

THE COMPOSER-PERFORMER RELATIONSHIP,  
THE MUSICAL SCORE, AND PERFORMANCE:  
Nelson Goodman's Account of Music as Applied to  
the Thought and Work of Glenn Gould

Elizabeth J. Wood

Department of Philosophy  
McGill University, Montreal  
May 1997

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

Copyright © Elizabeth J. Wood, 1997

## **Abstract**

This study investigates the composer-performer relationship in terms of the site of responsibility for the aesthetic features of the musical performance. It considers the extent to which the performer's view of that relationship affects the performance itself. This is accomplished by examining four focal points: the composer-performer relationship; composers' intentions; Nelson Goodman's account of notation, expression and style; and the work—including the writings—of Canadian pianist Glenn Gould.

The composer is seen by some as predominantly responsible for the performance, with the performer's role as that of fulfilling the composer's intentions. A contrasting perspective, cognizant of the significance of interpretive decisions, situates the performer as co-creator.

Pivotal in this debate are the discrepancies surrounding the role of composers' intentions. Critical discussion of the Early Music Movement, considered here as a paradigm of historical authenticity, distinguishes between its proponents, for whom composers' intentions are authoritative, and its opponents, who perceive that historical authenticity, even if attainable, would be insufficient to ensure a work's aesthetic merit.

This divergence derives from the fact that the musical performance is underdetermined by Western musical notation. Nelson Goodman addresses this by assigning to the musical score the function of identification: Any performance which complies with the score constitutes an instance of the work. Moreover, Goodman's account of expression and style recognizes the score's non-notational elements as instrumental to the aesthetic qualities

of the performance.

Goodman's theoretical account is then applied to the work of Glenn Gould. First, Gould's consideration of the performer as co-creator is identified as instrumental in determining the aesthetic features of his performances. The interpretive autonomy afforded by his perspective, it is argued, led to the development of a performance and compositional style characterized by a predilection for a manifestly contrapuntal rather than hierarchical structure. Gould's performances and compositions are shown to express views of an ethical as well as aesthetic nature, contributing to what Goodman terms "worldmaking," affirming the symbolic function of music.

In conclusion, the performer's view of the performer-composer relationship is fundamental and determinant in defining the aesthetic features of the musical performance.

## Résumé

Cette recherche vise à interroger le rapport compositeur/ interprète, en regard de la question portant sur l'instance responsable des caractéristiques esthétiques d'une performance musicale. Plus précisément, il s'agit de voir dans quelle mesure la représentation que l'interprète se fait de ce rapport a un impact sur la performance elle-même. Pour répondre à cette interrogation, seront considérés quatre domaines spécifiques: le rapport compositeur/interprète; la question de l'intentionnalité (plus spécifiquement, celle ayant trait aux intentions du compositeur); le traitement accordé par Nelson Goodman aux problèmes de la notation, de l'expression et du style; enfin, les réflexions et l'oeuvre du pianiste canadien Glenn Gould, en regard du problème posé.

Il y aura d'abord présentation de la perspective suivant laquelle le compositeur est responsable de la performance; le rôle de l'interprète se résumant à réaliser les intentions du compositeur. Par contraste, une autre approche sera esquissée où se trouve reconnu l'apport significatif des décisions de l'interprète; de telle manière que celui-ci se voit octroyé le rôle de co-créateur.

Le noeud du débat se cristallise sur la question du rôle à accorder aux intentions du compositeur. Sera donc considéré, pour rendre compte de cet enjeu, le cas du *Early Music Movement* (musique ancienne). Paradigme de la recherche d'une authenticité historique, ce mouvement a ses défenseurs, ceux pour qui les intentions du compositeurs sont décisives; il a par ailleurs aussi ses détracteurs dans la mesure où pour ceux-ci l'authenticité historique, si elle est possible, serait de toute manière insuffisante à assurer la valeur esthétique d'une



oeuvre.

Cette divergence de vues prend pour origine le fait que la performance musicale est sous-déterminée par la notation dans le monde occidental. Nelson Goodman s'attaque à ce problème en insistant pour donner une fonction d'identification à la partition musicale: toute performance s'accordant à la partition constitue une instance de l'oeuvre. La discussion de Goodman quant aux notions de l'expression et du style lui permet par ailleurs d'affirmer le caractère contributif des éléments non-notationnels quant à l'émergence des qualités esthétiques d'une performance musicale.

Le travail de Glenn Gould est par la suite considéré à l'aune de l'approche théorique de Goodman. La prise en compte par Gould du rôle de l'interprète, en tant que co-créateur, conditionne le jugement porté sur la valeur esthétique de ses performances. L'autonomie interprétative ainsi reconnue au musicien, a pour conséquence la genèse d'une performance et d'un style compositionnel caractérisés par une prédilection marquée pour une structure contrapuntique, plutôt que hiérarchique. Il est ainsi démontré que les performances, tout comme les compositions, de Gould témoignent d'une visée aussi bien éthique qu'esthétique; contribuant à ce que Goodman intitule "worldmaking", affirmant ce faisant la fonction symbolique de la musique.

## Acknowledgements

I wish first to thank my thesis supervisors, Dr. David Davies and Dr. James McGilvray of the Department of Philosophy, and Dr. John Rea of the Faculty of Music. Their incisive questions, thoughtful criticisms, and invaluable direction have served not only to heighten my knowledge of philosophy and music but, more importantly, to situate my inquiry within a wider philosophical context.

I extend my deepest gratitude to Dr. William Lawlor, Chair of the Department of Culture & Values in Education at McGill University. His work in education serves as an ongoing source of inspiration, and his presence and support as professional guide, colleague and friend are for me of inestimable value.

I would also like to thank Dean Ted Wall of the Faculty of Education at McGill University for his continuing commitment to my work, and to my colleagues in the Department of Culture & Values in Education for their interest and support. I am especially grateful to Dr. Ronald Morris for his precious encouragement since the beginning.

My appreciation to Louise Provencher for her friendship and constructive exchanges, and for valuable translation assistance. Similarly, thank you to Lisa Vinebaum and Tim Locke for technical assistance in the final preparation and formatting of the thesis.

Finally, I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to Sara Amato, Marc-Emile Villeneuve and, above all, to my family for their precious affection and unwavering confidence.

This project was supported by a doctoral fellowship from *Fonds pour la formation de chercheurs et l'aide à la recherche (FCAR)*, and my appreciation is extended to the council.

## **Table Of Contents**

Abstract	i
Résumé	iii
Acknowledgements	v
Introduction	1

### **CHAPTER ONE**

#### **Composer-Performer Relationship: From Platonic Ideal to Indeterminacy: Review of the Literature**

1.0.	Introduction	5
1.1.	Theoretical Accounts of The Composer-Performer Relationship: A Review of the Literature	7
1.1.2.	Edward T. Cone: Framing the Question: The Quest for a Platonic “Ideal Performance”	7
1.1.3.	Roger Sessions: The Composer as “Inspired” Creator	10
1.1.3.1.	The Composer as Unreliable Source of Authority	12
1.1.4.	Composer and Performer as One: From Baroque to Twentieth Century Electroacoustic Music	13
1.1.4.1.	The Indeterminacy of Performance of the Notated Score: The Emergence of New Notational Styles	18
1.1.4.2.	The Contemporary Composer: Source of Notational Authority	19

1.1.5.	Shared Responsibility for Interpretative Authority: Composer and Performer	21
1.1.5.1.	Edward T. Cone	22
1.1.5.2.	Leonard Meyer	27
1.2.	Intentionality and the Musical Performance	29
1.2.1.	Introduction	29
1.2.2.	Munroe C. Beardsley: The Inaccessibility of Composers' Intentions—A Conventionalist View	30
1.2.3.	Critical Response to Beardsley	35
1.2.3.1.	Peter Kivy: Composers' Intentions as Accessible but Overridden by Performers' Aesthetic Decisions	35
1.2.3.2.	Francis Sparshott: The Integration of Performers' Intentions	50
1.2.4.	Michael Baxandall: Intention as Other Than Psychological States	58
1.5.	Conclusion	62

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **The Early Music Movement: Historical Authenticity and Composers' Intentions**

2.0.	Introduction	64
2.1.	Overview of the Early Music Movement	65

2.1.1.	Factors Contributing to the Current interest in Early Music	67
2.1.2.	A Sceptical Stance: Controversial Aspects of the Authenticity School	70
2.2.	The Early Music Movement: Paradigm of Intentionality, or Musicological Mirage?	83
2.2.1.	Introduction	83
2.2.2.	Criticism of Early Music's Structural Intentional Fallacy	83
2.2.2.1.	A Socio-Musicological Perspective: Rose Rosengard-Subotnik	85
2.2.2.2.	Toward a Deciphering of the Ideological Underpinnings of The Early Music Movement: Richard Taruskin	95
2.3.	Alternative Frameworks: Moving Beyond the Myth of Authenticity	97
2.3.1.	Introduction	97
2.3.2.	A Tempered Historicity: Francis Sparshott —Conversation Analogy	98
2.3.3.	The Musical Work as Social Artifact: Nicholas Wolterstorff	107
2.4.	Conclusion	120

### **CHAPTER THREE** Nelson Goodman's Account of Music

3.0.	Introduction	122
3.1.	Overview of Goodman's Theory of Notation	123
3.1.1.	Introduction	123

3.1.2.	Goodman's Theory of Notation and its Music Application	125
3.1.2.1.	Syntactic Requirements	126
3.1.2.2.	Semantic Requirements	130
3.1.3.	The Musical Score	134
3.2.	Instances of "Problem cases": What is Not Notational?	135
3.2.1	Introduction	135
3.2.2.	Redundancy and Performance Preservation/Score Preservation	135
3.2.2.1.	Redundancy Through Notation of Rhythm	136
3.2.2.2.	Redundancy Through Notation of Pitch	138
3.2.3.	Wrong Notes	140
3.2.4.	Figured-bass, Continuo, and Free Cadenza	143
3.2.5.	Verbal Notation	146
3.2.6.	Metronome Markings	148
3.2.7.	Objections on Philosophical and Structural Grounds	152
3.2.7.1.	Why Should Identity be the Primary Concern? Francis Sparshott	153
3.2.7.2.	Can the Score be Viewed as Indicative of Music-Structural Components? The Relative Nature of Sound and the Music-Structural Theory- Dependence of Compliance: Benjamin Boretz	155
3.2.7.3.	Can a Score Denote a Musical Work? Kingsley Price	158
3.2.7.4.	Is Goodman's System Practically Applicable? James Ackerman	162

3.2.7.5.	To What Extent Is Music a Way of Worldmaking? Jens Kulenkampff	165
3.2.8.	Recapitulation: Notational Questions Unresolved	171
3.3.	Goodman's Overall View of Music: Reconciling Theory and Practice	172
3.3.1.	Introduction	172
3.3.2.	Contextualizing the Notated Score	174
3.3.2.1.	The Limits of Theory	176
3.3.3.	The Composer-Performer Relationship	179
3.3.4.	Goodman's Account of Expression	181
3.3.4.1.	Exemplification	181
3.3.4.2.	Metaphor	185
3.3.4.3.	Expression as Metaphorical Exemplification	189
3.3.5.	Goodman's Account of Style	194
3.3.5.1.	Style and Subject	194
3.3.5.2.	Style and Emotion	196
3.3.5.3.	Style and Structure	197
3.3.5.4.	Style and Signature	198
3.3.5.5.	The Significance of Style	200
3.3.6.	The Relationship Between Expression and Style	201
3.4.	Conclusion	202

**CHAPTER FOUR**  
**Glenn Gould in Counterpoint:**  
**The Composer-Performer Relationship**

4.0.	Introduction	204
4.1.	Glenn Gould and the Composer-Performer Relationship	205

4.1.1.	Introduction	205
4.1.2.	The Composer-Performer Relationship and Interpretive Autonomy	207
4.1.2.1.	Notation as a Factor in Gould's Performance of Bach	207
4.1.2.2.	A Concern for Structure	209
4.1.2.3.	Performer as Elaborator	212
4.1.2.4.	Aesthetic Autonomy of the Performer	213
4.1.2.5.	In Recognition of the Transitory Nature of Aesthetic Values	215
4.1.2.6.	Discrepancy Between Gould's View and his Performance	218
4.1.2.7.	The Performer's Autonomy: Summary	220
4.1.3.	Collapsing the Roles of Composer and Performer	221
4.2.	Historical Authenticity and Technology	224
4.2.1.	Introduction	224
4.2.2.	Gould's View of Authentic Instruments	225
4.2.3.	Glenn Gould and Technology	230
4.2.4.	Rejection of the Live Performance Venue	231
4.2.4.1.	Soloist as Virtuoso: The Concerto	234
4.2.4.2.	The Instrument and the Concert Environment	236
4.2.5.	The Advantages of Technology	237
4.2.5.1.	"Afterthought" in the Recording Process	238
4.2.5.2.	Consistency of Process in Performing and Recording	240



4.2.5.3.	The “Fragment” in Gould’s Recording Process: Recalling Edward T. Cone	241
4.3.	Gould and Counterpoint	243
4.3.1.	Introduction	243
4.3.2.	The Presence of Polyphony Across Gould’s Work	244
4.3.3.	A Concern for Structure in Gould’s Interpretation of Nineteenth Century Works	245
4.3.4.	Gould’s Radio Documentaries as Music	248
4.3.5.	<i>The Solitude Trilogy</i> as Contrapuntal Composition	255
4.4.	Goodman’s Account of Expression and Style as Applied to the Performance and Composition of Glenn Gould	258
4.4.1.	Gould and Metaphorical Exemplification	258
4.4.2.	Expression as an Element of Style	263
4.4.3.	Gould and Worldmaking	265
4.4.4.	Expression, Style and Worldmaking in the Work of Gould	268
4.5	Conclusion (Chapter Four)	271
4.6	Final Summary and Significance of This Study	272
	Appendix I: Example of Non-Conventional Nature of Contemporary Notation	278
	Appendix II: Glenn Gould Chronology	279
	References	283

*... counterpoint is not a dry academic exercise in  
motivic permutation but rather a method of composition  
in which, if all goes well, each individual voice lives a  
life of its own.*

—GLENN GOULD

## **Introduction**

Composer, musical text or score, performer, and listener comprise constituent elements in the musical performance. A cursory account of the relationship between these components would entail the following: First, the composer formulates a musical idea or intention, which is captured by the score. The performer then translates the composer's ideas, with the help of the score, through the performance, to the listener.

This account is clearly inadequate. Performances by different artists of the same musical score vary in subtle or substantial ways, despite their reliance on a common score. Thus, despite the determinate nature of the score in terms of some aspects of performance, it is clear that the performer assumes considerable responsibility for interpretive decisions, indicating that aspects of the performance are indeterminate in relation to the score. This leads to a series of important questions. First, in terms of responsibility for the musical performance, what is the relationship between the composer and the performer? Is the musical performance primarily a translation of the composer's musical ideas, or does the performer carry out a different role? And if so, what is that role, how is it determined, by whom, and according to what principles? Finally, and perhaps most importantly, to what extent is the performer's view of the composer-performer relationship determinant in defining the aesthetic features of the musical performance.

These questions raise others concerning the extent to which the musical score can determine the musical performance. Clearly, Western musical notation assures the possibility for performance of the musical work in the absence of the work's creator. Notation, as such,

comprises a system of symbols which prescribe not only fundamental aspects of the music such as rhythm and pitch, but also provide direction as to the work's expressive characteristics. To the extent that the signs and symbols in a musical score denote such aspects as tempo, dynamics, and expressive qualities of the music, it would appear to be the case that a performance of a musical work is subject to factors which cannot be precisely determined by the composer. Moreover, certain composition practices integrate an explicit creative freedom on the part of the artist, as in, for example, the cadence improvisation in Baroque and classical music, or the extensive improvisational freedom assigned to the performer in certain contemporary compositions. The subject of this dissertation will be the composer-performer relationship and the role of composer, performer, and score in determining the qualitative aspects of the musical performance.

Chapter One will provide an overview of existing accounts of the composer-performer relationship. This will bring to the surface the tension between, on the one hand, an insistence upon the musical work and subsequent performance as issuing from the composer and, on the other, a recognition of the role of the performer in determining the final qualitative outcome of the performance itself. The question of composers' intentions will emerge as central to this discussion. As such, Chapter One will also consider the nature of composers' intentions, and the extent to which quality of performance is determined by the performer's honouring of those intentions.

Having addressed these questions at a theoretical level in Chapter One, the discussion will turn, in Chapter Two, to a specific example in musicology, one which exemplifies and responds to the extensive debate around the role of composers' intentions in actual musical

performance. Chapter Two will consider the Early Music Movement as a virtual “paradigm of intentionality,” tracing the rationale behind the authenticists’ commitment to respecting the intentions of the composer, and critically evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of that approach. It will close with a perspective that is critical of the Early Music Movement. Philosophers and musicologists (Neumann, 1982, 1989; Sparshott, 1986; Subotnik, 1991; Taruskin, 1995) provide substantial support for their objections, and advance an alternative perspective with which to approach the performance of early music that advocates a considerable degree of interpretive freedom on the part of the performer.

This raises the question of whether limits can be or have been placed on such freedom. How, for example, can composers be assured that, through a series of ambitious interpretations, their works are not transformed into totally new works? A response is provided by Nelson Goodman, whose views comprise the subject of Chapter Three. Goodman advances the perspective that the role of the score in music is to preserve the identity of a work. His account will be surveyed, and critical responses to it will be presented. Goodman’s account of music extends beyond his theory of notation, to touch on the nature and role of expression and style. This material will also be presented, followed by a discussion of the relationship between non-notational elements of a score, expressive elements of performance, and style.

In the final chapter, the work of Canadian pianist Glenn Gould will provide a forum for a more specific consideration of the composer-performer relationship, and the effect on the musical performance of the performer’s views of that relationship. Glenn Gould is acclaimed particularly—but not exclusively—for his performances of the manifestly

contrapuntal music of Bach. Despite his international reputation as one of this century's foremost pianists, Gould's "(re)-interpretation" of certain works have served to alienate him from many who believe that the musical and professional liberties which he took were too extreme. Gould's status as a controversial performer heightens the poignancy of questions concerning, among others, the status and authority of composer, performer, and musical score.

Chapter Four will also seek to contextualize issues raised at a theoretical level in the first three chapters. Gould will be considered as both performer and composer, and his work will be discussed in terms of both his view of the composer-performer relationship, and the Early Music Movement (including performance practice and electronic recording). Goodman's account of expression and style will provide a theoretical framework through which to consider and determine the extent to which Gould's view of the composer-performer relationship was responsible for the development, both in performance and composition, of what may be termed his musical "style."

## CHAPTER ONE

### The Composer-Performer Relationship: From Platonic Ideal to Indeterminacy: Review of the Literature

#### 1.0. Introduction

The musical performance derives from the interaction between the aggregate roles of composer, score, performer, and listener. The greater or lesser responsibility accorded to one or another of these constituents, however, will understandably impact on the musical performance itself. This leads to an interesting question: What is the relationship between these elements? Who is responsible for determining the nature of the performance itself? What are the roles of composer and performer in qualitatively defining the sound event that is music?

In the early twentieth century, philosophy of music accorded substantial responsibility for the aesthetic features of music to the composer, insofar as the performance was considered a rendering of the composer's ideas as captured by the score. In a comprehensive treatise from the early twentieth century, *The philosophy of music*, Edward J. Dent (1924) voices this perspective:

One thing may, however, be pointed out, which, when well considered, ought to further the acceptance of the philosophical views; namely, how much they tend to exalt the art of music, and the merits of the great composers. The ordinary belief, that everything that a great musician writes ought to be "accounted for," i.e., brought into

conformity with some imagined natural rule, is no very complimentary tribute to his genius; it is infinitely more ennobling to believe, as the philosophical theory leads us to believe, that the musical forms are really the outcome of the *composer's own art—the offspring of his instinctive perception of what is pleasing* [italics added]. (1924, pp. 297-298)

Dent's account does not address the role of the performer in the music-making process. Rather, this passage emphasizes the role of the composer as the primary musical innovator, with the music being the outcome of the composer's personal, "instinctive" aesthetic. Developments in twentieth century aesthetics, epistemology, philosophy of language, and ethics, however, have shown such a view to be inadequate. The question of a performer's responsibility to the composer and to the score, and the parallel issue of the freedom or liberty available to the performer of a composer's score is a complex and unresolved matter.

Chapter One will investigate a range of views concerning the composer-performer relationship, providing an overview of the issue. In so doing, it will indirectly address a series of questions: Who determines what qualities the performance has? On what authority? According to what principles? With what results?

The discussion will begin with a view which holds the composer as chiefly responsible for the musical work. This will lead to a consideration of views which accord the performer increasing interpretive autonomy. Through this discussion, the question of the extent to which composers' intentions can, should, or do figure in the rendering of the musical performance will be addressed. It will be seen that while, intuitively, it may make sense to call on composers' intentions (with the term intention referring to other-than-



psychological states)<sup>1</sup> as a viable means to determine interpretive aspects of the musical performance, there is also evidence to suggest that we cannot, do not, and (according to some) should not accord composers' intentions as the exclusive authority.

### 1.1. Theoretical Accounts of The Composer-Performer Relationship: A Review of the Literature

#### 1.1.2. Edward T. Cone: Framing the question: The Quest for a Platonic Ideal Performance

The nature of the ideal interpretation is a complex and recurring question in discussions concerning the musical performance. There has been considerable speculation, along Platonic lines, as to whether one perfect performance of a composition exists as the ideal to which every actual performance should aspire. As Edward T. Cone points out in *Musical form and musical performance* (1968), it is common belief that, even if a perfect interpretation is conceivable, it is hardly possible to attain. If it were to exist, every actual performance would at best be an approximation of it. Still, he asserts, it is somehow comforting to hold on to the idea that one interpretation, in some Platonic realm, “constitutes *the music as precisely as a picture is a picture, a statue is a statue, and a building is a building*” (p. 32) [original italics]. Cone observes that, according to this view, the space arts (sculpture, painting, etc.) occupy a privileged position, since one would assume that works

---

<sup>1</sup>According to Baxandall (1985), for example, intentional states have to do with the factors which lead to the creation of the work. This will be addressed later in Chapter One.

in those arts are fixed and unchanging. The time arts,<sup>2</sup> on the other hand (including drama, all forms of literature, and music), are subject to readings, performances, and interpretations, which of course lead to distortions of the true essence of the works of art. Nonetheless, this idealist view holds fast to the notion that the essence remains, somewhere, to be discovered and exposed (Cone, 1968, pp. 32-33).

Cone points out, however, that this view is false, not only in terms of the time arts, but also for the space arts. Pictures, statues, buildings, as well as poems, are read. Moreover, any work of art must be read in what seems to be a linear manner: each viewer, listener or reader must choose the path they will follow through the work, seeking to illuminate inner relationships and meanings. As Cone observes, when the reading of a spatial work of art is a silent, personal one, the contemplation it can involve consists in not one but several performances—or at least several partial performances. We consider the work “from side to side, up and down, diagonally and spirally, taking our time and clarifying for our own satisfaction first one and then another connection” (1968, p. 33). Cone terms this silent viewing a kind of multiple performance, in that many possibilities are explored at once, not unlike the silent reading of a poem or a piece of music. In these instances, we can “choose our own pace, speed up or slow down as we like, look back or ahead, pause, repeat” (Cone, p. 33). When the poem is read aloud, however, or the piece of music played, one single

---

<sup>2</sup>Although Cone does not fully define his use of the term “time arts” from his examples one can infer that time arts are those which take place or unfold in a temporally linear manner, either through a succession of actions (drama), words (literature), or sound (music). To this list, dance (temporally linear movement) could be added. Also, recent hybrid forms that integrate various art forms in combination, such as performance art, would presumably be considered time arts.

complete performance must be chosen. According to Cone, the more complex the poem or composition, the more relationships its performance must be prepared to explain,<sup>3</sup> and the less it is likely that a single performance can accomplish this (1968, pp. 33-34).<sup>4</sup> In the performance context, the composition proceeds in time. It is impossible for the performer to “go back to explain,”<sup>5</sup> and so she/he must therefore determine what is most important about the musical work, and make that as clear as possible, even at the expense of other aspects of the work. There will, Cone reminds us, always be other performances.

The crux of the question that concerns us here is the very indeterminacy of performance, relative to the score. If the score does not, as in the perhaps reassuring but nonetheless untenable Platonic reading mentioned above, provide the “definitive” version

---

<sup>3</sup>The word “explore” would seem to be more appropriate than Cone’s word “explain.” The notion “to explain” something seems to suggest that a definitive version does exist somewhere: this is not Cone’s point. The exploration of possible readings would seem to be more in keeping with Cone’s view. As the text proceeds, however, this ambiguity will seem to persist.

<sup>4</sup>Clearly, then, according to Cone’s account, this Platonic view of the ideal performance is problematic. As his discussion unfolds, he advances an account of why and how this is so.

<sup>5</sup>Here, the phrase “we cannot go back to explain” is more ambiguous. Unlike the first instance, here the term “explain” could mean either to explain musically, through development, or to literally explain, in verbal terms. Feasibly, this could refer to a complex performance which calls for justification on the part of the performer as a result of aesthetic or interpretive choices. This would seem to be less likely, however, since it is not necessarily the simplicity or complexity of the performance which determines the extent of the performer’s aesthetic or interpretive decisions. As such, it is not necessarily the case that aesthetic choices made in the case of a complex performance would require more justification than those made in a less complex one.

of the work,<sup>6</sup> how does a performer determine what version is the best? The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to the investigation of possible responses to this question.

### 1.1.3. Roger Sessions: The Composer as “Inspired” Creator

Roger Sessions can be seen as emblematic of those who hold the view that the composer maintains primary responsibility for the creation of the musical work. This does not mean, however, that the composer is the one who best knows how her/his music should be played. These two aspects of his view would seem to be somewhat contradictory. The tension will be considered here.

First, Sessions seems to view creation of the musical work as the artist’s response to inspiration. In his essay “The Composer’s Craft” (1979) he contends that the process of musical composition comprises three stages: inspiration, conception, and execution. For Sessions, the composer is “living in a world of sounds, which in response to his creative impulse become animated with movement” (p. 21).

The process outlined by Sessions begins with an inspirational stage in which the composer has an idea, “consisting of definite musical notes and rhythms, which will engender for him the momentum with which his musical thought proceeds.” It is the inspiration which sets creation in motion, and the energy which keeps it going (Sessions, 1979, p. 21). The stage of conception refers to the formulation of a vision of the whole; the

---

<sup>6</sup>It is important to point out here that this is clearly the case because of the presumed constitutive role of the performance in assuring the existence of the work.

“form.” The final stage, execution, is the process of “listening inwardly to the music as it shapes itself; of allowing the music to grow; of following both inspiration and conception wherever they may lead (Cone, 1968, p. 22). For Sessions, conception and execution are inseparable: “Form” in music is identical with “content” (1968, p. 25).<sup>7</sup> In sum, “The actual process of composition remains mysterious—the composer is following, as best he can and with all the means at his disposal, the demands of his conception, listening for the sounds and rhythms which embody it, and giving them the shape which his creative vision prescribes” (1968, p. 25).

Sessions describes the composition process as a “deed”: the composer is “not so much conscious of his ideas as possessed by them” (1968, p. 26). Sessions sees art as a function, an activity of the inner nature. He views the artist’s effort as one which, using the raw and undisciplined materials provided by her/his inner nature, endows them with a meaning which they do not of themselves possess. The composer gives these materials form.

It is interesting to note that, in his *Collected essays* (1979), Sessions (himself a composer) rarely refers to the performer at all in terms of relationship to the composer or the score. Sessions’ account of the compositional process itself adopts a very nineteenth century stance of the *poète maudit*, the solitary artist, the composer-as-creator who occupies the

---

<sup>7</sup>The form = content argument is one which may provoke an intuitive negative response since conventional thinking and use have polarized these two notions. Note, however, that Sessions uses the term “content” in a very specific way, related to the process of composing. He argues that conception is that stage wherein a vision of the whole is formulated, and it is this whole vision that he calls the “form.” Because the content has to do with execution—the musical outcome—his point is that this outcome emerges in tandem with the emergence of the form or “the vision of the whole.” In this light, his assertion that form is identical with content seems less counter-intuitive.

principal role in the music-making process. This is confirmed by Cone, who observes that for Sessions, “[t]he composer is naturally concerned with creating a unified design, the performer must project the dynamism of the composition and the listener concentrates on the musical ideas and what they express” (Cone, in “Music and Form,” in Alperson, 1986, p. 137). Cone, as will become apparent in subsequent sections of this chapter, does not share this perspective; for him it is not nearly as clear-cut as this formulation would suggest.

#### 1.1.3.1. The Composer as Unreliable Source of Authority

Given the fact that Sessions accorded responsibility for the creation of the musical work to the composer, one might assume that this would lead to a position which encourages the performer’s concern for and commitment to the composer’s intentions. Paradoxically, however, this is not the case. In fact, Sessions cautions against attributing too much responsibility for the work itself to the composer.

Recall that Sessions holds creative activity to be essentially practical rather than theoretical. Like all practical natures, he holds, the artist is “absorbed in his own problems, even though occasionally, as in the case, for instance, of Wagner, he is capable of making vital generalizations as well” (Sessions, 1979, p. 28). Nonetheless, Sessions contends, “impersonality” is, for the artist perhaps even more so than for others, a great effort of will and understanding. For Sessions, the intentions of the composer are not a viable (or reliable) source of knowledge for others:

The testimony of a composer has the authority and the vitality of intensely lived

experience, but his interpretations of that experience are constantly open to revision, even by himself. Too much weight, therefore should not be attached to his reported casual utterances, nor should too important conclusions be drawn from them. (1979, p. 28)

This would thus place Sessions among those who assert that, whether or not we can or do take into consideration composers' intentions in performing their work, it does not go without saying that we should.

In summary then, in keeping with the description of the composer's role from earlier in this discussion, Sessions' view of the composer's awareness of her/his own work depicts the artist as somewhat of a naïve, even unstable individual, who could never be relied upon to account for, or even to understand, her/his own work. Yet the argument against calling on artists' intentions must be more substantial than this.

#### 1.1.4. Composer and Performer as One: From Baroque to Twentieth Century Electroacoustic Music

Due to the seemingly counter-intuitive nature of Sessions' cautionary stance, a position that is diametrically opposed to Sessions' will be considered: In response to his reasoning that the composer cannot be expected to know how her/his music should be performed, an immediate response could be that, surely, the composer does know. Is it not the case, for example, that the most direct and intuitively satisfying response to the question "What version is best?" would be provided in a situation where the composer and the

performer are, quite literally, the same person?<sup>8</sup> There, necessarily, no discrepancy would exist between composer and performer. If, as Cone holds, any interpretation is a partial one in that it cannot reveal all aspects of the musical work in one performance, then it would seem that the composer-as-performer would logically comprise the primary authority in determining which “partial” interpretation is to be endorsed.

Two examples of situations involving composers-as-performers come to mind. In the first instance, that of the Baroque and Classical periods, the composer habitually served as the first and primary performer of his own work.<sup>9</sup> The seventeenth and eighteenth century composers did not benefit from the revolution brought about by the printing press, which permitted multiple editions of a score to be made available to broader audiences. During this era, music tended to be performed either for the Court or for the Church; in both instances the composer performed the roles of conducting and/or performing (or participating in the performance) of the work.<sup>10</sup> As Leonard Stein notes in his essay “The Performer’s Point of View”:

In past epochs [the composer’s] style was usually transmitted directly by the

---

<sup>8</sup>Later in this chapter, Francis Sparshott will argue that, in effect, the performer is not necessarily an authority in terms of the performance. This could imply, by extension, that for Sparshott the composer is not the best authority in terms of the composition.

<sup>9</sup>The use of the term “his” is a conscious one here. Little historical evidence of female composers is available from this period. Current feminist musicology is concerned with redressing this situation. It must be acknowledged, however, that according to official Western music history, prior to the twentieth century musical composition was a decidedly masculine occupation.

<sup>10</sup>In the case of chamber music or small orchestral works, conductors often (as composers and performers) directed the musical ensemble from the harpsichord, which itself was included as one of the instruments in the score.



composer as performer, or by his disciples. It was with the product of an oral rather than a written tradition, with the accompanying danger of increasing distortion or “updating” to please modern tastes. (in Boretz and Cone, 1976, pp. 41-42)

In the case of electroacoustics music of the twentieth century, the composer is the sole performer, however for very different reasons than those cited above. There, the music is composed/performed onto an electronic recording, and a performance of the musical work consists precisely in the playing of that tape in the concert hall, with no intermediary “performer.” That role is filled by the composer.

Turning again to Cone (1968), it would appear that “Composers of electronic music imply by virtue of their activity—and sometimes explicitly state—that a single perfect performance can actually be realized—and by the composer himself” (1968, p. 36). Cone points out, nonetheless, that while composers may well prove to be the best performers of their own music, this is not necessarily the case. According to Cone (1968, p. 36) because of the composer’s intimate association with her/his own works, they may fail to appreciate how these will sound to those less familiar with them. For this reason, they are not the best judges of performances of these works, by themselves or others. Cone points out that a composer’s performance of her/his own work may understate points that need to be emphasized for the sake of the listener, and may also emphasize aspects that may not be heard. Cone contends that “while such a performance may teach a lot to one who already knows the composition well, in the case of electronic music it is the only performance of a musical work for which there is often not even a readable score” (1968, p. 36).

In the case of electronic music, the performance consists in playing a tape of the

original composition. Logically, then, since the performance is the playing of the tape, and the composition is the construction of the tape, technical hitches aside, the composition completely determines the aesthetic of the performance. While, as Cone aptly notes, his argument proves illuminating as to the nature of electroacoustics music, it does little to prove the possibility of ideal performances. As he points out, it could well lead to the conclusion that electronic compositions must always be imperfect (1968, p. 36).

This observation by Cone can be seen as controversial, namely in that he holds that the unchanging nature of electronic performance lessens our appreciation of “performances” beyond the first hearing.

The absolute temporal control possible and necessary in these media permanently fixes our rate of scansion of the art objects; and it is this, I think, more than anything else, that ultimately deadens our response to them. For connoisseur and dilettante alike, they seem to pall relatively quickly; and what fails to hold the attention of the individual tends, in spite of the continuous supply of new audiences, to drop out of circulation altogether. (1968, p. 37)<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup>Cone’s assumption that electroacoustic music is unchanging due to the fact that it is recorded is inaccurate. An interesting counter-example would be what is referred to as *acousmatique*. This practice combines the notion of performance, with electroacoustic diffusion. In an *acousmatique* concert, the “performance” takes place on a stage equipped with multiple loudspeakers, each qualitatively different. The “performer”—possibly, but not necessarily, the composer of the original work—intervenes by programming a computer to function as a mixer, managing the ways in which the sound is channeled through the speakers. As such, in the *acousmatique* concert, the “performer” programs the computer to modify the original sounds, such that certain sounds are maintained or emphasized, or not heard at all. It is described as: “Une théorie plus adaptée à la formation des espèces dynamiques, visant à dégager une cohérence dans les modifications discontinues des états acoustiques et des modèles de perception, une théorie des métamorphoses et de la prolifération musicale reste à venir. J’en propose seulement l’esquisse. Ainsi la théorie de

This is an interesting observation in terms of this discussion; it implies that performances which do allow for the “interpretation” that is absent from the above example would not be vulnerable to this particular shortfall. By extension, two things seem evident: first, that many performers render many “versions” (a fact which is clearly evident); and second, that the various versions which are made available to us are of interest to us. This mirrors Cone’s earlier perspective, that any one performance is incapable of rendering the right version, or even the only necessary one. If Cone is right, then each version brings out different aspects of a musical work, providing different windows through which to appreciate and enjoy the work.<sup>12</sup>

In musical works from the Baroque period, as well as in certain twentieth century composition-performance practices, the composer is both originator of the score and performer. Because of this dual role, the composer can be seen to maintain authority for the performance not only by virtue of interpretive decisions in performance, but also because she/he is the originator of the score. This would obtain in the case of Bach, performing while he conducts from the harpsichord.<sup>13</sup> But what of those instances where the composer is not

---

la musique acousmatique est une théorie de l'intuition des formes et des forces à travers leur qualité de composition.” (F. Bayle [1980], *Support Espace. Cahiers RECHERCHE/MUSIQUE*, no. 5, cited in *Repertoire acousmatique 1948-1980*).

<sup>12</sup>Note that Cone does conclude his discussion of this subject with the assertion that “even though the ideal performance may be a chimera, some performances are, after all, better than others. Some are superlative, and some are unacceptable” (Cone, 1968, p. 38). He does not specify the criteria implemented in the discerning of quality of performance.

<sup>13</sup>This is comparable to practices described earlier where, in contemporary electronic music, the composer directly composes a work onto tape, and a performance of such a work would consist in the diffusion of this tape in a concert hall. In that event, electronic music can be seen as another instance where the role of composer and performer are conflated. As

the person performing the work? What, then, is the relationship between composer and performer, in terms of responsibility for the qualitative aspects of the performance? Responses to this question will be considered here.

#### 1.1.4.1. The Indeterminacy of Performance of the Notated Score: The Emergence of New Notational Styles

The traditional role of notation was to secure certain performance elements, while leaving others to the musicianship passed on to a player by teachers and absorbed from the environment. Many of the decisions made by musicians were not determined by the score: deviation from metric values, differentiation in timbre and intonation, types of pedalling and tonguing and sliding, as well as the verbal indications—often in foreign languages, which were so vague that they were meaningful only to a player culturally conditioned to them (Behrman in Boretz and Cone, 1976, p. 74).

As traditional Western notation proves increasingly inadequate in meeting the needs of contemporary composers, new ways of notating have emerged. While an in-depth discussion of this area extends beyond the confines of this dissertation, it is important to note that contemporary compositions have presented unprecedented challenges to twentieth-

---

mentioned earlier, in *acousmatique* performances, this conflation is not necessary, since the role of “performer” may or may not be filled by the composer. Generally speaking, no scores exist for electronic compositions. Attempts to render a notated version from an electronic tape has proven to be very difficult and is not at all a common practice.

century composers and performers. According to Leonard Stein, Boulez admits to “confronting the performer with a condition of un-predetermined choice containing so many ramifications that no total determination is possible” (Stein in Boretz and Cone, 1976, p. 50).

In his essay “What Indeterminate Notation Determines,” David Behrman observes that new forms of music, and of notating it, have led both composers and performers to realize that “the range of sound which a player is capable of covering is so extensive and so susceptible to nuance that no notation can hope to control the whole of it, especially not at once” (in Boretz and Cone, 1976, p. 75).<sup>14</sup> According to Behrman, the composer takes on the role of dramatist, providing stage directions and dialogue. The score in such a situation, like the script, is “at the mercy of the interpreter who can make a thousand realizations of every symbol, whether of a noise, a note, or a word” (Behrman in Boretz and Cone, 1976, p. 75).

#### 1.1.4.2. The Contemporary Composer: Source of Notational Authority

Despite such awareness of the inability of the score to determine performances, there is still prevalent today an assumption concerning the presumed universal nature of traditional Western notation which characterized the musical practices of earlier centuries. While the composer of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries (as mentioned earlier) often directed and even participated in performances, because of the possibilities afforded by

---

<sup>14</sup>This issue will be raised again in Chapter Three. There, it will be pointed out that not all composers aim to achieve this “control.” John Cage, for example, placed the very notion of non-control at the heart of his compositions.

notation the musical performance itself did not require such participation.<sup>15</sup> The evolution in compositional forms and media that has occurred in the twentieth century, however, has resulted in musical works for which traditionally accepted Western notational practices are no longer adequate. The consequent innovation in notational and performance techniques has led to the creation of an intermediary role for the composer, that of advisor to performers.

Among the theorists to comment on this is Leonard Meyer. In his chapter “Varieties of Style Change” in *Music, the arts, and ideas* (1967), Meyer observes the extent to which the work of twentieth-century composers has challenged not only the composer-performer relationship as well as listening practices, but also how it has created a notational context which, even in non-electronic performances, often calls for a necessary but unconventional intervention on the part of the composer. Contemporary composers have resorted to innovative notational methods in the form of graphic and diagrammatic indications to represent pitch, time, timbre, and other aspects of sound (*see* Appendix 1). These methods can be elaborate, even cumbersome, in order to specify the complex metrical and temporal relationships of their works. Meyer qualifies the current situation as a “crisis in notation” (Meyer, 1967, p. 124). In his view, certain composers have avoided the problem by “allowing

---

<sup>15</sup>In other words, composers participated in musical performances of their works on different grounds than the “advisory” participation of the twentieth century. A detailed discussion of this historical context extends beyond the confines of this dissertation. Recall, however, that the sponsorship of music, historically, was derived through a system of patrons. The church and the aristocracy employed composers in order to be assured regular performances for church services, or the social and political events organized by the nobility. As such the “resident” composer was an active participant in the musical performances themselves. This will be discussed in somewhat more detail in Chapter Two, which addresses the Early Music Movement. Frederick Neumann provides an historical account of how, why, and when the shift from reliance on made-to-order music occurred. He also analyzes the current interest in music from the past.

the desired intricacies of pitch-time relationship to arise out of more or less free improvisation” (ibid.), and others have simply avoided the problem by composing directly on tape.<sup>16</sup>

What is significant about Meyer’s observation is that some of the attempts to solve notational problems represent a kind of return to an oral tradition, wherein the composer must give the performer detailed instructions about how to realize the score’s graphs, or in what style to improvise. This creates a context in which, even if the composer is not actually the performer (as would be the case for the artist who composes directly on electronic tape), the collaboration of the composer is necessary if the performer is to decode the notational system uniquely derived by the composer.<sup>17</sup>

#### 1.1.5. Shared Responsibility for Interpretive Authority: Composer and Performer

Not all instances of musical performance integrate the direct involvement of the composer, for obvious reasons. The interpretation of scores by performers means that musical performances of the same work vary from one performer to another, and for many

---

<sup>16</sup>Meyers does not seem to suggest that this notation problem is the reason for composing on tape, since surely the benefits of this medium extend beyond the confines of the notationally practical. Regardless, it could well be argued that the effacing of the intermediary role of the performer of the composer’s notation bypasses the problem.

<sup>17</sup>Meyer notes that, though an existing symbolic system can be modified, for example by adding new symbols, it is very difficult to change systems (to substitute one for another), particularly in a mass-producing technology in which radical change is costly, and called for by a very minimal number of the total participants in musical activity. He concludes that it is probably more difficult, in principle, to substitute a new notational system for an existing one than it was to create the system currently in use.

it is this very diversity that renders music aesthetically interesting. While it is the case that, in conventional Western practice, performers do not have the license to alter aspects of the musical work such as the key, time, or rhythm, there are nonetheless many aspects of the performance which are open to interpretation.<sup>18</sup> The question of who holds authority for “the work” remains unresolved.

#### 1.1.5.1. Edward T. Cone

Edward T. Cone recognizes the need for the performer to function within a certain freedom with respect to interpretive possibilities. At the same time, however, he accords authority to the composer’s intentions, assigning to performer the role of “recreating” these intentions.

Cone notes that the artist’s interpretive freedom is important in the qualitative construction of the musical work. In an early work, *Musical form and musical performance* (1968), he writes:

Now we go so far in our attempts to reconstruct historically correct interpretations that we often lose the music itself. We forget that, until very recently, composition and performance were almost inseparable, that the present-day concept of interpretation as an independent subject of study and an art in itself is comparatively new and often entirely misleading. (1968, p. 58)

---

<sup>18</sup>As the discussion of Goodman will show in Chapter Three, performance of those elements of the work which have to do with expression are primarily undetermined with respect to the score.



Cone observes here that the notion of performer as having a distinct role separate from the composer is a relatively recent phenomenon. Historically, there was no need to consider the distance between the performer and composer in terms of views (or intentions, desires, interpretations, etc.) since the composer most often was the performer.<sup>19</sup> Cone continues:

Besides[,] the rules of performance of the past were never meant to be applied in a restrictive way. They were never meant to be *applied* at all: they were—so far as they existed—merely expressions of the necessary relationship between the musical form and its physical expression. To take them more literally than that today is to misread them. (1968, p. 58)

Here a certain freedom on the part of the performer is sanctioned. While Cone is consistently concerned that performers recognize the extent to which rhythmic structure is strongly determinant of a work's musical identity, he nonetheless cautions against an exclusive reliance on rules deriving from the past (in terms of history, tradition, style, convention, and so on) as prescriptive of the performance itself. For Cone, to accord a central role to the musical work itself is simply to conform to the traditions in place at the time of composition.

Cone observes that:

Simple song, in the absence of an independent accompaniment, is often able to absorb a good deal of elaboration and variation in performance. In the presentation of a ballad, such modifications, especially if improvised on the spot, lend a convincing verisimilitude to the fiction that the song is being composed for the

---

<sup>19</sup>Or conductor-performer, or conductor. In any case, the composer maintained considerable influence as to the aesthetic qualities of the performance of the work.

occasion. In this case the balladeer impersonates, not a mere storyteller, but a poet-composer in the act of casting his story into a uniquely memorable form. (Cone, 1974, p. 60)

Cone reminds us that even some fully accompanied songs (for example, the Baroque aria) also permit improvisation.<sup>20</sup> The desired effect is that the character, not the singer or the composer, is composing the aria.

In his essay “The Authority of Music Criticism” Cone discusses performance as (re-)interpretation of the composer’s intentions (Cone, 1989, pp. 95-112). Cone begins by asserting: “We can know a piece of music only through its performance, real or imagined” (p. 109). This suggests that it is the performer who somehow “completes” the work; that it is only when the interpretive element is added that the piece is whole. Notwithstanding, Cone does recognize that both composer and performer contribute: “In all fairness, therefore, he [the critic] must try to distinguish the composer’s work from the interpreter’s—what is ‘permanent’ from what is ‘fresh’” (1989, p. 109).

Cone cites an anecdotal example by Roger Sessions as an instance of the kind of problem that can arise when the performer accords too much responsibility to her/his own interpretation. Cone quotes Sessions’ account:

As a very young student, I for years nourished a dislike for the C minor Piano Quartet of Brahms because I had misread an important melody as two short phrases. Had I been aware of the bass-line and of the harmonic progressions, which I knew, but to which, through inexperience, I had not paid sufficient attention, I would have realized

---

<sup>20</sup>By “improvisation,” Cone refers to arias or cadenzas.

it was single eight-measure phrase; I would have realized that a certain disturbing sequential repetition was only an incident in a larger design instead of, as it seemed, a rather mechanical and perfunctory lapse of energy on Brahms' part. (Sessions, in Cone, 1989, p. 109)

Cone's observation is that "Sessions went wrong precisely because he had failed to look beyond his own performance; he had taken a limited percept of his own as authoritative" (1989, p.109).

Cone implies here, (in alignment with Sessions' own self-criticism) that Sessions the performer had failed to grasp the music's internal structure. The performer had somehow misrepresented the music by imposing too much of his own reading onto the work. With this example, Cone emphasizes the fact that the score itself must be sufficiently analyzed, and the work's internal structure recognized, before the performer's interpretive decisions can be added.

This view is mirrored in Cone's discussion of vocal music. There, the singer (as both dramatic character and real person) must "move in accordance with the prescriptions of the musico-dramatic situation—that is, he must be faithful to the text" (Cone, 1974, pp. 60-61). Nonetheless, Cone insists, a performer's concern for appropriately rendering the text (or the score) must also be countered by the performer's insistence on his own interpretation of that text:

The tension between these two aspects of the singer's role thus curiously parallels ... the tension between his tendencies toward freedom as a "person" and the restrictions upon him as an artistic motif. Whenever we see a play, whenever we hear an opera,

and indeed, whenever we listen to a song, we are, or should be, aware of the force of these tensions. (1974, p. 61)<sup>21</sup>

Cone also considers the role of the instrumentalist in constructing the musical work. There, however, Cone notes that the relationships between instrumental agents and the players who bring them to life are virtual.

They are not embodied by their performers as vocal personas are. The singer *enacts* a role, *portrays* a character. The instrumental performer, too, is in part an actor, but one that *symbolically personifies* the agent of which his instrument in turn is but the concrete vehicle—for, once more, the instrument as sound, not as object, is the locus of the agent. (1974, p. 105) [original italics]

Because of this separation, the player (unlike the singer), is not thought of as composing his part. In instrumental music Cone holds (somewhat curiously, it must be admitted), that the music should “give the effect of composing itself through the player by means of an instrument.” He also suggests that the reverse is true, that the music should “give the effect of composing itself through the instrument” (p. 106). In this case both player and instrument are seen as vehicles, a means through which the music itself can exist.

As this discussion would seem to indicate, Cone’s views can be seen as being aligned with those of theorists such as Sparshott (in Alperson, 1986), for whom the score indicates merely a possibility, a point of departure.

---

<sup>21</sup>As a note of interest, this tension, for Cone, may account for audience enjoyment of the arts. He says: “Presenting as they do analogues of the tension between freedom and determinism that most of us feel operative in our own lives, they may explain the peculiar appeal of the arts of performance” (Cone, 1974, p. 61).

#### 1.1.5.2. Leonard Meyer

Meyer, like Cone, distributes responsibility for the musical work evenly between composer and performer. He holds that:

The musical relationships embodied in a score or handed down in an oral tradition do not fix with rigid and inflexible precision what the performers' actualization of the score or aural tradition is to be. They are indications, more or less specific of what the composer intended and what tradition has established. (1956, p. 199)

The performer, according to Meyer, is not a "musical automaton" or a kind of "musico-mechanical medium" through which a score or tradition is realized in sound. Rather, he asserts, the performer is a creator who, by applying a personal sensitivity of feeling and imagination, brings to life the relationships presented in the musical score (1956, p. 199).

Clearly, then, for Meyer a certain amount of freedom is accorded to the performer; however, its extent is variable. Meyer points out that interpretive freedom varies from culture to culture, and between different historical periods within the same culture. Western music has known periods in which composers indicated in great detail their wishes for the performance of their music.<sup>22</sup> Even in such cases, the performer is nonetheless called upon to add to and embellish the score, what Meyer refers to as "the schematic guide given by the composer." Thus the performer's role is to be "always an active creator, shaping and moulding the abstract scheme furnished him by the composer or by tradition" (Meyer, 1956, p. 200). Meyer points out that, quantitatively, this role varies. It can be limited to

---

<sup>22</sup>This detailing of the score reached a peak at the end of the nineteenth century.

communicating the meaning latent in a relatively fixed set of musical relationships.<sup>23</sup> In other cases, Meyer observes that in non-Western churches the performer adds to or alters the materials which serve as a point of departure.

Meyer observes that deviations in dynamics, tempo, rhythm and pitch have been valued historically. C.P.E. Bach, for example, maintained that “certain purposeful violations of the beat are often exceptionally beautiful” (in Meyer, 1956, p. 200). Chopin, similarly, held that “the singing hand may deviate from strict time, but the accompanying hand must keep time” (p. 200). Such deviations can be seen to enrich the music, to enhance its interest and aesthetic calibre.

