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Hegel on Music

Richard Eldridge

1

At first glance, Hegel says some striking but apparently inconsistent things about music. He appears, first, to defend musical formalism: the view, urged by theorists from Eduard Hanslick to Peter Kivy, that pure instrumental music is an acoustic arrangement that signifies nothing. In music as an art, Hegel notes, "sound, just as sound, is treated as an end in itself; . . . its own form, artistic note-formation, can become its essential end" (A 2:899).¹ He goes on to indicate in particular that successful art music need not be based on any verbal text.

Music has the maximum possibility of freeing itself from any actual text as well as from the expression of any specific subject-matter, with a view to finding satisfaction solely in a self-enclosed series of the conjunctions, changes, oppositions, and modulations falling within the purely musical sphere of sounds. (A 2:901–2)

Yet, second, Hegel also remarks that music that is simply self-enclosed development "remains empty and meaningless" (A 2:902). In order to defeat this threat of meaninglessness, music must acquire "spiritual content and expression" (A 2:902). If it fails to acquire this content, then it fails to be "a genuine art" (A 2:902). These remarks suggest that Hegel is committed to the view that successful art music must somehow be about something—a position held by Aristotle and defended in contemporary music theory by Kendall Walton, Jerrold Levinson, Edward T. Cone, and Fred Everett Maus.

About the now so-called Classical Style music of his own time, Hegel remarks first that by retreating from definite content it has "lost its power over the whole inner life" and become something "for connoisseurs only" (A 2:899). Yet he also notes that "nowadays . . . miracles [in conception and in virtuosity] have occurred in music" (A 2:936), and he claims that

"music carries [the] liberation [of the soul] to the most extreme heights" (A 2:896).

These *prima facie* contradictions (formalism vs. antiformalism; contemporary music as decadently empty vs. contemporary music as miraculously ensouled) are further set by Hegel within a historical framework that present-day thought about the arts finds peculiar and opaque. Music, according to Hegel, is "the second romantic art" (A 2:889) between painting and poetry, where historical epochs are distinguished from one another by the significative salience of a particular medium of art: architecture for the symbolic phase of art; sculpture for the classical phase of art; and successively painting, music, and poetry for art's romantic—that is, modern or post-Roman—phase. What sense can we make of this? Surely works in various media existed at many historical times. The Greeks, Romans, and medieval Europeans all had music, as did other civilizations. And why should poetry be thought to be more significant than music now?

In fact, however, Hegel's views about music are neither contradictory nor historically foolish. Instead his remarks on music provide a way to embrace the genuine insights present in the opposed camps (formalism vs. antiformalism; Classical Style as a matter of empty connoisseurship vs. Classical Style as normatively authoritative) without the exaggerations and confusions that often accompany the simple taking of sides in these debates. The key to seeing how his remarks afford balanced insights lies in unpacking his thought that a successful composer of art music must give attention to both structure and "content (true a rather vague one)" (A 2:954). The essentially vague content in question turns out to involve standing, felt aspirations for a meaningful, unified life plus a sense of present circumstances as simultaneously inhibiting those aspirations. This content of felt aspirations and a complex sense of circumstances can inherently be embodied, according to Hegel, in certain kinds of structures of developing sound, with certain open-ended degrees of latitude. In order, however, to make clear both the nature of the human content of music and how that content inherently permits embodiment in purely musical structures, it will be helpful first to survey briefly more standard, more scrutable, and yet ultimately one-sided philosophical views about music and meaning.

2

In his *On the Musically Beautiful* (1854), the Czech music critic Eduard Hanslick distinguishes sharply between purely musical ideas and their

development in musical form, on the one hand, and conceptions that are expressible in language, on the other.

A musical idea brought into complete manifestation in appearance is already a self-subsistent beauty; it is an end in itself, and it is in no way primarily a medium for the representation of feelings or conceptions. The content of music is tonally moving forms.²

Hanslick goes on to compare the self-contained, nonrepresentational character of beautiful forms with visual arabesques that please the eye but represent nothing, adding that musical arabesques, since they develop temporally, are living rather than “dead and static.”³ We may use what Hanslick calls “epithets” to describe music and so characterize musical motives as “arrogant, peevish, tender, spirited, yearning.”⁴ But we must “never lose sight of the fact that we are using [these terms] only figuratively and take care *not* to say such things as ‘This music *portrays* arrogance.’”⁵ Music—at least beautiful art music—has nothing to do with any content that is either borrowed from the rest of life or capable of embodiment in other media.

The beauty of a musical composition . . . is a specifically musical kind of beauty. By this we understand a beauty that is self-contained and in no need of content from outside itself, that consists simply and solely of tones and their artistic combination. Relationships, fraught with significance, of sounds which are in themselves charming—their congruity and opposition, their separating and combining, their soaring and subsiding—this is what comes in spontaneous forms before our inner contemplation and pleases us as beautiful.⁶

Hanslick’s formalism has been widely embraced in modernity, where there has been special importance placed on distinguishing different spheres of experience from one another. It seems important to many, at least when musical works are strikingly successful, not to confuse what seems to be distinctly musical experience with, say, sculptural experience or political experience or religious experience. In *The Power of Sound* (1880) Edmund Gurney writes that “the explanation of the essential effect” of musical art “must be sought . . . in the independently impressive aspect of Music.”⁷ “The ground for the essential effects of the [musical] art must be sought . . . in the facts of mere note-after-note melodic motion.”⁸ Though music is sometimes emotionally expressive and sometimes calls up scenes by association, these things are not what is important about it as an independent form of art; rather, its impressiveness is. When we

look for expressiveness and representation, we frequently find nothing, and we invariably miss what is of central and distinctive value: note-after-note melodic (and harmonic and rhythmic) motion.

Given the putative distinctiveness of musical experience, it would then be a category mistake to attempt to "read in" to that experience meanings and values that are properly realized in other domains. Such readings-in would bespeak ignorance of musical experience rather than insight into it. Following Hanslick and Gurney, Peter Kivy argues that though it is possible "to make a claim about what some piece of absolute music is 'saying' . . . making [that claim] good" is impossible.⁹ We should, Kivy urges, accept the thought that "the blessing of absolute music [is] that it frees our thought to wander in worlds that are completely self-sufficient," where we are concerned only with musical processes and structures, and with musical tensions and resolutions, altogether liberated from any thought about life otherwise.¹⁰ "The genius of absolute music is to make you think of aught but itself and, in so doing, of its (and your) liberation from the world."¹¹ Stephen Davies defends a similar view, with perhaps less metaphysical pathos, as he remarks that we are often just "curious" about things and "capable of finding enjoyment in attempting to comprehend . . . works in their particularity."¹² Our involvement with music, Davies urges, arises out of nothing other than "love of the activity" that is engaged in "for fun."¹³

Such formalist views have considerable plausibility. Attempts to find plots or messages in works of pure instrumental music are often contrived. Musical structures and processes of development are frequently foci of attention apparently "for their own sake." Absorption in such structures and processes can indeed be "transcendently" self-sustaining.

