spans a diminished fifth or tritone, and is answered by a rhythmic phrase played by violas, cellos and double basses. Interjections such as this in the lower strings recur as interludes between themes (example 13).

**Example 12. Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra, II, bars 25–30**

The image shows a musical score for two oboes. The score consists of two staves, both labeled "Oboe". The music is in 2/4 time and features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The first staff has a treble clef and the second has a bass clef. The music is written in a key with one sharp (F#). Dynamics markings include *p* (piano) and *f* (forte).



**Example 13. Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra, II, bars 40–45**

Viola

Violoncello

Double Bass

Dances *C*, *D* and *E* are illustrated in the following three examples.

**Example 14. Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra, II, bars 45–52**

Clarinet in A

Clarinet in A

Cl

Cl

**Example 15. Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra, II, bars 60–64**

Flute

Flute

**Example 16. Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra, II, bars 90–98**

These dances exemplify Bartók's variational treatment: while the octatonic motif forms the basis of four of the five themes in the chain, its presence is inconspicuous. The dance themes are themselves inverted, with parallel harmonies throughout in thirds, fifths, sixths and sevenths on similar instruments. The melodic structure corresponds to Serbo-Croatian melodies in which pairs of folk oboes are played in roughly parallel minor sevenths.<sup>27</sup> After a solemn trio (bars 123–57: example 17) that has been related to a Bach chorale, the dance chain is reprised with further variation.<sup>28</sup>

**Example 17. Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra, II, bars 123–27**

The tonality and form of the recapitulated dances echo their initial statements. They are altered in texture and expression, as accompaniments are varied and the use of dynamics increases. While

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<sup>27</sup> Cooper, *Bartók Concerto*, p. 46.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p.47.

the movement is not formally symmetrical, the many instances of contrary motion and inversion exemplify Bartók's use of symmetry at a motivic level. The rhythmic bass lines that separate the sections each echo the metre and character of the preceding theme and have a counterbalancing effect on the chain of dances. The movement's final cadence (bars 252–58) incorporates the intervals with which the dance melodies were harmonized in instrument pairs, forming a seventh chord (D–F sharp–A–C).<sup>29</sup> This closing gesture subtly unifies the harmonic design of the broadly ternary second movement.

### III: 'Elegia'

The 'Night Music' of the third movement, 'Elegia', constitutes the emotional as well as the structural centre of the *Concerto*. This is the only movement that does not refer to the octatonic motif. Its tonality is shaped by pentatony (example 18) and the use of the 1:3 distance model (example 19), deriving material from the first movement. The 'interlocking fourths' motif from the first movement re-emerges, but is disguised, inverted and brought into the bass. Its use as a smooth harmonic progression contrasts with its previous incarnation as an angular, abrasive trumpet theme.

#### Example 18. Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra, III, bars 1–5



Also deriving from the first movement, a dramatic theme based on four semiquavers is developed in 'Elegia' (example 20). The most dramatic passage of the movement, it is rooted in the *verbunkos* style. This exemplifies Bartók's use of exaggerated Hungarian gestures at the culmination point of passages. A trumpet motif with accentuated *scotch snap* rhythms punctuates this theme, which again escalates in pitch and dynamics.

<sup>29</sup> Stevens, *The Life and Music of Béla Bartók*, p. 196, p. 282.

**Example 19. Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra, III, bars 10–13**

The image shows a musical score for three woodwind instruments: Flute, Oboe, and Clarinet in Bb. The score is divided into two systems. The first system covers bars 10-13 and includes a Flute part with a triplet of eighth notes, an Oboe part with a series of eighth notes and accents, and a Clarinet in Bb part with a similar eighth-note pattern. The second system also covers bars 10-13 and includes a Flute part with a triplet of eighth notes, an Oboe part with a series of eighth notes and accents, and a Clarinet in Bb part with a similar eighth-note pattern. The music is in 3/4 time and features complex rhythmic patterns with accents and dynamic markings like pp and ff.

**Example 20. Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra, III, bars 34–40**

The image shows a musical score for Violin II. The score is marked 'a tempo' and is in 3/4 time. The music features a complex rhythmic pattern with dotted minims and crotchets. The score is for bars 34-40 and includes a Violin II part with a series of eighth notes and dotted minims.

The metre of the third movement's opening builds from dotted minims to crotchet motion in the latter half of the first 'Night Music' section. The momentum further increases to quavers and ultimately semiquavers. Subsequent sections bring a gradual reversal of note values, via quavers, back to the dotted minims of the opening, thus revisiting the 'Night Music'. The Elegia contains repeated references to and inversions of the first subject figure of the first movement. However, the strongest and most Hungarian themes, which constitute all of the climactic music of this central movement, occur one-third (bars 34–53) and two-thirds (bars 84–100) of the way through, giving it a complex but overarching symmetrical structure.

#### IV: Intermezzo Interrotto

##### Table 2. Structure of fourth movement

A	Bars 1–42
B	Bars 43–74
C	Bars 75–119
B	Bars 120–35
A	Bars 136–51

The Intermezzo is comparable only to the second movement, ‘*Giuoco delle Coppie*’, in its duration, texture, and mood. The shortest movement of the work, the fourth is not only the structural counterpart of the second, but shares its black humour, folk style and tonality due to the derivation of themes from the five-note octatonic motif. A symmetrical *ABCBA* form is defined by a lilting, sardonic dance, then a *cantabile* ‘serenade’, interrupted by ‘brutal band-music’ as Bartók is said to have called it;<sup>30</sup> this is a carnivalesque parody of Shostakovich’s Seventh Symphony, part of which Bartók likened to ‘a Viennese cabaret song’.<sup>31</sup> The *cantabile* and dance themes complete the movement’s mirror structure.

The fourth movement initially uses the four outer pitches of the five-note octatonic motif in a parodic dance tune (example 21). Inversion and extension of this melody give rise to a combination of sarcasm and playfulness.

The second section, from bar 43 to bar 69 (*B*) introduces a flowing melody in varying rhythm, which incorporates the ascending five-note motif in full, and extends it diatonically (example 22).

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<sup>30</sup> B. Bartók (verbal statement), cited in David Cooper, ‘Bartók’s Orchestral Music and the Modern World’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Bartók*, ed. by Amanda Bayley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 45–61 (p. 54). Hereafter referred to as Cooper, ‘Bartók’s Orchestral Music’.

<sup>31</sup> Antokoletz, ‘Concerto for Orchestra’, pp. 533–34.

**Example 21. Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra, IV, bars /5–12**

Allegretto  
Oboc  
p  
Ob

**Example 22. Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra, IV, bars 42–46**

Calmo  
Viola  
f. cantabile

The three themes of the movement are juxtaposed abruptly, cited by Cooper as one of many ‘disruptive forces’ which is balanced against ‘integrative forces’ in the *Concerto*.<sup>32</sup> To quote Cooper:

Bartók’s accommodation of heterogeneous material is seen at its starkest in the curious fourth movement, ‘interrupted serenade’, which brings together without trying to reconcile music from three different worlds: an opening theme with a Slovak peasant-style melody and a ‘Balkan’ rhythm which sways between 5/8 and 2/4; a second idea modelled on a melody from Zsigmond Vincze’s popular 1926 fairy-tale opera *The Bride of Hamburg*, harmonized by a cyclic tonal progression; and a parody of a theme from Shostakovich’s Seventh Symphony.<sup>33</sup>

While the second and third sections, *B* and *C*, inhabit different sound worlds (section *B* being a smooth rising melody on strings, and section *C* a comical brass-led burlesque), it becomes apparent that the theme in *C* approximately inverts and answers the main musical idea of *B* (example 23). *Glissandi* played by trombones and tubas add to the

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<sup>32</sup> Cooper, ‘Bartók’s Orchestral Music’, p. 61.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

humorous vulgarity (bars 90–91) and mock the interlocking fourth theme, using diminished fifths instead.

**Example 23. Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra, IV, bars /77–84**

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is for Clarinet in B $\flat$  and the bottom staff is for Clarinet (Cl.). Both staves are marked with 'accelerando' and 'mf'. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, with several triplet markings (indicated by a '3' over the notes) and a fermata at the end of the passage.

Rhythmic figures in the lower strings conclude the movement, after the cantilena and dance themes return, with falling fourths to a cadence on *B* (bar 151). String motifs of three to six bars that provided brief interludes between dance sections of the second and fourth movements, are recalled by this abrupt gesture with which the movement comes to an unceremonious ending. The black humour persists, and the impression that the music is parodic does not depend on a prior knowledge of the music being parodied.

The fourth movement's symmetry is marked by the return of the first two themes in reverse order after a distinctive central interruption (*ABCBA*). In the context of the entire concerto, it acts as a counterpart to the similarly folk-inspired second movement, and also uses the octatonic motif to construct themes.

**V: Finale**

The fifth and final movement of the *Concerto for Orchestra*, described as 'life-asserting' by Bartók,<sup>34</sup> is dominated by 'perpetuum mobile'<sup>35</sup> passages in the style of a Romanian *horă*.<sup>36</sup> Horncalls that introduce sections and recur as transforming motifs can be related to the calls of Transylvanian shepherds.<sup>37</sup> Referring to Bartók's fast finales, Kárpáti

<sup>34</sup> Béla Bartók, 'Explanation to the Concerto for Orchestra' in *Béla Bartók Essays*, ed. by Benjamin Suchoff (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1976), p. 431. Hereafter referred to as Bartók, 'Explanation'.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Cooper, *Bartók Concerto*, p. 59.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

has pointed out that ‘a common characteristic of the musical material in these movements is a regular semiquaver rhythm, here not against the traditional background of the baroque prelude or toccata but of Rumanian instrumental dance music’.<sup>38</sup>

As well as representing the maturity of Bartók’s ‘folk-dance finale’,<sup>39</sup> the *Concerto*’s final movement fulfils a symmetrical function. Corresponding to the first movement, the thematic material is developed as a fugue. In the fifth movement, as in the first, the ‘more or less regular sonata form’<sup>40</sup> designated by the composer is tempered by symmetry, which superimposes the composer’s distinct style of regularity on the historical form. Structurally, the movement completes the mirror form of the work, but within it, symmetry is most in evidence in the intervallic structure and motivic inversion.

### Table 3. Structure of Finale

Exposition	Horncall and first subject group ( <i>horǎ</i> )	Bars 1–147
	Transition (horncall)	Bars 148–87
	Second subject group (trumpet theme)	Bars 188–255
Development	Trumpet theme and fugue	Bars 256–383
Recapitulation	First subject group ( <i>horǎ</i> )	Bars 384–448
	Transition ( <i>tranquillo</i> )	Bars 449–81
	Horncall and inversions	Bars 482–555
	Second subject group	Bars 556–625

The prevalent theme in the finale is a whirling ‘perpetuum mobile’ with an incrementally thickening texture. The unceasing strings play variations on the acoustic scale of A (A, B, C sharp, D sharp, E, F sharp, G, A) (example 24). This scale contains the five-note octatonic segment C sharp, D sharp, E, F sharp and G. This circling, ascending theme dominates the finale, and while the second subject begins as a lilting, folk-like theme (example 25), it too builds up to perpetual motion.

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<sup>38</sup> Kárpáti, *Bartók’s Chamber Music*, p. 446.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 448.

<sup>40</sup> Bartók, ‘Explanation’, p. 431.



**Example 24. Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra, V, bars 8–15**

**Presto**

Violin II

Violin II

Vln. II

Vln. II

**Example 25. Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra, V, bars 188–91**

Oboe

Clarinet in Bb

The development of this movement is based on the fragmentation of motifs from the exposition, the combining of themes and the inversion of secondary themes that are brought to prominence. The contrapuntal mirroring of thematic material is paramount, and generates a distinctively Bartókian style of neo-Classicism.

The existence of two endings to the *Concerto for Orchestra* illustrates Bartók's tendency to revise and rewrite. With the addition of an alternative ending in 1945, it is likely that the intention was to give a more expansive ending to an expansive work, the revision replacing an ending that was characteristically abrupt. It can be noted that in Bartók's *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celeste* (1936) and *Divertimento for String Orchestra* (1939), the conclusions of final movements consist of short, rapid gestures lasting only a few bars, following a slow section. While a large part of the *Concerto for Orchestra's* finale may be of Romanian derivation, the temporal characteristics of the closing passages of this work, as of the other two, can be linked to the Hungarian *verbunkos* tradition and thereby to the gypsy rhapsody. Much of Hungary's folk music is structured, like

*verbunkos*, in a series of dances that incrementally move from slow to fast. While Bartók often composed fast final movements, the endings were frequently preceded by slow music, accelerating to *presto*.

The *Concerto for Orchestra* was premiered under Koussevitzky's baton on December 1–2, 1944, in Boston, and repeated there on December 29–30. Two performances in New York's Carnegie Hall followed on January 10 and 13, 1945. All of these performances used the original ending, until a slightly longer alternative ending, sketched by Bartók in early 1945, became the universally performed option.<sup>41</sup> While Koussevitzky reportedly requested a new ending,<sup>42</sup> it is also suggested that the twenty four bars proffered as an alternative to the existing last five bars were 'a self-critical second thought by Bartók'.<sup>43</sup> Whether the impetus came from Koussevitzky or Bartók, the revision was apparently preferred by both, and by subsequent conductors. The inclusion of both endings allows the revision to be compared both with the original version and with the endings of other orchestral works.

The original ending of the *Concerto for Orchestra* is notably abrupt, a recurring feature in Bartók's orchestral compositions. A long, predominantly *presto* movement, the finale's prevalent theme is a folk-dance based on scales that include the octatonic motif. The ending departs from this theme after a series of five-note scale fragments that use this motif with a major instead of a minor third (bars 585–93). The woodwinds then sustain a unison E flat while the strings begin an ascending scale on G (bars 594–97), including the pitches of the octatonic motif (A, B, C, D and E flat) in the scale. Rising to F sharp, the strings play a sustained cadential figure (bars 598–602) that introduces an air of finality. A rising piccolo scale incorporating the octatonic motif reintroduces the upper register (bar 602). A sudden *crescendo* builds the atmosphere, and a two-bar *accelerando* further heightens it. The last four bars (bars 603–06) consist mainly of a triadic descent, with falling arpeggiated chords on C minor, E flat major and G minor before the final chord of F major.

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<sup>41</sup> Somfai, *Béla Bartók*, p. 198.

<sup>42</sup> Cooper, *Bartók Concerto*, p. 25.

<sup>43</sup> Somfai, *Béla Bartók*, p. 198.

A large part of the extended ending comprises the falling triad motif of the original ending. In the revision, the piccolo's ascent is delayed by one bar by the inclusion of an extra bar of tied notes (bar 602), prolonging the sustained unison G. With the exception of dynamics, bar 603 of the new ending is identical to the original bar 602. The more forceful arrival of the descending triad motif in the revision (bar 604) is achieved by the entry of piccolo, flutes, oboes, clarinets in B flat, bassoons and strings, all *fortissimo* and in unison on G. Thus the texture of the alternative ending is denser than the original. The expansion of the ending revolves mainly around the falling triads, now predominantly C minor and E flat minor. The short ending's three-bar, descending sequential passage uses falling triads only in the last four bars (bars 603–06). For the alternative version, this idea is developed into an antiphonal passage between woodwinds and strings, with counterpoint and some inversion from horns in F and trumpets. Tonal alterations include the use of E flat minor (bar 610–14) instead of the original E flat major (bar 604).

During the last two bars of the triadic descent on E flat minor in the alternative ending, a fully chromatic scale, not found in the original ending, descends in semiquavers from B flat to B natural on piccolo. This scale and the triads are briefly resolved by trills on C in the first violins, violas and cellos (bars 615–18). Sustained for four bars and with a *decrescendo*, the strings are joined by *fortissimo* horns in F and trumpets in C (bar 616). While the strings fade to *piano*, the horns and trumpets jubilantly play a variant of the trumpets' fanfare or repeated note theme that was introduced in the fifth movement at bars 201–11. During this final statement, on the pitches of C and E flat, F emerges as the underlying tonality, giving C minor the role of dominant. The resolution to F is underscored by a perfect cadence in the timpani, which is completed as the flutes and bassoons initiate a sweeping scale ascending from F, with sharpened fourths. All woodwind parts are added during the ascent, with paired flute parts in major and minor thirds. First and second oboes also play a third apart, as do first and second clarinets.

The layers of ascending and overlapping scales, which are reinforced by unison scales on strings, culminate in a glissando built on an arpeggiated chord of F7 and a combination of scalar and arpeggiated ascents, to a final *fortissimo* chord of F major.

Commonalities between the two endings are many, despite the more flamboyant and exaggerated gestures of the revision. Both versions finish on a *fortissimo* F major chord, reached via a two-bar *crescendo*. In accordance with the more expansive nature of the revision, the *accelerando* in the alternative ending lasts for six bars (bars 604–09) instead of the original two (bars 603–04). In both versions, the onset of the *accelerando* coincides with the falling minor triads, and both endings are ultimately played *a tempo*. The *a tempo* final passage, like the *accelerando*, is longer in the alternative ending, with seventeen bars instead of two. The expansion of the falling triad motif, additional fanfare and scales account for the prolongation. However the motivic material, tonality, dynamics and tempo of the original version were largely retained in the second ending.

While the falling triads are not obviously derived from earlier in the work, they provide the basis for both endings. The theme to which they bear most resemblance is the finale's trumpet fanfare theme, from which the closing fanfare is derived. Following the falling triads on E flat minor, the fanfare on C and E flat unifies the material, while providing a strong air of finality. Its decisiveness anchors the jubilant mood evoked by the triads, while adding to the 'life-affirming' ethos of the finale.

Scales on the natural notes from F take flight five bars from the end (bars 621–25). The sharpened fourth (B natural) that featured in some of the scales in the finale's prevalent *horǎ* theme, and in the horncall theme, is thus re-invoked in a final unifying gesture. The momentum is generated from the finale's main themes, and sweeps upwards to a dramatic F major.

Bartók's extended ending, which was written as a post-script to the completed concerto, contains no material that is not derived from existing themes. The fanfare and sharpened-fourth scales, while absent from the original ending, are based on themes that recur throughout the final movement. While the first ending may have been more typical of Bartók's late orchestral works due to its peremptory abruptness, the alternative ending expands and exaggerates the first. Using more of the movement's signature themes to take this abruptness to a more dramatic level, the rewritten ending maintains the atmosphere and vision, as well as the thematic material of the original.

The original ending was retained, rather than replaced by the alternative version, making self-criticism a less likely factor in the revision than Koussevitzky's reported request. The more flamboyant finality of the second, longer ending is achieved by expanding the motivic material of the first and by adding derivatives of earlier themes.

