Arrangement, Listening, and the Music of Gérard Pesson

William J. Drummond

Christ Church, University of Oxford

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Music

Hilary Term 2019

Abstract

This thesis develops a critical framework for the study of musical arrangement and its relationship with concepts of listening through interpretations of music by Gérard Pesson (born 1958). It begins by identifying and accounting for persistent interpretative reflexes in existing discussions of arrangement, arguing that arrangement is best understood not as a type of musical object defined by fidelity to an original but rather as a way of listening influenced by this and other concepts. The four case studies that follow explore different implications of this shift in critical perspective, combining close reading and listening, philosophical reflection (in particular insights offered by conceptual metaphor theory and figures including Bergson, Sartre, and Adorno), and studies of reception. The first case study displaces the 'original' as the primary source of an arrangement's significance, arguing that *Nebenstück* (1998) plays extensively on the meanings of medium, through the manipulation of timbre and noise. The second considers the idea of linear temporal fidelity to a source as an engagement with notions of structural listening, using an examination of *Ambre Nous Resterons* (2008) to demonstrate that such fidelity is not a condition of arrangement but an ideal from which arrangements might meaningfully depart. The third complicates the relationship between the timbral and temporal aspects of arrangement discussed in the previous two chapters, exploring how Pesson manipulates both aspects in *Wunderblock* (2005) to suggest the absence rather than re-presentation of a source. The fourth probes the fraught relationship between notions of arrangement, fidelity, and kitsch within the overlapping contexts of modernism and historical 'authenticity', analysing the discourses surrounding *Kein Deutscher Himmel* (1997) supplied by Pesson himself, the transcription's commercial distribution, and a variety of its listeners. Finally, this thesis considers the extent to which musical arrangements, in particular those of Pesson, might be interpreted as offering 'critical' perspectives on listening.

Acknowledgements

I could not have written this thesis without the support of numerous institutions and individuals. First and foremost, I would like to offer my heartfelt thanks to my supervisor, Prof. Daniel M. Grimley, for guiding me through the years this project has taken with wisdom and kindness: you have truly been an inspiration. I would also like to acknowledge the financial support of Christ Church and the Clarendon Fund, without which this research would not have been possible. For reading my work and offering advice during the Transfer, Confirmation, and final examination process, I thank Prof. Jason Stanyek, Prof. Martyn Harry, Prof. Jonathan Cross, and Prof. Alastair Williams.

I am indebted to Frankie Perry and Peter Asimov for founding the musical arrangement study group TAROT and being such stimulating interlocutors in discussions at its meetings, which have undoubtedly shaped many of the ideas expressed in this thesis. I am also grateful to them, and Giles Masters, for reading and providing feedback on portions of this text.

My sincere thanks go to all the friends who have indulged me in intellectual discussion and, more importantly, offered emotional support when I most needed it. I am especially indebted to Mingyue Li, Emily Tan, and also James Strowman, who was a wonderful host during my trips to Paris. For a decade of reminding me what is most important in work and life, I am particularly grateful to Judith Lyons. I thank Rosie McMahon for her unending patience, keeping me grounded, and never failing to cheer me up.

Finally, I am deeply grateful to my family, who have done more for me than I can ever know. I thank my sister for being an ever-present source of strength, and my parents for not only putting me up during the final stages of writing but lovingly putting up with me for a great deal longer.

Contents

Abstract iii

Acknowledgements v

Contents vii

Gérard Pesson: Biographical Note xi

1 Introduction 1

1.1 Arrangement, listening, Pesson (I) 1

1.2 Arrangement 1

1.3 Gérard Pesson 5

1.4 Listening 8

1.5 Arrangement, listening, Pesson (II) 10

1.6 Aims and approach 12

2 Approaching Arrangement 16

2.1 Arrangement from word to idea 16

2.1.1 Terminological confusion 16

2.1.2 Two types of usage 17

2.1.3 Specific usages 18

2.1.4 Umbrella usage 19

2.2 The idea of arrangement 22

2.2.1 Arrangement and the work concept 22

2.2.2 *Werktreue* against arrangement 24

2.2.3 Arrangement as *Werktreue* 26

2.2.4 Fidelity-essentialism in analytic philosophy 28

2.2.5 Fidelity-essentialism in musicology and criticism 31

2.2.6 ‘Strict’ and ‘free’ 33

2.2.7 Shortcomings of fidelity-essentialism 34

2.3 Arrangement as a way of listening 38

2.3.1 Production, object, reception 38

2.3.2 Cues and expectations 40

2.4 The formalist fallacy 48

2.4.1 Fidelity and autonomy 48

2.4.2 Form, meaning, and fidelity 51
2.5 Fidelity, deception, taste, and kitsch 54
2.5.1 Fidelity and deception 54
2.5.2 Taste 56
2.5.3 Kitsch 59
2.5.4 Kitsch criticism critiqued 63
3 *Nebenstück*, Noise, and the Meanings of Medium 67
3.1 Introduction 67
3.2 Depth 70
3.2.1 *Nebenstück*, depth, and fidelity listening 70
3.2.2 Pesson's depth metaphors 72
3.3 Noise 76
3.3.1 Pesson's 'acoustic treatment' 76
3.3.2 Objective and subjective noise 79
3.3.3 Medium as noise 80
3.3.4 Pesson and noise 81
3.4 Technology 87
3.4.1 Technology, listening, and arrangement 87
3.4.2 Added noise 89
3.4.3 The listening persona 94
3.5 Listening to *Nebenstück* 96
3.5.1 Opening section 96
3.5.2 Noise as structure 103
3.5.3 Closing section 105
3.6 Haunting 109
3.6.1 *Nebenstück* and haunting 109
3.6.2 Recording, haunting, hauntology 109
3.6.3 Two haunting tropes 112
3.6.4 Artistic responses to *Nebenstück* 117
3.7 Conclusion 120
4 *Ambre Nous Resterons* and the Shadows of Time 123
4.1 Introduction 123
4.2 Temporality and linearity 125
4.2.1 Linear temporal fidelity 125

4.2.2 Linearity and the work concept 129
4.3 The work as heard and imagined 134
4.3.1 Temporal fidelity and structural listening 134
4.3.2 Phenomenology and structural listening 135
4.3.3 Sartre and the imaginary work 137
4.4 Analysing *Ambre Nous Resterons* 142
4.4.1 Openings 142
4.4.2 Following ‘step by step’ 145
4.4.3 Complicating correspondence 146
4.4.4 Linearity and circularity 150
4.5 Conclusion 153
5 *Wunderblock* and the Analysis of Absence 159
5.1 Introduction 159
5.1.1 Recomposition ‘bar by bar’ 159
5.1.2 *Wunderblock*, memory, and absence 161
5.1.3 Erasure and temporality 164
5.2 Analysing erasure 165
5.2.1 Rauschenberg and Pesson, concept and form 165
5.2.2 Timbral and temporal erasure 166
5.2.3 Adorno and dissolution 173
5.2.4 Sartre and destruction 175
5.3 Analysis 180
5.3.1 Three modes of erasure 180
5.3.2 Repetition and Bruckner 181
5.3.3 Repetition and Pesson 184
5.3.4 Unwriting 190
5.3.5 Insertion 207
5.4 Conclusion 212
5.4.1 Erasing time 212
5.4.2 Erasing subjectivity 214
5.4.3 Erasing erasure 217
6 Fidelity, Kitsch, and *Kein Deutscher Himmel* 223
6.1 Introduction 223
6.2 Modernism, kitsch, and arrangement 226

6.2.1 Modernism and kitsch 226
6.2.2 Fidelity and kitsch 228
6.2.3 The critical potential of kitsch 232
6.3 Modernist suspicion of *Kein Deutscher Himmel* 234
6.3.1 The 'other Pesson' 234
6.3.2 Transformation and transcription 236
6.4 Modernist suspicion of Mahler's Adagietto 242
6.4.1 The 'other Mahler' 242
6.4.2 Adorno's Mahler 244
6.4.3 Critiques of the Mahler revival 245
6.5 Rhetorics of authenticity 247
6.5.1 Authenticity against *Death in Venice* 247
6.5.2 *Kein Deutscher Himmel* and *Death in Venice* 251
6.5.3 Authenticity against *Kein Deutscher Himmel* 254
6.6 Pesson's pre-emptive kitsch 256
6.6.1 Pop art nuance and pre-emptive kitsch 256
6.6.2 Arrangement, irony, and critique 259
6.6.3 'Exorcising' kitsch 261
6.6.4 'Grading' listeners 263
6.7 Commercial distribution 267
6.7.1 Accentus's *Transcriptions* brand and fidelity 267
6.7.2 Imaging authenticities 269
6.7.3 Choral transcription and affectivity 275
6.7.4 Transcription, controversy, and *Kein Deutscher Himmel* 280
6.8 Conclusion 284
7 Conclusion 289
Bibliography 299

Gérard Pesson: Biographical Note

Gérard Pesson was born in 1958 in Torteron (Cher), France.[1] He studied literature and musicology at the Sorbonne, later taking classes in composition and analysis with Ivo Malec and Betsy Jolas at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Danse (CNSMD), Paris. In 1986 Pesson founded the new music journal *Entretemps* and became a producer at Radio France, continuing in the latter role until 1990. Between 1990 and 1992 the composer was a resident at the French Academy in Rome. The composer's diaries from 1991-1997 were published as *Cran d'Arrêt du Beau Temps* in 2004. Pesson has composed numerous chamber, orchestral, and operatic works for a range of performers including Ensemble Fa, Ensemble Intercontemporain, the WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln, Klangforum Wien, Ensemble Recherche, Ensemble Amarillis, Ensemble Ictus, the Orchestre National de Lyon, and the Orchestre National d'Île-de-France. He contributed to the Accentus choir's two successful *Transcriptions* albums (2003 and 2006), the first of which was nominated for a Grammy Award in 2004 and has sold over 130,000 copies. In 2006 he became Professor of Composition at the CNSMD, Paris, and continues to be heard on Radio France's France Musique station, presenting the weekly programme *Boudoir & Autres* until 2014. In his fiftieth year Pesson was the featured composer of the 2008 Festival d'Automne, Paris, and his sixtieth, 2018, saw the release of a double album of his music by Instant Donné and EXAUDI, the most recent of several discs devoted to his work. Pesson's scores are published by Editions Henry Lemoine and, since 2014, Maison ONA.

[1] For biographical information on Pesson and his work, see 'Gérard Pesson: Biographie', *Henry Lemoine* <https://www.henry-lemoine.com/fr/compositeurs/fiche/gerard-pesson>, accessed 9 April 2019; 'Gérard Pesson: Biographie', *Brahms.ircam.fr* <http://brahms.ircam.fr/gerard-pesson>, accessed 22 April 2019; Martin Kaltenecker, 'Sérénade Interrompue: Remarques sur les Hauteurs et sur la Forme dans "Cassation" de Gérard Pesson', *Musurgia,* 18/3 (2011), 57-72. 57-59.

1 Introduction

1.1 Arrangement, listening, Pesson (I)

This thesis is about the relationship between the idea of musical arrangement, ways of listening, and the music of Gérard Pesson. An arrangement is traditionally understood as an altered re-presentation of an existing musical work. This idea animates our experience of the pieces of music we call arrangements, shaping how we think about, discuss, and, crucially, hear them. From this perspective, arrangement names a way of listening as much as it does a type of musical object. Pesson's music affords a particularly rich framework through which to reflect on this way of listening. This reflexive engagement with listening is particularly evident in Pesson's many pieces which re-present an existing work with meaningful and often striking alterations, and which might therefore be considered 'arrangements'. In these pieces, the converse processes of alteration and re-presentation bring each other into focus, inviting listeners to listen to their own way of listening to works. Pesson's 'arrangements' frame the complex relationship between the idea of arrangement and listening with an exceptional degree of musical sophistication. They therefore provide ideal points of reference in this thesis's critical engagement with the traditional idea of arrangement and its continuing significance in our own time.

This introductory chapter weaves a context for the tripartite argument of the thesis, twisting its trio of tightly interconnected strands (arrangement, Pesson, listening) together rather than establishing a hierarchy among them. After introducing each of these three lines of enquiry cumulatively and revisiting each in light of the others, the chapter set out the aims and approach of the thesis as a whole.

1.2 Arrangement

Upon first consideration, the idea of musical arrangement might seem of little relevance or interest within contemporary musical culture. Two decades into the new millennium, the

needs and ideals which drove the so-called 'Golden Age' of arrangement, a 'heyday' spanning from the mid-nineteenth to early-twentieth centuries, appear to be consigned irrevocably to a distant historical past.[1] The former practical function of arrangement, to facilitate musical distribution, was usurped over a century ago by sound reproduction technology, culminating in the unprecedented level of access to countless recordings offered by today's digital download and streaming services.[2] Arrangement also seems aesthetically outmoded within a Western art music culture which remains centred on the notion of the musical work despite extensive scholarly critique of the concept: works are understood as original and autonomous organic unities, and therefore as unalterable.[3] In reproducing and transforming an earlier work, arrangements seem to be both too similar to and too different from what they arrange, at once troublingly 'derivative' of that work and troublingly 'unfaithful' to it. Further, theories of intertextuality and a historical 'grand narrative' concerning the fracturing of 'grand narratives' since 1960 have contributed to an interpretative emphasis on fragmentary forms of musical re-use in this period, such as quotation, collage, and sampling.[4] In engaging with the whole of an existing work, the practice of arrangement has been marginal to this interpretative paradigm.

---

[1] Peter Szendy associates arrangement's '*age d'or*' with Romanticism, in particular the figures of Liszt and Schumann. Peter Szendy, 'L'Arrangement Dérangé', *Arrangements, Dérangements: La Transcription Musicale Aujourd'hui* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000), 7-14. 14. Similarly, for Martin Kaltenecker, the nineteenth century was the '*haute époque*' of transcription. See Gérard Pesson and Martin Kaltenecker, 'Entretien Croisé: Pesson/Kaltenecker', *Sfz,* 1 (2008), 4-7. 5. Focusing on one subgenre of the practice, Ivan Raykoff suggests that '[p]iano transcriptions and paraphrases enjoyed their heyday from the 1830s (the era of virtuosi such as Liszt and Sigismond Thalberg) into the early twentieth century'. Ivan Raykoff, 'Transcription, Transgression, and the (Pro)creative Urge', *Queer Episodes in Music and Modern Identity* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 150-176. 153.

[2] The idea that arrangement needs explanation or excuse in the age of recording is expressed in Hans Keller, 'Arrangement for or Against?', *The Musical Times,* 110/1511 (1969), 22-25. 22. More recently, it has been suggested that '[o]ur ready access to recordings has perhaps led us to regard such arrangements as somewhat unworthy stand-ins for the originals'. Sandra Mangsen, *Songs Without Words: Keyboard Arrangements of Vocal Music in England, 1560-1760* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2016). 1. For further discussion of this 'functionalist' conception of arrangement see Szendy, 'L'Arrangement Dérangé'; Jonathan Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). 2, 11.

[3] See, for example, Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (2nd edn.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Michael Talbot (ed.), *The Musical Work: Reality or Invention?* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000).

[4] On collage and quotation see Glenn Watkins, *Pyramids at the Louvre: Music, Culture, and Collage from Stravinsky to the Postmodernists* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1994); Lisa Colton and Martin Iddon, 'Special Issue: Recycling and Innovation in Contemporary Music', *Contemporary Music Review,* 29/3 (2010); Pwyll ap Siôn and Lauren Redhead, 'Special Issue: Musical Borrowing and Quotation in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries', ibid.33/2 (2014); David Metzer, *Quotation and Cultural Meaning in Twentieth-Century Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). The relationship between a fragment-focused approach and theories of

Despite its apparent irrelevance, however, recent decades have seen a renewal of interest in the idea of musical arrangement. Most obviously, this interest has been manifested by a surge in the production of arrangements themselves. In the 1980s and 1990s, several established composers turned to arrangement with greater frequency, taking up the practice not in parallel to their creative activities but as an integral part of them, often as an intensification of an existing interest in musical reworking. This tendency is displayed variously in the work of composers such as Luciano Berio, Michael Finnissy, Hans Werner Henze, Harrison Birtwistle, Salvatore Sciarrino, Hans Zender, and Robin Holloway among others.[5] Subsequent generations of composers coming of age in this period continued and expanded this growing enthusiasm for arrangement, transcription, and recomposition into the twenty-first century. Notable and highly varied examples have been produced by figures as different in style and standing as Johannes Schöllhorn, Detlev Glanert, Brice Pauset, Isabel Mundry, Bernhard Lang, Olga Neuwirth, Thomas Adès, Max Richter, Eivind Buene and many others. Far from sinking into obscurity in the new century, the vitality of arrangement has been rekindled. As early as 1995, one critic suggested that 'we may be *entering* the Golden Age of Transcription', rather than leaving it behind.[6]

Importantly, this increased interest in musical arrangement is also evident outside the sphere of composition. As well as the performance of new arrangements, once-popular older examples have been reappearing on concert programmes after decades of near absence from

intertextuality takes as its cue from Julia Kristeva's notion that 'any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations'. Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, eds Leon S. Roudiez, Thomas Gora, and Alice Jardine (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1981). 66. On the relationship between collage and the rejection of 'grand narratives', see Richard Taruskin, *Oxford History of Western Music* (5: Music in the Late Twentieth Century; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Kenneth Gloag, *Postmodernism in Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

[5] Of this generation, Heinz Holliger turned to arrangement later through his *Machaut-Transkriptionen* (2001-2009), while Berio displayed an interest in arrangement earlier (from the mid-1960s).

[6] Michael Oliver, 'Better by Arrangement?', *Classic CD*, 59 (1995), 32-33. 32. Oliver uses the terms 'transcription' and 'arrangement' interchangeably (see 2.1). Curiously, he makes his claim with reference to works by Holloway, Alfred Schnittke, and Kurt Schwertsik which engage with pre-existing music but are not arrangements in the conventional sense.

the mid-twentieth century.[7] In addition, the success of recording projects such as the Accentus choir's *Transcriptions* releases (2004-2008), albums of Schubert, Brahms, and Mahler lieder reinterpreted by the Viennese folk band Franui (2008-2011), or Deutsche Grammophon's *ReComposed* series (from 2005) indicates the attraction of arrangements for listeners.[8] The exhibition *Re-Set: Assimilations and Updates in Music and Art Since 1900* (Basel, 2018), created in collaboration with the Paul Sacher Foundation, also attests to this curiosity about arrangements. The substantial volume of essays released to accompany this exhibition demonstrates the growing scholarly interest in the subject, also evident at academic conferences.[9] Recent histories of contemporary music have begun to balance the existing focus on fragmentary borrowings with a recognition of the newfound importance of arrangement and recomposition in recent decades.[10] Notably, Tim Rutherford-Johnson connects the resurgence of these practices from the 1990s onwards with a parallel trend of 'postproduction' in the visual arts theorized by Nicolas Bourriaud.[11] 'Since the early nineties', Bourriaud observes,

> an ever increasing number of artworks have been created on the basis of preexisting works; more and more artists interpret, reproduce, re-exhibit, or use works made by others or available cultural products […] These artists who insert their own work into that of others contribute to the eradication of the traditional distinction between production and consumption, creation and copy, readymade and original work. It is no longer a matter of elaborating a form on the basis of a raw

[7] For example, Liszt's piano and orchestra version of Schubert's 'Wanderer' Fantasy was performed 28 times at the BBC Proms between 1896 and 1960 before falling out of favour. It has since been performed at the Proms only twice, in 1986 and later in 2018, when it featured in a programme which also included four of Schubert songs orchestrated by Liszt. See 'Proms Performance Archive', *BBC* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/3SsklRvCSPvfHr13wgz6HCJ/proms-performance-archive>, accessed 1 April 2019. In 2002, Ivan Raykoff noted that 'piano transcriptions and paraphrases have enjoyed a vigorous renaissance in recent decades, as witnessed by the increasing numbers of recordings and concert programmes that feature these works'. Raykoff, 'Transcription, Transgression, and the (Pro)creative Urge'. 170.

[8] On Accentus's transcriptions releases, see Chapter 6. Deutsche Grammophon's *ReComposed* series includes 'remixes' and electronically manipulated re-uses of recordings of canonical works as well as newly-recorded recompositions such as Max Richter's version of Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* (2012).

[9] Simon Obert and Heidy Zimmermann, *Re-Set: Rückgriffe und Fortschreibungen in der Musik seit 1900* (Mainz: Schott, 2018). As well as interest at more general conferences, arrangement was the primary topic of the symposium 'Rethinking Musical Transcription and Arrangement' (Cambridge, 2018).

[10] Tim Rutherford-Johnson, *Music After the Fall: Modern Composition and Culture Since 1989* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2017); Paul Griffiths, *Modern Music and After* (3rd edn.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Seth Brodsky, *From 1989, or European Music and the Modernist Unconscious* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2017).

[11] See Rutherford-Johnson, *Music After the Fall*. 256-259.

> material but working with objects that are already in circulation on the cultural market, which is to say, objects already *informed* by other objects.[12]

As his term 'postproduction' suggests, Bourriaud situates the trend in relation to a contemporary cultural economy premised the manipulation (rather than manufacture) of data and images, especially as facilitated by the rise of digitization and the internet. The resurgence of interest in musical arrangement in the same period may similarly reflect this broader cultural trend.