At the same time, however, it can seem dismissive of the significance of pure instrumental music to regard it only as a pure acoustic structure for formal attention. Does music not in fact both arise from and contribute to human life more generally? It seems natural to regard composers as undertaking to "say" something about human life, albeit abstractly and symbolically. Purely musical processes seem to many listeners to echo and allude to processes of action. As Paul Shorey remarks, Plato and Aristotle regarded "music [as] the most imitative of the arts" in virtue of its "communication of a mood or feeling" whose pattern it shares.¹⁴ Even Gurney, who locates the essential power of music in melody alone, concedes that "the *general* bearing of speech on melody" is responsible for "the vivid effect, which a fine melody produces, of being *something said*—a real *utterance* of transcendent significance."¹⁵

The music theorist Edward T. Cone suggests that the performance of music involves taking up a role or persona that functions as a source of

utterance. Performers of musical works, that is, do something that is like acting from a verbal script; they play a role. "All music, like all literature, is dramatic; . . . every composition is an utterance depending on an act of impersonation which it is the duty of the performer or performers to make clear."¹⁶ Even in text-based music, Cone argues, musical personae "express themselves at least as much by melody as by speech, and as much by tone-color as by phonetic sound": the music itself, that is to say, speaks.¹⁷ True, purely instrumental music "has no content that can be paraphrased in other music, or in words, or in any other medium; and its elements—notes, chords, motifs—normally have no referents";¹⁸ but verbal language too "has a gestural as well as a strictly semantic aspect," and "especially in dramatic poetry . . . words . . . can be used to produce almost purely gestural effects that depend less on the specific meanings of the words than on the mode of performance . . . they imply."¹⁹ The meaning of music is bound up with this gestural dimension of communicative utterance.

Kendall Walton similarly suggests that musical expressiveness can be regarded as a species of representation. "To be expressive is to bear a significant relation to human emotions or feelings or whatever it is that is expressed. Why doesn't this itself amount to possessing extra-musical 'meanings,' and why shouldn't expressiveness count as a species of representation?"²⁰ According to Walton, purely instrumental music prescribes imaginings: we *are to* hear in it imaginatively certain courses of emotional development, in something like the way in which even abstract paintings frequently prescribe that we see one figure behind another.²¹ Like Cone, Walton suggests that these courses of development are frequently to be ascribed to an implied persona set up by the compositional action of the actual composer, just as a lyric poet sets up an implied speaker functioning as a locus of certain thoughts and feelings, as itself a role into which its readers are to enter.

Peter Kivy objects against this suggestion that Walton has conflated two quite distinct concepts of imagining: Kantian productive or constructive imagination, through which we come to notice anything at all; and fictional imagination, in which we take ourselves to follow a story about nonexistent characters.²² While it is true, Kivy concedes, that we must imaginatively attend to the piece of music before us, it by no means follows that in doing so we are taking the music to be *about* any characters or actions. While this seems clearly right, Walton, too, notes that works of music do *not* present us with (images of or claims about) definite objects, persons, or actions that we can identify elsewhere, apart from the music. In this sense, there is, in Walton's terminology, no "work world" presented by a piece of purely instrumental music.²³ But this fact does not stop the musical work from offering us auditory experiences that we "use . . . as

props" for imagining courses of emotional life, and when we thus imaginatively use props—as the work prescribes—then the work is functioning communicatively: it "says" something to us or "represents" to us what certain courses of emotional development are like by inducing us imaginatively to undergo them.²⁴

Jerrold Levinson defends a similar view, and he adds an account of *why* we play such games of dramatic musical imagination. Musical structure alone can be worth our attention as an object of pure enjoyment, just as Davies argues.²⁵ That is one of its benefits. But musical structure as a prop for imagining also offers the further rewards of participating in emotional resolution (feeling emotions to have courses of temporal development, like the development of plot in Aristotelian terms from beginning to middle to end), of cultivating expressive potency, and of communing emotionally with another mind.²⁶ Quite other than mere escape from the world, experiencing music imaginatively functions as the catharsis—the clarification and the cleansing—of the emotional lives we may share with other human beings.

Taking the opening of Beethoven's String Quartet op. 95 as his example, Fred Everett Maus argues not only that it is natural to hear in it "a succession of dramatic actions," but further that we cannot even develop and apply the technical terminology of formal musical analysis (cadences, suspensions, dissonance, resolution, and so on, as manifested in certain harmonic relations and successions) without relying on hearing the drama in the music.²⁷ Structural description presupposes dramatic description in order to identify the lexical units of formal analysis and the relations of sequiturity among them within a work. "A satisfactory account of structure must already be an aesthetically oriented narrative of dramatic action."²⁸ We hear the musical drama before we attend to the formal structure in itself.

A second strategy for characterizing the content of purely instrumental music focuses less immediately on the workings of the imagination of the individual auditor and more on the social uses of works of music. Broadly speaking, those who have developed this strategy are all interested in works of music as instruments of signification. Here the choice of the term "signification" is deliberate. Rather than specifying a definite, paraphrasable, single thought that a musical work encodes, these theorists instead look at how the production of certain kinds of musical works both proceeds from and refigures norms for the development of subjectivity that are already in circulation in their cultures. In thus turning their attention on the social uses of music in encouraging and inhibiting certain courses of identity development within the framework of the reproduction of social life, these theorists are turning the techniques of ethno-

musicology, originally developed to study music in non-Western cultures, on Western art music.

Rose Rosengard Subotnik has contributed to this line of thinking by developing a distinction between structural (formal) listening and style (sound-surface) listening.²⁹ Structural listening, she argues, is foreign to most music in most cultural settings.³⁰ "Only some music strives for autonomy. All music has sound and a style. Only some people listen structurally. Everyone has cultural and emotional responses to music."³¹ Like Maus, Subotnik argues that formal analysis presupposes stylistic listening. "Style is not extrinsic to structure but rather defines the conditions for actual structural possibilities; . . . structure is perceived as a function of style more than as its foundation."³² Building on work by Leonard Meyer,³³ Subotnik argues that when people *do* learn to listen structurally to absolute music, they are entering into a course of development aimed at the cultivation of self-conscious, distinctive, putatively autonomous individuality—the kind of being-in-the-world that has been cultivated in the West, but not so clearly elsewhere, since the Renaissance.³⁴ Structural listening requires "in its pure state . . . the renunciation of premises, organizational principles, purposes, meanings, values, and meanings derived from outside of a musical structure" for the sake of focusing instead on structure alone as an object of purely contemplative attention.³⁵ This requirement is part of post-Renaissance Western art music's social meaning, a social meaning that is bound up with the project of Western individualism.

Susan McClary develops a similar reading of the social functions of post-Renaissance Western art music, focusing specifically, however, on its roles in furthering certain conceptions of gendered identity.³⁶ For example, Monteverdi's invention of the *stile rappresentativo* in inaugurating modern dramatic opera in the seventeenth century rested on his development of distinct styles of musical expression for female and male characters. The dramatic action of an opera requires women and men doing things. The musical task of the composer in setting the action requires writing music that comments on and deepens the characterological representation of the women and men presented. So what did Monteverdi do? He wrote music for men that is lyrical, transcendent, dominated by well-organized stepwise melodic motion and clear I-V-I harmonic development with strong final cadences. He wrote music for women that is much more chromatic: there are more passing tones, more suspensions, less sense of a governing key center, and weaker cadences, so that the music is almost antiteleological. Why did Monteverdi do this? Because he was both drawing on and reinforcing a sense already circulating in his culture of how men and women respectively mostly do and mostly should think and feel and act. Men control their passions, and they set and achieve goals;

women are emotional, seductive, and unstable.³⁷ McClary also notes and criticizes the standard use in the formal analysis of purely instrumental music of the terminologies of masculine and feminine themes and masculine and feminine cadences. Masculine themes and cadences have a strongly marked direction of motion; feminine themes and cadences in contrast are more wandering. The broad point is clear: the composition, performance, and consumption of so-called absolute music—putatively a set of structures designed for the absorption of any reflective intelligence—are cultural practices bound up with the rest of culture, where rights, powers, and roles of all kinds are constructed and contested. In its cultural settings music does significant work.