Greater momentum is ultimately attained by the longer *accelerando*, which in turn reaches *presto* sixteen bars before the end (bar 609) in the alternative version, compared to three bars in the original. The main result of the new ending was to make existing gestures more jubilant and dramatic. The progressively increasing speed at the end of the final movement, and the abrupt endings that feature in *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celeste* (1936) and *Divertimento for String Orchestra* (1939) as well as *Concerto for Orchestra* (1943) are likely to have been influenced by the Hungarian *verbunkos* style. The arrangement of Bartók's finales somewhat corresponds to the traditional arrangement of suites of dances in order of increasing tempo.<sup>44</sup> Bartók's arrangements of folkdances, especially those from Hungary and Romania, frequently speed up towards the end. Correspondingly, the increasing tempo of Zoltán Kodály's *verbunkos* inspired *Dances of Galánta* (1933) illustrates the Hungarian roots of this phenomenon.

While Bartók rejected the developments or distortions that *verbunkos* music underwent in the hands of gypsy performers, in his music Erdely argues:

The *verbunkos* element becomes a symbol of the nation, of its moods and expressions, at times in passionate outburst, other times in calm reflecting mood, and at yet other times with a dignified pose or echoing the historical spirit. It is never how it was, but how it could have been if, in those promising times of national awakening, Hungarian music had evolved out of the roots of folk tradition.<sup>45</sup>

Whether or not the revision represents a compromise on Bartók's part has been debated since its addition. Reviewers of the earliest performances were already questioning the *Concerto's* artistic integrity,

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<sup>44</sup> Schneider, *Bartók, Hungary*, p. 17.

<sup>45</sup> Stephen Erdely, 'Bartók and folk music', in *The Cambridge Companion to Bartók*, ed. by Amanda Bayley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 24–42 (pp. 25–26).

and the more grandiose alternative ending may have been considered a concession to popular appeal. René Leibowitz, who considered Bartók's authentic style to have peaked with the Fourth String Quartet, criticized the 'continual symmetry' and parallel melodies, along with 'a loss of real harmonic control, or rather, a chaotic harmonic structure'.<sup>46</sup> The trend towards consonance that had occurred in Bartók's compositions in the late 1930's was identifiably linked to the composer's wish to maintain integrity to the tonality of folk music. Paradoxically, the use of the dissonant tritone, which is a feature of much of Bartók's output, is in keeping with folk styles, especially the modes of Romanian and Slovak folksongs.<sup>47</sup> The tritone occurs in harmonies formed by his frequent contrary motion scales, and coincides with diatonic and chromatic modes. Bartók had, in 1931, clearly explained his imminently declining use of dissonance in the essay: 'On the Significance of Folk Music'.<sup>48</sup> As he was pioneering a synthesis of art music and folk music, the more consonant late works are more likely to have been influenced by tonality derived from folk idioms than by a wish to compromise to popular taste, which was still struggling with twelve-tone music. In the same essay, Bartók argued that artists necessarily have 'roots in the art of some former times', and, while emphasizing creativity, reaffirmed his roots in folk music.<sup>49</sup>

### **Eclecticism and balance**

The importance of symmetry as a structural, melodic and harmonic device in the *Concerto* is clear from the analysis above. The tritone range of the fundamental motif, and the use of octatonic scales and the 1:3 model can also be related to divisions of the octave, and the invertibility of themes. Instead of representing an 'all-encompassing system', however, this symmetrical principle is balanced against tonal concerns in a work that invokes many scales and modes, as well as

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<sup>46</sup> Cooper, *Bartók Concerto*, p. 28.

<sup>47</sup> Amanda Bayley, 'The String Quartets and works for chamber orchestra', in *The Cambridge Companion to Bartók*, ed. by Amanda Bayley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 156.

<sup>48</sup> Béla Bartók, 'On the Significance of Folk Music', in *Béla Bartók Essays*, ed. by Benjamin Suchoff (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1976), pp. 345–47. Hereafter referred to as Bartók, 'On the Significance of Folk Music'.

<sup>49</sup> Bartók, 'On the Significance of Folk Music', p. 346.

major–minor diatony and chromaticism. Eastern European modes such as pentatony, Hungarian rhythms and folkdance tempos used throughout the work indicate the level of synthesis between Eastern, Western and original style characteristics. Elements of *verbunkos* and other styles of folk music often heighten the colour and mood, especially in climactic passages, during which their use intensifies. Folk references are never ‘pure’ invocations of a single folk style. Interwoven into the texture are Bartók’s use of variational treatment, symmetry and a vast array of modes from diverse sources. Many instances of contrary motion or motivic inversion are only approximately symmetrical, with intervals altered for reasons of tonality. While symmetrical devices are pervasive, their modification in the interests of tonality calls into question Antokoletz’s emphasis on symmetry as fundamental to Bartók’s pitch structures. It must also be noted that the tritone or diminished fifth does not perform only a mathematical or inversional function, as implied by Lendvai, but that it also acts as a dominant in Bartók’s compositions. This ‘mistuning’ was proposed as a theory by Kárpáti,<sup>50</sup> and endorsed by the composer.

The question of whether or not the recurring motifs, especially the five-note octatonic motif, unify the work is largely subjective. While less recurrent than the five-note octatonic motif, the interlocking fourth pattern and the 1:3 model are more recognisable when they do recur, as they are not significantly altered. The octatonic motif generates a wide variety of themes considering its narrow range, and these are often disguised beyond recognition. The tritone span is the motif’s most distinctive interval, and strongly influences the sound world of the first, second, fourth and fifth movements.

Symmetry operates as an integrative device in the *Concerto*, contributing to a tonality that merges diatony and chromaticism in the process of inverting themes and accompaniments. The influence of Eastern European folk music involves the combination of modes in polymodal pitch structures. Bartók’s compositional techniques comprise a system that counterbalances symmetry with tonal inspiration, as well as combining the techniques and forms of Western art music, such as fugue, counterpoint and sonata form, with rhythmic and modal influences from the East, many of which are inseparable.

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<sup>50</sup> Kárpáti, *Bartók’s Chamber Music*, p. 188.

Where symmetry is used in pitch construction, tonal considerations often depend on its modification. Balance is an overriding concept in the work, perhaps more than integration, as low-register sections answer high passages, themes are repeated in reversed order and also inverted, melodies are turned into harmonies, and above all as the work, on a large scale, forms a structural palindrome. Babbitt's conclusion that Bartók strove for 'assimilated balance' between 'internally defined relationships' and 'tonal motivation' applies to the balance between symmetrical constructions and tonality,<sup>51</sup> but the *Concerto* exemplifies the balance that also exists between Eastern and Western music, and Bartók's system of many interrelated components without a single underlying principle.

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<sup>51</sup> Babbitt, 'The String Quartets of Bartók', pp. 377–78.



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# Signature characteristics in the piano music of John Adams

## Eoin Conway

Recognition of music, the ability to hear an excerpt and determine (for example) its composer, is made possible by our unconscious awareness of the music's unique patterns of musical features. One could compare it with the study of fingerprints, though voice recognition is a more suitable analogy. The aim of this chapter is to bring to light the features which enable recognition of John Adams's piano music, and to trace the origins and development of those features. Since Adams composes at the piano, and since a majority of his works have been written for piano or for ensembles including a piano, this will go some way towards making a general study of his compositional style.

### Texture and melody

The earliest published piano pieces by John Adams are *China Gates* and *Phrygian Gates*, both dating from 1979.<sup>1</sup> Showing their Minimalist influences, they are written using a very small number of techniques. *China Gates* uses the first of these techniques for the entire piece, and *Phrygian Gates* uses it for its majority.

The technique, as seen in example 1 below, consists of two lines operating at once, each containing only one note at a time, and built either from a fragment of a scale (usually modal), or from an arpeggio, in whole or in part.

### Example 1. Adams: *Phrygian Gates*, bars 87–89



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<sup>1</sup> John Adams: *China Gates* (New York: G. Schirmer/AMP, 1979). John Adams: *Phrygian Gates* (New York: G. Schirmer/AMP, 1979). Hereafter referred to as Adams: *Phrygian Gates*.

Adams varies the means by which the material is presented: one can have a scale fragment and arpeggio figure played simultaneously between the hands, or simultaneously within each hand, where each line combines stepwise and leaping motion. The lines themselves are always built from a shorter repeating figure, between two and ten notes in length. Also, more often than not, the right hand's repeated figure is of a different length to the left hand's, as the following example where brackets have been added to highlight the six versus seven note pattern.

**Example 2. Adams: China Gates, page 7, bars 10–13**



It is clearly audible as a result of this that the music is built from repeating material, but the differing lengths of figures add a greater variety of sound to the texture by preventing literal repetition. The harmonic effect of this, since the pairing of notes changes constantly, is that every note of the local scale or mode is treated as equal. There is no melody, only surface texture. The two lines need not be made of the same note values. Such treatment is rare here, but is a principal feature of *Nixon in China*, written six years later.<sup>2</sup>

This texture is frequently punctuated by single notes, at least an octave higher in register than anything else and almost always doubled in octaves for added emphasis, as shown in example 3, below.

**Example 3. Adams: Phrygian Gates, bars 291–94**




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<sup>2</sup> John Adams: *Nixon in China* (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1987). Act II, Scene 1, Pat Nixon's aria 'This is prophetic', and Act III, Chou En-Lai's soliloquy 'I am old and cannot sleep'. Hereafter referred to as Adams: *Nixon in China*.

They never appear alone, and it is rare for them to appear at regular metric intervals. This, working in conjunction with the repeating figures of different lengths, creates a strong sense of pulsation while undermining any sense of metric regularity, and lends the music an airy, floating quality.

Since the piano functions as a good microcosm of Adams's output in general, we can see these same two techniques being used in the orchestral pieces written at the same time. *Shaker Loops*, written in 1978, differs only in having a denser polyphony and having the gestures translated onto stringed instruments.<sup>3</sup>

Adams's orchestral works from this period, *Common Tones in Simple Time* (1979–80), *Harmonium* (1980–81) and *Grand Pianola Music* (1981), all make extensive use of these techniques, on a larger scale.<sup>4</sup> However, one may detect a progression away from their use here: in the latter two works, these techniques become associated with background texture or introductory material rather than the principal substance of the music. By the time of *Harmonielehre* and *The Chairman Dances* (1984–85), these techniques were being superseded by others.<sup>5</sup>

By this time, the character of Adams's music was changing, becoming less ambiguous in its harmony and rhythm. The rhythm became more regular, and more 'rhythmic' in the conventional toe tapping sense. The harmony thinned out, moving from scale clusters to simpler triads. By the time of *Harmonielehre* and particularly *Nixon in China*, most of the music was built from arpeggio figures and repeated block chords.<sup>6</sup> The arpeggio figures could be thought of as being a

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<sup>3</sup> John Adams: *Shaker Loops* (New York: G. Schirmer/AMP, 1982, 2005). Hereafter referred to as Adams: *Shaker Loops*.

<sup>4</sup> John Adams: *Common Tones in Simple Time* (London: Chester Novello, 1980, rev. 1986). John Adams: *Harmonium*, 2nd edn (New York: G. Schirmer/AMP, 2006). Hereafter referred to as Adams: *Harmonium*. John Adams: *Grand Pianola Music* (New York: G. Schirmer/AMP, 1994).

<sup>5</sup> John Adams: *Harmonielehre*, 2nd edn (New York: G. Schirmer/AMP, 2004). Hereafter referred to as Adams: *Harmonielehre*. John Adams: *The Chairman Dances: Foxtrot for Orchestra* (New York: G. Schirmer/AMP, 1989). Hereafter referred to as Adams: *The Chairman Dances*.

<sup>6</sup> Adams: *Harmonielehre*, bar 1. Adams: *Nixon in China*, Act 1, Scene 1, bar 374.

development of the *Gates* lines, evolving in tandem with the harmony. In the context of Adams's compositions, a loop can be thought of as a repeating figure of pitches drawn from any of the notes of the local mode or scale. Furthermore, a loop which has been drawn from the more limited palette of a triadic chord constitutes an arpeggio. Block chords had been present since *Phrygian Gates*, but only in small quantities as clusters.<sup>7</sup> As their use became more common in Adams's works from the mid 1980s, use of the scale figures dwindled as arpeggios proved less malleable than scale fragments. Block chords are, however, more adaptable than scales to such harmonic change; remove the non-triadic pitches from a cluster chord and what remains is still a chord that can be treated in much the same manner.

Another change occurring at this time is the increasing use of melody in Adams's compositions. At this time, melody for Adams was treated as another aspect of texture, rather than as an aspect of form as it would be in most other Classical music. The following motif, by far the most enduring one in all of Adams's music, is a melodic and textural feature which literally saturates almost every work he wrote for the next twenty five years. It is Adams's solution to the problem which faces all composers who write in a Minimalist style: the music must incorporate enough surface activity to counterbalance the static, or very slowly changing, harmony, but by what means should such activity be introduced? For the sake of comparison with Adams's peers, Philip Glass tends to favour the use of arpeggiation, often in combination with conflicting speeds; e.g. triplet quavers against straight quavers. Steve Reich tends to favour canons and pulsation of block chords. Adams favours oscillation: he takes one or more members of the local harmony, and alternates it with an adjacent tone.

Adams's method has strong precedents within American musical traditions. In folk music, particularly the *blues*, and in popular music based on it, harmony moves at a relatively much slower pace than it does in Western Art Music. Musicians naturally tend toward oscillation of chords as a way to justify the prolongation. It is from this tradition that we get the use of the fourth introduced as an oscillation within a chord rather than as a suspension from the previous one, hence

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<sup>7</sup> Adams: *Phrygian Gates*, bar 334.

the ubiquitous mannerism found in popular styles of guitar playing: D–Dsus4–D.

When applied to more than one note of the chord simultaneously, the effect is similar to a rapid alternation between two chords. A downward oscillation produces the effect of I–bVII–I, while an upward oscillation produces the effect of I–IV–I. Both are common effects in *blues* and the various genres influenced by it. Adams's use of this technique is, I believe, one of the principle causes of the apparently 'American' sound of his music.

An excellent illustration of oscillation in action is the song, 'Play that Funky Music' by Wild Cherry.<sup>8</sup> The verses of that song are rooted in E Dorian harmony, which remains static for a full minute, an eternity for a popular song. The riff is centred around the root, in octaves, and the fifth. The upper two notes oscillate with their lower neighbouring note.

#### Example 4. Parissi: Play that Funky Music, bass riff



Reductive analysis suggests that leaps between registers create inner melodic lines. Based on this principle, we can see three lines at work in this riff, the lowest of them being static E, and the other two being simple oscillations between the chordal note and its lower neighbour.

A similar analysis of Adams's piano writing produces the same results: multiple individual oscillations occurring within the material. See example 2 above, where the highest note (alternately B and C) creates one oscillation, while another takes place between F–G in the right hand. The left contains two further oscillations: E–F (upper) and B–C (lower). I describe this as the Oscillating Note Motif, abbreviated to ONM. It can be defined as any instance, harmonic or melodic, of a note alternating regularly with either of its diatonic adjacent notes. For music written by Adams since 1985, the definition can be refined further as being between any note which is a member of the local triad, and either of its diatonic adjacent notes. Its use throughout Adams's works is extensive: in *Tromba Lontana* the trumpet solo which forms

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<sup>8</sup> Robert Parissi: *Play that Funky Music* (Sony Music Entertainment, 1976).

the majority of the piece's melodic content begins with a simple C–D oscillation, and returns to this material frequently.<sup>9</sup> The accompaniment in the orchestra in the flutes and piccolos, doubled by piano and harp, meanwhile oscillates between G–A for the duration. The second movement of *El Dorado* uses a flugelhorn solo on the same notes, while a keyboard sampler accompanies with material including ONMs between A–B, and D–E.<sup>10</sup>

The foxtrot melody of *The Chairman Dances*, shown in example 5, which also appears as a recurring theme in act III of *Nixon in China*, is a combination of two ONMs: B–A (upper) and C#–D (lower).<sup>11</sup>

**Example 5. Adams: The Chairman Dances, bars 305–10**



The second movement of *Harmonium*, ‘Because I could not stop for Death’, generates most of its melodic content from an ONM, as does *Hallelujah Junction* (for two pianos), which begins with a motif featuring the ONM between Ab–G, and derives most of what follows from the opening material.<sup>12</sup>

*Century Rolls* opens with a collection of repeating accompanying patterns, each incorporating an ONM.<sup>13</sup> Whereas earlier works had incorporated several oscillations within a single line, the excerpt below gives a single, individual oscillation to each instrument, creating the effect of multiple cogs in a machine. Each loop is also of a different length, creating an effect similar to that of the *Gates* pieces.

<sup>9</sup> John Adams: *Short Ride in a Fast Machine and Tromba Lontana*, published as *Two Fanfares* (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1986), bar 5.

<sup>10</sup> John Adams: *El Dorado* (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1991), bar 39.

<sup>11</sup> Adams: *The Chairman Dances*. Adams: *Nixon in China*.

<sup>12</sup> Adams: *Harmonium*. John Adams: *Hallelujah Junction* (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1996). Hereafter referred to as Adams: *Hallelujah Junction*.

<sup>13</sup> John Adams: *Century Rolls* (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1997). Hereafter referred to as Adams: *Century Rolls*.

Example 6. Century Rolls, I, bars 1-5

$\text{♩} = 120$   
*all notes equally short*

Picc.  
Flute I  
Bsn.  
Horn 2 in F  
Harp

$\text{♩} = 120$   
*first stand division*

1st stand  
Vln. I  
altri  
solo  
Vln. II  
altri  
Viola

*all notes equally short*

Vln. I  
Vln. I  
Vln. II  
Vln. II  
Viola

*altri ppp*  
*ppp*



Of particular interest here is the pattern played by the flute and harp, in which the ONM is implied between C#–D, rather than being played explicitly as a direct oscillation. This method hides oscillations at a background level, as in the second movement of *The Dharma at Big Sur*, here between B and C#.<sup>14</sup>

### Example 7. The Dharma at Big Sur, II, bars 1–3



Other analysts of Adams's music, Mark Simmons and Daniel Colvard, have previously discerned the significance of the ONM in *Harmonium* and *The Dharma at Big Sur* respectively, describing it as a significant element which Adams uses to unify his melodic, harmonic and textural writing.<sup>15</sup> This is, of course, true. However, Simmons and Colvard saw it as locally significant within the works they studied, rather than as a unifying motif through all of Adams's music.