Indeed, performances are valued for the degree to which the expressive qualities of the music, through the performer, are rendered. As Meyer (1956) has suggested, “The affective aesthetic value of deviations in the performance of music is perhaps even more clearly illustrated by the criticisms which chide the performer for ‘merely playing the notes’ or playing ‘mechanically.’ As Meyer observes, recent research has shown that deviations from exact pitch, tempo, and rhythm are present in most musical performances. Citing Carl Seashore and his associates, Meyer contends (in “Deviation in Performance and Tonal Organization” in Meyer, 1956) that, in contemporary performance at least,

The conventional musical score—the composer’s documentation of the tonal sequences which he feels will express beauty, emotion, and meaning—is for the singer only a schematic reference about which he weaves, through continuous

---

<sup>23</sup>In such an instance, however, I would suggest that Meyer’s use of terms such as “latent” and “relatively” nonetheless prescribe an interpretive treatment of the score.

variations in pitch, a nicely integrated melodic unit (Seashore in Meyer, 1956, p. 201).<sup>24</sup>

Thus, the performer draws on the fixed aspects of the musical score, and builds on these to create the more complete musical performance.

## 1.2. Intentionality and the Musical Performance

### 1.2.1. Introduction

Having established, as evidenced in the above accounts, that musical performance involves artistic interpretation, a central question surfaces concerning the relationship between performer and musical text, namely, what is the responsibility of the performer to the composer? To what extent, for example, is the performer called upon to interpret the text according to the intentions of its originator, the composer? From this pivotal question, others are derived. For example, is knowledge of the composer's intention attainable? And, if so, does such knowledge constitute sufficient grounds upon which to direct the interpretation? And by extension, what freedom, if any, exists for the performer to impose interpretations which modify aspects of the music in aesthetic terms (or on any grounds, for example, historical authenticity, individual performance capabilities, technological advances, etc.)? And finally, is the "authentic performance" (that is, one more aligned with the intentions of

---

<sup>24</sup>This is not to be confused with performances of contemporary music. Meyer obviously means "contemporary performance," because the studies mentioned here have taken place in the twentieth century.

the composer) superior to one in which creative licence leads the music away from strict adherence to what can be termed “authentic,” whether this refers to instruments, style, tempi, etc.? Recent theorists are divided in their responses to such questions. Representatives of the diverse range of perspectives will be provided here.

#### 1.2.2. Munroe C. Beardsley: The Inaccessibility of Composers’ Intentions—A Conventionalist View

Munroe C. Beardsley adopts a stance which rejects any appeal to authors’ intentions (understood as psychological states) as a means of determining the optimal performance. Discussion of his account will begin with an overview of the now familiar position which he proposed in *Aesthetics: Problems in the philosophy of criticism* (1958). His views will first be considered in terms of works of art in general, and then in terms of music specifically.

Beardsley begins by establishing what we mean by “artist’s intention”: it is “a series of psychological states or events in his mind: what he wanted to do, how he imagined or projected the work before he began to make it and while he was in the process of making it” (1958, p. 17). In other words, Beardsley acknowledges that “something was going on” in the artist’s mind when she/he was considering various possibilities for the work of art. While conceding that a response is difficult, Beardsley, in an effort to obtain one, invites the reader to ask of any work “What was its *cause*?” [original italics.] Discussion, then, could turn to a description of the historical situation, and social, economic, and political conditions under



which the works are produced, as well as such personal factors as the domestic affairs and physical health of the artists. Such information, he suggests, may be helpful in explaining why the works were created, and why they assumed their final form (1958, pp. 17-18).

Furthermore, Beardsley asserts a clear distinction between the aesthetic object and the intention in the mind of its creator, a distinction which, he observes, is not always made (pp. 18-19). He reminds us that:

If two things are distinct, that is, if they are indeed two, and not one thing under two names..., then the evidence for the existence and nature of one cannot be exactly the same as the evidence for the existence and nature of the other. (1958, p. 19)

This point is obscured where two distinct things are causally connected, as often occurs in the case of intention and aesthetic object. He explains that, for example, if Jones, Sr., is the father of Jones, Jr., then any evidence about the height of either of them will be *indirect* evidence about the height of the other, due to certain laws of genetics which would hold that the tallness of the father affects the probability that the son will be tall, without rendering it certain (pp. 19-20). Returning to the case of the aesthetic object and intention, Beardsley suggests that we have direct evidence of each. As such, we learn about the object by looking, listening, reading, etc., and we discover the intention through biographical inquiry (letters, diaries, workbooks), or by speaking with the artist. Conversely, however, what we learn about the nature of the object itself serves as indirect evidence of the artist's intentions, and what we learn about the artist's intention is indirect evidence of what the object became. Beardsley thus makes the distinction between internal evidence deriving from direct inspection of the object, and external evidence available from the psychological and

social background of the object, and “from which we may infer something about the object itself” (1958, p. 20). What initially appears to be straightforward, however, is less so when one considers that external evidence could, in fact, provide information which influences the viewer’s (or listener’s) perception of the “internal evidence” of the work of art, as such affecting one’s experience and knowledge of it.

In terms of music, then, the elements are even more complex: Attempts to distinguish the object itself from the processes that produced it are even more difficult in the arts which involve an intermediary process—that of performance—between the creator and the perceiver. Beardsley first observes that the score contains

the creator’s directions to his performers, (and these directions...) can never be as specific as the performance itself. The score does not settle in advance every decision about dynamics and phrasing that must be made by the players and conductor ....  
(1958, pp. 21-22)

The score, then, does not provide complete instructions for all aspects of performance, and the performer must then make certain decisions. Beardsley holds that it is natural to say that “the solution consists in determining how the composer intended the music to sound, though the score cannot fully report that intention” (1958, p. 22). He asserts, moreover, that

the “real” music is what the composer heard one time in his head: the aesthetic object *is* the intention. ... And where blanks still remain, the conductor must fill in to the best of his [sic] ability, guided by reverence for the imagined wishes of the composer.  
(1958, p. 22).

In this passage, Beardsley seems to contradict what he so clearly established earlier. Recall

that he began by pointing out that a clear distinction must be made between the aesthetic object and the artist's intention. Here, however, he states that "the aesthetic object is the intention." How can this be reconciled?

For Beardsley, a means to reconciliation (or at least some attempt at resolution) seems to be located in the distinction between theory and practice, and he is able to suggest this by calling upon common practice. He states that while some performers no doubt operate on his stated principle, namely by filling in as best they can, "guided by reverence for the imagined wishes of the composer," most of them do not. In fact, according to Beardsley, "it would be impossible to operate only on this principle" (1958, p. 22). He suggests that when modern performers decide how to perform a musical work, they are guided not by reference to supposed intention, but by other and more important principles. Decisions faced by performers are myriad: they can have to do, for example, with discrepancies between editions of scores (as in questions of emphasis or rhythm). Another example of choices faced by performers is the case of instrumentation: Should a work be played on a contemporary Steinway grand piano or a Baroque harpsichord? Should the conductor give a certain passage to a different instrument from that which is scored, since contemporary instruments achieve effects which (in the conductor's estimation) better achieve the sound intended by the composer?<sup>25</sup> As Beardsley points out, however, in opting for a revision in scoring based on

---

<sup>25</sup>For example, Beardsley refers to Beethoven's *C minor symphony* (no. 5). There, in the first movement, exposition section (Bars 59-62), the second subject is in E flat, assigned to the horns. In the development, however, where it occurs in C major (Bars 303-306), it is given to the bassoons. Beardsley notes that most conductors now assign the second passage to the horns, as in the first. The standard justification seems to be that "if Beethoven's horns had valves, so that they could play in both keys, instead of being limited to one, he would have let them do so; hence the decision is based on an appeal to intention" (1958, p. 23).

the capacities of contemporary instruments, “we don't decide what should be done after deciding what Beethoven wished, but the other way around” (1958, p.23).

Beardsley explains that in cases such as these, the performer attempts to “determine what details of performance are most appropriate to the broader features of the music that the score does prescribe” (1958, p.23). While resolution of this by different performers may lead to different results, the general task seems to be, according to Beardsley, to call upon relations found within the music itself for guidance.

In conclusion, Beardsley holds that intention (understood as a psychological state) does not play any role in decisions about how scores are to be performed (1958, p. 24). To perform a Bach cantata the way it would have been heard at the time of its composition, we must “investigate the techniques of performance, vocal and instrumental, that were used in his day” (1958, p. 24). Such investigations do not aim to decode the intentions of the composer, to know what sounds the composer had in his own mind *per se*, but rather to determine what the music sounded like at a particular time. Indications of this can be derived from the study of such things as rules for reading the notated score, and the customs of Baroque performance. For Beardsley these did not depend upon a particular individual's intentions, but as public conventions can, in principle, be historically discovered (1958, p. 24).

### 1.2.3. Critical Response to Beardsley

#### 1.2.3.1. Peter Kivy: Composers' Intentions as Accessible but Overridden by Performers' Aesthetic Decisions

While Peter Kivy, like Beardsley, contends that composers' intentions are not the actual authority used to determine musical performance, he holds this view for different reasons than those advanced by Beardsley.

In the above discussion it was seen that Beardsley distinguishes between, on the one hand, history and convention, which are able to be known and, on the other hand, intentions, which are not. Kivy, unlike Beardsley, holds that while knowledge of a composer's intention is available to us (through the documents and accounts that we can access), the practice of consulting such sources is not the way in which performers actually do make decisions as to performance.<sup>26</sup>

Kivy suggests that, in terms of performance, a composer's intentions may indeed provide insight as to the conditions present when the works were written. In practice, however, we tend to first establish our own understanding of the work itself and then make decisions about which of the factors surrounding the work's origins are in fact relevant. A concise synthesis of Kivy's position can be found in Kivy's 1990 work, *Music alone*.

... music alone cannot be defined in terms of the intentions of composers alone, if

---

<sup>26</sup>For Beardsley, composers' intentions are related to their psychological states and are not accessible to us. While Kivy agrees with Beardsley's definition of intention as psychological states, he argues that we can access them through the evidence which the composer leaves. This distinction will become clearer as the discussion unfolds.

only because, one way or the other, we do not seem willing to allow composers' intentions to override our strong musical impressions that a work is music alone or that it is not. (1990, p. 23)

For a more detailed elaboration of this position, however, it may be fruitful to turn to a somewhat earlier work by Kivy, *The fine art of repetition* (1986). There, in an essay entitled "Live Performances and Dead Composers: On the Ethics of Musical Interpretation" (1986, pp. 95-116), Kivy's detailed discussion of the intentional fallacy originates in the form of a response to Beardsley's account. While both authors ultimately reject an appeal to authors' intentions as a means of defining music, they come to this conclusion for different reasons.

Kivy addresses the question of the extent to which performers are responsible to composers who are no longer alive, reasoning on ethical grounds that, in effect, performers do have a moral responsibility to honour the intentions of composers. First, a clear distinction must be made between the two authors' perspectives. Kivy opposes Beardsley's statement: "[I]ntention...does not play any role in decisions about how scores...are to be performed" (1986, p. 95).<sup>27</sup> Recall that Beardsley has argued against the position which holds that a primary function of the musical performer is to determine how the composer intended the music to sound, and then to realize that intention. In particular, Kivy challenges Beardsley's claim that "No doubt some performers operate upon this principle, but it can easily be shown that most of them do not" (1986, p. 95). Kivy's opposition is forceful:

It appears to me that this is false: that composers' intentions *do* play a substantial role in decisions about how scores are to be performed; that *most* performers, as well as

---

<sup>27</sup>Kivy responds here to Beardsley (1958).

musical scholars, *do* operate on the principle of determining and being governed by the intentions of composers, although they labour under the expected quantity of self-deception about which intentions are the composers' and which their own. (1986, p. 95)

As a first step, Kivy counters two arguments that lead Beardsley to his conclusion. Having established how, in fact, considerations of composers' intentions do play a major role in performers' realizations of and decisions concerning scores, Kivy goes on to argue that not only do they play a major role, but they ought to.

Kivy disagrees with Beardsley's suggestion that composers' intentions are inaccessible to us and therefore cannot figure in the decisions made by performers concerning their works. He refers to Beardsley's assertion that:

Since [the performer] must choose among possibilities left open by the score, the criterion he uses must be something besides intention, or in most music he would never be able to decide upon a way of performing it at all. (Beardsley, 1958, cited in Kivy, 1993, p. 96)

The grounds for this are the many instances where a composer has, in effect, not made her/his intentions clear (as, for example, in the case of tempi). Quite simply, the score contains some indications of composers' intentions, but not very many. For Beardsley, the challenge to the performer begins where clarity of score, as indicative of the composer's intentions, ends.

In response, Kivy points out that Beardsley inappropriately restricts sources of our knowledge of composers' intentions to direct and obvious indications such as tempo

markings, phrasing, dynamics, and written directions (*adagio*, *expressivo*, etc.).<sup>28</sup> For Kivy, however, this limited perspective leaves the performer bereft of the vast body of accessible knowledge concerning historical background, performance practice, and musical instruments of earlier periods. The sum of these, Kivy holds,

... gives us a far wider and more substantial, albeit indirect, inferential knowledge of the composer's intentions than the obvious indications that Beardsley seems to suggest exhaust the possibilities. (1993, p. 97)

To support this perspective, Kivy calls upon early music authority Alejandro Enrique Planchart, who confirms that information about what the instruments were like and how they were played provides valuable information to the performer, who absolutely must try to learn all that can be known about performance traditions and the "sound-world" of the work to be performed, as a means of duplicating these as closely as possible (Planchart, 1982, cited in Kivy, 1993, p. 97).<sup>29</sup>

Kivy notes (1993, p. 96) that although Beardsley is aware of historical research, this does not for him constitute a revelation of composers' intentions. Unlike Kivy and Planchart, Beardsley holds that such research provides information not about the composer's intention (which he seems to equate with the sounds the composer heard in his own mind), but rather about what the music sounded like at a particular time. As established earlier, Beardsley

---

<sup>28</sup>Chapter Three will show that such verbal indications are indeterminate in terms of the effect desired by the composer.

<sup>29</sup>Kivy refers to an essay by Alejandro Enrique Planchart, "The Performance of Early Music in America." The perspective adopted by Planchart will be refuted later in this chapter in the context of critical responses to the theoretical premises adopted by proponents of the Early Music Movement.



makes a clear distinction between historical customs and composers' intentions, and insists that the two are not necessarily related.

Kivy holds that knowledge of how music sounded in a particular historical period does not preclude the desire to know the composer's intentions. In effect, he suggests that "*one* of the ways we can find out how Bach intended his music to sound is to find out how in fact it sounded" (1993, p. 98).<sup>30</sup> For Kivy, knowledge of historical customs is included, by extension, in the broader, all-encompassing desire to know what the composer intended. The particular sound that emerges from a given historical context (due to instrument construction, convention, etc.) is seen by Kivy as part of the composer's intentions.<sup>31</sup> Kivy argues that it is no more obvious that a piece of music should be made to sound as it would have in the composer's lifetime, than it should sound the way the composer intended, when there is divergence (1993, p. 98).

Making his second point, Kivy agrees with Beardsley that there is "a connection between finding out what sounds the composer heard in his head and what sounds he intended to be heard [in the performance]" (1993, p. 98). Indeed, for Kivy, "one is a means to the other." Although he acknowledges that certain limitations (in the capacity of instruments to make certain sounds, for example) might render a sound that is less "ideal" than that which the composer had in her/his head, Kivy sees a general correlation between

---

<sup>30</sup>This is available, for example, through knowledge of the instruments of the given historical period.

<sup>31</sup>Here we begin to see the beginnings of a delineation of Kivy's view of intention.

the sound of Bach's orchestra and the sounds heard in the composer's head. Kivy explains how

the orchestral sounds Bach heard in his head were those of the instruments he heard in his world. So, clearly, when we do research into the way the instruments of Bach's orchestra sounded, we are, at the same time, doing research into the way music sounded in Bach's head; and, to generalize from the special case, when we "ask what music sounded like at a particular time," we are, *ipso facto*, asking what the composers of that time heard in their heads. (1993, p. 99)

What Kivy seems to be doing here, however, is reduce the sounds heard in Bach's head to sounds related to the instruments. This is interesting because it provides another clue as to the parameters of what Kivy means when he refers to composers' intentionality: while what it is not about remains unknown, we do know that it is about instrumentation. Kivy, however, makes a large and, I think, risky leap in linking historical fact to sounds in the composer's head and to the actual sound of the performance. Is it not possible to imagine a situation in which the music sounded very different not only from the dicta of historical convention, but also from the composer's (intended?) sounds, those heard in the composer's head?

Imagine, for example, that it would be possible to return in time with the contemporary recording technology available to us today. While the recording would render an impeccable version of how the music actually sounded, that music may well be very different, because of the limitations Kivy refers to above, from that heard in the head of the composer due to musicians' technical capabilities, temperature affecting the instruments, and

so on. Nonetheless, Kivy's claim is that the composer's musical imagination delineated the desired sounds from the instruments available in the particular culture. It is those instruments, played in the way we presume was intended by the composer, that gives us access to sounds in the composer's head. It follows, then, that while we cannot know for sure the exact sounds that the composer heard in her/his head, the score, together with direct or indirect evidence as to the acoustic properties of the instruments specified by the composer (i.e., the *historical* instruments specified) does provide the closest indication possible as to what sounds were intended.<sup>32</sup>

In this way, Kivy disagrees with Beardsley's view of intention, namely that it is somehow "private," and different from the public, "discoverable" nature of past performance practice (Kivy, 1993, p. 99). Again, in order to support this, Kivy returns to his previous argument:

There is nothing necessarily private about an intention: We can, after all, make our intentions known. And the public conventions of Baroque performance practice *are* the products of individual intentions of composers, performers, and audiences. (1993, pp. 99-100)

Kivy's view of intention is clear here: the score provides evidence for the composer's intentions.

To support his claim, Kivy draws on the notion of public documentation as evidence

---

<sup>32</sup>An exception would be cases in which the composer heard sounds which, of the instruments known and available, none were capable of producing the sound he heard in her/his head. In that instance it is presumed that the composer selected the instrument which most closely met her/his requirements. In that case, it could not be said that the instruments reflect the composer's intentions.

of intention in other fields. Comparing Bach's performance practice to his own writing, Kivy argues:

[Bach's performance practice] is part of the public documentation of Bach's intentions, just as what I write in this essay, and where I publish it, are public documentation of mine. And just as one can make reasonable, if not infallible, inferences about my intentions by reading this essay, one can make reasonable, if not infallible, inferences about Bach's intentions by examining the historical artifacts of his day, both the written ones and the others. Intentions are revealed amply by what the intenders leave behind. (Kivy, 1993, p. 100)

Kivy argues that, while not infallible, inferences about intentions can be made based on the visible features of an individual's practice. For a composer, inferences can be made based on evidence that would consist in the score, much in the same way as inferences can be made about a philosopher's intentions based on the article which she/he writes, where it is published, and so on.

Kivy addresses Beardsley's position which holds that we first make our decisions about performance based on internal, musical grounds, and then proceed from there to make inferences about the composer's intention. Kivy agrees that, in practice, Beardsley's account is often the norm, and as such he questions what role composers' intentions play in the process. While the obvious response, he holds, is none at all, he challenges that response on grounds which seem to call on actual practice, which, he suggests, draws on ethical considerations. He states that "performers generally operate on some kind of principle of 'charity' to the effect that the best way is the intended way" (1993, p. 101).

What, then, is to be done when the composer's intentions and the best way to play the piece diverge? Although, again, Beardsley acknowledges that one might assume the response to be "the best way," he observes that "performers and musicologists have an almost unconquerable aversion to admitting that the best way could possibly not be the composer's way" (Beardsley, in Kivy, 1993, p. 101). Because of this, it is rare, he holds, for an instance to emerge wherein "best" and "intended" are admittedly not the same thing.<sup>33</sup>

In conclusion, Kivy disagrees with Beardsley: for Kivy not only do composers' intentions play a major role in determining how music is to be performed, but these intentions weigh heavily, and can even be decisive in questions of musical performance (1993, p. 102).

Kivy addresses the question of why this should be the case, in other words what constitutes its justification. Drawing on distinctions made by Randall R. Dipert, Kivy distinguishes between low-level intentions (type of instrument, fingering, etc.), middle-level

---

<sup>33</sup>Kivy's view of intention as related to convention will be seen to be problematic later in this dissertation. The problem will be foreshadowed here with a very brief example: If historical evidence reveals that Bach wrote a certain piece for harpsichord, this tells us, supposedly, something about his intentions. Contemporary performers, however, often decide to perform such work on Steinway grand pianos, despite their clear knowledge of Bach's intention that it be played on the harpsichord. As Kivy points out (later in this chapter), such performers would tend to argue something like "Performing it on the Steinway is more in keeping with what Bach must have meant." While the performer may qualify the choice of instrument as an aesthetic decision, justification for such a decision may well rely upon an assumption by the performer about choices that could/would have been made by the composer. What seems to be the case, then, is that while Kivy claims that psychological states do exist, and these can be accessed by inferences based on evidence, performers themselves often push such evidence aside, arguing that they know, better than the evidence does, what exactly comprises the composer's intentions. Kivy would argue, however, that in such cases we are using additional evidence in identifying an over-riding intention of the composer to produce a particular musical result. This is the point about different levels of intention.

intentions (the intended sound, temperament, timbre, attack, pitch, and vibrato), and high-level intentions (the effects the composer intends to produce in the listener) (Dipert, 1980, pp. 206-207). In instances where the low-, medium-, and high-level intentions are incompatible, and as such it becomes impossible to realize all of a composer's intentions in a single performance, the high level ones take precedence (Kivy, 1993, p. 102). This would be the case where a certain instrument was scored to produce a certain tone quality so as to achieve a certain expressive effect on the audience, yet that effect might be better attained by playing the musical work on a contemporary instrument unavailable to Bach.

In addition to the distinction made above, Kivy also differentiates between what he calls a strong and a weak sense of what the composer does not intend. Kivy clarifies:

In the strong sense, Bach did *not* intend the instrumental obbligato in the third number of the *Magnificat in D* to be played on the flute or violin of his day; and in the weak sense, he did *not* intend it to be played on the modern French oboe d'amore. ... [Kivy clarifies] Bach intended the obbligato *not* to be played on the flute or violin of his day, but on the oboe d'amore; whereas he did *not* intend the obbligato to be played on the modern French oboe d'amore. I would call the former the *strong* sense and the latter the *weak* one, because Bach chose between the flute, violin, and oboe d'amore of his day, and rejected all but the oboe d'amore; whereas he was, of course, in no position to choose between the oboe d'amore of his own day and the modern French instrument. Bach positively did *not* want his obbligato played on the flute or violin; simply by default he did not intend it to be played on the modern French oboe d'amore. (1993, p. 103)

Drawing, again, on examples which demonstrate the “almost unconquerable urge to bring performance into compliance with intention” (1993, p. 105),<sup>34</sup> Kivy turns to the defence of honouring the composer’s intentions on moral grounds. He couples honouring the wishes of dead composers with the honouring of wishes and intentions of the dead in general. Why would this be so, Kivy questions, wondering what inconvenience would arise as a result of a broken promise to the dead. Surely, he reasons, “just as the dead are beyond thinking and feeling, perception and pain, happiness and unhappiness, they are beyond wickedness and evil” (1993, p. 107).

Kivy draws on the work of Thomas Nagel, who investigates (and ultimately rejects) the concept of “what you don’t know can’t hurt you” (Nagel, 1979). He concludes that it is an injury to a human being to betray her/him, even if that human never knows and hence never experiences the pain of betrayal or its discovery: “This broken promise is an injury to a living man, irrespective of his finding out or not” (Kivy, 1993, p. 109). This principle still seems difficult to apply to the dead, who are no longer present to “find out,” and Kivy turns to the work of Joel Feinberg for further elucidation. Feinberg holds that the dead person’s earlier goals and interests extend beyond the harm of their death, and so, “When death [or an event after death] thwarts an interest, the interest is harmed, and the harm can be ascribed to the man who is no more, just as his debts can be charged to his estate” (Feinberg, cited in Kivy, 1993, p. 110).

Linking the above moral positions, (in agreement with Aristotle, Nagel, and what he

---

<sup>34</sup>As a practical example, Kivy cites the common claim, “It can’t be the composer’s intention, because the other way sounds better” (Kivy, 1993, p. 105).

considers common moral sensibility), Kivy concludes that for posthumous harm to a person's interests to occur, "the awareness of the subject is no more necessary than it is for harm to occur to certain of his interests at or before death (Feinberg, cited in Kivy, 1993, p. 110).

As Kivy points out, however, the fact of demonstrating that we do have moral obligations to dead people does not, *ipso facto*, show that we have obligations to honour the intentions of dead composers concerning the way their works are performed. "Perhaps we just don't in fact have such obligations to composers, for reasons other than that the composers are dead" (1993, p. 111). Following Dippert's reasoning, he wonders what happens when composers' works are not played, in instances where the intentions of such composers surely were for their music to be played. And what about disobeying the wishes of a composer to have scores destroyed? (1993, p. 111). Clearly, Kivy points out, certain duties can be overridden by other and stronger ones. Certain intentions are defensible (as is, he points out, the Sixth Commandment, "Thou shalt not kill"), and so it is simply not the case that, because we recognize an obligation to honour the performance intentions of dead composers, we must honour them in every instance (1993, p. 112).<sup>35</sup>

The issue of when composers' intentions should be honoured is thus called into question. In Kivy's example, Beethoven's metronome markings provide an instance where

---

<sup>35</sup>Kivy provides the example of the intentions of Handel, who intended much of his opera music to be sung by castrated men. By not honouring his intentions the works will never sound the way they should without castrati. However, we rightly ignore Handel's intentions on moral grounds.



we are called upon to evaluate whether to honour the composer's wishes or not.<sup>36</sup> Because the metronome of Beethoven's time was in the early stages of its development, it is possible that the numbers indicating tempi actually meant something quite different in Beethoven's period than that which they mean today. However, what if they do not? Then we are faced with a difficult decision. Kivy proposes that:

... if indeed it turns out that the numbers don't lie, and if those tempi really deprive us of truly enjoyable and musically satisfactory performances, then Beethoven's intentions are defeated on moral as well as on aesthetic grounds: on aesthetic grounds because the musical price we must pay to honour his intentions is too high; on moral grounds for the obvious reason that we owe *some* consideration, at least, to the maximization of musical pleasure in the auditors of these works. (1993, p. 113)

Following this reasoning of having established a moral obligation to honour the intentions of the composer, one could clearly argue that this obligation is diluted with the introduction of the need to consider the musical pleasure of the listener. However, just as the Sixth Commandment is not nullified because we also admit that it is right to kill an assailant in order to protect our lives or the lives of others, so too the principle of our responsibility toward the intentions of the composer is not nullified by the occasional need to overrule the composer's intentions in favour of other more important factors (Kivy, 1993, pp. 112-113).<sup>37</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> These marking have generated ongoing controversy in musicological circles. This example will figure in Chapter Three in Richard Tarsukin's response to Goodman concerning notated verbal instructions and metronome markings.

<sup>37</sup> Again, responsibility for deciding when, how, and by whom such decisions are to be made, even when based on aesthetic grounds, has still not been determined. This question will be addressed shortly.

We know that when certain circumstances render the fulfilment of obligations impossible, these obligations are not erased, even though they are unfulfillable (Ruth Barcan Marcus in Kivy, 1993, p. 113).<sup>38</sup> Yet, what are the factors that determine when and under what circumstances one can rightly determine the fulfilment of obligations to be impossible?

Kivy clearly asserts that we do have obligations to respect the intentions of dead composers. He holds that

it does not reduce to nothing our obligations to the performance intentions of dead composers to maintain that *sometimes—how frequently and under what circumstances I will not venture to say*—they are overridden by aesthetic considerations, or moral ones, or a combination of the two. (1993, p. 113) [italics added]

In condoning but not defining the “how often?” or the “when?” of our decisions to override the intentions of dead composers, Kivy does several things. On the one hand, he reminds us of the moral obligation to honour composers’ intentions and appeases our musical intuitions by calling upon real life musical practices which seem to require that intentions sometimes be broken. On the other hand, however, he leaves undefined the conditions under which such violations of intentions might occur.

Kivy addresses the question of how to interpret the intentions of the dead in light of posthumous contingencies of which they are, by necessity, unaware. He states:

I have not suggested that we cannot reinterpret the wishes and intentions of dead

---

<sup>38</sup>For the notion of unfulfillable obligations, Kivy draws on Barcan Marcus, “Moral Dilemmas and Consistency,” *Journal of Philosophy* (11) 1980, p. 126.

composers in light of present musical conditions. On the contrary, I think we have to do so, as in any other situation in which we feel an obligation to the dead, and must determine what exactly that obligation is, or how best to fulfil not just its letter but its spirit. (1993, p. 115)

Again, the operative point here seems to be the distinction between letter and spirit: Kivy acknowledges the importance of fulfilling the spirit of the obligation. The question remains, however, about *spirit*, particularly when “spirit” and “letter” diverge. Presumably, the same principles are applied here as in other cases of conflicting obligations or of interpreting past expressions of intent. Kivy cautions that:

The practical pitfall in such counterfactuals ... is that they can easily become irrefutable apologetics for doing anything you please. If the composer said *p* in 1720, who can prove that he wouldn't have said *not-p* in 1988? So if you want to play the *Art of the fugue* with a quartet of kazoos, why not? Surely Bach *might have*—which easily slips into *would have*—intended his work for these instruments, had he only lived long enough to hear and fall in love with them. (1993, p. 115)

The kind of historical speculation that surrounds considerations such as one's speculating on the result if the artist might/could/would/should have done so and so, which may lead to greater respect for intentions, may also lead away from it. Kivy's position, however, remains steadfast:

Nevertheless, that there are unscrupulous ways of applying a principle does not render the principle either useless or invalid; nor can we, I think, dispense with the present one without rendering the whole notion of honouring the wishes and

intentions of dead composers (or anyone else) completely nonsensical. (1993, p. 115)

Kivy holds fast to his argument that composers' intentions are deeply entrenched in performers' thinking, to the extent that these intentions ("either by logic or illogic") seem to be a criterion of "great, and sometimes decisive, significance" (1993, p. 115). In conclusion Kivy asserts that if we can think of the composer's way and the best way as logically distinct, "sometimes we owe it to a dead composer to play his music as he intended, rather than in what we may think is the best way possible" (1993, p. 116).

Summarizing Kivy's position, then, it is quite clear that while he proposes a well-developed line of reasoning as to why composer's intentions should be respected, he concedes that, in practice, the situation is quite different. Indeed, as was shown, Kivy observes that often performers themselves determine the best way of performing a piece, and then attempt to bring the notion of what the composer meant into alignment with their own decisions. As such, while we may conclude that Kivy believes we should respect composers' intentions, he recognizes that this is not always what is done. Again, theory and practice seem to be, to a certain extent at least, irreconcilable.

#### 1.2.3.2. Francis Sparshott: The Integration of Performers' Intentions

Like Kivy, Francis Sparshott (1967) objects to Beardsley's view of "the intentional fallacy" as developed in his *Aesthetics*. According to Sparshott, Beardsley's account holds the object of criticism as the aesthetic object, and views anything extraneous to the aesthetic object as irrelevant to criticism. Sparshott observes that, for Beardsley, "the performer's

intention is not part of the percept, but part of its cause, and thus extraneous” (Sparshott, 1967, p. 167).<sup>39</sup> This reading, Sparshott points out, depends on our taking the performance as an aesthetic object rather than a work of art, “as if it were a natural object and not a performance at all” (1967, p. 167). And to this, Sparshott responds adamantly:

And one cannot, does not, and should not, take performances so. How can one possibly, in reading a poem or looking at a picture, ignore the fact that it is the product of a human agency, and what could one gain by doing so? (1967, p. 167)

Thus, if we accept that criticizing with reference to the performer’s intentions is not advancing psychic causes (presumably no more so than is the case for references to the composer’s intention, since we know that a human being created the work, and can know at least something about what the performer intended), no more is it misconstruing a part-whole relationship as a means-end relationship: ... it cannot be reduced to analysis of the percept as percept, because to be a performance is not to be a percept, any more than it is to be the effect of a cause (1967, pp. 167-168). How, then, does Sparshott integrate artists’ intentions in his discussion of the performance? He first points out that in referring to the means taken by the performer to achieve the proposed end, one analyzes the performance strictly as a performance, something done by someone “who is up to something humanly intelligible” (1967, p. 168).

For Sparshott, intentions are not antecedent states of mind, although they may well involve antecedent thought. For him, “to state an intention is to specify a state of affairs to

---

<sup>39</sup>Note that the discussion of intention refers here to performers’ intentions, and not to those of the composer, as was the case earlier.

be achieved, in the light of which the action performed can be seen to fit into its human context” (p. 168). For performances, this means that the intention must be seen as the complete performance itself, “the situation brought about conceived as intended”:

to interpret a performance in terms of intentions is thus nothing more than to interpret it as structured for understanding and hence for appreciation, as part of the world of human interaction. Thus to understand a performance is, as Collingwood said of the understanding of historical events, to re-think what was done rather than to describe what took place, to bring oneself and others to see how what was done made sense as the thing to do in the circumstances. (1967, p. 168)

As such, critical explanation is quite unlike historical explanation: in the former, as opposed to the latter, the circumstances are not an historical situation but simply the performance itself that is to be performed, that which presents a problem that may not be antecedent to its solution. Sparshott notes that this is far too pervasively familiar to be explained in simpler terms; all it requires is that one resist calling upon the kind of causal interpretation that would be appropriate to the natural sciences. Sparshott acknowledges, and rightly so, that this nonetheless presents a tremendous challenge for many: rethinking is somehow linked to reconstructing psychic antecedents. Sparshott points out that while thinking that the “intention” invoked is, indeed, “nothing but the retrojected shadow of what was in fact done” (1967, pp. 168-169), this perspective fails to take into account the fact that retrojection is necessary since it amounts, not to a postulation of an unobservable psychic entity, but to the reconstruction of the performance itself in terms that make its nature as a performance clear. He observes, in fact, that attempts to explain an historical event or a criticism of a

performance, often amount to instances where the word “interpretation” is used for critical explanation. He reminds us that only signs can be interpreted, and not natural objects or occurrences as such (1967, p. 169).

Thus, the performance, Sparshott argues, involves a performer and an act of performing. While the performance does take place in a context, the critic is called upon to hold the context in suspension. The difficulty in criticism, Sparshott suggests, is that a performance is communication and action as well as isolated precept, and these two must be held separate in one’s mind. “We do not have to choose between them, nor do the arguments that compel us to recognize one aspect compel us to reject the others” (1967, p. 169). All of this leads Sparshott to recapitulate:

The interpretation by intention now appears to be no more than the interpretation of the performance that makes the best sense of the performance as something that could conceivably be intended to be performed. In other words, the performer’s *statement* of what he intended, even when available, is not authoritative. (1967, p. 170)

The performer’s declaration does have a privileged position, but it is not a pre-emptive one.<sup>40</sup>

---

<sup>40</sup>It should be noted that this section of Sparshott’s argument is only a fragment of his more extensive chapter entitled “Criticism and Performance.” This discussion not only considers the nature of criticism in terms of the performance, but also questions the how of criticism, and the ways in which to approach the act of good criticism. Sparshott argues that the point of seeking a favourable interpretation is to ensure a comprehensive one, and the requirement of comprehensiveness takes precedence over that of favourability. Briefly, Sparshott revives what he calls “a critical rule of thumb”: always seek the best case that can be made for a work, or you may overlook an important factor in its structure. This position, however, requires two qualifications: The first is that an interpretation may be favourable

In his earlier and well-known work *The structure of aesthetics* (1963) Sparshott further considers the role of intention in the evaluation of musical performances. While he argues that performers' intentions cannot be counted on as an entirely reliable authority as to what an artist does, he does nonetheless accord the performer the role of a privileged participant-listener who, by virtue of occupying this role, fulfills a role of some authority.

Sparshott holds, however, that since the interpretation of works of art is a complex endeavour, knowledge of performers' intentions may well contribute to the creation of a context of understanding (Sparshott, 1963, p. 31). Not only does Sparshott argue that such information will "show us what to look for," he seems to take this notion even further in suggesting that it will create a more just context for interpretation: "From the artist's point of view the denial of appeal to the artist's intentions has the disadvantage that it takes the interpretation of an artist's work out of his control and gives the critic irresponsible power" (1963, p. 31).

Here, Sparshott asserts that if we do not take into consideration what the artist (the performer) intended to do, valuable information about the performance itself is missing, thus

---

only at the price of being incomplete. The second is that of two alternative interpretations, the one that would represent the greater achievement is to be preferred. This second qualification appears to be a potentially serious ambush; what and who determines "greater achievement"? Fortunately, however, later in the essay Sparshott addresses the indeterminate nature of such evaluations: "Serious disagreements among competent persons about the nature of performances, especially when the judges are of different cultural backgrounds and epochs, are likely to reflect different views on the magnitudes of different kinds of achievement" (Sparshott, 1967, p. 173). In closing, Sparshott concludes that the final critical decision is made neither by the performer nor by the critic, but by everyone; there are "no critical courts of last appeal," only the public (in determining what interpretations do or do not win acceptance) and the individual through the making of personal decisions in accepting and rejecting (Sparshott, 1967, p. 175).



augmenting the “interpretive” authority of the critic. This perspective is taken up in far greater detail in Sparshott’s later work, *The concept of criticism* (1967).

There he again considers the question of the extent to which calling upon the performer’s intentions is a valid means of determining the success of a performance.<sup>41</sup> He outlines the options available so as to determine “what performance has been performed” (1967, p. 163). The performer, he concedes, would seem like the most likely candidate. How, though, does one call on the performer’s intentions? One suggestion would be to turn to the performance itself as emblematic of the performer’s decision. This, however, is problematic since it leads us back to the point of departure: if knowledge of intentions resides merely in the performance, any discussion of intentions is rendered superfluous. Another suggestion would be to ask the performer directly, but this, according to Sparshott, is of no use:

... if he did what he intended to do, his intentions will be realized in his work and we did not need to ask him; if he failed to do what he intended to do, his intentions are irrelevant to our interest in his actual performance. (1967, p. 163)

Besides, reasons Sparshott, one’s view of one’s own intentions is likely to change over time, and so the artist’s invoking of intentions “may be mere retrojections in time of a performance, rather than the other way round” (1967, p. 164). Sparshott provides a searing example:

---

<sup>41</sup>Success is a precarious term to use, since certainly the ways in which “success” *per se* is determined depend upon the criteria for evaluation. “Determining the success” here has something to do with the level of appreciation on the part of the listener: what is being heard, how can it be understood in the broader musical spectra of performances, similar and different, how “well” the performer is convincing us of the merits of the interpretation, revealing a certain understanding, and so on.

It is when a critic tells us of an artist's intentions in sculpting what later turns out to be a piece of driftwood that we realize most sharply the delusive character of the appeal to intentions. (1967, p. 164)

Despite this evidence as to why the performer is not the most effective source of elucidation concerning the performance, Sparshott nonetheless returns to the performer since, despite contrasting evidence, "provided the performer knows what he is doing, his statements of what he is up to will at the very least be the most valuable clues we could possibly have...." (1967, p. 164).<sup>42</sup> Sparshott acknowledges that this is ambiguous, for if we mean that the performer should be acting consciously, we are no further ahead. If we mean that the performer is acting skilfully, we are equally stalled: one may act consciously, do well, and still not be aware of the aesthetic or social implications of one's performance (1967, p. 164).

In maintaining the intuition that, somehow, the artist is an important source for clarification regarding the musical work, we remain tied to the belief that artists know their work much more intimately than any one else is likely to, or could for a considerable period after its first presentation. Sparshott characterizes the performer, then, as one who holds a

---

<sup>42</sup>The phrase "knows what he is doing" seems ambiguous: it could be understood to mean provided the performer is performing at a certain respected standard of performance, as in "I hope that my doctor knows what he is doing." It could also refer to a state of self-awareness, as in "the performer is conscious (and can articulate to us) what he intends to do, is doing, and what he has done." Sparshott eradicates this confusion later in the sentence when he concedes that "performers normally know what they're doing." From this we deduct that Sparshott does not refer to the former reading, but rather the latter, since he could not make the assumption that all performers know what they're doing in the sense of "play at a high level of excellence."

“privileged position,” “thus simply that of a singularly well-informed critic.”<sup>43</sup> In considering this reading, Sparshott turns to the fact that, often, knowledge of the true subject of a poem, or of its destined reader can, in fact, change our appreciation of it.<sup>44</sup> For Sparshott, information that has to do with the intentions of the author may be held as part of the performance if the reference that it makes beyond the work is accessible to the work’s primary public. Intentions that are private, however, even if they are stated afterwards, are not part of the performance.

When, then, can intentions be considered part of the performance? Sparshott draws our attention to a literary convention that distinguishes the preface to a work, or the title of a picture from the introduction to the work, or words painted into the picture. This convention would seem to indicate that, in certain instances at least, intent does figure in the public reading of a literary work. Yet does this not bring us full circle, back into unclear territory?

All this confusion, according to Sparshott, rests on a misunderstanding both of what a performance is and of what an explanation in terms of intention is. The objections to

---

<sup>43</sup>Recall that R. Sessions, discussed earlier in this chapter, asserted that the composer was not necessarily a reliable source of information about the work.

<sup>44</sup>In the elaboration of this argument, Sparshott plays with the difference between writing “what appears to be an ode to his mistress, but is in fact an ode to his pet dog” (1967, p. 165). He points out, and rightly so I think we must agree, that if one knows these facts, the poem is changed, and may be much improved by an irony that then becomes noticeable. No one would have known, however, if the author had not told them. Conversely, it could also be the case that increased knowledge concerning the intentions or origins of a poem could render it less valuable, subjectively speaking. For example, if this poem was originally read and perceived as a love poem, and that person was so moved as to ardently copy it and send it to her/his mistress, considerable problems could arise if either learned that it was written as an ode to a pet dog.

making the performer's intention the basis of interpretation maintain, ultimately, that the appeal to intentions turns away from the phenomenon itself to something else, the performer's frame of mind. This, for Sparshott at least, is merely one of the causal antecedents of the phenomenon.<sup>45</sup> Moreover, to view the question this way "is to speak as though the performance were one phenomenon and the performer quite another" (1967, p. 166). This perspective would have been implicit, for example, in the above reference to the artist's knowledge of his work,

as though a performer were a bystander at his own performance, differing from other bystanders only in that he has a closer view of it. But of course he is not the spectator of his performance but the performer of it; he does not have knowledge about it, even in the unmediated way in which one has knowledge of one's own private aches and pains, but rather knows it in and through doing it. (1967, p. 167)<sup>46</sup>

#### 1.2.4. Michael Baxandall: Intention as Other Than Psychological States

As is evident in this chapter thus far, the notion of intention is often related to various psychological states; that is, intention has to do with what was going on in the artist's mind. This is the case both for those who do favour calling on artists' intentions, as well as for

---

<sup>45</sup>Note that Michael Baxandall holds precisely this view: that intention is inextricably tied to the "causal antecedents of the phenomenon" or, more precisely, the conditions which led to the creation of the work. Baxandall's argument will be discussed in the following section.

<sup>46</sup>Sparshott refers here to the work on intentions by A.I. Melden (1961), *Free action*.

those who do not. According to such accounts, calling on intentions has been seen to amount to gaining access to what the artist or composer intended, meant, desired, hoped for, etc. While an extensive review of the literature on intentionality is beyond the scope of the present discussion, it is essential to consider at least one alternative perspective.

Michael Baxandall provides very different grounds for approaching the question of what, exactly, we might mean when we call on an artist's intention. In his 1985 work *Patterns of intention*, Baxandall shares Beardsley's belief that causality has something to do with the issue of intentionality. Whereas Beardsley held that intentional states are, quite simply, not accessible except as they are evidenced in the work itself, Baxandall succeeds in constructing a framework which successfully avoids discussion of artists' psychological states altogether. For him, the way in which to understand the work of art is through an understanding of the circumstances that led to the creation of the work.<sup>47</sup>

Baxandall makes several important points. First, he identifies what we are actually doing in describing the work of art "...what one offers in a description is a representation of thinking about a picture more than a representation of a picture" (1985, p. 5). For Baxandall, when we hold that we explain a picture as covered by a description, this can be viewed as another way of saying that we "explain, first, thoughts we have had about the picture, and only secondarily the picture" (1985, p. 5). This provides an interesting clarification in terms of music. When we talk about a symphony or a quartet, for example, alluding in descriptive terms to its characteristics, what we are actually doing is explaining our own thoughts about

---

<sup>47</sup>Baxandall's discussion deals primarily with visual art. The subtitle of his work is *On the historical explanation of pictures*. Nonetheless, his argument is of relevance across the arts, and so are pertinent to the question of intentionality in music.

the musical work itself. This distinction is important as it separates and isolates the listener's thinking about the work from claims about what the work actually is. If this distinction were not made, the jump from how the work is to what the artist meant would be smoother and more susceptible to gratuitous inferences about artists' intentions. In effect, Baxandall's distinction provides a safeguard against such inferences.

The second point of interest raised by Baxandall concerns causality. He holds that to ask simply what are the causes of or in a work is too unfocused to do anything with (1985, p. 26). In order to make the issue more manageable, he distinguishes two questions. The first is a question about where there is a work of art. The second, more importantly, concerns why the work has the form it does, and the circumstances of the work's genesis (1985, pp. 26-29). He acknowledges that "these are not insulated from each other, either in their historical sequence or in the actors' minds, but the distinction is necessary to our thought about the whole affair" (1985, p. 26).

Baxandall contends that in order for a work of art to come to be, there must be a series of what he refers to as "local conditions" surrounding its origins. These are objective circumstances which have a real presence apart from the mind of the creator. In other words, an artist addresses an objective problem within a circumstantial frame of cultural facts that affect her/his perception both of the problem and of the solution (1985, p. 30). The work, then, is a concrete solution to a problem.

Having mapped out his notion of causality, Baxandall turns to the question of intention. One element in the causal field behind a work of art, he holds, would be volition,

which overlaps with what we call ‘intention.’<sup>48</sup> He states clearly that he does not respond to the question of whether it is necessary to appeal to an artist’s historical intention in interpreting a work of art. The reasons why one would do so (as a means of establishing any determinate meaning in a work, that the relation between intention and actual accomplishment is needed for evaluation, etc.), refer to an intention different from that of Baxandall. Instead, he is firmly committed to an intention which is not a particular psychological state or even an historical set of mental events in the artist’s head, in light of which one would then interpret the works. Instead, Baxandall’s intentionality is “primarily a general condition of rational human action which I posit in the course of arranging my circumstantial facts” (1985, p. 41). This does assume a purposefulness (or intent) in the historical actor but even more in the historical objects themselves. “Intentionality in this sense is taken to be characteristic of both. Intention is the forward-leaning look of things” (1985, p. 42).<sup>49</sup>

In light of Baxandall’s work it can be seen as valid to view the question of intentionality in terms that extend beyond a concern with the psychological states of the composer. What the composer meant, according to accounts like that of Baxandall, refers to the sum total of factors which contributed to the final outcome being what it was.

---

<sup>48</sup>Baxandall uses the inverted comma in his discussion.

<sup>49</sup>As such, it is possible for the artist not only to be unaware of her/his “intentions,” but to disagree with someone else’s view of what she/he intended, if intentions are understood in this way. This is because it is feasible for another person to have a deeper awareness or understanding of the conditions which led to the creation of the works. For example, another’s knowledge of historical climate, aesthetic trends, or materials may extend beyond the level of awareness of the artist. The artist is, nonetheless, operating within a framework wherein such factors do contribute to the outcome of the work. This possibility, while seemingly counterintuitive, derives from the fact that, for Baxandall, what the artist meant refers to those factors which contributed to the work’s outcome.

## 1.5. Conclusion

Chapter One aimed to discern the locus of responsibility for the musical work. Discussion began with a view that accorded responsibility for the musical work to the composer. Dent (1924) argued that the performer's role is to capture in music the composer's idea, which is fixed and retrievable through musical notation.

Sessions (1979) discussed the extent to which the composer can be considered authoritative in terms of performance of the music she/he composes. Sessions suggested that only on some occasions was the composer a reliable source of authority concerning her/his own work, and that the performer was frequently in a better position to make aesthetic decisions.

This led to a consideration of situations wherein the roles of composer and performer merge, thus averting the issue altogether. These contexts were included, for example, in the case of Baroque music as well as twentieth century electroacoustics compositions. Also noted was the fact that, in contemporary contexts, conventional Western notation is at times inadequate as a means of indicating composers' intentions. In this case, the composer can be called upon to occupy an advisory role when working with performers.

Concerning the locus of authority for defining the qualitative nature of the musical work, both Cone (1968, 1974, 1989) and Meyer (1956, 1967) argued that responsibility is shared by composer and performer and, as such, both contribute to interpretive aspects of the work.

In the second section of the chapter, the question of intentionality emerged as critical



to the discussion. It was questioned, even in the event that we may determine that composers are more fully responsible for the musical work than performers, whether it is possible to know composers' intentions.

This issue was considered in tandem with that of whether we are morally obligated to respect composers' intentions if these are accessible to us. For Beardsley (1958) intentions are psychological states and, as such, are not accessible to us. Kivy (1993) also sees intentions as psychological states, but he argues that these intentions are accessible to us since we can make inferences about them through physical evidence. Such evidence is available in the form of the score, or through accessing aspects of the historical, sociological and musical conditions, practices, and conventions that prevailed at the time of the creation of the musical work. These determinants inform the aesthetic decisions involved in performing the work. In the process of mapping out his account, Kivy (1989) investigated the ethical factors involved in matters relating to the intentions of deceased composers. He concluded that while we do have a moral obligation to honour the wishes of deceased composers, we are not always capable of fulfilling these obligations. Finally, Baxandall (1985) separates intention from psychological state, arguing that the notion of the composer's intentions amounts to the sum total of the factors which contributed to determining the final outcome of the work.

## CHAPTER TWO

### The Early Music Movement: Historical Authenticity and Composers' Intentions

#### 2.0. Introduction

The critical question raised in Chapter One—What role should composers' intentions play in determining the best performance?—remains as yet unanswered. While Cone (1968, 1974), Meyer (1956), and Sparshott (in Alperson, 1986) argued in favour of a sharing of responsibility between composer and performer, according to Baxandall (1985), Beardsley (1958) and Kivy (1993), knowledge of the conditions surrounding the work's creation leads to knowledge of the composer's intentions. This will be further investigated in this chapter, by means of an examination of an extreme example: the Early Music Movement. Proponents of that movement argue that the best way to respect composers' intentions is to assure the historical authenticity of performance practices—involving authentic instruments, prescribed numbers of musicians, original ornamentations, and so on—and that this, by extension, will result in the best performance.<sup>50</sup> Consideration of the Early Music Movement inevitably

---

<sup>50</sup>An interesting tension emerges immediately. The Early Music Movement is one which calls for historical authenticity in performance practice. Ostensibly, the movement is not concerned with how the music actually sounded in its time (since scores may be discovered two hundred years after their composition, never having been performed), but, rather, with how it would have sounded if it had been performed in its time. This may be demonstrated by the hypothetical example of a work that was composed in the year 1624 by a Baroque composer, but was not performed until the Romantic period. Whereas music from both eras can be deemed today to be "Early Music," the authority of origins, in principle, would be the decisive factor. This opens the door to considerable discrepancy concerning historical authenticity in situations, for example, where the intermediary era may have altered

engenders discussion of myriad seemingly peripheral aspects of early music performance practices: instruments played, concert venues employed, ornamentation adopted, and so on. According to proponents of historical authenticity, these elements are important in that they provide us with the requisite knowledge to reconstruct prevailing practices in any given historical period. This chapter will begin with an initial overview of the Early Music Movement, providing the foundation for critical discussion to follow later in the chapter.