Lawrence Kramer has offered what he calls three radical presuppositions for studying music that generalize the strategies of Subotnik and McClary.

1. "Music participates actively in the construction of subjectivity."³⁸ That is, composing, performing, and listening to music are activities through which specific senses of a self and its interests are developed.

2. "We hear music only as situated subjects and hear *as* music only that acoustic imagery which somehow 'expresses' part of our situatedness, our ensemble of ways to be."³⁹ That is, what makes a piece of music intelligible as music is *not* a function of form alone for all subjects. Instead, different subjects respond to and take an interest in different forms, and which forms they respond to (and which they don't) is in part a function of what they *in particular* care about and do within specific cultural settings. (Music can also teach us some new things to care about and do.)

3. The processes of subject formation that include processes and practices of music construction and of music performing and listening always further some ideologies and undermine others.⁴⁰ That is, no conception of what it is worthwhile for subjects to do and to care about effectively articulates everyone's interest. All conceptions of interest are contested, and all are effective for some, but not for others. Specific ways of composing, performing, and listening to music are always caught up in a contestatory play of conflicting interests.

3

What ought we to make of these opposed formalist and antiformalist stances in the philosophy of music? It does seem important to emphasize that we typically listen to music with engaged imaginative attention, not through ambient perception alone, and it seems plausible to suppose that

composing, performing, and listening to music are practices through which subjective identities—certain routes of interest and feeling—are developed, always within a particular culture as an ensemble of practices. The interest of works of purely instrumental music as objects of imaginative attention and as signifiers within cultural practices seems readily to transcend simple escape, enjoyment, and fun (however much these are present). At the same time, however, “readings” of emotional and depictive plots of works of instrumental music can seem contrived. Are we really prescribed to imagine pink elephants dancing or even to “swell with” the music as our own emotional expression? Why not just listen?

What is in fact needed in order to mediate the formalist and anti-formalist stances is a deeper and more complete theory of subjectivity, its cultural situation, and its prospects. Such a deeper and more complete theory must focus in detail on how purely musical content (tonally moving forms) *can* be used to articulate and address subjectivity’s situation and interests, and do so in ways that are both parallel to and yet specifically different from other forms of articulation and address. This deeper and more complete theory of subjectivity in relation to music is exactly what Hegel provides in the section on music in his *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*. In order, however, to see exactly how the *Aesthetics* in general and the section on music in particular develop Hegel’s theory of subjectivity in relation to musical practice, it will be helpful first to rehearse briefly the main lines of Hegel’s theory of subjectivity in his theoretical philosophy.

In an important summary passage in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel observes that when we stop thinking about ourselves as essentially bearers of representational awareness but instead also think of ourselves as agents, then we think of ourselves as in a situation in which our “certainty is to itself its own object [*Gegenstand*].”⁴¹ That is to say, as emerging agents coming to take up various practical repertoires afforded within a cultural situation, we have an initial inchoate sense—a subjective certainty—of being this or that: the child of one’s parents, the class clown, the possessor of a musical ear, a middling runner, and so on. This initially diffuse subjective certainty is an object of our awareness. It is something to be tested and worked through, as one develops one’s ear, enters into new ways of being with one’s parents, gives up running, or begins to take schoolwork more seriously. We are capable of reflecting on the different skills and ways of being that we take ourselves to possess. Hence we can say that there is across the different things we do a “unity of self-consciousness with itself.”⁴² Yet this unity is initially only implicit, in the sense that how and why we turn to doing now this and now that remains opaque to us and determined by circumstantial contingencies rather than by reasons. If things go well as we grow up (both individually and historico-culturally),

then "self-consciousness exhibits itself as the movement in which this antithesis [between its turning to now this, now that and its being articulately and rationally self-identical throughout its different activities] is removed, and the identity of itself with itself becomes explicit [*wird*: comes about, becomes, or is made manifest]."⁴³ In Maurice Merleau-Ponty's useful rephrasing of Hegel's thought:

All of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* describes man's effort to reappropriate himself. At every period of history he starts from a subjective certainty, makes his actions conform to the directions of that certainty, and witnesses the surprising consequences of his first intention, discovering its objective truth. He then modifies his project, gets under way once more, again becomes aware of the abstract [i.e., merely conceived; unrealized] qualities of his new project, until subjective certainty finally yields objective truth [i.e., comes to fulfillment] and in the light of consciousness he becomes fully what he already obscurely was.⁴⁴

The ideal but actualizable and even self-actualizing end of this process of growing up, according to Hegel, is free human life, construed as the reasonable expression of both one's particular talents and one's shared human, rational-reflective nature, within a cultural setting of mutual recognition and endorsement. We come to both agentive and representational subjecthood from within a specific culturally afforded ensemble of practices. We then develop a point of view both on these practices and on ourselves as capable of this and that in relation to practices. We linger in some practices as we catch on to how things are done and practice *at* them, while we withdraw from other practices in frustration and disappointment. Historically, practices are themselves modified through this play of engagements and withdrawals, until, Hegel argues, a culture of freedom is reached, in which each person can live both freely and reasonably, in ways whose worth is evident to all. In the formulation of the *Philosophy of Right*:

Freedom lies neither in indeterminacy [withdrawal from all repertoires, techniques, and immersions in content] nor in determinacy [simply given contingently, without reflection and reflective endorsement], but is both at once. . . . Freedom is to will something determinate, yet to be with oneself [*bei sich*] in this determinacy and to return once more to the universal.⁴⁵

One might well wonder whether Hegel's argument for the claim that all possessors of an apperceptively unified, judgmental consciousness

must be committed to pursuing a free life so construed is sound.⁴⁶ One might also wonder whether Hegel's claim that this project can in fact be completed by everyone in and through the formation of a culture of rational freedom that is on the verge of appearance is well founded. "Human beings," as Robert Pippin puts it, "may simply *be* the unhappy consciousness; Hegel may be right about their 'self-diremption' but wrong about its possible resolution."⁴⁷ They may be capable of reflection on their subjective certainties and committed therein to the project of expressive-rational freedom in shared cultural life, but be unable to complete that project.