1.3 Gérard Pesson

This widespread re-engagement with the idea of musical arrangement finds particularly rich, varied, and sustained expression in the music of Gérard Pesson.[13] Pesson's 'arrangements' constitute one aspect of his broader involvement with musical tradition, which has been a characteristic and reoccurring dimension of his work since the start of his compositional career in the 1980s. His music is permeated by references to historic works and styles ranging from fleeting allusions on the one hand to extended quotations on the other. *Nocturnes en Quatuor* (1987) and *Pastorale* (2006) hint at Mahler, *Le Gel, par Jeu* (1991) cites Beethoven, *Mes Béatitudes* (1995) features a lengthy fragment of Bruckner, and *Récréations Françaises* (1995) and *Cassation* (2003) quote from Wagner, to name only a few examples. *Non Sapremo Mai di Questo Mi* (1991) and *La Vita è Come l'Albero di Natale* (1992) are each spun from single phrases by Mozart and Debussy respectively. In *Ravel à Son Âme* (2011) Pesson nods towards several of the earlier composer's works, while *Le Tombeau de Rameau* (2014) constitutes a broader stylistic homage. Pesson has also composed music for performance alongside or 'within' existing pieces, notably thirty-two additions to Antoine Dauvergne's opera *La Coquette Trompée* (*La Double Coquette*, 2014) and *Contra Me (Miserere)* (2002), a coda to Couperin's *Leçons de Ténèbres*. The variations genre of his *Transformations d'un Menuet de Mozart* (2016) is more traditional, even if the variations themselves are not.

[12] Nicolas Bourriaud, *Postproduction: Culture as Screenplay, How Art Reprograms the World* (New York: Lukas & Sternberg, 2005). 13.
[13] See Gérard Pesson: Biographical Note, above.

Pesson's engagement with musical tradition is especially apparent in his pieces which take an entire pre-existing work as their starting point. In doing so, these pieces might be understood as 'arrangements', or rather through the concept of arrangement, despite not being explicitly labelled as such and the diversity of (re)compositional approaches they represent. In some cases, Pesson adheres to traditional notions of arrangement closely, carefully reproducing the details of his sources, as in his 'transcriptions' of music by Mahler, Scriabin, Ravel, and Wagner for unaccompanied choir (1997-2008) or Scriabin's Ninth Piano Sonata for string quartet (*Messe Noire,* 2008). However, in other cases Pesson takes a more transformative approach to a source, refracting it through his own musical style, which is influenced by the brittle, noise-inflected sonorities of Helmut Lachenmann's *musique concrète instrumentale* and the work of Sciarrino.[14] Pesson characterizes *Nebenstück* (1998) as a 'filtration' (*filtrage*) of Brahms' Ballade for piano op. 10 no. 4 and its sequel, *Wunderblock (Nebenstück II)* (2005), as an attempted 'erasure' (*effacement*) of the first movement of Bruckner's Sixth Symphony. Other examples of this transformational approach include *Panorama, Particolari e Licenza* (2006), a cinematic 'making-of' which reworks the first three movements of Berlioz's *Harold en Italie*, and Pesson's two delicate 'coloured instrumentations' (*instrumentations colorées*) of polyphonic re-settings of the 'In nomine' chant by Thomas Tallis and John Taverner, *In Nomine I* and *II* (1999 and 2001). In the piano piece *Ambre Nous Resterons* (2008), composed 'after' (*d'après*) François Couperin's 'Les Ombres Errantes', Pesson's model is distorted almost beyond recognition, stretching the notion of arrangement to breaking point.

The elusive variety of approaches displayed by such works, Pesson's 'arrangements', makes it impossible to distinguish them conclusively from his supposedly 'original' works,

[14] That frequent allusion to earlier music is an integral part of Pesson's 'own' compositional idiom challenges the notion of personal style. However, Pesson's music clearly displays the influence of Lachenmann's compositional style, particularly that of works from the 1980s onwards that make more direct reference to musical tradition, such as *Tanzsuite mit Deutschlandlied* (1980). See Richard Toop, 'Concept and Context: A Historiographic Consideration of Lachenmann's Orchestral Works', *Contemporary Music Review,* 23/3-4 (2004), 125-143. Pesson's interest in Sciarrino is manifested in Gérard Pesson, 'Héraclite, Démocrite et la Méduse. Sur Salvatore Sciarrino', *Entretemps,* 9 (1990), 143-150. For a discussion of Pesson's music in relation to modernism and postmodernism see 6.3.2.

which are themselves littered with allusions to existing music, or to list them definitively. The work of arrangement is central to Pesson's conception of composition rather than a subsidiary activity to be pursued alongside it. He has repeatedly characterized his arrangements as the fullest expression of his concept of composition as inseparable from memory. Pesson regards them as attempts to 'objectify […] the contamination which occurs between invention and memory':

> It seems to me that the works which haunt us intervene, in one way or another, when we think we have pulled an idea from nothing, and that, in artistic matters, this search is always concomitant with a perpetual archaeology. […] Whenever it seems to me that the *tabula rasa* has been beneficial, it has proved to be an illusion.
>
> Brahms edited Couperin, Sciarrino has transcribed Scarlatti, Ravel and Berio harmonized popular songs, Bartok collected them… Since music was first written we have not stopped crossing musics by tropes, transcriptions, collections, citations, or plagiarisms (voluntary or not), 'mixing' them as one might say today.
>
> We live with more music stored in memory (in all senses of the term) than our predecessors and it is inevitable that this legacy, sometimes encumbering, interferes in our way of dreaming sounds. It is necessary to welcome this 'parasitism' to have a clear conscience, to transform it into a poetic ferment.[15]

Sceptical of 'originality', Pesson uses the idea of memory to question the distinction traditionally made between composition and arrangement. However, he also identifies a potential for fresh artistic stimulation in a similar conceptual elision of composition and listening.

> If to compose is, as I believe, nothing other than to prolong the work of listening, it is necessary that this listening be open and searching, that it becomes the way in which the artist will reach

[15] 'objectiver […] la contamination qui s'opère entre l'invention et la mémoire. Il me semble que les œuvres qui nous hantent s'interposent, d'une manière ou d'une autre, lorsqu'on croit tirer une idée du néant, et que, en matière d'art, la recherche est concomitante à une perpétuelle archéologie. […] En quoi il me semble que la *tabula rasa* a été salutaire, mais qu'elle s'avère illusoire.

Brahms éditait Couperin, Sciarrino a transcrit Scarlatti, Ravel et Berio harmonisaient des chants populaires, Bartók en recueillait… On n'a cessé depuis que la musique s'écrit, par tropes, transcriptions, collections, citations, plagiats (volontaires ou non) de croiser les musiques, de les « métisser » comme on dirait aujourd'hui.

Nous vivons avec plus de musique en mémoire (dans tous les sens du terme) que nos prédécesseurs et il est fatal que ce legs, parfois encombrant, interfère dans notre manière de rêver le son. Il faut accueillir ce « parasitage », en avoir une claire conscience, le transformer en un ferment poétique.' Gérard Pesson, 'Entretien avec Gérard Pesson: L'Espace d'un Instant Donné', in *Gérard Pesson: Un Instantané*, Instant Donné and Marion Tassou (Nouveau Théâtre de Montreuil, Paris, 19 June 2018), [Concert programme note], <https://manifeste.ircam.fr/media/uploads/events/manifeste%202018/gerard%20pesson/prg_gerard_pesson.pdf>, accessed 18 April 2019. 8.

> what is unknown to them, leading them to undertake what they do not (yet) know to do, because it seems to me that it is their mission.[16]

Elsewhere, Pesson follows the implications of such elisions, using a military metaphor to describe the affinity between listening, memory, and arrangement in the listening mind.

> The point of listening makes the immediate present and the archive sound simultaneously. It seems to erase this present as it underlines it. The absolute ear, the one which names and denounces, must leave the vanguard [*front*, also 'forehead'] in order to move to listening on the home front (which is not that of [military] intelligence). It samples, recomposes, connects and phrases.[17]

The archaeological *désécriture*, or 'unwriting', undertaken in Pesson's arrangements is, according to the composer, 'nothing other than a way to continue the tireless work of listening'.[18] For Pesson, the interdependence of composition and arrangement models that of listening and memory, blurring the distinctions between each activity. If arrangement is a process of listening which objectifies itself, it follows that it allows listeners to listen to themselves listening to music, including arrangements.

1.4 Listening

Although Pesson's comments may seem solipsistic or to lack precise meaning, their significance can be better appreciated in the context of a broader contemporary discourse that probes the close relationship between arrangement and listening. For example, the composer Brice Pauset has characterised transcription as 'a composition of listening—as composition *and* as listening'.[19] He applies this perspective to instances ranging historically from self-

[16] 'Si composer n'est, comme je le crois, rien d'autre que prolonger le travail de l'écoute, alors il faut que cette écoute soit ouverte et chercheuse, qu'elle devienne la voie par laquelle l'artiste atteindra ce qu'il ne connaît pas, l'amenant à entreprendre ce qu'il ne sait pas (encore) faire, car il me semble que c'est sa mission.' ibid. 8.

[17] 'La pointe de l'écoute fait sonner le temps immédiat et l'archive simultanément. Elle semble l'effacer quand elle le souligne. L'oreille absolue, celle qui nomme et qui dénonce, doit quitter le front pour passer à l'écoute arrière (qui n'est pas du renseignement). Elle échantillonne, recompose, lie et phrase.' Gérard Pesson, 'Ecoute Arrière', *L'Oreille* (15 October 2010) <http://droitdecites.org/2010/10/15/ecoute-arriere-gerard-pesson/>. Pesson's description of listening here is akin to Bergson's account of the interaction between experience and memory through the image of an inverted cone, see Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1978).

[18] 'Cette désécriture n'est rien d'autre qu'une manière de poursuivre le travail inlassable de l'écoute.' Gérard Pesson, Lambert Dousson, and Sarah Troche, 'De l'Écoute Buissonnière à l'Empreinte du Geste: Entretien avec Gérard Pesson', *Geste,* 6 (2009), 334-347. 335.

[19] 'la transcription comme composition de l'écoute—comme composition *et* comme écoute'. Brice Pauset, 'La Transcription Comme Composition de l'Écoute', in Peter Szendy (ed.), *Arrangements, Dérangements: La Transcription Musicale Aujourd'hui* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000), 131-140. 140.

reworkings by Bach and Beethoven through Webern's versions of Bach and Schoenberg to responses to Schubert by Zender (*Schuberts 'Winterreise'*, 1993) and himself (*Kontra-Sonate*, 2000).[20] Similarly, Zender's own concept of composition as 'productive listening' is an important motivation for his practice of 'composed interpretation'.[21] However, the idea that musical arrangement exists in an intimate relationship with the act of listening has been developed most extensively by the philosopher Peter Szendy. His work forms a key part of the wider intensification of scholarly interest in listening which has occurred in recent decades, including in relation to music.[22] In *Listen: A History of Our Ears*, Szendy proceeds from the premise that 'to *listen to music as music*' entails 'a musical listening that is *aware of itself*'.[23] For Szendy, a self-conscious listening of this kind is premised on the desire to listen to another (an Other) listening to us listen:

> I want to sign my listening: I would like to point out, to identify, and to share such-and-such a sonorous event that *no one else besides me*, I am certain of it, has heard as I have. […] And I am even convinced that musical listening exists only insofar as this desire and conviction exist; in other words, that listening—and not hearing or perception—begins with this legitimate desire to be signed and addressed. To others.[24]

Szendy understands musical arrangement as objectifying this desire; the practice is therefore central to his discussion of listening. Arrangers, he suggests, are

---

[20] Pauset's *Kontra-Sonate* (2000) responds to Schubert's Piano Sonata in A minor (D 845).
[21] See Håvard Enge, 'The Unfinished Past: Hans Zender's Concept of Productive Listening', *Studia Musicologica Norvegica*, 36 (2010), 144-159.
[22] The study of listening is a broad and varied field encompassing approaches from musicology, philosophy, and sound studies among other disciplines. See, for example, Nikolaus Bacht, 'Special Issue: Listening: Interdisciplinary Perspectives', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 135/Supplement 1 (2010); Catherine Laws, 'Special Issue: On Listening', *Performance Research*, 15/3 (2010); Sander van Maas (ed.), *Thresholds of Listening: Sound, Technics, Space* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015); Michel Chion, *Sound: An Acoulogical Treatise*, trans. James A. Steintrager (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016); Jean-Luc Nancy, *Listening*, trans. Charlotte Mandell (New York: Fordham University Press, 2007); Jonathan Sterne (ed.), *The Sound Studies Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2012).
[23] Peter Szendy, *Listen: A History of Our Ears*, trans. Charlotte Mandell (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008). 1. First published as Peter Szendy, *Écoute: Une Histoire de Nos Oreilles* (Paris: Minuit, 2001). See also Peter Szendy and Nicolas Donin, 'Otographes', *Circuit*, 13/2 (2003), 11-26; Peter Szendy et al., 'Musique: Interpréter l'Écoute, Selon Peter Szendy', in David Vandiedonck and Émilie Da Lage-Py (eds.), *Musique Interpréter l'Écoute* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003), 17-28; Peter Szendy, *Musica Practica: Arrangements et Phonographies de Monteverdi à James Brown* (Esthétiques; Paris: L'Harmattan, 1997).
[24] Szendy, *Listen*. 3.

> listeners who have *written down their listening*. […] The arranger (who can moreover be an author now and again) is not merely a virtuoso of styles: he is a musician who knows how to *write down a listening*; who knows how, with any sonorous work, to *make it listened to as*… .[25]

Arrangements, by extension, are written musical traces of an arranger's experience of listening to what they arrange. Szendy proposes that arrangement is an activity implicit in all listening, and that listening is an activity implicit in all arrangement, each constituting the other.[26] From this perspective, a musical listening cannot be identical to a work heard in the same way that an arrangement cannot be identical to the work it arranges. Szendy therefore advocates a concept of 'plastic listening' in which the work is constituted by listening rather than a 'structural listening' in which listening is entirely determined by the work. Works, he suggests, 'configure themselves in their reception, their possible appropriation, even in listening': an arrangement participates in making the arranged work what it is.[27] In engaging with recent arrangements, the present thesis necessarily considers the continuing relevance of the work concept, or rather work concepts, in contemporary musical culture.

1.5 Arrangement, listening, Pesson (II)

It is worth noting the kinship between Szendy's conception of listening and the blurring of production and consumption identified by Bourriaud in *Postproduction*, first published a year after Szendy's book.[28] Pesson's arrangements belong to the same cultural context as these two texts, Paris around the turn of the twenty-first century. With this context in mind, the composer's characterization of arrangement as part of the work of listening appears not idiosyncratic or abstruse but a timely participation in contemporary concerns in art and philosophy. It is therefore unsurprising that the conception of arrangement adopted by Szendy

[25] Ibid. 6.
[26] For an alternative view of arrangements as reflecting particular modes of listening, see Ola Stockfelt, 'Adequate Modes of Listening', in Anahid Kassabian and Leo G. Svendsen (eds.), *Keeping Score: Music, Disciplinarity, Culture* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1997).
[27] Szendy, *Listen*. 7.
[28] In what could almost be a quotation from Szendy, Bourriaud states that 'to listen to records becomes work in itself, which diminishes the dividing line between reception and practice'. Bourriaud, *Postproduction*. 18. The DJ, who remixes existing music, is a paradigmatic figure for both Szendy and Bourriaud.

and others has affected the way in which Pesson's arrangements are understood. Promoting this view of his work, Pesson approvingly reports Lachenmann's description of his *Wunderblock* as 'a listening of listening', a phrase strikingly similar to those employed by Szendy.[29] In an internet video on 'musical listening' produced by IRCAM, Nicolas Donin explicitly links Szendy's idea of arrangement as a transcription of listening with Pesson's *Nebenstück*.[30] Szendy is likewise quoted in the promotional material for Ensemble Cairn's concert cycle 'L'écoute et ses métamorphose, la transcription' ('Listening and its metamorphoses, the transcription'), of which Pesson's *Transformations du Menuet de Mozart* formed one instalment.[31] Tellingly, Lambert Dousson and Sarah Troche begin an introduction to Pesson's music by foregrounding the reflexive engagement with listening in his output more generally: 'The music of Gérard Pesson listens to itself. It *allows us to listen to a listening of listening*'.[32]

This conception of Pesson's music is cued in part by its extreme quietness, which has earned him the sobriquet 'Gérard *peu d'son*' ('not much sound').[33] The strain experienced in attending to these often barely-audible sounds encourages listening which is intensely aware of itself. In what Pesson describes as 'a new pact of audition', '[t]he ear leans towards the sound, as an eye squints to focus'.[34] In frequently leaving listeners struggling to identify the physical causes of the sounds they hear, Pesson's extensive deployment of unconventional playing techniques, sometimes confusingly imitative of everyday noises, has a similar effect. The often-oblique references to musical tradition throughout his work also place listening under a

[29] Gérard Pesson and David Sanson, 'Entretien avec Gérard Pesson', *Cycle Gérard Pesson* (Paris: Festival d'Automne à Paris, 2008), 3-6 [Press release]. 4. See also Pesson, Dousson, and Troche, 'Entretien avec Gérard Pesson'. 335.
[30] 'Écoute musicale par Nicolas Donin', *YouTube* [Video], <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7r0a8URAH40>, accessed 1 August 2017. 5:25.
[31] '12 transformations du menuet de Mozart K.355', *Fédération des Ensembles Vocaux et Instrumentaux Spécialisés* [Concert publicity materials], <https://www.fevis.com/concert/12-transformations-du-menuet-de-mozart-k-355-par-gerard-pesson/>, accessed 1 April 2019.
[32] 'La musique de Gérard Pesson s'écoute. Elle donne à écouter une écoute de l'écoute'. Pesson, Dousson, and Troche, 'Entretien avec Gérard Pesson'. 334. Emphasis added.
[33] In his published diary, Pesson reports that this nickname was first used by the composer Dominique Troncin and spread by Dominique My, director of Ensemble Fa. Gérard Pesson, *Cran d'Arrêt du Beau Temps: Journal 1991-1998* (Paris: Van Dieren, 2004). 113.
[34] 'un nouveau pacte d'audition', 'L'oreille se penche vers le son, comme un œil se plisse en focale.' Pesson, Dousson, and Troche, 'Entretien avec Gérard Pesson'. 342.

corresponding strain, bringing it to attention. According to Yannick Alirol, such references to everyday noises or other music '[arouse] an anxious listening to [Pesson's] works, which constantly call into question the way in which we listen to music'.[35]

As its affinity with Szendy's conception of arrangements suggests, the reflexivity implied by Dousson and Troche's description of Pesson's music is especially applicable to his reworkings of existing pieces. Understood in this context, Pesson's reworkings 'listen to themselves' in not only in re-presenting a work but also representing how Pesson hears it: listeners can listen to his listening. As Szendy argues, the listening of individuals is influenced by shared ideologies or 'regimes' of listening, in particular those defined in relation to the work concept.[36] Cued by Szendy, Pesson's arrangements might be interpreted as allowing listeners to hear their own listening, manifesting the 'regimes' of listening which continue to influence how works are heard and, perhaps, a degree of resistance to them. These 'regimes' affect how listeners engage with works and, crucially, their altered re-presentation as 'arrangements'. This thesis explores how Pesson's music may variously prompt, preserve, play upon, provoke, and push back against the 'regimes' by which listeners conventionally engage not only with works but also with arrangements.

1.6 Aims and approach

One manifestation of the growing cultural interest in musical arrangement is the increasing number of scholarly works that engage with the topic. Many of these studies focus on particular repertoires (such as nineteenth-century arrangements of lieder for piano solo or orchestral music for piano duet) or figures (such as Liszt or Busoni).[37] Others examine

[35] 'susciter une écoute inquiète de ces œuvres qui remettent constamment en question la manière dont on écoute la musique[.]' Yannick Alirol, *Gérard Pesson: Aspects de l'Œuvre et Entretien avec le Compositeur* (Paris: Observatoire Musical Français, 2010). 37.
[36] Szendy, *Listen*. 99-128 and throughout.
[37] See, for example, David Francis Urrows, 'Conscientious Translation: Liszt, Robert Franz, and the Phenomenology of Lied Transcription', in David Francis Urrows (ed.), *Word and Music Studies: Essays on Word/Music Adaptation and on Surveying the Field* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 135-160; Thomas Christensen, 'Four-Hand Piano Transcription and Geographies of Nineteenth-Century Musical Reception', *Journal of the American*

arrangements as a part of reception history, using them to track the changing meanings of a single work (such as Schubert's *Marche Militaire* or Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*) over time.[38] Studies of this kind provide valuable insight into the role arrangements have played in specific cultural contexts but have generally devoted little sustained attention to the broader methodological, analytical, theoretical, and philosophical issues that the study of arrangement raises. Lacking a widely applicable critical framework through which different responses to these issues might be articulated, scholarly interventions on this topic have remained unhelpfully isolated both from each other and other fields of enquiry within and beyond musicology. The first and most important aim of this thesis is therefore to develop a theoretical framework that might usefully inform critical approaches to arrangement in a wide variety of contexts. Sustained engagement with four pieces by Pesson serves to both stimulate and ground this ongoing theoretical project. These case studies serve a second aim of the thesis, to address the current paucity of scholarly literature about Pesson's music, especially in English.[39] The present study explores key aspects of the composer's style in relation to four representative works rather than conducting an exhaustive survey of his arrangements or aesthetic ideas. The

Musicological Society, 52/2 (1999), 255-298; Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*; Erinn Knyt, 'Between Composition and Transcription: Ferruccio Busoni and Music Notation', *Twentieth-Century Music*, 11/1 (2014), 37-61.