## 2.1. Overview of the Early Music Movement

Evidence of the current magnitude of the Early Music Movement consists of the large and increasing number of organizations devoted exclusively to the performance of music of the more or less distant past. While these groups differ in terms of their focus on the historical periods and musical forms, their central concern is “authenticity” of performance. Frederick Neumann, in his essay “The Rise of the Early Music Movement” (1989, pp. 3-16), discusses the origins of this movement in some detail. According to Neumann, authenticists favour the use of historical instruments (either antiques or reproductions), and apply “what *they* [italics added] consider to be historically correct techniques.”<sup>51</sup> The movement

---

the nature of the work itself, either through actual performance practice, or through notational adjustments carried out in order to render it more in keeping with the historical period of its performance. Ensuing questions of pure, purer, and purist render the issue a complex one.

<sup>51</sup>Frederick Neumann (1989), a musicologist and recognized authority in the area of performance practice, opens his chapter “The Rise of the Early Music Movement” with the conspicuous qualifier “what *they* [italics added] consider to be historically correct techniques” (p. 3). Neumann’s choice of phrasing foreshadows his own scepticism and that

encompasses not only professional groups, but also organizations based at universities, colleges, schools of music and conservatories around the world. The movement's powerful presence is illustrated by the fact that as many as seventy-five per cent of the new recordings of pre-1800 music originate from the "authentic" organizations (Neumann, 1989, p. 3).

According to Neumann the Early Music Movement has enjoyed quasi-imperialistic expansion. Twenty years ago the historical period referred to by the movement was considered that of pre-1750. It then developed to include the later eighteenth century, including Mozart and Haydn, and is presently seen as including nineteenth century composers such as Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Chopin, and Berlioz.<sup>52</sup>

---

of others like him, who reject or at least seriously question the belief that historical authenticity (even if desirable) can be reduced to the simple implementation of the methods described. Later in this chapter, theorists such as Subotnik (1991), Taruskin (1995), and Wolsterstorff (in Alperson, 1966) will provide additional arguments as to why and how the Early Music Movement can be seen to be highly problematic. Neumann's phrasing suggests a hint of scepticism as to whether "what they consider" authentic actually is. It is unclear whether Neumann believes that they have, simply put, made mistakes in their judgements, or whether the entire movement is invalid.

<sup>52</sup>Neumann notes that the end of this expansion is not yet in sight (1989, p. 3). The problematic factor, it would seem, is that time does not cease its relentless movement forward. What is new today will not remain so, and the parameters of the movement thus remain in constant flux. Given the accelerated rate of change prevalent in this century (particularly with the advent of increasingly sophisticated technology), it is not inconceivable to anticipate that by the early twenty-first century, the music of contemporary music composers could be considered eligible to be performed under the auspices of the Early Music Movement.

### 2.1.1. Factors Contributing to the Current Interest in Early Music

Neumann (1989) observes that major changes in attitude towards music from the past have occurred in recent centuries. The shift in preference from the new to the old, he argues, has contributed to the current interest in early music. Neumann identifies five aspects that can be seen as central to this shift: the first is scholarly interest in history; the second is the importance of sacred music; the third is the popularity of secular songs and dances; the fourth is the performance of music of the past for its aesthetic qualities; and the fifth is the striving for historical authenticity in the performance of early music. This final point is clearly the focus of this discussion. The first four attitude shifts will be briefly discussed as a foundation for approaching the fifth.

The first factor, the scholarly interest in the music of antiquity, has led to the production of entire libraries of books from the fifteenth century on. The majority were scholarly works of a purely theoretical nature. The authors of these were primarily Greeks and Romans, including a number of theologians. In sixteenth-century Italy, however, there emerged a new development, led primarily by Florentine noblemen from the areas of philosophy and music. This movement, characterized by an interest in ancient Greek practices, is considered by Neumann to be an “epic attempt at ‘authenticity’” and a “momentous event in musical history” (1989, p. 5).

The second factor to affect the movement is the importance in terms of volume, quality, and preservation, of sacred music, due to the longstanding links between liturgy and music. The best example of the role of the Church in preserving music would be the

Medieval chants that thrived in some churches and monasteries for a millennium and a half.

Third, Neumann credits secular songs and dances of folk origins with providing a foundation upon which eminent composers throughout history could build their compositions, using the original songs either as *cantus firmi* for masses or other polyphonic works, or as themes for variation. An example of this would be the “Folia,” a dance and song from the fifteenth century, adopted by a great number of composers well into the eighteenth century.

A fourth factor, according to Neumann, is the changing attitude towards old music. Simply put, up to the year 1800, the patronage system of the feudal-aristocratic era, the demands of the royal courts, aristocrats, opera houses, and even the church regularly commissioned newly composed music. Patrons employed musicians on a full-time basis, and “expected new music from their house composer as they expected fresh rolls from their house baker” (1989, p. 6). Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century composers produced a colossal output, comparable to the journalists of today, or the writers and composers of daily television shows. Music, until that point, had a short life expectancy.<sup>53</sup>

The erosion of the patronage system which signalled a shift in the role of composers and the conditions under which music was composed can be attributed to historical factors: the French Revolution and the end of feudalism, the Industrial Revolution and the ascent of industry and commerce, and the concomitant rise of a significant and prosperous bourgeoisie. These factors wielded enormous impact upon the sociological structure of Europe. The rising

---

<sup>53</sup>Note that Neumann does detail several significant exceptions to this. Discussion of these, however, would extend beyond the confines of this brief introductory survey.

bourgeoisie, as well as Romanticism's concern with national heritage, led to a favouring of early composers. For example, as Neumann points out, it was this attitude which led to the rediscovery of Bach after seventy-five years of near-total neglect (1989, p. 7).

This nineteenth-century phenomenon, it is important to note, resulted in the publishing of editions of music from earlier eras, for example Carl Czerny's edition of Bach's *The Well-tempered clavier* that aimed to show how Beethoven played it. Subsequent editions often differed significantly from the original.<sup>54</sup> In the second half of the nineteenth century, editors drew on a scholarly method in musical publication, one adopted from methods developed earlier by classical scholars. Results vary in terms of authenticity. The nineteenth century also saw the publication of works with commentary, including prefaces and critical remarks. In addition to compiling the works of one particular author, these were also often organized by nation, by time periods, by media, or by forms. Neumann observes that such scholarly editions were "not yet a manifestation of a search for authenticity in performance, but they were its precondition" (1989, p. 8). The reliable text is seen as the first hurdle to authenticity of performance.

Finally, Neumann's fifth observation, a striving toward historical correctness or "authenticity," as was seen in the above overview, emerged toward the end of the nineteenth century. Before that, artists, builders, and the like were relatively unconcerned with creating

---

<sup>54</sup>It is interesting to note, as does Neumann, that many such versions are still in circulation today. The existence of multiple editions will be pointed out as problematic later in Chapter Two in comments by Taruskin (1995). There, Taruskin will question which of the multiple editions available of any musical work is to be accorded supreme authority.

in a style other than that of their own time.<sup>55</sup>

The twentieth century, however, has witnessed a slow but steadily mounting interest in the performance of early music in an historically authentic manner. This has resulted in the use of antique instruments (or in the building of instruments as replicas of these), in the publication of books which formulated rules for authentic interpretation (based on historical materials such as ornament tables and prefaces to compositions), and finally in the increasing prevalence of musicological institutes concerned with scholarly studies and performances of early music. The period following the Second World War, in particular, saw the emergence of growing numbers of performers throughout Europe and, later, North America, who were increasingly concerned with striving for historical correctness.<sup>56</sup>

#### 2.1.2. A Sceptical Stance: Controversial Aspects of the Authenticity School

Composers' intentions play an important, if not singular role in considering the performance practices of early music, particularly when, as suggested in Chapter One, these are seen to encompass historical practices and conventions, instruments and so on.

Neumann questions the extent to which knowledge of these is sufficient. He initiates

---

<sup>55</sup>Neumann cites the example of the builder who, in the sixteenth century, designed the second spire for Chartres cathedral; he "never gave a passing thought to matching the austere and simple first spire built almost three hundred years earlier in the style of the early Gothic. He built instead a spire that is taller, heavier, and far more ornate, reflecting rather the style of the late Gothic. Indeed, many of the great churches of Europe, having required hundreds and more years to complete, are a conglomerate of many styles" (1989, p. 8).

<sup>56</sup>Neumann cites the systematic growth from Europe to North America, in particular England, The Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany, followed by Austria and America.



his discussion by observing that

a cantata directed by Bach or an opera directed by Mozart could be described as an authentic performance, but it would not necessarily provide a desirable model to emulate: incompetent performers or lack of rehearsal time may have left the composer dissatisfied. (1989, p. 17)<sup>57</sup>

He contends, rather, that whether authenticists believe or claim to offer “authentic performances in the sense of matching an historical model, they would most likely agree that their goal is to bring to life a work, true to the spirit in which it was conceived” (1989, p. 17). He also suggests that at best this goal is ultimately unattainable, and that we can strive to approach it as closely as feasible. Neumann attributes this to the inadequacy of musical notation, which is “eloquent on many matters but silent on many others” (1989, p. 18), and this problem intensifies as we recede in time historically. Neumann holds that requisite characteristics of the ideal performer include not only sensitivity and a gift of divination (informed by imaginative artistry), but also a keen sense of style.<sup>58</sup>

Neumann elaborates on the shortcomings of the musical score, noting, for example, that tempo indications tend to be limited to six basic speeds: *largo*, *adagio*, *andante*, *allegro*,

---

<sup>57</sup>As pointed out earlier in this chapter, a host of other factors, such as inadequate instruments or unfavourable environmental conditions affecting the instruments or the ambient sounds, can be cited as examples of other reasons for which the composer may well be dissatisfied with a performance of her/his own work.

<sup>58</sup>Goodman’s account, in Chapter Three, will examine in considerable detail the relationship between expression and style.

*vivace*, and *presto*.<sup>59</sup> The possibilities for variations are measureless, and fluctuations clearly impact upon the work itself.<sup>60</sup> Other examples of elements of inadequately notated compositions include expressive elements (such as phrasing), dynamic markings, articulation signs such as slurs, staccato marks and attack indications, ornamentation, accompaniment, pitch, playing techniques and tone production of old instruments and early voice techniques (1989, p. 19).

Citing the problems that can be encountered in the search for historical authenticity, Neumann cautions against what he calls the “cite-and-apply” method: adopting the principles of an acknowledged authority to other works, for example citing the writings of C.P.E. Bach and applying them to the music of J.S. Bach, as well as to Haydn and to Mozart. This can lead to problems deriving from the selection of the wrong expert, as well as to oversimplification in terms of the performance practices from an over-homogenized historical period. In short, many problems in contemporary performance practice emerge due to the fact that “it is by and large the doctrines of the establishment that the authenticists followed in order to fill the many gaps in our knowledge, though in many instances these doctrines are un-historical and occasionally unmusical” (1989, p. 22). According to Neumann, the “cite-and-apply” method often leads scholars to go by the book instead of by the music, obediently following rules without considering in each case whether the result is

---

<sup>59</sup>Neumann points out that tempo indications were largely absent from keyboard scores, yet are frequently present in those for chamber music and vocal works (1989, p. 18). Clearly, the accuracy of this observation depends upon which works, by whom, and from what era, are being considered.

<sup>60</sup>Again, this concern parallels responses to Goodman’s theory of notation to be examined in Chapter Three, in particular that voiced by Boretz (1981).

musically logical and sensible (1989, p. 22).<sup>61</sup>

Other practices implemented by proponents of the authenticity movement are challenged by Neumann. He argues that the systematic lowering of the pitch of up to a half tone and more, for example, leads to a far too simplistic generalization, and sometimes leads to music that is not even performable. Similarly, he holds that the removal (or near removal) of vibrato from singing and playing instruments is ungrounded, and its use has fluctuated throughout history. At the other extreme, Neumann asserts that: “Generally, a vibrato that is so heavy and obtrusive as to blur the musical line is as objectionable today for modern music as it would have been in centuries past” (1989, p. 23).

Neumann identifies a concern for what he calls the ‘fallacy of the homogeneous past,’ arguing that, if indeed, there was a basic articulation practice attributed to a given composer, it was not consistently used, but rather varied from nation to nation and from individual to individual.

A final example of the kind of error often made by proponents of the Early Music Movement is the simple misinterpretation of written texts about musical performance of the  *messa di voce*.<sup>62</sup> An example of this would be a text in which Leopold Mozart explains what

---

<sup>61</sup>Note here that the authority accorded to “experts” prior to the middle to late twentieth century (in essentially all matters where socially recognized experts exist) is grounded on a set of assumptions which has been contested since the 1960’s and 1970’s, leading to a challenging of what Lyotard has termed the *grands récits* of modernism and the dissolution of boundaries between disciplines.

<sup>62</sup>*Messa di voce* derives from the Italian which means “placing of the voice.” The term refers to the singing or playing of a long note in such a way that it begins softly, increases to full volume, and then recedes to the original quiet tone. In the seventeenth century, the  *messa di voce* was considered an ornament, to be used sparingly, but by the eighteenth century, it had greatly increased in importance, to the extent that in Italian singing

has been misread as directions for a *messa di voce*, but which he clearly explains later in the text as a directive for connecting two bow strokes as smoothly as possible (1989, p. 24).

Ultimately, Neumann's examples show that even if we determine that it is the right thing to do, attempting to create an "authentic performance" is very difficult. He summarizes his perspective:

Considering the great lacunae of our knowledge about composers' preferences of such matters as tempo, expression, articulation, phrasing, rhythmic freedoms, etc.; considering furthermore the many false leads that scholarship has offered performers on such matters as ornamentation and rhythm, as well as the many questionable principles the authenticists adopted from various sources on such matters as articulation, dynamic nuances, pitch, vibrato, etc., the claim of an "authentic" performance assumes a mythical quality. (1989, p. 24)

For the authenticists, the use of period instruments (with lower pitch) is a means of achieving their goal, which is "beyond debate, self-evident, a true article of faith because they fervently believe that the spirit of a work is indissolubly linked with its original sound" (1989, p. 24). This leads Neumann to ask a series of crucial questions: "Is this dogma incontestable? Must a timeless masterwork forever be tied to a time-bound medium?" (1989, p. 24). And further,

Must it be forever frozen and crystallized in an immutable shape, impervious to

---

it became a vocal exercise. Nineteenth-century scores reflect its increasing prevalence. While the *messa di voce* was originally part of vocal technique, it has also been used in instrumental music. See Owen Jander in Sadie, Stanley (1980), *The new Grove dictionary of music and musicians*, London: Macmillan.

changing conditions, attitudes and sensibilities? Or, as Robert P. Morgan put it, do we have to bring old masterworks back as fossils rather than trying to revive them, to give them new life through an infusion of new ideas, lending them the sort of richness and flexibility characteristic of a living tradition? (1989, p. 24)

With these questions, Neumann moves from a descriptive to a prescriptive position, venturing beyond the question of whether we actually can achieve an authentic performance, into the realm of whether we should strive for that goal at all.

Sceptical of the Early Music Movement, Neumann argues that “If we accept the proposition that the role of the interpreter is to convey to the listener the true spirit of the work at hand, the principle that it must be rendered with the original tone colour is not an *a priori* truth” (1989, p. 25). Indeed, he contends that mere reproduction of the acoustical phenomenon is insufficient to guarantee the historically authentic realization of a work. To support his position, he cites Swiss musicologist Jacques Handschin:

An exact reproduction of the acoustical phenomenon—supposing that science were capable of realizing one—does not match the reconstruction of the musical phenomenon as long as one does not also reconstruct the contemporary listener with his exact musical perceptions and habits.... One must not proclaim as a dogma the idea that a musical work must necessarily be played in the manner in which it was played originally. (Handschin, cited in Neumann, 1989, p. 25)

As Neumann points out, Handschin identifies the need to reconstruct the listener in order to justify the reconstruction of the “would-be” authentic sound. It is unreasonable, he asserts, to think that we could transform ourselves into eighteenth-century listeners by an act

of will, “when our ears have absorbed the music from Wagner to Stravinsky and beyond” (1989, p. 25). Among the sound features with which our ears are conditioned, Neumann cites the fact that our ears are conditioned to the pitch of  $a'=440$ , as well as the more brilliant sound of our violins, the richness of resonance of the modern piano, the range of sound of our woodwinds and the technical nimbleness of our valve horns and trumpets (1989, p. 25). To this list, I would add others. Surely, the hearing of works by contemporary composers even since the turn of the twentieth century has shifted our frame of listening, our reception of works such as *Poème électronique* by Edgar Varèse is altered due to our being informed by listening to later works, for example, those of Xenakis. The soundscape of contemporary society is a very different one from that of eighteenth-century Vienna. Particularly (but not exclusively) in urban centres, we are confronted on a daily basis with the sound of roaring jets, the wail of sirens and traffic, and industrial sounds of many sorts. Moreover, the finesse with which contemporary technology can actually reproduce the sounds of instrumental and vocal music has conditioned our knowledge of existing soundscapes, so much so that is impossible for us to hear works by earlier composers as they were heard in their time. Stravinsky’s *The rite of spring* was considered scandalous at the time of its premier some eighty years ago, yet this work sounds quite tame to a contemporary listener familiar with developments in contemporary music.

Neumann recalls that the spirit of a composition was equated in Baroque aesthetics with its “affect,” that is, the impression it made on the listener’s mind. Because our aural perceptions have changed and the communicative power of the “authentic” work has shifted, he argues that a strong case could be made to adjust the sound to modern sensibilities so that

the impression on today's listener is equivalent to that made on the eighteenth-century listener.<sup>63</sup> An example of this would be tempo. Neumann suggests that:

Just as with sonority and pitch, it is conceivable that over the time gap that separates us from early music, our sensation of the passage of time may have changed; that, say, given the faster metabolism of the twentieth century, the tempo may need to be accelerated for today's audiences in order to match the musical effect on eighteenth century listeners. (1989, p. 26)<sup>64</sup>

Neumann discusses in some detail the various aspects of music that can or may have been altered with the passage of time, and offers suggestions on how contemporary renderings could be modified to reflect the works' original spirit. Nonetheless, he also disagrees with certain rule-like assumptions that have been systematically applied to performances of early music. The work of Bach, in particular, provides a good example of the way in which rules can be adopted. These rules, according to Neumann, prove detrimental to the quality of the actual performance itself. These will be considered here.

First, Neumann asserts that the essence of Bach's music lies in its line, not in the

---

<sup>63</sup>The task of effecting the perfect judgement that would assure an exact reproduction for twentieth-century listeners of the "impression made on the eighteenth-century listener" is a daunting one. The idea of adjusting the work, taking into consideration contemporary aural perception, however, is valid. The degree and means whereby this is achieved comprises the subject of ongoing study and debate.

<sup>64</sup>Neumann holds, however, that while this is possible, it is not likely, inasmuch as we have documents about surprisingly quick tempos in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

differences in timbre resulting from instrument assignments.<sup>65</sup> Because of this, it was quite common practice for Bach to transcribe his works from any one medium to just about any other. According to Neumann, Bach's frequent indifference to the "colour" of the sound is also evident in his persistent failure to indicate registrations for his organ works. Their sound can vary significantly, depending upon the registration chosen by the player (1989, p. 27)

While it is nonetheless the case that certain of Bach's works do rely on the timbre of the instrument chosen, for example the high trumpet-cum-timpani sound, this is not the case for all of Bach's works. In fact, Neumann suggests that works for solo clavier actually gain musically and do not lose their soul by being transferred to the modern piano. He contends that "[i]n view of the supremacy of line and indifference to colour, the spirit of Bach's music stands to be enhanced, not denatured, by the modern piano's potential of giving his phrases plasticity in three-dimensional space (1989, p. 27).

Neumann points out that the case for this position is enhanced by Eva Badura-Skoda's discovery that Bach, as early as 1733, played some and maybe all of his clavier concertos with his Leipzig Collegium Musicum on the pianoforte. These concertos, all of which were transcribed from works for the violin and other instruments, were quite likely intended for similar performances with the Collegium and were, as such, piano, not harpsichord, concertos. As Neumann rightly asserts, this finding clearly weakens the "harpsichord-only" principle of the authenticists.

Equally sceptical of composers' written statements or accounts, Neumann cautions

---

<sup>65</sup>In cases where instrumental timbre is at issue, Neumann condones certain adjustments of playing technique, instruments, and so on.



elsewhere against over-estimating the value of treatises, the tool which many “intentionalists” use as a means of establishing the artist’s intent. In *Essays in performance practice* (1982) he argues:

We shall never be able to reconstruct Bach’s exact intention, since no text in any treatise can be considered definite proof of what he did and no silence proof of what he did not do. (1982, p. 196)

Neumann’s concern, mirroring the argument by Beardsley, is based on a scepticism surrounding the very possibility of accessing an artist’s intentions, even when we have access to written accounts of their intentions or practices.

Neumann recognizes that practices and conventions vary with the passage of time, and also differ on national, regional and local as well as individual levels. He holds that “There was no such thing as a general Baroque convention and many treatises are therefore bound to contradict each other on many points” (1982, p. 197). For Neumann, the only thing that a treatise does is provide a voice for the author at the time of writing. And even this is subject to scepticism:

And even then the author must not be taken too literally: many treatises are elementary textbooks, and in conformance with sound pedagogical practice the author will formulate rules to point out certain regularities *without necessarily intending to proclaim unbreakable laws* [italics added]. Instead he expects the student to find out with growing experience about the many exceptions which, in any field of aesthetics, invariably temper every prescription. (1982, p. 192)

Neumann concludes, then, that all treatises (“including those bearing famous names”)

have “only a limited validity in time and space and only a conditional one in matters of their wording” (1982, p. 197).

In the same paper, Neumann also argues against the reliability of technical indications provided by the composer, for example the ornament tables of Bach, written for the instruction of his son Friedemann. According to Neumann, these tables were simply stylized approximations indicating the fundamental design, but never pretended to show “how the formulas were to be brought to life” (1982, p. 198). Here Neumann reveals a commitment to the position that accords considerable freedom on the part of the performer. He likens the relationship between the formula prescribed in the ornamentation tables and the performed ornament itself to the relationship between the straight lines, triangles and ellipses used by a draftsman and the completed drawing. He observes that to ignore this and to take the tables at their metrical face value is a “misunderstanding of their nature and purpose (without mentioning the fact that many of the formulae in these tables were metrically irregular)” (1982, p. 198). Neumann argues that

it is this misunderstanding which has led so often, not only with Bach, but with the music of the whole period, to the most rigid and pedantic treatment of ornamentation—that runs counter not only to the spirit of ornamentation itself but to the whole spirit of the Baroque. Trills, slides, appoggiaturas, and whatever their names may be, when pressed into metrical strait-jackets, fail in their fundamental artistic function: instead of dissolving rigidity, they enhance it. (1982, pp. 198-199)

From this, Neumann resolves that a general principle can be derived: “All ornaments have to be liberated from metrical pedantry and have to receive a strong injection of life-

giving rhythmical freedom” (1982, p. 199). This, he holds, applies fully to Bach and his contemporaries, and “largely still to the following generations....” (1982, p. 199).

Finally, Neumann turns to the question of the number of performers for any given musical work. Even in situations where we believe that we have information concerning the exact “authentic” number of performers, he suggests this is not necessarily a true indication of the composer’s intention:

Only if the numbers had been the composer’s free artistic choice would their integrity be of musical significance, but such was rarely the case. Mostly the numbers were dictated not by musical but by economic reasons; if such was the case, then there is little reason for aiming at literalness, as long as a larger complement of players or singers does not upset the balance or blur the sonorities. (1989, p. 28)

Clearly, then, for Neumann it is the striving to approximate, as closely as possible, the true spirit of the work at hand which represents the best means of playing music from past historical eras.<sup>66</sup>

Neumann makes an important distinction between the two principal factors of a musical performance—historical and musical. These two can be at odds with each other. He agrees that a replica of an authoritative old performance would be of great historical interest as an exhibit of musical archaeology, yet to recreate the sound experience as it would have been experienced in another time is beyond our ability. At best, hearing period instruments is historically interesting as this can reveal aspects of a composition that modern instruments

---

<sup>66</sup>This view can be seen to be compatible with that expressed by Sparshott in Chapter One.

are unable to communicate.

Neumann's concern with the Early Music Movement is that the authenticists will not admit that such conflict between musicality and historicity can occur. "In their conviction, what they claim to be historically correct, like the period instruments and the lower pitch, is *ipso facto* also musically superior" (1989, p. 29). He argues that aesthetic judgement as to which instruments actually sound better is a matter of taste. He observes that "the way the authenticists make the use of period instruments is the object of a categorical imperative, hence an issue of morality, reveals a cultist trait of their movement, and this in turn explains the zealotry with which some of their followers demand conformance and condemn any questioning of their dogmas" (1989, pp. 29-30).

Neumann concludes that the Early Music Movement has proven both beneficial and detrimental to our musical life. On the positive side, it has made two important contributions. First, it has enriched the living repertory by reviving numerous works that had been neglected. Second, it has given us new insights into familiar works in cases where, for example, inner voices that had previously been obscured were able to be heard, or when different sonorities revealed new kinds of balance between the parts. The negative aspect, however, is that the movement has imposed a form of paralysis on the musical works from the past. He summarizes:

the movement has had a certain stultifying effect through the dogmatic insistence of its practitioners on freezing old masterworks in the form of their alleged original sound, then hermetically sealing them as a protection against any harm from exposure to twentieth-century fresh air. In so doing, the authenticists behave like

custodians of museum exhibits, when they ought to behave like wardens of living organisms whose souls are capable of constant renewal in adjusting to changing conditions. (1989, p. 30)

The challenge for Neumann, clearly, is to create the conditions in which a performance can remain musically “alive” while also respecting the artist’s intentions to the extent that these can be known.

## 2.2. The Early Music Movement: Paradigm of Intentionality, or Musicological Mirage?

### 2.2.1. Introduction

The Early Music Movement accords a great deal of value to composers’ intentions in terms of the objects, traditions, and practices that existed at the time of the work’s creation. Its proponents see musical performance as grounded in the (re)-creation of how the music was meant to sound (or did sound), what instruments the composition was authentically written for or performed on or both, how exactly the ornaments would have been played, and so on. This specific aspect of the movement will be considered here.

### 2.2.2. Criticism of Early Music’s Structural Intentional Fallacy

Of the theorists who take a moderate stance concerning the authority of the score, Paul Henry Lang provides a brief but lucid account of the extent to which the written

indications concerning a musical work can serve as an authority as to its performance. For Lang, the notes in the score of a composition are not yet music, but “only its image in another medium” (Lang, in Neumann, 1982, p. vii). This visual image, he asserts, “must be converted into an acoustic phenomenon, which in turn must be subjected to interpretation by a performer in order to become living art” (1982, p. vii). Lang acknowledges the contextual nature of the reading:

Such interpretation is not determined in every detail by the graphic notation; it depends on the prevailing state of musical thought and practice and on certain inherited traditions, following usages that may have solidified into rules. (Lang, in Neumann, 1982, p. vii)

Notwithstanding, Lang does not allocate total freedom to the performer. He suggests that for music of past centuries, both aesthetics and traditions must be re-created, and this is not reduced to the replication of instruments and the revivifying of old rules of the period:

It is not enough to restore the old instruments and study contemporaneous tracts and treatises on the art of playing and singing; we may succeed in conjuring up an acoustic replica while failing to convey the music’s message because today our musical experiences, our way of hearing, and our aesthetic views and requirements are different from those of the original audience. (Lang, in Neumann, 1982, p. vii)

Like Neumann (1982, 1989) Lang’s perspective is one which, while recognizing the value of musical heritage, also cautions against using superficial means to access it. In his

insistence on the contemporary listener, their musical experiences and “way of hearing,” Lang counters the tendency which considers the score itself to be the musical authority.<sup>67</sup>

#### 2.2.2.1. A Socio-Musicological Perspective: Rose Rosengard Subotnik

Rose Rosengard Subotnik, like Neumann and Lang, adopts a sceptical stance with regard to the limitations placed on performers of early music. She observes the “state of bondage” in which they find themselves, due to the strictures of an over-zealous commitment to respecting the wishes of the composer, as reconstituted, if necessary, by the musicologist.<sup>68</sup>

---

<sup>67</sup>Lang’s use of the phrase “way of hearing” is ambiguous here. On the one hand, Lang could be referring to what Rose Rosengard Subotnik calls the “structural listening” necessary to recognize and appreciate the form of a musical work. She writes: “the demand for structural listening cuts off the general public from its accustomed sensuous and stylistic modes of listening...” (1991, p. 281). Edward T. Cone, likewise, acknowledges the importance of the “way of hearing,” as he defines music in terms of form. For him, music just is “formal relations among sounds heard as such ... [which] arouse in the hearer expectations to which subsequent sounds respond, either by way of immediate fulfilment, postponed gratification or significant frustration” (cited in Alperson, 1986, p. 16). For Cone, the fundamental component of musical form is rhythm (that is, sounds must be connected by temporal patterns of duration and stress): without rhythmic structure, such musical “forms” as the aria, concerto, or rondo and fugue, could not be understood (Alperson, 1986, p. 16). Cone calls this synoptic comprehension of structure; such comprehension either recognizes a unity in what is perceived or imposes one on it (1968, p. 88). Returning to Lang’s phrase, “way of hearing” could, on the other hand, also refer to the twentieth-century soundscape mentioned elsewhere in this dissertation. The sounds that we are accustomed to, be they musical, industrial, urban, or technological, have provided a very different backdrop against which to listen to music. This sound “context” can be seen to intervene upon and change our very hearing of the music itself. On consideration, Lang may well refer to both of the above possibilities.

<sup>68</sup> For Professor Subotnik, this is equally true of the performer of old music and of new. This discussion will focus on her views of the Early Music Movement.

She notes the paradox that, whereas performing artists are often applauded for demonstrating such characteristics as “powerful personality” and “full-blooded musicality,” the very ideal against which performers are actually measured, namely transparency to the composer’s wishes, is one which may well conflict with such terms. Subotnik qualifies her observation: “I am not saying that reasonable efforts to interpret the musical wishes of the composer necessarily destroy the performer’s individuality” (1991, p. 256).

She does assert, however, that when efforts to preserve the autonomy of the composer’s vision are extreme, the result may be that the performer is turned into a kind of “automaton.” Subotnik offers a sardonic criticism of efforts to recapture the music of another era:

No more cadenzas for us in an anachronistic but highly personal style; now our ornamentation must be strictly authentic in terms of its historical period, just as our instruments, according to our most educated ideals, must be historically authentic, even if they cannot be heard in a large modern concert hall or be acquired by amateur music makers, and even if they sound a bit thin or off-putting on modern electronic equipment. Ideally, the boy soprano, where historical authenticity requires him, replaces the mature female soprano, even if her voice produces what seems to the modern ear a more pleasing musical result. And amateur performers of Bach’s *Well-tempered clavier*, if they have a good musical education, sit down at their historically unauthentic pianos a lot more uncomfortably than they used to. (1991, pp. 256-257)

Subotnik’s position is one which regrets the losses that ensue when the performance of music becomes more about authenticity than about music itself. She observes the disdain



held today for the ethnocentricity of the nineteenth-century performer for whom older music was a vehicle for self-expression. At the same time, however, she questions which century had the “greater, more immediate and vital love of musical performance”; that of the historically naïve nineteenth-century amateurs, despite their historically questionable practices, or the twentieth-century American, who listens passively to authentic performances in the concert hall, classroom, or living room. She bemoans the diminishing of the living art of improvisation by the performer, and the enthusiastic, if not necessarily authentic, performance of music in the home.

What seems to emerge from Subotnik’s account is a concern that it may well be possible to win the battle and lose the war: a scrupulously accurate rendering may indeed not be the ideal performance that we seek. A position characterized by what she terms “exaggerated deference to the wishes or at least cultural assumptions of any particular composer” is one which fails to connect the music with any vital love of musical performance. She cautions that it is possible that care for authenticity of performance, when carried to an extreme, may become “so conspicuous as to overshadow the individuality of a composition, so that the work is perceived principally as ‘rococo,’ ‘baroque,’ or just plain ‘antiquated.’”<sup>69</sup> She rightly asks: “Is there not a point when the ideal of historical authenticity brings about that very violation of musical individuality that it set out to overcome?” (1991,

---

<sup>69</sup>While Subotnik’s concern is, I believe, a valid one, it must be noted here that her argument does little to elucidate the question as to which performance is the best. In other words, even if we adapt Subotnik’s stance against what she characterizes as “exaggerated deference to the composer,” where, then, does that leave a performer faced with decisions as to interpretation? Critics of Subotnik would argue that, surely, it cannot be merely a question of anything goes.

p. 257).

In response to the current historical “repression” of individual expression, Subotnik makes an interesting observation of an historical-sociological nature. She notes that in oral traditions, religious rites or epic poetry, which often seem to be rigidly concerned with the rights of a collective culture (and often seemingly antithetical to individual self-expression), individual deviations from a cultural norm are regularly tolerated up to a certain point. This, she explains, is precisely because they are so insignificant in relation to the collectively defined substance which really matters. In our own culture, by contrast, she observes that individual deviations are recognized as so significant, so important in themselves, so potentially opaque, that we must vigorously repress them (1991, p. 257).

As an example of the kind of tension concerning authenticity that can emerge in musicology, Subotnik cites a text by a respected musical biographer which discusses Mozart’s revisions of Handel. She refers to the following passage:

[T]o us, with a keener historical sense than Mozart and his contemporaries, the arrangements may seem a travesty of Handel and an unconvincing mixture of styles. But by the canons of his own day, Mozart was not guilty of a lapse of taste: to him it could only have seemed that he was bringing up to date, as far as possible, some works which were rather primitively scored. (1991, p. 258)<sup>70</sup>

Subotnik points out that while the above passage means to defend Mozart, it is in a way patronizing, since it fails to consider the possibility (a plausible one according to Subotnik, since the subject is Mozart) that “a lack of absolute historical authenticity in ideals of

---

<sup>70</sup>The text cited by Subotnik is excerpted from Stanley Sadie (1965), *Mozart*, p. 67.

composition may in fact allow the survival of certain vital musical values that are no longer with us” (1991, p. 258).

According to Subotnik, much less rigid ideals of performance prevailed throughout most of Western musical history, even against an aesthetic shaped to the individuality of the composer alone. She cites the Italian composer Frescobaldi who, in his 1635 preface to his *Fiori musicali*, a well-known collection of organ pieces, articulated a preference for having his piece played from the score “because in this way true masters can most surely distinguish themselves from the ignorant” (cited in Subotnik, 1991, p. 258). Nonetheless, despite his desire for accomplished performances, Frescobaldi left a considerable margin for interpretation. It is worth quoting at length the opening of his preface, in order to reveal the extent to which he left room for individual interpretation:

I have always striven, with what talent God has given me, to help, in their profession, according to the best strengths, those eager to learn.... It is my warm wish that everyone who obtains and studies my work shall draw satisfaction and profit from it. Of this new volume I say merely that my chief aim was to help the organists in that I have composed pieces of the kind that one uses as verses for mass and vespers; they will be of great use to the organists who otherwise can use the verses *as they think fit* [italics by Subotnik], and in the canzonas and ricercares can make a conclusion out of an [internal] cadence, if [the piece] seems too long. (cited in Subotnik, p. 258)

[square brackets by Subotnik]

Further, more specific instructions were also provided:

In short, the toccatas shall be played according to the discretion and taste of the

player.... From the Kyries, some can be played quickly and others slowly as seems right to the player.... The cantus firmus shall be played legato, but where that causes awkwardness for the hands, [the player] can also disconnect [the notes]. I am always concerned for the greatest possible facility to the player. (cited in Subotnik, 1991, pp. 258-259) [square brackets by Subotnik]<sup>71</sup>

According to Subotnik's reading of this text, it can be seen as what amounts to historically authentic permission from Frescobaldi to place limits on our concern with faithfulness to his wishes. She questions, nonetheless, "how many performers today, in playing from the *Fiori musicali*, would dare to give this element of Frescobaldi's own aesthetic precedence over the historical purism of our own culture?" (1991, p. 259).

In addition to issues related to performance, Subotnik also considers scholarship, challenging some of the current assumptions surrounding the question of authenticity in research. She likens the current musicologist to the museum curator, who "carefully removes centuries of varnish and dirt, or, conceivably, restores bits of lost colour, to reveal an old masterpiece in its original form" (1991, p. 260). Painting and music, however, differ in that (at least in our culture) an original painting consists of a physically existing object that invites mental responses, whereas an original composition consists of a mentally existing object that invites physical response.<sup>72</sup> In painting, for example, the identity of a work

---

<sup>71</sup>Subotnik's references for the two Frescobaldi passages cited above are: (for the first) Bonnet, ed., *Fiori musicali*, p. xxxi and (for the second) op. cit. p. xxxii.

<sup>72</sup>It is not clear to me how an original composition can be termed a mentally existing object. Even if one adapts a Goodmanian stance (as will be discussed in Chapter Three), the musical performance itself is of greater importance, and the score exists only as a means to preserve identity of the work. Perhaps Subotnik leans toward a position suggested by Price

necessarily inheres in a physically fixed and unique object. In music, by contrast, “there is no need for such a literally physical existence as long as performers exist who can imagine the work and put together a performance out of their own heads” (1991, p. 260).

Moreover, painting does not involve active participation; such response would result in the destruction of the physical works. As Subotnik suggests,

though looking may well involve the active critical use of the imagination as well as endless mental violations of the artist’s intended meaning, it is a physically passive activity that does not threaten the physical integrity of the original but instead leaves intact a constant basis for new critical interpretations of a similarly passive physical sort. (1991, p. 261)

Music, however, is different. Prior to the advent of the tape recorder and computer, music in Western culture has traditionally been defined as a participatory art, in which the survival of the composer’s original construction (by way of notation) did not discourage but actually required physical participation by others, namely performers. This leads, however, to a tension between the ideas of the composer and the interpretation of the performer. The more actively performers are involved in re-creating the work, the more opportunity they have to alter the original, whether by accident or deliberately. Thus, Subotnik concludes, “In music, as in painting, it is certainly possible for physical response to destroy the original identity of

---

(1988), who argues that a performance is referred to by a phrase such as “performance of so-and-so,” a class of performances may only be denoted by a phrase like “performances of so-and-so.” According to Price, a score cannot denote the class of performance of the piece it carries. This might be understood to mean that the work does not exist until it has actually been performed. One might say, then, that prior to the first performance of a work, it could be considered as a “mentally existing object that invites physical response.”

an artwork.”<sup>73</sup> Subotnik notes, however, that (until now) our culture has not restricted its mode of response so as to prevent such destruction. Indeed, the identity of Western music, due to notation, can endure far greater physical reinterpretation than can painting, without getting lost altogether.

Subotnik’s principal argument is clear: “[R]estoring the musical composition to a state of absolute authenticity actually undermines an essential part of its character and brings it closer to the state of a painting” (1991, p. 262). Carried to an extreme, she holds, restoration may well discourage attitudes that are conducive to active participation in music, leading to passive contemplation instead.<sup>74</sup> As an example she suggests that:

The director of the amateur church choir, who once revelled in putting together a Bach cantata, gloriously oblivious to errors and anachronisms in the eventual performance, might well sink into lethargic gloom when confronted with the so-called *Kritische bericht* that accompanies the new critical edition of each Bach work,

---

<sup>73</sup>As will be seen in Chapter Three, Nelson Goodman would hold that the “original identity of the artwork” is preserved through the score. Any performance which is not “correct” is merely not a performance of the original. Subotnik’s assertion here would seem to contradict her earlier comment that “an original composition consists in a mentally existing object that invites physical response.” If this is true, how is it possible to damage the original? Does she not mean that, indirectly through the (destructive) performance, the audience could perceive a less-than-ideal version of the composer’s ideas? Yet in this instance, the original score still exists, as does the possibility for better performances. This discrepancy would seem to be rooted in terminology rather than content, since Subotnik clarifies it herself later in the same text: “And within boundaries of cultural continuity, a notated musical composition is far sturdier than a painting is with respect to its original identity” (Subotnik, 1991, p. 261).

<sup>74</sup>Although, of course, one may question Subotnik’s assertion that painting requires mere “passive contemplation.” Recall that the active nature of the viewing of a painting (as an example of a “space art”) was sketched out by Cone earlier in this chapter.

that is, the volume of alternative markings and commentary on authenticity of various notational choices. In its very density one of these volumes may impress upon amateurs their historical naïveté as well as the hopelessness of their ever mastering all of the information needed to insure the absolute authenticity of a performance. (1991, p. 262)

In short, Subotnik cautions that, by overwhelming performers with a sense of their own inadequacy vis-à-vis the intentions of the composer, the modern scholarly edition may well weaken the living force of the composer's music. (1991, p. 262)

This same response could arise in those involved in the study of music, beyond the reconstruction of authentic texts. For example, she asks:

Is it professionally safe, after all, to ascribe social or humanistic meanings to a work by Bach without having mastered all of the information bearing on the authenticity of a text? And who would dare to try and ascribe such meanings to music, even well-known music, for which no authentic edition is yet available? (1991, p. 262)

This leads to questions such as what value one's own interpretive musings would have if it turned out that they were based on a score that contained a couple of wrong notes.<sup>75</sup> Finally, she asks, "Again, whose music is it, anyway?" (1991, p. 262). In conclusion, she asserts that "authentic editions may actually discourage those ends of performance and scholarship for which they are intended, and may well exacerbate the lack of integration of art music into current social life" (1991, p. 262).

---

<sup>75</sup>As Chapter Three will show, Nelson Goodman would bypass this problem by saying that the work in question was quite simply not the work stated as the object of study.

Taking this one step further, Subotnik proposes that restoration of authenticity and active participation are mutually exclusive activities.<sup>76</sup> She observes that, to a certain extent, restoration is a safer pursuit than are attempts to integrate music into a living social and cultural context. This is because, according to Subotnik, restoration is subject to objective standards of empirical accuracy, which she sees as helping to limit the burden of active responsibility placed on the individual's judgement. Integration, on the other hand, leaves one open to mistakes of individual judgement.

That this task is a difficult one does not mean it should be avoided—particularly if it would lead to a more humane society.<sup>77</sup> Subotnik contends that a musical attitude which encouraged and allowed for individuals (as listeners, performers, improvisers, students, and amateurs) to participate in socially valued music far more fully than we do, “might well challenge the sanctity of individual authenticity as a cultural value and the social privilege of a certain art repertory” (1991, p. 264). On the positive side, she maintains this might well be conducive to the social integration of far more individual musical and human interests than is currently the case.

In summary, Subotnik questions whether it may be possible that Mozart's culture allowed the creation of unquestionably great music precisely because that culture did not yet insist on the absolute rights of individuality (with all the concomitant values of historical

---

<sup>76</sup>One might say, however, that the two are complementary activities, in the sense that they are grounded in the same ideological concerns.

<sup>77</sup>One might question Subotnik's use of the term “humane society”: What, precisely, would characterize such a society? Can we assume that consensus would or could be reached as to how such a society should be?



authenticity), but, rather, permitted an “uneasy truce” between the identity of an individual’s work on the one hand and the claims of society upon that work on the other (1991, p. 264).<sup>78</sup>

#### 2.2.2.2. Toward a Deciphering of the Ideological Underpinnings of the Early Music Movement: Richard Taruskin

In his recent and important work *Text and act; Essays on music and performance* (1995), Richard Taruskin provides an extensive analysis of the issue of authenticity and musical performance. In tandem with others considered earlier (Neumann, 1982, 1989; Subotnik, 1991), Taruskin holds that the problem with the Early Music Movement lies in its uncritical acceptance of what he terms a “post-Romantic work-concept,” and its imposition on pre-Romantic repertoires. He holds that “a movement that might, in the name of history, have shown the way back to a truly creative performance practice has only furthered the stifling of creativity in the name of normative controls” (Taruskin, 1995, p. 13). He further notes that, in this respect, “Early music actively colludes with the so-called ‘mainstream’ it externally impugns” (1995, p. 13).

The main problem, according to Taruskin, lies in the fact that:

---

<sup>78</sup>Subotnik points to a significant tension. She argues that in earlier, less individualistic historical periods there was less concern for historic authenticity. In contemporary Western society, however, an inordinate concern for individuality (over the collective) leads to an insistence upon the primacy of composers’ intentions. The paradox lies in the fact that, as we become more individualistic, the individual’s right to express musically seems less and less tolerable. Inversely, heightening the tension, if one does accord increased musical autonomy of expression to the performer (whether professional, student, or amateur) and thus valuing the musical authority of the individual, this would perhaps miss certain intentions of the composer, creating the paradox of not respecting the rights of that individual. Ultimately, when seen this way, it is clearly a question of ethics, with musical performance as the vehicle through which such rights are exercised or violated.

[T]he premise, central to performance-practice orthodoxy, that composers inherently suspect and wish to control their natural enemies, presupposes as a historical constant the hard and fast distinction between the creative and re-creative roles that has only existed since the nineteenth century. (1995, p. 14)

This is glaringly present, according to Taruskin, in accounts of the performer-composer relationship such as that proposed by David Fuller in *New grove*. In this work (cited in Taruskin, 1995, p. 14) Fuller writes: “A large part of the music of the whole era was sketched rather than fully realized, and the performer had something of the responsibility of a child with a colouring book, to turn these sketches into rounded art-works.” Taruskin’s central dissertation is that many who are concerned with performance practice tend to reflect a mentality emblematic of an oppositional hierarchy between producer (composer) and consumer (audience), “with the performer occupying the position of shady broker” (1995, p. 15). This, Taruskin points out, is a modernist view.

Taruskin posits that the central goal of today’s music performance practices should be liberation. Notwithstanding, he contends that it is only when we know something about the sources of our contemporary practices and beliefs, when we know something about the reasons why we do as we do and think as we think, and when we are aware of alternatives, that we will in any sense claim to be free in our choice of action and creed, and be responsible for it (1995, p. 19). The problem with the authenticists, for Taruskin, is that the movement<sup>79</sup> is not at all as disinterested as it purports to be; it has interests and it protects them. He holds that:

---

<sup>79</sup> Which, he points out, is quite distinct from the field of research.

[W]here performance-practice research is descriptive, the performance-practice movement is aggressively prescriptive and territorial, dispensing or conferring the status of authenticity as oxymoronical reward for conformity, claiming a specious moral authority, and laying guilt trips on those who fail to endorse its goals. (1995, p. 19)

Taruskin suggests that the practices of the authenticity movement are as limiting and short-sighted as those whose work it seeks to redress. He observes that:

[T]he “historical” performance, sensing the fragility of the idealized (“timeless”) work, seeks to salvage it by warding off all the contingent readings the work has received over time, and by adopting a characteristically anguished modern stance of estrangement against any subjectivity but its own. In its attempt to bond with the original intentions that produced the work, it excludes all other intentions. Under cover of hermeneutics it resists hermeneutics. (1995, p. 32)

The question that emerges is how can music performance be viewed in such a way so as to avoid the problems outlined above.

## 2.3. Alternative Frameworks: Moving Beyond the Myth of Authenticity

### 2.3.1. Introduction

Attempts to discern the roles of composer and performer seem inevitable to lead to discussion of intention: the composer’s intention, the performer’s intention or, as in the case

of proponents of the Early Music Movement, the intentions of an entire historical period. Despite the numerous criticisms voiced above, it remains that, as Taruskin points out, the underlying framework with which the composer-performer relationship is addressed must be problematized if the question of the composer-performer relationship is to be addressed in a more constructive way. The final section of this chapter proposes two views which attempt this. Francis Sparshott likens the musical performance to a conversation with no firmly pre-established rules, but one which evolves according to the exigencies of the situation. Nicholas Wolterstorff considers the musical performance as “social artifact,” one whose very existence draws on and is informed by the participation of numerous individuals, and is affected by sociological, historical and cultural factors. These two final accounts serve, to a certain extent, to liberate the discussion from the bonds of a too-narrow perspective which insists that any consideration of the musical performance must be limited to discussion of the two evident poles of composer and performer whose roles/functions have often been seen as polarized, distinct and sufficient in accounting for the music or sound event.

### 2.3.2. A Tempered Historicity: Francis Sparshott—Conversation Analogy

In a relatively recent essay, “The Aesthetics of Music: Limits and Grounds,” Francis Sparshott (in Alperson, 1986, pp. 33-98) addresses the question of the composer’s intentions and the performer. Sparshott holds that, while music is structured in ways similar to symbol schema, it has nothing to correspond with the subject-predicate relation of language, wherein it would say something of something (or someone else). As an alternative, Sparshott argues

that music is talk-like. Both music-making and talk are “improvised ways of getting from place to place in a social world” (in Alperson, 1986, p. 13). In adopting this view, Sparshott is able to render moot certain questions concerning the ontological status of musical “works,” the function of scores, the relation between composer and performer and the notion of interpretation. According to this perspective,

music is not construed in terms of the creation and appreciation of compositional “works” treated as objects and identified through scores but rather as something lived through, where the notion of a “work” has no privilege. Trying to determine the “proper” roles of composer and performer or the principles of co-operation between them has no more point than laying down a set of rules for conversation. (in Alperson, 1986, p. 14)

As such, the idea of an identifiable object accessible in principle to all in the same way—an idea that grounds so much of the fine arts tradition—is transformed in the context of a musical “conversation.”

To construct the foundation for such a position, Sparshott first turns to the question of the nature and purpose of music, which for him can only be determined by the actual interests of musicians and their publics. These interests must be taken as a given. He cautions, however, that:

We should be prepared to find that different musical practices, or different aspects of one practice, answer to different kinds of interest, and that some or all of these interests might be specific interests in music and in nothing else. (in Alperson, 1986, p. 52)

Sparshott suggests that, in taking music as a kind of human praxis (what musicians do), which he views as a standpoint that we cannot dispense with, we must suppose that every interest that could find expression in that activity will, in fact, potentially find it there. Moreover,

to refuse to take any set of such interests into consideration could be justified only by saying that the excluded interests were not germane to music as such; and that would require defining music *a priori* rather than by musical praxis as such. (in Alperson, 1986, p. 53)

Such *a priori* definitions might be defended, he suggests, in the name of high standards, or civilization, or a world view, or a preferred technique.<sup>80</sup> Sparshott then provides the welcome observation that “there is no impartial umpire to decide whether such a defence succeeds or fails. Success in identifying the nerve of a practice is a matter of capturing a consensus” (in Alperson, 1986, p. 53). He reminds us that

music manages to be meaningful by disposing of conventions that determine what may be varied and what variations of those variables are possible; and these generate an indefinitely extensible hierarchical structure in which there are higher-order conventions as to what conventions can be departed from and how far. (in Alperson, 1986, pp. 59-60).