Yet, astonishingly perhaps, these difficulties (if they are difficulties) in Hegel's systematic theoretical philosophy raise few problems for his philosophy of fine art, especially his philosophy of romantic art. His treatment of music as a central romantic art in particular is faithful to, even emphasizes, the thought that rational-expressive freedom in and through cultural life remains an ideal that is neither empty for us nor yet quite perfectly actualizable, at least insofar as there is compelling art. Musical development, then, *abstractly* models our continuing efforts to achieve expressive-rational freedom and unity with ourselves across our various social roles. That this modeling is abstract, rather than sociohistorically and semantically concrete, indicates that this ideal is not, or not yet, wholly actualized throughout personal and social life. Musical development of a certain kind is an anticipation of freedom, not its concrete sociohistorical achievement. Our participation as auditors in the process of musical development directly indicates our involvement in the actualization of this ideal, insofar as musical hearing requires us to be aware of ourselves as actively listening to sustained musical development over time. In listening to music, we exercise and develop the same power of reflective self-awareness aiming at satisfying closure on which our commitment to expressive-rational freedom depends. In order to see how this happens, we can now take up the details of Hegel's remarks on music.

4

Together with painting and poetry, music is, according to Hegel, one of the romantic arts or "the arts whose mission it is to give shape to the inner side of personal life" (A 2:625). In contrast to the symbolic arts, exemplified by architecture, and the classical arts, exemplified by sculpture, the romantic arts do not undertake centrally to present something external for its own sake as a "free individuality" (A 2:888), but involve instead "spirit's inner self-apprehension and its preoccupation with the sphere of

its own circumstances, aims, and actions" (A 2:889). This turn away from external free individuality is manifested even in depictive painting, for the objects presented in a painting are presented from a point of view and for an actively observing intelligence that must take up a particular point of view, both narrational and perspectival, in order to grasp the painting, unlike a sculpture of a recognizable object that may typically imply no narrative and be seen from many spatial points of view.

Music goes beyond painting, however, in refusing all depiction of definite objects. Unlike painting, which continues to depict (albeit by presenting three dimensions indirectly in two), music "keeps firmly to the inner life without giving it any outward shape or figure" (A 2:795). It is, as formalists urge, in this sense depictively about nothing, nonrepresentational. Yet music's reduction of externality to temporality alone has a significant purpose. Music "takes the subjective as such for both form and content" (A 2:889). It is about what it is like to apprehend and have experiences as a subject in general, with a subject's general reflectiveness and associated aim. It is, as antiformalists urge, in this sense significant.

Sounds succeeding one another in time are the appropriate medium for inviting reflection on point-of-view-having and aim-pursuing in general. Sounds "cannot . . . portray [objects] as they actually exist" (A 2:891). Thus they are suited to sustain both point-of-view-having in general and reflection on it, without being tied to the presentation of any specific object. Even beyond the abandoning of all spatiality (the abandonment of the painterly surface, beyond painting's own abandonment of three-dimensional form), music further involves a "double negation" (A 2:890) of externality: (1) we listen "to the results of the inner vibration" (A 2:890), focusing our attention on the quality and development of the sound, not on the violin or horn as physical objects; and (2) sound itself either decays once produced or it is sustained only through further effort and up to a limit set by breath or length of bow. (This latter point and how music typically has exploited it explains why we tend to hear exclusively electronically generated music, where these physical limits do not exist, more as soundscape than as genuinely felt melody, even not quite as music at all.) Material media are used in the romantic arts not simply as objects of sensory apprehension, but markedly as vehicles of constructive power of arrangement speaking to constructive power of apprehension. Post-medieval music makes use of equal temperament "nonnatural" tuning, initially developed by Vincenzo Galilei in Florence in the 1580s, precisely in order to extend the possibilities of temporally sustained constructive arrangement, thus breaking from the medieval musical practice of the monodic replication of what had been thought to be the music of the celestial spheres.⁴⁸ In postmedieval music, emphasis on the constructive

power exercised in ordering the material and in hearing its order is carried to its greatest height, as it exploits inherently "ideal" and "vanishing" sonic material in time.

There is, then, in purely instrumental music no depiction of external objects and events.

Music does not possess a natural sphere outside its existing forms, with which it is compelled to comply. The range of its compliance with law and the necessity of its forms fall principally in the sphere of the notes themselves, which do not enter into so close a connection with the specific character of the content placed in them, and in their use mostly leave a wide scope for the subjective freedom of the execution. (A 2:898)

Though there are certain associations that are called up by certain sounds (hunting by horn calls; the pastoral by woodwinds), even these associations are matters of history and convention, and a work of music is successful as art not simply insofar as it evokes such associations, but rather insofar as it achieves—as a result of "the subjective freedom of the execution" (the composer's constructive power)—"necessity . . . in the sphere of the notes themselves." In order to succeed distinctively as music, music "must free itself from any given text" (A 2:952). (Aptly, Hegel notes that in opera and song "the text is the servant of the music" [A 2:935] and that great scripted drama and poetry often do not make for great opera and song.) In pursuing musical necessity, "sound, just as sound, is treated as an end in itself," and "artistic note-formation [is] its essential end" (A 2:899). "The real region [of the musician's] compositions remains a rather formal inwardness, pure sound; and his immersion in the topic becomes not the formation of something external but rather a retreat into the inner life's own freedom, a self-enjoyment" (A 2:895).

This retreat into inner freedom and self-enjoyment that purely instrumental music is to accomplish is not, however, for the sake of either pure auditory delectation or immediate sense-based pleasure only. Ideas, particularly the idea of completely accomplished individuality in its achievement of expressive-rational freedom, are to enter into the composition not discursively, but in and through the arrangement of sound alone. "The difficult task assigned in music is to make [the] inwardly veiled life and energy [of the subject] echo on its own account in notes . . . and to immerse ideas into this element of sound, in order to produce them anew for feeling and sympathy" (A 2:902). Arrangements of notes can depart from the effort to embody the inner life of the expressive-rational subject and so become merely decorative (the more ordinary movements of Vivaldi? Pachelbel's Canon in C?). Music "may easily become something

utterly devoid of thought and feeling" (A 2:954). Freedom from any fixed content—either external or conceptually articulated—"will therefore always more or less carry on into caprice" (A 2:955), at least in comparison with the definiteness of presentation in painting and in most poetry. The composing of purely instrumental music carries with it an inherent risk of collapsing into an activity of thoughtless fancy yielding an arbitrary or merely decorative product. As Carl Dahlhaus notes, "Hegel's philosophy of music is stamped, in every phase of its development, with his apprehension that emancipating music [from text and from representation], and emancipating a soul that returns into itself in 'pure sounding,' will lead off into sterility."⁴⁹ As Dahlhaus further sees, one way, according to Hegel, for music to embody ideas is to make use of a text: dramatic libretto in opera or lyric poetry as a *point de départ* for song. "From the start the libretto gives us distinct ideas and tears our minds away from that more dreamlike element of feeling which is without ideas" (A 2:937), and so helps to overcome a tendency of music toward caprice and mere sonic decoration.

But while the risk of caprice is inherent in composing absolute music, the *outcome* of caprice is not. Absolute music can embody content abstractly, without text, and it must do so if it is to be successful as significant art. Hegel notes that even music as accompaniment

must not sink to such servitude [of the text] that . . . it forgets the free flow of its own movements and thereby, instead of creating a self-complete work of art, produces merely the intellectual trick of using musical means of expression for the truest possible indication of a subject-matter outside them and already cut and dried without them. Every perceptible compulsion, every cramping of free production, breaks up the impression [to be made by music]. (A 2:937)

Instead, the composer can and must produce a strictly musical development, either in setting a text or in producing music alone. Only in this way can ideas—and in particular the idea of being a subject capable of expressive individuality—be immersed in sound for "feeling and sympathy" directed at the developing sound itself.