### Rhythm

While much can be said about Adams's use of rhythm, the present discussion will focus on one characteristic, an almost universal aspect of the piano writing of Adams. The method by which most of the rhythms are played is a percussive alternating hands pattern. Like the use of block chords, it had been present in his earliest pieces but its potential was never fully explored. In the following example, from *Hallelujah Junction*, Adams is drawing on the 'oom-pah' tradition of piano writing established in music based on folk styles and ragtime, in which the left hand leaps constantly between registers to play both a bassline and accompanying chord.<sup>16</sup> In the present case, Adams modifies the style slightly, so that the lower notes outline a third rather than the usual

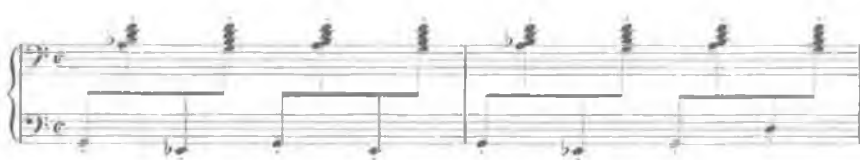
<sup>14</sup> John Adams: *The Dharma at Big Sur* (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 2003).

<sup>15</sup> Mark Simmons, 'An analysis of the melodic content of John Adams's *Harmonium*' (unpublished MA dissertation, Arizona State University, 2002). Daniel Colvard, 'Three Works by John Adams's' (unpublished MA dissertation, Dartmouth College, 2004).

<sup>16</sup> Adams: *Hallelujah Junction*.

fourth or fifth. Outlining thirds in the bass is an accompaniment style also used throughout *Nixon in China*.<sup>17</sup>

**Example 8. Hallelujah Junction, bars 512–13**



At other times, the division between the hands occurs to emphasize shifting accents and create apparent changes of metre, as in example 11. This style also echoes a twentieth century style of piano playing in popular music in which syncopated right hand chords are played against the unsyncopated left hand, in imitation of a larger ensemble, and resulting in an alternating hands pattern. It is a highly percussive style of playing, in which the movement of the hands alone suggests drumming on a solid surface.

**Example 9. Hallelujah Junction, bars 622–24**



The third strain of alternating hand patterns allows Adams to use the *Gates* motif in a new, rhythmically charged way. The following example is from *Road Movies*, with brackets added to highlight the patterns.<sup>18</sup> The switches in pattern occur in quicker succession, and the hands no longer sound note against note, but the ancestry is clear.

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<sup>17</sup> Adams: *Nixon in China*. Act 1, Scene 1, bar 374.

<sup>18</sup> John Adams: *Road Movies* (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1995). Hereafter referred to as Adams: *Road Movies*.

### Example 10. Road Movies, III, bars 76–78

Adams's most obvious predecessor in this style of piano writing is Steve Reich. Reich's *Piano Phase* uses a twelve-note ostinato played in the same manner as the above excerpt.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, Adams explicitly draws the connection himself in bars 132–33 of the third movement, which quotes *Piano Phase* almost verbatim (the only difference being that Adams raises one note by a semitone). The alternating hands use of block chords as a pounding, percussive effect is also a recurring feature in Reich, notably in the opening bars of works such as *Music for Eighteen Musicians*, *You Are (Variations)*, *The Desert Music* and *Sextet*.<sup>20</sup>

### Harmony

Having evolved from being modal to being triadic in the early 1980s, Adams's harmonic language began to broaden once more after *Nixon in China*.<sup>21</sup> *Eros Piano* (1989), one of Adams's lesser-known works, introduced the use of stacked and interlocking fifths to create chords.<sup>22</sup> Such use of fifths is an easy way to achieve a kind of consonant atonality, as the resulting music cannot be described tonally, but the most common intervals at any given moment are thirds and fifths. The most likely reason for his use of fifths is because *Eros Piano* is written

<sup>19</sup> Steve Reich: *Piano Phase* (Vienna: Universal Edition, 1967).

<sup>20</sup> Steve Reich: *Music for 18 Musicians* (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 2000). Steve Reich: *You Are (Variations)* (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 2004). Steve Reich: *Sextet* (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1985). Steve Reich: *The Desert Music* (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1984).

<sup>21</sup> Adams: *Nixon in China*.

<sup>22</sup> John Adams: *Eros Piano* (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1989), bars 1–8. Hereafter referred to as Adams: *Eros Piano*.

as a twin composition to Takemitsu's *Riverrun*.<sup>23</sup> This is made clear from the first bar: *Eros Piano* opens with a slightly altered quotation from *Riverrun*'s ending, implying that *Eros Piano* aims to pick up where *Riverrun* left off, as illustrated in examples 11a and 11b.<sup>24</sup>

**Example 11a. Takemitsu: Riverrun, page 29, bars 3–4**



**Example 11b. Adams: Eros Piano, bars 1–2**



From this point on, in *Eros Piano* and in the works which succeed it, fifths become an integral element of Adams's harmonic style.<sup>25</sup> Note the left hand from example 12, and the spacing of notes in example 8.

In *Eros Piano*, one particular chord assumes a structural importance; two fifths separated by a semitone (from the lowest note up, C#–G#–A–E).<sup>26</sup> The resulting sonority is to become one of Adams's signature chords: a transposition of it is used as something approaching a 'home' chord in the first movement of *Road Movies* and *Century Rolls*.<sup>27</sup> In both cases, the chord becomes expanded through the addition of further fifths at either end.

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<sup>23</sup> Toru Takemitsu: *Riverrun for piano and orchestra* (Tokyo: Schott, 1987).

Hereafter referred to as Takemitsu: *Riverrun*.

<sup>24</sup> Adams: *Eros Piano*. Takemitsu: *Riverrun*.

<sup>25</sup> Adams: *Eros Piano*.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, bar 4.

<sup>27</sup> Adams: *Road Movies*, bar 1. Adams: *Century Rolls*, bar 67.

*Eros Piano* also marks the end of Adams's first period of piano writing.<sup>28</sup> It was written several years after Adams had ceased writing with the *Gates* techniques and is composed in a style which is partly in imitation of Takemitsu, and partly in imitation of late nineteenth and early twentieth century composers like Ravel and Gershwin. There is little in it which is distinctively 'Adamsian', except when seen with the benefit of hindsight and the harmonic influence it has had on his works since 1990. Prior to it, everything that he had written except *Shaker Loops* had included a piano.<sup>29</sup> After its completion, he wrote nothing further for piano for the next five years. In 1995, he wrote *Road Movies* for violin and piano, which was the first of his works to make extensive use of the alternating hands motif in its modern form.<sup>30</sup> It was then followed by a string of pieces which prominently feature the piano, all of which were written in this new style, culminating with *Century Rolls* in 1997.<sup>31</sup>

A new addition to Adams's harmonic language, from 1990 onward, is the use of polychords, made from two triads and very often placed apart by a minor or major third. In *Road Movies*, the second movement's main motif is an arpeggiated polychord between F and D major, while much of the harmony in the third movement is in a polychord of F# minor and A minor, occasionally broken up by the F and D polychord played percussively.<sup>32</sup>

Adams reserves this effect for turbulent music, and also to denote conflict or aggression, in which case he often heightens it further by moving the harmonies chromatically or placing them apart by sevenths. Its use in *The Death of Klinghoffer* is extensive, but only in particular scenes of anger or malice.<sup>33</sup> It is used when the Captain's rambling monologues turn dark and anxious, for example in act one, scene one, bars 111–18, which begins in D major but turns polychordal

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<sup>28</sup> Adams: *Eros Piano*.

<sup>29</sup> Adams: *Shaker Loops*.

<sup>30</sup> Adams: *Road Movies*, bars 1–40.

<sup>31</sup> Adams: *Century Rolls*.

<sup>32</sup> Adams: *Road Movies*, III, bars 89–98, bars 174–78.

<sup>33</sup> John Adams: *The Death of Klinghoffer* (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1991).

Hereafter referred to as Adams: *The Death of Klinghoffer*.

after the words ‘as I believe now, one detail awakened my anxiety’.<sup>34</sup> Polychords are also heard when the terrorists take control of the ship<sup>35</sup>; when Leon Klinghoffer is killed<sup>36</sup>; during Omar’s aria where he invokes the ‘Holy Death’ he longs for, saying ‘my soul is all violence, my heart will break if I do not walk in paradise within two days’<sup>37</sup>; after the British Dancing Girl sings ‘I knew I’d be all right’, to add a menacing underscore of doubt to her words<sup>38</sup>. It is not used, for example, when the terrorists are being non-violent, such as Mamoud’s soliloquy from Act 1, scene 2, where he rhapsodises about listening to his favourite music over local radio stations.<sup>39</sup> There are also two confrontational scenes where, significantly, polychords are not used: during Leon Klinghoffer’s measured denunciation of the terrorists, and in the final scene where Marilyn Klinghoffer learns that her husband has been killed and berates the Captain for his cowardice.<sup>40</sup> In both cases, the omission serves to differentiate the anger of the Klinghoffers from the anger of their attackers, to make the speakers seem like the voices of reason, and to hint at where the composer’s own sympathies lie.

The chaotic final pages of *Hallelujah Junction* feature much use of polychords, but in the theatrical context of the duelling pianos; each attempts to end the piece in a different key and therefore comes across more light hearted than *Klinghoffer*.<sup>41</sup> *American Berserk*, a short and manic piano piece from 2002, is written almost entirely in this manner; using chords separated by thirds, played simultaneously or in rapid succession.<sup>42</sup> As with the use of interlocking fifths, use of polychords eschews tonality while retaining something of its sound.

The quintessential ‘Adams chord’ in his middle and later works is the minor seventh, which exists where these two techniques of

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<sup>34</sup> Adams: *The Death of Klinghoffer*.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, Act 1, Scene 1, bar 311.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, Act 2, Scene 2, bar 88.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, Act 2, Scene 1, bars 323–33.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, Act 2, Scene 1, bar 158.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, Act 2, Scene 3. *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> Adams: *Hallelujah Junction*. Adams: *The Death of Klinghoffer*.

<sup>42</sup> John Adams: *American Berserk* (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 2002), bars 45–55.

harmonic generation cross, as it is both a chord comprising two interlocking fifths, and a simple polychord of a minor and major chord placed apart by thirds.

The main theme from the third movement of *Century Rolls*, illustrated in example 12, is one example of Adams's use of the minor seventh, and combines grouped fifths with implied polychords.<sup>43</sup>

**Example 12. Century Rolls, III, bars 58–60**



The first two fifths (bracket no. 1) together make an Fm7 chord, those in bracket no. 2 make Gm7, bracket no. 3 makes Bbm7, and the last two chords in bracket no. 4 are a transposition of the same structural chord used in the first movements of *Eros Piano* and *Road Movies*: two open fifths separated by a semitone, but in this instance with the thirds added.<sup>44</sup>

Other examples of the minor seventh chord being prominently featured include the opening motif (perhaps “riff” is a better description) from *Lollapalooza*, which outlines Gm7.<sup>45</sup> The second movement of *Phrygian Gates*, ‘A System of Weights and Measures’, dwells upon the various permutations of a single chord, C#m7, very slowly oscillating to produce other minor sevenths, such as F#m7.<sup>46</sup> The second movement of *Harmonium* is built on the same chord, but the larger orchestral and choral forces are used to produce much richer harmonies; ONMs present in some (but not all) parts create passing cluster chords which flux in and out of being.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Adams: *Century Rolls*.

<sup>44</sup> Adams: *Eros Piano*. Adams: *Road Movies*.

<sup>45</sup> John Adams: *Lollapalooza* (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1995), bars 1–4.

<sup>46</sup> Adams: *Phrygian Gates*, bars 640–808.

<sup>47</sup> Adams: *Harmonium*, bars 1–28.

In conclusion, one can summarise the development of Adams's compositional style to date as a gradual but continuous move away from the 'purity' of Minimalism towards a music more sharply defined by its influences. The earliest pieces were the most classically Minimalist, until organisation of pitch material became more hierarchical in the mid 1980s. At the same time, the rate of harmonic change and the level of harmonic complexity increased, showing a distinct move away from what we would regard as the tenets of Minimalist music, and beginning a greater engagement with the traditions of the late Romantics and the American vernacular. With each new major work, Adams's musical fingerprints, and the influences which shaped them, become ever more clearly defined.

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## **Minimalism: towards a definition**

### **Adrian Smith**

It is somewhat ironic that the Minimalist movement, which has been hailed by many as a welcome return to simplicity, has arguably provoked more terminological confusion than any other musical movement in the twentieth century. What is Minimalism when applied to music? Is it an adequate term to describe this movement or does it have misleading connotations? Does it show parallels with its counterpart in the visual arts? In what context did it arise? These are all frequently asked questions which this chapter will attempt to answer. Many of the attempts to define Minimalism thus far have only focused on obvious surface features without probing deeper into its musical core. The result of all this is that after thirty years of Minimalist scholarship we have a widespread acceptance of a term which is still not fully understood. In order to address this situation comprehensively, this chapter will be divided into two distinct but nonetheless intrinsically linked sections. The first section will focus on the inadequacy of 'Minimalism' as a descriptive term when applied to music. Ultimately, however, it must be conceded that it is too late for a name change and we must accept what is now a common currency in musicological terms. Since this is the case and we are dealing with an accepted term, an understanding of the generic essence of the music itself and an awareness of the term's limitations is necessary. This is the argument which will comprise the second half of this chapter. I will examine the nucleus of this music and put forward a definition which will adequately describe the music of La Monte Young, Terry Riley, Steve Reich and Philip Glass, the four composers most associated with the movement. This definition of Minimalism will place it in a context which also considers the post-Cagean and post-war Serial movements. Finally, I will define the distinction between 'Classic' and 'Post' Minimalism which I feel is necessary to cater for the influences of Minimalism in more recent compositional trends.

The term 'Minimalism', borrowed from the fine arts, was formally transferred to music in 1974 by Michael Nyman, the English composer and critic, in his book *Experimental Music: Cage and*

*Beyond*.<sup>1</sup> Both Nyman and the American writer Tom Johnson had used the term on and off in their writings since the late 1960s but it wasn't specifically denominative until Nyman's book.<sup>2</sup> In the world of the fine arts the term had been in circulation as early as 1960, though it wasn't until 1965 that it received its formal introduction by Richard Wollheim in an article for *Arts Magazine*.<sup>3</sup> 'Minimalism' in the art world has been just as troublesome as its musical counterpart and questions ranging from whom exactly to include under its label to what is its exact meaning show interesting parallels. When viewed in its totality though, one adjective used frequently in the art literature to describe Minimal art is 'reduction'. This becomes quite a tangible prospect when one considers the black paintings of Frank Stella composed under the dictum of 'less is more' or the chequerboard 'floor pieces' made by Carl Andre. It was certainly in this context that Nyman first used the word 'Minimalist' to describe the early works of Young, Riley, Reich, and Glass.<sup>4</sup>

It is well known that the Minimalist composers based in New York in the 1960s were on far better terms with the artist community than with the musical establishment which took considerable time to win over. Most early Minimalist concerts took place in artist's lofts and galleries, largely due to the hostility they provoked from the more conservative concert-going audiences who were confronted with hitherto unheard of levels of repetition and perceived monotony. The most famous examples are Reich's mainstream debuts of *Four Organs* by the Boston Symphony at Symphony Hall in Boston on the 8 October

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Nyman, *Experimental Music: Cage and Beyond* (New York: Schirmer, 1974). Hereafter referred to as Nyman, *Experimental Music*.

<sup>2</sup> Johnson had written numerous articles for the *Village Voice* on the work of Alvin Lucier, Steve Reich and Philip Glass where he describes such music as Minimal or Minimalist. The first of these 'The Minimal Slow-Motion Approach: Alvin Lucier and Others' was published in the *Village Voice*, 30 March 1972. In October 1968, Nyman published a review entitled 'Minimal Music' in *The Spectator* describing the work of Cornelius Cardew.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Wollheim, 'Minimal Art', *Arts Magazine*, January 1965, pp. 26–32.

<sup>4</sup> In Robert Schwarz's book *Minimalists* Nyman is quoted as saying 'When I introduced it to music in 1968 it was a valid art historical term, and without thinking about it too much it seemed there was a musical parallel'.

1971 and Carnegie Hall on 18 January 1973 which managed to enrage both conservative audiences to an inordinate degree.<sup>5</sup>

Another connection between both the art and music downtown communities was the frequent collaborations between both groups. The premiere of Reich's *Pendulum Music* (1968) at the Whitney Museum in New York in 1969 was given by the composer James Tenney and three Minimalist artists, Michael Snow, Richard Serra and Bruce Nauman; Glass has collaborated frequently with Serra since the late 1960s and even became his full time assistant for a period; Robert Morris was part of the *Fluxus* movement with La Monte Young in the early 1960s.

Bearing this in mind, it must nevertheless be conceded that any assessment of the relevance of a musical term must begin with the literal meaning of the term itself. The Oxford dictionary defines the word minimal as meaning 'very small, the least possible'. Even before we apply this term to music, the art critic Lawrence Alloway accurately identified the terms inherent shortcomings:

because there is no consensus on what is Enough, or Too Much, one cannot accurately characterize (such art) as minimal. [...] It is a weakness of 'Minimal' as a critical term that it assumes or rather memorializes, a point in time when such work was less than expected.<sup>6</sup>

Because there can be no generally accepted consensus in this regard the term is immediately problematic as a critical term. When exactly is a piece of music deemed to be Minimalist and in what context of its design is this minimalization perceived to exist? Much of the artist's impatience with the term centres around the assumption that the movement is a reaction against the complexity of Integral Serialism or Abstract Expressionism by espousing an aesthetic not only based on compositional economy of organization and materials but also on economy of intellectual engagement. In this regard a term such as Minimalism only encourages a derogatory view of a low brow opportunistic art form masquerading ingenuously as high art. It is not

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<sup>5</sup> Keith Potter, *Four Musical Minimalists: La Monte Young, Terry Riley, Steve Reich, Philip Glass* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 208. Hereafter referred to as Potter, *Four Musical Minimalists*.

<sup>6</sup> Potter, *Four Musical Minimalists*, p. 3.

surprising then that artists, both sonic and visual, have resisted the term vehemently since its inception.