[38] See, for example, Scott Messing, *Marching to the Canon: The Life of Schubert's Marche Militaire* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2014); Ryan Raul Bañagale, *Arranging Gershwin: Rhapsody in Blue and the Creation of an American Icon* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

[39] To date, Pesson's music has received little scholarly attention in English, apart from fleeting references to it in recent surveys of contemporary music (Griffiths, *Modern Music and After*. 375-377, 414; Rutherford-Johnson, *Music After the Fall*. 254). The number of publications about the composer in French is greater, but still limited. For a survey of themes Pesson's work and an extensive interview with the composer see Alirol, *Gérard Pesson*. Further overviews of his work and interview material can be found in Pesson, Dousson, and Troche, 'Entretien avec Gérard Pesson'; Martin Kaltenecker, 'Concasser, Soustraire: L'Esthétique de Gérard Pesson', *Gèrard Pesson: Portrait en Dix-Sept Œuvres* (Paris: Festival d'Automne Programme 2008, 2008), 9-11 [Festival programme]; Martin Kaltenecker, 'Gérard Pesson: Parcours de l'Œuvre', *Brahms.ircam.fr* 2008) <brahms.ircam.fr/composers/composer/2553/#parcours>, accessed 4 July 2016; Pesson and Sanson, 'Entretien avec Gérard Pesson'. Pesson's available lectures and writings, notably his published literary diary, also provide insight into his compositional concerns. See Pesson, *Journal*; Gérard Pesson, 'Transcendance et Sensation: Un Parallèle Mahler/Debussy', in Maxime Joos (ed.), *Claude Debussy: Jeux de Formes* (Paris: Editions Rue d'Ulm, 2004), 79-97; Gérard Pesson, 'La Composition Comme Auto-Fiction: Figure, Portrait et Substrat dans l'Écriture Musicale', (IRCAM, 13 July 2006) [Recorded lecture]. Studies of individual works have adopted political, music-analytical, and sociological perspectives; see Lambert Dousson, 'Filtrer, Relâcher: Comment l'Espace d'une Touche (de Piano) Peut Constituer un Espace Politique', *Spaces of Art* (Copenhagen, 3 May 2008) [Conference paper]; Kaltenecker, 'Sérénade Interrompue'; Luis Velasco-Pufleau, 'Réseaux Collaboratifs et Création Musicale', *Figures de l'Art*, 30 (2015), 83-94.

third and final aim of this thesis is to consider the wider implications of its theoretical arguments and musical analyses by situating them within broader debates about listening.

This thesis seeks to assemble a body of 'arrangement theory' through close engagement with Pesson's music rather than positing such theory as an initial 'given' that may be simply applied to each example. Consequently, the 'Approaching Arrangement' chapter (Chapter 2) that preceeds the four case studies does not set out all the key terms and concepts encountered in the thesis, but instead provides the foundation on which the theoretical arguments of later chapters build. Key concepts that do not appear in this preliminary chapter are introduced over the course of the thesis as they become relevant to its argument. This argument begins in Chapter 2, which addresses the terminological confusion that surrounds the topic before outlining and then critiquing the dominant, fidelity-based conception of arrangement. Following this, it advocates understanding arrangement as a way of listening rather than type of musical object, using this critical perspective to reconsider longstanding negative assessments of the practice, including its association with kitsch.

Chapter 3 presents the first of the thesis's four case studies. The chapter challenges conventional distinctions between an arrangement's pre-existing 'content' and new 'medium' by considering how the interaction between these concepts generates meaning in *Nebenstück*. In particular, it considers how Pesson uses timbre, and especially noise, to establish meaningful continuities between notions of medium in the contexts of arrangement and sound reproduction technologies. Chapters 4 and 5 interrogate the idea that arrangements 'follow' their sources 'step by step' and its relationship with the regime of 'structural listening' that Szendy critiques. Chapter 4 probes the assumptions that inform this notion of 'linear temporal fidelity' before analysing the tension between following and wandering from the temporal 'pathway' of a source presented in *Ambre Nous Resterons*. This tension resists the architectonic conception of the musical work implicit in 'structural listening', instead representing it as constituted more flexibly through the perception and imagination of listeners. Chapter 5 questions the conceptual

distinction between the manipulations of timbre and temporality discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, pursuing a close reading of *Wunderblock* to illustrate how Pesson's 'erasure' precipitates the temporal disintegration of his source despite 'following' it bar by bar. In this way, *Wunderblock*, like *Ambre Nous Resterons*, seems to address the instability and absence of its source rather than bringing it to presence as traditional conceptions of arrangement might suggest. Chapter 6 explores the fraught relationship between notions of 'fidelity' and kitsch from both modernist and authenticity-focused standpoints in relation to *Kein Deutscher Himmel*, Pesson's most popular and controversial piece of music. The chapter considers how Pesson has attempted to secure a favourable reaction to the transcription with different audiences, often without success. It also contends that the commercial distribution of the piece has reinforced a discourse of fidelity and discusses the effect this has had on how the transcription has been heard by a wide range of listeners. Chapter 7 concludes the thesis, reviewing its central claims and the tools it has developed before considering further challenges in the study of musical arrangement. Overall, the thesis considers not simply *what* Pesson's arrangements may mean, but, more importantly, *how* the idea of arrangement affects the ways music is and might be understood as meaningful.

2 Approaching Arrangement

2.1 Arrangement from word to idea

2.1.1 Terminological confusion

Any discussion of musical arrangement must confront the terminological confusion which surrounds the topic. The word 'arrangement' can express a wide variety of related but subtly different meanings, and its precise meaning in any given context is often difficult to discern. To complicate matters further, its possible meanings often arise in relation to a host of associated terms, many of which are equally ambiguous. 'Transcription' and 'recomposition' are perhaps foremost in this loose grouping, which might also include orchestration, adaptation, version, reworking, compositions 'after', paraphrase, potpourri, and even cover versions, remixes, mashups, and so on.[40] To this list we might also add more creatively descriptive or metaphorical designations, from 'reimagining', 'translation', and 'commentary', to the more pejorative 'derangement', 'mutilation', and 'vulgarization'. Composers engaged in practices of reworking have also formulated their own labels for specific works and approaches, such as 'composed interpretation' and 'creative transformation' (Zender), 'anamorphosis' (Schöllhorn), 'framed orchestration' (Glanert), or 'recoding' (Filippo Zapponi).[41] In Pesson's case, these individual labels include 'filtration' (*filtrage*), 'erasure' (*effacement*), 'coloured instrumentation' (*instrumentation colorée*), and 'making of'. The ambiguity of the word 'arrangement' itself is only increased by its association with this potentially bewildering array of associated terms. This terminological confusion reflects and exacerbates a corresponding

[40] An indicative list of such terms in English, French, and German appears in a recent volume on the subject: 'Adaptation, Arrangement, Ausarbeitung, Bearbeitung, Coverversion, Demontage, Einrichtung, Fassung, Instrumentation, Kopie, Mashup, Metamorphose, Montage, Orchestration, Originalbearbeitung, Palimpsest, Paraphrase, Parodie, Plagiat, Recycling, Reduktion, Rekomposition, Rekonstruktion, Remake, Remastering, Remix, Revision, Rewriting, Stilkopie, Transformation, Transkription, Überarbeitung, Übermalung, Umarbeitung, Variation, Work-in-progress, Zweitverwertung'. Obert and Zimmermann, *Re-Set*. 5. It should be noted that arrangement and transcription are direct cognates of terms in Pesson's native French, though the German term usually considered equivalent to 'arrangement', '*Bearbeitung*', is etymologically distinct, loosely meaning 'reworking'.

[41] These terms refer to Zender's *Schuberts Winterreise*, Schöllhorn's *Anamorphoses* (2001-2004), and Glanert's *Vier Präludien und Ernste Gesänge* (2005).

conceptual one; to address its causes is therefore to begin to reflect critically on how listeners think about musical arrangement.

2.1.2 Two types of usage

The ambiguity of the word 'arrangement' results partly from the confusion of two different ways of using the term. These reflect different conceptions of the relationship between 'arrangement' and the diverse collection of terms associated with it. On the one hand, 'arrangement' is used as an umbrella term which is applied to a broad subcategory of practices within the wider field of musical borrowing.[42] These more specific practices, such as transcription and recomposition, are understood as *types* of arrangement.[43] On the other hand, the word 'arrangement' is often used much more specifically, as if it referred to only one of the many related practices encompassed by its use as an umbrella term. In this narrower sense, arrangement is understood as distinct from other practices such as transcription and recomposition, despite its similarity to them. The coexistence of these two different ways of using the word 'arrangement' can make its intended meaning in any given context unclear. Further confusion arises from the unwitting slippage between different ways of using the term within the work of individual commentators. For example, Sandra Mangsen begins her study of early modern keyboard arrangements by defining the term according to its broad, 'umbrella' usage: 'The transformation of a piece through a change of medium, a simplification, or an elaboration, is usually referred to as an "arrangement"'.[44] She maintains this definition in positing transcription as one specific type of arrangement. 'If the transformation is fairly literal', she states, 'we tend to call the result a transcription—that is, an arrangement in which the hand of the perpetrator is not much in evidence'.[45] However, later in the same paragraph, Mangsen

[42] See J. Peter Burkholder, 'The Uses of Existing Music: Musical Borrowing as a Field', *Notes*, 50/3 (1994), 851-870.
[43] '[M]ost academics concur that transcriptions are essentially a sub-category of the wider term "arrangement"'. Ian Shepherd, *The Drawing Room Symphony: A History of the Piano Duet Transcription* (Norwich: Kingswood, 2008). 8.
[44] Mangsen, *Songs Without Words*. 1.
[45] Ibid. 1.

makes an unannounced switch to a narrower sense of the word 'arrangement', suggesting that '[a]n arrangement, in contrast [to a transcription], often involves more extensive changes which may either simplify […], or elaborate upon the original'.[46] In this second case, Mangsen contradicts her earlier statement, positing arrangement as distinct from transcription rather than as a category which includes it.

2.1.3 Specific usages

The confusion caused by the failure to differentiate these two distinct ways of using the word 'arrangement' is compounded by further ambiguities. In contrast to the general consensus regarding the umbrella use of the term, the narrower way of using it has itself been subject to great inconsistency. This is especially evident in the changing relationship between narrower usages of 'arrangement' and the related term 'transcription'.[47] As Millan Sachania documents, the meanings of the two terms have swapped over the course of the twentieth century.[48] While 'arrangement' formerly implied a more 'literal' re-presentation of a source and 'transcription' a 'freer' one, the terms now have the opposite connotations, as Mangsen's comments illustrate.[49] Given that in other contexts to 'transcribe' simply means to write out a copy, as the word's etymology implies, the early-twentieth-century musical usage that suggests a 'freer' approach than 'arrangement' is puzzling. One explanation is that transcription, as a simple copying out, was not initially associated with a change in instrumentation, while arrangement was.[50] Consequently, the alterations to a source made in an arrangement could be interpreted as

[46] Ibid. 1.
[47] This thesis is not concerned with 'transcription' in its ethnomusicological sense, the writing down of previously un-notated musical sounds. See Jason Stanyek et al., 'Forum on Transcription', *Twentieth-Century Music*, 11/1 (2014), 101-161. Similarly, the meaning of 'arrangement' specific to the context of jazz ('a written-down, fixed, often printed and published version of a composition', akin to 'orchestration' in Western art music) will not be discussed here. See Gunther Schuller, 'Arrangement', in Barry Kernfeld (ed.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz* (2nd edn, 1; London: Macmillan, 2002).
[48] Millan Sachania, '"Improving the Classics": Some Thoughts on the "Ethics" and Aesthetics of Musical Arrangement', *The Music Review*, 55/1 (1994), 58-75. 61-62.
[49] Some authors maintain their own apparently intentionally idiosyncratic definitions of arrangement, transcription, and paraphrase. See, for example, Leonard B. Meyer, *Music, the Arts, and Ideas: Patterns and Predictions in Twentieth-Century Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967). 195-197.
[50] The word transcription does not seem to have been commonly used to refer to adaptations of instrumentation before the later nineteenth-century, suggesting it retained closer ties with its literal, etymological meaning. Early domestic versions of Beethoven's symphonies were sold as *arrangements* or *Bearbeitungen* (or derivations of

technical necessities, but those which were inevitably introduced in the course of transcription could not, instead being understood as artistic. Transcription seemed less 'literal' in its approach because the changes it wrought were heard as 'artistic' rather than merely technical. As 'arrangement' and 'transcription' came to be applied equally to adaptations both with and without changes in instrumentation in the twentieth century, the implications of each term re-aligned to a degree with those of their meanings beyond music. However, the changing connotations of the two terms have eroded distinctions between them to such a degree that they have become almost synonymous. Derrick Puffett, for example, laments that 'the two terms are used interchangeably in so much of the literature that it seems pointless to try to distinguish them now'.[51] Although noting the potentially more literal connotations of the word 'transcription', recent reference entries and scholarly discussions about arrangement also highlight this interchangeability.[52]

2.1.4 Umbrella usage

The inconsistency of such narrower usages of the word 'arrangement' makes attempting to distinguish its meaning from that of equally unclear terms such as 'transcription' and 'recomposition' less fruitful than recognising their common conceptual basis. As Jim Samson, using 'arrangement' in a narrow sense, suggests:

---

these French and German terms) rather than as transcriptions. Although throughout his career Liszt called some of his 'stricter' reworkings 'transcriptions', the term is now used to describe many more of these reworkings, both 'strict' and 'free', than Liszt ever did himself. Once it gained wider currency in the context of instrumental adaptation, the 'transcription' seems to have quickly accrued two polarized meanings, referring not only to 'strictness' in the Lisztian sense but also 'the most extreme advance yet achieved in the direction of freedom of interpretation' as Hubert Parry puts in in the first edition of *Grove* See Hubert Parry, 'Arrangement', in George Grove (ed.), *A Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London: MacMillan, 1879). By the 1920s, Liszt's usage had largely been overtaken by Parry's. This issue, however, remains an etymological puzzle awaiting further investigation.

[51] Derrick Puffett, 'Transcription and Recomposition: The Strange Case of Zemlinsky's Maeterlinck Songs', *Analytical Strategies and Musical Interpretation: Essays on Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 72-119. 437.

[52] Consider, for example, the following instances: '[T]he terms are commonly interchangeable in everyday musical conversation, "arrangements" perhaps suggesting more license in the adaptation', Urrows, 'Conscientious Translation: Liszt, Robert Franz, and the Phenomenology of Lied Transcription'. 136; 'The terms "transcription", "arrangement" and "reduction" are, for the purposes of this book, largely interchangeable'. Shepherd, *The Drawing Room Symphony*. 8; 'The terms transcribe and transcription are sometimes used interchangeably with arrange and arrangement. Often, however, the former imply greater fidelity to the original', 'Arrangement', in Don Michael Randel (ed.), *The Harvard Dictionary of Music* (4th edn; Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2003).

> It may be that the line separating categories such as arrangement, transcription and recomposition needs to be looked at in rather broader terms than the legalistic definitions of an analytical aesthetics, and that a more flexible view of roles and motivations would not find an abundance of clear water between them […] In any event, there are issues that arise equally from all of them.[53]

In its umbrella sense, 'arrangement' is the name usually given to the range of practices bound by the shared issues to which Samson refers. In some cases, terms such as 'transcription' and 'recomposition' are used as quasi-synonyms of 'arrangement' in its umbrella sense. This is because of the combined effect of their interchangeability with 'arrangement' in its narrow sense and confusion between this usage of the word and its broader meaning. However, it is the network of ideas which constitute and sustain this grouping of practices that are the focus of attention in this thesis, not any particular term used to describe it.[54] 'Arrangement' is the most widely-used term for this category and so is the one which will be adopted here, for reasons of convenience and clarity rather than any special linguistic preference for the term.

Conceptions of arrangement in its broad, umbrella sense have changed little for a century and a half and remain consistent in recent discussions of the topic. In the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Malcolm Boyd defines arrangement as '[t]he reworking of a musical composition, usually for a different medium from that of the original'.[55] Arnold Whittall, in the *Oxford Companion to Music*, characterises arrangement similarly as '[t]he adaptation of music for a medium different from that for which it was originally composed'.[56] In an almost identical formulation, the *Harvard Dictionary of Music* defines arrangement as '[t]he adaptation of a composition for a medium different from that for which it was originally composed, usually with the intention of preserving the essentials of the musical substance'.[57] Older reference texts also provide comparable definitions of the term. For example, in a musical

[53] Jim Samson, *Virtuosity and the Musical Work: The Transcendental Studies of Liszt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). 5.
[54] This focus should not, however, deaden awareness of the potentially differing implications of each of these terms in the individual contexts in which they appear.
[55] Malcolm Boyd, 'Arrangement', in Stanley Sadie (ed.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (2nd edn; London: Macmillan, 2001).
[56] Arnold Whittall, 'Arrangement', in Alison Latham (ed.), *The Oxford Companion to Music* (2002).
[57] 'Arrangement', (2003).

encyclopaedia of 1924 Waldo Selden Pratt characterised arrangement as '[t]he process or result of readjusting a work for performance by different artistic means from that originally intended'.[58] French reference texts provide similar definitions of the cognate *arrangement.*[59] While the differences between these various definitions should be noted, they nonetheless circle around a single common idea of arrangement. This idea is captured elegantly in a reference entry of 1950 by Robert Illing which describes arrangement simply as 'the presentation of a composition in other than its original form'.[60]

In his *Grove* entry, Boyd seeks to clarify the concept of arrangement by establishing the musical practices which are and are not encompassed by it. He does this by presenting progressively more restrictive conceptions of arrangement before arriving at the 'commonly used' umbrella sense of the term, itself encompassing a range of more specific practices.

> The word 'arrangement' might be applied to any piece of music based on or incorporating pre-existing material: variation form, the contrafactum, the parody mass, the pasticcio, and liturgical works based on a cantus firmus all involve some measure of arrangement. In the sense in which it is commonly used among musicians, however, the word may be taken to mean either the transference of a composition from one medium to another or the elaboration (or simplification) of a piece, with or without a change of medium. In either case some degree of recomposition is usually involved, and the result may vary from a straightforward, almost literal, transcription to a paraphrase which is more the work of the arranger than of the original composer.[61]

In the 'commonly used' and understood sense of the term Boyd identifies, an arrangement is an altered re-presentation of an existing musical work, and only that work, in its entirety. So conceived, arrangement is to be distinguished from other types of musical borrowing which re-use only part of an earlier piece (such as quotation, sampling, and variations or fantasy on an

[58] Waldo Selden Pratt, 'Arrangement', *The New Encyclopedia of Music and Musicians* (New York: Macmillan, 1924).
[59] See, for example, 'Arrangement', in François Michel (ed.), *Encyclopédie de la Musique* (1; Paris: Fasquelle, 1958); 'Arrangement', in Marc Honegger (ed.), *Dictionnaire de la Musique* (3; Paris: Bordas, 1970 [1976]).
[60] Robert Illing, 'Arrangement', *A Dictionary of Music* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1950).
[61] Boyd, 'Arrangement', (2001). This narrowing of the definition is even more dramatic in an earlier version of the entry, which begins differently: 'In its broadest possible sense the word "arrangement" might be applied to all Western music from Hucbald to Hindemith, since each composition involves the rearrangement of the basic and unchanging melodic and harmonic components of music, whether these be understood as belong to the harmonic series or the chromatic scale'. Malcolm Boyd, 'Arrangement', in Stanley Sadie (ed.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London: Macmillan, 1980).

existing theme) or draw on multiple sources either in part (as in collage) or complete (as in medley). It is this idea of arrangement which will be interrogated in this thesis.

2.2 The idea of arrangement

2.2.1 Arrangement and the work concept

The idea of arrangement is dependent upon the concept of the musical work. The work concept is the unacknowledged centre upon which Boyd's progressively more restrictive definitions of 'arrangement' converge, informing his ultimate formulation in both the range of practices delineated by it and, more implicitly, its historical specificity.[62] Among conceptions of musical re-use, the idea of arrangement posits a uniquely ambivalent and ambiguous relationship with a single prior work, its source.[63] The arrangement seems to be a copy, replica, simulacrum, or even doppelgänger that makes its source *present* to a listener and also a surrogate, substitute, proxy, or stand-in which deputizes for it in its *absence*. An arrangement, so conceived, both *is* and *is not* the work that it arranges. For this reason, the idea of arrangement is inextricably linked to that of the musical work and is unable to exist without it. As Lydia Goehr suggests,

> transcription emerged with [its] modern understanding as [a concept] sibling to the work-concept. [It] stand[s] in an intimate relation to the latter, but it is not one of identity. It seems to be indeterminate. On occasion we refer to transcriptions as transcriptions; sometimes we speak of them as works in their own right.[64]

The idea of arrangement is therefore not 'ageless' as J. Peter Burkholder has 'tentatively' suggested, but rather is only as old as the work concept in relation to which it is defined.[65] 'Arrangement', writes Peter Szendy, 'will essentially be for us the paradigm of a critical, active

[62] In whittling down his definition, Boyd excludes contrafactum, parody mass, pasticcio, and elaborations of a cantus firmus, all of which are forms of pre-modern musical practice.
[63] The term 'source' rather than 'original' will be adopted here to refer to the arranged work because, as both intertextuality theory and Pesson's conception of composition suggest, this arranged work its always itself derived from earlier music. In this sense 'source' implies a musical 'raw material' rather than an origin of meaning, as discussed in the remainder of this thesis.
[64] Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum*. See also 61-63.
[65] See Appendix 2, 'A Tentative Chronology of Uses of Existing Music' in Burkholder, 'Musical Borrowing as a Field'. 869-870.

relationship with *works*. Which, at least in music, *do not exist as such* before the eighteenth century'.[66] That Goehr dates this change slightly later, to around 1800, does not undermine the basic thesis that the idea of arrangement is dependent on the work concept and arose alongside it.[67] The notion that arrangements might be recognized as re-presentations of anything at all seems to reinforce the impression that works exist in an unchanging form beyond any of their differing instantiations. '[O]ne can […] argue that our very conception of the original—the boundaries we create for the work itself—is developed out of our experience with its translation', Mangsen contends:

> Arrangements may assure us that there is, or was, an original, since the former points up the difference between the two […] The musical work becomes a moving target, its existence being confirmed by the sum total of all its extant versions (preserved, remembered, or created by the reader). In this context, arrangements hardly need to be justified: in helping to define it, they constitute our evidence that the work exists.[68]

For Mangsen, arrangements may be 'justified' on the grounds that they sustain the concept of the musical work.