Music then, according to Hegel, "claims as *its own* the depths of a person's inner life as such" (A 2:891, emphasis added). How does it manage to do this? First, the sounds that compose a musical work exist only as an ideal phenomenon, that is, as something essentially realized in experience. Hegel captures this point by noting, again, that we hear the bounded vibrational results of the use of the violin or horn rather than attending to the violin or horn as physical objects. Second, and more crucially,

music as composed, developing sound exists inherently in recollection, as we follow the succession of the notes and their connection with one another. Roger Scruton makes this point by noting that works of music are tertiary objects, composed not simply of sounds (as either physically measurable pitches or pure momentary qualia) but also of tones, heard as leading to one another. It requires memory and attention to hold developing motives, themes, and harmonic and rhythmic patterns in mind as patterns, not all of whose elements are present at any single moment. The pattern that is the music must be followed from within recollection. As Scruton puts it,

We might say that a work of music is a *tertiary* object, as are the tones that compose it. Only a being with certain intellectual and imaginative capacities can hear music, and these are precisely the capacities required for the perception of tertiary qualities.⁵⁰

Hegel captures this point in his terminology by noting that a work of music “is a communication which . . . is carried by the inner subjective life, and is to exist for that life alone” (A 2:891–92). Only a being capable of recognitive recollection can follow and apprehend the work, which itself exists essentially in being apprehended.

The composer, according to Hegel, produces a temporal arrangement of tones through which marked differences (changes of pitch, of motive, of theme, of harmony, of rhythm) are both encountered and overcome: housed within an overall intelligible, recollectable ensemble or pattern. In this way composers explicitly test and develop their powers to encounter and organize difference, therein establishing that they themselves are coherent subjectivities across time who have survived and flourished through an encounter with difference. In the single most important passage of his remarks on music, Hegel writes:

Recollection [*Erinnerung*] of the theme adopted is at the same time the artist’s inner collection [*Er-innerung*] of *himself*, i.e., an inner conviction that *he* is the artist and can expatiate in the theme at will and move hither and thither in it. (A 2:897)

Through this recollection of a developing pattern, expressive unity of the self with itself is tested and developed—abstractly—across time, in and through the occurrence of different experiences (markedly new pitches, motives, themes, rhythms, harmonies) that are nonetheless experienced as forming a unified whole (established by overall harmonic development and rhythmic and instrumental consistency). The self in general has the

possibility and task of “maintaining itself in its other as the self and only the self as such. The self is in time, and time is the being of the subject himself” (A 2:908). Initially its self-identity is “wholly abstract and empty and it consists in making *itself* its object” (A 2:907), that is, in having an accomplished, difference-embracing unity with itself as its task. An empty succession of unrelated “mere nows” must be organized so that I can recognize my life in relation to my experiences *as mine*. The identity of the self with itself must, in the terminology of the *Phenomenology*, come about or be made explicit. By organizing divergent materials into a unified pattern essentially displayed in a subject’s apprehension, music overcomes the incoherence and fragmentation of the self and achieves—within its sphere of tones—expressive freedom and unity with oneself. It “carries this liberation [from abstract, empty subjectivity and mere unintelligible temporal succession and into the experience of meaningful, differentiated totality and selfhood] to the most extreme heights” (A 2:896).

The self . . . only becomes a self by concentrating its momentary experiences and returning into itself from them. . . . The self is what persists in and by itself, and its self-concentration interrupts the indefinite series of points of time and makes gaps in their abstract continuity; and in its awareness of its discrete experiences, the self recalls itself and finds itself again and thus is freed from mere self-externalization and change. (A 2:914)

This achievement of the self is brought about initially through the composer’s act of construction, but is likewise carried out in and through the listener’s attentive following of the musical development. (Composers are, after all, the first auditors—often in imagination alone—of their own work as they monitor the course of the musical development that they are attempting to achieve, thus checking on “how it is going.”) As Julian Johnson puts Hegel’s point, the self, whether composer or listener, “experiences the temporal progression *as its own*.”⁵¹ In R. K. Elliott’s phrasing, we experience the music from within “as if it were our own expression.”⁵² There is neither definite representation here nor, frequently, is there definite expression of emotion, but there is significance for the subject—the accomplishment and reinforcement of its life as a subject—in this participation. Despite his *prima facie* pure formalism, Gurney captures this point well.

The deep satisfaction felt in winning our way from note to note, or phrase to phrase, continually gives us a sense of inward triumph [even] in music whose general expression, so far as it is describable, would not

be called triumphant. . . . In poor music, note after note and phrase after phrase seem to present themselves trivially and pointlessly; but in music we enjoy, as we progressively grasp the form, the sense of absolute possession, of oneness with it, the cogent and unalterable rightness of every step in our progress, may produce the most vivid impression of triumphal advance.⁵³

As already indicated, the key to the liberative establishment through attentive listening of the unity of the self with itself is musical *development*: the coherent, recollectable integration of various musical elements with one another across time. In describing the achievement of unity of musical pattern across differences, Hegel offers a short account of what A. B. Marx was later to baptize and codify as sonata form.

In a musical composition a topic can be unfolded in its more specific relations, oppositions, conflicts, transitions, complications, and resolutions owing to the way in which a theme is first developed and then another enters [exposition: first theme, second theme], and now both of them in their alternation or their interfusion advance and change [development], one becoming subordinate here and then more prominent again there, now seeming defeated and then entering again victorious. (A 2:897)

Dahlhaus notes that Hegel explicitly condemned Carl Maria von Weber's mosaic technique of presenting persons on stage via unintegrated "characteristic" musical motives, without thematic interweaving and development, as in von Weber's *Der Freischütz*, whose Berlin premier Hegel attended in June 1821.⁵⁴ In his *Freischütz* critique, Hegel shares with Humboldt and Goethe a normative classicism or preference for the integrative formal techniques of the Classical Style.⁵⁵

Thematic contrast and development is, however, not the only device for achieving unity of musical pattern across variation. Hegel's most general term for the overall structure of successful music is "cadenced interjection" (*kadenzierte Interjektion*). "Music is itself art only by being a cadenced interjection" (A 2:903). Here "interjection" implies something between a mere immediate cry and the putting forward of a conceptually formed judgment for contemplation. It is something more formed than "a natural shriek of feeling" and something less formed and more specific to its material medium than a thought that can be assessed as true or false. "Interjection" implies the insertion into a structure of a compositional unit—a new theme or motif (melodic, rhythmic, or harmonic)—as a marked new focus of attention. "Cadenced" then implies that interjections

must lead toward some culmination, toward a resolution of the material that has been interjectively introduced. Closure or consummation, rather than simple cessation, must be achieved.