In his discussion of what constitutes music, Sparshott turns to a consideration of “sounds.” The “languages and procedures of sound,” he holds, “can be developed out of

---

<sup>80</sup>These are precisely the kinds of criteria cited by proponents of particular performance approaches (for example, the argument in favour of historical authenticity).

expressions of feeling and accompaniments of endeavour” (p. 58). This is not necessary, however, since music which is dependent entirely on formal structures can also be written. Thus it can be expressive or inexpressive, patterned or patternless (in Alperson, 1986, p. 58).

It is interesting to note the music of John Cage, for example, which calls for audiences to attend to sounds in the environment as though they were musical sounds.<sup>81</sup> From this perspective all sounds are equally interesting and it is impossible to conceive of an *art* of music. Sparshott contends that “such an art must be one of producing sounds having an interest that other sounds lack” (in Alperson, 1986, p. 59).

Aleatoric procedures introduced by musicians such as Cage are interesting, since these appear to liberate both composer and performer from such concepts as intention. Sparshott, however, does not view such composition procedures as liberating, nor does he see determinate composition as tyranny wherein the performer is told what to play and the audience is told what to hear. Such a view, he argues, confuses a recipe with a command:

A composer’s score specifies something that performers and listeners may (if they wish) perform and listen to. It provides an opportunity. Randomizing affords a lesser opportunity, since the liberty of making noises at random is not one of which people are initially deprived. There are, no doubt, relations of coercion, exploitation and tyranny in musical practice; but indeterminacy [sic] in musical composition does not alleviate them. (in Alperson, 1986, p. 59)

---

<sup>81</sup>As in, for example, his piece for piano, 4’33”. There, a “concert” performer sits at the piano on the stage for a duration of four minutes and thirty three seconds, his hands in his lap. The music itself consists in the ambient sounds heard by the audience, sounds which fill the music hall, or those which can be discerned in the surrounding environment.

Thus we see that for Sparshott both random composition procedures and formally notated works that lead to performances are to a certain degree, at least, indeterminate. This leads us to wonder what, then, can be said to comprise the function of the score.

According to Sparshott, its functions are multiple. First, it does not command but merely specifies and thus provides opportunities. It can be strictly adhered to, or not. It can provide a point of departure for improvisations or alternative works, or used as a source of ideas or transformations (in Alperson, 1986, p. 82). Sparshott holds that such uses are not necessarily any less musically valuable than the “normal” use of a score by a performer who aims to produce a performance in which nothing fails to comply with the score. In fact, the use of a score differs only in one important way from hearing someone sing a song, and singing a song based on what one has heard.<sup>82</sup> Sparshott’s position is summarized as follows:

When one stops thinking about music as a fine art issuing in works of art, a point of view from which the status of scores in relation to performances must seem problematic, and thinks instead of music-making as talk-like, recent arguments about the “proper” function of scores appear as tiresome combinations of mystification, pontification, and disguised debate about conditions and examination that are schoolteacherly rather than musical in their motivation. They can be disposed of by the realization that using a score in one way does not prevent others from using it another way. (in Alperson, 1986, pp. 82-83)

---

<sup>82</sup>Sparshott includes here various possibilities: a copy or imitation of the singer’s version of it; one’s own way of singing what one takes to be the same song (according to the criteria of identity used by one’s own musical tradition, or by criteria of one’s own); a variation on it; a new song inspired by it, etc. (in Alperson, 1986, p. 82).



This position concerning the role of the score predictably foreshadows Sparshott's account of the relationship between the composer and the performer. He reiterates the question at hand: Should the performer be an independently creative artist, or a mere executant? If the former, what are the artistic principles of this co-operation? For Sparshott, "the question is ludicrous" (in Alpers, 1986, p. 83). He does not see why it should be necessary to single out one, or one set, of all the relationships that are possible.

According to Sparshott, the problem concerning the relations between composer and performer arises when we insist on regarding the performer as interpreter of the composer's work. This concept, he holds, suggests a duty that must be spelled out, whereas he prefers to view the problem as a conceptual one. He urges consideration of the notion of "interpret," noting that many different relationships and procedures go by that name, and that it is not necessary to hold the performer to any one of them. In Sparshott's account, the task of the performer

may be to find some sense for the piece; to find the best sense for it; to find what the composer meant; or could have meant, or should have meant; or, at the other extreme, simply to find a possible way of playing the piece. (in Alpers, 1986, p. 84)

Clearly, Sparshott alludes to the broad range of musicological positions that attempt to prescribe the "best" approach; he seems to suggest that these are merely prospects. In considering what could be meant by a "possible" way, Sparshott reasons that to speak of an interpretation suggests that what is interpreted has a unified meaning, or that its entirety is such as to preclude such unity. He argues, however, that one would not speak of an

“interpretation” of a musical work if what was done defied appreciation: “what denies value or significance does not amount to an interpretation. An interpretation must carry a sense” (in Alperson, 1986, p. 84).

This position, it would seem, places Sparshott in precarious territory. What, for example, constitutes a work which “defies appreciation”? According to what criteria does one measure whether an interpretation does, indeed, carry “sense”? For whom? According to what values or principles? Would a performance of Bach, intended for a harpsichord, for example, “carry sense” if played on a Steinway grand piano? For a musicologically oriented listener concerned with “historical authenticity” the answer would be a resounding no, whereas a local Conservatory of Music adjudicator would certainly assent. Would a Brahms piano concerto played at a blatantly unconventional tempo “carry sense”? A Brahms scholar or a seasoned orchestral conductor might well answer no, whereas the ambitious solo performer might well respond favourably to the possibility. The problem with Sparshott’s account is that it seems to avoid the issue: It presumes that the judgements involved in discerning what, exactly, constitutes “sense” in terms of interpretive decisions are universally accessible, as is agreement upon the “sense”-full performance.

As a means of clarification, Sparshott calls upon the notion of “musicianship,” which is “a quality of understanding comparable to that necessary to composing a musically satisfactory piece” (in Alperson, 1986, p. 84). In displaying musicianship, the performer demonstrates a grasp of musical meanings (structural and affective), rather than just

following the score from point to point.<sup>83</sup> Sparshott insists, in defence of this account, that one is speaking more of the level of understanding shown than of any specifiable matter to be understood. "Requests that one sum up in a phrase the significant content of a skill that takes decades to acquire are as common as they are absurd" (in Alperson, 1986, pp. 84-85).<sup>84</sup>

Sparshott, then, is committed to the belief that in resolving the question of propriety in the use of scores and in the relationship between composers and performers, the question of the criteria of identity of the musical work is also defused. This leads him to evoke the analogy of a conversation:

A conversation is the same for all its participants, it is a conversation *they* are having together. But, equally, it is different for each of them, each contributing a different voice and hearing a different set of voices, as well as hearing what is said against a different background of knowledge and concerns and in a different state of health, fatigue, and mood.... Just as a conversation is made up of different people with different selves as well as different voices, so we may speak of a musical field that holds together people differently related. It is not so much that we all play, hear,

---

<sup>83</sup>Again, the question remains "Whose meanings?" Does this lead us back, indirectly, to the composer's intended meaning? And if Sparshott answers "no" (as one assumes he would), then to whose meanings does he refer? The performer's? History's? The audience's? A combination of any or all of the above? And even more importantly, on what grounds does one determine which of these sources is authoritative? Presumably, Sparshott would recognize a combination of sources, rather than favouring one source as authoritative.

<sup>84</sup>Here there seems to have infiltrated a discrepancy between, on the one hand, talk of "sense" in terms of the palatability or appropriateness or brilliance of a performance (the aesthetic judgements for which Sparshott provides no criteria) and, on the other, a definition of what constitutes the requisite skills necessary in order to provide a (palpable, appropriate or brilliant) performance.

study, the same music or (on a given occasion) the same piece of music, as that we participate differently in musical experience that is the same as languages and conversations are the same. (in Alperson, 1986, p. 85)

What remains to be identified, however, is what exactly comprises the limits to which the conversation analogy can be extended.

Consider a fictitious example: a visual arts *vernissage*. The event can be comprised of conversations which follow pre-determined practices drawing on, among other elements, language rules or social convention or both, in keeping with the prescribed dictates of the genre. What happens, though, when at that event a creative individual rejects the implicit model described above (for whatever reason) and decides to improvise alone in the crowd, or just plain sets out to stir up the calm by playing devil's advocate and provoking other guests? Some will find this refreshing, others will be scandalized, but it is quite conceivable that, at some point, all present will feel compelled to wonder how far things will go. In evoking the conversation analogy, Sparshott provides not guidance, but "sense." This is perhaps less problematic in the context of social conversation, but is clearly a thorny issue when transposed upon a domain where historians and musicologists, philosophers, performers and conductors legitimately demand their say.

While Sparshott's notion of "sense" does not clarify what, precisely, the conversationalists would call the "authority" so as to determine what carries "sense," it could be assumed that this would consist in the very source which Sparshott attempts to bypass, namely history, current (and past) musical praxis, theoretical perspectives, and so on. These sources of authority are not problematic in themselves. In effect, Baxandall (1985) cites them

as the factors which create the conditions under which the work comes to be, such as constituting the artist's intention. Sparshott's "conversation analogy" would only prove problematic if it were understood as intended to offer an alternative to the view advanced by Baxandall. What is important to note here is the opening up that occurs as a result of Sparshott's conversation analogy, wherein the musical "work" is viewed as involving process, rather than as possessing the ontological status of object.

### 2.3.3. The Musical Work as a Social Artifact: Nicholas Wolterstorff

Research into music within the Western tradition has to a great extent focused on concerns surrounding the creation and performance of works of art as autonomous objects. That assumption was challenged by Sparshott above and will now be pursued in the work of Nicholas Wolterstorff. Wolterstorff expands the notion of the work to encompass the very context and conditions that inform the creation, the performance, and the process of listening to music. His account characterizes music-making as socially embedded, and is worth considering in some detail since it provides a model in which responsibility for the creation and delivery of a musical work extends beyond the conventional dichotomy of composer and performer.

Wolterstorff begins his essay "The Work of Making a Work of Music" (in Alperson, 1986, pp. 103-129) by recalling the expressionist perspective of artistic creation, wherein the artist aims to render external that which is internal, a theory expounded by, for example, R.G. Collingwood. Along similar lines, although more developed, is Beardsley's account that

articulates a two-step process in artistic creation, one which strives to construct an expressive aesthetic unity: inspiration and selection. To this Wolsterstorff adds a third stage, evaluation (in Alperson, 1986, pp. 106-108). Ultimately, Wolsterstorff finds both accounts lacking, in that they seem to neglect any consideration of what can be termed social considerations.

Notice [he writes] that nothing is said here about demands of audiences and patrons, nothing about musical instruments available, nothing about current ways of playing those instruments, nothing about new developments in paint or paper or crayons, nothing about traditions of artistic form, nothing about current view as to the purpose of art, nothing about extant ways of evaluating art, nothing about reward systems for artists. (in Alperson, 1986, p. 108)

In a nutshell, observes Wolsterstorff, “nothing is said about the social realities of art, nor, indeed, about its cultural and material realities” (in Alperson, 1986, p. 108).

Wolsterstorff turns to the work of Alasdair MacIntyre, *After virtue*, as a point of departure for discussing of the key features of social practice. From it he extracts a concept of a practice as an ongoing activity into which new members are inducted. For MacIntyre,

To enter into a practice is to enter into a relationship not only with its contemporary practitioners, but also with those who have preceded using the practice, particularly those whose achievements extended the reach of the practice to its present point. It is thus the achievement, and *a fortiori* the authority, of a tradition which I then confront and from which I have to learn” (MacIntyre, cited by Wolsterstorff in Alperson, 1986, p. 109)

Such a tradition involves both standards of excellence and obedience to rules, and to enter

into a practice is to accept the authority of both those standards and the inadequacy of one's own performance as judged by them. "It is to subject my own attitudes, choices, preferences and tastes to the standards which currently and partially define the practice" (MacIntyre, cited by Wolterstorff in Alpers, 1986, p. 110).

MacIntyre distinguishes between goods that are *internal* to activities and goods that are *external*. When one engages in an activity for external goods, it is for goods which could be obtained through a broad variety of significantly different activities. A simple example would be to make an important financial donation to charity so as to become famous; the benefit, notoriety, could be obtained in many other ways. When one engages in an activity for internal goods, these goods (the products of the activity or experiences which emerge through them) can only be achieved by engaging in that activity or one that is very similar. An example of this could be the breeding of horses: the internal good could either be the joy of being able to ride the animals, or the pleasure of working in a natural setting with animals.

These distinctions are important in terms of refining the criteria for a social practice. According to Wolterstorff, an activity "is more intensely a social practice in a certain society the more regularly those who engage in it, in that society, do so for internal rather than external goods" (in Alpers, 1986, p. 111). Wolterstorff continues:

In the course of the history of a practice, new internal goods may come to light and old ones may fade into oblivion; corresponding to that, new goals may be seized on by practitioners and old ones become unattractive. A fundamental feature of social practices is this plasticity with respect to internal goods and goals, and indeed external. (in Alpers, 1986, p. 111)

What seems to be important in this emphasis on social practices is the fluidity with which choices concerning practices can be made, as such choices are linked to the degree to which they respond to the need for internal and external goods. Clearly, the fine arts can be seen as paradigmatic examples of the type of social practice described by McIntyre and adopted by Wolterstorff. This definition of social practice effectively paves the way for Wolterstorff to make the even bolder suggestion that the work of art be considered a social artifact.

According to Wolterstorff, artistic practices carried out by those with knowledge and skill, continue their course uninterrupted, in tandem not only with changes in the knowledge, skills, standards of evaluation, and goals of its practitioners, but also through serious disagreement in terms of goals and standards. The existence of changes, disputes, and disagreement is linked to the emergence of new internal and external goods and to the disappearance of old ones. Thus, the ebb and flow of internal and external goods aimed at by practitioners is characteristic of a practice.

Linking this to the creative act, Wolterstorff describes the process as it might apply to painting:

When the painter sets brush to canvas she is acting not as a solitary individual, alone with some artistic medium, but as a participant in a social practice. It's true that she is not merely a mouthpiece for that practice. If she has any creativity at all she will stretch and change that practice, extend and alter it, from how it was when she received it, into something different which bears the impress of her own contribution. Nonetheless, the goals and standards she uses to govern her composition will in good



measure have been imbued in her by way of her induction into the social practice of painting, at a certain time in the history of that practice and at a certain place. (in Alperson, 1986, p. 112)

Here, Wolsterstorff makes clear the necessity of an awareness of the social basis of the creative act, revealing as incomplete accounts such as those forwarded earlier in this chapter, which tend not to take this into consideration.

How does this apply to music itself? In response, Wolsterstorff outlines what is required of or within a society whereby music-making practices can exist. Wolsterstorff describes a music-making system by constructing the process from scratch, in a “possible worlds” type process wherein or where an imagined society would evolve through stages from a non-musical one to one in which music was to be found. First, it must be acknowledged that this system is a complex one, involving music-makers who are familiar with the hearing practices of their society, and who produce sounds which are informed by these practices. It also involves music-makers who act with the intention of making particular sounds, which they choose from those sounds that comprise their musical material. To further clarify the concept, for Wolsterstorff, a person is making music when she/he intentionally produces certain sounds which he believes could be heard as music by some (extant) person, taking as a given the fact that the music maker hears what she/he plays as music.<sup>85</sup> The stock of sounds from which one must choose to make music clearly varies from time to time and place to place, and the sounds that the music maker believes persons can

---

<sup>85</sup>Could we infer here that, for Wolsterstorff, this also obtains in the case where “ready-made” sounds are manipulated and heard as music?

hear as music depends not only on perceptions, but on the music which they have been accustomed to hearing. Thus, for Wolsterstorff, what a given person can hear as music is partly natural and partly learned. In his view, the music actually played in a given society constitutes the *objective* side of that society's practical musical culture, whereas the *subjective* side is comprised of people's tendencies and habits of hearing (in Alperson, 1986, p. 116). Hearing practices, too, must evolve in the society, as music makers stretch the ears of people who hear their music, and similarly hearers may apply new hearing practices to old sounds. Crucial, however, is the fact that music-makers release their sounds to a group of people who are equipped and trained to hear them in a particular way. This establishes the music making and hearing practices of the imagined society, but does not yet provide actual works of music (in Alperson, 1986, p. 117).

Various musical genre concepts emerge, and people begin to recognize certain instances of music-making as being identified with the genres. Rules for music-making and for playing a sequence of sounds correctly begin to emerge. Once this happens, new possibilities emerge: making music by following a rule, making music in accord with a rule without following it, trying to follow a rule but failing, following a rule for the most part but intentionally departing a bit here and there, following what one believes to be a rule (yet making a mistake concerning the rule), etc.<sup>86</sup> In addition, the system must integrate the required principles of individuation: the repeated following of rules (allowing the same work

---

<sup>86</sup>A well known parallel has been established in the philosophy of language, namely the problematization of the notion of rule-making and rule-following. See Wittgenstein, L. *Philosophical investigations*. For a response to Wittgenstein see, for example, Kripke, S. (1982), *On rules and private language*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

to be performed again), and of playing an entire work in its entirety (in Alperson, 1986, p. 117).

Despite integrating the above characteristics, such a system still does not necessarily have musical *works*. For this to occur people must have musical unit-concepts that apply to their music-making, in other words, elements which, in combination, form the work's structure. Thus the notion of intention of making sounds according to the concepts of musical units must also be integrated. In addition, people must successfully try to follow rules for correctness in music-making, and there must also be rules of completeness specifying what constitutes a complete playing. In an effective analogy Wolsterstorff states that "Works of music are like games which have completeness rules attached" (in Alperson, 1986, p. 118). The final step in this process would be the emergence of composers, who would intentionally engage in the practice of making works. When, at last, adequate notation systems emerge, some people will gain access to the work without hearing it sounded out (in Alperson, 1986, p. 119).

According to this view, Wolsterstorff posits the notion of rules for correctness of music-making, together with completeness rules, as a means to distinguish between correct and incorrect examples of musical works. For example, "one can try to follow the rules of some such set and succeed; the result will be a correct performance of a work. One can also try, but fail. If one doesn't fail too badly, the result will still be a performance of a work, but an incorrect one" (in Alperson, 1986, p. 120).<sup>87</sup>

---

<sup>87</sup>Wolsterstorff's account does speak to that which is necessary for music to exist, however it is not concerned with questions that relate to the quality of the music, or to what distinguishes one performance from another. Certain questions emerge. For example: Is the

Linking his account of the work itself to the issue that concerns us here, namely the roles of composer and performer, Wolsterstorff argues that the existence of a set of correctness rules, with a completeness rule attached, does more than provide for the distinction between correct and incorrect performances of a work. "It makes possible performances of the work *tout court*, be they correct or incorrect, since one only performs a work if one tries to follow its constitutive rules (or something close to them). Performing is that kind of intentional rule-governed activity" (in Alperson, 1986, p. 120).

Once Wolsterstorff establishes the making and performing of music as a complex social process, he is well positioned to return to the three-phase model of composition derived from Beardsley, and to add to that the notion of ordaining rules of correctness and completeness. In light of this, he points out that the model now involves four phases: invention, evaluation, selection and ordination (in Alperson, 1986, p. 121). In the view set out by Wolsterstorff, the basic reality of music is not works, nor the composition of works, but music-making, and the composition of works is done primarily for the sake of enhancing a society's music-making. The fact that composing exists in the service of music-making means that the process of making and listening to works not only motivates composing but also guides it (in Alperson, 1986, p. 121).

---

following of rules sufficient to guarantee a "correct performance"? Are rules sufficient for (or capable of) assuring the integration of expressive qualities introduced by the performer who "interprets" the work? And finally, in terms of a performance, what constitutes a failure (as implied by his use of the terms "fail," and "doesn't fail too badly")? Who determines the measurement according to which the failure is determined? Is consensus required for such a measurement, or is the extent to which a performed work fails merely a matter of individual taste? Or must one call on authority, such as a committee of critics? For further consideration of these questions, see N. Wolsterstorff (1980), *Works and worlds of art*.

Turning to the subject of the composer, Wolsterstorff questions the status of the composer's desire or anticipation or both that her/his work be heard in a certain way, wondering whether this involves preference, or a *right* or *correct* way. This would imply (he reasons) that there is a wrong and a right way to hear a piece. Despite the accepted assumption that there are many right ways, are there, for a given work, canonical modes of perception? This implies that there would then be rules for correct performance and rules for correct hearing. This leads Wolsterstorff to conclude that performing and hearing must somehow be linked (in Alperson, 1986, p. 122).

Does the composer's desire, expectation or desire *and* expectation that his work be heard in a certain way, then, factor in the determination of rules for right hearing (canonical modes of perception), and if, so how? Further, Wolsterstorff asks, does the composer's desire and/or expectation determine the correctness and incorrectness of hearing? If so, we must acknowledge that the composer's rules for right hearing are "in good measure parasitic on society's rules. He wants us to listen to his work in the way which is regarded as a right way in the hearing-practices of his society" (in Alperson, 1986, p. 122). This takes into consideration the fact that, according to Wolsterstorff, social practices incorporate variable and contestable norms. Wolsterstorff can then conclude that, if rules for right hearing contribute to constituting the work, then the work itself is in part a social rather than just a personal artifact. He writes:

Its very identity is in part determined by the hearing practices of the composer's society—not just shaped in the process of composition by those practices, but determined in their identity by them. What the work is like at certain points is

determined by what the hearing practices of the society are like at that point. (in Alperson, 1986, p. 123)<sup>88</sup>

As a direct consequence of society's role in shaping the identity of composition and hearing, Wolsterstorff reasons that there must be works for which we have scores but which may nonetheless be inaccessible to us. This is because "we may no longer be able to hear them as they once were heard (in Alperson, 1986, p. 123).<sup>89</sup> He states this even more strongly: "You and I cannot hear old music as it was once heard; our hearing of intervening music has made our hearing practices different from those and there is nothing we can do to undo that" (in Alperson, 1986, p. 123).<sup>90</sup> According to this reasoning, works can be irrecoverably lost to us, in the sense that we lose the way in which they were listened to and/or heard as they emerged in their particular social context.

On the other hand, Wolsterstorff asserts, perhaps rightness of hearing is determined

---

<sup>88</sup>Remaining with a now familiar example, it is interesting to note that the work of John Cage both relies upon and contests this. In a society which, according to convention, listens to sounds in a particular way, with particular expectations, he challenges us to listen (and hear) sounds based on an entirely different set of expectations—and this is a tremendous challenge indeed. Even today, many would deny that Cage's works are, in fact, "music." Others, however, might argue that through his very challenging of societal norms, Cage made an immeasurable contribution in terms of how we listen to any music.

<sup>89</sup>This parallels the objections raised earlier in this chapter in response to the Early Music Movement.

<sup>90</sup>Wolsterstorff's reason for our inability to hear music as it was once heard is more complex than this. Our inability to hear Bach as Bach—or his audience—heard it is due not only to our having heard "intervening music," but even more importantly to our having been exposed to a radically different soundscape in a deeper sense. As mentioned earlier in this dissertation, contemporary urban sounds of traffic, industry, aircraft, Muzak, the work of thinkers like John Cage who encouraged us to "listen to" everyday sounds and hear them as music, and contemporary technology with its capacity to mix, splice, amplify music and other sounds, etc., have all shifted our points of reference in terms of heard sounds.

not by the composer's desires and expectations, but by the norms embedded in the hearing practices of our own society, regardless of whether the works to which those hearing practices are applied are new or old. If this is the case and rules for right hearing constitute the work, not only will works be partially social rather than personal artifacts, but their identity will alter from age to age (in Alperson, 1986, p. 123).<sup>91</sup>

Parallel to this, according to Wolsterstorff, hearing practices also in some way enter into the correctness rules which determine the identity of the work; this would be the case, for example, with performance practices. This emerges as a result of the nature of musical instruments, whose existence is dependent not only on musical taste but also on an array of other factors including the raw materials available, the physical situations in which a society likes its instruments played, a society's ideology surrounding music, performance-forming practices, and the level of "advancement" of the society's form of production.

Thus, a composer determines the instrument on which the work will be performed

---

<sup>91</sup>Wolsterstorff does not seem to place a great deal of emphasis on the potential for (re-)construction on the part of individual performers and listeners. To do this, Wolsterstorff would need to consider various factors in terms of the listener who, to a great extent, also constructs the work. The omission is understandable if one attempts to avoid the question of psychological states, etc. Nonetheless, the listener's role is not only to hear, but to understand, as Scruton and others have emphasized (see *The aesthetic understanding*, 1983; and *Musical understanding and musical culture*, in Alperson, 1986). It will suffice to note here that others have glimpsed the importance of the performer's and listener's experience as an important factor in discussions of music. Edward T. Cone, for example writes in *The composer's voice* (1974): "Young pianists often fail to give convincing accounts of the last Beethoven sonatas not because of technical deficiency or lack of intellectual understanding but because of insufficient emotional maturity. Their personal histories offer them no parallel to help them gauge the expressive potential of the music" (p. 170). Further, referring to the contribution of the listener, Cone writes that "Here, finally, is where the total potential content of any musical work is located: in the relationship among all its contexts and in the illumination thrown on that relationship by the musical structure that unites them" (1974, p. 171).

in order for the sound produced to be aesthetically pleasing. According to this choice, a condition of the work's correct performance would be that it be played on the instrument specified, in accordance with the standard performance-practice of the period of its origin, in that particular musical tradition. The rules which the composer ordains are rules that specify certain sounds and certain actions, or playing certain instruments in certain ways. Because of this, for Wolsterstorff, musical works cannot consist entirely of sounds, or even of sounds *heard* in a certain way: they also consist of actions.

To summarize, then, the composer selects from musical material, instrument-playing actions, and often the occasion or type of occasion for which the work will be performed (in Alperson, 1986, p. 125). Social practices are embodied in composers' works, possibly even constituting the identity of those works. "They contribute to the 'why' of those works, to their rationale. The rationality of a work of art is neither purely interior to the work nor purely interior to the artistic; not even its identity is" (in Alperson, 1986, p. 125).

Wolsterstorff's conclusion that the work of art amounts to what he terms a "social artifact" counters the idea that "music is exemplified in works," a view which dates back to the sixteenth century.<sup>92</sup> It also counters contemporary views which often consider the musical work as autonomous. According to Wolsterstorff, the social practice of music-making consists almost entirely in that it makes works accessible to us.

An instrumental factor in this shift, according to Wolsterstorff, is the appearance of a more adequate and detailed system of notation, one which would not only be a reminder

---

<sup>92</sup>For evidence of the long-standing nature of the notion of an autonomous musical work, Wolsterstorff draws on Carl Dalhaus, (1982), *Esthetics of music*, p. 10.



to performers, but would serve to acquaint us with the work.<sup>93</sup> “Whereas previously works were almost evanescent, retained for a while in social memory and then disappearing, with adequate notation they acquired the solidity of scores!” (in Alpers, 1986, p. 127).

Wolterstorff is led to question why theorists have been oblivious to the fact that works embody social reality. He speculates that this may well be to preserve the position of art as above society, perhaps so as not to acknowledge what he refers to as the social contamination of art (in Alpers, 1986, p. 127). With respect to writings about art produced during and concerning the last two centuries, Wolterstorff observes that:

To a society mired in the rationality of craftsmanship Collingwood says that in autonomous Art there is something nobler and better. To a society mired in domination and exploitation Adorno says that in autonomous Art we find a mimesis of that society which illuminates us while at the same time finding a glimpse of a joy still beyond us. (in Alpers, 1986, p. 127)<sup>94</sup>

Wolterstorff notes that even Beardsley writes of the artist as one who presents a model of humanity’s hope for control over nature, and over self (in Alpers, 1986, p. 127).

---

<sup>93</sup>In the case of Western music the neumatic notations of plainchant and secular song originated between the ninth- and twelfth centuries. Neumes (graphic signs) essentially indicated the rise and fall of the voice. As these evolved, the resultant note symbols provided the basis for notation from the thirteenth through to the fifteenth centuries. Barring entered notation in the seventeenth century and became regular practice in the eighteenth.

<sup>94</sup>This representation of Adorno might be criticized in that Adorno emphasized the role of the artist as a social critic. In this light, however, some might argue that the role of artist as social critic is merely a nostalgic one, reminiscent of the nineteenth-century solitary artist. This take on the artist would be adopted, (again, according to some) as a means of avoiding the fact that the question of art and society is a complex one, involving such intricately interwoven factors as the art market, funding, etc. See, for example, R. Shusterman, (1992), *Pragmatist aesthetics: Living beauty, rethinking art*.

Wolsterstorff observes that the view of the artist as socially oblivious is an unavoidable corollary of an ideology in which art allows one to enter a higher realm of freedom and transcendent universality, of freedom from social demands alien to the artist, thus transcending the particularity of the artist's society so as to put us in touch with universal humanity (in Alperson, 1986, p. 128). Wolsterstorff has significantly shaken the foundations of this position.

#### 2.4. Conclusion

In this chapter, the Early Music Movement was considered as a “paradigm of intentionality,” since the *modus operandi* of its proponents is to base aesthetic and performance decisions on what they claim to be the intentions of composers of early music. The assumption is that historical authenticity in musical performance is coextensive with quality of performance.

Chapter Two began with an overview of the basic history of, and reasoning behind, the Early Music Movement. As the chapter progressed, however, it became apparent that historically authentic performance practices are characterized by a zeal that many consider alarming. In fact, critics of the Early Music Movement (Neumann, 1982, 1989; Subotnik, 1991; Taruskin, 1995) raised concerns at two levels. First, they questioned the extent to which historically authentic musical performances (with authentic instruments, halls, performance techniques and so on), actually are capable of assuring historical authenticity in musical performance. Second, critics questioned whether historically authentic

performances, even if these are achievable, are necessarily the best performances.

Ultimately, these critics rejected the assumption that history remains the definitive keeper of the secrets of music from the past. They viewed the historical authenticity movement as “claiming a specious moral authority” (Taruskin, 1995, p. 32). When this occurs, it was argued, “in its attempt to bond with the original intentions that produced the work, it excludes all other intentions” (Taruskin, 1995, p. 32).

As an alternative, these critics argued that music should not remain confined to the role of historical artifact, but rather should be permitted to evolve through liberating interpretations which reflect and respond to the complex social, intellectual, and aesthetic climate of contemporary society (Neumann, 1982, 1989; Subotnik, 1991; Taruskin, 1995).

Chapter Two concluded with a perspective that viewed the musical score not as a determined and fixed document for translating composers’ intentions to performers for their rendering, but rather as a point of departure for musical inquiry. Sparshott likened the complex process of music making to a conversation (1963, 1967; and in Alperson, 1986), and Wolsterstorff viewed musical creation, performance, and perception as a socially embedded practice subject to the influences of a complex network of social factors (in Alperson, 1986).

## CHAPTER THREE

### Nelson Goodman's Account of Music

#### 3.0. Introduction

Attempts to identify the site of authority in determining the qualitative characteristics of the musical work have revealed a range of positions. At one end of the spectrum, it has been argued that the score is a tool through which the composer's intentions are accessed, whereas at the other, the score is seen as a mere point of departure, a set of indications which chart a possible course of exploration, as yet undefined. The positions considered are alike in that they lack precision of terms and fail to provide a rigorous and systematic approach to the question. To address this, the discussion will now turn to the work of Nelson Goodman. Since first publication in 1968 of *Languages of art*, Goodman has contributed significantly to the area of aesthetics.<sup>95</sup> His account of the role of notation in defining musical works stipulates that "...work-preservation is paramount, and score-preservation incidental" (Goodman, 1976, p. 178). This may initially lead one to assume that Goodman regards the composer as the most important author of the musical work, to the extent that a performance of the work is one which correctly meets the requirements of the notational tool employed by the composer, that is, the score. Further investigation of Goodman's broader views, however, reveals that his account of notation in defining musical works provides only a

---

<sup>95</sup>Throughout this dissertation all page references to *Languages of art* will be to the 1976 edition.

partial account of the way in which music functions as a symbolic language. His very theoretical and stringent account of the role of notation in defining musical works is offset by his view of the music as a sound event, and by his account of expression and style.

This chapter will address these three main areas of investigation. The first section will provide an overview of Goodman's theory of notation, and in particular the role of notation in defining musical works. The second section will identify and discuss what appear to be unreconciled tensions in Goodman's theory. The final section will consider Goodman's views on the general nature of musical performance; these extend beyond those articulated in terms of his theory of notation as applied to music, in particular his account of musical expression and its relationship to style.

### 3.1. Overview of Goodman's Theory of Notation

#### 3.1.1. Introduction

The vague language employed by many theorists in the discipline of musical aesthetics can be seen to derive from a generally inadequate theoretical base. According to Quine, "the less a science has advanced, the more its terminology tends to rest on an uncritical assumption of mutual understanding" (cited by B. Boretz in Boretz and Cone, 1972, p. 31). Boretz contends that:

Given this observation, it is hardly surprising that the customary inadequacy of meta-artistic communication has resulted in the usual, though erroneous, attributions of

cognitive indeterminateness to the manifestations of the object-domains of art themselves, an attribution which is evident in the prevalent practice, in the philosophy and theory of art, of identifying as the salient aspects of art almost anything other than the contextually observable properties of those manifestations. (in Boretz and Cone, 1972, p. 32)

Moreover, Quine has also noted that “what counts as observation sentences for a community of specialists would not always so count for a larger community” (cited by Boretz in Boretz and Cone, 1972, p. 32). Unfortunately, as Boretz also points out, this particular weakness, namely the failure of non-artists to recognize, and of artists to explicate the inter-subjectivity of the entities the observation of which constitutes the contemplation of something as a work of art, has hindered the theory of art more so than it has theory in other fields (in Boretz and Cone, 1972, p. 32).

In contrast, Goodman’s insistence on the cognitive aspect of art has led to the criticism that he somehow anaesthetizes the aesthetic (Ackerman, 1981, pp. 249-254). To this charge, Goodman responds:

What I want to emphasize is that pleasure or even ecstasy alone, without insight or inquiry, without recognition of significant distinctions and relationships, without effect on the way we see and understand a world including the object itself, can hardly be considered aesthetic. (Goodman, 1981, p. 274)

In this light, Goodman sets out to clarify such “significant distinctions and relationships” in an attempt to elevate discussion of the aesthetic beyond a mere recognition of pleasure.

### 3.1.2. Goodman's Theory of Notation and its Music Application

Goodman recognizes that the score is generally considered a mere tool, dispensable after the performance, and in keeping with this he establishes which characteristics must exist in order for a score to be considered notational.

First and foremost for Goodman, the score has as its primary function "the authoritative identification of a work from performance to performance" (1976, p. 128). This is not to say that a score may not serve other functions, for example to facilitate transposition, comprehension or even composition, but for Goodman the fundamental role of the score is to determine and define the identity of the work.

In defining the work, the score distinguishes performances that belong to the work from those that do not. According to Goodman, all and only performances that comply with the score can be considered performances of the work (1976, p. 128). The definition of the work, however, is more complex than most definitions which exist in ordinary discourse and formal systems. While a definition, in general, always determines what objects conform to it, a definition is rarely uniquely determined by each of its instances. When asked to identify an object, one is free to select an answer from any class to which the object belongs. It is possible, then, to pass from an object to a definition the object complies with (e.g., to "eating utensil"), to another object (e.g., "a knife"), to another label applying to the second object (e.g., "weapon"), and to a third object complying with the second label (e.g., "a bow and arrow"). In this way it is possible to move from one object to another in such a way that no label in the series applies to both. Moreover, in this example, two labels in the series may

differ totally in extension, with no one object complying with both.

This kind of latitude, according to Goodman, cannot be tolerated in the case of scores. According to his definition,

[s]cores and performances must be so related that in every chain where each step is either from score to compliant performance or from performance to covering score or from one copy of a score to another correct copy of it, all performances belong to the same work and all copies of scores define the same class of performances. Otherwise, the requisite identification of a work from performance to performance would not be guaranteed; we might pass from a performance to another that is not of the same work, or from a score to another that determines a different—even an entirely disjoint—class of performances. (1976, p. 129)

According to Goodman's system, not only must a score uniquely determine the class of performances belonging to the work, but the score (as a class of copies or inscriptions that so define the work) must be uniquely determined, given a performance and the notational system. In order to consider what, exactly, this means, Goodman sets out the required properties for scores and the notational systems in which they are written so that they meet this requirement.

#### 3.1.2.1. Syntactic Requirements

Goodman begins by acknowledging that while the symbol scheme of every notational system is notational, not every symbol system with a notational scheme is a notational



system.<sup>96</sup> Because of this, a definition of a notational scheme is essential. First, a symbol scheme consists of characters, which are certain classes of utterances or inscriptions or marks, be they visual or auditory. The essential feature of a character in a notation, according to Goodman, is that its members may be freely exchanged for one another without any syntactical effect. He argues that:

being instances of one character in a notation must constitute a sufficient condition for marks being “true copies” or replicas<sup>[97]</sup> of each other, or being spelled the same way. And a true copy of a true copy of... a true copy of an inscription x must always be a true copy of x. For if the relation of being a true copy is not thus transitive, the basic purpose of a notation is defeated. Requisite separation among characters—and hence among scores—will be lost unless identity is preserved in any chain of true copies. (1976, pp. 131-132)

Character indifference among the instances of each character is a necessary condition for notation. For Goodman, two marks are character-indifferent if each is an inscription (in other words, belongs to some character) and neither one belongs to any character the other does not. Goodman specifies that:

---

<sup>96</sup>Music is not necessarily a notational system, due to the presence of elements which violate notationality. These will be discussed later in this chapter. Nonetheless, a musical score integrates notational scheme.

<sup>97</sup>Goodman makes reference here to the distinction between “type” and its “tokens” as defined by Pierce: see *Collected papers of Charles Sanders Pierce*, vol. IV., in C. Hartshorne and P. Weiss, ed. (1933), Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. The type is the universal or class of which marks are instances or members. Goodman, dismissing the type altogether, treats the so-called tokens of a type as replicas of one another. An inscription need not be an exact duplicate of, or even similar to another, to be a replica of it.

A character in a notation is a most-comprehensive class of character-indifferent inscriptions; that is, a class of marks such that every two are character-indifferent and such that no mark outside the class is character-indifferent with every member of it. In short, a character in a notation is an abstraction class of character-indifference among inscriptions. (1976, pp. 132-133)

As such, Goodman asserts, no mark may belong to more than one character.

That characters are disjoint is, for Goodman, an essential feature of notations. As an example, imagine a mark that belongs to both the second and the sixteenth letter of the alphabet. In this instance, every “b” and every “p” will be “syntactically equivalent with this mark and hence with each other” (1976, p. 133). In this instance, the two letter-classes collapse into one character. Otherwise, “joint membership in a letter-class will not guarantee syntactical equivalence, so that instances of the same letter may not be true copies of one another” (1976, p. 133). In such situations, Goodman explains, the letters do not qualify as characters in a notation.

Goodman does recognize that, if the differentiation between characters is extremely precise (he gives the example of the characters which are classes of straight marks differing in length by one-millionth of an inch), it can be very difficult to determine whether certain given marks belong to a given character. He argues that

If, on the other hand, there are wide neutral zones between characters (e.g. between one and two inches long, the class of straight marks between five and six inches long, etc.), then among the marks that do not belong to any character will be some that are exceedingly difficult to distinguish from some instances of some character. (1976,

p. 134)

In cases such as these, Goodman points out, it is difficult to determine the membership of some marks in such classes.

Goodman explains that a genuine notation is distinguished not by how easily correct judgements can be made, but by what their consequences are. For a genuine notation, unlike a non-disjoint classification, “marks correctly judged to be joint members of a character will always be true copies of each other” (1976, p. 134).

A second necessary requirement of a notational system, according to Goodman (1976, p. 135) is that the characters be *finitely differentiated*, or *articulate*. This means that “for every two characters K and K\* and every mark m that does not actually belong to both, determination either that m does not belong to K or that m does not belong to K\* is theoretically possible” (1976, pp. 136-137).

An example of a scheme which is undifferentiated would be a syntactically dense scheme, that is, one which “provides for infinitely many characters so ordered that between each pair there is a third” (1976, p. 136). As an example, Goodman suggests, is

a scheme where the characters correspond to all rational numbers that are either less than 1 or not less than 2. In this case, the insertion of a character corresponding to 1 will destroy density. When no insertion of other characters in their normal place will thus destroy density, a scheme has no gaps and may be called dense throughout. (1976, p. 136)

Goodman cautions, however, that absence of density does not guarantee finite differentiation.

Having established the first two conditions necessary in order for a notational system

to obtain, Goodman observes that the syntactic requirements of disjointness and finite differentiation are met by alphabetical, numerical, binary, telegraphic, and basic musical notations, among others (1976, p. 140).<sup>98</sup> As well, he asserts that “some schemes recently devised and called notations fail, because they do not meet these minimum demands, to qualify as notations at all” (1976, p. 140). Moreover, “[t]he requirements of disjointness and finite differentiation are not meant to describe the class of what are ordinarily called notations, but are rather conditions that must be fulfilled if the basic theoretic purpose of a score is to be served” (1976, pp. 140-141).

### 3.1.2.2. Semantic Requirements

According to Goodman, the first semantic requirement of notation systems is that they be unambiguous (1976, p. 148). A mark that is unequivocally an inscription of a single character is ambiguous if it has different compliants at different times or in different contexts, both in terms of literal and metaphorical uses. The requirement of unambiguity is necessary since the central purpose of a notational system can be met only if the compliance relationship is invariant. Goodman holds that “any ambiguous *inscription* must be excluded since it will give conflicting decisions as to whether a particular object complies with it” (1976, p. 148). Any ambiguous *character* must also be excluded because, “since different inscriptions of it will have different compliants, some inscriptions that count as true copies of each other will have different compliance classes” (1976, p. 149).

---

<sup>98</sup>This will be questioned in terms of musical notation later in this dissertation.

Goodman argues that even if all characters of a symbol system are disjoint classes of unambiguous inscriptions, and all inscriptions of any one character have the same compliance-classes, different compliance-classes may intersect in any way (1976, pp. 149-150). He specifies, however, that:

[I]n a notational system, the compliance-classes must be disjoint. For if two different compliance-classes intersect, some inscription will have two compliants such that one belongs to a compliance class that the other does not; and a chain from compliant to inscription to compliant will thus lead from a member of one compliance-class to something outside that class. (1976, p. 150)

It follows that, without disjoint compliance classes, the fundamental purpose of a notational system would be defeated.

This leads to the question of whether different characters must have different compliance-classes, in other words, whether the system must be free of redundancy. Goodman's argument:

In a redundant system some inscription will have a compliant that also complies with a second inscription that is not a true copy of the first. Accordingly, while in every chain of permitted steps every compliant will belong to the same compliance-class, not in every such chain will every inscription belong to the same character. Hence, strictly, redundancy must be proscribed. (1976, p. 151)

Having clearly articulated why redundancy is to be avoided, Goodman goes on to

make concessions and allow occurrences of it.<sup>99</sup> He argues that:

[S]ince preserving identity of character (e.g., of score from copy to copy) is incidental to preserving identity of compliance class (e.g., of musical work from performance to performance), redundancy is harmless (1976, p. 151).

At this point a tension can be perceived. Recall Goodman's earlier assertion as to the primary function of the score: "all and only performances that comply with the score can be considered performances of the work" (1976, p. 128). Recall, also, his account of the way in which the steps in the chain must function:

Scores and performances must be so related that in every chain where each step is either from score to compliant performance or from performance to covering score or from one copy of a score to another correct copy of it, all performances belong to the same work and all copies of scores define the same class of performances. (1976, p. 129)

For Goodman, in order to be a performance of a work, it must comply with the score and, further, in the chain of movement between elements in the system, it must be possible to move from one copy of a score to another correct copy of it.<sup>100</sup> Given the rigour of the above, it is not clear why redundancy is considered a negligible violation. This question of redundancy will be revisited later in this chapter in a discussion of rhythm and pitch, where it will be shown that two identical sound-events can be notated in different ways.

---

<sup>99</sup>Elsewhere in this dissertation I refer to the stipulations of these concessions as Goodman's Redundancy Clause.

<sup>100</sup>Concerns related to Goodman's waiving of the redundancy requirement will be explored later in this chapter.

The final requirement for a notational system is semantic *finite differentiation*. Goodman defines this in the following way: for every two characters K and K\* such that their compliance-classes are not identical, and every object h that does not comply with both, determination either that h does not comply with K or that h does not comply with K\* must be theoretically possible (1976, p. 153). Goodman gives this example: If a system contains two characters “a” and “b”, and all objects weighing an ounce or less comply with “a” while all objects weighing more comply with “b”, then that system—no matter what other characters and reference classes it may embrace—lacks semantic differentiation. Because no limit is established in terms of significant difference in weight, there will always be many characters so that even the most detailed measurement is unable to confirm that an object does not comply with K or K\*. For this reason, such a system fails of notationality.

In conclusion, for Goodman the properties that are necessary for a system to be notational are unambiguity and syntactic and semantic disjointness and differentiation. He asserts that “All derive from the primary purpose a score must serve; and all are categorically required for any even theoretically workable notational system” (1976, p. 156). As such, for Goodman, a system is notational if and only if all objects complying with inscriptions of a given character belong to the same compliance class and we can, theoretically, determine that each mark belongs to, and each object complies with inscriptions of, at most, one particular character (1976, p. 156).

### 3.1.3. The Musical Score

For Goodman, a score is a character in a notational system. A score is considered to be every character that may have compliants. It is important to note that, according to Goodman's system, the term "score" refers to characters from any notational system, not merely in musical notion. He also holds that the compliants of such characters are termed "performances" when such compliants are not performed or even events at all.

The score, as discussed above, defines a work. A class is uniquely determined by a score and, conversely, a score is uniquely determined by each member of that class. For Goodman, then,

Given the notational system and performance of a score, the score is recoverable.

Identity of work and of score is retained in any series of steps, each of them either from compliant performance to score-inscription, or from score-inscription to compliant performance, or from score-inscription to true copy. (1976, p. 178)

The language in which a score is written must be notational, satisfying the five requirements discussed above.



### 3.2. Instances of “Problem cases”: What is not Notational?

#### 3.2.1. Introduction

Goodman’s system provides a rigorous set of rules according to which it becomes possible to characterize a notational system. As well, he has outlined a set of provisions which determine the relationship between the score and the performance of the work. Thus far, identity of the work can be seen as Goodman’s primary concern. The system is constructed around an attempt to eliminate any ambiguity that might emerge from the notation and thus lead to error of identity. Notwithstanding (or perhaps due to) the rigour of this endeavour, instances of exceptions, problems, and tensions emerge which do not seem to be resolved in Goodman’s account. These will be discussed in the following section.

#### 3.2.2. Redundancy and Performance Preservation/Score Preservation

Non-redundancy, as demonstrated earlier, was established as a necessary criterion within a notational system. This derives from the disjointness requirement which stipulates that no two characters have any compliant in common, so that not only must every two different compliance-classes in a notational system be disjoint, but every two characters must have different compliance classes. Notwithstanding, Goodman argues that “for two characters to have all as against only some common compliants is often the lesser transgression” (176, p. 152). As such, Goodman does countenance redundancy in an

otherwise notational system: “non-redundancy need not be taken as a separate requirement” (1976, p. 151). He considers that redundancy is a “common and minor violation of notationality” (1976, p. 178). As a result, “in a notational system, or even a system that misses notationality only through redundancy, all scores for a given performance are coextensive—have all the same performances as compliants” (1976, p. 179). What this means is that two score-inscriptions of a particular musical work need not necessarily be identical copies of each another, yet will nonetheless be semantically equivalent and, as such, all performances will be of the same work. Here, work-preservation but not score-preservation is ensured and “insofar as work-preservation is paramount, and score-preservation incidental, redundancy is tolerable” (1976, p. 178).

#### 3.2.2.1. Redundancy Through Notation of Rhythm

Goodman’s tolerance of redundancy through rhythm notation would initially seem to lead to curious implications. This will be discussed, first by outlining what appears as problematic, and then by explaining why the initial concern is ill-founded.

Edward T. Cone argues that music, generally speaking, consists of “formal relations among sounds heard as such” (in Alperson, 1986, p. 13). For Cone, rhythm is central; “for a succession of sounds to be heard as music, they must be connected by a perceptible temporal pattern of duration and stress—in other words, by a rhythmic form. If the sounds are tones, they must be connected by a pitch pattern as well—a melodic form” (in Alperson, 1986, p. 13). The semantic disjointness requirement would seem to pose a problem when

applied to Western notation practices, since here it is very common for two inscriptions to denote the same character. This can be illustrated with the following example.

In Western music notation, a score indicates not only the tones to be played, but also the rhythmic form. In a score, the notation provides a time signature in which the upper number indicates the number of beats to a measure, and the bottom number indicates which note value receives one beat. For example, in 2/4 time, there would be two beats per measure, and a quarter note, written as ♩, would be allocated one beat. If a quarter note is worth one beat, then two quarter notes, indicating two distinct notes, would be worth one beat each ♩ ♩. These quarter notes, however, can be “tied,” ♩̣, in which case only the first note would actually be sounded, but it would be held for two counts, “tied” over the second. This is where the problem arises since, ostensibly, it is the half note, in 2/4 time, that is allocated two beats. This means that, in Diagram 1 below, two very different marks would have the same referent, both in terms of tone and time value.



diagram 1.

As such, the character (in this case, the A, worth two counts) violates the condition of semantic disjointness.

Why does this initially appear to be problematic? Clearly, it has no effect if one is concerned with the performance alone, since in terms of sound, the compliance class is the same for both inscriptions. Thus, two scores of the same work could end up looking entirely

different; this could result in a situation in which two different sets of inscriptions denote the same compliance class. According to Goodman's account, however, this poses no serious problem since, as noted earlier, a correct copy of a score is one which leads to a correct performance: Work preservation is more important than score preservation. In the above example, the score successfully preserves the identity of the work.

#### 3.2.2.2. Redundancy Through Notation of Pitch

If, in terms of rhythm notation, redundancy is harmless, implications for redundancy through notation of pitch are somewhat more significant. While the identification of the work, in terms of sound-event, may well be preserved through a score wherein pitch notations vary from one score to another, the implications at a deeper musicological level are more serious than Goodman has acknowledged.

Goodman considers redundancy in terms of tonal systems, pointing out that the same sound-events comply with the characters for c sharp, d flat, e triple-flat, and b double-sharp. He reiterates, however, that for his system, "redundancy, as we have seen, is not altogether fatal" (1976, p. 181). This assertion proves itself to be simplistic, however, when one takes into consideration the important role played by musicological and music theoretical analysis in understanding the structural workings of the music. For example, the character d flat, when it appears in a passage in the key of A major, would be considered an important indicator of an upcoming modulation (the shifting of one pitch focus or *tonic* to another), from the key of A major to another key.

Goodman is correct in his observation that the sound-event at that moment would be the same, regardless of whether the character employed were d flat or c sharp. The theoretical implications, however, would be much more significant. This is because (in Western tonal music) the key in which a work is written, and the harmonic modulations which that music undergoes, not only assures the tonal characteristics of the work but, in so-doing, is of critical importance to even the most basic understanding of the music itself. The tonal system is built around the *tonic* key, the central and key-indicating tone of any scale.<sup>101</sup> For example, the sound-event notated as a c sharp would function as the *mediant* in the key of A major, whereas if this same sound-event were notated as a d flat it could carry out any number of functions; as the mediant in B flat major, as the *tonic* in D flat major, as the *dominant* in G flat major, or as the *sub-dominant* in A flat major.