Inherent weaknesses aside, it can nevertheless be assumed that composition in a 'Minimalist style' may involve a number of possibilities. These could include limiting the duration of a work, working with a very small amount of basic materials, or a limitation of the means by which the materials are processed or developed. The first aspect concerning duration can be universally dismissed, for if one thing is certain it is that Minimalist compositions are rarely short events. The first performance of Glass's *Einstein on the Beach* (1975–6) lasted five and a half hours, while Riley is famous for his all-night concerts. La Monte Young adopted an epic timeframe from the beginning, stretching back to his pre-*Fluxus* compositions. His performances of his magnum opus *The Well-Tuned Piano* (1964–) average six hours, while it is reported that in the 1970s he kept a constant sine wave drone going in his loft for twenty four hours a day for periods of up to a few months at a time.<sup>7</sup> In general, however, the processes used by Minimalist composers are time oriented, making extended duration a necessity for these processes to come across convincingly.

The remaining two aspects of what can be deemed Minimalist features were alluded to by Nyman in his 1973 study:

This music not only cuts down the area of sound-activity to an absolute (and absolutist) minimum, but submits the scrupulously selective, mainly tonal, material, to mostly repetitive, highly disciplined procedures which are focused with an extremely fine definition.<sup>8</sup>

In essence this means that this reduction occurs texturally in terms of the amount of materials chosen and, secondly, in the adoption of certain procedures which allow the listener to focus his/her concentration on the already reduced material. The first aspect of this theory accounts for the initial reason why the term 'Minimalism' ever came into being in the first place: namely because it is the only obvious surface characteristic

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<sup>7</sup> Eric Strickland, *Minimalism; Origins* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), p. 156. Hereafter referred to as Strickland, *Minimalism: Origins*.

<sup>8</sup> Nyman, *Experimental Music*, p. 139.

which was perceptible amongst all four composers in the initial stages of their work. The opening section of Young's *Trio for Strings* (1958) contains only three notes and lasts around five minutes, in Riley's *Keyboard Studies No. 2* (1964) only eight different notes are used, Reich's *Piano Phase* (1966–7) contains a repeated twelve-note figure and Glass's *One+One* (1968) contains only two repeated rhythmic figures. Such a drastic limitation of materials had never before been seen by a collective of composers working at the same time in close proximity to each other.

However, this initial reduction lasted only a short while, hardly long enough to define a whole movement. A single glance at slightly later works such as Reich's *Drumming* (1970–1) or even what many consider to be the quintessential Minimalist piece, Terry Riley's *In C* (1964), reveal textures as dense as anything previously composed in western music. Besides, a more important factor to consider is that this initial reduction served only as an experimental parameter in order to refine and develop certain techniques which would later become important developmental devices. For instance, in Reich's *Piano Phase* (1966–7) the material is reduced to a single twelve-note pattern played on both pianos. However, it is not the reduction that is important but rather the stasis and gradual process achieved by the phasing technique. The reduction allowed Reich a more concentrated arena in which to refine the phasing technique. A similar situation applies to Glass's rhythmic processes and Young's work based on sustenance. None of the four composers set out to compose music using a minimum of means solely as its *raison d'être*; while there is an initial reduction it is never the most important aspect of the music.

The adoption of reduction in the early stages of these composers' careers could be viewed as analogous to the simplified textures and instrumentation in the formative years of any composer's early career. Although this initial reduction is admittedly austere, it paved the way for the techniques of each composer to be adopted into more advanced large scale forms. Glass has since written a number of successful operas and eight symphonies while Reich and Riley have been commissioned to write works for similar large ensembles. Young's work remains the most confined to smaller ensembles. There is, however, a progression away from the early sustenance works to larger works such as *The Well-tuned Piano*. It is also interesting to note that

none of the composers have reverted back to the stark reduction of their early years which would seem to confirm the view that reduction, while an important developmental necessity, was never considered a central feature of their aesthetic.

The second aspect of Nyman's statement concerning 'highly disciplined procedures which are focused with an extremely fine definition' is again partly true, but only relevant to certain early works which use reduced material.<sup>9</sup> In order for the phasing technique to be developed, the reduced material in Reich's *Piano Phase* is submitted to repetition which does indeed focus the listener's attention on the gradual process. This simple procedure could be argued to be somewhat Minimal but only within this reduced context. In pieces like *Music for Mallet Instruments, Voices and Organ* (1972–3) or *Drumming* (1970–71) where the texture is consistently dense and constantly changing, the repetition of the melodic patterns and the sustained tones of the voices produce a complex interlocking of material in which the attention level required from the listener is extremely high if everything is to be followed. It is a similar situation with Glass's additive and cyclic techniques. While the basic techniques themselves are quite simple, the textures that result in a work such as *Music with Changing Parts* (1970) when these techniques are combined result in a complex web of sound which refutes any notions of a Minimal aesthetic in this regard.

In keeping with current trends, it was inevitable that the prefix 'post' would sooner or later be attached to the already ambiguous 'Minimalism'. Most musicologists would agree that 'Classic Minimalism', ended around the mid-1970s with Reich's *Music for Eighteen Musicians* (1974–6). Music composed after 1974 exhibited a new level of harmonic and melodic enrichment. Reich's *Music for Eighteen Musicians* had already contained a level of chordal progression which had never been present in Minimalist compositions before. At the same time, composers outside the 'Minimalist quartet' began to incorporate Minimalist surface features in their work. The music of John Adams for example has adopted Minimalist style repetition underpinned by a neo-Romantic harmonic language indebted to his American predecessors such as Ives, Copland, Gershwin and Bernstein. Therefore if we accept, as most commentators do, that

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<sup>9</sup> Nyman, *Experimental Music*, p. 139.

Minimalism is an inadequate term to describe anything but the initial stages of the movement, it would seem that the term 'post-Minimalism' only adds to the confusion by conversely giving the term 'Minimalism' increased terminological clout.<sup>10</sup> To classify a work as post-Minimalist implies a certain connection with Minimal reduction, but most of the music written by composers after 1973, which is classified as post-Minimalist, shows no evidence of the drastic reduction that was present in the early works of Reich or Glass.

Since Nyman's book, however, the term Minimalism has resisted all challenges. Numerous other descriptive labels have vied for position including 'repetitive music', 'trance music', 'pulse music' and 'process music', not to mention the more than occasional derogatory branding such as 'stuck in the needle music' and 'pop-music for intellectuals'.<sup>11</sup> The frequent pronouncements of its death by both critics and composers have, according to Erick Strickland, become 'the surest testimonial to its staying power'.<sup>12</sup> It seems pointless then, in one sense, to continue to argue over the term's shortcomings. The label has stuck and is now the accepted term to describe this music. Nonetheless, a certain caution must always be exercised when using the term. If we are to continue to use it as a critical label then we must bear in mind its inherent weaknesses and misleading connotations. The term must only be used when referring to the movement as a whole rather than functioning as the dominant characteristic of the music.

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<sup>10</sup> Wim Mertens, the first critic to pen a publication dealing at length with Minimalism in music (*American Minimal Music*), described it as only 'partially satisfactory' and quickly discarded the term after the opening chapter in favour of 'American repetitive music'. The most recent publication on Minimalism, Robert Fink's *Repeating Ourselves*, prefers the term 'repetitive music'. Other major publications such as Keith Potter's *Four Musical Minimalists*, Eric Strickland's *Minimalism: Origins*, and Kyle Gann's chapter on Minimalism in *American Music in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, have all begun their respective studies of Minimalism with the seemingly obligatory preliminary discussion on the suitability of the term.

<sup>11</sup> Samuel Lipman, *The House of Music; Art in an Era of Institutions* (Boston: Godline, 1984), p. 48.

<sup>12</sup> Strickland, *Minimalism: Origins*, p. 1.



But what is the defining feature of this movement? Most musicologists divide Minimalism into two categories, 'Classic' and 'Post'. Classic Minimalism is considered to begin with La Monte Young's *Trio for Strings* and ended somewhere around 1974 with Steve Reich's *Music for Eighteen Musicians*. So what justifies this division? Generally speaking, the work of composers associated with Minimalism began to display a number of features including the expansion of forces and increased harmonic movement. Reich's *Music for Eighteen Musicians* had already contained a level of chordal progression which had never been present in Minimalist compositions before. Many commentators delineate this composition along with Glass's *Einstein on the Beach* as the end of a 'Minimal' aesthetic. However, I have argued in the first section of this chapter that there never really was a Minimalist aesthetic to begin with. So what was there?

With the benefit of hindsight it is quite understandable why Nyman coined the term 'Minimalism' in the early years, particularly when one considers the visual art movements of the time which, as Nyman has admitted, seemed to suggest a certain connection. More lasting features of Minimalist music such as repetition, gradual process and a resurgence of tonality cannot be consistently discerned in the music. This is especially so in the case of La Monte Young. Young's early pioneering work with sustained tones is atonal, his use of repetition is limited to a few conceptual works such as *X for Henry Flynt* (1960), and the presence of gradual process is negligible. Indeed it has been argued that Young's association with the group is solely as a founding father figure and formative influence on Terry Riley.<sup>13</sup> But this is not the case especially when one delves beyond the surface features of the music.

In his 1980 study of Minimalism Mertens makes the distinction between repetition in Classical music and repetition in American Minimal music:

The traditional work is teleological or end-orientated, because all musical events result in a directed end of synthesis. Repetition in the traditional work appears as a reference to what has gone before, so that one has to remember what was forgotten. This demands a learned, serious and concentrated, memory-dominated approach to listening.

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<sup>13</sup> Paul Hillier, *Arvo Pärt* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 13.

The music of the American composers of repetitive music can be described as non-narrative and a-teleological. Their music discards the traditional harmonic functional schemes of tension and relaxation, disapproves of classical formal schemes and the narrative that goes with them. Instead there appears non-directed evolution in which the listener is no longer submitted to the constraint of following the musical evolution.<sup>14</sup>

Teleology is derived from the Greek word *teleos* meaning purposes and is a branch of philosophy which deals with directed ends or final causes. The traditional musical work is teleological: it has a directed end written into the music by the composer and the events contained within the work are directed towards this particular point. In tonal music this normally consists of a return to the tonic key after numerous modulations and developments. The sonatas of Mozart and Haydn are classic examples of such a structure.

By contrast, 'Classic Minimalist' music is completely a-teleological. Although Minimalist music is tonal there are no functional harmonic progressions, which effectively rules out any form of teleology based on traditional tonally progressive concepts. Most Classic Minimalist music is based entirely on constantly repeated fragments which are gradually alternated by processes. This can take the form of phasing processes, the substitution of notes for rests or various additive processes. So, one may ask the question, isn't the teleology present in Minimalist music inherent in the unfolding of the process itself? Not quite. In Classic Minimalist music the processes are all focused on the repeated patterns so that, although the music is changing slightly all the time, it remains essentially in the same place. Furthermore, the processes themselves are not designed with an end goal in mind; instead what is important is the focus on the here and now. Although the processes may run out (as is the case with phasing) or reach a point of saturation (as is the case with substituting notes for rests), there are no hierarchical stages as there would be with a teleological piece. Each stage of the process is as important as the next. To quote Reich, 'Once the process is set up and loaded it runs by itself. [...] By running this

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<sup>14</sup> Wim Mertens, *American Minimal Music* (London: Kahn and Averill, 1983), p. 8. Hereafter referred to as Mertens, *American Minimal Music*.

material through this process I completely control all that results, but I also accept those results without changes.’<sup>15</sup> Teleology, on the other hand, implies a narrative and a narrative implies contrast. Classic Minimalist music negates this contrast in favour of repetition or sustained elements. It does this to focus the listener’s attention minute details and extremely gradual developments. But these are static developments, devoid of an intentional teleological goal. To say Minimalist music is teleological is incorrect and misreads the intentions of the music itself.

However a-teleological stasis as a concept in itself is not exclusively limited to Minimalist music. Both the European Serialists and John Cage had already ‘achieved’ it long before Minimalism. The third piece of Messiaen’s *Quatre Études de Rythme*: ‘Mode de valeurs et d’intensités’ signalled the start of a new direction in European composition. The piece is based on a pre-compositional structure of three twelve-note modes. Each member of the mode is given a fixed duration, attack type, dynamic and remains in the same registral position for the entire piece. The starting note of the first mode is a thirty-second note and the subsequent pitches of that mode are determined by adding the duration of a thirty-second note to each successive note. Likewise, the second mode begins with a sixteenth note and the third mode begins with an eighth note and the same process applies. The score contains three lines, one for each mode. The end result is a constantly changing pointillistic sound which remains fundamentally static for its entire duration. It is entirely devoid of traditional teleology, there is no sense of progression towards a goal and when the piece is over it simply stops. Many of the early Integral Serial works followed this model and are entirely a-teleological. Works such as Boulez’s *Structures No. 1* and the first group of Stockhausen’s *Klavierstück* remain essentially static for their entire duration. Essentially the lack of progressive relationships means that there is no sense of when the piece should end and could for all intents and purposes continue indefinitely. The stasis which one can discern in works such as these has been accurately summarized by Christian Wolff:

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<sup>15</sup> Steve Reich, *Writings on Music 1965–2000* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 35.

Complexity tends to reach a certain point of neutralization, continuous change results in certain sameness. The music has a static character and goes in no particular direction. There is no necessary concern with time as a measure of a distance from a point in the past to a point in the future, with linear continuity alone.<sup>16</sup>

While the Europeans adopted a rigorous system in which every aspect of the music was strictly controlled, the American experimental school led by Cage adopted indeterminacy. In order to liberate sound and let it be itself, all aspects of control were abandoned. In this sense Cage's 4'33" could be considered the conclusive study in a-teleology. Indeed Mertens has argued that the importance of repetitive music lies in the way in which it represents the most recent stage in the continuing a-teleological evolution of music since Schoenberg:

It is clear that repetitive music can be seen as the final stage of an anti-dialectical movement that has shaped European avant-garde music since Schoenberg, a movement which reached its culmination with John Cage.<sup>17</sup>

What distinguishes and defines 'Minimalism', however, is not a-teleological stasis alone but rather the means used to achieve this concept. Repetition, which is undoubtedly Minimalism's most instantly recognizable surface feature, is a device which remains at a relatively fixed continuum when extended over time. The end result from constantly repeating a phrase or melodic fragment is stasis. The music goes nowhere and just is. Similarly the musical processes devised by Minimalist composers very often progress along fixed geometric parameters. Glass's strict additive techniques employed for the first time in *1+1* is one such example. The two rhythmic units in the work (here labelled as units 1 and 2) are combined in patterns such as 1+2, 1+2+2, 1+2+2+2, 1+2+2, 1+2, etc. Thinking along these lines also solves the La Monte Young dilemma concerning his lack of trademark Minimalist features such as repetition and gradual process. Young's use of sustained tones is employed to the same a-teleological ends as

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<sup>16</sup> Cited in Mertens, *American Minimal Music*, p. 79.

<sup>17</sup> Mertens, *American Minimal Music*, p. 87.

repetition and process is in the music of Riley, Reich and Glass. Repetition, process and sustained elements are all devices which remain at a fixed continuum when extended over time resulting in the a-teleological stasis that Mertens described.

It is in this a-teleological sense that Minimalism is partly indebted to both Serialism and the music of John Cage. This may seem rather perverse considering that both Reich and Glass have expressed their lack of enthusiasm for European Serialism, particularly the attempts to build on the achievements of the Second Viennese School. Furthermore, the hostilities directed at Minimalism from the modernist establishment have been unrelenting and most regard both styles as polemical opposites.<sup>18</sup> However, while both Reich and Glass have made their opposition clear, both Young and Riley have freely expressed their early interest in Serialism, especially the music of Webern. Young, in particular, identified features such as Webern's tendency to repeat pitches in the same octave in works such as the *Symphony Op. 21* (1928) and the *Variations for Orchestra* (1940) as a form of stasis.<sup>19</sup> He has credited these 'little static sections' as formative influences on his later static music.

Although Cage's music comes from an intellectual background far removed from Minimalism it shares the fundamental preoccupation with a-teleological stasis. As Mertens describes it:

Instead of the existential identification with dialectical time that one finds in traditional music, [...] Cage identifies with macro-time, which transcends history and can therefore be called mythic. The nature of

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<sup>18</sup> Various composers associated with Modernism have spoken out against Minimalism, with the most vehement objections coming from Eliot Carter who is quoted in an interview with Michael Walsh entitled, 'The Heart is Back in the Game', *Time*, 20 September 1982, as saying 'About one minute of minimalism is enough, because it is all the same. Minimalists are not aware of the larger dimensions of life. One also hears constant repetition in the speeches of Hitler and in advertising. It has dangerous aspects'.

<sup>19</sup> Strickland, *Minimalism: Origins*, p. 126.

macro-time is essentially static, and duration is an atomized conglomerate of moments, without relation to past or future.<sup>20</sup>

The difference with Minimalism is the means used to achieve stasis. Whereas Cage uses indeterminacy, Minimalists use devices which remain at a relative constant. I say relative because these devices may be subjected to slight changes during the course of a piece. This results in a massive aural distinction and in no way can Cage be termed a Minimalist as some have claimed.<sup>21</sup> Therefore a definition of 'Classic Minimalism' which accurately describes this music is as follows:

A style of music which originated in America during the 1960s which uses devices such as repetition, sustained elements and musical process as a relatively fixed continuum resulting in an experience of a-teleological stasis over an extended period of time.

It is important to make this distinction between 'Classic Minimalism' and the later 'post-Minimalism'. 'Classic Minimalism' ends around the mid 1970s when a-teleological stasis is no longer the central trait of the music. Post-Minimalism on the other hand exhibits a more flexible teleological gradient in comparison to the flat surfaces of 'Classic Minimalism'. This is unmistakable in works such as Reich's *Desert Music* (1982–4) and Glass's *Violin Concerto* (1987), where teleology is restored and repetition acts as an important device in the construction of the tension/release principle. Nonetheless many of the surface features remain and the music of Riley, Reich and Glass is still largely based around constant devices such as repetition. Even outside the Minimalist quartet the surface Minimalist features remain unmistakably obvious as is the case with John Adams.

All of the above ultimately puts the scholar of Minimalism in a bewildering position. While on the one hand it is necessary to use the term since it has achieved universal acceptance, it is also a mandatory requirement to question immediately, before undertaking any extensive

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<sup>20</sup> Mertens, *American Minimal Music*, p. 87.

<sup>21</sup> Among many examples the headline of Cage's obituary in *the New York Times* on the 13 August 1992 listed him as 'John Cage, Minimalist Composer'. Strickland, *Minimalism: Origins*, pp. 124–25.

study, what is at first its most obvious meaning: a music based on reduction. It would have been much easier for all concerned if some vague label such as the New York School or something similar, which would assume no misleading preconceptions, had been applied from the beginning. Previous publications on the subject have fallen short when it came to laying out a transparent definition which rests on solid foundations. This is perhaps due to the momentum which the term 'Minimalism' has unfortunately gathered in the musicology discipline over the years. The definition above, by contrast, aptly captures the resultant static effect which the devices of Classic Minimalism achieve and which is discernable in the early works of Young, Riley, Reich and Glass. It is with this understanding of the nature of Minimalist music that I believe further investigation and references to Minimalism should proceed.