However, Mangsen also points out that '[c]ontemplating the field of possible arrangements leads one quickly into awkward territory where questions about the work's identity emerge at every turn, from the existence of an original, to the ownership rights of composers, and the interpretative duty or license of the performer'.[69] The idea of arrangement is ideologically 'awkward' within a musical culture centred on a conception of the work as an original, autonomous creation invested with an authentic meaning by its composer. In such a context, arrangements are often viewed negatively as both inauthentic (too original to be considered faithful to an existing work) and derivative (not original enough to be understood as works in their own right). In wilfully disregarding the imperatives of originality and *Werktreue*,

---

[66] Szendy, *Listen*. 39.
[67] On the work concept and historical debates about its age, see Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum*; Szendy, *Listen*. 39-44.Talbot (ed.), *The Musical Work: Reality or Invention*; Carl Dahlhaus, *Esthetics of Music*, trans. William W. Austin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982). 9-15.
[68] Mangsen, *Songs Without Words*. 7.
[69] Ibid. 2.

fidelity to the work, the practice of arrangement might be interpreted as critical of the work concept and the aesthetic ideology which supports it. Jonathan Cross, for example, suggests that the 'ambiguous, borderline status' of arrangement means that over the last century it has 'flourished as a critical tool, challenging the notion of *Werktreue*, dislodging dominant narratives, questioning identities, interrogating traditions and institutions'.[70] However, the idea of arrangement also operates to reinforce dominant aesthetic values. As Daniel Leech-Wilkinson has argued, '"[a]rrangement" functions as an isolation ward into which readings of a composition that challenge orthodox views of the sanctity of classical works can be safely put […] The concept exists only because we have sacralised composers and hypothesised works'.[71] The ambivalent relationship between the idea of arrangement and the work concept is reflected in the musically ambiguous relationship between individual arrangements and the works they arrange.

2.2.2 *Werktreue* against arrangement

In a musical culture premised on the work concept, the uncertain status of arrangements is a source of anxiety. One response to this anxiety is to reaffirm traditional conceptions of the work by denigrating arrangement as an illegitimate artistic activity, thereby attempting to dismiss the 'awkward' questions it poses. Arrangement has long been attacked on the grounds that it is both unfaithful to the work it arranges and unoriginal 'in itself'. Such attacks have often been expressed in moral and even religious as much as artistic terms. Writing of one famed pianist-arranger in 1893, George Bernard Shaw confided, albeit with humorous exaggeration, that he was 'now more than ever convinced that [Carl] Tausig's early death was, like that of Ananias, the result of a supernatural interposition for the extermination of a

[70] Jonathan Cross, 'Tales of Retelling', [Unpublished essay]. I thank Prof. Cross for sending me his original English-language version of the essay, published in German as Jonathan Cross, 'Geschichten vom Wiedererzählen', in Simon Obert and Heidy Zimmermann (eds.), *Re-Set: Rückgriffe und Fortschreibungen in der Musik seit 1900* (Mainz: Schott, 2018), 15-29. Szendy too emphasises the critical potential of arrangement in this regard, but notes that it is not always fulfilled (see Chapter 7).

[71] Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, 'There is No Arrangement', *Rethinking Musical Transcription and Arrangement* (Cambridge, 19 May 2018) [Conference paper].

sacrilegious meddler'.[72] Similarly outraged attacks on the supposed inauthenticity of arrangements intensified as *Werktreue* gained importance in the twentieth century. In its early decades this led to heated polemics over what came to be known as the 'ethics of arrangement'.[73] Arrangements were accused of being 'vandalistic', 'outrages' which 'mauled', 'distorted', or even 'destroyed' great works with perverse irreverence.[74] In his entry on the subject for the *Oxford Companion to Music* (1938), Percy Scholes expressed horror at the 'desecration' perpetrated by 'the evil transcribers', complaining that the 'ineptitude and callousness of arrangers have no end'.[75] 'No Ten Commandments can be graven on tables for the guidance of the arranger', Scholes admitted, 'but he can be asked to observe the Golden Rule of doing to others as he would wish them to do to him'.[76] Even those largely in favour of arrangement agonized over the circumstances in which it was 'permissible', warning against 'abuses perpetrated in the name of freedom of transcription': 'Regard it as odious to change anything whatsoever in the works of the masters, to omit anything or add anything new; this is the greatest insult you can inflict upon art'.[77]

As Alan Walker suggests, such proscriptive attitudes continued to dominate discussions of arrangement until the late twentieth century.

> It was the Age of Authenticity, and the *Urtext* was the thing. Scholarship pressed its case with evangelical zeal, and was extraordinarily successful in converting a whole generation of

[72] George Bernard Shaw, 'The Ninth Symphony', in Dan H. Lawrence (ed.), *Shaw's Music: The Complete Musical Criticism* (II: 1890-1893; London: Max Reinhart, 1981), 825-831. 831. The comment was prompted by a performance a solo piano arrangement of Chopin's First Piano Concerto by Tausig (1841-1871).
[73] The phrase appears earlier: 'The question of the propriety of eking out one work with portions of another entirely independent one […] belongs to what may be called the *morale* of arrangement, and need not be touched upon here'. Parry, 'Arrangement', (1879). Several decades later, Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji complained that '"The Ethics of Transcription" is one of those cliché catch-phrases that musicians are given to, among whom the repetition of parrot cries empty of precise, or any, meaning at all, is as prevalent and as welcome a substitute for intelligent thought as it is with the rest of a modern populace'. Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji, 'Leopold Godowsky as Creative Transcriber', in Marc-André Roberge (ed.), *Mi Contra Fa: The Immoralisings of a Machiavellian Musician* (London: Porcupine Press, 1947), 62-70. 62. For an overview of these debates, see Sachania, '"Improving the Classics"'.
[74] See Discus, 'Gramophone Notes', *The Musical Times*, 69/1020 (1928), 140-142.
[75] Percy A. Scholes, 'Arrangement', *The Oxford Companion to Music* (London: Oxford University Press, 1938).
[76] Ibid.
[77] Alexandre Cellier, 'Is Transcription Permissible?', *The Musical Times*, 66/992 (1925), 900-902. 900, 901.

> musicians to the idea that only the original "soundscape" was worthy of attention. The crime of an arrangement now was that it *was* an arrangement.[78]

For example, in 1952 Paul Hindemith characterised arrangers as 'pseudo-creators' who 'for want of creative talent cannot experience the power of the vivifying fire directly' and so 'try at least to catch a little reflected spark of it'.[79] To Hindemith, the 'irrepressible desire to arrange, to participate in the creative process, at least by nibbling, seems to belong in the same class—although on a higher level—with the cannibal's eating of his captured enemy in order to add the enemy's strength to his own'.[80] Hindemith charged arrangers with inauthenticity as well as unoriginality. The arranger, he writes,

> take[s] some older music written for harpsichord, organ, or any other relatively unattractive group of instruments and dress[es] it up with all sorts of more fashionable trimmings. For the connoisseur this is an artistic procedure of about the same value as providing a nice painted skirt and jacket for the Venus of Milo, or dolling up the saints of Reims and Chartres with tuxedos, mustaches, and horn-rimmed spectacles.[81]

Hindemith complains that respected composers are sadly 'defenceless' against such 'tampering' and 'rehashing' of their work.[82] Instead of arrangements, he advocates direct access to the 'original' work, asserting that 'we should not permit any arranger, even one with the best technique and most honest intentions, to make any decision for us. Consequence: *the arranger is always wrong*'.[83]

2.2.3 Arrangement as *Werktreue*

From the 1960s onwards, arrangement was defended in reaction to the perceived excesses of the 'pious, puritan, and anxiety-ridden' attitudes in the 'Age of Authenticity',

---

[78] Alan Walker, 'Preface', *The Schubert Song Transcriptions for Solo Piano* (3; New York: Dover, 1996). xiii.
[79] Paul Hindemith, *A Composer's World: Horizons and Limitations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952). 143, 141. Interestingly, in his equally spirited defence of transcription over a decade later, Larry Sitsky characterizes critics of arrangement as lacking creative or generative powers, labelling them 'eunuchs'. Larry Sitsky, 'Transcriptions and the Eunuch', *Quadrant*, 10/5 (1966), 30-34.
[80] Hindemith, *A Composer's World*. 142. Cannibalism continues to be used as a metaphorical trope to describe arrangements in negative terms: '[I]n the earlier 20th century many popular compositions by classical composers were cannibalized by jazz composers and arrangers'. Whittall, 'Arrangement', (2002). This trope might be contrasted with the positive conception of artistic and cultural 'cannibalism' within early-twentieth-century Brazilian modernism. See Oswald de Andrade, 'The Cannibalist Manifesto', *Third Text*, 13/46 (1999), 92-95.
[81] Hindemith, *A Composer's World*. 140.
[82] Ibid. 141.
[83] Ibid. 142. Emphasis added.

reflecting more positive views of the practice.[84] Although arrangement may still prompt guarded suspicion in some quarters, explicit moral condemnation of arrangements on the grounds that they are unfaithful to an 'original' work are now rarer in scholarly and journalistic discourse.[85] In recent decades, the notions of fidelity and authenticity which prompted such attacks have been subject to scholarly critique.[86] Despite such critiques, however, these notions remain fundamental to the way in which arrangement is understood in current discussions of the topic. This understanding of arrangement responds to the same anxiety which prompted condemnation of the practice, that it is incompatible with the ideal of fidelity to 'original' works. It seeks to assimilate arrangement into a dominant *Werktreue* ideology, theorizing arrangement in such a way that this ideology remains unchallenged rather than interpreting the practice as critical of it. This position is vividly illustrated by promotional videos for conductor Laurence Equilbey's recent album of orchestrated Schubert songs, which consist of spoof news footage following her arrest for 'infringement' of the composer's 'moral rights'.[87] Although openly mocking the moralistic outrage directed at arrangement, in her 'interrogation' Equilbey defends the orchestrations not by rejecting the values of *Werktreue,* but rather by emphasizing the arrangements' fidelity to Schubert's 'original' songs.

This assimilationist theory of arrangement is not new; Hubert Parry's entry on the subject in the first edition of *Grove* (1879) provides a clear exposition of its basic tenets. Parry elucidates his conception of arrangement through a telling analogy:

---

[84] Keller, 'Arrangement for or Against?'. 23. See also, for example, Sitsky, 'Transcriptions and the Eunuch'; Larry Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano: The Works, the Writings, and the Recordings* (New York: Greenwood, 1986). 295-299; Alan Walker, 'In Defense of Arrangements', *Piano Quarterly*, 36/143 (1988), 26-28.

[85] However, such condemnation remains in evidence in listeners' comments online. See 6.7.4. For insightful discussion of the negative reactions the reuse of 'classical' music still provokes, see Ola Stockfelt, 'Music and Reuse: Theoretical and Historical Considerations', *Music and Manipulation: On the Social Uses and Social Control of Music* (New York: Berghahn, 2006).

[86] The work concept has been historically relativized, undermining its status as a universal arbiter of musical practice (see Chapter 1 note 3) and the desirability and even possibility of fidelity to the work and its supposedly 'authentic' meaning has been challenged. See, for example, Richard Taruskin, *Text and Act: Essays on Music and Performance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

[87] 'The Schubert Trial 1/2', *YouTube* [Video], <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2XYBE46ySKw>, accessed 17 September 2018; 'The Schubert Trial 2/2', *YouTube* [Video], <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qqf6sitTfr4&vl=en>, accessed 17 September 2018.

> Arrangement, or adaptation, is the musical counterpart of literary translation. Voices or instruments are as languages by which the thoughts or emotions of composers are made known to the world; and the object of arrangement is to make that which was written in one musical language intelligible in another.[88]

For Parry, translation suggests that the meaning of a literary text, its content, might be separated from the language through which it is expressed, its medium.[89] Similarly, he reasons, the content of a musical composition, the 'thoughts or emotions' of its composer, might be expressed through a different sounding medium, arising from the use of alternative 'instruments or voices'. An arrangement, Parry argues, expresses the same content or 'meaning' as its source through a different musical medium.

> The functions of the arranger and translator are similar; for instruments, like languages, are characterised by peculiar idioms and special aptitudes and deficiencies which call for critical ability and knowledge of corresponding modes of expression in dealing with them. But more than all, the most indispensable quality of both is a capacity to understand the work they have to deal with. For it is not enough to put note for note or word for word or even to find corresponding idioms. The meanings and values of words and notes are variable with their relative positions, and the choice of them demands appreciation of the work generally, as well as of details of the materials of which it is composed. It demands, in fact, a certain correspondence of feeling with the original author in the mind of the arranger or translator.[90]

Distinguishing between content and medium allows Parry to interpret an arrangement's alterations to an 'original' work not as a betrayal of that work's authentic content, the 'thoughts and emotions' of its composer, but as the mechanism by which this content is faithfully re-expressed. Shaped by *prescriptions* governing 'legitimate' musical practice, Parry's *description* of arrangement posits fidelity as the principal criterion by which arrangements are understood.

2.2.4 Fidelity-essentialism in analytic philosophy

The continuing significance of *Werktreue* ideology in the present, despite recent critique, has ensured that the fidelity-based conception of arrangement reflected by Parry's *Grove* entry remains a dominant interpretative paradigm. The pervasiveness of this theorization

[88] Parry, 'Arrangement', (1879).
[89] Parry espouses an 'instrumental' as opposed to 'hermeneutic' theory of language in which language is thought of as referring to an externally existing meaning rather than itself constituting meaning. See Lawrence Venuti and Mona Baker (eds.), *The Translation Studies Reader* (London: Routledge, 2000). 5-6.
[90] Parry, 'Arrangement', (1879).

is most starkly illustrated by its importance in the work of analytic philosophers. Characteristically, these philosophers seek to fashion a formal theorization of arrangement from so-called 'ordinary' ways of thinking and talking about the subject. Their interventions therefore demonstrate how central fidelity is to the conventional view of arrangement as the altered re-presentation of a musical work. In attempting to affirm and clarify this view, these philosophers unwittingly reveal the problematic assumptions and inner contradictions it implies. In what could almost be a paraphrase of Parry's position, Roger Scruton states that transcriptions' 'relation to the original is not merely accidental: they are *versions* of it, attempts to realise, in another medium, its musical essence. Here we see a striving to reproduce a similar musical experience, through dissimilar sounds'.[91] The 'most interesting cases' of arrangement, Scruton suggests, are those in which 'in order to preserve the *aesthetic* identity of an original, the transcriber is compelled to recompose it, introducing new pitches and patterns in order to re-create the old effect'.[92] He illustrates this point in relation to Brahms's piano left-hand arrangement of J. S. Bach's Chaconne in D minor for solo violin: 'Simply to play the notes of Bach's original on the piano would be to lose its effect […] To arrange the original as Brahms does is to be *truer* to Bach's artistic intention than one could be simply by performing his violin score on the piano'.[93] Fidelity to the 'original' work, being 'true' to it, is an unquestioned axiom of Scruton's conception of arrangement. He accounts for the formal differences between an arrangement and the work it arranges in terms of *fidelity* to the arranged work's '*musical essence*' or 'aesthetic identity', existing beyond the level of form but manifested through it. This conception of arrangement might therefore be termed 'fidelity-essentialism'.

Several other analytic philosophers articulate this fidelity-essentialist view of arrangement, albeit with minor variations in terminology. Paul Thom, for example, states that

[91] Roger Scruton, *The Aesthetics of Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997). 453.
[92] Ibid. 542. This idea is somewhat contradicted by his concurrent claim that arrangements 'promote our sense that harmony, melody, and movement belong to the essence of music—while instrumentation is accidental'. 453.
[93] Ibid. 453.

'the content of the transcription is the same as that of the original work, but the transcription differs from the original by presenting that content in a new medium'.[94] Stephen Davies similarly writes that 'the musical content of the transcriber's score should adequately resemble and preserve the musical content of the original work', but 'must depart far enough from the original to count as a distinct piece and not merely as a *copy* of the original'.[95] Transcription is creative, he suggests, 'precisely in that it seeks to reconcile the musical content of the original work with the limitations and advantages of a medium for which that content was not designed'.[96] Richard Beaudoin and Joseph Moore liken transcription and translation as Parry did, seeking to describe one subspecies of the practice, which they call 'transdialection', in which a transcriber 'reexpresses a work in a different musical dialect'.[97] 'At root, musical transcription aims at preservation', they suggest, it 'has the conservative goal of reexpressing the content of the target work in a new musical context'.[98] In consequence, they argue that 'the transcriber's creativity is balanced against—or better, played out within—a guiding and constraining fidelity to the original work'.[99] Beaudoin and Moore account for differences between an arrangement and its source by claiming that an arrangement is faithful not to the form of its source, but rather its 'expressive content'. The transcriber, they contend, is 'clearly guided in his choices by a sense of something more stable and, dare we say, deeper than the sheer notes of the original'.[100] All these analytic philosophers offer a theorization of arrangement which differs little from that outlined by Parry in 1879.

---

[94] Paul Thom, *The Musician as Interpreter* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007). 7.
[95] Stephen Davies, 'Transcription, Authenticity, and Performance', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 28/3 (1988), 216-227. 216, 217.
[96] Ibid. 218.
[97] Richard Beaudoin and Joseph Moore, 'Conceiving Musical Transdialection', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 68/2 (2010), 105-117. 106.
[98] Ibid. 106.
[99] Ibid. 107.
[100] Ibid. 112. On the role of 'depth' in arrangement discourse see 3.2.

2.2.5 Fidelity-essentialism in musicology and criticism

Before considering the problems with this fidelity-essentialist conception of arrangement, it is fruitful to note its influence on current musicological and journalistic discussions of the subject. In one recent and substantial scholarly contribution to the field, Jonathan Kregor interprets Franz Liszt's transcriptions through contemporary theories of translation. This historicist approach is certainly insightful, but the fidelity-essentialism of many of these translation theories comes to determine Kregor's own understanding of arrangement.[101] Affirming Liszt's own translation-based ideal of arrangement, akin to Parry's, he argues that the composer's transcriptions

> do indeed bring about a palingenesis of Schubert, Beethoven, and a host of Liszt's own contemporaries in the Romantic sense. But Liszt's activities as a transcriber did not fuel a desire […] to dress up a work to suit the demands of the target audience. Rather, Liszt's justification stemmed from his self-acknowledged rapport with these works and their creators, as if he had been apprenticed in the workshop of Mozart or Beethoven, apprehending every detail of their compositional aesthetics.[102]

Although not denying Liszt's inventiveness, Kregor's use of the word 'palingenesis' in particular evokes preservation of essence despite change in form. A similar notion of arrangement is reflected by the views of the composer-transcriber Ferruccio Busoni (1866-1924), on which Kregor, Mangsen, Jann Pasler, and other musicologists still draw without explicit critique.[103] In 1910, Busoni argued that all notation, including that of so-called 'original' works 'is itself the transcription of an abstract idea […] From this first transcription to the second is a comparatively short and relatively unimportant step'.[104] Although challenging

---

[101] For insightful discussion of Kregor's book see F. Brittan, 'Review: "Liszt as Transcriber" by Jonathan Kregor', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 66/1 (2013), 308-314.
[102] Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*. 40.
[103] See ibid. 10-11; Mangsen, *Songs Without Words*. 4-5; Jann Pasler, 'Contingencies of Meaning in Transcriptions and Excerpts: Popularizing "Samson et Dalila"', in Byron Almén and Edward Pearsall (eds.), *Approaches to Meaning in Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 170-213. 190-191. While none of these scholars explicitly affirms Busoni's views, neither do they reject them. In contrast, Busoni's theories are overtly upheld in Walker, 'In Defense of Arrangements'. 26.
[104] Ferruccio Busoni, *The Essence of Music, and Other Papers*, ed. Ferruccio Busoni (London: Rockliff, 1957). 87-88. For further discussion of Busoni's theory see Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*. 295-299; Erinn E. Knyt, '"How I Compose": Ferruccio Busoni's Views about Invention, Quotation, and the Compositional Process', *The Journal of Musicology*, 27/2 (2010), 224-264; Knyt, 'Between Composition and Transcription: Ferruccio Busoni and Music Notation'; Marc-André Roberge, 'The Busoni Network and the Art of Creative Transcription', *Canadian University Music Review*, 11/1 (1991), 68-88.

the notion of originality, this view is essentialist in suggesting that an arrangement projects the same abstract 'idea' as its source.[105] Michael Finnissy has characterised his own highly transformative transcriptions in relation to Busoni's conception of arrangement, which is endorsed by Ian Pace in overtly fidelity-essentialist terms:

> It is Finnissy's belief (which I share) that after even the most radical of transformations, a kernel of a source's intrinsic characteristics, however small, will continue to be present in a work which has been created from that source. That his transcriptions do indeed sound so very different [from their sources] bears this out.[106]

This seemingly paradoxical understanding of difference as proof of a shared essence is particularly characteristic of fidelity-essentialism (which is, incidentally, less evident in Finnissy's own comments than Pace suggests).[107]

Fidelity-essentialism is also evident in descriptions of other recent and transformative reworkings. For example, the tenor Ian Bostridge asserts that Hans Zender's *Schuberts Winterreise* (1993), which he has performed on several occasions, 'reflects and refracts Schubert's original through a series of mirrors and kaleidoscopes, while retaining its essential identity'.[108] 'Zender stretches the music, interrupts it, subjects it to filmic procedures of montage and slow motion', Bostridge continues, 'but, projected by the figure of the singer, Schubert's original vision is always implicated'.[109] In yet another analogy of arrangement and translation which differs little from Parry's, Menachem Zur argues that

> a new adaptation, however modern, can add something to [Schubert's songs] as long as it preserves and emphasizes the original score without replacing it. A good translation is one that manifests an ability to build on the original […] Mr. Zender's treatment of the songs reflects understanding and deep respect for the original.[110]

---

[105] Busoni maintains that 'the musical work of art exists whole and intact before it has sounded and after the sound is finished'. Busoni, *The Essence of Music*. 88.
[106] Pace in Christopher Fox, Henrietta Brougham, and Ian Pace, *Uncommon Ground: The Music of Michael Finnissy* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1997). 80.
[107] For Finnissy's views, see ibid. 2-3.
[108] Ian Bostridge, 'Zender's Winterreise: Old, New, Borrowed–But Still True', *The Guardian* (12 May 2016) <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2016/may/12/ian-bostridge-zender-schubert-winterreise>, accessed 17 September 2018.
[109] Ibid.
[110] Menachem Zur, 'Reflections After Listening to Zender's/Schubert "Die Winterreise"', *Music in Time*, Winter (2000), 61-65. 61-62.