The history of music is laden with instances wherein audiences responded forcefully in outrage or exhilaration at unexpected or non-conventional tonal modulations by innovative composers.<sup>102</sup> It is true that the performance of the music provides the sound-event, and that different versions of (score) notations do not *sound* different to the audience. Nor is the score in any way the cause of this kind of forceful response by audiences. Nonetheless, the score

---

<sup>101</sup>The particular functions within the scale system are established through their naming: The first is the tonic, the second is the super-tonic, the third is the mediant, the fourth is the sub-dominant, the fifth is the dominant, the sixth is the sub-mediante, and the seventh is the leading note. The use of these terms is an accepted convention in any discussion of musicology and music theoretical analysis.

<sup>102</sup>The 1913 premiere of Stravinsky's ballet score *The rite of spring in Paris* is clearly an example of the former response. Opening night of *The rite* created one of the most acclaimed musical scandals in the history of Western music: a riot broke out and so much noise was created by the audience that the music itself was almost entirely obliterated.

is nearly always a critical tool in analysis of what a composer has done at a structural and tonal level. Musical analysis and musicology would need to be entirely rewritten if, as Goodman suggests, redundancy is tolerable, and notes written one way instead of another could be attributed merely to the odd case of a mistaken transcription, or to an arbitrary decision by a composer to notate c sharp instead of d flat.

### 3.2.3. Wrong Notes

Even more serious problems can be seen to arise as a result of Goodman's treatment of the wrong notes in a musical performance. According to his theory, complete compliance with the score is the sole requirement for a genuine instance of a work. As such, "the most miserable performance without actual mistakes does count as such an instance, while the most brilliant performance with a single wrong note does not" (Goodman, 1976, p. 186). Goodman acknowledges that common practice could be seen to necessitate some reconsideration of this, as would musicians or composers; in fact, he considers whether ordinary usage does not sanction overlooking a few wrong notes. In response, however, he determines this to be one of those cases where calling upon ordinary usage can lead to trouble. He observes:

The innocent-seeming principle that performances differing by just one note are instances of the same work risks the consequence—in view of the transitivity of identity—that all performances whatsoever are of the same work. If we allow the least deviation, all assurance of work-preservation and score-preservation is lost; for

by a series of one-note errors of omission, addition, and modification, we can go all the way from *Beethoven's fifth symphony* to *Three blind mice*. (1976, pp. 186-187)

Thus, for Goodman, while a score may leave unspecified a considerable number of features of a performance and allow for variation in others within prescribed limits, “full compliance with the specifications given is categorically required” (1976, p. 187). Yet how is this to be reconciled in the imperfect, but very real, world of musical performances?

Taruskin (1995) shares the concern that only a note-perfect performance (one that exhibits full compliance with the score) should count as an instance of the work in question. He cites Goodman's recognition of the problematic nature of this condition:

The composer or musician is likely to protest indignantly at refusal to accept a performance with a few wrong notes [here Taruskin adds his observation “actually, with a single one”] as an instance of a work; and he surely has ordinary usage on his side. But ordinary usage here points the way to disaster for theory. (Goodman, 1976, cited in Taruskin, 1995, p. 207)

To this stance, and clearly in light of the extent to which it clashes with musical practice, Taruskin is led to inquire “at what price theory?” and “what is theory supposed to accomplish?” (Taruskin, 1995, pp. 208-209).

Even if one were to accept Goodman's view on wrong notes, a second and even more significant problem arises. In according full authority to the text so as to assure work-preservation and score-preservation—(recall that “not the slightest deviation from the text can be tolerated”)—Goodman does not recognize or accommodate the very real fact that often many versions of a manuscript exist. Taruskin (1995) recognizes the potential dilemma

that may arise when complete authority is accorded to “the text.” He questions: “But which text? The autograph? The first printed editions? Parts or score? Peter Gulke’s new critical edition? Your old yellow Eulenburg? My green Kalmus?” (1995, p. 208). Indeed, many versions of one musical work can exist at any given time for any number of reasons, for example as a result of decisions made for editorial clarity, or printing errors. No consensus exists as to criteria for determining which version is authoritative and, as such, the use of one version over another amounts to a question of personal choice.<sup>103</sup>

Goodman distinguishes between a painting, which is “autographic” in that it is wholly executed by the artist, and a musical work, which is “allographic” since only the notation, not the sonic realization, is necessarily executed by the composer.<sup>104</sup> A performance is an

---

<sup>103</sup>In response to the question of how to determine which of the available scores of Beethoven’s *Fifth symphony* is the authoritative text, one might intuitively want to argue “The text that comes directly from the hand of the composer.” It seems to make the best sense to call upon the authority of what the composer meant. This stance is laden with the same kind of reasoning that motivates many musicologists, performers, and theorists today, as was seen in the discussion in Chapter Two concerning the Early Music Movement. Later in this section, Pearce (1988) advances a serious concern around composers’ intentions, in particular regarding Beethoven’s metronome markings. Pearce points out that, according to the testimony of Beethoven’s contemporaries, the indicated tempos are in conflict with Beethoven’s own compositional intentions. In that case, what the composer wrote was not necessarily what he meant, and certainly not what is considered by contemporary musicologists, performers, or listeners to be the most aesthetically solid possibility. In other instances, the score indications are incomplete or indeterminate, and so we are left to speculate as to what we believe the composer meant, what convention would have dictated, etc. As has been shown so far in this dissertation, strict adherence to the composer’s original text, both concerning what is indicated and what is not, can lead to considerable divergence of views at the levels of both theory and practice.

<sup>104</sup>These distinctions may be challenged by new arts media and techniques that have emerged in the late twentieth century. For example, in electronic new music, the composer composes directly on tape, and performances consist in the playing of that electronic tape. Thus, unlike traditionally performed music, which is two-stage and allographic, in electronic compositions, no second (or performance) stage exists: the composer is both originator and



instance of the work. Since Goodman considers music, like poetry, to be an allographic art form, he clearly recognizes the fact that multiple editions and copies of scores will exist for a given musical work, and that discrepancies among such scores may arise. Notwithstanding, for Goodman, a misprint in one edition of a score, if it concerns a notational element of that score, would mean that it is a different version, and so defines a different work altogether. As Goodman's primary concern is the preservation of the identity of works, this often leads to counter-intuitive situations in terms of actual occurrences in music practice.

#### 3.2.4. Figured-bass, Continuo, and Free Cadenza

The figured-bass and the continuo present further problems in the application of Goodman's theory of notation to the performance of the score. Having established the necessary criteria for a notational system, Goodman clearly states that while "the main corpus of peculiarly musical characters of the system thus appears on the whole to meet the semantic as well as the syntactic requirements for a notation," it is also the case that "the same cannot be said for all the numerical and alphabetical characters that also occur in scores" (1976, p. 183). The figured-bass and the continuo are examples of exceptions.

---

executor of the work. In general no score exists, and attempts to derive a notated score from the sounds transmitted through electronic performance have met with limited success. A simpler example of a similar problem, however, would be the improvised piano music of Keith Jarrett. If a score could be derived from such a performance, the work could be considered allographic. If, however, it is not possible to derive a score from the recording, the work would be an autographic work, since it derives directly from the composer's "hand." The question of autographic and allographic art forms will be addressed in more detail later in this chapter.

According to Goodman, if the score of the figured bass determines comparatively broad but still mutually disjoint classes of performances, these are not problematic since he holds separateness as more important than specificity. In the case, however, where alternative use of figured-bass and specific notation, are used alternately, without clear prescriptions for the choice in every instance, the conditions for a notational system are violated. This is because the compliance-classes of some of its characters are properly included in the compliance-classes of other, more general characters (Goodman, 1976, p. 183). Two score-inscriptions, one in figured-bass and the other in specific notation may have common compliant performances, but they will not be semantically equivalent. Similarly, two performances complying with the figured-bass may also comply with two specific scores that have no compliant in common. This leads Goodman to conclude that such musical scores, in that they offer free choice between figured-bass and specific notation, do not meet the criteria of a true notational system. Instead, they are comprised of two notational subsystems, and the one adopted must be designated and adhered to if it is to be possible to identify work from performance to performance (1976, p. 184).

The same situation arises in the case of the free cadenza, where the freedom and scope allotted to the performer is vast. Goodman points out that scores providing for free cadenzas have compliance-classes that also include those of other scores whose solo passages are notated in detail, note by note. This provides yet another example of how and why the language of musical scores is not purely notational, but rather can be seen as comprised of notational subsystems (1976, p. 184).

Benjamin Boretz (in Boretz and Cone, 1972, pp. 30-44) shares Goodman's concerns

regarding the compliances determined by a figured-bass notation and a free-cadenza notation.

He points out, however, that, according to Goodman's purely notational criterion,

only a failure to observe actually notated "facts" counts as a "mistake"; but a music-structural theory will extend from what is notated to what is interpolated, and, for any given performance, will determine how what is not specified is constrained by what is specified such that literal compliance to the specified entities is no more or less determinate of "correctness of realization" than is the appropriateness of what is chosen to intervene between them. (Boretz & Cone, 1972, p. 36)

The issue at hand here is an interesting one. According to Goodman's system, for example, a performer could improvise a cadenza very badly, that is rendering a performance plagued with wrong notes (according to the key structure established), stylistic errors of judgement, generally displeasing dynamics, attacks, etc. Nonetheless, insofar as the performer is meeting the requirements of a notational system (namely performing a cadenza), it is correct. Contrastingly, a musically sensitive, stylistically convincing rendering of the same piece, but one wherein the performer opted not to perform the cadenza would not, according to Goodman, be considered a correct performance of that piece.<sup>105</sup> This provides a clear example of an instance whereby according preference to the "identity" of a musical work can be seen as problematic in terms of actual performances of those works.

---

<sup>105</sup>It would not be a performance of that piece at all; the sound-event does not correspond to the notation and vice versa.

### 3.2.5. Verbal Notation

The final problem concerning Goodman's theory of notation is much more prevalent than the case of the figured-bass or cadenza, namely the use of textual indicators, or "verbal notation"<sup>106</sup> as Goodman refers to them.<sup>107</sup> He points out that it is not by virtue of the fact that such words come from ordinary object-language that such indicators are a problem. He specifies that "notational" does not imply "nonverbal," and that not all selections of characters, together with their compliance classes from a discursive language, violate the conditions for notationality. What is central is whether the verbal indications<sup>108</sup> meet the semantic requirements (of a notational system). Tempo vocabulary includes such terms as *allegro*, *andante*, and *adagio*. A lack of unambiguity is the first problem, and a lack of semantic disjointness the second.

And since a tempo may be prescribed as fast, or as slow, or as between fast and slow, or as between fast and between-fast-and-slow, and so on without limit, semantic differentiation goes by the board, too. (1976, p. 185)

---

<sup>106</sup>This is the case since the incorporation of the figured-bass and the cadenza is a practice that tends to be limited to a particular historical period, whereas the use of textual indicators (what Goodman calls verbal notation) has increased in usage since the time of the Baroque.

<sup>107</sup>Goodman suggests that verbal notation is used exclusively "for the tempo of a movement." This is misleading. In effect, verbal notation is also regularly used to indicate certain instructions concerning expression, attack, and style. Goodman corrects this later in his discussion: "Apparently almost any words may be used to indicate pace *and mood*" (1976, p. 185). [italics added.]

<sup>108</sup>Goodman refers to the words as "borrowed vocabulary" (1976, p. 184).

Goodman concludes, then, that the verbal language of tempi is not notational.<sup>109</sup> The tempo words cannot be integral parts of a score because the score serves the function of identifying work from performance to performance. He explains that no departure from the indicated tempo disqualifies a performance as an instance—however wretched—of the work defined by the score (1976, p. 185). How, then, does Goodman accommodate this problem? He simply discounts such tempo specifications; for him they are not integral parts of the defining score. Rather, he refers to them as “auxiliary directions whose observance or nonobservance affects the quality of a performance but not the identity of the work” (1976, p. 185).

In an article entitled “Intentionality and the nature of a musical work” (1988a), David Pearce raises concerns about this aspect of Goodman’s theory. He notes that many have pointed out that Goodman’s analysis does little justice either to music theory or to performance practice. For most critics, Pearce observes, the most counter-intuitive consequence is that it excludes as a “proper performance” of a work any rendition, however brilliant, that is not a note-perfect compliant of the score. Furthermore, it may consider as a genuine instance of a work a performance that is, for example, twice as fast as normally performed, or exceptionally boring and slow (1988a).

Richard Taruskin (1995) shares this concern, noting that only notated signs whose meanings may be quantified in terms of relative frequency (pitch) or relative duration (rhythm) need be complied with, since, as he observes, only these can be complied with on Goodman’s terms. Taruskin writes: “Non-quantifiable specifications, including marks of

---

<sup>109</sup>Here, Goodman slips back into his original assumption that verbal indications refer to tempo only. Again, this also applies to other types of indicators, for example *espressivo*, *dolce*, *leggero*, *sempre staccato*, or *marcatissimo*.

expression, Italian words, and so forth, may be interpreted with unlimited latitude or ignored at pleasure, for they are ‘non-notational’” (p. 208).

Taruskin cites the Goodman passage to which I referred earlier: “tempo specifications cannot be accounted integral parts of the defining score, but are rather auxiliary directions whose observance or nonobservance affects the quality of a performance but not the identity of the work.” In keeping with Pearce’s example of Beethoven, Taruskin observes: “As long as the first movement of Beethoven’s *Fifth symphony* carries the indication half note = 108, a performance at half-note = 107 (or one containing so much as a single measure at half-note = 107) does not qualify as an instance of the work.... Taruskin notes with irony, however, the fact that if the words *Allegro con brio* had stood alone (as they did from 1808 until 1817), a performance of the piece extending to ten hours would qualify as an instance of the work, as long as the relative durations indicated by the note values were scrupulously observed (p. 208). As was pointed out earlier, this is a curious situation to countenance.

### 3.2.6. Metronome Markings

Goodman argues that verbal tempo indicators “cannot be accounted integral parts of the defining score” (1976, p. 185) because they violate notationality through absence of disjointness and the absence of unambiguity. However, he does consider metronomic specifications of tempo as integral to the score, presumably since the latter do not violate notationality. He holds that

metronome specifications of tempo do, under obvious restrictions and under a system

universally requiring them, qualify as notational and may be taken as belonging to the score as such. (1976, pp. 185-186)

The question arises as to why Goodman considers non-verbal instructions, such as those provided by the metronome, as notational. Two possible lines of reasoning behind Goodman's theory will be explored here, as will their apparent weaknesses.

A first and most likely reason for Goodman to consider metronome markings as notational would be his assumption that these are less ambiguous than verbal indicators. According to that reasoning, the metronome, with its precise numeric indicators for tempi, provides a tool for assuring that the identity of the work is preserved from one performance to the next. In order for this to make sense, however, metronome markings would need to provide a reliable measure, and be unfailing in their ability to calculate exact tempi, from one time era to another and from one country to another. Otherwise they would merely provide the illusion of assuring tempo and, as such, their contributing to the identification of themusical work would be equally illusory.

Does Goodman make a correct assessment of the metronome's capacity to determine tempi? In effect, the metronome does not provide reliable and consistent markings. In order for this to be the case, the metronome would have to be scientifically calibrated, which it is not. For this reason, metronomes vary according to their age, their manufacturer, and even situational factors such as climactic conditions. As a result of this, a metronome marking of 120 could vary significantly across time or geographic boundaries. If one is unaware of these discrepancies, then one could assume that the metronome markings, if explicitly followed, serve the purpose of guaranteeing that the tempo of the work will not vary from one

performance to another. Given the fact that this is not the case, and that metronomes vary considerably in the tempo that they would indicate for any given numerical setting, Goodman's assumption that metronome markings do not violate notationality proves incorrect.<sup>110</sup>

How is it, then, that Goodman has determined metronome markings to be notational, when clearly they are incapable of contributing to the identification of a work from score to performance to score? Two possible responses arise. The first is that he has over-estimated the reliability of the measurement provided by the metronome.<sup>111</sup>

The second, less feasible explanation as to why Goodman considers metronome markings as notational would be that though he is aware of their inherent lack of stability, he nonetheless considers them notational because, even without being completely accurate, they contribute to the identification of the work. If this is the case, then the argument is inconsistent with that which considers verbal indicators as non-notational. Recall that, like metronome markings, verbal indicators are incapable of precisely determining a work's tempo. Notwithstanding, musicologists, music theorists, composers, and performers assert that verbal indicators such as *adagio*, *andante*, *allegro*, and so on provide very specific indications that encompass quantitative aspects of the work (ie., tempi), as well as qualitative

---

<sup>110</sup>One might assume that this problem is covered by his reference to "obvious restrictions" (1976, p. 168). Nonetheless, Goodman's designation of such markings as notational indicates the degree to which he seemingly views them as reliable.

<sup>111</sup>Goodman's assumption, however, is understandable since conventionally instruments derived from similar kinds of gauges—for example a measuring ruler or thermometer—are assumed to provide relatively reliable measurements even though we also acknowledge that these vary from instance to instance.



or expressive aspects.

If Goodman is aware of the fallible nature of the metronome, but nonetheless considers metronome indications in the score to be notational, this would indicate a willingness to accommodate a certain degree of indeterminacy in terms of the performance of a notational element. Yet if it is this the case for metronome markings, why would verbal indicators be non-notational? Goodman seems to be aware of the fact that both verbal and metronomic tempo indicators violate notationality and, as such, his classification of metronome markings as notational and of verbal indicators as non-notational seems inconsistent.

It may have been more convincing for Goodman to have addressed this issue in the same way as he did that of redundancy, namely by observing that, while both metronomic and verbal tempo indicators fail to meet the criteria for a notational system, they are nonetheless tolerable.

Pearce (1988a), raises another concern, and its implications for Goodman's account may be even more significant: Pearce questions whether musical scores actually do succeed in defining and individuating works. In order for this to occur, he argues, score compliance must provide necessary and sufficient conditions for determining a performance as an instance of the work. He observes, however, that there may exist many examples from Western notated tonal music, where such conditions are absent. As an example, he turns to Beethoven, whose scores contain sections which

seem to contradict the intuitive musical workings of a passage or movement; which

are technically un-performable if the indicated tempos are observed;<sup>[112]</sup> or which are, according to the testimony of Beethoven's contemporaries, in conflict with his own compositional intentions. (Pearce, 1988*a*, p. 110)

Pearce concludes that, in general, a class of musically non-equivalent scores may partake of the same work, in that compliance with any one of them may be a sufficient condition for a performance to be a genuine instance of that work. This means that a performance that follows an indicated metronome marking (considered notational by Goodman) may well lead to a performance which, while correct in terms of the score, is incorrect in the sense that it violates the composer's intentions. In such an instance the score would have neither defined nor individuated the work. As noted earlier, this would occur insofar as Goodman assumes that all metronomes are scientifically calibrated, which they are not.<sup>113</sup>

### 3.2.7. Objections on Philosophical and Structural Grounds

Thus far, the issues raised in response to Goodman's account of the role of notation in defining musical works have dealt with the applicability of this account to music practice. The objections have centred on the issues of wrong notes, the continuo or figured bass, non-redundancy, verbal indicators, and metronome markings. Other concerns, seemingly more deeply rooted in theoretical or structural issues, will be outlined here.

---

<sup>112</sup>The use of the term "tempo" here refers to metronome markings.

<sup>113</sup>Clearly, if metronomes were scientifically calibrated, the problem identified by Pearce would not arise.

### 3.2.7.1. Why Should Identity be the Primary Concern? Francis Sparshott

Francis Sparshott formulates a fundamental philosophical objection to the role played by Goodman's theory of notation as applied to musical works. Sparshott disagrees with the assumptions informing Goodman's account of the score, namely that the primary purpose of the score is to preserve the identity of the work. Sparshott discusses musical notation by showing what it is not, in this way challenging the very account forwarded by Goodman (in Alpers, 1986, p. 81). Sparshott suggests that the distinction between an improvisation and a work (a composition, treated as an object rather than lived through) rests on a decision with respect to what is to count as the work, as well as what is to count as performing the work. He argues:

Such decision can be made at any time and with any degree of firmness, may be unmade and remade, made for some purposes and not others. It is only for teaching in school courses, in financial contexts involving copyright, in historical discussions and in advertising musical performances to a public, that questions of identity give the concept of a work salience. (in Alpers, 1986, p. 81)

As Sparshott observes, some suggest that the introduction of musical notation changes this, since it transforms music into a new sort of art. When music is written down, as in staff notation, the focus of the art becomes works as written. It then follows that "what identifies the work is that in it which it is notated, and whatever complies with that is a

correct performance of the work” (in Alpers, 1986, p. 82). According to Sparshott this reasoning is a mistake, a “crude application of the concept of a notational system worked out by Nelson Goodman in *Languages of art* (in Alpers, 1986, p. 82). The crux of his criticism is that viewing the role of the score in these terms, and according it the role of assuring the identification of the musical work, corresponds to the requirements of Goodman’s typology rather than to musical practice itself. For Sparshott, the requirement that compliance with the notation suffices for identity answers to the technical need that the identity of a work be preserved within the resources of the notational system (in Alpers, 1986, p. 82).

Sparshott further contends that there is no musical need for identity to be preservable in any one way. Identity, instead, is relevant only in certain classes of contexts, and how it is established depends on the context. For Sparshott, Goodman has succeeded in essentially ascribing to the score of a work the function of defining that work, implying that the function of the score is to lay down what shall be played. Sparshott finally disagrees:

But it need do no such thing. What a score is is a piece of paper or something bearing marks that count as signs indicating, when understood in the light of their syntax and the appropriate performing practices, certain kinds of sounds and silences and relations between them that correspond to a class of musical performances. (in Alpers, 1986, p. 82)<sup>114</sup>

Based on the nature of music itself, Sparshott questions whether complete compliance with

---

<sup>114</sup>Sparshott notes that such a set of signs may be useful, from a theoretical perspective, as in the work of Nattiez who uses it to define a “neutral level,” biased neither towards producers (poetics) nor towards consumers (aesthetics) on which structural analyses can be carried out. Sparshott refers to Nattiez (1975), *Fondements d’une sémiologie de la musique*. Paris: Union Générale d’Editions. p. 407.

the score is the sole means of establishing the identity of the musical work and, conversely, whether the purpose of the score is to determine the work.

3.2.7.2. Can the Score be Viewed as Indicative of Music-Structural Components? The Relative Nature of Sound and the Music-Structural Theory-Dependence of Compliance. Benjamin Boretz

According to Boretz (1972), Goodman overlooks the fact that sounds are not what a musical notation specifies. In “Nelson Goodman’s Languages of Art from a Musical Point of View” (in Boretz and Cone, 1972, pp. 31-44), Boretz observes that what scores do is specify information about music-structural components, for example “pitches, relative attack-times, relative durations, and whatever other quale-categorical information is functionally relevant” (in Boretz and Cone, 1972, p. 34). Thus, Boretz suggests, the notations of scores determine their interpreting musical works, and the performances thereof, to varying degrees and in varying respects, depending on the identity of the functioning quale-categories and the quantization thresholds that are functional within each category (in Boretz and Cone, 1972, p. 34). Boretz concludes from Goodman’s account that the varying determinacies of score-notations with respect to various quale-categories at different music-historical junctures, correspond to the degrees of structural functionality that are at most assignable to those categories in those compositions, at least on the evidence of their scores.

Boretz concludes, then, that “precision” of notation is relative to inferred “thresholds”: a piece whose pitch notation specifies only “relative height” may be one where

pitch-relational characteristics function only to within “higher-than” determinations. In this case, according to Boretz, such a notation would limit appropriate interpretations to within the “higher-than” boundary criterion without any lack of music-structural “precision.” This is because any interpretation that conforms to such a criteria possesses “the” correct pitch-structural information for that piece (in Boretz and Cone, 1972, p. 34).

This leads Boretz to formulate a second argument against Goodman’s account of the role of notation in defining musical works. Boretz contends that what will count as compliance to even a supposedly “precisely” notated score is relative to a theory of the structure of the work with reference to which the score-performance relation is measured. The problem with Goodman, according to Boretz, is grounded in Goodman’s non-recognition of the music-structural theory-dependence of compliance. He explains that, whatever the notation involved, a listener to other music, who is conditioned to more precisely quantized pitch-functional music such as our own, might hear a given piece (intended by the performers as the same piece) as two different pieces in successive performances. Boretz explains that this, in part at least, is due to the fact that it is *sound-successions* rather than *notations* that are the real symbolic languages of music, and notes require prior music-structural interpretation to be regarded as *music-determinately* symbolic of sounds (1972, p. 35).

Boretz provides an example of this. He notes that a listener from non-Western culture, learning that a given notation represented two attacks of the same pitch, may well hear a Western culturally “correct” realization of that notation as an “incorrect” succession of two different pitches. This, Boretz explains, is because the listener’s background pitch-

structural vocabulary was more finely quanticized than ours. As Boretz rightly notes,

pitch-function assignments are *contextual*, and take place within thresholds that in practice enable such apparent anomalies as the assignment of discernably different pitches to identical pitch functions, and of indiscriminable pitches to different pitch functions, depending on the *structural* context. (in Boretz and Cone, 1972, p. 35)

In the same light, the difference at issue in a G-sharp versus A-flat notational problem in terms of the difference between a piano score and a violin score is not, according to Boretz, a question about pitch-function difference, but rather an observation of the inflectional room left by our traditional quanticizations of pitch-functional thresholds. Boretz accurately observes that similar differences within the realization of a piano-score are assigned the status of “out-of-tuneness,” a state which can be determinately distinguished from “wrong-pitchness” only by the operation of a background pitch-function reference.

Thus, for Boretz, Goodman’s concern with the question of the relation of wrong pitches to genuine instances of a musical work is related to the structural question of what constitutes a wrong note with respect to a given work. In this light, Boretz explains, the theory of the structure of that work, necessary in the determination of the work’s identity, will interpret some wrong notes as wronger than others, disabling any correlation of “degree of non-genuineness of an instance of a work” with “number of non-compliant sounds presented.” Boretz illustrates this point. Imagine constructing a theory of a work’s pitch structure using the three pitch functions of “high,” “middle,” and “low.” In this system, the structural limits within which notation-determinably wrong notes may still be part of a “wholly correct” performance of that piece might be considerably wider than the notationally

determined limits. Nonetheless, Boretz argues, such structural limits would still be non-indifferent to the question of “wrong-note” determination, even after that question had passed beyond the range of notational limits (in Boretz and Cone, 1972, p. 36).

In conclusion, Boretz suggests that Goodman’s avoidance of music-structural questions in talking of musical notation is not so much frivolous as impracticable; his discussion itself is music-theoretical.<sup>115</sup> Goodman’s account of the determinability of compliance-classes in, for example, the notations of John Cage are, according to Boretz, “pure music criticism,” since it in effect speaks of the limits of music-structural determinacy in Cage’s compositions. This has predictable consequences, Boretz observes, for the particularity those compositions are likely to be able to exhibit as musical structures.<sup>116</sup>

### 3.2.7.3. Can a Score Denote a Musical Work? Kingsley Price

Kingsley Price (1982) opens his essay “What is a Piece of Music?” with a clarifying

---

<sup>115</sup>The choice of the term “music-theoretical” by Boretz could elicit criticism by music theorists, performers, and composers or all three. Boretz’s intended sense here, it would appear, is that Goodman’s work is not applicable to the practical world of music *per se*. Music theory, in the sense understood within the discipline of music itself, however, is infinitely tied to the practice of music. If Goodman’s work were truly music-theoretical, as Boretz (inadvertently?) contends, it might well avert criticisms such as those forwarded by Boretz.

<sup>116</sup>To clarify: Given the nature of a Cage notation, Boretz speaks to the fact that, as musical structures, Cage’s pieces are minimally specific. So many “works” would meet the criteria for compliance with the score that the result would be an excessively over-populated compliance class. Goodman’s system points out this weakness. (It is a weakness according to Goodman’s system; for Cage I suspect that it was, quite simply, the point.) It is in this way that, for Boretz, Goodman’s system serves as “pure music criticism.”



point: "In Music, the work is the class of performances compliant with a character" (Goodman, cited in Price, 1982, p. 325). Price explains:

By "compliant with" he means denoted by; by "character," he means score; and by "work" he means a piece of music. Thus[,] thinking of a score as a common noun and identifying its denotation with its performances leads us to Goodman's view of the nature of a piece of music. (Price, 1982, pp. 325-326)

Price considers this to be unsatisfactory. His central criticism has to do with whether or not a score can denote a performance of a musical work. To pursue this question, he asks us to imagine a class of composition students who do not perform, and do not retrieve, the scores they submit. Imagine, then, that the instructor reads them, assigns grades to them, and in the end incinerates them. In this instance the piece carried by each student's score was never performed, nor will it ever be; thus the class of performances that each denoted, in other words (in Goodman's terms) the class of performances that complied with each, remains empty. Price notes that there is but one empty class; and that if Goodman's views were right, because the students' scores would all comply with that class, everyone would have carried the same piece. In this case the instructor would have committed a pedagogical error in assigning different grades (1982, p. 326).

According to Price's reading of Goodman's system, the work is the class of performance which, because they are correct in terms of the score, count as instances: "A piece of music cannot fail to be the class of its performance" (1982, p. 326). Price observes that under this theory it would be by good luck only that *The star spangled banner* and *Eroica* are different pieces, since their identity is based on the very contingent fact that there

are performances of each. Price reasons, however, that the difference between the two must lie in the pieces themselves, and can depend in no degree whatever upon whether or not circumstances do or do not permit performances. He argues that their difference could not disappear in a world where, though the scores existed, the classes of their performances were empty. This leads Price to conclude that “in neither *The star spangled banner* nor any other piece of music is the class of performances denoted by its score” (1982, p. 326).

Recall that for Goodman the score secures the identity of a musical work: in order for a performance to be a performance of a given work, it must be a correct performance, namely one which complies with the score. If a musical performance does not comply with the score, then it is not that work. Price takes this view one step further, arguing that if there is no performance, then there is no musical work. This amounts, for him, to a system in which the musical work itself exists only by virtue of a performance of the score to which the musical piece complies.

The piece itself, then, cannot be the class of performances denoted by its score because its score does not denote that class. Indeed, in no piece of music is the class of performances denoted by its score because no score denotes such a class” (1982, p. 327).

This leads to a question: If the score cannot denote the class of performances, what, then, does it denote? Price proposes a response. He observes that a performance is referred to in terms of “performance of so-and-so,” and never by reading the score from which it is

derived.<sup>117</sup> He reasons that

[J]ust as our referring to the animal in the zoo as an elephant suggests that the word “elephant” denotes the class of elephants, so our referring to the three-dimensional sound system in the park as a performance of *The star spangled banner* suggests that the phrase, “performance of *The star spangled banner*” denotes the class of those performances. (1982, p. 327)

Price argues that since a performance cannot be referred to by a score, a score cannot denote the class of performance of the piece it carries. Nonetheless, since a performance is referred to by a phrase such as “a performance of so-and-so,” a class of performances may be denoted by a phrase like “performances of so-and-so.”

How convincing is Price’s argument? Presumably, Goodman would respond in one of two ways. He might argue that, if the score was notational, and there was no performance, then the work exists, but with an empty compliance class. Or, he might reason that if there is a score, and if that score is non-notational, then the work does not exist, since in that case there would be no criterion for the identity of the work. He discusses such an example:

Sometimes, as in some of Cage’s music that uses non-notational sketches in place of scores, we have no such definitive criterion and so in effect no works and no distinction between autographic and allographic, or even between singular and

---

<sup>117</sup>This assertion is questionable: Consider a situation wherein a Western musicologist in a foreign land discovers isolated musicians playing music unknown and previously unheard in the West. If the musicologist notates the music, and returns to her/his class of fourth year musicology students to analyze the work, she/he and her/his students would refer to the performance by reading the score, at least until the students had heard it performed once. After that point, they would refer to a “performance of so-and-so.”

multiple works. (1982, pp. 139-140)

Regardless, the argument advanced by Price would not in all probability be considered serious by Goodman.

In conclusion, Price seems to have constructed his argument by reversing the original question. Instead of being concerned, as he claims to be, with whether a musical work is denoted by a score, Price seems more concerned with how to refer to a performance. Price's argument loses strength when viewed in light of the responses that, arguably, Goodman would forward.

#### 3.2.7.4. Is Goodman's System Practically Applicable? James Ackerman

In "Worldmaking and practical criticism" (1981) James Ackerman (like Boretz, 1972; Pearce, 1988a; and Taruskin, 1995) raises concerns related to the practical utility of aesthetic writings and less related to the resolutions of problems in aesthetics. According to Ackerman, Goodman's work is rendered less relevant since it was not addressed to a milieu versed in aesthetic challenges grounded in questions of practical concerns. This creates a context for the comments advanced by Ackerman.

First, Ackerman (1981) holds that the five symptoms of the aesthetic<sup>118</sup> as proposed by Goodman in *Languages of art* offer an "inordinately cumbersome and imprecise apparatus that I [Ackerman] cannot imagine anyone using in actual critical writing" (1981, p. 151).

---

<sup>118</sup>Ackerman refers here to Goodman's syntactic density, semantic density, relative repleteness, exemplification, and multiple and complex reference.

Second, Ackerman regrets Goodman's separation of both the artist and the observer from the work of art.<sup>119</sup> Ackerman holds that

[K]nowledge of the artist's work and ideas usually figures significantly in interpretation .... Like all historians of past art, I try to understand the motivations and aims of the artists I study, reading their writings (realizing that they may intentionally or unintentionally mislead and that I may not understand them in the way that the writer did), examining other works by the same artist and by contemporaries, and reading contemporary criticism. (1981, p. 252)

This passage shows the very nature of Ackerman's project or goal to be significantly different from that of Goodman. While Ackerman seeks to *understand* the work of art, to *interpret*, as he says, Goodman seeks rather to lay the foundation for a system which establishes the "symptoms" of a work of art, which tries to clarify what must obtain in order for a work to be a work, and to determine what symptoms are present when a work *is* a work of art.

Ackerman advances a third criticism, this time of what he perceives to be Goodman's attempt to "establish art on the plane of science as a way of world-making that produces right versions of a particular world" (1981, p. 253). Ackerman sees a distinction between art and science. While he agrees that, after an encounter with a particular work of art the viewer comes to construct a new version of the world, he holds that this process continues through subsequent viewings. This, for Ackerman, is not the case for science: once a scientific "truth"

---

<sup>119</sup>Ackerman's use of the term "viewer" could presumably parallel, in music, the roles of listener and performer or both.

is grasped, we incorporate it into our consciousness and move on (1981, p. 253).<sup>120</sup>

Ackerman maintains that his differences with Goodman are due to diverging aims: He is interested in universal processes of worldmaking and I am interested in understanding and explaining the particular worlds made by artists. Because he wants to show that the artists' worlds are in many ways like those of scientists or philosophers, he has de-emphasized the elements of the aesthetic response that differ from other kinds of perception. (1981, p. 253)

In conclusion, Ackerman applauds Goodman's contribution for two reasons. First, "Goodman offers to the critic and historian a way to accept and to understand the art of all times and places without forcing us to change our sights as we approach each individual object" (1981, p. 253). Second, Goodman gives to the arts a status not always accorded in the academic world; this path is not to gratification and diversion but to worldmaking "as essential and fundamental to culture as that of science, religion or philosophy" (1981, p. 253).

---

<sup>120</sup> Ackerman has clearly understood science and art in a very different way from that in which Goodman does. For Goodman, scientific knowledge, like knowledge in the arts, is subject to a process of "worldmaking." Both are equally dependent upon the process of construction of the individual knower, and the knowledge that derives from each discipline is subject to revisiting. Goodman discusses this at length in *Ways of worldmaking* (1978). The discrepancy is pointed out by Goodman in his response to Ackerman (*Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, [39]3, Spring 1981). Goodman writes: "Our disagreement, I think is less about the nature of art than about the nature of science. Whereas Ackerman looks upon science as 'concerned primarily with the processes of experimentation and proof,' I think of it, in the words of Lewis Thomas, as 'a mobile unsteady structure... with all the bits always moving about, fitting together in different ways, adding new bits to themselves with flourishes of adornment as though consulting a mirror, giving the whole arrangement something like the unpredictability and un-reliability of living flesh.... The endeavour is not, as is sometimes thought, a way of building a solid, indestructible body of immutable truth, fact laid precisely upon fact.... Science is not like this at all'" (Goodman, 1981, p. 273).

### 3.2.7.5. To What Extent Is Music a Way of Worldmaking? Jens Kulenkampff

In an essay entitled “Music Considered as a Way of Worldmaking” (1981), Jens Kulenkampff points out the ways in which music plays an important role in the development of Goodman’s “theoretical apparatus” as described in Nelson Goodman’s *Ways of worldmaking* (1978). Kulenkampff observes that it is music (when contrasted with pictures) that first makes apparent the difference between autographic and allographic arts. It is the fact that we have a standard musical notation at our disposal, Kulenkampff argues, which reveals the reasons for this distinction. Goodman’s theory of notation does take music as its model, regardless of whether works do or do not satisfy the five criteria for a notational system (Kulenkampff, 1981, p. 255).

Despite these positive aspects, Kulenkampff holds that Goodman’s contribution concerning the “cognitive achievements of music” does little in answering what, for Kulenkampff, is the decisive question raised by a symbol theory of music, namely “In what way does music create its own world, and in what way do we acquire knowledge when we listen to music?” (1981, p. 255). Kulenkampff notes that, in looking to answer this question one would not turn to Goodman’s chapters on notation and on music in *Languages of art*. The inapplicability of those chapters is summarized by Kulenkampff:

Listening to James Levine and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra performing a Mahler symphony, usually no one doubts that the notational directions in the score are being followed exactly, and usually no one calls into question how different

versions of the symphony may come about because of variable interpretations allowed conductor and orchestra by non-notational parts of the score. (1981, p. 255)

This typifies the type of objection that many (Ackerman, 1981; Boretz, 1972; Pearce, 1988a; Sparshott in Alperson, 1986; Taruskin, 1995) have raised against Goodman. Kulenkampff asks what he considers to be the more relevant question: “What then does he [the listener] come to know or which world does he experience, when he attentively follows the music?” (Kulenkampff, 1981, p. 255).

In an attempt to provide a response, Kulenkampff acknowledges that Goodman has distinguished between representation and description: the distinction between denotation by symbols from dense sets and denotation by symbols from articulate sets. Kulenkampff questions whether this can be reversed, that is, whether one can say that when a denotative symbol comes from an articulate set, it describes, and when it comes from a dense set, it represents. This would result in the conclusion that denotative music can be called descriptive in its notational aspects and called representative in its non-notational aspects. This, according to Kulenkampff, is what Goodman does. Kulenkampff, however, proposes an alternative version. He suggests that perhaps the impression of a narrative or of a painting character in a piece of music depends respectively upon whether and to what degree notational or non-notational elements are dominant in its performance. This, he explains, is not to suggest that music is descriptive or representative, but rather to explain a determinate range of expressive qualities found in music.

For Kulenkampff, the question of the worldmaking capacity of music remains critical in questions of so-called pure or absolute music. He asks, for example, how to account for



the fact that in a Mahler symphony, slow waltzes, marches, and songs occur without being denoted. For the understanding of these symphonies, he says, a knowledge of denotation does not matter, even if certain passages can be considered to denote definite individual musical events.

On the one hand, we understand the symbolic function of a picture only when we understand that it is a denotative symbol, even if in a given case nothing is actually denoted. On the other hand, our understanding of pure or absolute music usually does not take denotative relationship into account, even when the musical work does denote something. (1981, p. 256)

According to Kulenkampff, Goodman's theory offers an important contribution in positing expression as a type of symbolization for the cases of non-denotative music. He points out that as expression, that is, metaphorical exemplification, works of music, while denoting nothing, do make what can be called worlds of expression.

This leads Kulenkampff to the tentative conclusion that "To understand music, therefore, means to understand what it expresses" (1981, p. 256). He responds to this, suggesting that the concept of expression is too narrow to encompass all cases of musical symbolization, due in great part to the fact that Goodman's concept of expression is a very different one from that which is meant by "expression" in terms of music criticism. It is in the breadth of Goodman's use of the term that Kulenkampff can salvage this argument. He recalls that there is expression wherever there is metaphorical exemplification, with no restrictions as to what may be exemplified. Kulenkampff ties together his argument:

Differences in expressiveness are differences in what is expressed. To characterize

music as expressive or as expressionless, for example, does not amount to the proposition that it is expression or not, but rather signifies in either instance what is expressed. Seen this way, the multitude of musical works offers in fact a nearly inexhaustible stock of worlds of expression and versions of these worlds. (1981, p. 256)

Kulenkampff concludes, and I think rightly so, that against such a clarification of the question of the worldmaking character of music, there is no convincing falsifying argument.

Kulenkampff turns to Goodman's *Ways of worldmaking* (1978) for further instances of ways in which Goodman's work may apply to music. He notes that the list of ways in which worlds are made, including composition and decomposition, weighting and ordering, deletion and supplementation, and deformation, are precisely the same list as that which would describe what the composer does. For this reason, then, Kulenkampff fully justifies his application of Goodman's term "world" to musical works.

Kulenkampff is concerned, however, with the fact that Goodman speaks of worlds only in terms of contexts structured by a symbol system of some sort. Kulenkampff observes, pushing Goodman's ideas further, that a world is made, and in that same stroke the ways of understanding it are provided. Moreover, "there are no hermetically-sealed worlds." Therefore, one cannot "call every structured object or set of such objects a world, but rather only those whose structure depends upon or at least relates to a way of symbolization." This, then, leads Kulenkampff to formulate another question: What is the best way to view musical works as symbols? What is the best way to interpret their formal structure as a symbolic one? (1981, p. 257).

In response, Kulenkampff turns to a passage from *Ways of worldmaking* (Goodman, 1978, p. 137) which he summarizes as comprehending the symbolic function of musical works means considering them as instances of exemplification. This is complex: “The telling point is, however, that we are dealing with examples or samples of features which we know neither in advance nor independently of the works themselves” (Kulenkampff, 1981, p. 257).<sup>121</sup> This, according to Kulenkampff, has two consequences: first, that the composer, or the artist in general, “may now be understood as a creator in the true sense of the word, and not as before merely as a creative imitator” (1981, p. 257). Making a world, he cautions, means nothing more than just producing a sample of it. The samples are what reveal the world to the artist or the critic. As such, every work of art provides the challenge of exploring that world which it makes known by being a sample of it. How is this done? Kulenkampff explains that it is (for the viewer, listener or critic) by finding out what the work exemplifies. The artist, on the other hand, must try to produce other fitting examples, in order that her/his entire body of work can be designated as creating her/his world (1981, p. 257).

The second consequence recognized by Kulenkampff (and in response to his earlier question) is that music is a way of worldmaking in that it is the way by which we explore the world of what may be heard, or even more precisely, the world of what may be listened to. We do this, he says, since we are confronted with musical compositions which are “instances of the already known or the previously unheard of, or the partly new—at any rate, instances

---

<sup>121</sup>This assertion could be challenged. A work’s title, for example, including mention of the composer, indicates the kinds of features that the work may possess or exemplify. This information could provide indication to the listener of the “world” which the work may create.

of that which is never entirely known” (1981, p. 257).<sup>122</sup>

Kulenkampff’s formulation leads to an interesting question: Does the world of what may be heard, or even the world of what may be listened to, not extend beyond the confines of music? For example, if I walk in the forest, hear the sound of the stream, the brush of the wind, the birds in the trees, and the sound of children playing, am I not somehow contributing to the making of a world (for example a world that exists in my awareness and direct experiential knowledge of the world of nature)?<sup>123</sup> Kulenkampff’s formulation seems to suggest that anything from the world of what may be heard, or what may be listened to, is music (and therefore is a means of worldmaking). Yet these sounds are not necessarily music! Further consideration shows, however, that this would follow only if being a way of worldmaking of the relevant sort were both necessary and sufficient for something to be music. Kulenkampff seems to argue merely that it is necessary.<sup>124</sup>

---

<sup>122</sup>This assertion could be challenged. A work’s title, for example, including mention of the composer, provides an indication of the kinds of features that the work may possess or exemplify. This information could provide prior indication to the listener of the “world” which the work may exemplify.

<sup>123</sup>Notwithstanding, many would hold that these sounds, or this world, do comprise music. Certain composers and theorists, for example John Cage and R. Murray Schaffer, have contended precisely that such “environmental” sounds can be, should be, or are considered music.

<sup>124</sup>The notion of worldmaking will be considered again in Chapter Four, in terms of the work of Glenn Gould.

### 3.2.8. Recapitulation: Notational Questions Unresolved

Before moving on to the final section of this chapter, the tensions or discrepancies that have emerged in this discussion will be summarized. First, the issue of non-redundancy has been shown to be problematic, not in terms of rhythm, but in terms of pitch. If redundancy is dispensable, considered by Goodman to be a “common and minor violation of notationality” (1976, p. 178) why does it figure in his system at all. In light of the example of pitch, Goodman’s argument that it represents a minor violation of notationality overlooks other concerns around the role played by pitch in understanding musical works.

Other tensions have been identified. It is clearly problematic that a theory of musical notation prescribes that the existence of one wrong note changes the identity of a piece of music. This leads to the possibility wherein performing a piece at a tempo that is twenty times too slow does not affect its identity, whereas one wrong note does. How can we accommodate the many scores that do contain figured-bass, continuo, or cadenza indications, such that improvising a cadenza (and as such rendering a correct performance) could lead to the performance of an entirely different-sounding piece ascertained to be another “correct” performance of the same work? Why does Goodman hold that verbal instructions indicating tempo are not notational (presumably because they cannot contribute to identification of the work), whereas metronome markings *are* considered notational?

In terms of the philosophical and structural underpinnings of Goodman’s account, several concerns have been voiced. For example, Francis Sparshott (in Alperson, 1986) took exception to the very premise upon which Goodman grounded his account: namely that the

identity of the work should be the primary concern for a theory of notation. Benjamin Boretz (1972) found Goodman's account problematic due to the relative nature of sound, and the implications for this of the music-structural theory-dependence of compliance. Kingsley Price (1982) expressed a concern for whether or not a score actually can denote a musical work. And finally, James Ackerman (1981) found that the excessively theoretical nature of Goodman's account of the role of notation in defining musical works undermined its value in terms of practice.

### 3.3. Goodman's Overall View of Music: Reconciling Theory and Practice

#### 3.3.1. Introduction

Goodman's account of notation, and its role in defining the musical work, has provided a framework for determining whether a score is notational. In this regard, Goodman's contribution to a clarification of the language with which we speak of music is considerable. However, it remains that, according to Goodman's account, most musical scores are not notational in the pure sense due to their many and frequent infractions.

The objections and concerns raised above show that in its application to the defining of musical works Goodman's theory of notation is problematic because it appears to lead to very real tensions between, on the one hand, the philosophical imperatives of a commitment to rigorous language and structure and, on the other, the dictates of the very functional world of music performance.

Many of the seeming discrepancies can be seen to derive from the fact that, for Goodman, the score serves as the ultimate determinant of the identity of the work. As such, the composer's capacity to direct the outcome of the eventual sound-event that is the music is determined by the effectiveness of the symbols with which she/he translates the musical idea into symbols, in the form of a score. The performer, in the ideal Goodmanian sense, would deliver a performance which "correctly" renders that which is notated in the score. As such, notation would seem to tightly bind the composer, who authors the score, and the performer, who performs it.<sup>125</sup>

In this light, Goodman's account of the role of notation in defining musical works would at least give the impression of aligning composer, score, and performer in a relationship not unlike that described by Dent at the onset of this dissertation, wherein the performer is viewed as one who executes the composer's musical ideas. On further investigation, however, it can be argued that this is not the case; that, despite the rigour of Goodman's theory of symbols, elsewhere he acknowledges music to be much more than that which can be accommodated by a theoretical model. In fact, Goodman accords significant importance to the performer, whose individual musicianship is exercised primarily through the non-notational and often indeterminate elements of the score.

In short, a dichotomy permeates Goodman's account of music. While he maps out very stringent requirements for notationality, he also recognizes that musical scores are not

---

<sup>125</sup>In an extreme case of this, as discussed in Chapter One, an actual "collapsing" of roles occurs in the case of electroacoustic music, wherein the composer also plays the role of performer by virtue of the fact that the music is composed directly onto the electronic medium, which is then "played," constituting the "performance." Similarly, the composer and performer were often were the same person in the Baroque era.

fully notational, and that the actual performance of music is subject to a far greater degree of indeterminacy. This section of Chapter Three will consider Goodman's view of music beyond the confines of notationality, in terms of the ephemeral sound-event that Goodman considers music to be.

### 3.3.2. Contextualizing the Notated Score

While earlier discussion of Goodman's account of the role of notation in defining musical works addressed the role of the score, it will be considered here in terms of its limitations. Recall that for Goodman a score, whether or not it is ever actually used as a guide for a performance, "has as a primary function the authoritative identification of a work from performance to performance" (Goodman, 1976, p. 128). This does not mean, as Goodman points out, that the score must provide an "easy test" for determining whether a given performance belongs to a given work or not. Indeed, he notes that the definition of gold as the element with an atomic weight of 197.2 provides no ready test for telling a gold piece from a brass one. He argues that the line drawn need only be theoretically manifest. Thus, while a score may leave unspecified many features of a performance while allowing for considerable variation in others within prescribed limits, full compliance with the specifications given is categorically required (1976, p. 187).

As such, the commonly accepted role of the score is that of a mere tool, one that is no more intrinsic to the finished work than is the sculptor's hammer or the painter's easel. This is because the score is dispensable after the performance and even during, for example



in the case where music is composed and learned and played “by ear,” without any score, and even by people who cannot read or write any notation. Goodman likens music to architecture and drama: any building that conforms to the plans and specifications, or any performance of the text of a play that is in keeping with the stage directions, is as original an instance of a particular work as any other.<sup>126</sup> This raises the question of why the use of notation is appropriate in some arts and not in others.

Goodman reasons that, initially perhaps, all arts are autographic. However, where the works are transitory (as in singing and reciting), or when they require many persons for their production (as in architecture and symphonic music), a notation is devised so as to transcend the limitations of time and the individual. This involves establishing a distinction between the constitutive and the contingent properties of a work. The notation does not arbitrarily dictate the distinction, but rather follows generally (although it may amend) lines antecedently drawn by the informal classification of performances into works and by practical decisions as to what is prescribed and what is optional.<sup>127</sup> Amenability to notation depends on a precedent practice that develops in instances where the works of art in question are customarily either ephemeral or not able to be produced by one person (1976, p. 122).

---

<sup>126</sup>Goodman does point out, however, that architecture is different from music in that testing for compliance of a building with the specifications requires not that these be pronounced, or transcribed into sound-events, but that their application be understood. The implication here is that there would exist a range of possibilities resulting from the understanding. This, he holds, would also be true for stage directions, as contrasted with the dialogue of a play.

<sup>127</sup>This would suggest that, in the case of music, Goodman allows for the existence of the “optional” meaning, presumably, the range of expressive qualities that are brought to the work by the performer.