The unavoidable means, according to Hegel, for establishing musical unity over significant stretches of short-term attention is rhythm. Introduction of a bar or measure functions "to establish a specific temporal unit as the measure and rule for the marked contemplation of the previously undifferentiated temporal succession" (A 2:915). Without bars, that is, musical events cannot be readily marked for hearing by having beginnings and endings come on strong rather than weak beats. One needs a system of regular strong and weak beats in order to achieve this marking of thematic and melodic material for hearing. "Only if the definiteness of the measure conquers and regulates what is arbitrarily unlike [i.e., specifically different pitches and sonorities] is that definiteness proved to be the unity of accidental variety and the rule for it" (A 2:916).

Over significant stretches of short-term musical attention, rhythmic patterning is necessary for musical hearing of what is significant. Over longer stretches of development there must be governing "deeper relations and secrets of harmony which have a necessity of their own" (A 2:932). A successful musical piece must, somehow, move from consonance into dissonance and then into resolution. Successful music

abandons a purely consonant progression, goes on to oppositions, summons all the starkest contradictions and dissonances and gives proof of its own power by stirring up all the powers of harmony; it has the certainty nevertheless of being able to allay the battles of these powers [i.e., to achieve resolution] and thereby to celebrate the satisfying triumph of melodic tranquility [in the coincidence of melodic closure with harmonic closure]. (A 2:932)

In general as the music develops, melody, or what Hegel calls "the poetic element in music, the language of the soul" (A 2:929), "float[s] independently above the bar, rhythm, and harmony" (A 2:930): it has its own contour. "And yet on the other hand it has no means of actualization except the rhythmical measured movement of the notes and their essential and necessary [harmonic] relations" (A 2:930). Rhythm is required to mark significant melodic musical events (beginnings and ends of phrases), and harmony is required in order to lend to the melody a significant place in an overall, longer-term harmonic development, where in the end harmonic closure and melodic closure coincide.

In focusing on the importance of the coincidence of harmonic and melodic closure within a rhythmic structure, Hegel mediates the classic opposition between Rousseau's advocacy of melody as the natural locus of

the life of music and Rameau's emphasis on the necessity of properly developed harmonic development in a successful work. "In [its] close link with harmony the melody does not forgo its freedom at all; it only liberates itself from the subjectivity of arbitrary caprice in fanciful developments and bizarre changes and only acquires its true independence precisely in this way" (A 2:930). The freely achieved substantive and meaningful unity of the melody requires appropriate harmonic cadencing as its closure. Melody, one might say, stands to harmony as *Willkür* (choice or subjective particularity) stands to rational necessity (reasonable rules for self-formation and expression in social life): the former finds its significance in relation to the latter and only therein, and vice versa. "We have a battle between freedom and necessity: a battle between imagination's freedom to give itself up to its soaring [in melody] and the necessity of those harmonic relations which imagination needs for its expression [as opposed to mere unburdening, discharge, or shrieking] and in which its own significance lies" (A 2:932).

5

Hegel's account of music as a fine art applies most obviously to Classical Style music (Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven). In keeping with its norms, Hegel emphasizes the importance of thematic developmental structure (exposition and development), overall harmonic organization, the use of regular rhythms, and the working-through of motivic materials in overall compositional unity.⁵⁶ When appropriate formal structure is achieved, then music is properly freed from dependence on any text, and it displays a value for the life of a subject that is independent of liturgical or other extramusical cultural uses.⁵⁷ Hegel himself remarks that "nowadays . . . two miracles have occurred in music: one in the conception, the other in the genius of virtuosi in the execution. . . . The result is that . . . the notion of what music is and what it can do has been more and more widened" (A 2:936), as though it has just recently been discovered what art music properly can be and is. Hegel even reportedly remarked in dinner table conversation, after having heard the revival of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* by Mendelssohn in Berlin in March 1829: "That is no proper music; we have really gotten further than that now."⁵⁸ Dahlhaus, who cites this remark, goes on to speculate that Hegel may here have been endorsing E. T. A. Hoffman's thought, in his famous review of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony in the 1810 *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, that Beethoven's purely instrumental music is itself of direct religious significance, so that we need not revert any longer to textually based Passion music.⁵⁹ Though it is unclear whether he

has Haydn, Mozart, or Beethoven explicitly in mind, Hegel does remark that "especially in recent times music has torn itself free from a content already clear on its own account and retreated in this way into its own medium" (A 2:899).

This retreat has its costs, Hegel notes, in that loss of textual content means that purely instrumental music

has lost its power over the whole inner life, all the more so as the pleasure it can give relates to only one side of the art, namely bare interest in the purely musical element in the composition and its skillfulness, a side of music which is for connoisseurs only and scarcely appeals to the general human interest in art. (A 2:899)

As a result of this retreat from textual content, there has arisen in relation to music a division between amateurs and experts: "An essential difference begins to arise between the dilettante and the expert" (A 2:953). Amateurs continue to prefer text-based "music as accompaniment" (A 2:954) and are tempted to try "snatching a meaning" out of what is to them an "apparently insubstantial procession of sounds" (A 2:954). Experts, in contrast, have at "their fingers' ends the inner musical relations between notes and instruments [and] love instrumental music in its artistic use of harmonies and melodious interactings and changing forms" (A 2:954). They are "entirely satisfied by the music itself" (A 2:954). Yet although Hegel, as Dahlhaus has emphasized,⁶⁰ worries about the inherent risk of musical emptiness and about a tendency of musical development itself to become capricious, there is, for him, no going back to any earlier text- and ritual-based musical culture, and he identifies more with the experts than with amateurs (despite his own confession that he is "little versed in this sphere" [A 2:893]). *Fine art music must develop as music alone.*

In virtue of the most natural and obvious application of Hegel's views to Classical Style music, one might well wonder whether those views amount *only* to a preference for purely instrumental music in the Classical Style. Is this preference centrally a matter of Hegel's class identification with educated experts, musical and otherwise? Or can Hegel's views offer any insights into post-Classical Style musical life? Hegel himself argued that ultimately the threat of empty, formal, and merely decorative virtuosity in both composition and execution could be met not within music alone, but only by poetry. Art, according to Hegel, cannot remain "exclusively [in] the element of the inner life" (A 2:796), as purely instrumental music does, but must go on "to bring to our contemplation not only the inner life but also, and equally, the appearance and actuality of that life in its external reality" (A 2:795). It must show, in particular, how intellectu-

ally formed ideas are lived, how the ideas we have of ourselves do or can give a particular shape to our form of social life. In order to do this, art "must use the sensuous material of its disclosure as simply a means of communication and therefore must degrade it [the sensuous material] to being a [conventionalized] sign which has no significance by and in itself" (A 2:796). That is, poetry, not music (which attends only to the sensuous sound-material in itself and for the sake of the inner life alone), must become the more salient form of art, the form that is more adequate to art's vocation.

But then what should we say about music after the heyday of the Classical Style? Dahlhaus observes, with great insight, that Hegel's turn toward poetry and verbal-ideational content, away from music alone, as the most salient form of art in later modernity can be understood as embodying Hegel's recognition of a genuine problem that Classical Style music and post-Classical Style music face. There is a risk attaching to the emancipation of music from all textual content in order to concentrate on the musical development of instrumental sound alone. This emancipation sets up real possibilities of empty, merely decorative formalism and of a musical art for experts that has lost all contact with vernacular life, in relation to which "merely popular" music remains allied more closely with song, dance, and social use. As Dahlhaus puts it,

The dialectic of emancipation and estrangement, of autonomy and loss of substance—which one could say really became evident in the new music of the twentieth century—is already recognized [by Hegel, in his response to instrumental music, especially to Beethoven] as a central problem.⁶¹

Can these problems of estrangement, loss of textual and social-liturgical substance, and of the fragmenting of musical culture into "high" expert culture and "low" popular art be addressed by music alone, in Hegel's terms?