Håvard Enge similarly claims that Zender's '"criticism" of the original' is 'a largely affirmative one', upholding the composer's concept of 'agonistic harmony' as a means to 'rejuvenate the past'.[111] The notion of balancing fidelity to tradition with creative innovation is a reoccurring trope in discussions of recent transformative reworkings, indebted to a modernist conception of the role of the artist.[112] This idea is combined with an explicit fidelity-essentialism in Malcolm Miller's description of reworkings by Luciano Berio, Peter Maxwell Davies, and Hans Werner Henze as displaying 'an explicitly individual balance of past and present, an attitude which preserves the spirit of the original by means of a consciously creative interpretation'.[113] While interpretation, translation, and commentary may be understood in many different ways, analogies between these processes and arrangement often imply fidelity-based conceptions of the practice. In each case, it is posited that the significance and meaning of an arrangement is primarily dependent on that of the work it arranges, which it either re-expresses or 'interprets'. The belief that an arrangement's meaning and value is determined by its source lies behind the oft-repeated claim that arrangements are 'revelations of the original in a new light'.[114]

2.2.6 'Strict' and 'free'

In an attempt to mitigate this focus on fidelity, commentators often attempt to account for the full diversity of arrangements in relation to a continuum between 'strict' and 'free' approaches. 'Perhaps', Mangsen suggests, 'we can construct a continuum from "exact replica" to "unrecognisable version" and try to measure the extent of each departure'.[115] An approach of this kind is widely adopted as a way to avoid making rigid and therefore restrictive

[111] Enge, 'The Unfinished Past: Hans Zender's Concept of Productive Listening'. 155, 158. Compare Bostridge's description of the work as '[offering] us a conversation—and sometimes a confrontation—between the past and the present'. Bostridge, 'Zender's Winterreise'.
[112] The classic formation of this modernist view is T. S. Eliot, 'Tradition and the Individual Talent', *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism* (7th edn., London: Methuen, 1972). See also Alexander Goehr, 'Using Models... for Making Original Music', *Common Knowledge*, 8/1 (2002), 108-123.
[113] Malcolm Miller, 'From Liszt to Adams: the 'Wiegenlied' Transcription', *Tempo*, /175 (1990), 23-26. 23.
[114] Tom Service, 'The Proms Listening Service', in *BBC Prom 14: Sibelius, Schubert and Zimmermann*, BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, Elizabeth Watts, and Louis Lortie (Royal Albert Hall, London, 24 July 2018), [Concert programme note]. See also, for example, Keller, 'Arrangement for or Against?'. 24; Mangsen, *Songs Without Words*. 198.
[115] Mangsen, *Songs Without Words*. 6.

distinctions between arrangement and other borrowing practices.[116] It also aims to construe transformation and recomposition as proper to the practice of arrangement rather than a deviation from it. However, this approach does not escape a fidelity-based conception of arrangement. The 'freedom' at one extreme of this continuum is defined negatively; the whole concept of the continuum still takes the fidelity at its other pole as its ultimate reference point. To place any arrangement, however 'free', on such a continuum is to understand it in relation to an ideal of absolute fidelity, even if its potentially distant relationship to this ideal is legitimised or even praised. Moreover, fidelity-essentialism does not grant 'free' arrangements any 'real' freedom from their sources: formal transformations are interpreted in terms of how they preserve the 'expressive content' of an 'original'.

2.2.7 Shortcomings of fidelity-essentialism

There are three major problems with this fidelity-based theory of arrangement. The first is that, in positing fidelity to a source work as axiomatic to an arrangement's identity, it limits understanding of the full range of ways in which arrangements might be interpreted as meaningful. This notion of intrinsic fidelity suggests that the meaning of an arrangement is entirely dependent on that of the work it arranges, which it communicates or 'interprets'. However, an arrangement's significance may result as much or even more from the way it manipulates and recontextualizes its source's musical material, regardless of that material's supposed meaning. Although an arrangement's perceived meanings may indeed relate to the apparent meaning of its source, in part due to the pervasiveness of fidelity-based understandings of the practice, it may also generate meaning in *indifference* to it (as discussed in Chapter 3). Acknowledging this potential indifference is important: to argue that an arrangement works against its source is to define its meaning by looking 'backwards' to that source rather than 'sideways' to its musical and cultural contexts, and is therefore an inverted form of fidelity-

[116] Recall Boyd's comparable proposal (2.1.4). For a graphical illustration of such a continuum, see the appendix 'Bach Borrowed: A Spectrum of Cases' in Beaudoin and Moore, 'Conceiving Musical Transdialection'. 115.

essentialism.[117] Furthermore, to posit that a source work possesses a fixed, 'authentic' meaning which an arrangement might either reproduce or react against fails to take account of how the significance of a work may change over time, as demonstrated by studies of reception history (an issue addressed in Chapter 3).

This point implies a second problem with fidelity-essentialism, that the idea of essence, or 'expressive content' is untenable. In this context, the notion of essence is a hypothesized extrapolation from listeners' perceptions made as a result of the ideological necessity of assimilating arrangement to the demands of *Werktreue* ideology. It cannot be directly perceived or defined, acting rather as an ideological 'buffer' which ostensibly 'absorbs' the evident differences between arrangements and the works they arrange. Even the philosophers whose definitions of arrangement rely on this notion of preserved essence are puzzled by it. Davies does not define what he means by musical content, and Thom acknowledges that '[t]he meaning of the preservation of content is not always clear'.[118] Despite being indispensable to their definition of transcription, Beaudoin and Moore admit they cannot explain their concept of 'expressive content':

> Alas, we do not have a theory of expressive content to offer. But in fact, we do not think we need one for our purposes […] When semantic push comes to metaphysical shove, it may be that this talk is subtly misleading: it purports to get determinately at something fixed and precise, while it is actually activated in a more rough and ready way by shifting clusters of a work's aesthetically relevant properties.[119]

And yet, a fidelity-essentialist would argue, listeners *do* identify arrangements as re-presentations of existing works, even if they differ from these works considerably: how can this be explained without recourse to the idea of a preserved essence?

Answering this question reveals a third problem with fidelity-essentialism, that its way of defining arrangement, and therefore arbitrating what is and is not an arrangement, is logically

[117] An antagonistic stance towards pre-existing music is central to studies of arrangement drawing on Harold Bloom's concept of the 'anxiety of influence', see Chapter 3 note 94.
[118] Thom, *The Musician as Interpreter*. 11.
[119] Beaudoin and Moore, 'Conceiving Musical Transdialection'. 112.

circular. Examples of arrangement are identified as such on the grounds that they faithfully re-present an existing work, and arrangement is consequently defined on the basis of these examples as the faithful re-presentation of an existing work. Using this definition, the formal differences between such examples will be interpreted as faithful to the essence of their sources on a 'deeper' but imperceptible level. This continuing circular argument seems to provide objective criteria according to which arrangement might be defined and examples identified, but it actually relies on a prior assertion that any given example is or is not an arrangement.

All three of these problems can be clarified with reference to an example, Beaudoin and Moore's discussion of Finnissy's highly transformative transcription of a chorale prelude by J. S. Bach (*Wenn Wir in Hochsten Nöthen Sein*, 1992). They rightly assert that Bach's chorale prelude and Finnissy's reworking of it 'seem worlds apart in their melodic makeup, harmonic content, and rhythmic complexity', and consequently that 'in Finnissy's transcription the Bach original is […] difficult to perceive, both aurally and graphically'.[120] Such extensive transformations, they note, seem to be 'a direct challenge to the traditional notion of transcription', that is to say fidelity-essentialism.[121] However, faced with the transcription's overwhelming formal difference from its source, Beaudoin and Moore reaffirm a fidelity-essentialist theory of arrangement rather than rejecting it. They argue that 'Finnissy's fundamental aim is to remain faithful to Bach—to reexpress Bach's original in Finnissy's own twentieth-century musical language'.[122] Due to their initial assertions that transcriptions are faithful to their sources and that Finnissy's piece is a transcription, they seek to explain the differences between it and its source in terms of fidelity, positing fidelity as transcription's defining characteristic and lack of fidelity as inherently 'nontranscriptive'. They argue that Finnissy's late-twentieth-century stylistic idiom 'properly characterize[s] not some nontranscriptive goal, but rather the character of the musical language within which Finnissy

[120] Ibid. 105, 109.
[121] Ibid. 109.
[122] Ibid. 109.

endeavors to reexpress Bach's work'.[123] Consequently, Beaudoin and Moore maintain that as well as preserving Bach's 'mood of calm, contrapuntal rumination' and textural structure, Finnissy's transcription and Bach's chorale prelude present the same level of musical complexity in relation to, and therefore alienation from, the prevailing norms of their respective compositional cultures.[124] In summary, they profess that 'Finnissy's bold treatment of Bach is so successful precisely because of the insight it gives into Bach's original'.[125] Not only does their fidelity-essentialist theory of arrangement permit no other conclusion, but this conclusion is also used as evidence in support of the very theory which determined it. As well as being rather strained and unconvincing, their interpretation of Finnissy's transcription closes down more viable interpretative possibilities which might seek to explain the differences between it and Bach's prelude rather than explaining them away as faithful to its supposed, but unverifiable, musical essence.

In appealing to an imperceptible essential content, fidelity-essentialism fails to provide answers to the questions it purports to address. If the identity of a musical work is defined by its form, then how can we recognise an arrangement, which necessarily alters that form, as a re-presentation of it? What quantity and quality of formal alteration makes a derived piece too different from, or too similar to, its source to be considered an arrangement of it? As Goehr suggests, questions of this kind are 'unlikely to find a satisfactory answer merely through an ontological arbitration', despite the efforts of analytic philosophers.[126]

---

[123] Ibid. 110.
[124] Ibid. 110.
[125] Ibid. 110.
[126] Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum*. 62. Goehr refers specifically to 'the question as to what [in the context of arrangement] counts as the production of a new work'. This question is posed by Mangsen, among others: '[O]ne has to wonder how far a version many depart from its model and still be regarded as representing the work'. Mangsen, *Songs Without Words*. 6. For attempts to answer this question through analytic philosophy, see Jerrold Levinson, 'What a Musical Work Is', *The Journal of Philosophy*, 77/1 (1980), 5-28. Peter Kivy, 'Orchestrating Platonism', *The Fine Art of Repetition: Essays in the Philosophy of Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 75-94.

2.3 Arrangement as a way of listening

2.3.1 Production, object, reception

To understand and address the impasses and aporias intrinsic to the traditional, fidelity-essentialist conception of arrangement, it is necessary to critically interrogate the assumptions upon which it rests. As Pratt's characterization of arrangement as the 'process or result of readjusting a work' attests, 'arrangement' is commonly understood as both a mode of musical production and the type of musical product which necessarily results from it.[127] Conversely, the form of such a musical product, an arrangement, is thought of as materializing this mode of production, arrangement, its form objectifying the arranger's decisions and actions. As a result, arrangement has come to be considered a type of musical object, defined by particular formal characteristics. A definition of this kind is concerned with determining what an arrangement is and, by implication, what it is not. Such definitions work on the assumption that pieces of music simply *are* or *are not* arrangements, and that a description of a piece of music as an arrangement might therefore be judged true or false. This assumption informs the way listeners habitually talk about arrangements: they are often happy to describe one piece of music but not another as an arrangement as if this status were an inherent formal property of the piece by virtue of the process by which it was produced. Boyd's *Grove* entry is characteristic in attempting to identify the nature of this property by locating arrangements in a hierarchy of nested categories of musical objects. For Boyd, arrangements constitute one subcategory of all pieces which use pre-existing material, a larger grouping which in turn constitutes a subcategory of musical works more generally, and the range of arrangements may conversely be divided into further subcategories, such as transcription and recomposition.[128] To call a piece of music an arrangement in this sense is to classify it according to an ordering system by which the formal properties of different musical objects, resulting from the mode of their production, may be

[127] Adaptation more generally has been similarly defined as both 'process' and 'product' in Linda Hutcheon and Siobhan O'Flynn, *A Theory of Adaptation* (2nd edn.; London: Routledge, 2013).
[128] Compare Appendix 1, 'Notes Towards a Typology of Musical Borrowing' in Burkholder, 'Musical Borrowing as a Field'. 867-869.

understood in relation to one another. That to call a piece of music an arrangement may be considered a mere description of it which is either accurate or inaccurate shows that this ordering system appears to be inherent to what is ordered.[129]

However, ordering and classifying systems of this kind are not inherent in the things they order, but rather are imposed upon them.[130] This simple point suggests a substantial and productive shift in critical perspective but rarely if ever informs discussions of the topic. From this altered perspective, an arrangement's status as such is not actually but only seemingly 'given' as a property of its form; it *results* from a listener's engagement with a piece of music rather than being *revealed* by it. To classify a piece of music as an arrangement is not a mere description of its inherent properties and the way it was produced but is rather an interpretation of it, an initial stage in a process of sense-making.[131] This realization shifts the focus of enquiry, asking not what an arrangement is but what it is to engage with a piece of music as an arrangement. Such an engagement is necessarily bound up with experience and perception; this shift in perspective might be characterized as a move from an ontological approach to arrangement to a phenomenological one.[132] Arrangement might be understood not only as a process of musical production and type of musical object but also as a mode of reception. The idea of arrangement, in this sense, is constituted not by a type of musical form but rather a potential subjective response to form. From this perspective, there are no arrangements; instead, arrangement is the name of an interpretative strategy through which listeners might choose to hear music. In short, it is possible to rethink musical arrangement as a *way of listening*.

---

[129] Uncertainty or disagreement regarding individual cases only serves to reinforce the notion that there *is* something called arrangement, a type or category to which the piece in question may or may not belong.

[130] Michel Foucault provides an eloquent description of this situation: 'Order is, at one and the same time, that which is [seemingly] given in things as their inner law, the hidden network that determines the way they confront one another, and also that which has no existence except in the grid created by a glance, an examination, a language; and it is only in the blank spaces of this grid that order manifests itself in depth as though already there, waiting in silence for the moment of its expression'. Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Routledge, 2002). Xxi.

[131] For insightful discussion of a similar perspective in the field of adaptation studies, see Nico Dicecco, 'State of the Conversation: The Obscene Underside of Fidelity', *Adaptation*, 8/2 (2015), 161-175.

[132] On phenomenology, see 4.3.

Listening to a piece of music *as an arrangement* involves hearing it through the interpretative frame provided by the idea of musical arrangement. As a result, understanding arrangement as a way of listening involves critically relativizing traditional conceptions of arrangement, including fidelity-essentialism, rather than attempting to transcend them. Such traditional conceptions of arrangement inform what cues listeners to engage in this way and the expectations that result from this mode of engagement.[133] Arrangement as a mode of engagement is defined by the way these cues and expectations draw musical sound, interpretative frame, and listener into a complex, continuous, and sometimes contradictory interplay with one another. A listener may employ this mode of engagement quite consciously, be unaware of its effect on their experience of a piece, or, most likely, a shifting combination of the two. This way of listening is not dependent on how the music in question was produced; in theory any piece of music, whether 'arranged' or 'original' in the traditional sense, may be heard through the interpretative framework provided by the idea of arrangement. In this context, to talk of 'an arrangement' is merely a convenient way to refer to a piece of music which is heard as an arrangement either at the invitation of the speaker or by convention, necessarily resulting from a range of cultural and ideological influences. In the present study, any reference to given examples as 'arrangements' should be understood as a shorthand of this kind rather than an affirmation of conceiving arrangements as objects.

2.3.2 Cues and expectations

Perhaps the most obvious cues to hear a piece of music as an arrangement are provided by what Gérard Genette calls paratexts, 'thresholds of interpretation' such as titles and subtitles, attributions, programme and liner notes, promotional and marketing material, and so on. Genette, whose primary concern was literature, suggests that

> although we do not always know whether these productions are to be regarded as belonging to the text, in any case they surround and extend it, precisely in order to *present* it, in the usual sense

[133] The terminology of cues, expectations, and interpretative frames is adapted from John Frow, *Genre* (2nd edn.; London: Routledge, 2015). See especially 109-133.

> of this verb but also in the strongest sense: to *make present*, to ensure the text's presence in the world, its 'reception' and consumption in the form (nowadays, at least) of a book.[134]

Similarly, paratexts influence the reception of a piece of music as 'an arrangement' and constitute its status as such. A title page announcing 'Franz Schubert, Great Fantasy op. 15, symphonically orchestrated for piano and orchestra by Franz Liszt' explicitly encourages buyers to interpret the music which follows as an arrangement (Figure 2.1). A double-barrelled attribution such as Schubert-Liszt implies this longer formulation, as does the graphical interlocking of composers' names on the cover of a CD of Mozart piano sonatas with a second piano part by Grieg (Figure 2.2). More recently, titles such as *Dufay-Bearbeitungen, Machaut-Transkriptionen, Schuberts Winterreise* (subtitled a 'composed interpretation'), and less directly *The Cold Trip*, a response to the same song cycle, all invite listeners to hear the music they label as arranged.[135]

---

[134] Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). 1.
[135] These reworkings are by Isabel Mundry, Heinz Holliger, Zender, and Bernhard Lang respectively.



Figure 2.1: Title page of 1876 edition of Liszt's piano and orchestra arrangement of Schubert's 'Wanderer' Fantasy (1851).