### 3.3.2.1. The Limits of Theory

Earlier in this chapter, concerns emerged as deriving from those aspects of the score which are non-notational, for example the verbal language of tempi. Recall that Goodman did not consider these to be integral parts of a score insofar as the score serves the function of identifying a work from performance to performance. Whereas that earlier discussion raised concerns about the fact that, for Goodman, such non-notational aspects were nonetheless tolerable, the issue of tempo will be addressed here for other reasons. In effect, such tolerance can be seen to provide indications as to Goodman's view of the performer's latitude in the interpretive aspect of the work.

Recall his assertion that "no departure from the indicated tempo disqualifies a performance as an instance—*however wretched* [italics added]—of the work defined by the score" (1976, p. 185). Goodman's formulation indicates that a performance could be considered "wretched" (presumably based on a bad choice of tempo),<sup>128</sup> notwithstanding the fact that it does comply with the score.

[T]hese tempo specifications cannot be accounted integral parts of the defining score, but are rather auxiliary directions whose observance or nonobservance affects the quality of a performance but not the identity of the work. (1976, p. 185)

In this passage Goodman clearly differentiates between the theoretical construct of the "defining score" and the actual sonic event with its "quality of performance." In effect, this

---

<sup>128</sup>Again, specification of the aesthetic grounds upon which such a judgement would rest lies beyond the confines of Goodman's account.

is a distinction between the identity of a work and the aesthetic value of that work.

Another example of this distinction can be found in Goodman's own view of his stipulation concerning wrong notes. Recall Goodman's observation that the playing of even one wrong note would lead to a lack of work-preservation and score-preservation. This, as noted earlier in this chapter, means that through a series of one-note errors of omission, addition, and modification, one piece could be radically transformed into another. Goodman's account of the role of notation in defining the musical work derives much of its theoretical rigour from this stipulation. Nonetheless, he observes that the exigencies that dictate our technical discourse need not necessarily govern our everyday speech.

Or course, I am not saying that a correct(ly spelled) performance is correct in any number of other usual senses. Nevertheless, the composer or musician is likely to protest indignantly at refusal to accept a performance with a few wrong notes as an instance of a work; and he surely has ordinary usage on his side. *But ordinary usage here points the way to disaster for theory* [italics added]. (1976, p. 120)

And further:

I am no more recommending that in ordinary discourse we refuse to say that a pianist who misses a note has performed a Chopin Polonaise than that we refuse to call a whale a fish, the earth spherical, or a greyish-pink human white. (1976, p. 187)

Thus it becomes apparent that, for Goodman, while the rigour of a theory of symbols—in this case a system of musical notation—is necessary, this does not mean that common practice can, does or should be expected to meet those same exigencies. In fact, in *Ways of worlmaking* Goodman argues that “in music the sound is the end product....” (1978,

p. 51). This is even made clearer when he observes in a later book, *Mind over matter* (1984, p. 85), that “The musical work consists of performances, and these usually function in art and in worldmaking quite differently from a score.” The fact that such functions are different is confirmed in an analogy made by Goodman:

The results suggest, however, that it [the musical score] comes as near to meeting the theoretical requirements for notationality as might reasonably be expected of any traditional system in constant actual use, and that the excisions and revisions needed to correct any infractions are rather plain and local. After all, one hardly expects chemical purity outside the laboratory. (Goodman, 1976, p. 186)

Here Goodman draws a parallel between the purity of his theoretical stance and the purity and rigour of conditions which lead scientists to obtain data, derive theories, and draw conclusions.<sup>129</sup> Both of these theoretical contexts, in science and in music, are very different from the actual conditions which obtain in real-life situations, scientific and musical.

Goodman’s laboratory analogy confirms that he is aware of the fact that the theoretical requirements for notationality are respected in musical notation only to the extent that this could be “reasonably” expected. It becomes apparent, then, that Goodman’s theory

---

<sup>129</sup>This is a surprising analogy for Goodman to make, given his views on science: he is sceptical of the possibility that science can be based uniquely on “pure” empirical evidence. In terms of the emotions, he argues that the “emotions function cognitively...the work of art is apprehended through the feelings as well as through the senses” (1976, p. 248). Likewise, in terms of the purity of cognition he asserts that “the zoologist, psychologist, sociologist, even when his aims are purely theoretic, legitimately employs emotion in his investigations” (1976, p. 251). For him, then, cognition is as subject to emotion, intuition, and creative thinking as invention in the arts, and the line between the two, for Goodman, is blurred. Thus, while art-making involves cognition, cognitive, empirical research involves intuition and affect. This reinforces our reading of Goodman’s comments concerning “chemical purity outside the laboratory.”

of notation in the role of defining the musical work is, to a certain extent, distinct from his views of the roles of composer and performer in their responsibility for determining the aesthetic qualities of the musical performances of a work. These will be considered here.

### 3.3.3. The Composer-Performer Relationship

Goodman distinguishes clearly between genuineness or correctness of performance and aesthetic merit. He recognizes that

several correct performances of about equal merit may exhibit very different specific aesthetic qualities—power, delicacy, tautness, stodginess, incoherence, etc. Thus even where the constitutive properties of a work are clearly distinguished by means of a notation, they cannot be identified with the aesthetic properties. (1976, p. 120)

He argues, however, that such different performances of a work are not considered variations upon, but rather constitute, the work (1988, p. 67). This would seem to suggest that Goodman accords considerable responsibility to the performer, who must make interpretive decisions of an aesthetic nature, regardless of whether the performance correctly complies with the score and as such is a “performance” of that specific work or not.

This leads to the discerning of a critical distinction within Goodman’s overall view of music. While, on the one hand, he rigorously delineates conditions for identifying musical works, on the other he clearly recognizes the fact that among those performances which qualify as “correct” there may be considerable variation in terms of the sound-event.

If, then, notation is distinct from the real sound-event that is the music, a now-

familiar question resurfaces: Where is the music? What is the site, the locus of the work? According to Goodman's account, "the work" is localized in different ways across the arts. For example, in painting the work is an individual object, in etching it is a class of objects, and in music "the work is the class of performances compliant with a character" (1976, p. 210). What is important to note here is that music is a two-step art form, for which notation exists merely as a first stage indicator of a variety of potentials.

It is through the second stage (the performance itself) that the sound-event exists. In some instances, when the work is not performed at all, even though a compliance class could potentially exist, this compliance class is empty and so there is no sound-event. In other instances, a performance of the notated score may well take place, but if that performance does not comply exactly with the score (if it were to contain one wrong note, for example) then it is not considered a "correct" performance, and so is a performance of another work. Finally, a performance could "correctly" comply with the score, and so be deemed a performance of the work.

In this final eventuality wherein the performance does fully comply with the score, a Pandora's box emerges. This is because, while one performance may comply with a score and so be considered a performance of "that work," so too may another, albeit very different, performance also comply. And so may another, and another. Thus, in Goodman's account, since one score can lead to very different performances, both correct, the score underdetermines the musical performance.<sup>130</sup>

---

<sup>130</sup>In Goodman's discussion of the text he holds that "right interpretations may differ as drastically as do good translations. We found reason to consider different interpretations to be interpretations of the same work, and we might regard good translations along with

For Goodman, differences in the aesthetic qualities of the performance must derive from the elements that are non-notational, involving primarily expressive elements: those related to tempo, dynamics, mood, and so on. If, as Goodman argues, it is the non-notational, expressive qualities of the work which account for differences among correct performances of a given work, this accounts for how it is that two performances of a given score can be correct, in that both comply with that score, and yet still differ. Moreover, this calls us to consider more closely the role of expression in Goodman's broader account of music.

#### 3.3.4. Goodman's Account of Expression

Goodman defines expression as "metaphorical exemplification." Consideration of this will first entail determining what, exactly, these two terms mean. Exemplification will be defined first, followed by an overview of Goodman's account of what metaphor is and how it works. This will equip us with the theoretical grounding necessary to consider Goodman's account of expression.

##### 3.3.4.1. Exemplification

Goodman characterizes exemplification as an important and widely used mode of symbolization in and out of the arts (1976, pp. 52-53). To explain how it works, he cites the

---

right interpretations as belonging to a collection that is determined by the work" (in Nelson Goodman & Catherine Elgin [1988], *Reconceptions in philosophy and other arts and sciences*, p. 57).

example of a tailor's booklet of small swatches of cloth, which function as samples or symbols that exemplify certain properties of the material. A swatch, however, only symbolizes certain properties. As Goodman points out, it is a sample of colour, weave, texture, and pattern, but not of size, shape, or absolute weight or value. It does not exemplify all of the properties that it shares with a particular bolt of material, for example, having been finished on a particular day. According to Goodman, "exemplification is possession plus reference. To have without symbolizing is merely to possess, while to symbolize without having is to refer in some other way than by exemplifying" (1976, p. 53). Goodman reasons, then, that the swatch exemplifies only those properties that it both has and refers to. He also observes that not every piece of the material functions as a sample, and it is also possible that something else, such as a painted chip of wood, may have the colour or other properties of the material, and thus be used to exemplify these.

Goodman observes that whereas possession is intrinsic (a symbol possesses a characteristic or it does not), reference is not. It is the particular system of symbolization in effect that determines which properties of a symbol are exemplified. The tailor's sample normally exemplifies particular properties of a given material, but not the property of exemplifying such properties.

When speaking, for example, of a chip as a sample of "red" rather than of redness, Goodman cautions that what exemplifies in this case is something denoted by, rather than an inscription of, the predicate. This leads him to remark that "What a symbol exemplifies must apply to it" (1976, p. 55). He reasons that it seems too strict to say that "exemplifies redness" is always an equivalent of "exemplifies red," whereas to say that "exemplifies



redness” is the same as “exemplifies some label coextensive with “red” would seem to provide too much latitude. He notes that:

While “exemplifies rationality,” taken by itself, says only “exemplifies some label coextensive with “rational” the context usually tells us a good deal more about what label is in question. (1976, pp. 55-56)

In other words, when a paint chip exemplifies redness to a Frenchman, the predicate is clearly not an English one, but rather “rouge.” On the other hand, in the English language, a sample of redness exemplifies “red” or some or all of those predicates used interchangeably with “red” (1976, p. 56).

Exemplification obtains between sample and label, as in between the sample and each concrete inscription of a predicate. The inscriptions of a label may be “abstract” in having multiple denotation, and a singular label may be exemplified just as well by what it denotes. A label, regardless of whether it has plural or singular or no denotation, may itself be denoted. In conclusion, then, Goodman asserts that “While anything may be denoted, only labels may be exemplified” (1976, p. 57).

Goodman also addresses the question of whether exemplification is entirely dependent upon language. He holds that not all labels are predicates, which are labels from linguistic systems. It is also possible for symbols from other systems—gestural, pictorial, diagrammatic, etc.—to be exemplified and otherwise function very much like predicates of a language. Goodman observes that such systems are in constant use, and that “exemplification of an unnamed property usually amounts to exemplification of a non-verbal symbol for which we have no corresponding word or description” (1976, p. 57).

What is important in distinguishing exemplification from denotation is not so much the organization of language, even when nonverbal symbols are involved. In ordinary language, for example, Goodman would argue that the reference of “woman” to Deneuve, and of “word” to woman, is unequivocally denotation. On the other hand, if Deneuve symbolizes “woman,” and “woman” symbolizes “word” the reference is unequivocally exemplification.

In the case of pictures, despite the fact that they are nonverbal, Goodman argues that orientation of referential relationships is provided through established correlations with language (1976, p. 58). A picture that represents Deneuve—in the same way as a predicate that applies to her—denotes her. And, as Goodman points out, reference by a picture to one of its colours is often exemplification of a predicate of ordinary language.

Goodman observes that labelling seems to be free in a way that sampling is not: anything can denote red things, but it is not possible to let anything that is not red be a sample of redness. This leads Goodman to ask whether exemplification is more intrinsic, less arbitrary, than denotation. He explains what the difference would be. For a word to denote red things it needs only to refer to them. For a green sweater to exemplify a predicate, however, merely letting the sweater refer to that predicate is not sufficient. The sweater must also be denoted by the predicate. In other words, the predicate must also refer to the sweater. What this means, then, is that while denotation implies reference between two elements in one direction, exemplification implies reference between the two in both directions.

Goodman points out that a gesture may denote or exemplify or both. For example, an orchestra conductor’s gestures denote sounds to be produced but they are not themselves

sounds.

They may indeed have and even exemplify some properties—say of speed or cadence—of the music, but the gestures are not among their own denotata. The same is true of such activities in response to music as foot- and finger-tappings, head-bobbings, and various other minor motions. (1976, p. 61)

Goodman explains that the fact that gestures such as foot-tapping are called forth by the music, while the conductor's gestures call it forth, does not affect their status as labels. This is because labels may either record or prescribe. He further observes that the fact that a tailor's swatch exemplifies texture but not shape, and a given picture exemplifies summer greenness but not newness, will usually be quite evident. He cautions, however, that it can be difficult to discern exactly which among its properties a thing exemplifies.

#### 3.3.4.2. Metaphor

Goodman considers the relationship between the metaphorical and the actual. He holds that:

Metaphorical possession is indeed not *literal* possession; but possession is actual whether metaphorical or literal. The metaphorical and the literal have to be distinguished within the actual. Calling a picture sad and calling it gray are simply different ways of classifying it. (Goodman, 1976, p. 68)

What this means is that although the metaphorical application of a predicate to an object is different from a literal one, it applies nonetheless. This would mean that calling a picture

blue and calling it melancholy are different ways of classifying that picture. The distinction between an application that is metaphorical and one that is literal “is dependent upon some feature such as novelty” (1976, p. 69).

As Goodman points out, however, the difference is not attributed solely to novelty: Every application of a predicate to a new event or a new-found object is new; but such routine projection does not constitute metaphor. And even the earliest applications of a coined term need not be in the least metaphorical. Metaphor, it seems, is a matter of teaching an old word new tricks—of applying an old label in a new way. (1976, p. 69)

Goodman explains that “a metaphor is an affair between a predicate with a past and an object that yields while protesting.” He argues that the metaphorical application of a label to an object “defies an explicit or tacit prior denial of that label to that object” (1976, p. 69). This means that in metaphor, the labels applied render conflict, as for example in the situation where a vase is proud, even though the vase is insentient. A metaphorical application of a term must be, to some extent, contra-indicated.

As Goodman points out, this does not explain the difference between metaphorical truth and simple falsehood. He observes that “Metaphor requires attraction as well as resistance—indeed, an attraction that overcomes resistance” (1976, p. 70). Just as the picture clearly belongs under the label “blue” and not the label “red,” it also belongs under the label “melancholy” and not the label “joyful.” As Goodman points out here, conflict arises due to the fact that the picture’s being insentient implies that it is neither melancholy nor joyful. The only way to explain this seeming contradiction, namely that the picture is both melancholy

and not melancholy, or joyful and not joyful, is to recognize that there are two ranges of application. Take, for example, a picture that is literally not melancholy, but is metaphorically melancholy. "Melancholy" in the first instance is used as a label for certain sentient things or events, and in the second instance, for certain insentient ones. Goodman argues that:

To ascribe the predicate to something within either range is to make a statement that is true either literally or metaphorically. To ascribe the predicate to something in neither range ... is to make a statement that is false both literally and metaphorically. (1976, p. 70)

Goodman very succinctly notes that "whereas falsity depends upon misassignment of a label, metaphorical truth depends on reassignment" (1976, p. 70).

It is important to recognize the difference between metaphor and ambiguity. Goodman argues that the many uses of a merely ambiguous term are "coeval and independent"; in other words, "none either springs from or is guided by another" (1976, p. 71). In the case of metaphor, however, a term with an extension that has been fixed by habit is applied elsewhere, under the influence of that habit. In other words, "there is both departure from and deference to precedent." As Goodman points out, when one use of a term precedes and affects another, the second use is the metaphorical one. A metaphor freezes or evaporates after usage; the original history fades, and the two uses become equal and independent. Two literal uses remain, resulting in ambiguity instead of metaphor (1976, p. 71).

Goodman cautions that in order to fully understand the workings of metaphor, it is

important to recognize that a label functions not in isolation, but as belonging to a family; sets of alternatives are used to categorize. As he points out, even literal applications are relative to a set of labels. For example, what counts as blue varies depending upon whether it is contrasted with non-blue, or whether it is contrasted with green or yellow or pink or red. It is custom and context, rather than declaration, that will indicate the admitted alternatives.

Goodman uses the term “realm” to refer to the totality of the ranges of extension of the labels in a schema, or of a set of labels. A realm consists of the objects sorted by the schema, those objects denoted by at least one of the available labels. Thus the range of “blue” comprises all blue things, while the realm in question may comprise all coloured things. Goodman points out, however, that

since the realm depends upon the schema within which a label is functioning, and  
since a label may belong to any number of such schemata, even a label with a unique  
range seldom operates in a unique realm. (1976, p. 72)

This distinction is important in establishing how metaphor works: metaphor typically involves a change in both range and realm. Goodman argues that a given label, together with others constituting a schema, is separate from the home realm of that schema, and “is applied for the sorting and organizing of an alien realm.”

Partly by thus carrying with it a reorientation of a whole network of labels does a metaphor give clues for its own development and elaboration. The native and foreign realms may be sense-realms; or may be wider, as when a poem is said to be touching, or an instrument to be sensitive; or narrower, as when different patterns of black and white are said to be of different hues; or have nothing to do with sense-realms. (1976,

p. 72)

In the case of metaphor a transfer of schema, a “migration of concepts, an alienation of categories” occurs (p. 72). Goodman observes that classes or attributes are not moved from one realm to another, “nor are attributes somehow extracted from some objects and injected into others” (1976, p. 74). What is transported, however, is a set of terms, of alternative labels. According to Goodman, the organization they effect in the alien realm is guided by their habitual use in the home realm.

#### 3.3.4.3. Expression as Metaphorical Exemplification

Equipped with Goodman’s account of both exemplification and metaphor, it will now be possible to consider his account of what it means for something to express or metaphorically exemplify. Expression is distinguished from representation in that it involves metaphor. A picture of trees and cliffs by the sea, painted in dull greys and “expressing great sadness,” for example, can be seen to “be sad.” The way in which it “is sad,” however, is different from the way in which it “is grey.” This shows how it can be claimed that while (strictly speaking) only sentient beings or events can be sad, a picture is only figuratively sad. While the picture *literally* possesses a grey colour belonging to the class of grey things, it only *metaphorically* possesses sadness, or belongs to the class of things that make one feel sad. To draw a parallel in music, a work “is slow” in a very different way than that in which it “is melancholy.” The piece literally possesses a slow tempo, belonging to the class of slow pieces; it only metaphorically possesses melancholy, or belongs to the class of things that feel

melancholy. As such, expression involves figurative possession: what is expressed is metaphorically exemplified. In the case of the painting, then, what expresses sadness is metaphorically sad. In the case of the musical performance, what expresses melancholy is metaphorically melancholy. What a face or picture expresses may be, but is not necessarily, “emotions or ideas the actor or artist has, or those he wants to convey, or thoughts or feelings of the viewer or of a person depicted, or properties of anything else related in some other way to the symbol” (1976, p. 85). The property that is metaphorically exemplified, that is expressed, belongs to the symbol itself; it does not derive from the state of those involved in the creation or reception of the symbol. Goodman explains:

That the actor was despondent, the artist high, the spectator gloomy or nostalgic or euphoric, the subject inanimate, does not determine whether the face or picture is sad or not .... The properties a symbol expresses are its own properties. (1976, p. 86)

According to Goodman, metaphorical possession and exemplification resemble literal possession and exemplification. He explains:

A picture is metaphorically sad if some label—verbal or not—that is coextensive with (i.e., has the same literal denotation as) “sad” metaphorically denotes the picture. The picture metaphorically exemplifies “sad” if “sad” is referred to by and metaphorically denotes the picture. And the picture metaphorically exemplifies sadness if some label coextensive with “sad” is referred to by and metaphorically denotes the picture. (1976, p. 85)

As such, what expresses sadness is metaphorically exemplified: it is actually but not literally sad. What expresses sadness is metaphorically sad through “a transferred application of some



label coextensive with 'sad'" (1976, p. 85). The properties a symbol expresses are properties that it possesses, but also that it has acquired.

Properties expressed are not only metaphorically possessed but also referred to, exhibited, typified, shown forth. Goodman explains that "A square swatch does not usually exemplify squareness, and a picture that rapidly increases in market value does not express the property of being a gold mine" (1976, p. 86). A symbol—pictorial, musical, verbal—expresses only properties that it metaphorically exemplifies as a symbol of that kind (1976, p. 87).<sup>131</sup> Goodman maintains that "among the countless properties, most of them usually ignored, that a picture possesses, it expresses only those metaphorical properties it refers to" (1976, p. 88). In other words, the referential relationship is established through the singling out of specific properties for attention, of "selecting associations with certain other objects." Verbal discourse is an important way in which such associations are established and cultivated. According to Goodman, "Talking does not make the world or even pictures, but

---

<sup>131</sup> Goodman points out that while accuracy would call for speaking of expression of predicates, he speaks rather of expression of properties. He acknowledges that, in so doing, he risks the charge of making what a symbol expresses depend upon what is said about it—of leaving what a picture expresses to the accident of what terms happen to be used in describing the picture. This would lead to a situation in which the expression achieved is not credited to the artist but rather to the commentator. Goodman clarifies this misunderstanding: he asserts that a symbol must have every property it expresses, and what counts is not whether anyone calls the picture sad but whether the picture is sad; whether the label "sad" does in fact apply. He observes that "sad" may apply to a picture even though no one ever uses the term to describe it. Moreover, calling a picture sad by no means makes it so. He argues that this is not to say that whether a picture is sad is independent of the use of "sad" but that given, by practice or precept, the use of "sad," applicability to the picture is not arbitrary. This leads him to observe that, since practice and precept vary, possession and exemplification are not absolute either, and that what is actually said about a picture is not always altogether irrelevant to what the picture expresses. "Pictures are not more immune than the rest of the world to the formative force of language even though they themselves, as symbols, also exert such a force upon the world, including language (1976, pp. 88-89).

talking and pictures participate in making each other and the world as we know them” (1976, pp. 88-89).

For Goodman, since it is limited to what is possessed and to what has been acquired second-hand, expression is doubly constrained as compared with denotation. He argues that “whereas almost anything can denote or even represent almost anything else, a thing can express only what belongs but did not originally belong to it” (1976, p. 89). As such, the difference between expression and literal exemplification, like the difference between more and less literal representation, is a matter of habit.

This is important in that it leads Goodman to note the impermanent nature of habits (or conventions), which can differ greatly according to time and place and person and culture. Goodman cites an example recounted by Aldous Huxley upon his hearing some supposedly solemn music in India:

I confess that, listen as I might, I was unable to hear anything particularly mournful or serious, anything specially suggestive of self-sacrifice in the piece. To my Western ears it sounded much more cheerful than the dance which followed it. (1976, p. 90)

The boundaries of expression, then are dependent upon the difference between exemplification and possession, and also upon the difference between the metaphorical and the literal, and as such are inevitably tenuous and transient. Goodman shows that while an Albers picture may exemplify certain shapes and colours and interrelations among them, and merely possesses the property of being exactly 24½ inches high, the distinction is not always so easily drawn. Goodman observes that the status of a property as metaphorical or literal is often unclear and seldom stable; comparatively few properties are purely literal or

permanently metaphorical (1976, p. 90).

Goodman contends that both music and dance may exemplify rhythmic patterns, and express peace or pomp or passion: “Music may express properties of movement while dance may express properties of sound” (1976, p. 91). In terms of verbal symbols, a word or passage can be understood to express “not only what the writer thought or felt or intended, or the effect upon the reader, or properties possessed by or ascribed to a subject, but even what is described or stated” (1976, p. 91). A verbal symbol, however, may express only properties it metaphorically exemplifies; naming a property and expressing it are different matters. As Goodman observes, a poem or story need not express what it says or say what it expresses. For example, a tale of fast action may be slow, a biography of a benefactor bitter, a description of colourful music drab, and a play about boredom electric. This means that to describe, as to depict a persona, as sad or as expressing sadness is not necessarily to express sadness. In the same way, a passage or picture may exemplify or express without describing or representing, and even without being a description or representation (1976, p. 92).<sup>132</sup>

Goodman summarizes his account of expression as follows: If *a* expresses *b* then: (1) *a* possesses or is denoted by *b*; (2) this possession or denotation is metaphorical; and (3) *a* refers to *b* (1976, p. 95).

It is important to recognize that Goodman’s account does not purport to determine what is expressed, nor to what extent. He demonstrates this with an example from science:

---

<sup>132</sup>As examples of the latter, Goodman suggests some passages from James Joyce and some drawings by Kandinsky.

No test for detecting what a work expresses has been sought here; after all, a definition of hydrogen gives us no ready way of telling how much of the gas is in this room. Nor has any precise definition been offered for the elementary relation of expression we have been examining. (1976, p. 95)

His concern, rather, has been to establish what expression is, by explaining how what is expressed is metaphorically exemplified.

### 3.3.5. Goodman's Account of Style

Goodman argues (1976, 1978) that expression is a factor in determining the style of a given work. A full account of Goodman's view of expression would thus entail consideration of the relationship between expression and style. As such, it is first necessary to consider what constitutes Goodman's account of style; this will lead, finally, to a discussion of how expression and style are related.

#### 3.3.5.1. Style and Subject

Goodman points out that while it may appear that, in a work of art, subject is what is said, and style is how, in fact the "what" of one sort of doing may be part of the "how" of another. He argues that "some notable features of style are features of the matter rather than the manner of the saying" (1978, p. 23). This leads him to note that there are many ways in which subject is involved in style. In fact, Goodman rejects the received opinion that style

relies on an artist's conscious choice among alternatives, and he recognizes that "not all differences in ways of writing or painting or composing or performing are differences in style" (1978, p. 23).

In terms of literature, Goodman argues that while variations in style are variations in how the expository function is performed by texts, and variations in style amount to variations in how this function is performed by texts, this dictum is not without difficulties. Goodman cites the argument by Graham Hough, for example, which advances the following: "the more we reflect on it, the more doubtful it becomes how far we can talk about different ways of saying: is not each different way of saying in fact the saying of a different thing?" (1978, p. 24).<sup>133</sup>

Goodman argues against the synonymy view that style and content are one. He suggests that there are different ways of saying things that are very nearly the same and, conversely (and, he argues, often more significantly), very different things may be said in much the same way, by texts that share certain characteristics seen as comprising a style. Styles of saying, he holds, for example in painting or composing or performing, can be compared and contrasted regardless of the subjects, regardless of whether any subject exists. It follows, then, that, for Goodman, even without synonymy, style and subject do not become one.

This leads Goodman to ask: "If both packaging and contents are matters of style, what isn't?" (1978, p. 26). He argues that to say that style is a matter of subject is not right, that

---

<sup>133</sup>This citation is drawn by Goodman from Graham Hough (1969), *Style and stylistics*.

it is “vague and misleading.” Rather, he argues that only some of the aspects of what is said count as aspects of style, “only certain characteristic differences in what is said constitute differences in style” (1978, p. 27).

In a similar way, he suggests, only certain features of the wording, and not other features, constitute features of style. That two texts consist of very different words does not make them different in style. What counts as features of style here are such characteristics as the predominance of certain kinds of words, the sentence structure, and the use of alliteration and rhyme (1978, p. 27).

#### 3.3.5.2. Style and Emotion

Goodman considers (and rejects) the suggestion that style depends upon the qualities of feeling expressed. This suggestion, he argues, renders the theory so broad that it no longer does any work. Moreover, he argues, “definition of style in terms of feelings expressed goes wrong in overlooking not only structural features that are neither feelings nor expressed, but also features that though not feelings *are* expressed” (1978, p. 28).

For Goodman, then, style is not limited to what is expressed, nor to feelings. It is the case, nonetheless, that expressing is at least as important a function of many works as is saying. Goodman holds that “what a work expresses is often a major ingredient of its style” (1978, p. 29).

The differences between sardonic, sentimental, savage, and sensual writing are stylistic. Emotions, feelings, and other properties expressed in the saying are part of

the way of saying; what is expressed is an aspect of how what is said is said, and as in music and abstract painting may be an aspect of style even when nothing is said. (1978, p. 29)

Goodman argues that since expression is a function of works of art, ways of expressing as well as ways of saying must be taken into account. Since differences in what is expressed may count as differences in style of saying, it is also the case that differences in what is said may count as differences in style of expressing. He provides an example: a writer may typically describe outdoor activities through gloominess, using the emphasis on rainy weather as a typical way for the writer to express gloom. “What is said, how it is said, what is expressed, and how it is expressed are all intimately interrelated and involved in style” (1978, p. 29). Understanding this is critical to an understanding of how works of art do their work.

#### 3.3.5.3. Style and Structure

Goodman notes that what a text says or expresses is a property of the text, not of something else. At the same time, however, “properties possessed by the text are different from and are not enclosed within it, but relate it to other texts sharing these properties” (1978, p. 30). The argument that features that are not exclusively formal and not clearly intrinsic can be defined in terms of the difference between what a work does and what it is is not suitable. This is because, according to Goodman, a poem or picture does possess the gloom expressed by it, although this is metaphorical not literal possession. “The poem or

picture that expresses gloom is (metaphorically) gloomy” (1978, p. 31). Moreover, the stylistic features of a work that are considered to be intrinsic

are never merely possessed but are among those possessed properties that are manifested, shown forth, exemplified—just as colour and texture and weave, but not shape or size, are exemplified by the tailor’s swatch he uses as a sample. (1978, pp. 31-32)

For this reason, Goodman argues that both expressing and exemplifying are matters of being and doing, of possessing properties while at the same time referring to them. This leads him to conclude that whether the features of a work are structural or nonstructural, they are nonetheless properties that are literally exemplified by a work (1978, p. 32).

#### 3.3.5.4. Style and Signature

Goodman notes that, if a work is in a given style, “only certain aspects of the subject, form, and feeling of the work are elements of that style” (1978, p. 34). A property of a work, whether it takes the form of a statement made, structure displayed, or feeling conveyed, can be said to be stylistic only if it associates a work with a particular artist, period, region, school, etc. A style, Goodman argues, serves as an individual or group signature distinguishing “early from late Corot, Baroque from Rococo,” and so on. By extension, he points out, it is possible to speak of a work by one author as being in the style of another author. Similarly, it is possible to speak of a passage being or not being in the style of other passages in the same or another work. As a general rule, according to Goodman, “stylistic



properties help answer the questions: Who? When? Where?" (1978, p. 34). He observes that:

A feature that is non-indicative by itself may combine with others to place a work; a property common to many works may be an element of style for some but stylistically irrelevant for others; some properties may be only usual rather than constant features of a given style; and some may be stylistically significant not through appearing always or even often in works of a given author or period but through appearing never or almost never in other works. (1978, p. 34)

Thus, determining style has to do with "the sureness and sensitivity of our sorting of works" (1978, p. 34).

It is also possible, Goodman points out, for a work's maker, period or provenance, to be determined by properties that are not stylistic. Labels, catalogue listings, letters from the artist, and so on do help to identify works, but these properties are not related to style. This leads Goodman to conclude that "Although style is metaphorically a signature, a literal signature is no feature of style" (1978, p. 34).

In order for certain properties to count as determinant in a work's style, these must be properties of the functioning of the work as a symbol. As such, any and only aspects of symbolic functioning of a work may contribute to a style. This leads Goodman to define style as

those features of the symbolic functioning of a work that are characteristic of author, period, place, or school .... According to this definition, style is not exclusively a matter of how as contrasted with what, does not depend either upon synonymous alternatives or upon conscious choice among alternatives, and comprises only but not

all aspects of how and what a work symbolizes. (1978, p. 35)

It is important to note that, according to Goodman's account, style does not rest upon an artist's intentions. He argues that "what counts are properties symbolized, whether or not the artist chose or is even aware of them" (1978, p. 36).

That such properties may be difficult to determine implies, for Goodman, that there is something to be determined: "that the work in fact does or in fact does not say so-and-so, does or does not exemplify (or express) a given property" (1978, p. 37). He argues that:

Whether a property is stylistic depends no more than what a work says either upon the difficulty of determining or upon the importance of what is exemplified or said. (1978, p. 37)

#### 3.3.5.5. The Significance of Style

Goodman concludes his discussion of style with some very important comments concerning its significance. He rejects the notion that determining stylistic attributes of a work serves merely to discern the work's attribution. He argues, rather, that "attribution is a preliminary or auxiliary to or a byproduct of the perception of style" (1978, p. 38). Goodman reasons that history and criticism differ in their ends and means:

Where the historian uses his grasp of style to identify a picture as by Rembrandt or a poem as by Hopkins, the critic uses the identification of authorship as a step toward discerning the Rembrandt properties or the Hopkins properties of the work. (1978, p. 39)

Stylistic properties, Goodman argues, are not necessarily obvious: “Styles are normally accessible only to the knowing eye or ear, the tuned sensibility, the informed and inquisitive mind.... What we find, or succeed in making, is heavily dependent on how and what we seek” (1978, p. 39). Goodman argues that when such perception is achieved, it increases our comprehension of the work. He writes: “The less accessible a style is to our approach and the more adjustment we are forced to make, the more insight we gain and the more our powers of discovery are developed” (1978, p. 40). Goodman concludes that the discernment of style comprises an integral aspect of the understanding of works of art and the worlds they present (1978, p. 40).

### 3.3.6. The Relationship Between Expression and Style

Key points concerning both expression and style have been established. First, Goodman defined expression as metaphorical exemplification. Recall that, in exemplification, the symbol both possesses and refers to a work. When exemplification *is* metaphorical, the symbol metaphorically possesses and refers to the metaphor. For example, what expresses joy is actually but not literally joyful; joy is metaphorically exemplified through a transferred application of some label coextensive with “joy.” The properties a symbol expresses are properties that it possesses as well as those it has acquired. In expression, properties are not merely metaphorically possessed but are also referred to, exhibited, typified, shown forth.

In terms of the relationship between expression and style, Goodman argues that style

is not limited to what is expressed. What a work expresses, however, is as important as what a work says; expression is “often a major ingredient of its style” (1978, p. 29). Emotions, feelings, and other properties expressed in the saying are part of the way of saying; what is expressed is an aspect of how what is said, is said. Goodman also argues that, as such, differences in what is expressed may count as differences in style of saying, and that differences in what is said may count as differences in style of expressing. “What is said, how it is said, what is expressed, and how it is expressed are all intimately interrelated and involved in style” (1978, p. 29). As such, the expressive properties of a work, which contribute to the style of the work, serve to relate it to other texts which also possess those properties.

### 3.4. Conclusion

This chapter first provided an overview of Goodman’s theory of notation, and his account of the role of notation in defining musical works. The five properties required in order for a system to be notational, namely unambiguity, and syntactic and semantic disjointness and differentiation, were discussed. Following, in section two, critical response to Goodman’s theory of notation revealed that, despite the theoretical stringency of his theory of notation, difficulties arise when it is applied to musical notation, both in terms of practical considerations (such as the question of wrong notes), as well as on philosophical grounds (as in Sparshott’s disagreement with Goodman’s view of the score as serving primarily to identify works).

In section three, however, it was shown that Goodman himself recognizes a clear distinction between practice and theory, arguing that one cannot expect chemical purity outside the laboratory. Interestingly, the characteristics which Goodman did not consider notational, namely verbal indications of tempo or mood, tend to be the very aspects of the work which determine its aesthetic or interpretive individuality, its musicality. This led to a consideration of Goodman's broader view of music, in particular his account of expression and the very direct relationship between expression and style.

In summary, this chapter has shown that, according to Nelson Goodman, the musical performance derives from two sources. Its identity is assured by the notational elements present in the score, and its interpretive quality is shaped by the performer's decisions regarding the non-notational, expressive elements of the work. Moreover, it was shown, expression comprises an important factor in determining the style of a work.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Glenn Gould in Counterpoint: The Composer-Performer Relationship and Gould's Musical Style

#### 4.0. Introduction

The first three chapters of this study have considered the relationship between composer and performer at a uniquely theoretical level. At this point, the discussion will turn to the work of one performer-composer, Canadian pianist Glenn Gould (1932-1982). This will provide an opportunity to consider some of the tensions and challenges that arise with respect to the aesthetic choices facing the performer of musical works as well as the factors and considerations involved in responding to these challenges.

This chapter aims to determine Gould's view of the composer-performer relationship as well as to investigate the impact of Gould's view on his performances. Further, it will attempt to discern what informed and motivated Gould's aesthetic decisions.<sup>134</sup> In short, this chapter will consider the impact of his view of the composer/performer relationship on his actual performance. It begins with a discussion of selected themes within Gould's work. Goodman's account as outlined in Chapter Three then provides a theoretical framework we

---

<sup>134</sup>For Gould, the purpose of making music concerned the attainment of a state of what he termed "ecstasy," for both performer and listener. This extends beyond the scope of the present study, which focuses on the aesthetic decisions that informed his musical performance.

may utilize as we consider Gould's work in terms of expression and style. The discussion will investigate the extent to which Gould's views of the composer/performer relationship can be seen as operative in defining and developing his musical style.

Gould's view of historically authentic performance practices will be considered, specifically in terms of instruments used in the performance of early music. This chapter will also outline what Gould considered to be the drawbacks of live performance, as these informed his decision to prematurely abandon the concert stage. It will go on to provide an overview of the ways in which technology afforded Gould a performance alternative.

Finally, in section three, Goodman's account of expression and style will be brought into the discussion of Gould's artistic production. The sound documentaries or "oral tone poems" which he produced, in particular the *Solitude trilogy*, will be considered as emblematic of Gould's broader stylistic concerns. In this section, links will be established between Gould's view of the composer-performer relationship, and the development of his musical style.

#### 4.1. Glenn Gould and the Composer-Performer Relationship

##### 4.1.1. Introduction

Glenn Gould is a suitable candidate for such consideration for a number of reasons. First, he has been recognized as a performer of high international acclaim since his New York début in 1955. His performances include Baroque music, through Mozart and Brahms,

and also encompass the work of twentieth century composers. Moreover, his profoundly challenging and controversial performances and seemingly inconsistent view of music have elicited considerable reflection, scholarship, and debate for over four decades.<sup>135</sup> In 1964, at the peak of a brilliant international concert career, the 31 year-old Gould ceased giving live performances to pursue a career as a recording artist.

Gould's interpretations have been referred to as "re-creations."<sup>136</sup> That they were innovative is evidenced not only in Gould's performances and recordings themselves, but also in the volume and magnitude of polarized responses to his work.<sup>137</sup> According to some, this can be traced, in part at least, to the fact that:

Gould had little or no interest in traditional approaches to performance and felt the performer of the moment had an inalienable responsibility to remake any music in his or her image for contemporary listeners. (John P.L. Roberts in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. xi)

If this assertion is accurate, that is to say, if Gould did perceive the performer's role as one characterized by a responsibility to "remake any music in his or her image for contemporary

---

<sup>135</sup>A brief chronological overview of Gould's career is provided in Appendix II. Discussion of Gould's philosophical views, biography, technical considerations in his recording, and audience and critics' responses to his performances would extend beyond the confines of this study. For supplementary material see this study's References section: Angilette (1992); Friedrich (1988); Guertin (1988); Kazdin (1990); McGreevy (1983); Page (1984); Payzant (1978); and Roberts & Guertin (1992).

<sup>136</sup>This term is adopted by John P.L. Roberts (Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. xi), and would appear to be supported by the volume of criticism of Gould's performances by those who have disagreed with his interpretations.

<sup>137</sup>The bibliographic references cited in footnote 135 support the suggestion that Gould's performances, attitudes, and practices were controversial.



listeners,” it would be possible to align Gould with theorists (Neumann, 1982, 1989; Subotnik, 1991; and Taruskin, 1995) for whom the role of the contemporary performer is to render music of the past meaningful and aesthetically fulfilling to current audiences.

In order to establish whether this is the case it is necessary to determine Gould’s views of the composer-performer relationship; this will establish whether the designation “re-creator” is appropriate.

#### 4.1.2. The Composer-Performer Relationship and Interpretive Autonomy

##### 4.1.2.1. Notation as a Factor in Gould’s Performance of Bach

Gould is recognized for his interpretations of the music of J.S. Bach, whose music takes up a large part of his recorded performances. Gould’s own account of his interest in that composer sheds light on his general view of the composer-performer relationship. Concerning Bach’s music, Gould attributes ... “the considerable freedom of interpretation afforded by this work to the score itself.” He argues:

it is possible to isolate certain factors which may have some bearing on my attitude toward the interpretation of Bach’s music. One such [factor], certainly, is the lack of instrumental discrimination, so to speak, which Bach exhibits. (letter, November 12, 1972, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 183)

Gould points out that Bach’s scores lacked firm instrument specifications, and could be performed on the harpsichord, organ, or contemporary piano. Concerning the selection

of the instrument, he held that “it is largely a question of performer’s attitude” (letter, September 25, 1968, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 110). He argued that

this instrumental indifference plays an important part in helping us to achieve sufficient freedom so as to articulate our perhaps quite specialized views of his [Bach’s] music without embarrassment. In other words, in contra-distinction to music of the late nineteenth century, for example, where a very detailed notational style and a very specific instrumental predilection was built in to the creative concept, the music of Bach, in particular, because of its curious combination of structural precision and improvisatory options, encourages one to invest it with aspects of one’s own personality. (letter, November 12, 1972, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 183)

These passages show that, according to Gould, the indeterminacy of instrumentation in the music of Bach, together with the minimal interpretive indications or expressive markings provided in his scores, combine to foster what he views as a welcome interpretive independence on the part of the performer.

Notwithstanding, Gould still held that the “aspects of one’s own personality” with which one invests such music must be, to some degree at least, “harmonious with the basic philosophic and/or religious outlook which permeated much of Bach’s music, as well as with the specific contrapuntal design with which all of it was invested” (letter, November 12, 1972, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 183).<sup>138</sup>

---

<sup>138</sup>The term “counterpoint” refers to a complex musical practice, with an equally complex history, a detailed description of which would extend beyond the confines of this discussion. Briefly, counterpoint is defined as “the art of combining with a melody one or more melodious parts, as contrasted with harmony, which accompanies a melody with chords. It is so called because the notes or points are written counter to each other or *nota*

#### 4.1.2.2. A Concern for Structure

The authority to which Gould turns in the making of interpretive decisions is a personal one, resting on a combination of intuition and concern for structure. The above text continues:

many of the liberties I have taken with the Mozart K 330 I cannot attempt to defend on any grounds other than those of instinct. However, when I do arbitrarily change a phrase marking or dynamic indication, I do attempt to integrate it into the concept of the work as a whole and not to allow it to be simply and exclusively a notion for the moment without relation to the total conception. (letter, December 14, 1959, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 24)

This passage reveals two aspects of Gould's view of the performer's autonomy. First, it illustrates the ease with which Gould describes his own "arbitrary" intervention in the notated score, for example replacing the composer's indicated intentions with his own phrasings or dynamics, as such exercising his own creative independence and fulfilling his role as co-creator.

Second, this passage demonstrates Gould's concern for matters of a structural nature.

---

*contra notam*. The chief melody or theme or subject or *Cantus firmus*, the latter of the nearly synonymous terms being best, may pass from one part to another without losing its predominant character, from which it may readily be seen that the composer's aim is to give a singing quality to each part." Counterpoint reached its peak of development in the work of Palestrina, in the sixteenth century, with a second culminating point in the works of Johann Sebastian Bach "who applied to instrumental music a complete knowledge of counterpoint as well as of harmony, and whose fugues are a most perfect illustration of the principles of counterpoint" (Bekker, 1925, p. 142).

When he does impose his own musical ideas, in terms of expression, his foremost concern is that such changes be integrated into the musical work's overall structure, and not remain unrelated to the total conception. This will be shown to be a constant consideration throughout Gould's work.

Another example of Gould's composer-independent view of performing and of his concern for the structure of the musical work is reflected here:

I'm rather pleased with the result of the Wagner transcription disc and, since I suspect you are a died-in-the-wool Wagnerian, as I am, hope you like it as much as I do. (I must warn you, however, that the italics re [*sic*] my interpretation of the "Siegfried Idyll" are very much on "Idyll" and not on "Siegfried"—i.e. it is probably the most stately rendition since Knappertsbusch;<sup>139</sup> I've always felt that the piece has an indigenous languor which the "ruhig bewegt," or whatever [*sic*], in the score does not adequately delineate.) I think you will find, however, that my tempi for Meistersinger and Rhine Journey are almost alarmingly conventional. (letter, October 27, 1973, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 202).

In this passage Gould acknowledges the unconventional aspects of his performance of *Siegfried idyll*: he had not respected the term *ruhig bewegt*—"quietly agitated." In this passage, he cautions a New York executive of RCA Records that he has interpreted the piece more slowly than indicated by the composer. In justifying this change, Gould calls on the work's own "indigenous languor" which, he argues, the composer has not effectively captured through the tempo indications in the score.

---

<sup>139</sup>Hans Knappertbusch (1988-1965) [German conductor].

Gould's failure to respect the composer's notated indications is based on what can be seen as a circular argument; he appeals to his own subjective understanding of characteristics which, he argues, are inherently possessed by the work. Yet, we might ask, if Gould's interpretation is inherent in the work's structure, why have other performers not performed the works accordingly? It would seem that, in determining how the work should be performed Gould, as the performer, calls on what the work itself calls for, which he determines himself.

It is not surprising that Gould's performances were seen by many as countering the authority of the composer's notated score. The fact that he called on the music itself to inform the performer can be examined in terms of certain perspectives discussed earlier in this dissertation. Kivy (1993) argued that to not honour a composer's intentions could lead, through a series of modifications, further and further away from the work and, in the extreme case, could result in the performance of an entirely different work. For Cone (1989), the musical structure and identity is a critical aspect of the music. Cone described an instance where the performer infused the work with too much of her/his own musical vision, overlooking as such the work's inherent musical structure.

Gould's argument resembles that advanced by Roger Sessions (1979), who cautioned the performer against placing too much emphasis on the composer's intentions. In terms of the composer's utterances, Sessions wrote that "The testimony of a composer has the authority and the vitality of intensely lived experience, but his interpretations of that experience are constantly open to revision, even by himself" (1979, p. 28). While, admittedly, Sessions' comment refers to the composer's "testimony," it could be assumed

that such testimony could include not only what a composer said, but also what she/he wrote, or indicated, on a score.

#### 4.1.2.3. Performer as Elaborator

As early as 1959, Gould's correspondence indicated his awareness that his performances of certain (more indeterminately notated) scores were characterized by considerable flexibility of interpretation, even "improvisation." He wrote:

As to the matter of interpretation and the artist's fidelity, or lack of it, my approach has always been a rather relaxed improvisatory one when dealing with those eras out of the repertoire in which the performer's role was, in part at least, that of an elaborator. (letter, December 16, 1959, in Roberts & Guertin, 1992, p. 24)<sup>140</sup>

Gould's choice of the term "elaborator" is telling. According to *Webster's dictionary*, the verb "elaborate" means: 1. to produce by labour; 2. to build up from simple ingredients; 3. to work out in detail, develop. Gould's choice of that term would seem to align him with, for example, Sparshott (in Alperson, 1986), for whom the score served to merely lay down a foundation, to serve as a point of departure, which the performer was then free to follow or not.<sup>141</sup>

---

<sup>140</sup>Again, Gould refers to a good deal of Baroque music, the notation of which left considerable latitude for improvisation and embellishment on the part of the performer.

<sup>141</sup>This notion of "elaborator," wherein the notated score constitutes in a point of departure, recalls the work of Umberto Eco (1994). Drawing on distinctions made by Rorty, Eco delineates opposition between interpreting a text (critically) and merely using a text. Eco holds that "to critically interpret a text means to read it in order to discover, along with our

Gould's view of his role as performer can be seen as an active one which entails building, enhancing, producing and developing the music as it is suggested through the score. He appears less concerned with accessing the composer's intention than with enhancing and expressing through music his own understanding of what the composer provided as a point of departure.

#### 4.1.2.4. The Aesthetic Autonomy of the Performer

Recognizing that this position can leave the performer open to criticism by those who find her/his aesthetic problematic, Gould nonetheless accorded less importance to external feedback than to meeting his own expectations as a performer:

Since so many listeners and critics (trustworthy ones too) have taken exception to my conception of late Beethoven [*sic*] I cannot claim that it is the most convincing recording that I have made. However, I do feel that, if only as a personal manifesto, it is the most convinced. (letter, February 15, 1957, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 6)

Clearly, Gould highly valued his aesthetic autonomy: What counted for Gould was not that

---

reactions to it, something about its nature. To use a text means to start from it in order to get something else, even accepting the risk of misinterpreting it from the semantic point of view" (1994, p. 57). Gould's notion of elaborator would recall Eco's critical interpreter. He could be described as a user, in the way in which he systematically aimed to discern the polyphonic structure of works of music for which, conventionally, this is not a central feature of the work. The question of Gould and polyphony will be developed more fully in the course of this chapter. Eco's distinction is an interesting one to keep in mind. See Umberto Eco, (1994), *The limits of interpretation*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

his recording was convincing to others, but that, in his own estimation, it was the “most convinced.”

This need for musical interpretive autonomy is not something that evolved over time; it is present even in the early stages of Gould’s professional career. In an early letter in which he describes having left his only formal teacher, Gould wrote:

I had been for nine years a student of Alberto Guerrero,<sup>142</sup> for whom I have much admiration, but I felt that at a certain point I was equipped with everything, except the kind of solidarity of the ego which is, in the last analysis, the one important part of an artist’s equipment. It seems to me that even if one does the wrong thing at any time, there is a kind of absolute right about making one’s own wrongs. (letter, July 8, 1958, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 15)

Thus, at the age of twenty-six Gould defended his own views, arguing for the value of being responsible for one’s actions, even if they are viewed by others as aesthetic “wrong.”

Chapter Three showed how elements which can be termed “expressive” tend to be those elements which, according to Goodman’s account, are non-notational. Tempo is an important means, as are dynamics and phrasing, through which the performer can articulate the musical ideas that give shape to the work itself, as such distinguishing one interpretation from another. In this light, it is not surprising that tempo, a non-notational element, is one of the vehicles through which Gould’s convictions about music were manifest. Tempo provides an opportunity for the performer to play according to “one’s own discretion.” While

---

<sup>142</sup>Alberto Guerrero was born in 1886 in Chile, where he was a leading musical figure before emigrating to New York and then Toronto. He joined the Toronto Conservatory of Music in 1922, and taught there until his death in 1959.



Gould asserts that many of his tempi in recordings of the *Well tempered clavier* are, in his terms, “rather unorthodox,”<sup>143</sup> he also argues in favour of the possibility of many interpretations of one work.

[N]one of these were designed in order to create a spectacular effect or for any inherent shock value (more often than not indeed, I was relatively unaware of the “traditional” method of performance for the particular work) [*sic*]. I really do not think that it is possible to impose a “one and only” concept in regard to such works which should ideally give rise to so many diverse points of view. (letter, October 17, 1970, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 126)

Thus, Gould recognized that the score underdetermined the numerical performance, and he supported the view that a given score would lead to multiple interpretations. Original tempi provided one of the venues through which his aesthetic views could be voiced.

#### 4.1.2.5. In Recognition of The Transitory Nature of Aesthetic Values

Gould’s view of the aesthetic autonomy of the performer remained with him throughout his career.