In *Music, the Arts, and Ideas*, Leonard Meyer argues that they cannot. We live, Meyer argues, at the end of the Renaissance. Once upon a time, from roughly 1450 in Italy to roughly 1950 in the United States and Western Europe, the cultivation of individuality mattered as a central cultural project. People, or at least some people at the center of culture, thought that it was important to have a free and independent personality and to determine the shape of one's own life from one's own resources of personality, rather than passively inheriting one's life from one's forebears. They further thought it important that the life thus freely shaped should be rationally intelligible to others, as opposed to living in what Hegel calls a "mush of 'heart, friendship, and enthusiasm.'"⁶² Instead, subjective par-

ticularity would find objective fulfillment in a shared and self-consciously willed life of social freedom.

But alas, Meyer argues, that Hegelian project is no longer on the books for us. As a result of the modern conditions of industrial work, spectacular commodity production and consumption, and the bureaucratically regulated reproduction of culture, no one has time or interest any longer in such cultivation of self and society toward social freedom and accomplished individuality.

Once upon a time, when that Hegelian project *was* on the books, the most valuable and central form of music was absolute, purely instrumental music that moved from initial statement to complication to some kind of surprising yet necessitated resolution, as itself an abstract parable of the centrally valuable path of development to which subjectivity is or was thought to be open, just as Hegel argues. Meyer defines maturity as "self-imposed tendency inhibition and the willingness to bear uncertainty," and the music that was most valued from 1450 to 1950 abstractly displayed, according to Meyer, development toward maturity.⁶³ As opposed to a music of less structured sound surfaces, Meyer favors the music of syntactic development. "It is because the evaluation of alternative probabilities and the retrospective understanding of the relationships among musical events as they actually occurred *leads to* self-awareness and individualization that the syntactical response [to music] is more valuable than those responses in which the ego is dissolved."⁶⁴

But now, Meyer argues, such responses are typically not open to us, for we no longer have the project of individualization available to us. Increasingly, from 1900 to 1975, "the idea that progress is inherent in the processes of history no longer seems credible."⁶⁵ As a result, in the music world there is now "a coexistence of a number of alternative styles" in "a kind of dynamic steady state." That is, pluralism reigns; many alternative styles are available. But none of these alternative styles is central for significant music in relation to a significantly shared cultural project, for there is now no significantly shared cultural project. Things happen. People write this and that. But the works that are thus produced are receivable only as bits of formal organization that might be liked or not by different people, as may be, not as abstract patternings of the valuable development of subjectivity as such. A sybaritic presentism-cum-consumerism dominates, just as Hegel feared could happen.⁶⁶

As the major alternative styles that *are* now circulating in culture, Meyer lists the following:

1. Academic serialism in the style of Milton Babbitt—largely an intellectual coterie music, dependent on government and university support for its continuance, and not really finding any audience, because not producing any hearable structures of significance.

2. Primitive or tribal music, i.e., rock, dominated by repetitive rhythms and motifs, by verbal text, and by a simple verse and chorus structure, with no syntactic development comparable to that of Western art music.

3. Ambient music or elevator music, the light music of distraction while we work in our cubicles or dine with our friends.

4. Transcendental particularism and aleatoric music, or music as unstructured sound, in the style of John Cage's definition of music as "sounds heard at a bus stop." Zenlike, Cage urges, we are to open our ears to the being of sound as sound, without worrying much about compositional development.

And that's about it. Various intermediate compromises are possible: for example, the minimalism of Philip Glass and Steve Reich combines bits of the repetitiveness of rock with the sound surfaces of ambient music with aleatorism's rejection of development. But music no longer plays the central cultural role once fulfilled by Western art music. Explicit returns to the structures of Western art music in the style of the new Romanticism of David Diamond or Alan Hovhaness are hearable only as either pastiche or empty melodism.

But is it quite true that these are the only available alternatives? Hegel's account of absolute music as significantly embodying the inner life through *cadenced interjection* in fact usefully suggests further alternatives that have not gone unexploited. Recall that Hegel argues that purely instrumental music must have development; it cannot simply linger in continuous consonance; there must be interjections or marked musical events, further housed within an overall cadential structure. This account suggests a number of techniques of composition that draw on the normative authority of Classical Style music but without simply replicating it. The rate of harmonic development (so-called harmonic rhythm) can be increased; that is, the tonic can be moved away from at a more rapid rate, as in the music of Berlioz, for example. The range of dissonant sonorities that are introduced can be increased, as in Wagner, Mahler, and Debussy, thus making available their introduction within a new work as a marked musical event.⁶⁷ Folk melodic motives (particularly previously unexploited modal motives) can be picked up and subjected to thematic variation, as in Bartok and Stravinsky, or as in Messiaen's use of modal motifs taken from birdcalls. New instruments with new sonorities to be explored can be introduced, as in the exploitation of percussion in twentieth-century works from Bartok and Stravinsky through George Crumb and contemporary investigations of Javanese Gamelan music. Hegel himself notes that "freedom from the pedantry of meter and the barbarism of a uniform rhythm" may help to keep the melody from sounding "humdrum, bare, and lacking in invention" (A 2:918); Bartok, Stravinsky, Copland, and Shostakovich have significantly exploited the possibilities of introducing

accents on offbeats, using more complicated rhythmic figures, and varying the time signature from measure to measure.

To be sure, each of these compositional possibilities carries risks. Increased rate of harmonic development, greater dissonance, borrowed melodic motives, new instrumentation, and rhythmic variation all tend to call attention to the local sound surface and away from an awareness of overall harmonic development. But then, this is just what it means to have a marked musical event: an interjection. Given the compositional achievements of the twentieth and now twenty-first centuries—from Bartok and Kodály to Stravinsky and Copland, Shostakovich, and now to Ned Rorem, William Schumann, and a wealth of younger composers just coming to wider notice—there is no reason to think that it is impossible to house interjections within an overall cadential structure in absorbing ways that continue to engage the inner life of subjectivity. What we hear as musical achievement continues to be describable in the Hegelian terms of cadenced interjection. As Theodor Adorno observes, “Hegel’s thesis that art is consciousness of plight has been confirmed beyond anything he could have envisioned,” and it continues to be confirmed in purely instrumental art music as powerfully as anywhere.⁶⁸

At the conclusion of the Gospel of John, the writer assumes explicitly the role of witness to something sacred that has gone on to play itself out in further events beyond the framework of his narrative. “This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true. And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which, if they should be written every one, I suppose the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.”⁶⁹ Hegel’s own last words about music—perhaps legible as a distant echo of John—are: “These are the most essential things that I have heard and felt in music and the general points which I have abstracted and assembled for consideration of our present subject” (A 2:958). Many more things—words and music—might be and would be written, but it seems apt to regard Hegel’s account of instrumental music as a fine art as itself a form of witness to “the elemental might of music” (A 2:908) that continues to display itself in our own time.