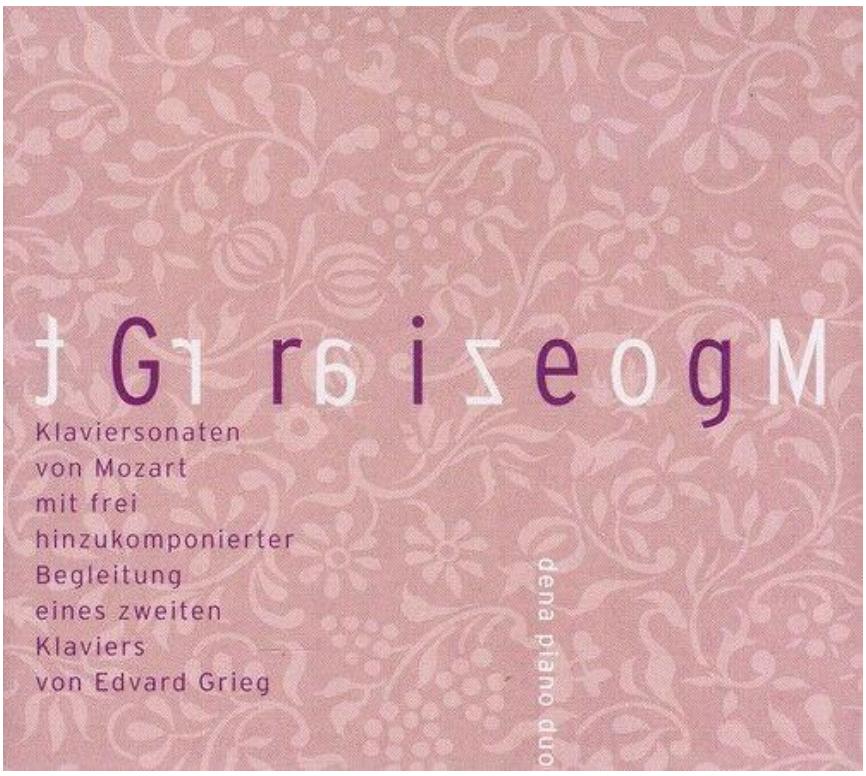


Figure 2.2: CD cover of *Mozart's Piano Sonatas with a Freely Composed Accompaniment for a Second Piano by Edvard Grieg* (Dena Piano Duo, 2007).[136]

In suggesting the idea of arrangement as an interpretative frame, such paratexts cue particular expectations about the music to which they are attached. The most notable is the expectation that the arranger will re-present the material of an existing work in an altered form. More specifically, a listener is cued to expect this material to be re-presented in the *same order* in which it was presented in the source. This is because arrangements are understood as re-presentations of works and the order in which material is presented is understood as constitutive of a work's identity. This expectation of *temporal fidelity* to a source (discussed in Chapters 4 and 5) is one of the most important elements of arrangement as a way of listening. Crucially, however, the musical expectations cued by paratexts may be fulfilled or frustrated to varying degrees and in different ways, as, for example, a comparison of Zender's *Schuberts Winterreise* and Lang's *The Cold Trip* attests. Pieces of music may also be interpreted by listeners as containing 'internal' cues to hear them as arrangements. If familiar with Mussorgsky's piano suite, a listener switching on the radio to hear the opening phrases of *Pictures at an Exhibition*

[136] *Klaviersonaten von Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart mit Frei Hinzukomponierter Begleitung Eines Zweiten Klaviers von Edvard Grieg* (2007, 2L), CD.

played alternately by a solo trumpet and full orchestra is likely to interpret what they hear as an arrangement of it. Such a listener may even wait for an announcer to provide supplementary paratextual information about the music, for example that this is an orchestration by Ravel. In this way, what may be regarded by a listener as a cue in one context may be proposed as an expectation in another, and vice versa, the factors involved all being regarded as indicative features of 'an arrangement'.

In this last example, the popularity of Ravel's orchestration makes it especially plausible that a listener may have encountered it, rather than Mussorgsky's 'original', first. Hearing the piano version on the radio, such a listener may deduce they are hearing an unfamiliar 'original' of a familiar 'arrangement', or, more interestingly, hear it as a virtuoso keyboard arrangement of Ravel's 'original' orchestral work. This second case demonstrates the possibility of discrepancies between arrangement as a mode of production and as a mode of reception. Upon first consideration, it might seem that an arrangement can only be heard as such by a 'knowing' listener, that is to say one who is familiar with the source work.[137] A piece produced by arrangement may certainly be heard as an 'original' work by a listener either unaware of its source or willingly discarding it as an interpretative frame. For instance, Liszt's *Liebestraum* No. 3 is most often presented with no explicit paratextual indication that it is 'actually' a piano transcription of an earlier song by the composer, and so is heard as an 'original' work.[138] As the questions of canonicity raised by this example indicate, 'hearing as arrangement' is not determined by the listener independently of the cultural and institutional contexts in which listening occurs. It is productive to question the rigid distinction between 'knowing' and 'unknowing' listeners. Knowing a source work intimately and simply knowing *of* it both offer possibilities for 'hearing as arrangement', albeit significantly different ones. That such slight

[137] Compare with the idea of knowing and unknowing audiences in adaptation studies: 'If we do not know that what we are experiencing actually *is* an adaptation or if we are not familiar with the particular work it adapts, we simply experience the adaptation as we would any other work. To experience it *as an adaptation*, however, […] we need to recognize it as such and to know its adapted text, thus allowing the latter to oscillate in our memories with what we are experiencing'. Hutcheon and O'Flynn, *Adaptation*. 120-121.
[138] The song in question is 'O Lieb, O Lieb, So Lang du Lieben Kannst' (1843).

'knowing of' a source might also slide into mere 'thinking of' or 'imagining' one suggests that an 'original' work may be heard as an arrangement.

This situation is exemplified by the long tradition of hearing Schubert's *Grand Duo* in C Major (D 812) as a piano duet reduction of a lost symphony by the composer despite the lack of historical evidence to support this interpretation.[139] The tradition was initiated by Schumann's review of the work, written in 1838:

> I had always regarded [Schubert's *Grand Duo*] as the piano arrangement of a symphony [*eine das Klavier übertragene Symphonie*], until a glance at the original manuscript—in which it is described in his own handwriting as a 'four-hand sonata'—seemed to contradict me. I say 'seemed' advisedly, for I still cannot entirely abandon the idea.[140]

Schubert, Schumann suggests, was either simply careless with titles or thought a sonata would be more appealing to potential publishers. He describes his experience of listening to the *Duo* as an arrangement:

> Familiar as I am with his style and his way of treating the piano, and comparing this work with his other sonatas, all of them so expressive of the purest pianistic character, I cannot but regard it as an orchestral work. One hears [*hört*] strings and winds, tutti, solos, the rumble of timpani, the broad symphonic form.[141]

As further evidence for this hearing, Schumann indicates allusions to symphonies by Beethoven (the Second and Seventh), and, even more interestingly, identifies 'a few paler passages [*blassere Stellen*] which appear […] to have been casualties of transcription [*durch das Arrangement verloren*]'.[142] '[I]f one regards [the *Duo*] as an arrangement of a symphony', he concludes, 'one sees it from a different point of view, in which case we are a symphony the

---

[139] In the words of one critic, the *Duo* 'has come to be identified, quite gratuitously, as the Symphony No. 7'. Conrad Wilson, *Notes on Schubert: 20 Crucial Works* (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 2003). 14.

[140] Robert Schumann, 'Schubert's Grand Duo and Last Three Sonatas', in Henry Pleasants (ed.), *Schumann on Music: A Selection from the Writings* (New York: Dover, 1988), 141-144. 141-142. For the original German text see Robert Schumann, *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker* (3 edn., 2; Leipzig: Georg Wigand's Verlag, 1875). 2-6.

[141] Schumann, 'Schubert's Grand Duo and Last Three Sonatas'. 142. This hearing is also advocated in Donald Francis Tovey, 'Symphony in C Orchestrated by Joachim from the Grand Duo Op. 140', *Essays in Musical Analysis* (1 Symphonies; London: Oxford University Press, 1935), 215-218.

[142] Schumann, 'Schubert's Grand Duo and Last Three Sonatas'. 142. Schumann's conviction must also have been informed by piano duets being the preferred format for the distribution of symphonic works in this period, with such reductions forming a significant proportion of the duet repertoire.

richer'.[143] This 'symphonic' hearing of the *Duo*, and its connections with Beethoven, may be motivated by a desire to 'masculinize' the troubling 'intimacy' of a piece by a composer whose music Schumann describes in the same essay as having 'a feminine character'.[144] In any case, the listening experience Schumann describes finds outward musical expression in the 'Symphony by Franz Schubert orchestrated by Joseph Joachim after op. 140 [D 812]' of 1855 (Figure 2.3). If, following Szendy, arrangements are understood as written traces of listening, Joachim's 'reconstruction' of a hypothetical symphonic original provides an unusually reflexive example of the practice. The experience of listening to a work as an arrangement is represented through the production of an(other) arrangement, which in turn posits itself as a surrogate 'original'.

[143] Ibid. 142.
[144] Ibid. 142.
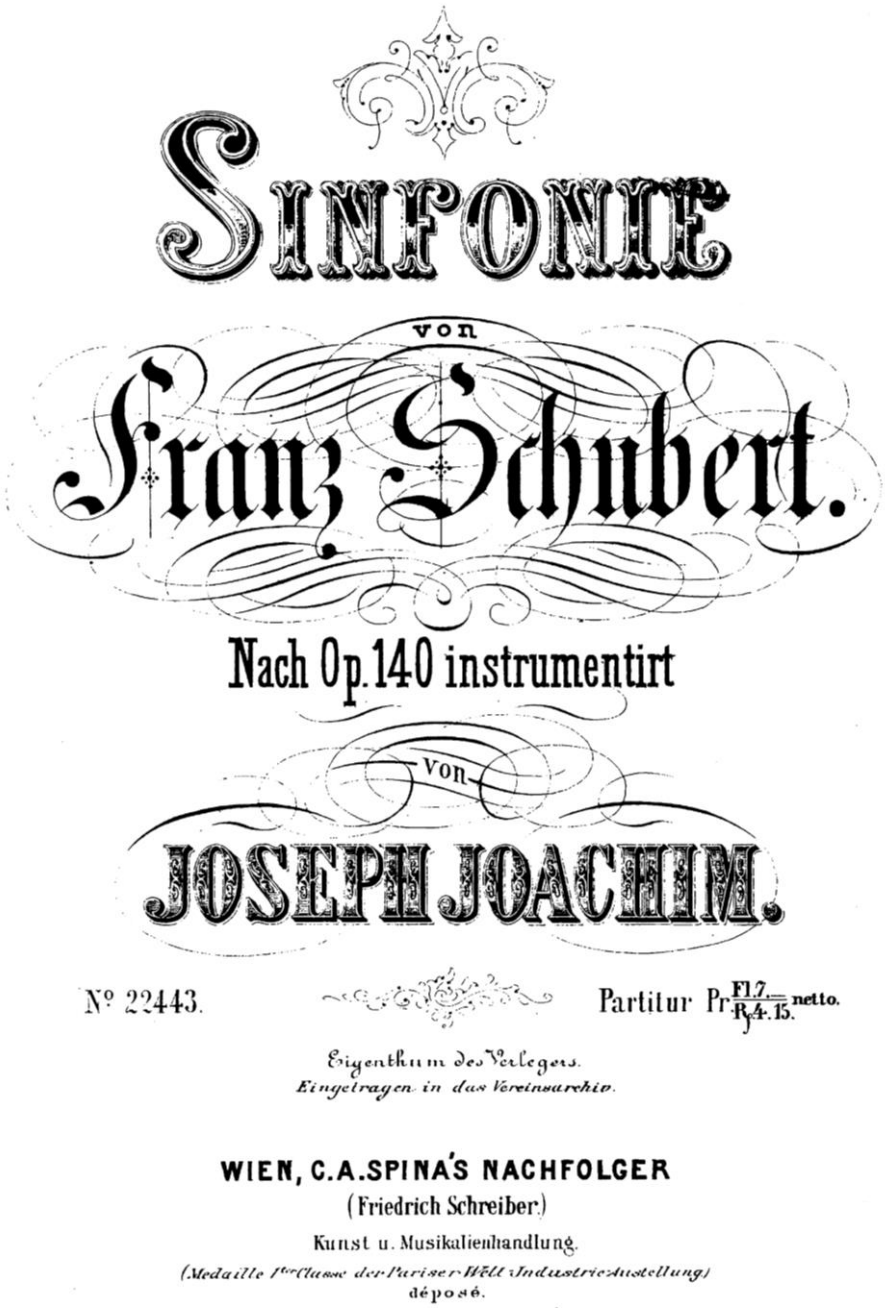


Figure 2.3: Title page of 1873 edition of Joseph Joachim's orchestration of Schubert's *Grand Duo* D 812 (1855).

Arrangement as a way of listening might be understood as a *triangulation* performed by the listener in which their relationship with the music they are hearing, the 'arrangement', is understood in relation to a third term, the supposed 'original'. These theoretical 'positions' may be 'occupied' by all manner of music regardless of the mode or history of its production, or left 'unoccupied', and 'filled in' by the listener. What might be gained, for example, by understanding Liszt's B Minor Piano Sonata as an 'arrangement' of Schubert's 'Wanderer'

Fantasy, his concerto version of which was created two years previously?[145] As the case of the *Grand Duo* attests, 'independent' works might imply shadowy hypothetical originals. The process of arrangement might conversely be understood as 'realizing' an initially equally hypothetical arrangement based on a known 'original'. Understanding arrangement as mode of triangulated listening in this way opens up new possibilities for theorizing previously inexplicable but nonetheless vivid listening experiences. It also offers greater flexibility in interpreting the role of arrangement as an idea beyond traditional conceptions of it as a type of musical object or mode of production.

2.4 The formalist fallacy

2.4.1 Fidelity and autonomy

Equipped with an understanding of arrangement as a way of listening, rather than type of musical object, the theoretical impasses presented by traditional approaches to the subject, including fidelity essentialism, begin to dissolve. Many of these impasses are manifested in the idea that arrangements exist on a continuum from 'strict' to 'free'; a re-examination of this idea therefore serves to illustrate the advantages of a reception-based perspective. While the continuum model appears coherent and intuitive, in following this model's assumptions to their logical extent Sachania ends up wrestling with its seemingly contradictory implications without satisfactorily resolving them. In particular, he attempts to account for arrangements' apparently varying degrees of aesthetic autonomy according to the continuum model but struggles to do so because of the difficulty of describing the production, formal features, and reception of an arrangement through a single continuum of 'strict' to 'free', 'transcription' to 'paraphrase'. He begins by reasoning that, in terms of reception, arrangements at either end of this continuum achieve a degree autonomy from their sources that those in the centre do not.

[145] See Chunghwa Hur, 'Schubert's "Wanderer" Fantasie: A Creative Springboard to Liszt's Sonata in B minor', Doctor of Musical Arts thesis (University of Arizona, 1997); Steven Vande Moortele, *Two-Dimensional Sonata Form: Form and Cycle in Single-Movement Instrumental Works by Liszt, Strauss, Schoenberg, and Zemlinsky* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2009). 37.

> For the listener hearing a strict transcription, prior knowledge of the original is relatively unimportant, as it seems to present an alternative version of the [original] rather than a variation on it; thus an external reference to the original […] on the part of the listener is essentially tautologous. At the other extremity, the interest in each of the paraphrases located here depends strongly on its internal integrity: for the music might have traversed such a distance from the original that it becomes unreasonable to expect the naïve listener to forge an aural connection between the original and the paraphrase […] The arrangements between these extremes rely on the listener's establishing the connection between the 'variant' and the original for their impact.[146]

However, he goes on to suggest that the supposed autonomy of the 'free' arrangement presents a puzzling case which disrupts this model.

> It might be concluded […] that an arrangement constitutes a new work when it can be placed at the 'recomposition' end of the spectrum, where the listener's forging the connection with the original is less important than his or her contemplating the internal integrity of the arrangement; but such a contention fails to acknowledge that new light is always cast on a (free) arrangement even through rudimentary knowledge of the original. Such knowledge unwittingly forms an element of the aesthetic experience. For this reason, the free arrangement can never wholly divorce itself from the original from which it sprang.[147]

Having made this assertion, Sachania identifies what he considers to be the drawbacks of the continuum model. He worries that '[f]ormulating scientific criteria for measuring the strictness or freedom of an arrangement surely presents an insurmountable challenge' because of the discrepancy between using strict or free 'procedure' and cultivating a strict or free 'sound'.[148] Sachania concludes by suggesting the use of 'several models, each measuring strictness or freedom on its own terms', nonetheless admitting that 'the usefulness of such an enterprise would depend on the formulation of a methodology that could effective elucidate their interactions'.[149] Responding to Sachania on his own terms, one might argue that this 'solution' multiplies rather than solves the problems inherent in the continuum model. It is more fruitful, however, to diagnose the conceptual basis of Sachania's initial confusion: accounting for the experience of listening to an arrangement, including interpreting its potential meanings, within a broadly formalist theory of arrangement.

---

[146] Sachania, "'Improving the Classics'". 72.
[147] Ibid. 72-73.
[148] Ibid. 73.
[149] Ibid. 73.

This theory is premised on the idea that music's significance and meaning is constituted by its formal properties alone. It follows from this assumption that an arrangement's meaning differs from that of its source only by virtue of the formal changes it makes to that source, and that the degree of formal change is proportional to the degree to which a source's meaning is altered. This erroneous idea might be termed the 'formalist fallacy'. It is this perspective that in the first instance leads Sachania to suggest a direct link between the 'freedom' of an arrangement and its degree of autonomy; he conceives this 'freedom' as freedom from a source. However, Sachania is unable to square this hypothetical autonomy with the actual experience of listening to free arrangements, which seem to remain indissolubly connected to their sources. Fidelity-essentialist thinking, with its appeal to a preserved content beyond form, is in part motivated by the wish to work around this apparent paradox. Although logically incompatible with a formalist view, fidelity-essentialism often serves to sustain it by obfuscating the conceptual paradox it implies. Consequently, in arrangement discourse the two contradictory perspectives co-exist in an implicit interdependence which is ostensibly coherent so long as it remains unscrutinized. In pursuing a formalist rather than fidelity-essentialist account of arrangement, Sachania reveals the contradictions between formalist thinking and listening experiences but cannot resolve them.

If arrangement is understood from neither a formalist nor fidelity-essentialist position but rather as a way of listening, however, this 'problem' untangles itself. From this perspective, the listener does not *discover* the supposedly existing connection between an arrangement and its source's form or essence. Rather, the listener *constructs* a piece of music as an arrangement by *making* a connection between it and another work, with which they may or may not be familiar, and which may or may not 'really' be its source (or even exist). As Schumann's hearing of the *Grand Duo* demonstrates, the idea of arrangement operates as much as a way of listening than as either a mode of production or type of musical form, probably even more so. Sachania wonders *how* listeners 'establish' or 'forge' *the* supposed connection between

arrangement and source, in the passive sense of *revealing* it. It would be more illuminating to interpret these verbs in a more active sense, asking *why* listeners 'establish', that is *create*, *a* connection which posits one piece as the arrangement of another and how such connections, 'forged' by and through listening, generate meaning.

2.4.2 Form, meaning, and fidelity

Within current musicology the idea that music's capacity for meaning results from a negotiation between its form and its contexts, rather than its form alone, is uncontroversial. However, this premise has all too easily been forgotten in discussions of musical arrangement, which proceed from formalist assumptions. Fidelity-essentialism may seem contrary to formalism but is ultimately motivated formalist concerns, attempting to account for the repetition of meaning without repetition of form arrangements appear to achieve. Regarding music's meanings arising from an interaction between form and context (which cannot be definitively distinguished) offers a more insightful conception of arrangement. From this perspective, to hear a piece of music as an arrangement is to interpret it by configuring its contexts in a particular way. The triangulation between listener, 'arrangement', and 'source' not only contextualizes, or recontextualizes, a piece in relation to a purported source, but also in relation to the situation within which listening occurs, a complex mix of cultural and environmental factors. Arrangement as a way of listening is a particular process of (re)contextualization by which music might be interpreted as meaningful. This approach facilitates the deconstruction of the continuum model's binary of 'strict' and 'free' and, ultimately, the notion of an arrangement's 'fidelity'. Attempts to explain in fidelity-essentialist terms how 'free' arrangements may remain 'faithful' to a source's supposedly authentic expressive content, or meaning, despite their alterations to its form are numerous. However, the converse case, concerning so-called 'strict' arrangements which suggest meanings that differ considerably from those of their sources, has been largely ignored. Contrary to what the formalist fallacy might suggest, fidelity of form does not guarantee fidelity of meaning. As

studies of reception history attest, recontextualization may considerably alter the significance and meaning of a musical work without it being arranged. Arrangement, however, presents a special case; even minimal alterations in form may enable or facilitate a recontextualization which precipitates substantial alterations to a work's possible meanings.

Nineteenth-century piano duet reductions of orchestral music provide a clear example of this situation. Such reductions seem to be, and were intended as, purely 'functional', simply projecting the symphonic original as 'transparently' as possible. However, as Thomas Christensen has convincingly argued, the 'modest duet reduction […] was not such an innocent vehicle of dissemination':

> [I]t played a surprisingly destabilizing role by blurring any number of traditional musical polarities: those between symphonic and chamber repertories, professional and amateur music cultures, active and passive music acculturation, and even repertories gendered as masculine and feminine. Its destabilizing potency […] was due in large part to its breaking down of traditional geographic boundaries between public and private spheres of musical reception. By bringing music intended for the public sphere of the orchestral hall or opera house into the domestic space of the parlor, the four-hand piano transcription profoundly altered the generic identity and consequent reception of these repertories for nineteenth-century musicians.[150]

Schumann's hearing of Schubert's *Grand Duo* was probably shaped by the 'destabilizing potency' of this type of arrangement with respect to context and genre. A more recent and explicit example of 'faithful' arrangements' capacity to generate different or even contradictory meanings to those carried by their sources is offered by the film *Brassed Off*.[151] The film, set only a few years before its release in 1996, tracks the progress of a colliery band to the final of a national competition at the Royal Albert Hall against the tense backdrop of their pit's closure. As the credits roll, the miners celebrate their competition victory with a dignified rendition of Elgar's First *Pomp and Circumstance* March (1901) aboard an open top bus as it passes the Houses of Parliament. Following an emotional speech criticizing governmental complicity in pit closures and introduced ironically as 'Land of Hope and Bloody Glory, eh?' the march in

[150] Christensen, 'Four-Hand Piano Transcription and Geographies of Nineteenth-Century Musical Reception'. 256.
[151] *Brassed Off* (Film 4, 1996), Mark Herman (dir.), Digital stream.

this context suggests radically different political meanings to those associated with its performance in the Albert Hall during the Last Night of the Proms. Although this transcription is ostensibly 'faithful' to the form of the march as played at the Proms, it seems to present a contrasting conception of British nationhood, in part facilitated by its brass band instrumentation.[152] The film's use of this common if contested musical emblem of Britishness does, perhaps, indicate a seam of nostalgic nationalism in the miners' worldview (or its depiction) which complements that offered by Proms performances of the March. Nevertheless, after watching *Brassed Off*, an audience is unlikely to hear a Proms rendition of Elgar's March unalloyed by doubt regarding the patriotism of which it has become so emblematic.