I am [he wrote] convinced that one must, of necessity, be one’s own best critic and that one should, in fact, be rather wary of any opinion from other sources.... I do feel quite convinced that one’s creativity is enhanced primarily by the more-or-less

---

<sup>143</sup>In this instance, Gould refers to the works of Bach. Other instances of Gould performances, for example Mozart and Brahms, have also been characterized by “unorthodox” tempi.

single-minded pursuit and development of one's own resources without reference to the trends, tastes, fashions, etc. of the world outside. (letter, February 14, 1973, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 197)

Interestingly, however, this later view can seem to counter an observation made by Gould at the height of his performance career. In 1963, one year prior to leaving the concert stage, Gould commented on the extent to which values concerning performance are transitory:

I have suddenly been made aware by these recordings just how transitory are our values of performance and how dependent they are upon the analytical approach of the particular generation. (letter, May 27, 1963 in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 71)

Gould recognizes that recordings by other performers from the past demonstrated less concern with the overall structure of the music:

I found that in these recordings, the desire to sectionalize, to play from the passion of the moment tended to jeopardize the larger structures just as it tended to lend great charm and whimsicality to the smaller ones. I thought that Grieg and Fauré were exquisite, but I felt that the larger structures, the Chopin Ballade by Paderewski etc. just did not seem of a piece and yet one must admit that these were the great pianists of their day and reflected the analytical concepts of that time and since that time is really not so far distant, is it possible that the integrationist, everything-hanging-togetherness [*sic*] views of our time are just as transitory? Will we sound just as odd 40 years from now? (letter, May 27, 1963 in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 71)

This demonstrates Gould's awareness of the fact that the aesthetic and cultural values of a given era inform the performance of a musical work ("these were the great performances

of the day and reflected the analytical concepts of that time”).<sup>144</sup> As values shift, however, so too do the primary aesthetic characteristics of the music that is performed. On the other hand, as Chapters Two and Three showed, it is also the case that we hear works in a particular way, based on the soundscape, performance principles, and aesthetic values that we are accustomed to and that characterize the era and to which we are accustomed. In questioning whether the “integrationist ... views of our time are just as transitory,” Gould recognizes that the aesthetic values evidenced in works performed and recorded today may well be perceived and valued differently in the future.

Over time this view extended to encompass Gould’s own performances.

I did not, of course, mean to suggest that my recording of a particular Bach Fugue ... was in any sense *the* performance of that particular work. I do feel, however, that so far as my notions about Bach at a particular period in my life are concerned, it was *the* performance. (letter, April 24, 1967, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 101)  
[original italics]

This passage does two things. First, it implicitly recognizes the inability of the musical score to fully determine performance, a fact which can lead to the very different, albeit correct, performances of a given work by different performers. It also reveals Gould’s own awareness that his views could reflect fluctuations in his aesthetic judgement. Such fluctuation is in evidence in Gould’s two recordings (1957 and 1982) of performances of Bach’s *Goldberg variations*. The first differed considerably from the second in terms of

---

<sup>144</sup>However, more generally this point applies to the retrospective perception of musical interpretation and the way which we view these is representative of the musical “analytical concepts” of a given era.

expressive quality, tempo, and structural emphasis.

This explains Gould's understanding of the dialogical nature of the act of performing, not unlike the "conversation" analogy proposed earlier by Sparshott (in Alperson, 1986). Recall that, for Sparshott, music was not construed in terms of the creation and appreciation of compositional "works" as objects, identified through scores. Instead, a composer's score "specifies something that performers and listeners may (if they wish) perform and listen to": it was something "lived through" (in Alperson, 1986, p. 59). Sparshott suggested that trying to determine the proper roles of composer and performer, or the principles of co-operation between them, was as senseless as laying down a set of rules for conversation. Sparshott argued that "we would be prepared to find that different musical practices, or different aspects of one practice, answer to different kinds of interest...." (in Alperson, 1986, p. 52). Ultimately, Sparshott held that "using a score in one way does not prevent others from using it another way" (in Alperson, 1986, pp. 82-83). Gould's work reflects in practice what Sparshott has argued at a theoretical level.

#### 4.1.2.6. Discrepancy Between Gould's View and his Performance

Despite the alignment of Gould's views of the role of the score with those of Sparshott (in Alperson, 1986), it is also the case that discrepancies can be discerned between Gould's expressed views and his performances. Consider one example concerning a recording of Robert Casadesu performing Chopin sonata No.3, Op.58 (Columbia). Gould observed:

I find that I can live quite nicely without Frederic Francois' Sonatas [*sic*], but I've always felt that if one is to do them, one should surely do them straight. And this is the straightest, and best, performance of the *B minor sonata* I've ever heard. (letter, September 14, 1966, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 97)

As Roberts and Guertin (1992) aptly point out, Gould's own performance of that work in a radio recital on "CBC Thursday Night" (July 23, 1970), "was anything but 'straight'" (1992, p. 97). The term "straight," presumably, means with a minimum of performer input in terms of expression, for example tempo variations, rubato, and so on.

This is an instance of a clear discrepancy between what Gould said about the interpretation of a specific musical work, and how he actually performed it. This inconsistency could be attributed to one of two possibilities. First, one might argue that chronology was a factor. Gould's own performance of the Chopin sonata took place in July 1970, four years after Gould's written comments, and in the intervening years he may have, quite simply, changed his mind. This is a valid possibility, particularly in light of the Goldberg rethinking noted earlier.

A second possibility seems more probable. In light of Gould's seeming commitment to interpreting composers' works according to (his perception of) the aesthetic spirit which prevailed at the time of their composition, his own performance of Chopin may more accurately reflect his true conviction. If so, Gould's comment on the Casadesus performance would merely contradict the views "expressed" in his actual performances.<sup>145</sup>

---

<sup>145</sup>Later in this discussion the way in which "expression" in Gould's performances and compositions contributed to his musical style will be considered.

#### 4.1.2.7. The Performer's Autonomy: Summary

Thus far, several principles have been established. First, Gould's interest in Baroque and pre-Baroque music has been linked to the flexibility of interpretation afforded by the notational practices of that period. This recalls the example of Italian composer Frescobaldi (1583-1643), cited by Subotnik (1991) in Chapter Two. She similarly noted the range of interpretive freedom with which such composers intended their music to be approached. Second, in certain instances Gould counters the indications provided by composers (such as Mozart or Wagner, for example). The discussion has shown that this is not a random decision by Gould, but derives from his perception of the underlying musical structure of the work itself.

In both cases discussed above Gould gave evidence of his support for the validity of a performer's own aesthetic judgement, arrived at irrespective of the public's response to it. This view of the composer-performer relationship aligns Gould with Sparshott (in Alperson, 1986), but also reflects the aesthetically creative, "hands-on" approach to interpretation that Kivy (1989) refers to. This perspective, however, led Gould to challenge the musical establishment, a fact systematically noted by critics and scholars. Gould's contribution is summarized as follows:

At the very least his provocative performances will be seen as points of departure in re-examining the repertoire and re-evaluating the ethical responsibilities of the

performer. (Roberts in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. xi)<sup>146</sup>

It is interesting to consider whether Gould's awareness of the transitory nature of aesthetic perception of performances of the past may have been a factor in his unfaltering commitment to the authority of the performer's own aesthetic, independent of fashion, critics, or even the composer's notated score indications concerning expression. In this light, he may have reasoned as follows: If perceptions of the quality of the work will likely shift as, historically, aesthetic preferences and musical understandings evolve, then the best authority for directing aesthetic decisions of an interpretive nature is the performer. This may well provide insight into Gould's recreating works according to his own musical views, regardless of the impact on audiences' aesthetic expectations.

#### 4.1.3. Collapsing of the Roles of Composer and Performer

This discussion has shown that Gould supported the division of authority for the musical performance between composer and performer. His "democratic" view of the process, however, extends beyond this dichotomy. Gould envisioned a future wherein, through technology, recorded music would eliminate the distinctions between composing, performing and listening; such compartmentalization would no longer exist.<sup>147</sup> He argued that recorded music provides the opportunity for the performer to make artistic decisions which

---

<sup>146</sup>The ethical implications of Gould's thought and work will be briefly considered later in this chapter.

<sup>147</sup>Gould's view of technology, and its impact on his work, will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

post-Renaissance culture afforded exclusively to the composer. With the increasing sophistication of technology, Gould anticipated that by electronically manipulating her/his home sound system the New Listener<sup>148</sup> would be able to make aesthetic decisions which were formerly inaccessible to them. Thus the listener's tastes and preferences would come to be instrumental in determining the final musical product.

In many ways, it could be argued, the listener's aesthetic had already begun to factor into the listening process: it had long been possible to adjust the sound or equipment for loudness, balance, clarity, and tempo. Eventually, Gould envisioned, it would be possible for the listener to impose her/his own personality upon the work through electronic modifications. "As this happens, the work is transformed, as is the listener's relation to it, from an artistic to an environmental experience (Gould in Page, 1983, p. 347). Gould described such participation as being

in its limited way an interpretive act. Forty years ago the listener had the option of flicking a switch inscribed "on" and "off" and, with an up-to-date machine, perhaps modulating the volume just a bit. Today, the variety of controls made available to him requires analytical judgement. And these controls are but primitive, regulatory devices, compared to those participational possibilities which the listener will enjoy

---

<sup>148</sup>The term "New Listener" is used frequently by Gould in his writings. He anticipated what he referred to as the "kit-concept" of the listener's role. He envisioned that the listener would purchase a kit consisting of many different recorded performances of a particular work, and through home editing, could splice together pieces of tape from these to make a composite interpretation that reflected their aesthetic preferences. To a certain extent this process mirrors that adopted by Gould in the recording studio. The only difference, of course, is that he did not combine composers' works.



once current laboratory techniques have been appropriated by home playback devices. (Gould, 1966, cited in Payzant, 1978, p. 42)

In Gould's own words, the new era of electronic transmission was just the beginning:

Electronic transmission has already inspired a new concept of multiple-authorship responsibility in which the specific functions of the composer, the performer, and indeed, the consumer overlap. We need only think for a moment of the manner in which the formerly separate roles of composer and performer are now automatically combined in electronic tape construction or, to give an example more topical than potential, the way in which the home listener is now able to exercise limited technical and, for that matter, critical judgements, courtesy of the modestly resourceful controls of his hi-fi. It will not, it seems to me, be very much longer before a more self-assertive streak is detected in the listener's participation, before, to give but one example, "do-it-yourself" tape editing is the prerogative of [a] very reasonably conscientious consumer of recorded music (the Hausmusik activity of the future, perhaps!). And I would be most surprised if the consumer involvement were to terminate at that level. In fact, implicit in electronic culture is an acceptance of the idea of multilevel participation in the creative process. (in Page, 1984, pp. 92-93)

This "multilevel participation" indicates Gould's support of an interpretive process which distributes authority for the musical work between composer and performer, and also integrates the listener's aesthetic. This would emerge as a central element in the production of his radio documentaries (to be discussed later in this chapter). It will suffice to note that Gould's view of the music-making process systematically rejected the image of the solo

performer as being entirely responsible for the quality of the musical performance.

## 4.2. Historical Authenticity and Technology

### 4.2.1. Introduction

The discussion of the historically authentic performance in Chapter Two revealed that one of the ways in which Early Music Movement proponents purported to achieve authenticity—through the use of authentic instruments—is a contentious issue. Those who oppose the movement object as forcefully to the use of authentic instruments as its proponents do to contemporary ones. Since the concern for authenticity was linked to a commitment to respecting composers' intentions, it will be important to consider Gould's position on this issue due to the predominance of early music in his performance repertory. If his position is shown to favour the authenticity stance, we can assume that he accords more authority to the composer's judgement than to his own.<sup>149</sup> If, on the other hand, his approach is not seen as embracing the principles adopted by the authenticists, it would seem to demonstrate Gould's awareness of the limitations of that movement.

---

<sup>149</sup>In the performance of Baroque music, Bach for example, an authenticist stance would restrict performances to the harpsichord, since the modern piano as it is known today was not yet developed and as such, it would be reasoned, could not have been the composer's intended instrument.

#### 4.2.2. Gould's View of Authentic Instruments

According to Gould, if one is to use the piano in interpreting Bach's keyboard works, this must be done in such a way as to "simulate the terraced registration of the harpsichord" (letter January 3, 1963, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 69). Despite the purity of form for which Gould is known to have interpreted Bach, emphasizing clarity of articulation and development of contrapuntal structure, he was in no way committed to performing these works on the harpsichord.

Gould writes that his performances took place at a time when "the whole neo-Baroque craze (which I, of course, find a bit exaggerated, as with all such crazes) makes a view of this kind seem slightly out of fashion" (letter, November 16, 1964, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 73). Gould nonetheless places considerable importance on the contrapuntal line and structure which characterizes Baroque music.

While I am far from puritanical in this matter and do not believe in any case in carrying such theories to excess, I feel that the main progress in Bach interpretation which has occurred in the last generation or so, has been that so many people have been willing to attain the necessary clarity and delineation by sacrificing to some degree colouristic qualities of the piano. (letter, January 3, 1963, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, pp. 68-69)

This position is reflected later in Gould's career, in reference to an album devoted to works by two English Tudor composers, William Byrd (1543-1623) and Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625). He writes:

... and though it may seem an odd choice, in relation to conventional keyboard repertoire—I've discovered, to my great delight, that their music sits surprisingly well on the modern piano. This is particularly true in the case of Byrd who is, of course, in some respects, the father of modern keyboard writing.... (letter, August 12, 1971, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 151)

While he defends the performing of Baroque works on the piano, Gould nonetheless qualifies this position by specifying the particular action which such a piano requires. After acknowledging that one's preference with regard to pianos is a subjective matter, Gould outlines his own position in the following lengthy and rather technical description concerning that instrument:

For many years prior to that time [1970], I had felt that the instruments which were most congenial to me personally were those built during the 1920's and 1930's and for that reason whenever possible I tried to select for my concerts and recordings instruments of that period. It was, however, not always possible to do so and eventually having experimented with many different action systems, I came to the conclusion, that whatever the piano the one tendency of pianos build [*sic*] in America—and, to some extent in Europe as well—in the last 25 years—which I absolutely abhor, is the tendency to increase the draft of the key—i.e.[,] the distance which the key is permitted to follow when struck—and much—[*sic*] possibly out of some search for a larger or more brilliant tonal quality had displaced many of the peculiar virtues of pianos built in the preceding decades. In my own case I prefer an instrument which is regulated with a touch-block of a slightly shallower than average

measurement partly because, assuming all the correlative factors such as after-touch etc. are accounted for, it does, generally speaking, increase ones [*sic*] control over the instrument and provides a more precise and usually more even tonal quality. Needless to say the compensatory adjustments relative to this draft decision are of supreme importance but, all else being equal, it is possible, I think, to generate via the piano an almost harpsi-cord [*sic*] like clarity of sounds which, particularly for music of the 17th and 18th centuries is appropriate now. (letter c.1972, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 192).

According to Gould, the proliferation of large concert halls built in the twentieth century encouraged what he characterizes as the opposite tendency: the design of an instrument with a great potential sonority and the capacity to project those qualities with great vitality. For Gould, however, these instruments do not match for precision and delicacy the instruments built in the 1920s and '30s. He describes his own piano: “[T]he instrument which I presently use though built at that period has been, of course, totally reconditioned, and it does, I feel, combine the best of both worlds” (letter, c.1972, Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 192). Thus, while Gould does advocate a contemporary instrument for works of earlier periods, the fact that he is able to produce what he considers to be an appropriately authentic rendering is dependent upon careful consideration of the piano selected, and upon the possibility of adjusting it to achieve the action and sound which he felt was essential.

Gould is aware that, as a result of his own comments, critics considered that the piano used in his Bach recordings had been “harpsichordized.” Yet he points out that

the same piano has been used for Prokofiev, Scriabin, Bizet, Hindemith, et al[.]

without alteration but that, indeed, the “harpsichordizing” was simply my way of characterizing a rather unique keyboard sound attained through various manipulations of the action. (letter, April 11, 1974, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, pp. 205-206)

It is interesting to note that, despite the fact that this piano had been adjusted to render an acceptable Baroque action and sound, Gould also performed the works of the composers cited above on the same piano.

In choosing to perform the works of Baroque composers on the piano, Gould’s position concerning the Early Music Movement parallels that of theorists such as Taruskin (1995). As Chapter Two revealed, opponents of historical authenticity criticized that movement for its principled commitment to authentically pure instruments, often mistaking the letter of the law for the spirit of the law. Gould, in wishing to emphasize the clarity and contrapuntal “delineation” of Bach’s contrapuntal music, determined that he could best meet this on the piano. Gould further elaborates on this decision in the same passage:

I suppose that the logical extension of my attitude would be to simply play the works on the harpsichord and yet I cannot help feeling that in many ways the piano, with its range of sonority and the possibilities it provides for effects of registration which are quite within the plateau concept of Bach’s music, but for purely mechanical reasons are impossible on the harpsichord, is a perfectly sensible alternate.... I do feel it requires a willingness to surrender what you might call the glamour qualities of the piano and this, it seems to me, happily is now being accepted more and more widely in the present generation of musicians. (letter, January 3, 1963, in Roberts and

Guertin, 1992, p. 69)

By “glamour qualities” Gould presumably refers to such characteristically pianistic techniques as use of the pedal; he indicates in the above passage that, in fact, when one remains true to the spirit of Bach’s keyboard work, the piano is more capable of rendering “effects of registration” which are impossible on the harpsichord, rendering the piano an even more “authentic” instrument than the harpsichord for which the music was written.

Notwithstanding, Gould recognized the impact of the instrument on the work performed, and the suitability of certain instruments to certain works, arguing, for example, that the more romantic works of the late nineteenth century are suited to an instrument of that period. Concerning a recording by Venezuelan pianist Maria Teresa Carreno (1853-1917), he wrote:

I would suggest, though, that if they are to make another series of these recordings, the instrument used to accommodate the piano-roles might be chosen with an eye to a certain archaic mellowness. It seems to me that a piano of approximately the same vintage as the roles themselves would enhance the nostalgia of these recordings and assuming it was kept in good condition, without losing anything in the clarity and lucidity of the sound available. Something along the lines of the turn of the century Chickering for instance would be ideal for this project, I would think.<sup>150</sup> (letter, May 27, 1963, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 72)

This could be seen to contradict Gould’s position concerning Bach and the harpsichord,

---

<sup>150</sup>It is interesting to note that Gould’s own piano, which he had kept in his home since his childhood and which he used as his permanent practice instrument, was a Chickering.

namely that a contemporary piano, with adjustments, was perfectly appropriate for the performance of works from another era. In response, however, it could be argued that for performances of Baroque music, his concern for the contrapuntal nature and internal structure, Gould viewed the authenticists' harpsichord as less effective than the piano. In the passage concerning the Romantic works of the nineteenth century, however, this same commitment to the spirit of the music is maintained through his selection of an instrument that would provide a more "archaic mellowness."

In conclusion, then, while Gould does not share the hard and fast commitment of the authenticists concerning period instruments, preferring to render Bach on what he considers to be an appropriate instrument (the piano), he is nonetheless sensitive to the need for certain sounds appropriate to specific styles of music.

#### 4.2.3. Glenn Gould and Technology

Gould's decision to leave the concert stage after only nine years (1955 to 1964) has been perceived by many to have been synonymous with withdrawing from musical performance altogether. This was not the case since Gould, in a manner unprecedented in the history of recording, constructed his remaining twenty-two year career exclusively on the possibilities afforded by technology. The impact of this decision on Gould's work will be considered later in this chapter. Here, it is relevant to indicate, however, that Gould viewed technology as facilitating his role as a performer:

It [technology] makes the performer very like the composer, really, because it gives



him editorial afterthought, it gives him that power—it's a different kind of power than you [A. Rubenstein] were talking about, certainly, but it's very real nonetheless. Well, obviously, this is something that you cannot do in a concert, if only because you can't stop, as I always wanted to, and say, 'Take two.' (in Page, 1984, p. 287)

Before considering the full implications of Gould's support of technology, and its role in his work as performer, it will first be important to contextualize Gould's decision, to show how it was grounded in reasons that reflected his commitment to music itself. This discussion will provide an overview of the aspects of live performances that Gould viewed as problematic.

#### 4.2.4. Rejection of the Live Performance Venue

Whereas for many performing artists, for example Arthur Rubinstein, contact with an audience was “an indispensable component of their performing craft,” this was not the case for Gould. He recalls that “at the best [*sic*] the presence of the audience was a matter of indifference; at worst, impossible to reconcile with the essentially private act of music-making,” and argues that the concert hall is about something other than music.

For instance, the feeling at the beginning when the audiences arrive—they come from a dinner, they think about their business, the women observe the dress of other women, young girls look for good-looking young men, or vice-versa—I mean, there is a tremendous disturbance all over, and I feel it, of course.<sup>151</sup> (Rubenstein, in

---

<sup>151</sup>Rubenstein further explains that he can “have their attention” by playing one note and holding it for a minute. Gould greatly favoured the recording studio, which he felt would provide him with a far superior environment for performing music. His ideal public was one

conversation with Glenn Gould, cited in Page, 1984, p. 286)

Payzant (1978) explains Gould's rejection of this context:

This, or something close to it, is what Gould means by "aesthetic narcissism." In the noisy herd at a concert it is absent. When it is present in an individual's experience, it is the result not of one single great moment, but of a cumulative tendency to lower one's guard, to remove layers of social protectiveness and private delusion. (pp. 65-66)

Another way in which Gould perceived the audience as problematic was through the competitive spirit which it imposed on the concert situation. He argues that the reputation of the artist could become a limiting factor in the concert performance when the priority becomes not the making of music, but the surpassing of personal achievements in performance. Gould believed that in the concert "One was forced to compete with oneself" (from Glenn Gould: Bach in the electronic age, by Richard Kostelanetz, cited in McGreevy, 1983, p. 126). This involved the audience because, Gould was convinced, audiences attend concert halls mainly in the hope of witnessing a spectacular disaster of which the performer will be the victim (Payzant, 1978, p. 22). He referred to this as "Blood-lust." "At live concerts I feel demeaned, like a vaudevillian" (Gould, quoted by Alfred Bester, cited in Payzant, 1978, p. 22).

Gould also deplored the competition that arises among artists performing the same

---

attentive listener in her/his living room.

musical work,<sup>152</sup> particularly given the popular view that performance is essentially a repetitive act, whereas a recording reproduces what occurred on the concert stage. “This recorded performance would be quintessentially ‘his’ [the performer’s]. Listeners would then compare one performer’s recorded version of the piece with another’s, to see which comes closest to the paradigm” (in Payzant, 1978, p. 68). Gould opposed this because it draws the attention away from the music, toward the identity of the performer, for example to “Brendel’s Beethoven” or “Rubinstein’s Chopin.” Gould was opposed to it. As an example of this, American composer Ned Rorem, for example, argues that “It’s hard still to care whether some virtuoso tonight will perform the *Moonlight sonata* a bit better or a bit worse than another virtuoso performed it last night” (in Payzant, 1978, p. 22).

While for many artists audience interaction is an important element in the “communication” involved in music-making,<sup>153</sup> for Gould the audience proved to be a negative factor. Not only did he not derive anything positive from the audience, he felt that listeners’ need to participate in the live musical performance was somehow artificial. For example, he disagreed with the custom of applauding at concert halls, since this practice provides the audience with a false sense of active participation, and misleads performers toward personal display, thus diminishing the attention available to the performer for her/his

---

<sup>152</sup>Some listeners would identify this as a necessary element within the discipline. They would hold that the subtle nuances, the differences that one perceives, and the comparison one makes between interpretations provides interest and material for reflection. Gould did not hold this view, but believed, rather, that such competition was unnecessary and destructive.

<sup>153</sup>For performer Myra Hess, for example, a concert was “an occasion confidently and happily shared with people she regarded as friends” (Payzant, 1978, p. 23).

music (in Payzant, 1978, p. 24). Gould wonders whether the listener

stuffed into Row L at Place des Arts,<sup>154</sup> periodically nudged awake to flap his blistered palms in mandatory approval, is more participant, more engaged with musical experience than when, at home, manipulating the already sophisticated, yet still comparatively primitive playback equipment which modern technology places at his disposal. (letter, October 30, 1965, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 87)

It would appear that Gould did not need the audience to be present “live,” and further he was convinced that they, too, would be better off hearing his music without the benefit of his presence on stage.

#### 4.2.4.1. Soloist as Virtuoso: The Concerto

For Gould the specific genres and soloists of the concert performance broadened the distance between the music and the audience. There the virtuoso’s attempts to please the crowd is “set apart, the great man, the object of worshipful attention rather than the sharer in a profound human experience” (in Payzant, 1978, p. 44).

In particular Gould disliked the concerto form, the genre wherein the soloist and the orchestra engage in musical conversation. He explains:

We exaggerate the protagonist’s role in concertos. We exaggerate a sense of dualism as between orchestra and soloist, as between individual and mass, as between masculine and feminine statements, as Tovey put it. This is a great mistake. (in

---

<sup>154</sup>This refers to a concert hall located in Montreal, Quebec.

Payzant, 1978, p. 72)

What Gould found most problematic about concertos was “the competitive, comparative ambience in which the concerto operates in the concerto we have a perfect musical analogy of the competitive spirit. There the virtuoso is set apart with attention being directed away from the person who is listening” (Gould, cited in Page, 1983, p. 41).

“It would seem to me that one ought to make the listener aware of an inward-looking, rather than an outward-looking, process. Surely everything that is mixed up in virtuosity and exhibitionism on the platform is outward-looking, or causes outward-lookingness” (Gould, CBC Broadcast, July 15, 1969, cited in Payzant, 1978, p. 72).

Gould’s account of his exchange with the conductor Leopold Stokowski prior to performing the *Emperor concerto* reflects this view:

I really don’t think it ought to be a virtuoso vehicle. I did not expect Stokowski to argue against that proposition, but I was not attempting to buy his interpretive vote; rather, I wanted to indicate to him my willingness to accentuate the positive in a musical genre toward which, in general, *I have a profoundly negative attitude, and to enlist his aid in an attempt to demythologize the virtuoso traditions* [italics added] which have gathered round this particular work. (cited in Page, 1983, p. 269)

Gould seems to have attempted, if not to eliminate, at least to reduce what he perceived as competition between the soloist and the orchestra.

#### 4.2.4.2. The Instrument and the Concert Environment

As shown in the earlier discussion of authentic instruments, the instrument played by Gould was central to his ability to render the sound required for a given interpretation. Having to change instruments from one performance to the next while on concert tour represented a problem for Gould.

While Kazdin (1989) contends that Gould's humming as he performed represented the way in which Gould as a performer intended the music to be phrased, others have argued that his "involuntary bursts of song in mid-performance were unconscious attempts to compensate vocally for the structural failings of the piano he is playing" (from Joseph Roddy, Appollonian, cited in McGreevy, 1983, p. 95).

As noted earlier in this chapter, Gould's original piano was a Chickering, and it remained his preferred instrument throughout his career. For his recordings the piano was also a very important factor, and Gould made great efforts to ensure that the instrument used during his recording sessions resembled as closely as possible his Chickering, which he had been familiar with since boyhood. This was a factor in the choosing, adjusting, and even shipping pianos to the appropriate cities for recording.

Finally, the external factors which can affect a performer are multiple: teachers, the public's response, the ideas and attitudes of the performers he hears, as well as the approval and disapproval of audiences and critics. In addition to the instrument and the concert hall itself, the pianist's health, disposition, even the weather, can "raise him up or smash him down, and he is all but helpless in the face of them" (Payzant, 1978, p. 53). These were all

factors contributing to Gould's preferring the controlled, easily manipulated environment of the recording studio.

#### 4.2.5. The Advantages of Technology

In 1964 Gould left the concert stage in order to realize ambitions established much earlier: composing, writing, and experimenting with applications of technology to music making.

He frankly sees no justification for playing compromised performances before mere thousands of people when records extend his best rendition into millions of living rooms. Moreover, the act of putting a certain piece on record "frees you to go on to something else." (McGreevy, 1983, p.126)

His preference for the recording studio preparing either recordings, or material for radio or television, was evident throughout his concert-giving period. He explained as early as 1961 that:

[F]or me, the microphone is a friend, not an enemy and the lack of an audience—the total anonymity of the studio—provides the greatest incentive to satisfy my own demands upon myself without consideration for, or qualification by, the intellectual appetite, or lack of it, on the part of the audience. (letter, February 15, 1961, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 43)

This passage confirms not only his lack of desire for a direct audience, but also his independence from any "consideration for or qualification by" that public. This, coupled with

his belief in the possibilities afforded by the recording studio, shows Gould's decision to turn to the studio to be a congruous one.

Gould's early and sudden success had propelled him quickly into what can be viewed as the "unacceptable" concert performance circuit. As such, he recognized early on that touring, flying, and "the extramusical hysteria that accompanied him wherever he went" (Page, 1983, p. xiii)—in short the whole business of being a concert artist—had got in the way of his commitment to making music. According to Gould, technology was able to reduce or eliminate the negative aspects of live performing.

#### 4.2.5.1. "Afterthought" in the Recording Process

Gould felt that "music is much more cogently and creatively served by the recording studio or via any medium which permits one the luxury of second-guessing, so to speak, the interpretive decision" (letter, September 12, 1972, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 180). He argues that "the real virtue of the recording process is not in its inherent perfectionism but in the after-thought control by which one can operate upon the raw material of performance" (letter, April 24, 1967, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 101). For Gould, the ideal world would be one where performance provided merely the raw material, and "the process of assembling or reconstructing the work occupied the major portion of the performer's activity" (Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 101).

Andrew Kazdin, Gould's record producer for fifteen years, gained first-hand knowledge of the process which Gould experienced in the recording studio, His account of



Gould's recording process corresponds to the above comments by Gould.<sup>155</sup> He explains that the process consisted of three steps: first, the technicians would record a complete take of the movement (or, in the case of longer works, a large section of the piece); then, Gould and the producer would listen to it and note any imperfections such as finger slips and/or musical imbalances. Finally, Gould would return to the piano and record small inserts that would fix the errors. According to Kazdin (1989), the quest for the "perfect" basic take could lead to as little as one playing, or as many as a dozen. On some occasions, more reflection was necessary. Kazdin observes that:

Generally speaking, with Bach works, the basic take would be recorded very quickly, for it seemed that Gould had a more stable notion of exactly how a Bach piece was going to go before he even started to play. Mozart sonatas and Beethoven slow movements apparently possessed an elusive quality (at least as far as the interpretation Gould desired was concerned) that sometimes led to copious run through surmounted by the ever-present threat that none of them would qualify at all. (Kazdin, 1989, p. 20)

Kazdin notes, however, that with the works of Bach, whose notated scores provide little direction in terms of expression, Gould very quickly achieved the results he sought, whereas

---

<sup>155</sup>Gould ended his working relationship with producer Andrew Kazdin quite suddenly, after fifteen years of collaboration. According to Kazdin, the reasons for this decision were never provided. Kazdin's book, *Glenn Gould at work: Creative lying* (1989) is a bitter account, which describes Kazdin's version of their working relationship. While the book is subjective and emotional, Kazdin's description of the working process undergone in the studio corresponds with accounts by Gould, and by others familiar with the process. Despite the shortcomings of Kazdin's account, his description of the recording and splicing process has informed this point.

his attempts to finalize interpretations of the works of other composers often took significantly longer.

#### 4.2.5.2. Consistency of Process in Performing and Recording

Gould's views of the concert stage and technology are consistent with the autonomy and independence he had demonstrated vis-à-vis the performer-composer relationship discussed earlier. Gould expresses a preference for

those sessions to which one can bring an almost dangerous degree of improvisatory, open-mindedness—that is to say, sessions in relation to which one has no absolute, a priori, interpretive commitment and in which the process of recording will make itself felt in regard to the concept which evolves (letter, June 17, 1972, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 178).

This did not mean, as Gould pointed out, that the work could be approached in a state of unpreparedness, but rather that, since he did not view the recording as a documentary replica of the concert-hall experience, no matter how planned or unplanned a particular interpretation may be, it was important to take full advantage of the peculiar opportunities the process itself affords. (letter, June 17, 1972, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 178)

In conclusion, technology provided the ideal environment in which Gould could implement his own approach to music-making. It afforded him the opportunity to avoid what he referred to as the “take one-or-bust philosophy”; the belief of artists who feel somehow that there is something dishonest in a multi-take or multi-insert approach to the creation of

a musical structure. He argued:

[I]t is precisely through the unabashed exploitation of those assets which make recording something more than a photographic process by which to capture concert-performance virtues and liabilities that the process itself can come into its own and make an original contribution to musical tradition. (in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 178)

This confirms the point raised earlier, that a performer's views as to the best way to perform a particular work or style of works often evolves over time. Moreover, it structures the music-making process so that there can be much more latitude in terms of the construction, through technology, of a single performed work. No longer must the performance unfold through time, exactly as it will be perceived by Cone's listener of a "time art."

#### 4.2.5.3. The "Fragment" in Gould's Recording Process: Recalling Edward T. Cone

Recall that for Cone the reading of a spatial work of art (such as a picture or a poem) takes place by considering it "from side to side, up and down, diagonally and spirally, taking our time and clarifying for our own satisfaction first one and then another connection" (Cone, 1968, p. 33). Cone argued that this kind of "multiple performance" differed greatly from a piece of music, which necessitates the choosing of "one single complete performance," where the performer "must choose the path they will follow through the work, seeking to

illuminate inner relationships and meanings” (p. 33). As Cone rightly observed, the more complex the composition, the more relationships its performance must be prepared to explain, and “the less it is likely that a single performance can ever cover all possible readings.”

Adopting Cone’s term, the recording process allowed Gould to “conflate” to a certain extent the time arts and the space arts by recording multiple performances of a given musical work or section of a work, selecting fragments and splicing them together to finalize the recording according to his aesthetic judgement. Once Gould recorded a work, he rarely revisited it,<sup>156</sup> seemingly since what interested him was the possibility of a fresh approach.

The recording studio released Gould from the drawbacks of the concert-hall. He argued that not only does technology render virtually obsolete all competition, including the pressure upon performers to “live up to past performances, both stylistically and qualitatively,” but the uncontrollable factors such as inadequate concert halls and unsatisfactory instruments are also lessened or eliminated with the increasing integration of technology in the music-making process:

Technology has the capability to create a climate of anonymity and to allow the artist the time and the freedom to prepare his conception of a work to the best of his ability.

It has the capability of replacing those awful and degrading and humanly damaging uncertainties which the concert brings with it. (Gould, cited in Page, 1983, p. xiii)<sup>157</sup>

---

<sup>156</sup>Only on two occasions did Gould record material that he had been previously recorded (Kazdin, 1989).

<sup>157</sup>Payzant describes such perceived drawbacks as follows: “A tremendous conservatism takes over the concert performer—he’s afraid to try out the Beethoven Fourth,

In the recording studio the performer as spectacle is eliminated: as the artist is removed from the position of “virtuoso,” “performer,” or “vaudevillian,” and the process of artistic creation is redistributed among composer, performer and listener.

#### 4.3. Gould and Counterpoint

##### 4.3.1. Introduction

Thus far, in the attempt to trace the reasoning behind certain aspects of Gould’s career as a performer, a number of points have been established. First, Gould views the performer as an autonomous artist, to a certain extent a partner of the composer as co-creator of the musical work. While he recognizes the need to respect the composer’s indications as notated, he views the performer as responsible primarily to her/his own judgement and criteria.

Second, in terms of authenticity, Gould shares the views of those such as Neumann (1982; 1989) and Taruskin (1995) in arguing against viewing the contemporary performer as one who is able or obliged to render a performance which sounds exactly as it would have at the time of its composition. Gould recognizes that his understanding and creative interpretation of earlier music necessarily reflects intervening historical development. His concern for structure and clarity of contrapuntal line, rejection of a rigid authenticist stance in terms of performance instruments, awareness of the effect of an instrument on a

---

if the Beethoven Third happens to have been his speciality” (1978, p. 26).

performance, his early rejection of the concert hall as a performance venue, and recognition of the advantages afforded by the multi-take approach of the recording studio, all are consistent with his view of the performer as recreator, and informed his decision to cease giving live performances.

The aspects listed above were instrumental in assuring Gould's capacity to interpret musical works according to his aesthetic views, and reflect his awareness of the vital role played by the expressive qualities of a musical work.

#### 4.3.2. The Presence of Polyphony Across Gould's Work

As established earlier, it is for his performance of Bach that Gould is most highly recognized. Bach's contrapuntal music, in which a theme or subject weaves the musical work, entering first in one voice, then in another, inverted, extended, modified, and so on, derives directly from the germinal voice of one or several themes. Gould's predilection for the music of Bach derived from his interest in the relationship between single voices, as well as between the singular voice and the multiple.

According to Angilette (1992) "Contrapuntal music interested Gould because, in his own words, it is music with an explosion of simultaneous ideas. It is music where the quality of ideas are implied (1992, p. 111).

Gould explains his interest in contrapuntal music:

... in that [Baroque] music, the intellectual aspiration of the composers (Bach being the obvious example) and the tactile considerations demanded for the realization of

their works are, if not one and the same, *at least intimately linked* [italics added].

(letter, April 17, 1970, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 123)

He describes the strand-by-strand dissection of a Bach fugue as not only rewarding for its tactile efficacy, but also indicative of the true nature of that music as a multi-linear experience.

In one studio experiment, Gould made a recording of Bach's fugues one voice at a time, playing them back through a quadraphonic sound-system from four corners of the room. This process, according to Gould, affords "conclusive proof of the appropriateness of the one-voice-at-a-time approach to Bach," a practice through which the performer reconstructs the composing process as a means to better perceive and understand the music as an entity. According to Gould, the actual compositional style itself, with its characteristic interweaving of voices, represents the "intellectual aspirations" of the composer.

#### 4.3.3. A Concern for Structure in Gould's Interpretation of Nineteenth Century Works

Gould's concern with structure led him to invest works from later eras with a concern for the relationship of part to whole rather than for an exploration of thematic evolution. One example of this is Gould's contentious interpretation of Brahms' *Concerto no. 1 in D minor, op. 15*, performed on April 6, 1962 with the New York Philharmonic. Prior to that performance, conductor Leonard Bernstein addressed the audience, dissociating himself from Gould's very slow tempi of the first and last movements, resulting in a New York music

scandal involving audience and critics alike. Gould's own account of this incident, however, reveals much about the types of underlying structural concerns which informed his overall view of music.

Gould argued that what had scandalized the audience was not the slowness itself, but rather the proportions that were held throughout these two movements. He explained:

I have been gradually evolving a view of the nineteenth-century in the last couple of years with the eyes of someone who looked back having also known [Arnold] Schoenberg—this is to say that I have begun to find I think [*sic*] a way of playing the middle and late nineteenth century repertoire in which the predominant characteristic will be the presence of organic unity and not the continual acknowledgement of the sort of coalition of inequalities which it seems to me, underlies most interpretations of nineteenth century music. (letter, April 18, 1962, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 57)

Clearly, shifting the tempo not only challenged audience expectations, but also resulted in a renewed reading of the work in terms of structure.

Gould argued that the tempo modification was not an arbitrary choice, but rather a deliberate reduction of “the masculine and feminine contrast of theme-areas in favour of revealing the correspondences of structural material between thematic blocks.” Tempo was used to do this since, as an expressive tool, tempo was capable of applying, with equal validity, to all of the primary thematic functions of a movement. (Gould pointed out that this was the case “unless otherwise indicated in the score, of course.”) He argues that what was most different and disturbing about that performance was not the basic determination of the



tempo itself, but rather the fact that “these proportions were held in some kind of minimally fluctuating line” (letter, April 18, 1962, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 57)

Two points are of interest here. The first is the clear demonstration in this passage of the indeterminacy of performance of the musical work, in terms of its notation. Gould’s qualifier, “unless otherwise indicated in the score, of course,” shows that his performance, in Goodmanian terms, did not aim to disregard those aspects of the score that are notational. The contentious aspects of his interpretation derive from qualities of an expressive nature, for example from verbal tempo indicators that were not notational. As such, Gould did not necessarily counter the composer’s indications, but rather shaped his performance by highlighting certain structural aspects in his performance, in accordance with his aesthetic views.

The second point of interest is the fact that Gould’s description shows him, once again, to demonstrate the kind of twentieth century listening referred to by Kivy (1993), Neumann (1982, 1989), Subotnik (1991) and Taruskin (1995). Recall that they argued against the possibility of actually hearing music of the past as it would have been heard at the time of its composition. Gould’s account demonstrates how a performer’s perception of the structure of a musical work such as a Brahms concerto is influenced or impacted upon by having heard works composed in the intervening years since the earlier work’s composition. The experience of having listened to, analyzed, and performed the work of Arnold Schoenberg, for example, informed the way in which Gould perceived the overall structure and line of the Brahms concerto. His rethinking and subsequent interpretation, as supported by his own account of his performance, can be understood as his attempt to escape

from the “seeming state of bondage” (Subotnik, 1991) which can be engendered by an overzealous commitment to respecting the wishes of the composer. In fact, as Sessions (1979) pointed out in Chapter One, composers are very often not the most reliable authorities as to the best interpretations of their works. As Gould’s example shows, this is particularly the case since they have no way of knowing how works composed after their death will provide insights to future performers as to how to enrich performances of their compositions in the future.

#### 4.3.4. Gould’s Radio Documentaries as Music

Gould’s interest in polyphony was not limited to performances of Bach. In the decade following his decision to leave the concert stage, he was increasingly interested in exploring the possibilities of recording and manipulating the spoken word.<sup>158</sup> He argued that:

[T]here are a great many things that we should think about as vehicles for recording which might run the risk of being only of interest to those who deliberately seek out arcane experiences but which, on the other hand, might just reflect a maturing of the record-making process as well.... I really would like to feel that we could regard our

---

<sup>158</sup>Gould’s radio documentaries evolved in sophistication and complexity as the technology to accommodate them evolved. Simon Penny (1995) has argued that, in terms of their ideas and projects, artists are ahead of the technology available to them. In other words, they must make do with what is available and, very often, their needs actually fuel technological developments. This would seem to have been the case with Gould. It is interesting to speculate what kind of work he would do today, given that fast-paced technological progress has virtually transformed the possibilities available to musicians and artists in all areas.

repertoire activities, no matter how conscientiously outlined and prepared, as only one portion—albeit a very important one—of our total record-making activity. (letter, November 21, 1970, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, pp. 131-132)

Gould refers here to the radio documentaries that, by 1970, he was already involved in producing

contrapuntal manifestations in all forms have always held a particular fascination for me.... I have produced a series of radio documentaries—the majority of which have nothing at all, in terms of subject matter, to do [with] that music—in which the multi-voice aspects of baroque and pre-baroque polyphony are applied to the human voice rather than to musical instruments. (letter, November 12, 1972, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 183)

Gould considered such recording to be a form of music: compositions which wove the human voice into a complex contrapuntal soundscape. He justified using the term “contrapuntal” in these works since, he argued,

counterpoint is not a dry academic exercise in motivic permutation but rather a method of composition in which, if all goes well, each individual voice lives a life of its own. (letter, August 3, 1979, Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 150)

Gould produced a total of nine radio documentaries, three of which comprise the thematically-linked *Solitude trilogy*. These are: *The idea of north*; *The latecomers*; and *Quiet in the land*, all of which were produced in the late 1960s and early '70s. These documentaries progressively explored the technological and expressive possibilities afforded by the medium. Although Gould viewed the documentaries as music, he considered them to be an

exercise in the techniques of radio, which seemed to him “strikingly obvious and shockingly neglected” (letter, June 22, 1968, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 106). He approached this by developing a “seemingly specific theme,” exploring it by recording voices, and then splicing them into a monaural or stereo contrapuntal sound work.<sup>159</sup> As will be shown, the single voice (borrowing a term from counterpoint) is both literally and figuratively germinal to *The solitude trilogy*.

For Gould the first part of the trilogy, *The idea of north* (1967), was a metaphor, an excuse,

an opportunity to examine that condition of solitude which is neither exclusive to the North nor the prerogative of those who go North but which appears a bit more clearly to those who have made, if only in their imagination, the journey North. (Gould cited by William Littler in McGreevy, 1983, p. 217)

Gould wrote that his aim in making this radio documentary was “to examine the effects of solitude and isolation upon those who have lived in the Arctic or Sub-Arctic” by “counterpointing several such experiences of the North” (letter, September 1, 1967, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 105).

To make *The idea of north*, Gould journeyed by train to Port Churchill, Manitoba—at that time the most northern point to which it was possible to take a train from southern Canada—and interviewed various people, including a sociologist, a nurse, and a government official. By layering and intersplicing the various voices, he created the impression of a

---

<sup>159</sup>In his essay “Radio as music” Gould elaborated the argument that words can be organized to form music. This article adopted, in text form, certain expressive devices which characterized his radio documentary works.

dialogue among the individuals (Canning, 1992, p. xx). To accomplish this, he recorded single voices: in the final edited documentary, “Two, three, four characters spoke simultaneously in different sound perspectives and emerged, considering that this wasn’t stereo, with remarkable clarity” (letter, June 22, 1968, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 107).<sup>160</sup> Gould describes the technique as one which involves “two or three conversations counterpointed in such a way as to minimise the static quality inherent in most interview-derived documentaries,” which Gould felt approached the qualities of drama (letter, January 13, 1969, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 113).

The second part of the trilogy, *The latecomers* (1969), was Gould’s first stereo radio programme. Due to its integration of fourteen characters, it “afforded virtually unlimited opportunities for vocal counterpoint.” *The latecomers* was an examination of outport life in Newfoundland, again addressing the theme of solitude. This work considered the isolation of Newfoundland,

the province-as-island, the sea which keeps the mainland and the mainlanders at ferry crossing’s length, and with the problems of maintaining a minimally technologized style of life in a maximally technologized age (Littler, in McGreevy, 1983, p. 221).

The piece is composed with the voices of thirteen characters, woven in counterpoint, and coloured with the textures of ambient sounds from the place.

For the third and final part of the trilogy, *The quiet in the land* (1973), Gould

---

<sup>160</sup>In the same letter, Gould expresses interest in pursuing the same technique in television. “[I]t seems to me that it should be possible to use television as fragmentarily as that, and to offer, for example, a quorum of opinion, even from the comment of one person. It would mean, in addition to the above-mentioned considerations, the right sort of topic, obviously—a multi-faceted, interpretive concept of one work, for instance....”

originally chose to work with the Mennonite, Hutterite, and Doukhobour cultures of Western Canada. The three groups interested him because, as he explained, each demonstrates a different approach to the theme of community-in-isolation which served as underpinning for both *The idea of north* and *The latecomers*. In the end, practical considerations led him to limit his recording to the Mennonite community of Red River, Manitoba. *The quiet in the land* investigates the solitude faced by yet a third group of people in isolation, this time through their life in a religious community, one that had since its inception been detached from the mainstream of Canadian life (Littler, in McGreevy, 1983, p. 221).

Of particular note is that Gould's interest in these three groups, thematically, is compatible with his interest in counterpoint. There, a single "voice" is joined by others to create a coherent unit. Each voice maintains its autonomy, at times inaudible to the untrained ear, yet as it dialogues with other voices a more complex entity is formed. In the *Trilogy*, a contrapuntal style is not only adopted at a compositionally, but also at a thematic level in terms of the relationship between the individual and the collective.

Consideration of these works initially raises the question of whether it is possible to view Gould, or whether he viewed himself, as a composer. As early as 1959, he described the importance which he accorded composition:

It is, unfortunately, true that in my own case I have in the past few years been seriously hampered in concentrating very much time on composition, which is the field in which eventually I feel I must devote my energy (letter, July 8, 1958, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 14)

After leaving the concert stage, Gould often stated that the main reason for his retirement was

to gain time to compose his own music. "I obviously wanted to be a composer. I still do" (in Friedrich, 1989, p. 158).

Despite Gould's frequent references to his work as a composer, and despite the fact that he initiated many compositions, very few of his compositions were ever completed. Only one work was finished and published: *String quartet, op. 1* received its world premiere in Montreal, Quebec, on May 26, 1956, performed by the Montreal Quartet (Hymen Bress, Mildred Goodman, Otto Joachim and Walter Joachim). A recording of Gould's composition performed by that ensemble was released later that year.<sup>161</sup> Prior to that, in 1950, he had written *Sonata for bassoon and piano*, although he was not satisfied with this work and it was destroyed after its premiere performance. Another sonata exists only in the form of a pencilled manuscript entitled *5 short piano pieces*, dated 1951-52. Most would agree that it is as a performer and not as a composer that Gould is recognized today. The limited volume of music composed by Gould may suggest that, in conventional terms, Gould did not meet his aim of becoming a composer.

It could be argued, however, that Gould's goal of composing *was* achieved in an alternative manner, through the documentaries.<sup>162</sup> Evidence in Gould's correspondence can

---

<sup>161</sup>According to Gould, the quartet was begun in 1953 (letter, May 23, 1972, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 176).

<sup>162</sup>John P.L. Roberts, colleague and friend of Gould's for over twenty years, argues that Gould viewed his documentaries as a form of music. He writes in the introduction to his edited (with Ghyslaine Guertin, 1992) collection of Gould's letters: "Some might argue that achieving organic unity at the expense of presenting some striking revelation or new point of view can be construed as a weakness in his approach to documentary making. Nevertheless, it must be understood that *Gould thought of his documentaries as a form of music*, [italics added] and any evaluation of them needs to take Gould's aesthetic into consideration" (p. xiii).

be seen to support the view that the documentaries extend the compositional practices which began with his early, more traditional compositions of the 1950s. For example, in response to an enquiry about Canadian chamber music, Gould directly links his only published composition to his documentary works. He explained that the quartet demonstrates “certain essential attitudes which I have, I think, brought to bear in more recent years on another medium altogether.” He then suggested that he send the individual a copy of the original sound-track albums of his two documentaries *The idea of north* and *The latecomers*, together with a copy of his article, “Radio as Music,” suggesting that Gould viewed the quartet as a precursor to the documentary radio compositions that followed a decade later.

Gould initially argues that the documentaries may seem to have little in common with the quartet, particularly since the quartet is intended for four string players in a concert hall, whereas the documentaries involved a cast of five and thirteen respectively. He notes, moreover, that the radio documentaries are not designed as a public spectacle but do in fact exploit electronic resources to the utmost (letter, May 23, 1972, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 176).

Gould does provide a framework through which it is possible to see the link between the quartet and his later documentary works. He contends that his quartet, which appeared to revisit the harmonic world of Strauss and Mahler, did in fact re-examine them “in the light of the cellular concerns of the second Viennese School” (1992, p. 176). In summary, he writes:

... there is a true fraternal link, both in subject matter and technique, between the vocal polyphony of “The idea of north” and “The latecomers,” and the chromatically



concentrated counterpoint in the quartet. (letter, May 23, 1972, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, pp. 176-177)

His term “fraternal link” suggests that Gould viewed the quartet and the documentaries as sharing a comparable status.

A final point may be brought to bear in establishing that the documentaries be considered musical compositions: there is a distinct parallel between the process which Gould utilized in the studio during the recording of piano repertoire and that which he adopted in the “composition”—production of his documentaries. In the former, he would

take a row of elementary notes and then force them through as many changes as possible, changes that would come from splicing bits of tape together to make new wholes, from displacing sequences ..., from using different pianos for different sections of the same music. (E. Said, in McGreevy, 1983, p. 53)

The process of constructing the radio documentaries followed the same basic procedure—the production and manipulation of fragments—to construct the whole.