Notes

1. G. W. F. Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, trans. T. M. Knox, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975). All references to this work will be given in the text as A, with volume and by page number.

2. Eduard Hanslick, *On the Musically Beautiful*, trans. Geoffrey Payzant (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1986), 28–29.

3. Hanslick, *On the Musically Beautiful*, 29.
4. *Ibid.*, 32.
5. *Ibid.* (emphases added).
6. *Ibid.*, 28.
7. Edmund Gurney, *The Power of Sound* (London: Smith, Elder, 1880), 338.
8. Gurney, *Power of Sound*, 315.
9. Peter Kivy, *Philosophies of the Arts: An Essay in Differences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 155.
10. Kivy, *Philosophies of the Arts*, 209.
11. *Ibid.*, 217.
12. Stephen Davies, "Why Listen to Sad Music If It Makes One Feel Sad?" in *Music and Meaning*, ed. Jenefer Robinson (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 242–53, at 250.
13. Davies, "Why Listen to Sad Music?" 252.
14. Paul Shorey, notes to Plato, *Republic I*, trans. Paul Shorey (London: William Heinemann [Loeb Classical Library], 1930), 224 note c.
15. Gurney, *Power of Sound*, 125.
16. Edward T. Cone, *The Composer's Voice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 5.
17. Cone, *Composer's Voice*, 9.
18. *Ibid.*, 161.
19. *Ibid.*, 163.
20. Kendall Walton, "Listening with Imagination: Is Music Representational?" in *Music and Meaning*, ed. Robinson, 57–82, at 58.
21. Walton, "Listening with Imagination," 61.
22. Kivy, *Philosophies of the Arts*, 47.
23. Walton, "Listening with Imagination," 82.
24. *Ibid.*
25. Jerrold Levinson, "Music and Negative Emotion," in *Music and Meaning*, ed. Robinson, 215–41, at 231.
26. Levinson, "Music and Negative Emotion," 234–36.
27. Fred Everett Maus, "Music as Drama," in *Music and Meaning*, ed. Robinson, 105–30, at 118.
28. Maus, "Music as Drama," 129. Maus qualifies this remark by saying that it is true "for at least some music." I am not sure what music he is thinking of for which it is *not* true: perhaps pure (computer-generated?) soundscape arabesques where we hear only background and no musical drama. Maus's claim does seem to apply to nearly all significant composed instrumental art music.
29. Rose Rosengard Subotnik, *Deconstructive Variations: Music and Reason in Western Society* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 149.
30. Subotnik, *Deconstructive Variations*, 158.
31. *Ibid.*, 175.
32. *Ibid.*, 168.
33. See Leonard Meyer, *Music, the Arts, and Ideas: Patterns and Predictions in Twentieth-Century Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994). See especially chapter 5, "The End of the Renaissance?" and "Postlude."

34. Subotnik's *Deconstructive Variations* includes a tour-de-force 108-page analysis of Chopin's sixteen-bar A-Major Prelude, arguing that it expresses, ambivalently, *both* a sense of the possible happy completion of the cultivation of individuality within a social setting *and* the irrational violence that this cultivation always entails ("How Could Chopin's A-Major Prelude Be Deconstructed?" 39–147).

35. Subotnik, *Deconstructive Variations*, 159.

36. Susan McClary, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991). See especially chapter 2, "Constructions of Gender in Monteverdi's Dramatic Music," 35–52.

37. Here I note that I am actually simplifying and flattening McClary's analysis. She also remarks that the seventeenth century was a time of uncertainty about gender roles and that Monteverdi did write some particularly "feminine" music for men. Yet that music was less popularly successful, she claims, than his more "standard" music, and the central norms of the musical representation of character that Monteverdi laid down persisted at least well into the twentieth century.

38. Lawrence Kramer, *Classical Music and Postmodern Knowledge* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 21.

39. Kramer, *Classical Music and Postmodern Knowledge*, 24.

40. *Ibid.*, 24, final paragraph.

41. G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), paragraph 166, p. 104; G. W. F. Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, ed. Johannes Hoffmeister (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1952), 133.

42. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, paragraph 167, p. 105; Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, 135.

43. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, paragraph 167, p. 105; Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, 135.

44. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Sense and Non-Sense*, trans. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Patricia Allen Dreyfus (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 65–66 (my interpolations). See also the discussion of the opening paragraphs of chapter 4 of the *Phenomenology* in R. Eldridge, *Leading a Human Life: Wittgenstein, Intentionality, and Romanticism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 27–32.

45. G. W. F. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, trans. H. B. Nisbet, ed. Allen W. Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), addition to section 7, p. 42.

46. For doubts about the soundness of Hegel's arguments for this conclusion in either the *Phenomenology* or the *Science of Logic*, see Charles Taylor, *Hegel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 214–21 on the *Phenomenology*, and 225–57 on equivocations in the opening chapters of the *Logic*.

47. Robert B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism: The Satisfactions of Self-Consciousness* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 167.

48. On Vincenzo Galilei's development of equal temperament tuning, see Daniel K. L. Chua, *Absolute Music and the Construction of Meaning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 18–20.

49. Carl Dahlhaus, *Esthetics of Music*, trans. William W. Austin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 49.

50. Roger Scruton, *The Aesthetics of Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 161.
51. Julian Johnson, "Music in Hegel's *Aesthetics*: A Re-Evaluation," *British Journal of Aesthetics* 31, no. 2 (April 1991): 160.
52. R. K. Elliott, "Aesthetic Theory and the Experience of Art," in *Aesthetics*, ed. Harold Osborne (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 152.
53. Gurney, *Power of Sound*, 337.
54. Carl Dahlhaus, *Klassische und romantische Musikästhetik* (Laaber: Laaber, 1988), 240.
55. Dahlhaus, *Klassische und romantische Musikästhetik*, 242.
56. Compare the account of the Classical Style in Charles Rosen, *The Classical Style: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1972).
57. Here dance, which is essentially rhythmic and has a closer connection with music than does liturgy, for example, may be regarded as itself a musical rather than an extramusical use of music. I thank an audience for this paper at the University of South Carolina for noting this point.
58. Reported by Therese Devrient in her memoirs, according to Dahlhaus, *Klassische und romantische Musikästhetik*, 245, where the remark is cited without footnote; my translation.
59. Dahlhaus, *Klassische und romantische Musikästhetik*, 248.
60. See Dahlhaus, *Esthetics of Music*, 49; and Dahlhaus, *Klassische und romantische Musikästhetik*, 236–39, especially the claim that for Hegel "Beethovens Grösse . . . ins Verhängnis führte" (239).
61. Dahlhaus, *Klassische und romantische Musikästhetik*, 238 (my translation).
62. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, preface, 16.
63. Meyer, *Music, the Arts, and Ideas*, 33.
64. *Ibid.*, 35.
65. *Ibid.*, 331.
66. See *ibid.*, 334.
67. See Charles Rosen, *Arnold Schoenberg* (New York: Viking, 1975), for a nice, brief account of the liberation of dissonance as the engine of the historical development of nineteenth-century music.
68. Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 18.
69. John 21:24–25, Holy Bible: Authorized King James Version (Boston: Christian Science Publishing Society, n.d.), 1385.