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# **Gender identity and the electric guitar in heavy metal music**

## **Philip Kelly**

Robert Walser attempts a definition of heavy metal, a genre of music which developed in the late 1960s from the hard rock movement:

During the 1960s, British hard rock bands and the American guitarist Jimi Hendrix developed a more distorted guitar sound and heavier drums and bass that led to a separation of heavy metal from other blues-based rock. Albums by Led Zeppelin, Black Sabbath and Deep Purple in 1970 codified the new genre, which was marked by distorted guitar 'power chords', heavy riffs, wailing vocals and virtuosic solos by guitarists and drummers.<sup>1</sup>

Heavy metal is a much maligned genre of music which has been dominated by controversy since its beginnings in the late 1960s. It has consistently drawn fire from various lobby groups because of its sometimes controversial subject matter often involving violence, death, sex and the occult. Like most rock music heavy metal is a musical genre dominated by men. The electric guitar, the genre's most iconic instrument, has been predominantly played by men since its development in the 1950s.

My motivation to investigate this subject is due to my interest in both heavy metal and the electric guitar. In this chapter I will attempt to outline the gendered characteristics of heavy metal and the electric guitar and address the question: has society's impression of heavy metal as a primarily masculine pursuit been so imbedded in Western culture that we will never see a female heavy metal band achieve the same level of success as a male heavy metal band?

Part one of the chapter is a broad examination of how masculinity is expressed through playing the electric guitar in this genre of music. Part two is an investigation into the apparent absence of

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Walser, 'Heavy Metal', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. by Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 2nd edn, 29 vols (London: Macmillan Publishers, 2001), xi, 301.

female heavy metal electric guitar virtuosi who perform professionally on the world circuit. Finally, part three analyses and discusses a music video from the genre of heavy metal for gender codes and metaphors contained within the performance of the artist.

*Heavy metal, heavy metal*

*What do you want?*

*Heavy metal, Heavy Metal<sup>2</sup>*

### **1. Metal as masculinity**

Since its creation, the electric guitar has been predominantly played by men. It has been used by these musicians as an expression of masculine power, through its capacity for loud volume. The notion of masculine power communicated through the electric guitar and heavy metal will be discussed throughout this chapter. This notion of masculine and feminine has permeated musicology. A.B. Marx's description of Sonata form, for example, employs gender terminology to describe the various sections of a sonata:

In this pair of themes [...] the first theme is the one determined at the outset, that is, with a primary freshness and energy — consequently that which is energetically, emphatically and absolutely shaped...the dominating and determining feature. On the other hand, the second theme [...] is the [idea] created afterward [*Nachgeschaffne*], serving as a contrast, dependant on and determined by the former — consequently, and according to its nature necessarily, the milder [idea], one more supple [*schmeigsam*] than emphatically shaped, as if it were [*gleichsam*] the feminine to the preceding masculine.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Judas Priest, *Ram it down*, Track no. 2, 'Heavy Metal' (Sony, B0000630BW, 1980).

<sup>3</sup> A. B. Marx, *Die Lehre von der musikalischen Komposition*, 2nd edn (Leipzig 1845), p. 221. Trans. by James Hepowski, 'Masculine. Feminine. Are current readings of Sonata Form in Terms of 'Masculine' and 'Feminine' exaggerated? James Hepowski argues for a more subtle approach to the politics of musical form', *The Musical Times*, 135 (1994), 494–99 (p. 494).

Chopin's music was often criticized for 'unmanning' the listener, suggesting that a quiet emotional section of a piece is feminine in nature and may destroy masculine power. Speaking of a Chopin nocturne Arthur Hedley said: 'Let us not tarry in this Capua — it bewitches and unmans'.<sup>4</sup> If one is to categorize masculinity and femininity in music by these ideas then one could argue that heavy metal, and its ear splitting volumes (listening example: Metallica: 'Fuel' from the album *Reload*, 1997<sup>5</sup>) and powerful musical themes played on the electric guitar are undoubtedly masculine.

Masculinity as an expression of power can only exist in a society or cultural system where power is derived from a dominantly patriarchal structure. In the book, *Running with the Devil: Power, Gender and Madness in Heavy Metal Music*, Robert Walser states that 'Heavy Metal is, inevitably a discourse shaped by Patriarchy'.<sup>6</sup> This musical genre places large emphasis on masculine power. This is evident within many aspects of the genre, through the clothes worn by the participants, the swaggering walk and theatrical posturing of the performers and the ever present suggestion of imminent violence conveyed by the music.

Is heavy metal dependant upon this depiction of masculinity; can the genre of music survive without it? Can the music exist within itself and for itself without Western societal notions of masculinity dominating its subject matter?

Heavy metal is an expression of masculinity as perceived to be demanded by young, predominantly white males in Western society in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. 'Notions of gender circulate in the texts, sounds, images, and practices of heavy metal, and fans experience confirmation and alteration of their gendered identities through their involvement with it'.<sup>7</sup> Rapid and significant societal changes have occurred in the last century regarding gender identity.

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<sup>4</sup> Arthur Hedley, *Chopin: The Master Musician Series* (London: JM Dent, 1947), p. 131.

<sup>5</sup> Metallica, *Reload*, Track no. 7, 'Fuel' (Elektra/Wea, 1997).

<sup>6</sup> Robert Walser, *Running With the Devil: Power, Gender and Madness in Heavy Metal Music* (Middleton: Wesleyan University Press, 1993), p. 109. Hereafter referred to as Walser, *Running With the Devil*.

<sup>7</sup> Walser, *Running With the Devil*, p. 109.

Women have become increasingly empowered and in most areas of Western society they now occupy the same social status as men; this leaves men in some doubt as to what their specific gender identity is in relation to that of their female counterparts. How does one define masculinity when the attributes that were originally used to describe it, and the specific roles associated with it, now encompass both sexes? The sociologist R.W. Connell writes about changing notions of masculinity in Western society:

The fact that conferences about 'masculinities' are being held is significant in its own right. Twenty five years ago no one would have thought of doing so. Both the men-and-masculinity literature that has bubbled up in the interval and the debates at conferences and seminars, testify that in some part of the Western intelligentsia, masculinity has become problematic in a way it never was before.<sup>8</sup>

Heavy metal may allow for the expression of many different masculinities rather than a singular masculinity, therefore mirroring complex gender issues in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. This will be examined subsequently in the analysis of a heavy metal music video.

The electric guitar has been at the centre of the heavy metal movement from its beginning and is without doubt the genre's most iconic instrument. It holds a position of power within this music that sometimes surpasses that of the vocals. In heavy metal, levels of extreme virtuosity are often demanded from the guitarist in the group. The guitar solo is one of the most important aspects of the genre and some guitarists are worshipped because of their technical mastery of the instrument.

The electric guitar has always been a male dominated instrument and in heavy metal music it takes on an almost hyper-masculinity. Very few female heavy metal guitarists exist on the world circuit. Why do so few women succeed in making a career from playing heavy metal electric guitar? The cultural sociologist Deena Weinstein claims:

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<sup>8</sup> R.W. Connell, 'The big picture: masculinities in recent world history', *Theory and Society*, 22 (1993), 597–623 (p. 597).

Heavy metal is a musical genre. Although some of its critics hear it only as noise, it has a code, or set of rules, that allows one to objectively determine whether a song, an album, a band or a performance should be classified as belonging to the category 'heavy metal'.<sup>9</sup>

Could it be that women simply do not conform to the accepted rules laid down by the culture keepers of heavy metal? This may well be the case considering that heavy metal has been contrived by men, for men, as an expression of masculinity. Can female performers be accepted into a genre that has been developed by men as such an extreme expression of masculinity? The majority of female performers who have been accepted into this genre of music tend to be singers – one such example is the Swedish metal band Arch Enemy's Angela Gossow (listening example: Arch Enemy, *Songs of Rebellion*, 'We will rise', 2003<sup>10</sup>) – rather than guitarists, which further enforces the electric guitar's association with the male performer. The apparent absence of female electric guitarists from the genre of heavy metal will be investigated later.

Heavy metal electric guitarists are known for their theatrical body movements, for example strutting confidently around the stage. This posturing may be more than just egotistical theatrics: it contributes to masculine connotations about the electric guitar. The guitar is worn on low straps that hang just around the waist-line or lower. I argue that this could have phallic connotations. Simon Frith and Angela McRobbie write about phallic symbols in rock music in their 1990 publication 'Rock and Sexuality', in which they specifically link Led Zeppelin with this sexual nature of the guitar. 'Cock Rock shows are specifically about male sexual performance ... In these performances mikes and guitars are phallic symbols; the music is loud rhythmically, insistent, built around techniques of arousal and climax.'<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Deena Weinstein, *Heavy Metal: A Cultural Sociology* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 1991), p. 6. Hereafter referred to as Weinstein, *Heavy Metal*.

<sup>10</sup> Arch Enemy, *Anthems of Rebellion*, Track no. 3, 'We Will Rise' (Century Media, 2003).

<sup>11</sup> Simon Frith and Angela McRobbie, 'Rock and Sexuality', in *On Record: Rock Pop and the Written Word*, ed. by Simon Frith and Andrew Goodwin, (New

Coupled with this wearing of the guitar below the waist, some guitarists strike a pose that is commonly known as the 'power stance', whereby the guitarist positions his feet at twice the width of his shoulders, with knees bent and head quite often thrown back as though caught in a moment of inspired genius (See fig. 1).

**Figure 1. Slash from Guns 'n' Roses, power stance<sup>12</sup>**



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York: Routledge, 1990), pp. 371–89 (p. 372). Hereafter referred to as Frith and McRobbie, 'Rock and Sexuality'.

<sup>12</sup> Photograph taken from <<http://www.gibson.com/en-us/Lifestyle/Features/Slash>> [accessed 18 February 2008].

Stances such as this have been used through the centuries as battle stances, with weapons replaced by the guitar, as they convey strength, power and unwavering balance to a foe or in the guitarist's case, the audience. A recent lecture by Dr. Jason Toynbee of the Open University's Sociology department discussed communication in music performance through the body language of a performer.<sup>13</sup> He spoke about an artist, specifically Bob Marley, developing a system of communication with an audience through body language. I argue that heavy metal guitarists use similar methods to communicate notions of masculinity to an audience. The power stance and theatrical shaping around a stage is expected and even demanded by a heavy metal audience; guitarists who do not perform in this manner may not be accepted by the audience. This posturing is most common in heavy metal music which further suggests guitarists longing to express their masculinity and sexuality through their music, as well as fans' willingness to accept this action as an integral part of heavy metal culture.

Clothing is also a very important part of heavy metal culture and is used as an expression of masculinity and power by the performers and as a means of expression of identity by the heavy metal audience. In heavy metal, leather is one of the main materials used for clothing. Deena Weinstein says that 'Marlon Brando made the leather jacket a symbol of both masculinity and rebellion'.<sup>14</sup> This is one of the most recognisable features of heavy metal fashion (see fig. 2).

Heavy metal guitarists like Slash (fig. 1), originally from the band 'Guns and Roses' and now currently playing with 'Velvet Revolver', wore leather trousers, a leather jacket and heavy boots usually complemented by a black tee shirt. Leather has traditionally been used by warriors and hunters because of its strength and durability; both of these roles have strong masculine associations. The heavy metal guitarist's use of this material is undoubtedly linked to Brando's use of the leather jacket as an expression of masculinity and perhaps to the use by ancient warriors and hunters of leather as a form of armour.

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<sup>13</sup> Jason Toynbee, 'The primitive author, Bob Marley Performing Reggae as Rock', *NUI Maynooth Media Studies Seminar*, Maynooth, Ireland, 20 February 2008.

<sup>14</sup> Weinstein, *Heavy Metal*, p. 30.

**Figure 2. Metallica leather clad<sup>15</sup>**



Other guitarists in this genre wore spandex: 'Pants made of this material allow greater freedom of movement on stage and better display the athletic bodies of the performers, thereby promoting an image of vital power'.<sup>16</sup> This type of costume was popular amongst bands like Van Halen (see fig. 3).

Weinstein suggests that this costume was used as a way of distancing the band from the audience, and enhancing the theatrical element of heavy metal.

During the 1980s electric guitar manufacturers began to design guitars which would further contribute to the electric guitar's association with the male performer. Guitars were designed to reflect fashion trends amongst musicians and often enhanced a band's image as metal performers. These newly designed guitars further enhanced

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<sup>15</sup> Photograph taken from <<http://www.metallica.com/media/photos/gallery>> [accessed 18 February 2008].

<sup>16</sup> Weinstein, *Heavy Metal*, p. 30.



notions of masculinity within the music of the performers as they took on new shapes, often employing spikes or the shapes of weapons. This is quite fitting as the electric guitar is also known as an 'Axe';<sup>17</sup> this further associates the electric guitar with the role of the warrior. BC Rich, Ibanez, Jackson, and ESP were the main manufacturers of these new guitars (see fig.4).

**Figure 3. Van Halen wearing spandex<sup>18</sup>**



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<sup>17</sup> Rusty Ed. Cutchin, *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Guitar Heroes* (Flame Tree Publishing, London, 2008), p. 4.

<sup>18</sup> Photograph taken from <<http://www.rateitall.com/i-12769-van-halen.aspx>> [accessed 18 February 2008].

**Figure 4. BC Rich Beast guitar<sup>19</sup>**



The shape of the guitar was not the only thing that changed in these new designs: technologically the guitars were modified to allow for louder volumes and greater levels of distortion. These modifications included the development of the active pickup, a new electronic component on the electric guitar. This device uses a separate power supply and a built-in preamp to eliminate noise generated by electricity passing through the pickup. In his article 'California Noise: Tinkering with Hardcore and Heavy Metal in Southern California' Steve Waksman states that 'Tinkering with the electric guitar has been a predominantly masculine endeavour, the end of which could be deemed the fortification of manhood as much as the specific technological or musical goals that are

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<sup>19</sup> Photograph taken from <[http://www.bcrich.com/beast\\_nt.asp](http://www.bcrich.com/beast_nt.asp)> [accessed 18 February 2008].

sought'.<sup>20</sup> Waksman is referring to the process of modifying the electric guitar as an expression of masculinity. I also argue that the development of active pickups and the widespread use of them by electric guitarists in heavy metal was an expression of masculinity, as these new pickups allowed for greater volumes and more distortion, which as I have already stated are used directly as an expression of masculine power.

The gender division in heavy metal performance does not hold true for audience members. 'Since around 1987, concert audiences for metal shows have been roughly gender balanced'.<sup>21</sup> This means that heavy metal and the heavy metal guitar do not exclusively appeal to men as a genre of music. From a commercial point of view the female audience is immensely important for heavy metal as it propels heavy metal's fan numbers out of minority and into majority mainstream popular culture. Robert Walser argues that this gender balancing of heavy metal was largely due to the impact of the release of Bon Jovi's album *Slippery When Wet*. 'Bon Jovi managed to combine the power and freedom offered by metal with the constructed "authenticity" of rock, and, most important, the romantic sincerity of a long tradition of pop'.<sup>22</sup> Bon Jovi offer a different kind of masculinity to the audience than that of conventional heavy metal and has often been dismissed as being 'too soft' to be considered metal, although their guitar based songs are steeped in hard rock and heavy metal traditions. Richie Sambora, the guitarist from Bon Jovi, demonstrates excellent technical command of the instrument in his playing on the song 'Living on a Prayer' from the album *Slippery When Wet*.

While audience statistics for heavy metal concerts are indicative of a gender balance amongst fans since the release of *Slippery When Wet*, performance within this genre still remains a primarily masculine pursuit. What is it about this musical genre which prevents women from

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<sup>20</sup> Steve Waksman, 'California Noise: Tinkering with Hardcore and Heavy Metal in Southern California', in *Social Studies of Science*, ed. by Michael Lynch (London: Sage Publications, 2004), pp. 675–702 (p. 676). Hereafter referred to as Waksman, 'California Noise'.

<sup>21</sup> Walser, *Running With the Devil*, p. 110.

<sup>22</sup> Walser, *Running With the Devil*, p. 120.

engaging with it in a performance capacity, specifically with the electric guitar?

## **2. Why are there no great female heavy metal electric guitarists?**

Linda Nochlin addresses the question of the exclusion of female artists in her article 'Why have there been no great women artists?'<sup>23</sup> Nochlin does not directly answer this question, instead investigating its nature and the social circumstances that allow it to be asked:

It is when one really starts thinking about the implications of 'Why have there been no great women artists' that one begins to realise to what extent our consciousness of how things are in the world has been conditioned — and often falsified — by the way the most important questions are posed.<sup>24</sup>

Nochlin argues that this question essentially answers itself:

But like so many other so-called questions involved in the feminine 'controversy', it [the question] falsifies the nature of the issue at the same time as it insidiously supplies its own answer: 'There are no great women artists because women are incapable of greatness'.<sup>25</sup>

Nochlin does not argue that there have been great women artists to rival the already established pantheon of 'great' male artists like Dali, Da Vinci and others. Nochlin asks why great women artists are not allowed to exist. I ask the same question specifically of female virtuosic performers in heavy metal guitar playing.

In this regard a virtuoso musician has been defined by Owen Jander as:

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<sup>23</sup> Linda Nochlin: 'Why have there been no great women artists?', in *Women Art and Power and Other Essays*, ed. by Linda Nochlin (Colorado: Westview Press, 1988), pp. 147–58. Hereafter referred to as Nochlin, 'Why have there been no great women artists?'.

<sup>24</sup> Nochlin, 'Why have there been no great women artists?', p. 150.

<sup>25</sup> Nochlin, 'Why have there been no great women artists?', p. 147.