#### 4.3.5. *The Solitude Trilogy* as Contrapuntal Composition

Even in the preparatory stages of his documentary works, Gould demonstrated a clear understanding of the process itself. He anticipated it as a non-“musical” program, “except to the extent that, in my view, the treatment of the human voice as an element of texture should, indeed, always be approached in a musical way” (letter, April 15, 1971, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 139).

Gould considered his contrapuntal radio documentaries to be “very unlike the ‘linear’ (using the word in the McLuhanesque sense now) documentaries with which radio has traditionally been concerned.” He explained that if, for example, a dozen people were interviewed during the course of a project, it was obviously not possible to “attempt a dozen sound-portraits within the structure afforded by that programme.” For this reason, he argued that he made

no attempt to identify individual speakers but every attempt to guarantee the fidelity of each piece of testimony in relation, not only to its contextual service within the documentary, but also the original transcript from which it was evolved. (letter, August 3, 1971, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 150)

This process can be likened to the composition of a manifestly contrapuntal musical work, such as a fugue. In both cases a series of individual “voices” are woven together, and only a well-trained ear is capable of differentiating the single strands. As such, the venue through which Gould explored the theme of solitude, or isolation, was through the juxtaposing, blending, separating, and reconnecting of singular voices. The end result, paradoxically, was a radio-composition-documentary clearly modelled on principles of Baroque composition: a contrapuntal sound deriving its form from the singularity of one voice, in isolation, so to speak, placed together with others in the construction of a multiplicity of voices, metaphorically “in community.” Nonetheless, if one were to separate them, either through electronic means (in the case of Gould’s recording) or by textual analysis, it would be seen that the voices have remained intact.

At this point, a very interesting question emerges: Is it possible to argue that there

exists a distinct relationship between the interest by Gould the performer in the music of Bach, and the compositional style adopted by Gould the composer? Gould's correspondence will provide some indication as to his perception of the relationship between his performance and composition. If his performance and composition can be shown to be related, it will be important to consider what that link is. This will entail an analysis in terms of Goodman's account of style and the role played by expression therein.

Gould refers to the commonalities between his approach to music performance, and his approach, both thematically and technically, to *The idea of north*. Gould describes the outcome in "specifically 'Baroque' musical terms" as a trio-sonata. He writes:

perhaps the sense of linear independence, of simultaneous motivic impressions, has played a particularly important role in my life and in my relationship to music and that, just as in a fugue where the solidity of the structure contrasts ... with the improvisatory nature of the interrelationship between the voices—i.e.[,] with the way in which, without damaging or compromising the structure one can illuminate, draw from context, so to speak, individual strands and thereby emphasize that peculiar dichotomy mentioned above—that the possibility for linear invention in the recreation of a work is unquestionably one of the aspects of late [B]aroque literature which particularly fascinates me. (letter, November 12, 1972, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 184).

This is an important passage, since it synthesizes those critical themes which have been identified as Gould's consistent interest in polyphony. First, it confirms the concept of linear independence as constant in Gould's overall approach to music, both in terms of his

interest in Bach, and his “structural” approach to music by composers such as Mozart, Brahms, and Wagner discussed earlier in this chapter. Second, it provides a concise link, in Gould’s own words, between the performance of Baroque music, and his own compositional approach to the radio documentary. His interest in contrapuntal music, his structural analyses of non-contrapuntal works, and his compositional approach to radio documentary, derive from the necessary “possibility for linear invention in the recreation of a work” (letter, November 12, 1972, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 184).

#### 4.4. Goodman’s Account of Expression and Style as Applied to the Performance and Composition of Glenn Gould

##### 4.4.1. Gould and Metaphorical Exemplification

Goodman’s account of expression and style discussed in Chapter Three will provide a framework for considering how and what Gould’s work expresses, and for determining the extent to which expression can be seen to contribute to the development of a particular style in his work. It will first be necessary to consider what in Gould’s work is being expressed: in Goodman’s terms, what is metaphorically exemplified. Following that, it will be possible to relate expression and style, and to draw conclusions about Gould’s performance and composition based on this.

Recall that, according to Goodman, “exemplification is possession plus reference. To have without symbolizing is merely to possess, while to symbolize without having is to refer in some other way than by exemplifying” (1976, p. 53). In his original example, Goodman

reasoned, a tailor's swatch exemplifies only properties that it has and refers to. What, then, is exemplified in Gould's work? Recall the emphasis throughout this chapter on polyphony. In Gould's work, both in the predominance of manifestly contrapuntal works that he performed and recorded, and the way in which he performed them, as well as the similar approach to his own compositions, Gould emphasized a contrapuntal soundscape. As discussed, the predominant characteristic of counterpoint is the relationship between single musical lines. As one or several themes are presented, the music evolved through variations on the theme(s), both in relation to the original, and to subsequent instances or versions of it or its variations. The more complex the contrapuntal work, the more numerous the themes, and the more intricate the modifications and subsequent relationships become.

What, then, is being exemplified? If, according to Goodman, "What a symbol exemplifies must apply to it" (1976, p. 55), what applies to this symbol? First, it could be the case that each line both possesses and refers to autonomy and independence. As Gould demonstrated in his experimental recording of a Bach work, the single lines can be recorded individually, and mixed afterward in the recording studio to form the contrapuntal work. That experiment showed how each line carries out its own work, moves through time, and undergoes modulation and variation as an autonomous entity. Does counterpoint exemplify autonomy, then?

This cannot be the full picture, since the single musical entities in counterpoint are not merely independent and autonomous. If this were so, this would be a case of a series of individual musical lines. Recall, however, that in Gould's recording experiment the voices are brought together when the recorded tracks are mixed. In an actual performance of

contrapuntal music, which unfolds through real time, the lines interweave, in relationship to each other and to earlier versions of their own present form.

What can be said is that manifestly contrapuntal music exemplifies the coexistence of autonomy and independence, as this is manifest in a complex plural form, in co-operation. Is it possible for there to be exemplification of autonomy, of independence, of co-operation? Recall that, according to Goodman, exemplification obtains between sample and label, as in between the sample and each concrete inscription of a predicate. A label, regardless of whether it has plural or singular or no denotation, may itself be denoted. In fact, Goodman argued that “While anything may be denoted, only labels may be exemplified” (1976, p. 57). In that case, polyphonic music can be seen to exemplify the labels autonomy, independence, co-operation. The music refers to and is denoted by these labels.

Merely showing that exemplification exists, however, is insufficient: this example is musical, and the exemplification takes place at a symbolic level through metaphor. In effect, the exemplification in this case demonstrates what Goodman called a “frozen metaphor.” In a contrapuntal work—a fugue, for example—common usage has established that the individual musical lines be referred to as “voices.” Moreover, it can be said that the themes or voices carry out a musical “dialogue.” As Goodman pointed out, a frozen metaphor has “lost the vigour of youth, but remains a metaphor” (1976, p. 68). He argued that a metaphor becomes more like literal truth through “progressive loss of its virility as a figure of speech,” becoming more literal as their novelty fades. As such, the voice metaphor is operative despite its fatigue. Metaphorical exemplification, in this case, would amount to the *voices* of the music exemplifying metaphorically the intermittently interchangeable autonomy

and dialogical nature of conversation. The voices do not literally possess these qualities, but, rather, do so metaphorically since, although the metaphorical application of a predicate to an object is different from a literal application, it nonetheless applies.

Recall Goodman's observation that a label does not function in isolation, but is categorized through the use of sets of alternatives: Applications are relative to a set of labels. For example, what counts as a voice, autonomous and situated in dialogue, depends upon whether it is contrasted with plainsong, or with Cage's *Roaratorio*. It is custom and context, according to Goodman, that indicates the admitted alternatives.

According to Goodman, the "realm" or the totality of the ranges of extension of the labels in a schema or set of labels consists of the objects sorted by the schema, those objects denoted by at least one of the available labels. As such, the range of "autonomy in dialogue" comprises all things that are at once autonomous and in dialogue, whereas the realm may comprise all methods of speaking. Recall that for Goodman, since the realm depends upon the schema within which a label functions, and since a label may belong to one of many possible schemata, even a label with a unique range rarely operates in a unique realm (1976, p. 72). Metaphor typically involves a change in both range and of realm: a given label, together with others constituting a schema, is separate from the home realm of that schema, and "is applied for the sorting and organizing of an alien realm." In the present example, the realm shifts from the home realm, namely all methods of speaking, to the "alien" realm of music.

Interestingly, it is in part through its "reorientation of a whole network of labels" (1976, p. 72) from a native to a foreign realm that the metaphor provides indications as to

its own development, as, for example, when a poem is said to be touching. Goodman termed this a “migration of conception, an alienation of categories” (1976, p. 72). It is not the classes or attributes that are moved from one realm to another, but a set of terms, of alternative labels: the way in which they organize in the alien realm is guided by their habitual use in the home realm.

Because the exemplification is metaphorical, however, the way in which the musical voices “are autonomous” or “are independent” or “are co-operative” is different from the way in which they “are in the key of C major,” just as the way in which a painting “is sad” is different from the way in which it “is grey.” Because only sentient beings can possess autonomy or independence, or indeed can “co-operate,” these characteristics are figuratively possessed, exhibited, shown forth. In other words, a referential relationship is established through the singling out of specific properties for attention, of “selecting associations with certain other objects.” Recall Goodman’s assertion that “whereas almost anything can denote or even represent almost anything else, a thing can express only what belongs but did not originally belong to it” (1976, p. 89). Goodman pointed out that, for example, music can exemplify rhythmic patterns and express peace or pomp or passion. In the example considered here, the music expresses certain ways of being—such as autonomy, independence, and co-operation—which cannot otherwise belong to it. As Goodman observed, it is habit which distinguishes between expression and literal exemplification.



#### 4.4.2. Expression as an Element of Style

According to Goodman, expression is one of the factors in determining the style of a given work. Styles of saying, for example in painting or composing or performing, can be compared and contrasted regardless of the subject, and even whether or not any subject exists, and “only certain characteristic differences in what is said constitute differences in style” (1978, p. 27). Goodman also argued against the notion that style is defined by what is expressed. This, he argues, is inadequate in that it not only overlooks structural features that are neither feelings nor expressed, but also features that though not feelings are expressed (1978, p. 28). Notwithstanding, he argued that expressing is at least as important a function of many works as is saying: “What a work expresses is often a major ingredient of its style” (1978, p. 29).

For Goodman, since differences in what is expressed may count as differences in style of saying, it is also the case that differences in what is said may count as differences in style of expressing. This provides an interesting framework through which to consider Gould’s work. In an earlier example, Goodman spoke of the writer who describes outdoor activities through gloominess, using the emphasis on rainy weather as a way to express gloom. In Gould’s performances and his compositions, the metaphorical possessing of properties, the expressing of autonomy and co-operation contribute to the manifestly contrapuntal style of the work.

Goodman also argued that “properties possessed by a text are different from and are not enclosed within it, but relate it to other texts sharing these properties” (1978, p. 30). In

Gould's case, the music's metaphorical (and not literal) possession of certain characteristics normally possessed by sentient beings serves to relate the music to other ways of being that share those properties, for example social contexts involving dialogue among voices.

For Goodman, even when a work is determined to be in a given style, only certain aspects of the work's subject, form, and feeling are elements of that style (1978, p. 34). He maintained that in order for certain properties to count as determinant in a work's style, these must be properties of the functioning of the work as a symbol; any and only aspects of symbolic functioning of a work may contribute to a style. He defined style, then, as

those features of the symbolic functioning of a work that are characteristic of author, period, place, or school.... According to this definition, style is not exclusively a matter of how as contrasted with what, does not depend either upon synonymous alternatives or upon conscious choice among alternatives, and comprises only but not all aspects of how and what a work symbolizes. (1978, p. 35)

According to Goodman, a property of a work, whether this takes the form of a statement made, structure displayed, or feeling conveyed, is said to be stylistic only if it associates a work with a particular artist, period, region, school, etc. In Gould's composition *The idea of north*, for example, the way in which individual voices enter into dialogue in fragments or whole phrases can be seen to be an element of contrapuntal style, whereas the fact that the fragments are of human voices as opposed to instrumental, or that the work is part of a trilogy, or that it addresses the theme of solitude, are not aspects of its contrapuntal style. What counts as stylistic here is the way in which the voices are directed or manipulated, since those aspects serve to associate the work with a manifestly contrapuntal

style, that of the Baroque or pre-Baroque periods, as in the style of the music of German composer J.S. Bach.

#### 4.4.3. Gould and “Worldmaking”

Goodman’s notion of worldmaking as discussed by Jens Kulenkampff in Chapter Three may shed light on Gould’s performance and composition, and so will be briefly discussed here. Kulenkampff noted that there is expression wherever there is metaphorical exemplification, with no restrictions as to what may be exemplified. He pointed out that differences in expressiveness are differences in what is expressed, and he reasoned that to characterize music as expressive or as expressionless is not to say whether or not it is expression, but is, rather, to signify what is expressed. Because of this, Kulenkampff argued, the vast possibility of musical works provides the potential for a limitless potential of worlds of expression and versions of these worlds (Kulenkampff, 1981, p. 256).

Kulenkampff also observed that the list of actions performed by someone “making a world” is the same list as that describing what a composer does: composition and decomposition, weighting and ordering, deletion and supplementation, and deformation. This led Kulenkampff to apply Goodman’s term “world” to musical works. He disagreed, though, with Goodman’s limiting of worlds to those structured by symbol systems, arguing that a world is made, and in that same stroke the ways of its understanding are provided. Because worlds cannot be hermetically-sealed, he argued, one can only call a world those objects whose structure depends upon or at least relates to a way of symbolization. Kulenkampff

considered how, then, musical works can be viewed as symbols, and concluded that comprehending the symbolic function of musical works means considering them as instances of exemplification. This is complex in that the samples of features symbolized can neither be known in advance nor known independently of the works themselves (Kulenkampff, 1981, p. 257). This led Kulenkampff to view the composer as true creator; making a world, he cautioned, means nothing more than just producing a sample of it. Conversely, the samples are what reveal the world to the artist or the critic. A work of art provides the challenge of exploring that world which it makes known by being a sample of it. According to Kulenkampff, this is done by the viewer, listener or critic when she/he determines what the work exemplifies. As he observed, the artist, on the other hand, has to try to produce other fitting examples, in order that her/his entire body of work can be designated as creating her/his world (p. 257). Music is a way of worldmaking, insofar as it is the way by which we explore the world of what may be listened to. Musical compositions are “instances of the already known or the previously unheard of, or the partly new—at any rate, instances of that which is never entirely known” (1981, p. 257).

In terms of Gould’s work, several things can be noted with interest in light of the above. First, Kulenkampff has helped to shed light on how Goodman’s account may provide the means with which to view the relationship between Gould’s performance and his composition. If the composer makes a world by producing a sample of it, one which (Goodman argued) metaphorically exemplifies certain qualities or features, then Gould was making a world by producing a sample of that world in his compositions. This world, I have suggested, is one which, for Gould, replaces a less desirable one: his new world is

characterized by autonomy of voice, in dialogue and co-operation, replacing a hierarchical world (also exemplified in certain other types of musical works) characterized by a sole authoritative voice supported by accompaniment.

Once the composer has produced a sample, the role of the listener is to determine what the work exemplifies. Knowledge of tendencies across Gould's performances (for example a notable interest in manifestly contrapuntal music) facilitates the listener's task of determining which characteristics of his composition, which aspects of the "sample," are relevant and which are not. For example, our awareness of Gould's interpretations of contrapuntal music, his interest in the relationship between voices and in the way this music effaces "tyranny" in music, helps us to determine which aspects of the sample in his compositions are relevant. The fact that *The idea of north* is 58 minutes and 56 seconds long, or that it was composed in 1967, are less salient features than, for example, the fact that four distinct voices can be heard, weaving around each other "counterpointing several such experiences of the North" (Gould, letter, September 1, 1967, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 105).

According to Kulenkampff, the composer must attempt to produce other fitting examples, in order that her/his entire body of work can be designated as creating her/his world (1981, p. 257). This study has shown how, for Gould the composer, identifiable characteristics served to create family ties among his works. His compositions consisted of samples which systematically exemplified, at a metaphorical level, that which he was able to merely emphasize or bring out through performance in the musical compositions of others.

#### 4.4.4. Expression, Style, and Worldmaking in the Work of Gould

Identification of stylistic links between works, according to Goodman, enhances our insight and understanding of those works; the significance of the identification of such links in terms of Gould's work and worldmaking is noteworthy. First, it enables us to discern, in Gould's music, his expression of views of an ethical or political nature: Contrapuntal style metaphorically exemplifies a reconsidered view of the traditional hierarchical balance of power. Even Gould's interpretive approach to manifestly non-contrapuntal works, those of Mozart or Brahms for example, were characterized by a redistribution of emphasis among voices and between movements, serving to parallel Gould's rejection of a hierarchical structure in music and, by extension, in society:

It would, however, be true to say that, in musical terms, the more accurate expression for the totalitarian ideal ... could be found in homophonic music in which one thematic strand—usually the soprano line—is permitted to become the focus of attention and in which all other voices are relegated to accompanimental roles. (letter, August 3, 1971, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 150)

Gould draws a parallel between his dislike of homophonic music and his rejection of the "totalitarian ideal," as this appears in the hierarchical structures that characterize the world of live virtuoso solo performance.

In terms of his compositional style, Gould's views are even more significant. Between his quartet and the *Solitude trilogy* he identifies the following links as being most obviously, a concentration on aspects of counterpoint ... and perhaps, less

obviously, a tendency in each case to celebrate, if not precisely a fin de siècle [sic] situation, then at least a philosophy which deliberately sought an isolated vantage point, in relation to its time and milieu.... It [the quartet] was nonetheless, and despite all rationalization to the contrary, an unusual work for its time and place, and it would be no exaggeration, I think, to stress that aspect of it through which, in effect, I sought to challenge the zeitgeist. (letter, May 23, 1972, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 176)

In the passage which immediately follows, Gould contextualizes the above comments, observing a connection between the expression of certain political views and the composition of his quartet, of *The solitude trilogy*, and of his writings. It continues:

The tyranny of stylistic collectivity in the arts and, more generally, in life styles, per se [sic], has been, I think, the primary theme in most of the works I have attempted and, indeed, in a good many of the articles which I have written from time to time about the musical situation.... However far fetched the connection may appear at first glance, there is a true fraternal link, both in subject matter and technique between the vocal polyphony [sic] of *The idea of north* and *The latecomers*, and the chromatically concentrated counterpoint of the quartet.<sup>163</sup> (letter, May 23, 1972, in Roberts and Guertin, 1992, p. 176)

The “tyranny of stylistic collectivity in the arts” was manifest, and rejected by Gould, in his refusal to participate in live concert performing due to the expectations and pressures which

---

<sup>163</sup>At the time of the writing of this letter, Gould was working on *The quiet in the land*, the third in the trilogy. This is why he mentions only the first two.

he perceived it to entail.<sup>164</sup> *The solitude trilogy* expressed, both in subject and style, the withdrawal from such tyranny.

In place of homophonic music, Gould opted for the manifestly contrapuntal style of the Baroque era, music in which this “totalitarian ideal” is absent or at least diminished. Gould’s choice of works for performance, not only manifestly polyphonic music such as that by Bach, but also (as discussed) certain works by composers such as Brahms or Mozart, reflected this ethical position. Similarly, works by the latter composers provided Gould with an opportunity to integrate structure as a venue for the expression of certain philosophical and political ideals. As has been observed:

Gould liked to extend the idea of counterpoint beyond musical applications. He believed that because each contrapuntal voice must live a life of its own, yet also make concessions to accommodate *the harmonic and rhythmic pace of the whole* [original italics], counterpoint could serve as a model for co-operation among individuals. As such, Gould defined the standard recording process as a contrapuntal experience, one in which each individual (performers, engineers, technicians, producers) worked together to create a convincing statement. (Canning, 1992, pp. xxii-xxiii)

Gould’s concern for “the harmonic and rhythmic pace of the whole” expresses an ideal social order wherein the autonomous individual (like the individual voice of the fugue) seemingly rejects the tyranny of hierarchy (the “soloist” on the stage), while maintaining independence

---

<sup>164</sup>Recall that, in terms of chronology, the three works that comprised *The solitude trilogy* were released over a thirteen year period: *The idea of north* in 1967; *The latecomers* in 1969; *The quiet in the land* in 1977.



of voice through membership in a multiple team or community, like the line in polyphonic music, and like the voices in his radio documentaries. Gould's musical, ethical, and political views and values were present in the voices of manifestly contrapuntal music which metaphorically exemplified the qualities of autonomy and co-operation.

#### 4.5. Conclusion (Chapter Four)

This final chapter considered the work of Glenn Gould in terms of the composer-performer relationship. First, he was shown to view his role as a performer as involving significant interpretive autonomy; the performer as recreator, elaborator, and autonomous and active participant in determining, to a considerable degree, the aesthetic features of the musical work. As established earlier in this dissertation, it is primarily the non-notational, expressive aspects of a work—tempo, dynamics, attack, and so on—that provide a venue through which the performer can manifest that role.

Gould demonstrated, not only in his musical performances but in his compositions as well, a strong sensitivity to the fact that what was being said could not be separated from how it was being said. As such, he made important decisions concerning, for example, which instrument(s) he performed on, and in what context. These decisions liberated him from what he perceived as the negative aspects of concert performance: faulty instruments, concert halls, audience expectations, competition and so on. Moreover, Gould exhibited a distinctive tendency to both perform and compose works that were manifestly contrapuntal. This was attributed to two factors: Gould's view of the performer as co-creator, and his assuring the

optimal physical conditions in which to carry out his own work.

Chapter Four concluded with an analysis of how the contrapuntal style of Gould's music can be seen to express aspects of Gould's ethical and political views. According to Goodman's theory of expression, style derives, to a certain extent, from the expressive characteristics of the work. In Gould's case, expressive or non-notational aspects of the score provided the forum through which Gould was able to enhance the contrapuntal nature of the music he performed and composed. Counterpoint was shown to metaphorically possess qualities which Gould valued, for example autonomy of voice, dialogue, and co-operation. These values were also evident in other aspects of Gould's work, for example his desire to redistribute interpretive responsibility for the performance between composer, performer, and listener and, as such, to metaphorically exemplify values of an ethical as well as an aesthetic nature.

#### 4.6. Final Summary and Significance of This Study

In addition to the interpretation of notational elements of the score, the performer is called upon to make numerous decisions concerning the non-notational, expressive elements of the music, and also concerning repertory, instruments, performance practices, and so on. The reasons behind those decisions are not always visible, nor are they accessible to the listener. This investigation has attempted to render explicit the way in which a performer's view of the composer-performer relationship can be seen to contribute to the musical performance as an expression of that artist's aesthetic and ethical concerns. In so doing, the

study engenders an increased awareness and understanding of the general impact, in terms of creative output, of a performer's views of the performer/composer relationship.

This was accomplished by first raising the question of the site of responsibility for the aesthetic features of the musical work. Chapter One argued, generally speaking, for a shared responsibility between composer and performer and, as such, for the qualitative aspects of the musical performance. Composers' intentions, nonetheless, were considered important in making and evaluating decisions of an interpretive nature.

Chapter Two traced the genesis of and reasoning behind the Early Music Movement, and noted the cult-like rigour with which its proponents enforce their beliefs and evaluate unfavourably those performances which do not comply with them. For Sparshott (in Alperson, 1986), as for some opponents of the Early Music Movement (Neumann, 1982, 1989; Subotnik, 1992; and Taruskin, 1995), the score served as a mere point of departure.

In Chapter Three Goodman (1976) attributed to the musical score a significant role in assuring the identity of the work, leaving the performer free to "interpret" only those symbols that are non-notational. Goodman also proposed an account of expression as metaphorical exemplification, and viewed it as one factor in determining style.

Chapter Four integrated the findings of the first three chapters in an investigation of the work of Glenn Gould. There, the performer's view of the performer-composer relationship was demonstrated to be an important factor in determining the expressive qualities of a musical work and, as such, in determining its style.

The foremost significance of this analysis is the light it has shed on the impact upon musical performance of the performer's view of the composer-performer relationship. Recall

that the discussion of Goodman's account considered as non-notational those aspects of the score which are indeterminate in terms of performance. According to him, the non-notational elements of the work included such elements as verbal tempo indications and qualitative indications related to mood, attack, phrasing and so on. These, it was argued, are the elements that determine the work's expressive qualities, and are also the elements with which the performer is called upon to interpret, according to her/his own aesthetic.

Clearly, the extent to which musical interpretations are either original and "fresh" (to use Cone's terms) or conventional and predictable depends on the performer. If the performer views her/his role as primarily that of actualizing the composer's views through the performance, there will be minimal infiltration of that performer's personal aesthetic vision into the music in the process. This is highlighted in the views advanced by proponents of the Early Music Movement, namely in their concern for strict adherence to composers' intentions. Advocates of historical authenticity are concerned primarily with preserving historical authenticity, as opposed to viewing the score as leading toward new interpretations that may reveal unexplored relationships present in the music. A performer concerned with historical authenticity would be far less likely to imbue the music with a personal aesthetic, which may or may not exemplify broader themes or ideas to which she/he is committed. As Taruskin noted in Chapter Two:

... the 'historical' performance, sensing the fragility of the idealized ('timeless') work, seeks to salvage it by warding off all the contingent readings the work has received over time, and by adopting a characteristically anguished modern stance of estrangement against any subjectivity but its own. In its attempt to bond with the

original intentions that produced the work, it excludes all other intentions. (1995, p. 32)

Subotnik (1991) similarly held that when efforts to preserve the autonomy of the composer's vision are extreme, the result may be that the performer is turned into a kind of "automaton." This occurs because the performer remains closely tied to interpretations which bring out or emphasize what she/he presumes to be the composer's musical ideas.

If, on the other hand, a performer views her/his role to be one of co-creator or elaborator, then she/he will be free to imbue the work with aspects of her/his aesthetic views. This would lead to greater freedom for exploration and innovation in terms of the work's expressive features. As Neumann (1989) advocated, tempo, for example, may be varied at the performer's discretion. In Chapter Two he argued that:

Just as with sonority and pitch, it is conceivable that over the time gap that separates us from early music, our sensation of the passage of time may have changed; that, say, given the faster metabolism of the twentieth century, the tempo may need to be accelerated for today's audiences in order to match the musical effect on eighteenth century listeners. (1989, p. 26)

Neumann observed that the Early Music Movement has imposed a form of paralysis on musical works from the past. He considered this detrimental to musical performance, arguing that "the authenticists behave like custodians of museum exhibits" (1989, p. 30), and advanced a very different role for the performer of early music. He argued that they "ought to behave like wardens of living organisms whose souls are capable of constant renewal in adjusting to changing conditions" (1989, p. 26).

Indicative of this line of thinking, Sparshott viewed the composer's score (and, by extension, the composer's intentions) as a mere point of departure, a possibility, arguing that "A composer's score specifies something that performers and listeners may (if they wish) perform and listen to" (1986, p. 59). A performer who views the composer's score with the kind of openness described by Sparshott will be free to invest her/his performances in a way more in keeping with her/his own aesthetic values and views.

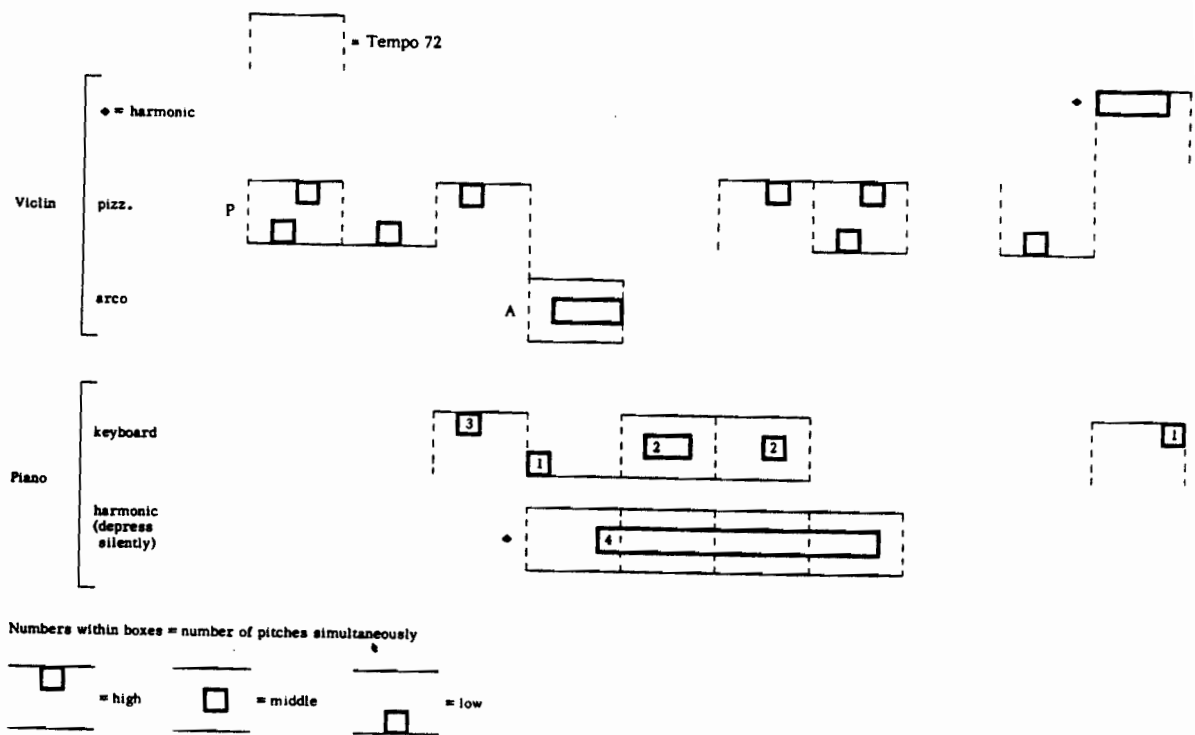
Gould's practice reflects the work of Neumann (1982, 1989), Sparshott (in Alperson, 1986) Subotnik (1991), and Taruskin (1995). His artistic autonomy, in terms of his musical analyses, performance practice, and aesthetic goals was instrumental in determining the qualitative characteristics of his performances. Because he viewed his role as that of co-creator, re-creator, or embellisher, he assumed a greater degree of responsibility for investing performances with his own aesthetic views. This was effected through his decisions concerning the performance of non-notational aspects of the score such as tempi, choice of instrument, phrasing, and emphasis (in certain voices, passages, or movements). As Chapter Four demonstrated, this led to the development of what has been identified as a contrapuntal style.

It is believed that the findings of this investigation will lead to deeper understanding at two levels. First, in providing the tools with which to contextualize the underlying concerns and principles that informed Gould's work, and articulating the beginnings of an account of how these affected his creative output, the study contributes to our understanding of Gould's performance and composition. More significantly, however, it demonstrates the extent to which a performer's views of the composer-performer relationship are instrumental

in determining the musical performance itself. The paradigm proposed, namely the application of a Goodmanian theoretical framework to analysis of a given body of music, may engender further investigative research into the work of other musicians, their views concerning the nature of the composer-performer relationship, how these are determined, and the extent to which they affect the aesthetic features of the performance itself.

## APPENDIX I

### Example of non-conventional nature of contemporary notation



Feldman, *Projection IV*, first page



## Appendix II: Glenn Gould Chronology

1932	<p>Glenn Herbert Gould, born September 25 in Toronto to Russell Herbert (Bert) and Florence <i>née</i> Greig Gould.</p> <p>The home of his childhood and early manhood is 32 Southwood Drive in the Beaches district of Toronto.</p> <p>Studies piano with his mother until 10 years of age when he attends Toronto Conservatory of Music (now the Royal Conservatory of Music).</p>	1952	<p>Television début with the CBC. First pianist to be televised by the CBC (September 8), official opening of CBC Toronto television station CBLT.</p> <p>Montreal début, Ladies' Morning Music Club, Ritz Carlton Hotel (November 6).</p>
1940-47	Studies theory with Leo Smith.	1953	<p>First commercial recording (with Albert Pratz, violinist) for Hallmark label, Toronto.</p> <p>Performs Piano Concerto Opus 42 by Schoenberg with CBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jean-Marie Beaudet (December 23).</p>
1942-49	Studies organ with Frederick C. Silvester.		
1943-52	Studies piano with Alberto Guerrero. Receives Associate designation at the Toronto Conservatory of Music (ATCM) at age 12 with highest marks in the country.	1955	<p>First concert appearance at the Stratford Festival, Ontario.</p> <p>Recital début, Washington, DC, at Philips Gallery (January 2).</p>
1945	Organist début, Eaton Auditorium Toronto (December 12). Begins studies at Malvern Collegiate Institute, Toronto.		<p>Recital début, New York, at Town Hall (January 11).</p> <p>The following day Gould signs an exclusive contract with Columbia Records.</p>
1946	Début with orchestra as soloist with Toronto Conservatory of Music Orchestra conducted by Ettore Mazzoiini in first movement Piano Concerto No. 4 by Beethoven (May 8).		Finishes his String Quartet, Op. 1.
1947	<p>Début with Toronto Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Bernard Heinze in Massey Hall. Complete performance Piano Concerto No. 4 by Beethoven (January 14).</p> <p>First public recital as a piano soloist for International Artists, Eaton Auditorium, Toronto (October 20).</p>	1956	<p>Début recording for Columbia Records, <i>Bach's Goldberg Variations</i>.</p> <p>Tours Canada and the United States in the fall.</p> <p>Montreal String Quartet records Gould's String Quartet Op. 1 as a transcription recording for CBC International Service (now Radio Canada International).</p>
1950	First broadcast for Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) "Sunday Morning Recital" (December 24).	1957	Début New York Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Leonard Bernstein, Carnegie Hall. Beethoven Piano Concerto No. 2 (January 26).

	Conducts pick-up orchestra on Chrysler Festival for CBC television with Maureen Forrester as soloist (February 20).		Concert Gala Performance for the Orchestra Fund, Montreal Symphony Orchestra, Montreal (April 19). Made three appearances at the Vancouver International Festival July 27, 29, and August 2).
	First overseas tour. Recitals in Moscow, Leningrad, and Vienna. European orchestral début with Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra (May 8). Plays with Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra (May 18) and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under Herbert von Karajan (May 24-26).	1961	Active at the Stratford Festival Ontario as a co-director and performs with other co-directors Leonard Rose, cellist, and Oscar Shumsky, violinist.
	As his performing career develops he "escapes" as often as possible to his parents' cottage at Uptergrove on Lake Simcoe, north of Toronto, where he works in solitude and enjoys the country.		Gould consolidates his reputation as a television commentator as well as a performer with CBC television program. "The subject is Beethoven," in which he collaborates with cellist Leonard Rose.
			Adjusts to living in a penthouse at 110 St. Clair Avenue West, Toronto.
1958	Second overseas tour. Plays with Hart House Orchestra of Toronto under Boyd Neel at Brussels World Fair (August 25). Other concerts in Stockholm, Berlin, Salzburg, and Florence. Gives eleven performances in eighteen days in Israel.	1962	Gould develops his writing career with "Let's Ban Applause!" in <i>Musical America</i> (February) and "An Argument for Richard Strauss" in <i>High Fidelity</i> (March).
1959	Performs first four of the five Beethoven piano concerti in London with the London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Joseph Krips. His last European concert is in Lucerne at the Lucerne Festival (August 31).		Performs Piano Concerto No. 1 by Brahms with New York Philharmonic. The conductor, Leonard Bernstein, dissociates himself from Gould's interpretation (April 6, 8).
	Receives an injury from a technician at Steinway & Sons in New York. Gould sues Steinway in 1960 and the company agrees to an out-of-court settlement.	1963	Gould's first music documentary for CBC Radio "Arnold Schoenberg, The Man Who Changed Music" (August 8).
1960	Symphonia String Quartet records Gould's String Quartet, Op. 1.		Columbia Records releases Gould's performances of the six Partitas by Bach. CBC telecast <i>The Anatomy of the Fugue</i> includes Gould's own composition <i>So You Want to Write a Fugue</i> .
	National Film Board of Canada release two half-hour films, <i>Glenn Gould: Off the Record</i> and <i>Glenn Gould On the Record</i> .		Delivers the Corbett Music Lecture <i>Arnold Schoenberg, A Perspective</i> , at the University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio (April 22), and the MacMillan Lectures at the University of Toronto (July).
	American television début with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra and Leonard Bernstein (January 31).		

1964	Receives Doctor of Laws <i>honoris causa</i> , University of Toronto.		Romantics? ... No, They're Only a Fad," published in the <i>New York Times</i> (November 23).
	Last public concert given in Los Angeles (April 10).	1970	Television program, "The Well-Tempered Listener": Gould in discussion with Curtis Davis. Gould performs on piano, harpsichord, and organ (February 18).
	Retires from concert stage.		Recital for CBC Radio on "CBC Thursday Music" includes uncharacteristic repertoire: Sonata No. 3 in B minor, Op. 58 by Chopin and a group of "Songs Without Words" by Mendelssohn (July 23).
1965	CBC Radio broadcast "The Prospects of Recording" (January 10), later adapted as an article for <i>High Fidelity</i> (April 1966).		Television version of "The Idea of North," CBC TV (August 5).
1966	"Conversations with Glenn Gould" for BBC television programs recorded in Toronto with Gould interviewed by the BBC's Humphrey Burton.		CBC TV "Glenn Gould Plays Beethoven"; includes Concert No. 5 in E flat major, Op. 73 ("Emperor") with The Toronto Symphony conducted by Karel Ancerl, in honour of Beethoven Bi-Centenary (December 9).
	Records Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 5 ( <i>The Emperor</i> ), Opus 73 with Leopold Stokowski.		
	CBC TV program "Duo" with Gould and Yehudi Menuhin (May 18).		
1967	CBC TV program "To Every Man His Own Bach" (March 29).	1971	Creates and produces radio documentary, "Stokowski: A Portrait for Radio" (February 2).
	"Centennial Performance," CBC television program. Soloist with Toronto Symphony, conducted by Vladimir Golshmann (November 15).		Radio broadcast for the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), broadcast throughout Europe and by the CBC in Canada.
	Releases recording of music by Canadian composers Isrvan Anhalt, Jacques Hétu, and Oskar Morawetz in honour of the Centenary of Canada.		Recorded music by Bach, Bizet, Byrd, Grieg, and Schoenberg for Columbia Records.
	"The Idea of North," the first of the three radio documentaries known as "The Solitude Trilogy," is broadcast (December 28).	1972	Provides music for American film, "Slaughterhouse Five" directed by George Roy Hill.
1969	Awarded \$ 15,000 Molson Prize by The Canada Council.	1973	Purchases Steinway CD 318
	Creates and produces radio documentary "The Latecomers" (November 12), the second installment in "The Solitude Trilogy."	1974	Series of four television programs, "Chemins de la Musique" produced for the ORTF, France.
	Article, "Should We Dig Up the Rare		CBC radio documentary, "Casals: A Portrait for Radio" (January 15).

	CBC TV, Musicamera, "The Age of Ecstasy," the first of a four-part series called "Music in Our Time" (February 20).		Glenn Gould plays Bach, No. 1: The Question of Instrument," a CLASART film, is released.
	CBC radio documentary, "Arnold Schoenberg the first Hundred Years: A Documentary/Fantasy" (November 19).	1980	CBS Records <i>Glenn Gould Silver Jubilee Album</i> (two records). Includes the Ophelia Leider, Op. 67.1 (three songs) sung by Elisabeth Schwarzkopf accompanied by Gould, and a Glenn Gould Fantasy.
1975	CBC TV Musicamera, "The Flight from Order 1910-1920," "Music in Our Time" series (February 5).		"Glenn Gould Plays Bach, No. 2: An Art of Fugue," is released by CLASART.
	Florence Gould dies (July 26).		
	Video, <i>Radio as Music</i> produced for the conference <i>An International Exhibition of Music for Broadcasting</i> , Toronto. It deals with Gould's innovative approaches to creating radio programs.	1981	"Glenn Gould Plays Bach No. 3: Goldberg Variations," a CLASART film is released. Bruno Monsaiegon is director of "Glenn Gould Plays Bach" series.
	CBC TV, Musicamera, "New Faces, Old Forms 1920-1930." "Music In Our Time" series (November 26).	1982	Second recording of "The Goldberg Variations" by Bach is released by CBS Records.
1977	Records the English Suites of J.S. Bach for CBS Records.		In August Gould turns to having himself taped as a conductor and directs a performance of the chamber version of Wagner's "Siegfried Idyll" with local Toronto musicians.
	CBC radio documentary, "The Quiet in the Land." The third of the "Solitude Trilogy" (March 25).		On September 27 suffers the first of several strokes.
	CBC TV, Musicamera, "The Artist as Artisan 1930-1940," "Music in Our Time" series (December 14).		Gould dies, Toronto General Hospital at 11:30 A.M. on October 4.
1978	Article, "In Praise of Maestro Stokowski," <i>New York Times Magazine</i> (May 14). This was a reuse of material first published in <i>The Piano Quarterly</i> , in two parts in the same year under the title "Stokowski in Six Scenes."		Ecumenical Memorial Service (Anglican, Catholic, Jewish, Salvation Army) for Glenn Gould, with several thousand people present. St. Paul's Anglican Church, Toronto (October 15). Music is provided by leading Canadian musicians as a tribute to Gould.
1979	CBC two-part radio documentary, "Richard Strauss: The Bourgeois Hero" (April 2, 9).		
	TV, "Glenn Gould's Toronto," City Series, directed by John McGreevy. John McGreevy Productions (CBC telecast September 27).		

## References

- Ackerman, James S. (1981, Spring). Worldmaking and practical criticism. (Special issue, Aesthetics and worldmaking: An exchange with Nelson Goodman). *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 39(3), 249-254.
- Alpers, Philip. (1986). *What is music?* New York: Haven.
- Bazzana, Kevin. (1990, Oktober). Glenn Gould's Beethoven. *The Glenn Gould Society*, 7(2), 5-27.
- Bester, Alfred. (1964, October). The zany genius of Glenn Gould. *Holiday*, 35(4), 150, 152.
- Budd, Malcolm. (1989, Spring). Music and the communication of emotion. *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 47(2), 130-138.
- Baxandall, Michael. (1985). *Patterns of intention: On the historical explanation of picture*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Beardsley, Munroe C. (1958). *Aesthetics: Problems in the philosophy of criticism*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.
- Boretz, Benjamin, & Cone, Edward T. (1972). *Perspectives on contemporary music theory*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company Inc.
- Boretz, Benjamin and Cone, Edward T. (1976). *Perspectives on notation and performance*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company Inc.
- Chanan, Michael. (1994). *Musica Practica. The social practice of Western music from Gregorian chant to postmodernism*. London, U.K.: Verso.
- Cone, Edward T. (1989). In Robert P. Morgan (Ed.), *Music: A view from Delft: Selected essays*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- . (1974). *The composer's voice*. Berkley, CA: University of California Press.
- . (1968). *Musical form and musical performance*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company Inc.
- Davies, Stephen. (1983, Summer). Is music a language of the emotions? *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 23(3), 222-233.

- De Bekker, L.J. (1925). *Black's dictionary of music and musicians*. Toronto, ON: The Musson Book Company Limited.
- Dick, Robert. (1989, Spring). Contemporary concerns: making the composer-performer relationship work. *The Flutist Quarterly*, XIV(2), 65-67.
- Dipert, Randall R. (1983, March). Meyer's emotion and meaning in music: A sympathetic critique of its central claims. *In Theory Only: Journal of the Michigan Music Theory Society*, 6(8), 3-17.
- Finkelstein, Sidney. (1970). *How music expresses ideas*. New York: International Publishers.
- Friedrich, Otto. (1988). *Glenn Gould. A life and variations*. Toronto, ON: Lester and Orpen Dennys.
- Galaise, Sophie et Rivest, Johanne. (1990). Compositeurs québécois: chronique d'une décennie (1980-1990). *Circuit. Revue nord-américaine de musique du XXe siècle*, 1(1), 83-97.
- Goldman, Alan. (1992, Winter). The Value of Music. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 50(1), 35-44.
- Goodman, Nelson. (1976). *Languages of art: An approach to a theory of symbols*. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company Inc.
- . (1984). *Of mind and other matters*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- . (1978). *Ways of worldmaking*. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company Inc.
- , & Elgin, Catherine Z. (1988). *Reconceptions in philosophy & other arts & science*. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company Inc.
- . (1981, Spring). Response to J.S. Ackerman. (Special issue, Aesthetics and worldmaking: An exchange with Nelson Goodman). *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 39(3), 249-254.
- Gould, Glenn. (1966). The prospects of recording, *High Fidelity Magazine*, 16(4), 49.
- . (1965). An argument for music in the electronic age. *University of Toronto Varsity Graduate*, 11(3), 118-119.
- Guertin, Ghislaine. (1988). *Glenn Gould Pluriel*. (Papers presented at Glenn Gould colloquium, Université du Québec à Montréal, 1987). Verdun, QC: Louise Courteau.

- Hanslick, Eduard. (1957). *The beautiful in music*. Gustav Cohen (Ed. & Trans.). New York: Liberal Arts Press.
- Helwig, Maggie. (1988, January). Participating in God: The theology of Glenn Gould. *The Canadian Forum*, 29-31.
- Jander, Owen. (1980). *Messa di voce*. In Stanley Sadie (Ed.), *The new Grove dictionary of music and musicians* (p. 201). London, U.K.: Macmillan.
- Kazdin, Andrew. (1990). *Glenn Gould at work: Creative lying*. New York: E.P. Dutton.
- Kessels, Jos. (1986, August). Is music a language of the emotions? On the analysis of musical meaning. *The Music Review*, 47(3), 200-216.
- Kivy, Peter. (1995). *Authenticities: Philosophical reflections on musical performance*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- . (1990). *Music alone: Philosophical reflections on the purely musical experience*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- . (1989). *Sound sentiment: An essay on the musical emotions (incl. The corded shell)*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- . (1993). *The fine art of repetition: Essays in the philosophy of music*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.
- Krantz, Steven C. (1987, Summer). Metaphor in music. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, XLV(45)(4), 351-360.
- Kripke, S. (1982). *On rules and private language*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Kulenkampff, Jens. (1981, Spring). Music considered as a way of worldmaking. (Special issue, Aesthetics and worldmaking: An exchange with Nelson Goodman). *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 39(3), 254-258.
- Langer, Susanne K. (1953). *Feeling and form: A theory of art*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
- Martinich, A.P. (Ed.). (1985). *The philosophy of language*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- McGreevy, John (1983). (Ed.). *Glenn Gould: By himself and his friends*. Toronto, ON: Doubleday Canada Limited.
- McMullin, Michael. (1982, Aug-Nov). Music and meaning. *The Music Review*, 43(3/4), 248-260.
- Meyer, Leonard B. (1967). *Music, the arts, and ideas*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- . (1956). *Emotion and Meaning in Music*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Neumann, Frederick. (1982). *Essays in performance practice*. Ann Arbor, MI: U.M.I. Research Press.
- . (1989). *New essays on performance practice*. Ann Arbor, MI: U.M.I. Research Press.
- Page, Tim. (1984). *The Glenn Gould reader*. Toronto, ON: Lester and Orpen Dennys.
- Payzant, G. (1978). *Glenn Gould: Music and mind*. Toronto, ON: Van Nostrand Reinhold Ltd.
- Pearce, David. (1988a, Spring). Intentionality and the nature of a musical work. *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 28(2), 105-118.
- . (1988b). Musical expression: Some remarks on Goodman's theory. In V. Rantala and E. Tarasti (Eds.), *Essays on the philosophy of music*. Helsinki, Finland: Societas Philosophica Fennica.
- Pole, William. (1924). (Introduction Edward J. Dent). *The philosophy of music*. London: Kegan Paul.
- Price, Kingsley. (1988, Summer). Does music have meaning? *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 28(3), 203-214.
- . (1982, Autumn). What is a piece of music? *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 22(4), 322-336.
- Roberts, J., & Guertin, Ghyslaine. (Eds.) (1992). *Glenn Gould: Selected letters*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.
- Rochlitz, Rainer. (1994). *Subversion et subvention*. Paris, France: NRF Essais, Gallimard.



- Rochlitz, R. et Bouchindhomme, C. (1992). *L'Art sans compas*. Paris, France: Collection Procope, Cerf.
- Rowell, Lewis. (1983). *Thinking about music*. Amherst, MA: The University of Massachusetts Press.
- Schnabel, Artur. (1969). *Music and the line of most resistance*. New York: Da Capo Press.
- Scruton, Roger. (1987, Special Issue). Analytical Philosophy and the Meaning of Music. *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, (Vol. 46), 169-176.
- . (1983). *The aesthetic understanding: Essays in the philosophy of art and culture*. London: Methuen.
- Sessions, Roger. (1979). In Edward T. Cone, (Ed.), *Roger sessions on music. Collected Essays*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Sparshott, F.E. (1967). *The concept of criticism*. Oxford, U.K.: Clarendon Press.
- Sparshott, F.E. (1963). *The structure of aesthetics*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.
- Subotnik, Rose Rosengard. (1991). *Developing variation: Style and ideology in Western music*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Taruskin, Richard. (1995). *Text and act: Essays on music and performance*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- White, David. (1992, Winter). Toward a theory of profundity in music. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 50(1), 23-34.
- Wittgenstein, L. (1958). *Philosophical investigations*. Oxford, U.K.: Basil Blackwell.
- Wollheim, Richard. (1980). *Art and its objects*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.
- Wolsterstorff, Nicholas. (1980). *Works and works of art*. Oxford, U.K.: Clarendon Press.

#### **Liner Notes and Introductions:**

- Gould, Glenn. (1972). Introduction. *Bach's Well-tempered clavier* (p. iii). New York: Amsco Music Publishing Company.

### Secondary References:<sup>165</sup>

- Barcan, Marcus. (1980). Moral dilemmas and consistency. *Journal of Philosophy*, (11), 126.
- Dalhaus, Carl. (1982). *Esthetics of music*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.
- Dipert, Randall R. (1980). The composer's intentions: An examination of their relevance for performance. *Musical Quarterly*, 66, 206-207.
- Eco, Umberto. (1994). *The limits of interpretation*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Feinberg, Joel. (1980). Harm and self-interest. In *Rights, justice and the bounds of liberty* (pp. 61-64). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Hartshorne, C., & Weiss, P. (Eds.). (1933). *Collected papers of Charles Sanders Pierce*. (Vol. 4). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Hough, Graham. (1969). *Style and stylistics*. London, U.K.: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Melden, A.I. (1961). *Free action*. London, U.K.: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Nagel, Thomas. Death. In James Rachels (Ed.), *Moral problems*. (Third ed.). New York: Harper & Row.
- Natiez, Jean-Jacques. (1975). *Fondements d'une sémiologie de la musique*. Paris, France: Union Générale d'Éditions.
- Sadie, Stanley. (1965). *Mozart*. London, U.K.: Calder & Boyars.
- Shusterman, R. (1992). *Pragmatic aesthetics: Living beauty, rethinking art*. Oxford, U.K.: Basil Blackwell.

---

<sup>165</sup>These references were cited by authors or editors listed above and referred to in the text of this document.