As this last point suggests, the triangulation of contexts inherent in the idea of arrangement, 'faithful' or otherwise, does not leave the meaning of the 'original' unchanged. In his 'defence' of the practice, Walker states that '[t]he most familiar criticism against the arrangement is that it harms the original […] But all the arrangement does is create an *alternative*. The original is still there, unharmed, waiting to be played'.[153] Walker's response is formalist in its assumption that the 'original' form of a work will continue to project its 'original' meaning to a listener regardless of any arrangements of it that they may have heard. A similar adherence to formalist thinking means that the critics of arrangement Walker addresses cannot fully articulate or account for their objections to the practice as harmful or destructive. However, value judgements aside, such critics are entirely justified in claiming that an arrangement may irrevocably alter the meaning of a source. As Mangsen rightly points out, there is no way to 'insulate the original work (or at least its prior versions) from the effects of

[152] The use of Elgar's March at the Last Night of the Proms (as 'Land of Hope and Glory') itself constitutes a reconfiguration of its potential meanings. The notoriety and Albert Hall setting of this particular configuration of meaning makes it especially relevant to *Brassed Off*. It should be noted that the meanings Elgar's March has accrued at the Proms may themselves be complex, encompassing irony as well as sincere patriotism. For insightful discussion see Daniel M. Grimley, '"The Spirit-Stirring Drum": Elgar and Populism', in Byron Adams (ed.), *Edward Elgar and His World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 97-124.

[153] Walker, 'In Defense of Arrangements'. 26. This is a longstanding position: Busoni similarly complained that his critics 'overlook[ed] the fact that a transcription does not destroy the original; so there can be no question of loss arising from it'. Busoni, *The Essence of Music*. 88.

arrangements on its identity'.[154] Arrangements known to a listener or community of listeners are part of the context by which the works which have been arranged are heard and interpreted, and therefore change their meaning. Such a change in meaning need not be understood as 'harmful' as these critics of arrangement suggest. Consciously or not, this alarm at arrangements' apparently destructive potential results not only from the 'harm' they supposedly inflict upon 'originals', but also from the way they seem to undermine the concept of the 'original' itself. Although the idea of arrangement traditionally posits the 'original' as a fixed reference point in the production of musical meaning, the practice of arrangement, including as a way of listening, suggests that it is actually transitory and mutable. Inexpressible in formalist terms, anxiety about this mutability is articulated as condemnation of the 'harm' supposedly done by arrangements to individual 'originals'.

2.5 Fidelity, deception, taste, and kitsch

2.5.1 Fidelity and deception

The suspicion prompted by 'faithful' transcriptions in particular is related to this wider anxiety about the unnerving instability of the supposed 'original'. The capacity of these ostensibly 'faithful' transcriptions to 'betray' the purportedly 'authentic' meaning of their sources is similarly inexplicable according to a traditional, formalist conception of arrangement. As a result, such 'strict' transcriptions have even greater potential to provoke anxiety and condemnation than 'free' ones, despite appearing to comply more readily with dominant ideologies of *Werktreue* and authenticity. A 'free' arrangement openly manifests its difference from the work it arranges. Its changed meaning can be interpreted as resulting directly from the changes it makes to the form of its source, whether or not a given listener approves of such changes. In contrast, a 'strict' arrangement appears, from a formalist perspective, to make an implicit claim to authenticity, seemingly inviting the listener to trust that it 'faithfully'

[154] Mangsen, *Songs Without Words*. 193.

communicates the supposedly 'original' meaning of the work it arranges. Recall, for example, Mangsen's characterization of a transcription as 'an arrangement in which the hand of the perpetrator is not much in evidence'.[155] However, the process of recontextualization means that 'strict' arrangements often do not communicate this ostensibly 'authentic' significance, and so have a greater potential than free ones to appear deceptive: the 'hand of the perpetrator' is active but disquietingly 'invisible'.[156]

Arrangements have been most frequently and explicitly criticized for the formal changes they make to their sources because formalism and *Werktreue* provided the most 'authoritative' ideological frameworks by which to express disapproval. However, the particular aggression and vitriol of such criticism until the late-twentieth century perhaps results from the inability to articulate another, and possibly more fundamental, concern with the practice, its apparent but inexplicable potential for deception and the anxiety which results. Hindemith expresses the revulsion induced by this ostensible deception with a characteristically vivid analogy.

> [O]ne of the most primitive laws in food production—namely, that for the protection of the health of a population food has to be kept pure, under penalty of severe punishment of the adulterator—is not [considered] valid in the nobler field of artistic production. You are not permitted to sell unsanitary macaroni or mustard, but nobody objects to your undermining the public's mental health by feeding it forgeries.[157]

In the visual arts, a forgery is 'a work of art whose history of production is intentionally misrepresented to a buyer or audience, usually for financial gain'.[158] However, the arrangements Hindemith criticizes are openly acknowledged as such by their creators, who do not attempt to misrepresent them as 'original' works by other musicians.[159] Rather, he calls them 'forgeries' because he understands arrangements as making an implicit claim to be

---

[155] This context reveals Mangsen's apparently casual use of the word 'perpetrator' as implicitly pejorative.
[156] Compare with Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* (2nd edn.; London: Routledge, 2008).
[157] Hindemith, *A Composer's World*. 142.
[158] Denis Dutton and Michael Wreen, 'Forgery', in Michael Kelly (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics* (2nd edn, 3; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014). See also Thierry Lenain, 'Forgery', in Judith Rodenbeck (ed.), *Grove Art Online* (Oxford University Press, 2003); Denis Dutton (ed.), *The Forger's Art: Forgery and the Philosophy of Art* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).
[159] Using the tools of analytic philosophy, Sachania concludes that arrangements cannot be considered forgeries in the sense the term is used in relation to visual art. See Sachania, '"Improving the Classics"'. 73-75.

'faithful' or 'authentic' re-presentations of an 'original' work that he considers deceitful. Hindemith articulates a more widely felt anxiety that arrangements, particularly 'faithful' ones, may offer the outward appearance of a source work without conveying its 'true' artistic import as this appearance seems to promise.

2.5.2 Taste

The analogy Hindemith makes between arrangement and adulterated food vividly links this supposedly deceptive quality of the practice with a sense of revulsion and disgust. A similar association underpins the widespread but more furtively expressed suspicion that arrangements have a particular tendency to lack artistic 'taste'. The notion of taste as 'an abstract capacity for cultural discrimination' requiring disinterested contemplation of aesthetic objects arose in the eighteenth century, expressed notably in Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Judgement*.[160] However, the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu has challenged this conception of taste as disinterested and objective.[161] He argues that ideas of 'good taste', particularly as represented in notions of 'high art', are constructed by a ruling class as a form of 'cultural capital' that enables them to distinguish themselves from other social groups.

From the perspective adopted by Bourdieu, calling an arrangement 'tasteless' is a socially motivated act by which the speaker attempts to situate themselves and the arrangement according to existing hierarchies of social and cultural status. Arrangements' supposed potential for tastelessness is often blamed on the ways they change the meaning of their sources. Under the influence of the formalist fallacy, this process is habitually associated with alterations made to its source's form. One dictionary, first published in 1959, warns that '[a]rrangers often go far beyond […] necessary modification, elaborating details in the original text until they acquire a new significance and adding extraneous material of their own. The criterion of an arrangement

[160] See Gay Hawkins, 'Taste', in Tony Bennett, Lawrence Grossberg, and Meaghan Morris (eds.), *New Keywords: A Revised Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (Malden: Blackwell, 2005), 340-342.
[161] Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (London: Routledge, 1999).

is not only technical skill but good taste'.[162] From at least the early twentieth century, the latter criterion has been upheld by defenders of arrangement as well as its detractors.[163] Larry Sitsky is typical in complaining that 'the low esteem in which transcription is generally held is due to the undisputed number of cheap, superficial works in this branch of art, which have brought the whole idea of transcription into disrepute'.[164] As a result, he laments, '"transcription" is a dirty word, we regard such efforts with distaste'.[165] For Sitsky, it is the generalization which is unfair rather than the initial identification of many arrangements as tasteless. The suspicion that arrangements lack taste is most pronounced with regard to examples which bring canonical works of art music into popular, commercial, and mass-media contexts. Hans Keller, for example, contrasts 'such undeniable improvements in terms of musical substance as Bach's Vivaldi arrangements' with 'such debasements as the Modern Jazz Quartet's or the Swingle Singers' Bach'.[166] One French encyclopaedia entry from 1958 condemns the massification of canonical works through arrangement as tasteless with particular clarity.

> Our era is fertile in sacrileges committed for the radio, cinema, and ballet (cf. Chopin's *Tristesse*). Here […] one should perhaps use a stricter vocabulary: to call *arrangement* the learned work of a high style similar to that of Bach, and *adaptations* (because this word has more than the other the favour of the vulgar), the misappropriation [*détournement*] of goods in which so many philistines indulge.[167]

Through terminology, the encyclopaedist seeks to articulate a fundamental categorical distinction between artful, 'learned' examples and those which are commercial and 'philistine', insulating tasteful arrangements from tasteless, 'vulgarizing' adaptations. The same distinction

---

[162] J. A. Westrup and Frank Ll. Harrison, 'Arrangement', *Collins Music Encyclopedia* (London: Collins, 1959).
[163] On this issue in early-twentieth-century polemics, see Sachania, '"Improving the Classics"'. 59-60. 'Is it in good taste?' is one of the selection criteria applied in a much more recent guide to pianistic arrangements, Maurice Hinson, *The Pianist's Guide to Transcriptions, Arrangements, and Paraphrases* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990). xi.
[164] Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano*. 297.
[165] Ibid. 295.
[166] Keller, 'Arrangement for or Against?'. 22. Interestingly, Keller also regards '50s' and 60s' Gershwin arrangements, simplified almost beyond recognition in harmony and rhythm alike' as 'debasements'. To complain that Gershwin's music has been 'debased' works to canonize it as 'art' despite its popular associations.
[167] 'Notre époque est fertile en sacrilèges commis pour la radio, le cinéma et le ballet (cf. *Tristesse* de Chopin). Ici […] on devrait user d'une vocabulaire plus strict : appeler *arrangement* le travail savant et de haut style semblable à celui que fit Bach, *adaptation* (car ce mot a plus que l'autre la faveur du vulgaire), le détournement de biens auquel se livrent tant de philistins.' 'Arrangement', (1958).

and set of value judgements are implicit in the conclusion of Boyd's *Grove* entry on arrangement:

> Few areas of musical activity involve the aesthetic (and even the ethical) judgment of the musician as much as does the practice of arrangement. This involvement is at its most intense in the case of those arrangements which set out to popularize an acknowledged masterpiece, either by adapting it for the stage or film (or, worse still, for the television advertisement), or by 'jazzing up' its rhythms and instrumentation. In either case the arrangement will often earn the musician's disapproval, and even his or her resentment. However, it is clearly inconsistent to deplore solely on aesthetic grounds the arrangements of Borodin's music in the musical *Kismet*, or the Bach arrangements made for the Swingle Singers, while using lack of 'historical authenticity' as the only stick to beat other, more seriously intentioned arrangements.[168]

Despite acknowledging this inconsistency, Boyd maintains the distinction between 'popularizing' and 'seriously intentioned' arrangements and the different criteria according to which they are evaluated. 'Every arrangement creates its own authenticity', he suggests, absolving 'seriously intentioned' examples of the charge of inauthenticity without addressing the disapproval and resentment directed at 'popularizing' arrangements.[169]

Relying on distinctions of 'taste', the careful aesthetic judgement Boyd advocates is necessarily not merely aesthetic but seeks to codify diverse practices of arrangement according to existing social, cultural, and economic hierarchies. As Bourdieu suggests, such a judgement not only situates what is judged according to these hierarches, but also whoever makes the judgement.[170] Influenced by formalist thinking, Boyd condemns 'popularizing' arrangements for the formal alterations they make to their sources, in particular the process of 'jazzing' them up. However, the 'disapproval' and 'resentment' directed at such arrangements results more from their deceptive quality, which hinges on their apparent *fidelity* to the canonical work they arrange. In mimicking an 'acknowledged masterpiece', a 'popularizing' arrangement seems to posit itself as a 'faithful' re-presentation of an artwork while actually operating as a commodity

[168] Boyd, 'Arrangement', (2001). On the BBC's 1942 music policy, which severely restricted the broadcast of such 'popularizing' arrangements, see Christina Baade, 'Radio Symphonies: The BBC, Everyday Listening and the Popular Classics Debate During the People's War', in Marta García Quiñones, Anahid Kassabian, and Elena Boschi (eds.), *Ubiquitous Musics: The Everyday Sounds That We Don't Always Notice* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 49-71.
[169] Boyd, 'Arrangement', (2001).
[170] See Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*.

whose meaning merely trades on the source's cultural prestige. The '*linked* denigration of arrangement and of the mechanization of music' identified by Szendy is pertinent in this context.[171] As he suggests, 'we have to suspect a systematic link between, on the one hand, the reproducible setting of music and, on the other, arrangement conceived in a restrictive way as a counterfeit substituting itself for the work'.[172] Hindemith, for example, considers arrangements 'forgeries' not simply because they substitute one meaning for another, but because they falsely pretend to the status of art while offering only marketable entertainment. According to this view, a 'faithful' arrangement is not necessarily tasteless on its own terms, but rather through its strained and deceptive effort to appear tasteful for commercial appeal.

2.5.3 Kitsch

The ideas of tastelessness and deceptive inauthenticity (or forgery) evident in descriptions of arrangement by Hindemith and others converge in the concept of kitsch.[173] Although this etymologically mysterious term is subject to diverse and subtly differing usages, these all reflect a common conception of kitsch as tasteless because it pretends to the status of art without achieving 'genuine' artistic value.[174] Denis Dutton, for example, defines kitsch as 'a kind of *pseudo, parasitic art*, whose essential function is to flatter, soothe, and reassure its viewer and consumer'.[175] Dutton usefully identifies kitsch as a category characterized by its relation to notions of 'art' rather than according to specific stylistic or formal features. On the

[171] Szendy, *Listen*. 73.
[172] Ibid. 73. See also 85-91.
[173] For further discussion of arrangement and kitsch, see Chapter 6.
[174] The origins of the word, which first came into use in late-nineteenth-century Germany, are unclear. It could be a corruption of the English word 'sketch', its meaning rooted in the commonplace and inexpensive souvenir images made for British tourists in Bavaria. Alternatively, it could be derived from the German *kitschen*, to collect rubbish from the street or 'to stroke, pet, smear, or lump together', or even *etwas verkitschen*, 'to knock off cheaply'. See Gordon C. F. Bearn, 'Kitsch', in Michael Kelly (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics* (2; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Gillo Dorfles, *Kitsch: An Anthology of Bad Taste* (London: Studio Vista, 1969). 4.
[175] Denis Dutton, 'Kitsch', in Judith Rodenbeck (ed.), *Oxford Art Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). An insightful and concise overview of the issues raised by kitsch see Bearn, 'Kitsch', (2014). For further discussion and a range of recent perspectives on the topic see Tomas Kulka, 'Kitsch', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 28/1 (1988), 18; Matei Călinescu, *Five Faces of Modernity: Modernism, Avant-garde, Decadence, Kitsch, Postmodernism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987); Monica Kjellman-Chapin, *Kitsch: History, Theory, Practice* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013); ibid.; Roger Scruton, *Modern Culture* (London: Continuum, 2005); Călinescu, *Five Faces of Modernity*.

one hand, kitsch is understood as fundamentally different from art. An artwork, it is thought, is an original, unique, and autonomous form whose intrinsic and exceptional cultural value is accessed through disinterested contemplation. In contrast, examples of kitsch are considered derivative, mass-produced, and reliant on cliché for their meaning, possessing value exclusively as a commodity which invites only sentimental indulgence. On the other hand, however, kitsch's deceptively 'pretentious' quality relies on it closely resembling 'genuine' art, borrowing its gestures and forms to flatter consumers into believing themselves 'tasteful'.[176]

In pretending not just to the status of art but to being a specific artwork, popular appropriations of canonical works bring this 'pseudo-artistic' quality into particularly sharp focus. Gillo Dorfles, for example, regards such 'transpositions' of art as paradigmatically kitsch:

> [I]t is wrong, or at best very risky, to transfer a work of art from one medium to another which is not suited to it. Almost without exception this produces something in decidedly bad taste unless the transposition is made by a particularly gifted artist capable of creating not just a "translation" of the original work, but a new work which has only very tenuous connections with the original. Otherwise the result is at best mediocre or at worst execrable. [177]

Importantly, it is for their similarity to the work they appropriate that Dorfles condemns these 'transpositions' as kitsch, not their differences from it.[178] He implies that it is the kitsch appropriation's 'fidelity' to its model that allows its meaning to be mistaken for that of the artwork it imitates. To Dorfles' horror, this resemblance works both ways, allowing the meaning of the 'original' artwork to be usurped by its kitsch counterpart.

> Even if faithful reproduction has made it possible to spread artistic and historical knowledge to wide sections of the population, we should not forget that these days the mania for reproduction has resulted in the paradox of works and objects which are only apparently and extrinsically similar to the original being treasured […] These copies only apparently encourage culture and taste: what they really do is to incite the public to put the authentic masterpiece on the same level as the mediocre or even obscene copy.[179]

---

[176] See Călinescu, *Five Faces of Modernity*. 240-248.
[177] Dorfles, *Kitsch*. 87.
[178] Dorfles regards such 'transpositions', including cinematic adaptations of literature, as a characteristic form of kitsch, see ibid. 87-93.
[179] Ibid. 31-32.

As a result, Dorfles complains, 'many famous works come to be identified with their anecdotal or extrinsic aspects, and modern man is unable to appreciate fully the relationship between "form" and "content" in a work'.[180] From this perspective, kitsch results in a fixation on fidelity to form, such that it becomes separated from its supposed content: the semblance of art is retained only to parasitically channel its cultural prestige.

These issues find a specifically musical manifestation in 'popularizing' arrangements of canonical works (as discussed in Chapter 6).[181] Leopold Stokowski's orchestration of J. S. Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D minor, which he famously conducted in Walt Disney's film *Fantasia* (1940), provides a particularly clear example of this phenomenon.[182] Szendy acknowledges its potential to be heard as 'kitsch' that 'turns Bach's organ into music for costume dramas', while Scruton observes that 'some would dismiss it as a vulgar travesty'.[183] This orchestration, and especially its appearance in *Fantasia*, typifies Stokowski's reputation as the 'vulgar virtuoso', a Hollywood-style showman who affected the role of artist.[184] Hindemith's diatribe against arrangement must have been at least partly informed by an earlier visit to Disney's studio during the production of *Fantasia*, during which he heard Stokowski's version of the Toccata and Fugue alongside its other musical items. In one letter, Hindemith complains that 'the masterpieces of composers have suffered badly under [Disney's] ham-fisted arrangements […] I was close to having my fill of it and I came to the firm conclusion that the musical world could only be cured of this evil with a generous dose of rat poison. It's enough to drive you up the wall!'[185] Stokowski's reworking of the Toccata and Fugue does not alter its

[180] Ibid. 87.
[181] Dorfles condemns 'symphonic compositions adapted for different instruments' and 'the use of themes from classical music (especially for the organ) in popular music', and complains that 'many of Liszt's and Chopin's tunes (two composers far from minor, far from easy if studied in their own context) […] have been dragged down to the level of sentimental songs'. Ibid. 87, 18.
[182] *Fantasia* (Walt Disney, 1940), Samuel Armstrong et al. (dir.), DVD (2011).
[183] Szendy, *Listen*. 36; Scruton, *The Aesthetics of Music*. 453.
[184] Terry Teachout, 'The Vulgar Virtuoso', *Commentary*, 100/4 (1995), 49-51.
[185] 'Die Meisterwerke der Komponisten schwer unter seiner Bearbeiterfaust zu leiden haben […] war mir's hart vorm Überwerden und ich kam zu der festen Überzeugung, daß die musikalische Welt nur durch eine gehäufte Hand voll Rattengift von diesem Übel zu kurieren wäre. Es ist wirklich zum Einmachen!' Paul Hindemith, *Briefe* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1982). 209-210.

musical material, but subjects it to a highly colouristic treatment that emphasises spectacular effects over the material itself or its organisation.[186] Stokowski's version seems to calculated to showcase the orchestra more than the music that is orchestrated, which is inflated to indicate Bach's 'greatness' and the idea of artistic 'greatness' more generally. This focus on the paraphernalia of artistic prestige is rendered explicit in *Fantasia*, which opens with the Toccata and Fugue. Shadows inflate the musicians and their instruments just as the music has been inflated, while Stokowski himself appears in auratic silhouette (Figure 2.4), the timbral contrasts of his orchestration enhanced by extravagant stereo effects. Suitably 'informed' about absolute music by the white-tied but chummily ingratiating expert Deems Taylor, whose status as such is more important than any expertise he provides, Disney's audience is presented with an *image* of 'Classical Music' in all its supposed earnestness, profundity, and grandeur.[187] To its critics, the sequence is paradigmatically kitsch because Stokowski and Disney 'hijack' Bach's music while claiming to re-present it faithfully, self-consciously appearing artistic while offering only the mere accessories of art.