A musician of extraordinary technical skill ... A virtuoso in music may have been a skilled performer but more importantly he was a composer, a theorist or at least a famous *maestro di capella* ... the true virtuoso was a musician of exceptional training, especially theory ... there has been a tendency to regard dazzling feats of technical skill with suspicion (and even, in such cases as Tartini and Paganini, to ascribe to them some supernatural power), the true virtuoso has always been prized not only for his rarity but also for his ability to widen the technical and expressive boundaries of his art.<sup>26</sup>

And, it is interesting to note here that Jander uses gendered language to define virtuosity as a male pursuit. In 1978 the heavy metal band Van Halen released their debut album entitled *Van Halen*. This was perhaps the most important album for the development of the electric guitar for almost a decade, and may have been the catalyst for all virtuoso electric guitar records since then:

Eddie Van Halen had revolutionised metal guitar technique with the release of Van Halen's debut album in 1978, fuelling a renaissance in electric guitar study and experimentation unmatched since thousands of fans were inspired to learn to play by Eric Clapton's apotheosis in the late 1960s and Jimi Hendrix's death in 1970.<sup>27</sup>

Joe Satriani, one of the world's premier heavy metal electric guitar virtuosos credits Eddie Van Halen with bringing electric guitar virtuosity into mainstream popular music. Speaking in an interview in October 2007 regarding his ground breaking album *Surfing with the Alien*, Satriani paid tribute to Eddie Van Halen: 'Eddie's success meant Steve Vai and I could do our thing without people turning around and saying, "Stop that!" He made it acceptable. God bless him, but it's all his

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<sup>26</sup> Owen Jander, 'Virtuosity', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. by Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 2nd edn, 29 vols (London: Macmillan Publishing, 2001), xxvi, 789–90 (p. 789). Hereafter referred to as Jander, 'Virtuosity'.

<sup>27</sup> Walser, *Running with the Devil*, p. 11.

fault. No one would let us do it in public until that'.<sup>28</sup> Satriani's statement shows how important Eddie Van Halen was in the development of this style of guitar music. Before Van Halen no other guitarist had played the electric guitar in this manner and been commercially successful. His success inspired a new style of guitar playing and a new sub-genre of heavy metal, 'Shred Metal', in which Satriani and Steve Vai excelled both commercially and artistically. Van Halen's success allowed Satriani and Vai to release albums that entirely contained solo heavy metal electric guitar music, usually without vocals.

Heavy metal guitar playing is dually influenced by African American *blues* and Western art music. While growing up, Eddie Van Halen was fortunate enough to have received classical piano tuition. His father was intent upon Eddie and his brother Alex becoming classical musicians. 'Jan Van Halen encouraged his sons to become classical musicians, and both boys started piano lessons while very young, dutifully practicing Mozart until their interests in guitar and drums prevailed'.<sup>29</sup>

I believe that heavy metal guitar soloists are influenced heavily by romantic connotations about virtuosity, specifically romantic virtuoso violinists such as Paganini, and argue that this influence brings with it the gender and sexual ideals already established by romantic violin virtuosos:

Virtuoso codes of violin performance were gendered in several ways, ways so obvious to contemporaries as to have been transparent. From the new symbol of the violin as a feminine form (no longer the "king of instruments") and the bow as a phallic symbol to the sexual connotations of male violinists in the act of performance, gender codes were ubiquitous.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Ciarán Tracey, 'Gone Surfing Again...', in *Guitarist*, ed. by Mick Taylor (London: Future Publishing, 2007), p. 61.

<sup>29</sup> Walser, *Running with the Devil*, p. 67.

<sup>30</sup> Maiko Kawabata, 'Virtuoso Codes of Violin Performance: Power, Military Heroism and Gender (1789–1830)', *19<sup>th</sup> Century Music*, 28/2 (2004), 89–107 (p. 103). Hereafter referred to as Kawabata, 'Virtuoso Codes'.

Maiko Kawabata argues that virtuoso violin playing was related in the nineteenth century to military heroism and power, something which was linked entirely with societal notions of masculinity. 'I argue that virtuoso codes of performance — a network of physical and musical gestures — combined to create the overall impression of the violinist as a hero, as a symbol of military power'.<sup>31</sup> I argue that male heavy metal electric guitarists exhibit these concepts in the performance of their music and this may be one of the reasons that there are very few female heavy metal electric guitarists.

Kawabata writes about heroic codes being embedded in virtuoso violin music. In the late 1970s, with the release of Van Halen's debut album, Eddie Van Halen wore the mantle of guitar 'hero', following in the footsteps of guitarists such as Eric Clapton and Jimi Hendrix. In the eyes of fans, guitarists were more than just musicians; romantic concepts of virtuosity, heroism and power were apparent in the imagery and ideology of the electric guitarist. 'For all his widely admired virtuosity, Edward Van Halen was expected by his bandmates, and perhaps by many of his fans, to adhere to an ethos of rock "heroism"'.<sup>32</sup>

Contemporary with the release of Van Halen's first album, Floyd Rose was developing a new vibrato system for the electric guitar. Some electric guitars come equipped with a movable bridge to allow for the production of a vibrato like sound. The bridge is manipulated by an arm attached to the bridge (see fig.5).

The guitarist depresses (sometimes raises) the arm to create a vibrato effect. This can have a detrimental effect on a guitar's tuning. Floyd Rose set out to make a vibrato system that would allow the guitar to stay in tune even with extended use from the guitarist. Rose devised a system that incorporated string clamps at the nut of the guitar that would hold the guitar in tune and a series of fine tuners, similar to a violin, which would allow for minor tuning adjustments (see fig.6).

Maiko Kawabata writes: 'The sight of a violinist lashing around with the bow, attacking the string aggressively, and disciplining the resonance of that string with tight dotted rhythms seems to enact sexual domination.'<sup>33</sup> The new Floyd Rose vibrato system allowed for the heavy

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<sup>31</sup> Kawabata, 'Virtuoso Codes', p. 91.

<sup>32</sup> Waksman, 'California Noise', p. 117.

<sup>33</sup> Kawabata, 'Virtuoso Codes', p. 103.

metal guitarist to attack the guitar with the vibrato arm and produce screams and moans from the guitar, which has obvious sexual connotations similar to that of the romantic virtuoso violinist 'disciplining' the string. This is evident in listening to the following: Steve Vai, *Alien Love Secrets*, 'Bad Horsie'.<sup>34</sup>

**Figure 5. Fender Stratocaster, note bridge vibrato system and attached vibrato arm<sup>35</sup>**



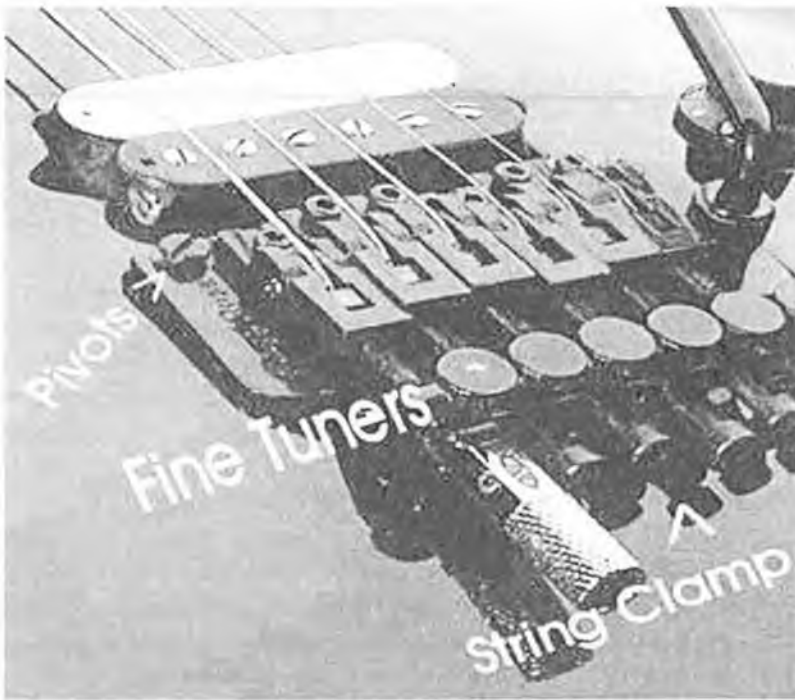
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<sup>34</sup> Steve Vai, *Alien Love Secrets*, Track no. 1, 'Bad Horsie' (Relativity Records/Epic Records 074646803127, 1995).

<sup>35</sup> Eric Johnson Stratocaster photograph taken from <<http://www.fender.com>> [accessed 19 March 2008].



**Figure 6. Floyd Rose vibrato unit<sup>36</sup>**



‘A handful of women performed the music under discussion during Paganini’s lifetime, and they were seen as successful only when imitating masculine displays of power’.<sup>37</sup> In this quotation Kawabata reflects upon Nochlin’s ideas. He considers that women were only successful when imitating men; he agrees with Nochlin’s idea that an audience’s consciousness is conditioned and I also argue that this is the case for female heavy metal electric guitarists. As I have stated heavy metal culture is dominated by patriarchy and if a female is to succeed perhaps she will only do so if imitating masculine displays of power.

In the course of my research I reviewed videos of female heavy metal guitarists. In each video there is an evident commonality between female guitarists and male guitarists; the female guitarists are shown

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<sup>36</sup> Floyd Rose Vibrato Unit photograph taken from  
 <<http://www.fretnotguitarrepair.com>> [accessed 20 March 2008].

<sup>37</sup> Kawabata, ‘Virtuoso Codes’, p. 104.

performing in the same manner as their male counterparts in terms of movements, body language and the ideology behind costume choice, for example, clothing that accentuates the performers' gender or sexuality. This reinforces Kawabata's above statement regarding women imitating male performers. Jennifer Batten and Katherine Thomas (Thomas is also known as 'The Great Kat') are two of the most successful female heavy metal guitar virtuosi. Both guitarists conform to Kawabata's above argument, presenting typically masculine displays of power in their performances as examined in section one.

Batten and Thomas play as fast and as theatrically as any of the male virtuoso electric guitarists. Why then are they not held in as much esteem as Eddie Van Halen or Steve Vai? In her performances Thomas accentuates both masculine connotations associated with the electric guitar as examined earlier and her own femininity. Photographs of Thomas show her in clothing that accentuates her femininity but she usually counterbalances this with extremely violent imagery (see fig. 7).

Thomas, a Julliard graduate, promotes herself as both a classically trained violin virtuoso and a heavy metal guitarist. Her albums feature Western art music by composers such as Wagner, Rossini, and Vivaldi, the titles of which generally feature the names of classical composers in a deliberately controversial manner such as *Wagner's War*, *Rossini's Rape*, *Beethoven on Speed* and *Bloody Vivaldi*. Thomas's extremely dramatic and violent image seems to be a marketing tool for self promotion. She uses it to differentiate herself in a genre of music dominated by men. Thomas was recently placed at number ten in a top ten list of heavy metal guitarists by *Guitar One* magazine:

The Great Kat: Girl power is an understatement. Born Katherine Thomas, this Julliard-trained violinist snapped after graduating and mutated into the world's first shredding dominatrix — the self dubbed 'High Priestess of Shred Guitar'. Not that she doesn't really belong here but we were scared to leave her off.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Christopher O' Byrne, 'Top Ten Fastest Shredders of All Time', *Guitar One*, April 2003, p.12.

Figure 7. 'The Great Kat', *Bloody Vivaldi*<sup>39</sup>



Even in this article negative language regarding Thomas' inclusion in the top ten is present, albeit in good humour. Nevertheless the negative connotations regarding Thomas' gender are there.

In an article entitled 'No Girls Allowed?' in the *Washington Post*, David Segal asks questions regarding the absence of female electric guitar heroines:

Where are all the guitar heroines? Where are all the female guitarists who can light it up in some original, groundbreaking and influential way? Can you name any? Come to think of it, have you ever heard the term 'Guitar Heroine?' [...] Here's the hard and horrible truth: Fifty years after Elvis Presley recorded 'That's All Right Mama', the grand total of pantheon-worthy female rock guitarists is zero. There isn't a single one.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> The Great Kat Photograph taken from <[www.thegreatkat.com](http://www.thegreatkat.com)> [accessed 20 March 2008].

<sup>40</sup> David Segal, 'No Girls Allowed?', *Washington Post*, 22 August 2004, p. 1.

It is useful here to once again make reference to Owen Jander's definition of virtuosity:

The true virtuoso has always been prized not only for his rarity but also for his ability to widen the technical and expressive boundaries of his art.<sup>41</sup>

Jander defines virtuosity as an artist's ability to develop the genre in which they perform. The reason Eddie Van Halen, Steve Vai and Joe Satriani are held in such high esteem is that they have all been innovators in the genre of heavy metal. Katherine Thomas and Jennifer Batten possess the skill to play at the highest level of this genre. Batten played guitar in Michael Jackson's touring band and has also played with other esteemed guitarists like Jeff Beck. Is it possible that the female guitarists are not held in as high regard as their male counterparts by the heavy metal audience because they have not broken new ground, as Jander states, in the same way that Van Halen or Vai have? One could argue the point that they have been innovators in so far as few women have played guitar in this manner before, but this point suggests the guitarists are novelty acts rather than legitimate artists. Male guitarists have played in this style for a number of years. Mary Ann Clawson writes in her article 'When Women play the Bass: Instrument Specialisation and Gender Interpretation in Alternative music': 'Being a novelty is an advantage for females ... This continuing novelty status is but further confirmation of rock's character as an obviously displayed bastion for male exclusivity'. I believe that women must have more than novelty to offer to this genre of music. Rather than offering something strictly new to the genre, I argue that female heavy metal guitarists like Batten and Thomas offer a unique perspective on heavy metal guitar; a feminine interpretation of a primarily masculine form.

These arguments do not fully answer my initial question: Why is heavy metal guitar virtuosity a primarily masculine endeavour? Is Nochlin's proposal about great art correct? Do societal notions about the electric guitar prevent women from offering their own, uniquely feminine, interpretation of the electric guitar within heavy metal? By

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<sup>41</sup> Jander, 'Virtuosity', p. 789.

this I mean a female electric guitarist who is not directly imitating the already established masculine approach to the instrument.

The question 'Why are there no great female heavy metal guitarists?' implies the same answer as Nochlin's 'Why are there no great female artists?' Does the heavy metal audience feel that women are 'incapable of greatness', as Nochlin states? I believe that in order for a female heavy metal guitarist to have the same success and be regarded as highly as male performers in the genre, the heavy metal audience's and heavy metal music industry's perception of the instrument and genre must change.

### 3. Music video analysis

In the following analysis of a heavy metal music video I will attempt to demonstrate some of the sexual and gender codes typical of heavy metal exhibited in the performance of the artist.

Heavy metal artists use many different media to communicate the heavy metal ideology to their fans, for example, magazines, fan websites and music videos. Robert Walser writes: 'Verbal meanings are only a fraction of whatever it is that makes musicians and fans respond to and care about popular music'.<sup>42</sup> Walser is referring to popular music having meaning beyond the lyrics of songs. I agree with Walser and argue that popular music bands, including heavy metal groups, use many methods to communicate meaning to fans. I believe the music video is one of the most effective media used by the popular music industry to communicate with its consumers.

I argue that heavy metal bands use the music video to communicate the visual ideology attached to heavy metal culture, i.e. clothing, actions, and body language, to their fan-base. The music video may heighten a fan's sense of identification and closeness with the band. Terry Bloomfield comments on imagined intimacy with a band or artist:

'When I'm getting off on an Al Green record there's Al, there's me, and there's very probably an absent woman I'm having a love fantasy about'. (Roberts 1991) But there isn't Al. If Al were there he would be giving a private performance to Chris Roberts as patron: an odd conception in the present-day world ... In his comment Roberts has

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<sup>42</sup> Walser, *Running with the Devil*, p. 26.

been captured by the Romantic understanding of the song; that its essence is (artistic) interiority made exterior. He is not alone in his fantasy of access to the pop singer.<sup>43</sup>

This 'fantasy of access', as Bloomfield calls it, is created by the artist using a variety of methods to give the listener a sense of closeness with the performer and a means by which to identify with the band or artist.

The music video is a highly effective method of conveying a band's image or message to a mass audience. With a music video a band reaches a far larger audience than would be possible at a single concert. The music video allows for repetition of a performance and with television channels such as 'VH1' or 'Kerrang' dedicated almost exclusively to the airing of music videos there is great potential for exposure to an extremely large audience.

Walser writes that heavy metal music videos are only part of how fans relate to the performers:

'Headbangers' Ball', the weekly three hour MTV program devoted to heavy metal, is quite popular with the fans I surveyed, but it is hardly the most important aspect of their involvement with metal. Concerts, records, radio, fan magazines, and quite often playing an instrument figure as primary components of metal fans' lives ... A significant number of fans (especially male) watch MTV seldom or never ... This is not to argue that metal videos are unimportant but rather to say that they do not operate in a social vacuum: their analysis must be inflected by knowledge of the lives and cultural investments of the viewers.<sup>44</sup>

Walser wrote this in 1993 before the mass proliferation of music video television channels devoted exclusively to the airing of music videos. Since then MTV has diversified and become less about showing music videos and more about generic popular culture with programs ranging from 'Reality TV' to film review shows. In its stead other channels have sprung up whose mandate is to exclusively show music videos. Some of these channels dedicate themselves entirely to heavy metal, with 'Scuzz'

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<sup>43</sup> Terry Bloomfield, 'Resisting Songs: Negative Dialectics in Pop', *Popular Music*, 12 (1993), 13–31 (p. 13).

<sup>44</sup> Walser, *Running With the Devil*, p. 112.

being perhaps the channel most devoted to showing heavy metal videos in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland. I argue that since the time Walser wrote his book the heavy metal music video has become increasingly important for the initial mediation of the genre of heavy metal to new fans and perhaps as a way for older fans to keep in contact with the genre.

Heavy metal music videos generally show the band in question in the act of performing their songs. I believe this is to heighten the sense of musical authenticity that heavy metal artists strive to communicate with their fans, a way of saying they are more musically legitimate and honest than other popular music performers through 'performing' in front of the fans. As Walser writes:

The most distinctive feature of heavy metal videos is that they typically present the spectacle of live performance; bands are shown on stage, performing in synch with the song ... In the typical metal video, however actual concert footage is often used ... Heavy metal has long had the most loyal touring support of any popular music genre, and the arena concert experience of collectivity and participation remain the ideal that many videos seek to evoke.<sup>45</sup>

Weinstein agrees with Walser:

During the 1980s, music videos provided another medium for the visual expression of heavy metal's sensibility ... The first rule is that concert footage or a realistic facsimile must be a strong element in the video. However, the medium of television cannot capture the aural power and general excitement of a heavy metal concert. TV is too domesticated in its ubiquitous position as a member of the household to stimulate the all-inclusive concert experience. Its smaller-than-life screen and low-quality speakers cannot begin to approximate the sensory inputs of the live venue.<sup>46</sup>

I argue that since Weinstein wrote the above some television sets have become larger-than-life, with incredibly high definition picture quality

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<sup>45</sup> Walser, *Running With the Devil*, p. 114.

<sup>46</sup> Weinstein, *Heavy Metal*, p. 31.

and surround sound speakers which contribute to bringing the concert experience closer to the audience's home, thereby increasing the importance of the heavy metal music video.

#### **4. 'Tender Surrender' – Steve Vai**

The video for 'Tender Surrender' by Steve Vai<sup>47</sup> will now be analysed to examine the way in which a male virtuoso heavy metal electric guitarist expresses masculinity and sexual power through his performance. While this piece of music may not seem to conform to most of heavy metal's characteristics, the distorted electric guitar and flamboyant techniques used by Vai are all hallmarks of heavy metal. Vai has performed and recorded with many of the most successful heavy metal bands in the world, including Whitesnake and David Lee Roth. Vai has also released over twenty solo albums and been nominated for six Grammys of which he has won two. He is renowned for his incredible virtuosity and ability to fuse heavy metal guitar techniques with other styles of music including jazz, as can be seen and heard in this video.

This video shows Vai, surrounded by his band, exclusively in the act of performance. The video begins with Vai playing an octave motif. It is interesting to note Vai's costume: a suit with no shirt beneath his blazer, a choice of costume which is used, as Weinstein suggests, to show Vai's slender physique, demonstrating athletic fitness and power, thereby contributing to notions of sexual power. Vai initially plays the guitar tenderly, strumming lightly with his thumb to create the desired tone. His actions contribute greatly to sexual connotations about virtuosity in heavy metal. Vai gazes lovingly at the guitar as though trying to communicate his love for the instrument to it. In the early parts of this video Vai does not use the 'power stance', instead he moves sensuously and gently from foot to foot. Close up shots of Vai's hands reveal that his sensuality of movement continues even to the way he frets the notes he plays. Throughout the video, Vai moves his mouth as though the guitar is voicing a feeling he cannot express. Vai, like many other guitarists, was influenced in this regard by Jimi Hendrix who also moved his mouth in this manner.

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<sup>47</sup> Steve Vai, 'Tender Surrender', *Alien Love Secrets DVD*, dir. by Devin Meadows (New York, Epic Records 014381549621, 1995).



This piece begins in E minor and is built around a series of climaxes over given chord progressions. The initial chord progression is Em7 |Am7 |D |Em |Em7. Each time the chord pattern begins Vai increases the level of virtuosity in his playing, building eventually to a solo of extreme virtuosity. Vai knows his fans expect a guitar solo and manipulates this expectation throughout the piece. As the level of virtuosity increases, Vai's movements become more energetic, as though the music is propelling him to ever increasing levels of physical pleasure. This display has obvious sexual connotations and the continual building to a climax in the music is, as Frith and McRobbie write, representative of male sexual performance: 'The music is loud, rhythmically insistent, built around techniques of arousal and climax.'<sup>48</sup>

When Vai eventually reaches the guitar solo in the piece, he uses distortion to allow him to sustain long notes and his body language and facial expressions become more vivid. The majority of his movements have sexual connotations, for example running his hand through his hair while sustaining a note. From this point in the video Vai begins to move as though he is putting tremendous passion and energy into his performance. His facial expressions sometimes suggest intense pleasure, moments of inspiration and disbelief at the passage just played; seemingly surprising himself with his own skill. Vai frequently mouths the notes he's playing, particularly high, sustained pitches, here it looks as though the guitar is screaming for Vai and expressing the passion he is putting into his performance and perhaps representing sexual pleasure (see video at 2.31 and again at 2.41).

Vai accentuates his skill and technical proficiency by pointing to his left hand fingers as they speed down the neck. In bar 51 of this piece, (video: 3.07) Vai bends the vibrato arm ferociously, making the guitar scream. Not satisfied with one scream from the guitar, Vai bends the vibrato arm again, at the same time shaking his head as though encouraging the guitar to scream again for him. I argue this has sexual connotations, similar to Kawabata's romantic violin virtuoso, as discussed in section two, 'disciplining' the violin string with the bow. Vai repeats this action moments later followed by a flurry of semi-demi quavers in complex metrical divisions. Vai's facial expression at this point is indicative of the effort required to play this passage. He ends

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<sup>48</sup> Frith and McRobbie, 'Rock and Sexuality', p. 372.

the guitar solo with a series of rapid arpeggios over chords of Em7 and D major. The last note of the solo is a high D and as Vai plays this he leans back with his mouth open again emphasizing the technical skill, effort and bodily energy needed to play such a fast passage.

The song ends with a recapitulation of the initial octave pattern over the familiar chord progression starting on Em7. Vai comes to the end of this piece with some more vibrato arm work, initially playing notes as he pushes the arm, moving his mouth as though voicing the notes. He begins to push and pull the arm with great intensity, making the strings rattle off the pickups, increasing in volume and speed until Vai slows down and eventually stops. Vai's facial expressions match the intensity of the sound he creates with the vibrato arm. This is perhaps the most obvious representation of arousal and climax in the piece, summing up the entire form of the piece in this one act. Vai ends the piece by licking his finger and playing an artificial harmonic on the note A, while the organ plays a supporting Em11 chord.

Vai's actions during his performance of this piece contribute to male sexual connotations regarding heavy metal electric guitar virtuosity. Almost all of his movements imply male sexuality and power, even the title of this piece has sexual connotations. Vai's stamina and energy are exhibited when playing extremely fast passages over prolonged periods, which contribute to notions of athletic fitness and male sexual power.

### **Heavy metal: masculinities in the twenty-first century**

It has become apparent that heavy metal is indeed a genre of music almost completely dominated by men. In the beginning of this piece it was shown how masculinity and patriarchy dominate virtually every aspect of the genre, from fashion trends and timbre of instruments, to body language and technological advancements of the instrument. The development of heavy metal as an expression of masculinity and the methods used in the communication of this masculinity to the heavy metal audience were also examined.

Section two examined the absence of professional female heavy metal guitar virtuosos from the world circuit. Research for this section has highlighted that electric guitar performance is a strongly male dominated musical role in heavy metal, although female heavy metal vocalists like Angela Gossow from Arch Enemy make successful careers within the genre. I feel that if a female heavy metal electric guitarist is to

achieve the levels of success of Eddie Van Halen or Steve Vai, significant changes must occur within the heavy metal audience's perception of the electric guitar and the gender codes embedded in its performance.

With the analysis of the music video in section three it was demonstrated that gender and sexual codes are indeed present in heavy metal electric guitar performance. Steve Vai communicated his own personal, sexual and gender identity through this performance. It is important to state that the specific gender codes displayed in Vai's performance are not universally accepted and shared in heavy metal and that each heavy metal performer offers his/her own interpretation of their unique gender identity. One wonders if the varying depictions of gender identity in heavy metal music videos are conditioned by the audience's reaction to them or is the audience's perception of gender identity determined by what they see and hear on screen?

It seems that heavy metal has endured since its beginnings in the late 1960s because of its popularity amongst fans and its mass appeal. I argue that one reason for this is because it confirms and reifies different masculinities for its fans. It allows the male fans to assert themselves in relation to gender in a way they see fit and feel comfortable with.

It has become apparent to me that people need a way of expressing gender and sexuality. Heavy metal appears to have been a viable means for the expression of masculinities as defined by Western society in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. As the factors that define gender in Western culture continue to change over time, one wonders whether heavy metal will continue to endure as a means of expressing masculinities.

*An armour plated raging beast  
That's born of steel and leather  
It will survive against all odds  
Stampeding on forever*<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Judas Priest, *Ram it down*, Track no. 2, 'Heavy Metal' (Sony, B0000630BW, 1980).

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# **Multi-channel and binaural spatial audio: an overview and possibilities of a unified system**

**Brian Carty**

## **1. Overview**

Multi-channel reproduction of spatial audio can be approached in several ways. Typically, several loudspeakers are placed in a listening space and a discrete signal is sent to each. Many loudspeaker configurations and signal capturing/generation techniques exist. Systems vary from the omni-prevalent two channel stereo to large Wave Field Synthesis loudspeaker arrays. Stereo and quadraphonic spatialization algorithms are typically based on amplitude panning, which has recently been extended using vector based techniques. Other approaches include Ambisonics, which employs spherical harmonics to decompose the sound field, and Wave Field Synthesis, which is based on the Huygens Principle of Wave Propagation. Respective systems can be critically assessed based on attributes such as spatial accuracy, complexity and practicality.

Spatial audio can also be artificially simulated using binaural techniques. Binaural systems involve modelling/measuring the transformations made on sound from a particular location from source to tympanic membrane. These transformations can then be imposed on a non-localized sound, thus making it appear to originate from the measured location. An interesting fusion of the two techniques involves using binaural techniques to artificially localize loudspeakers as point sources. Any of the multi-channel loudspeaker setups above can thus be artificially recreated as headphone signals. Therefore, a listener can theoretically audition a desired loudspeaker setup in a desired listening space in headphones using binaural processing.

This chapter presents a brief introduction to spatial audio, followed by a discussion of the main approaches to multi-channel audio. Binaural techniques are then considered, from the point of view of possibilities of a unified system. Finally, benefits, limitations and applications of such a system are presented. A non technical approach is taken to the often complex algorithms and phenomena involved, in the

hope that an audience who may not be familiar with the topics covered can appreciate the final application.

## **2. Spatial audio**

Spatial audio, in the context of sound reproduction, refers to sound existing in a three-dimensional space around a listener, and is primarily concerned with the location specific qualities of a sound/sound field. Sound spatialization refers to how sound is distributed in a specific environment. Sound localization, conversely, deals with how listeners perceive location specific parameters of the sound field in their listening environment.

Binaural hearing is the main factor involved in sound localization. Essentially, listening with two ears (rather than one) affords the brain two independent signals from the left and right ear respectively, which can be compared from a spatial point of view. Interaural Time Difference (ITD) is the name given to the time it takes a sound to reach one ear after it has first reached the other, and is one of the two main binaural phenomena used in sound localization. If a sound source is further from one ear than the other, a delay will occur in the time it takes the sound to reach the further ear. The further the sound source is from the lateral centre of a listener's environment, the greater this delay will be. ITD works best for lower frequencies, whose wavelengths are long with respect to the distance between the ears. Higher frequencies with shorter wavelengths can be ambiguous, thus causing the breakdown of ITD.

The other main binaural localization cue is Interaural Intensity Difference (IID). IID is based principally on the head acting as a barrier to sound and uses varying respective intensities of a signal at each ear to locate source sounds. Conversely to ITD, IID works best for high frequencies, as low frequencies tend to diffract around a listener, enveloping the head.

These binaural cues rely on differences between signals arriving at each ear to derive information about where sound sources lie in a sonic environment. However, when a source is directly in front of, behind, or above a listener (or indeed anywhere in the median plane), there are essentially no interaural differences. Monaural information can provide important localization cues in these cases. Monaural refers to independent information attainable from one ear. The physiology of the outer ear is complex and causes incoming sounds to be altered as



the sound waves interact with the various folds of the pinna. These interactions vary with source location. Thus the pinna's interaction with the sound is the main factor involved in localization in the median plane, particularly in determining if the source is in front of or behind a listener, where the back of the pinna will filter out higher frequency components of the sound.

Another phenomenon which becomes important, particularly when considering multiple loudspeakers is the Precedence Effect. If a similar sound arrives at a listener's ears more than once in quick succession, from apparently different locations, the sound is localized according to the first arriving wavefront.<sup>1</sup> This can become particularly pertinent when a listener's location relative to the loudspeakers in a multi-channel setup is non-ideal/variable.

### **3. Multi-channel audio**

Multi-channel audio refers to sound reproduction using a number of loudspeakers. In a real world scenario, sound arrives at our ears from everywhere in our three-dimensional environment, implying the need for an infinite number of loudspeakers. Typically, however, a discrete number of loudspeakers are used in a multi-channel situation. An ongoing audio research challenge is how to best represent complex spatial environments with a discrete number of loudspeakers. A number of approaches will be discussed.

#### **3.1 Two channel stereo**

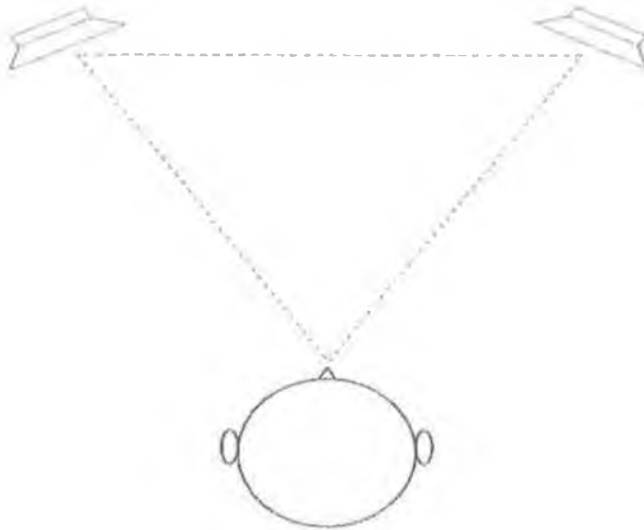
Strictly speaking, stereophony refers to any three-dimensional sound system; however the omnipresent two channel/loudspeaker stereophonic approach has commandeered the term and is typically referred to as 'stereo'. An equilateral triangle describes optimal listening conditions, with the listener just behind the base point/in the 'sweet spot', as shown in figure 1, below. Wider loudspeaker angles distort the spatial image leading to a 'hole in the middle' of the sound scene as the source collapses to loudspeaker locations. Amplitude/intensity panning is typically used in stereo systems, allowing a source to be artificially spatialized between the loudspeakers (by simply taking a mono signal

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<sup>1</sup> B. C. J. Moore, *An Introduction to the Psychology of Hearing*, 5th edn (London: Elsevier Academic Press, 1977), pp. 253–56.

and sending relatively more of it to the loudspeaker nearest the desired source).

**Figure 1: Optimal stereo setup**



Alternatively, stereo recording methods exist, using specific microphone techniques. Microphones can have different polar patterns/directional responses. For example, a figure of eight response will pick up sound from in front of and behind the microphone, whereas a Cardioid microphone will pick up sound predominantly from the front. Two figure of eight microphones, one facing left and the other right, in the same location can thus be used as a stereo microphone technique. The microphone facing left will pick up more sounds located to the left of the setup and vice versa. Upon playback on loudspeakers, a source that presented more energy to the left facing microphone will appear to come from the left. This technique is based predominantly on intensity differences. Alternatively, two microphones can be placed in a spaced pair configuration, perhaps to the left and right of a performing group. This setup will introduce time delays between the left and right microphone of the pair. If, for example, a source is nearer to the left microphone, it will arrive at this microphone first. Thus time differences are introduced to the reproduction of a spaced pair recording.

The stereo reproduction system is strictly limited and exhibits several drawbacks. The source can only exist between loudspeakers, severely limiting the spatial image, not allowing sources behind a listener or at the extremes of the horizontal plane, and not considering source height at all. As the user moves away from the sweet spot, spatialization gets progressively worse, as binaural cues become compromised. Also, amplitude panning does not provide exact spatial characteristics over the audible spectrum. Another relevant point to mention when considering any multi-channel loudspeaker setup is that a non-reverberant reproduction room is recommended to avoid reverberation, which can alter spatial images (unless a sound designer wishes to use the listening room's reverberant characteristics as part of the reproduction).

### **3.2 Vector Base Amplitude Panning**

Vector Base Amplitude Panning (VBAP) can be described essentially as an extension of stereo. It was recently suggested by Pulkki and reformulates amplitude panning to vector bases for simplicity and efficiency.<sup>2</sup> VBAP can extend two channel stereo to any number of channels, even incorporating height information, leading to the possibility of three-dimensional sound. In VBAP, a source will use only the nearest loudspeakers to its desired location for spatialization using amplitude panning techniques. Therefore, if a source is at a loudspeaker location, only that loudspeaker will be used. If a source is between loudspeaker locations, only the two/three nearest loudspeakers will be used. In horizontal-plane-only reproduction, loudspeaker pairs will be used. In such a setup, sources above/below the loudspeaker array are impossible. However, in full three-dimensional reproduction, speaker triplets will be used, as the nearest three loudspeakers to the left and right of the source as well as above and below it will be used. Like stereo, a listener should be equidistant to loudspeaker pairs/triplets, ideally in the sweet spot, outside of which, the spatial image will be degraded.

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<sup>2</sup> V. Pulkki, 'Virtual Sound Source Positioning Using Vector Base Amplitude Panning', *Journal of the Audio Engineering Society*, 45/6 (1997), 456–66.

### **3.3 Ambisonics**

Ambisonics is a complete system of sound capture and reproduction, aiming to provide full three-dimensional spatialization with accuracy depending on the number of reproduction channels. Specific methods exist for sound field capture, storage and reproduction. The technique stores signals in B-format, which describes a sound field's overall pressure level and directional velocity levels. This can be done using a specific kind of microphone (a sound field microphone) to capture a sound field, or artificially using mathematical formulae to encode a particular source location to B-format. B-format signals store details on how much sound energy is coming from the front/back, left/right and up/down directions, as well as the overall sound pressure level.

Ambisonics is flexible in the number/location of loudspeakers employed for playback, although a regular layout is best. Typically, all loudspeakers work together to create the spatial image. B-format signals can then be decoded for the specific loudspeaker setup desired. This decoding can use psychoacoustically motivated formulae, splitting the task into a low frequency and high frequency process. The low frequency process uses ITD sensitive formulae, and the high IID based computations. Ambisonics constitutes a more physically-based approach to sound spatialization, and can be increased to a higher order, which gives increased spatial precision. Again, listeners should ideally be in the sweet spot.

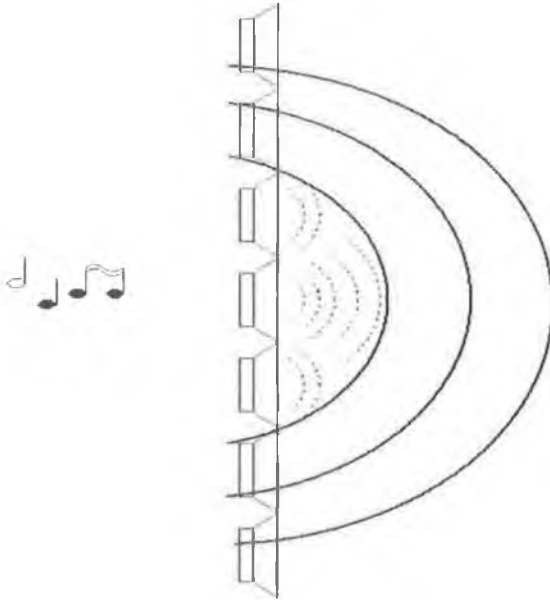
### **3.4 Wave Field Synthesis**

Wave Field Synthesis (WFS) can be thought of as a 'Wall of Loudspeakers' approach. It is based on the Huygens Principal, which states that a wavefront can be represented by an infinite number of point sources, whose wavefronts add to recreate the original. In WFS, this principal is extended to a discrete array of loudspeakers, as shown in figure 2, below.

The main benefit of WFS is that there is no 'sweet spot'; the wavefront is recreated for the reproduction space. The wavefield is physically recreated, no longer trying to 'trick' a listener, as with previously mentioned approaches. Virtual sources will be located at the same point anywhere in the listening space, allowing a user to move around and gain an impression of the whole sound scene. Virtual sound sources can be placed on/outside the array of loudspeakers, infinitely

far away (with direction) or even between a listener and the loudspeakers.

**Figure 2: A Wave Field Synthesis loudspeaker array. The outputs of the loudspeakers (dashed lines) add to represent the output of the source (full lines).**



Practical difficulties include the sheer amount of loudspeakers needed, for example the WFS setup at TU Berlin consists of 840 loudspeakers in a lecture hall.<sup>3</sup> As above, reverberation issues can be problematic. Accurate spatial reverberation for WFS is a complex and extremely computationally costly task. It also raises the issue of listening room interference. Mathematical issues also play a part, related to not using the ideally infinite number of loudspeakers (for example, spatial aliasing and diffraction at the edge of the array). Practically, a limitation to the horizontal plane is also logical (which not only limits the source sound to the horizontal plane, but also prohibits the reproduction of

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<sup>3</sup> M. A. J. Baalman, T. Hohn, S. Schampijer and T. Koch, 'Renewed architecture of the sWONDER software for Wave Field Synthesis on large scale systems', *Proc. 5th Linux Audio Conference*, Berlin, Germany, March 2007, 76–83.

reverberant reflections from the roof and ceiling, which are important for realistic environmental processing).

### **3.5 Surround sound (5.1)**

The pervasive ‘surround sound’ that is swiftly becoming a consumer standard and is typically used in cinemas is referred to as 5.1, referring to five standard audio channels and one low frequency/bass channel. Three channels are located in close proximity in front of the listener and two behind. From the outset, the technique was always meant as more of an ‘experience enhancer’ than a true spatialization tool, and does not aim for full three-dimensional spatial accuracy. It is a front centric system, designed with a visual screen in mind. Part of the 5.1 protocol is to be compatible with stereo, as above, so a narrow frontal region, where spatial images are sharpest, is somewhat inevitable. Problems are similar to those of stereo systems, as amplitude based panning is typically employed (although ambisonic decoding for 5.1 has been suggested).<sup>4</sup> Surround and front left/right channels subtend large angles, leading to phantom source problems. Listener location also poses a difficult challenge. In a scenario designed for a large audience, listeners may be significantly far from the ideal sweet spot, thus potentially ruining the spatial image.

## **4. Binaural**

As multi-channel refers to multiple loudspeakers, binaural refers to headphone reproduction. Binaural techniques aim to accurately model how a source sound from a particular location is perceived at our ears, and will include all the localization cues mentioned above (for example ITD). Binaural techniques use headphones, so do not suffer from multi-channel loudspeaker listener location drawbacks (for example, there is no sweet spot).

### **4.1 Head Related Transfer Functions**

Head Related Transfer Functions (HRTFs) are functions that describe how a sound from a specific location is altered from source to eardrum, and are typically used in binaural systems. For any particular source sound, a pair of transfer functions exist (for the left and right ear) for

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<sup>4</sup> F. Rumsey and T. McCormick, *Sound and Recording: An Introduction*, 4th edn (Oxford: Focal, 1992), p. 407.

any location relative to a listener. By imposing the HRTFs for a particular location on a mono source sound (which inherently includes no direct spatial information), it can be artificially spatialized to that location. Essentially, the process involves boosting or attenuating and delaying the frequencies contained in the source sound in accordance with how the ear treats the appropriate frequencies. ‘Real world’ sounds are made up of combinations of simple periodic sounds, with different frequencies, amplitudes/magnitudes and phases. HRTFs alter these component frequencies depending on the direction they come from. To reiterate, artificial binaural spatialization can be summarized thus: find out how the ears treat sound from a particular location and treat a source sound in the same way.

#### 4.2 Moving sources

HRTFs are typically measured at discrete points around a listener/dummy head. Interpolation is needed if sources are required to be artificially spatialized at non measured points or are required to move. For example, if the HRTFs for a source directly in front of a listener and ten degrees to a listener’s right are known, a source can be placed at both locations. If the source is required to move from one location to the other, and the HRTFs are simply switched, the source will jump, and there will be a click/some noise in the output due to the complex processes involved in applying the HRTF to the source. In a real world scenario, the source sound will move smoothly between the two points, rather than jump between them. So, for a full three-dimensional system, HRTF measurements are needed for all locations. As this is not practical, a HRTF for ‘in between’ points is needed. This is a very complex task, with several difficulties inherent to the nature of HRTFs and the discipline of Digital Signal Processing (DSP).<sup>5</sup> Briefly, the complexities and fine degree of detail involved in the HRTFs make it a non trivial task to derive an accurate intermediate HRTF between measured points.

If the HRTF is considered in the frequency domain, it is possible to see how the ear treats individual frequencies that make up a source sound, with regard to magnitude boosts/attenuations and

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<sup>5</sup> B. Carty, ‘Artificial Simulation of Audio Spatialization: Developing a Binaural System’, *Maynooth Musicology*, 1 (2008), 271–96.

delay/phase shifts. It is reasonable to use a simple interpolation algorithm to derive how an intermediate HRTF will treat magnitudes of component frequencies of a source sound, by looking at how it treats magnitudes of nearest measured points, and interpolating/deriving a relative 'in between' value. However, this technique is not successful for phase information (which contains time delay details, so is important for ITD), as phase is a cyclical property.

Various solutions to this challenge, including system updates and novel algorithm development, have been recently presented by the author.<sup>6</sup> To summarize, the novel algorithms use the above mentioned magnitude interpolation and two novel approaches to phase interpolation. The first simply truncates phase values to the nearest known values. When a source is moving, a jump from one set of nearest phase values to another may cause an interruption in the audio output. This is dealt with using a user definable cross fade, fading out the old phase information and in the new. Thus any discontinuity in the output is perceptually removed. The second assumes the head is a sphere and uses geometry to calculate phase values. This method also looks more closely at the phase values in the available locations, in the low frequency range where phase delays/time differences are more important. This data is closely analysed and compared to the geometrically derived data. Inconsistencies are then corrected, leading to a psychoacoustically motivated solution, with accurate phase information, and thus accurate ITD in the important low frequency range.

## **5. Multi-channel binaural**

HRTF processing can place a source sound anywhere in a listener's environment, as above. A simple, yet high potential link between multi-channel and binaural systems can thus be drawn. Virtual multi-channel systems can be simulated by placing a HRTF source at each loudspeaker location for a specific multi-channel setup. Multi-channel binaural systems can thus spatialize a source sound at each loudspeaker point for any of the mentioned multi-channel setups, using the process outlined above, with interpolation if necessary. The source sound at each

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<sup>6</sup> V. Lazzarini and B. Carty, 'New Csound Opcodes for Binaural Processing', *Proc. 6th Linux Audio Conference*, Cologne, Germany, February 2008, 28–35.



location will be the sound at the respective loudspeaker for the multi-channel setup in question. For example, to virtualize a stereo system, process the left and right stereo output feeds to appear to be located at the corners of the equilateral triangle described above. So, take the left channel of a stereo output and place it 30 degrees to the left of a listener using HRTF processing. Then do the same with the right output, placing it at 30 degrees to the right of the listener. Sending these processed signals to the listener's headphones creates a virtual optimal stereo listening configuration. Therefore, if a source is panned left, the virtual left loudspeaker will get more amplitude, as the amplitude panning law dictates. Crucially, the listener is always in the 'sweet spot' if these loudspeakers are kept static. Equally, using dynamic HRTF processing, a user can move around within a virtual listening space. Therefore a listener may, for example, virtually move to the left of the sweet spot and observe how the spatial image is distorted. Similarly, the signals derived from ambisonic (or indeed any) panning algorithms can be sent to multiple 'virtual loudspeakers'. A binaural stereo system is shown in figure 3, below.

**Figure 3: Virtual stereo using multi-channel binaural techniques**



### **5.1 Source distance from listener**

Sound source distance from listener should be considered in a multi-channel binaural setup, as sound takes time to travel from source to listener. Also, the farther a sound travels to reach a listener, the more amplitude it loses. HRTFs are typically measured at fixed distances from a listener. Sources can therefore be delayed/attenuated to simulate distance.

### **5.2 Reverberation**

When a sound source exists in an enclosed space, environmental processing/reverberation is also critical. Typically, if sounds exist in a room, the room interacts with the source. Sound will be reflected off walls/objects. Binaural systems do not interact with the listening room, as they are ideally reproduced using headphones. Therefore, reverb can be added artificially, or the multi-channel signal can be reproduced directly. Adding reverberation is a much more complex scenario than simply processing direct sounds using HRTFs, as it introduces the necessity to consider lots of reflections.

Multi-channel signals may have artificial reverberation added to them with vastly varying degrees of spatial accuracy. Alternatively, multi-channel recordings may include the natural reverb of the recording location (for example sound field microphone ambisonic recordings), or may contain no reverb at all (for example a synthetically created sound), allowing the listening room interaction to constitute all the reverberation. In the move to headphones two approaches can be taken. The system can artificially recreate how a specified multi-channel system/source sound would react in a user defined room, with user defined characteristics. Alternatively, the system can just play the multi-channel source, in a theoretically anechoic room. In the first scenario, the reverb is added virtually as part of the multi-channel binaural process (various approaches can be taken). In the second, the reverb is assumed to be encoded into the multi-channel source (for example an ambisonic recording in a reverberant environment, or a purposefully anechoic reproduction). Note that using HRTF based reverb may provide more accurate spatial reverb resolution than a limited multi-channel system.

### 5.3 Artificial reverb

As discussed above, a multi-channel binaural system requires an artificial reverb module for more accurate source spatialization. Artificial reverb involves modelling how a specific environment will affect sound. In an enclosed environment, the direct sound will reach a listener, followed closely by reflections off walls and other obstacles. The nature of these obstacles will define how they affect the sound. For example, curtains will absorb more sound than painted plaster walls, therefore sound reflected from plaster walls will be louder. Also, different surfaces will affect different frequencies in a non linear fashion, for example a particular surface may absorb high frequencies very well, but not lower frequencies.

Reverberation in a room can be broken down into two significant parts. After the direct sound reaches a listener, a number of distinct early reflections promptly arrive. Early reflections help to inform the listener on the nature of the space, as well as the location of the source.

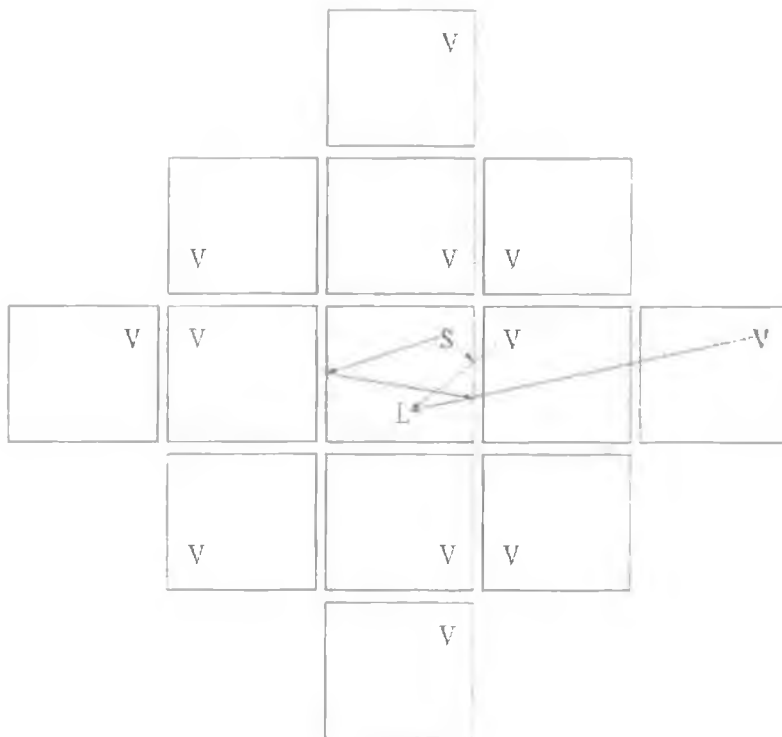
After the distinct early reflections, reflections begin to arrive at the listener from all locations, as the direct sound has had time to travel around the room in several trajectories. Sound is thus reflected off several walls before it reaches the listener, and is affected by each of these walls, as above. Thus this later reverb begins to fade out; as each reflection is reduced in amplitude as it travels further to reach the listener and is absorbed by several surfaces. As there are very many possible reflections reaching the listener at any one moment, the reverb swiftly becomes dense and no longer contains individual, localized reflections. This later reverb gives the listener further insight into the characteristics of the listening space and the distance of the source.

Several approaches can be taken to modelling reverberation artificially. Highly complex modelling is possible, but for a reliable result offering real time processing, the geometric image model can be effective.<sup>7</sup> This model works by assuming there are virtual sources in rooms adjacent to the listening room. Figure 4 illustrates this model.

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<sup>7</sup> J. Allen and D. Berkley, 'Image Model for Efficiently Simulating Small Room Acoustics', *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, 65/4 (1979), 943-50.

**Figure 4: The image model for artificial reverberation**



The source is at point S, the listener at L, and virtual/image sources at each V. The source and listener are in the actual listening room. Other rooms are virtual/image rooms, containing virtual sources. Each virtual source can then be dealt with individually, with respect to distance from listener, effect of reflective surfaces and location. For example, the source in the virtual room to the immediate right of the actual room is further from the listener than the direct source, so will take slightly longer to arrive. It also originates more to the listener's right than the direct source and will be spatially perceived accordingly. The actual trajectory of the source is shown by the trajectory line in the actual room, showing the source hitting the right hand wall. Therefore this source will be filtered/attenuated according to the characteristics of this wall. Each virtual source can be treated in this way: reflections are traced back to virtual sources. Trajectories get more complex as sound is reflected off two or more walls before it reaches the listener. This can

be seen in the next virtual room to the right of the listener, which will be further again from the listener, at a more severe angle, and be affected by both the left and right walls.

The image model is desirable as early reflections can be accurately modelled using the first group of virtual sources. If the source or listener is moving, interpolated HRTF algorithms can be used to provide smooth movement of both the direct source and the early reflections. Thus the spatial cues that early reflections give regarding source location and room characteristics can be maintained. The later reverberation can be similarly modelled. As the arrival of the reflections becomes diffuse, the location of specific reflections is no longer necessary, so a generalized function can be derived.

This suggested model for artificial reverberation thus constitutes a useful application of the developed HRTF processes. The direct sound and early reflections are modelled accurately and a binaural generalized later reverb is employed. Crucially, the listener and sources can move smoothly in this setup, which maintains spatially accurate dynamic early reflections. The split of early and later reverb greatly increases computational efficiency, allowing real time processing. By design, the image model simplifies the nature of reflections and the reverberation process. However, a natural, efficient environmental processing tool is possible using the technique.

#### **5.4 State of the art**

Multi-channel binaural systems have been implemented. Binaural Ambisonics are used in auralization software, typically commercial products which go to incredible lengths to accurately model a room. 5.1 for headphones has also been implemented, essentially constituting a virtual cinema in headphones (used, for example, on long distance flight film presentations). An interesting new approach would be to allow a user to choose the multi-channel system algorithms/amount of loudspeakers/room size etc. Typically, systems are setup for sweet spot listening.<sup>8</sup> It would be interesting to allow the user to move around within the loudspeaker system, i.e. out of the 'sweet spot', thus testing

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<sup>8</sup> M. Noisternig, T. Musil, A. Sontacchi, and R. Holdrich, '3D Binaural Sound Reproduction using a Virtual Ambisonic Approach', *IEEE Symposium on Virtual Environments*, Lugano, Switzerland, July 2003, 174-78.

the multi-channel system. In summary, the novel tool being suggested is a binaural *loudspeaker setup simulation*, as opposed to a room simulator/auralization tool.

### **5.5 System benefits**

With HRTF only processing, each source has to be processed separately. In a multi-channel binaural setup, the number of HRTF processes is always the same as the number of loudspeakers. Therefore a large number of sources can be represented using a fixed amount of HRTF processes. For example a film will have many layers of sound effects, dialog, atmospheric effects, music etc., each of which may be spatialized to a different location. In a multi-channel binaural scenario, the number of HRTF processes will at most be the same as the number of loudspeakers, irrespective of the number of sources.

The practicality of not having to set up loudspeaker displays is also clearly advantageous. Furthermore, the often complex algorithms used to derive loudspeaker signals can be incorporated in the software, allowing immediate results.

Output can also be reproduced in a virtual anechoic room, a specialized and expensive facility to procure. WFS, for example, is designed for reproduction in an anechoic room.

### **5.6 Limitations**

HRTFs are individual specific (everyone's ears are different), although generic sets perform quite well.<sup>9</sup> Headphone monitoring is not always desirable; head tracking is needed for a more virtual reality based approach. The proposed tool also suffers from the limitations of the multi-channel system itself. For example, stereo will only allow frontal images. However, this is also an advantage from a system analysis point of view.

## **6. Conclusions and applications**

Spatial audio has been introduced and discussed from psychoacoustical, multi-channel and binaural points of view. The possibilities of a flexible multi-channel binaural system have been considered. Such a system has

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<sup>9</sup> E. M. Wenzel, M. Arruda, D. J. Kistler and F. L. Wightman, 'Localization using Non-individualized Head Related Transfer Functions', *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, 94/1 (1993), 111–23.

many applications, some of which follow. A composer can audition a new multi-channel output using only headphones, providing a very practical solution to an otherwise difficult and perhaps daunting task. Films can be mixed in a 'virtual cinema'. Loudspeaker setups in specific rooms can be tested (with accuracy proportional to the complexity of algorithms employed). Of particular interest, multi-channel algorithms can be tested, allowing users to walk out of the sweet spot, for example. Collaboration with research into sound source localization (finding out where a sound lies in space) could allow the up-mix of binaural signals to any multi-channel format. Significant development of the room model and a collaboration with instrument modelling research could even allow antiquated instruments to be heard in models of historic auditoria (although this moves away from the loudspeaker approach).

## **Acknowledgements**

This work is supported by the Irish Research Council for Science, Engineering and Technology: funded by the National Development Plan and NUI Maynooth.

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