[186] Such 'colouristic' treatment is susceptible to the suspicion that arrangement trades in mere sonic sensation rather than musical substance, especially in 'faithful' examples in which that substance is not altered. Consider, for example, August Halm's comparison of orchestrated fugues with neon advertisements (see 6.6.3, especially note 134). A contrasting view of Webern's orchestration of Bach's Ricercar from the *Musical Offering* is expressed in Carl Dahlhaus, 'Analytical Instrumentation: Bach's Six-Part Ricercar as Orchestrated by Anton Webern', *Schoenberg and the New Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987). A more nuanced view of this orchestration is presented in James Currie, 'Splinters in the Eye: Interpreting Webern's Bach transcription', *Journal of Musicological Research*, 21/3 (2002), 167-196.

[187] The film's images 'are not going to be the interpretations of trained musicians', Taylor reassures the audience, '…which I think is all to the good!'



Figure 2.4: *Fantasia*, opening of the Toccata and Fugue sequence.

2.5.4 Kitsch criticism critiqued

Detractors of such popularizing arrangements may claim to act with 'democratic' motives on behalf of a public that lack the discrimination to tell kitsch from 'genuine' art, protecting them from the counterfeit. However, this is not the only or even most significant reason that popularizing arrangements identified as kitsch cause such anxiety. As Gordon C. F. Bearn rightly points out, kitsch is 'a category known only to those who think themselves above it' either in a straightforward sense or through the use of irony.[188] Keeping in mind the social distinctions articulated by distinctions of artistic taste, kitsch criticism can be understood as a defence mechanism against the music used by one 'elite' socio-economic group to distinguish itself being appropriated by another, less exclusive one. In this sense, popularizing arrangement

[188] Bearn, 'Kitsch', (2014). The 'perspective' on listening afforded by arrangement readily lends itself to irony, particularly in the context of kitsch. Consequently, while all the examples discussed in this thesis have ironic potential, the notion of irony is addressed in detail as part of the discussion of kitsch in chapter 6 (see 6.6.2).

alarms its critics because it short-circuits existing modes of social distinction, an alarm only intensified by greater 'fidelity' to an 'original'.

In his critique of the practice, Hindemith tellingly suggests that arrangement undermines the value of canonical works by making them accessible to a wider range of listeners.

> Why should everyone have everything? Even with the most liberal and most democratic distribution of goods there will be many things that the average citizen will hardly ever have in sufficient quantities, such as diamonds, caviar, and Stradivarius violins. Should we not be glad to have certain pieces of music similarly kept away from the ordinary musical goings-on, if for no other reason than to give the ambitious seeker of higher musical truths an opportunity to grow.[189]

These socio-cultural factors prevent critics from acknowledging the way apparently kitsch treatments of respected works undermine the aesthetic framework by which their initial value is articulated. If kitsch closely resembles art, it follows that art is akin to kitsch: what causes anxiety in one is not absent in the other. Supposedly, art, as opposed to kitsch, is not a commodity (of value in itself), not derivative (original), not defined by the vicissitudes of context and reception (an autonomous form), not encouraging of sentimental or clichéd emotional reactions (an object of disinterested contemplation), and so on. However, art is, at least in part, all the things it is not supposed to be. Kitsch is a conceptual 'scapegoat', a category defined by all the troubling dimensions of aesthetic experience and its contexts such that the idea of art might be kept free of them. However, as Bearn argues, the two categories cannot and should not be entirely separated from one another:

> If we think of kitsch and art not as different in kind but as differing only in degree of intensity, then we will be able to avoid the elitist sneer that is a feature of the very category of kitsch […] either essentially or ironically. […] T]he main reason, apart from its truth, for insisting that kitsch and art differ only in degree is that it makes it possible to add to the naked enjoyment of art, without either blushing or sneering.[190]

Those invested in canonical works on the basis of traditional aesthetic values may reject popularizing arrangements because they do not want to confront their own kitsch-inflected way

[189] Hindemith, *A Composer's World*. 142. In particular, Hindemith is referring the practice of arranging Bach's *Art of Fugue* rather than 'enjoying' the score in 'nonsounding abstraction'.
[190] Bearn, 'Kitsch', (2014).

of listening to the 'original'. Despite being dismissed as kitsch, in facilitating such a confrontation these popularizing arrangements possess a critical potential.

This critical potential is illustrated by the narrative role of arrangement in the film *All About Eve* (1950). Margo Channing, an actress, melodramatically laments her passing youth during her birthday party while repeatedly instructing the cocktail pianist to play Liszt's *Liebestraum* No. 3.[191] She complains that her guests 'know nothing about feelings' and, when they ask for livelier music, criticizes their tastes as infantile. Later, the *Liebestraum* returns in a swooning orchestral arrangement when Margo, stranded with her friend in a broken-down car, breaks a frosty silence by switching on the radio.[192] 'I detest cheap sentiment!', she declares with knowing irony after cutting the music off again almost immediately. Margo then embarks on a frank monologue, acknowledging her often melodramatic behaviour and meditating upon the often painful artificiality of her performed identities.[193] The orchestral *Liebestraum*'s overt 'sentimentality' prompts Margo to adopt a critical stance towards her earlier sentimental (but purportedly 'artistic') hearing of the 'original' in a way that the 'original' alone could not; the arrangement is posited as an agent or reflection of her broader shift in attitude. While certainly exaggerated to suit the film's dramatic purposes, this critical potential of apparently kitsch arrangements may also be manifested in other listeners' engagement with similar examples in other contexts.

In this way and the others discussed in this chapter, arrangements, even and sometimes especially those which appear the most 'conventional', put traditional theories of the practice and the dominant aesthetic ideologies that inform them under considerable strain, showing the conceptual fractures inherent in notions of fidelity, essentialism, formalism, and artistic value more generally. Arrangement as a *practice*, a mode of production and listening, exists in a

[191] *All About Eve* (Twentieth Century Fox, 1950), Joseph L. Mankiewicz (dir.), DVD (2012). 00:45:34-00:47:58.
[192] 01:18:54-01:22:01.
[193] The monologue's critique is, however, undermined by its more ideologically conformist conclusion, which reinforces traditional gender roles.

potentially critical relationship with the aesthetic assumptions which underpin the *idea* of arrangement by which individual examples are interpreted. The critical potential of arrangements is often considered proportional to the formal change they make to their sources. Pace, for example, makes such an assumption in his discussion of Finnissy's transcriptions: 'His approach is above all "critical"—he is uninhibited about modifying or mutating his source material to suit his own ends'.[194] The composer also affirms such a view, claiming that his highly transformative *Verdi Transcriptions* (1972-2005) 'form a critique of a musical culture which is over-saturated in its past […] How? By dissection, analysis, parody, and by self-dramatized intent'.[195] However, the most incisive critique of such a backward-looking musical culture might not be levelled simply at the forms of the canonical works with which it seems obsessed, but rather at the processes of commodification by which it maintains a stranglehold over both what such works may mean and ideas about how they generate meaning. In this respect, 'faithful' arrangements, especially those which popularize their canonical sources, may hit closer to home. Counterintuitively, such examples may prove as ideologically disruptive as those which parade their critical credentials through extensive formal transformation, subtly realizing as-yet-undertheorized dimensions of arrangement's critical potential in the twenty-first century.

[194] Fox, Brougham, and Pace, *Uncommon Ground*. 75.
[195] Michael Finnissy, 'Programme Notes', in *Michael Finnissy: Verdi Transcriptions*, Jonathan Powell (Jacqueline du Pré Music Building, St Hilda's College, Oxford, 30 April 2016), [Concert programme note]. On parody, see 6.6.1.

3 *Nebenstück*, Noise, and the Meanings of Medium

3.1 Introduction

The subtitle of Pesson's *Nebenstück* (1998) describes it as a 'filtration of Johannes Brahms's Ballade op. 10 no. 4 for clarinet in B-flat and string quartet'.[1] The piece re-presents the pitches and rhythms of Brahms's early piano work (1854) largely intact, deftly scoring them for the instrumentation of his late Clarinet Quintet op. 115 (1891). However, Pesson eschews the 'full-bodied' Romantic sonority of the Quintet in favour of the 'hollow' scraping, rasping, tapping, and wheezing sounds produced by a range 'extended' performing techniques. This contrast between 'fidelity' and 'filtration' in *Nebenstück* amplifies a tension inherent to the idea of musical arrangement more broadly. To hear a piece of music as an arrangement is to negotiate a course between two contradictory intuitions about what arrangements are and what makes them meaningful. The first is that an arrangement is necessarily the same as the work it arranges despite sounding different from it, and therefore that the arrangement's meaning is ultimately derived from that work. The second intuition is that an arrangement is necessarily different from the work it arranges despite sounding similar to it, and therefore that an arrangement's meaning *as an arrangement* always exceeds and eludes that attributed to the arranged work.

Although both of these intuitions seem fundamental to listeners' experience of arrangements, the first is articulated more explicitly in discussions of the subject. This prominence is manifested most obviously in the fidelity-essentialist definition of an arrangement as a piece of music which re-presents the *content* of an existing work in a new musical *medium*.[2] In this context, 'content' most usually refers to the pitches and rhythms of the arranged work, 'medium' to the arrangement's instrumentation, stylistic idiom, or a combination of the two.[3] Such a definition suggests that an arranger manipulates the source

[1] See Gérard Pesson, *Nebenstück, Filtrage de la Ballade op. 10 no. 4 de Johannes Brahms pour Clarinette en Si-bémol et Quatuor à Cordes* (Paris: Henry Lemoine, 2001 [1999]) [Score]. For a recording see *Mes Béatitudes* (2001, Aeon), CD.
[2] See 2.2.4.
[3] See, for example, Chapter 2 note 92.

work's means of expression rather than the meaning it expresses, that their contribution is like an empty vessel which channels content but does not possess any content itself. So conceived, an arrangement is inherently faithful to its source because that source supplies its content and therefore determines its essential significance. Consequently, an understanding of arrangement that draws a conceptual distinction between musical content and medium in this way implicitly posits fidelity as arrangement's necessary condition whether or not it explicitly prescribes fidelity as an aesthetic ideal. However objective or neutral it might initially appear, this distinction between content and medium posits a fidelity-essentialist conception of arrangement that limits the ways individual examples may be interpreted as meaningful. Regarding the new 'medium' fashioned by the arranger as reinterpreting, commenting upon, or even critiquing the 'content' provided by the composer of the 'original' work does not escape this implicit fidelity discourse; to understand the contribution of the arranger as a 'medium' posits a pre-existing 'content' as the fundamental basis of its meaning. Conversely, a 'happy compromise' between the two conflicting intuitions about arrangement, suggesting they exhibit a 'novelty in fidelity' or 'balance of old and new', either tacitly reverts to a constraining fidelity discourse or recasts 'medium' as simply another form of 'content' and therefore the arrangement as effectively a new 'original' work. To open up interpretative possibilities that are precluded by fidelity thinking it is therefore necessary to adopt a critical stance towards the distinction between content and medium. This involves holding both intuitions about arrangement in tension with one another without dismissing either or adopting an illusory 'happy compromise' between them. In short, this involves appreciating the 'meanings of medium', however contradictory such a concept might initially appear.

Upon first consideration, *Nebenstück* seems to sharpen the distinction between content and medium rather than challenging it. In Pesson's piece, the compositional parameters traditionally regarded as constituting music's content and its medium are starkly polarized. A listener need not be familiar with Brahms's Ballade to distinguish between *Nebenstück*'s

nineteenth-century pitch material and the strikingly modern timbral context in which Pesson re-presents it.[4] This polarization intensifies the opposing intuitions that arise when listening to an arrangement. From one perspective, *Nebenstück* facilitates the attempt to tease apart content and medium which, however inconclusive, is central to the experience of hearing a piece of music as an arrangement which re-presents an existing work. Conversely, however, this distinction also foregrounds *Nebenstück*'s timbres as generating meaning beyond the Ballade rather than being a mere 'medium' by which its 'content' is expressed. Pesson's description of *Nebenstück* as a 'filtration' hints at this tension, suggesting that the work's meanings as a mediation of Brahms's Ballade are at least as significant as those of the Ballade which supplies its 'content'.

This chapter considers the meanings of medium in *Nebenstück*, examining how these arise in relation to notions of 'medium' beyond the context of arrangement. In its most literal sense, 'medium' is a spatial term, signifying the 'gap' between listeners and a supposed source of musical meaning. In arrangement discourse, this mediation is often understood through metaphors of depth and containment which contrast the 'surface' fabricated by an arranger with an arrangement's 'deeper' or 'inner' content, derived from the source work. 'Medium' may also refer to physical means by which musical 'content' is made available to listeners, from acoustic instruments to electronic sound reproduction technology. In both cases, 'noise' acts as a reminder of a medium's presence, conceptually distinguishing the effects of that medium from the 'signal' with which it interferes. That a recording may be described as of 'high' or 'low' fidelity ('hi-fi' or 'lo-fi') also presents telling connections with the notion of fidelity in arrangement discourse. The reoccurring references to ghosts and haunting in *Nebenstück*'s critical reception and artistic responses to the work are linked to its association with sound reproduction technologies, and suggest its role as a medium akin to that in a séance, 'channelling' Brahmsian 'content' from beyond the grave. While each of these contexts seems

[4] On unhelpful distinctions between 'knowing' and 'unknowing' listeners see 2.3.2.

to sustain the binary distinction between content and medium made in arrangement discourse, *Nebenstück* can be interpreted as destabilizing this distinction. In examining the ambiguities *Nebenstück* evokes, this chapter seeks to temper the dominant, fidelity-essentialist intuition about how arrangements produce meaning by articulating the usually-implicit intuition that their significance results in part from their manipulation of medium. Such an approach suggests a critical framework that better reflects the tension between these two intuitions and therefore the experience of listening to a piece of music as an arrangement.

3.2 Depth

3.2.1 *Nebenstück*, depth, and fidelity listening

Contemporary uses of the word 'medium' remain closely tied to its initial meaning in Latin, a 'middle', 'centre', or 'intermediate course'. The literal meaning of the word 'content', 'something contained', is similarly spatial. The spatial connotations of both terms continue to inform how they are used in musical contexts. The word 'medium' is used variously to refer to the sound, instrumentation, or style of a musical work, 'content' its 'material' (especially pitch and rhythm) or 'meaning'. A work's 'medium' is understood metaphorically as positioned between its 'content' and listeners, both propagating this 'content' to listeners and separating them from it. The content of a work is understood as positioned 'within' or 'beneath' the audible 'surface' provided by its medium. This composite conceptual metaphor of depth and containment posits an implicit hierarchy, contrasting a profound 'inner' content essential to a work's identity with a superficial 'exterior' medium which is incidental to it.[5] An arrangement, such a metaphor suggests, may preserve the content of an 'original' work 'beneath' a new instrumental or stylistic medium provided by the arranger, which might reveal or obscure it to

[5] For further discussion of conceptual metaphor theory, see 4.2.2. For insightful discussion of depth metaphors in musical discourse, see Holly Watkins, *Metaphors of Depth in German Musical Thought: From E.T.A. Hoffmann to Arnold Schoenberg* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Robert Fink, 'Going Flat: Post-Hierarchical Music Theory and the Musical Surface', in Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist (eds.), *Rethinkinig Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 102-137.

varying degrees while retaining its essential identity.[6] Unsurprisingly, the influence of this idea is particularly evident in fidelity-essentialist descriptions of arrangement. Recall, for example, Richard Beaudoin and Joseph Moore's description of the expressive content preserved by an arrangement as 'deeper' and 'more stable' than its medium, or Ian Pace's reference to a 'kernel' of the 'original' remaining at the heart of the most transformative reworkings.[7] Fidelity-essentialist discourse uses metaphors of depth and containment as a rhetorical device to assimilate the apparently 'unfaithful' practice of arrangement to *Werktreue* ideology by suggesting fidelity on a 'deeper' level that is as fundamental as it is obscure.[8]

The influence of such depth and containment metaphors is evident in descriptions of *Nebenstück* in which the separation of content and medium is upheld even if 'fidelity' is not explicitly privileged. For example, Susann El Kassar suggests that in *Nebenstück* 'fragile sound surrounds [Brahms's harmony] with a patina, as if to protect it and its beauty'.[9] Jens F Laurson's review of the work expands upon a similar depth metaphor:

> Strings breathe like the gentlest of steam locomotives might, slightly uphill, shortly before happy hour. From these hushed rhythmical phrases arises a romantic, lullabyesque melody of great beauty, fragmented by a recurring descent into left-hand pizzicato phrases. If the touch of music's love shines strongly through here […], it's probably because the core of this ingenious work is Brahms Ballade No.4, op.10 [*sic*]. A sea of indefinite associations arises in a cloud of beauty; without shape but constant form.[10]

Laurson envisions Brahms's Ballade as a 'core' of truly 'musical' content surrounded and partially concealed by the 'cloud' of hushed, breath-like sounds that characterize Pesson's arrangement. He describes the varying audibility of the Ballade's melody as resulting from the way it 'arises' from and 'descends' back into the obscurity of this cloudlike medium. Laurson

---

[6] Similar metaphors are used in fidelity discourse surrounding film adaptations of novels. See Robert Stam, 'Beyond Fidelity: The Dialogics of Adaptation', in James Naremore (ed.), *Film Adaptation* (London: Athlone, 2000), 54-76. 57.

[7] See 2.2.4 and 2.2.5.

[8] Fidelity-essentialism is therefore a mode of 'interpretation' of the kind critiqued by Susan Sontag, 'excavating' behind the surface of a text to 'reveal' a more ideologically acceptable 'subtext'. See Susan Sontag, *Against Interpretation* (London: Vintage, 1994).

[9] 'der fragile Klang umgibt sie mit einer Patina, als müsste man sie und ihre Schönheit beschützen.' Susann El Kassar, 'Oxidierte Musik', *Positionen*, 103 (2015), 17-20. 17.

[10] Jens F. Laurson, 'Ionarts-at-Large: Munich Biennale (Part 1)', *Ionarts* (4 May 2010) <http://ionarts.blogspot.com/2010/05/ionarts-at-large-munich-biennale.html>, accessed 14 December 2018.

likens the sound of the Ballade to a ray of light that emanates from deep within Pesson's arrangement and passes outward, through the indefinite fog of its exterior surface to lovingly 'touch' the listener beyond. In doing so, he imputes to Brahms's music an agency that actually belongs to the listener. The idea that the sound of this 'core' reaches outwards to a listener rhetorically implies the complementary desire to listen 'inwards' to hear it.[11] Laurson's description tacitly posits as normative the inclination to listen *for Nebenstück*'s 'content', the Ballade at its 'core', *through* its 'medium', the 'cloud' of breath sound which envelops it. This mode of engagement, which privileges the 'content' of the 'original' work above new 'medium' employed by the arranger, might be termed *fidelity listening*.

3.2.2 Pesson's depth metaphors

Pesson's programme note for *Nebenstück* draws on the depth metaphors conventionally used to describe arrangements, activating in them the broader temporal and psychological connotations such metaphors often carry in other contexts.

> This instrumentation of a ballade by Brahms is an attempt to fix, to objectify the strange contamination which occurs between musical invention and memory. The works that haunt us often interpose themselves when we believe we have pulled an idea from nothing, as in return they are coloured by our obsessions, because, in artistic matters, research is concomitant with an incessant archaeology.[12]

Through one of his frequent references to archaeology, the composer likens his musical memories to historic artefacts concealed by the progressive accretion of new topsoil over time.[13] Pesson characterizes *Nebenstück* as a psychoanalytical 'excavation' which unearths these artefacts, unconscious memories buried deep beneath the surface of compositional practice in

[11] This idea may be fruitfully compared with Pesson's 'new pact of audition', see 1.5.
[12] 'Cette instrumentation d'une ballade de Brahms est une tentative de fixer, d'objectiver la contamination étrange qui se fait entre l'invention musicale et la mémoire. Les œuvres qui nous hantent s'interposent souvent lorsqu'on croit avoir tiré une idée du néant, comme en retour, elles se colorent de nos obsessions, car, en matière d'art, la recherche est concomitante à une incessante archéologie.' Gérard Pesson, 'Nebenstück', *Henry Lemoine* [Online programme note], <http://www.henry-lemoine.com/fr/catalogue/fiche/27536>, accessed 14 December 2018.
[13] See, for example, Pesson, *Journal*. 183.

the present.[14] The composer continues by giving this initial archaeological metaphor an oceanic twist.

> This ballade from op. 10 has literally haunted me for years: its strange form, its low tessitura, the beauty of its initial barcarolle-like movement, its central cantando where the song is submerged in a rippling texture, interrupted by a sort of chorale. If it has haunted me so, it is because I have not heard it ever again in my memory, where it gradually rusted, like an object which has fallen in the sea. To try to transcribe it was to fish it out again, to rediscover it assimilated to my own projects, already charged with what my own musical work was adding to it, as far as subtracting from it perhaps, although crowding around it, like coral which develops on all nearby material, exaggerating each shape that it absorbs.[15]

From one perspective, this passage simply replicates Pesson's archaeological metaphor in marine terms, suggesting that *Nebenstück* brings his memory of Brahms's Ballade from the murky depths of unconscious memory to light at the water's surface as a 'new' composition. However, Pesson blurs this trope with a related container metaphor, comparing the Ballade to a retrieved object and his own compositional idiom to the layer of coral which encloses it. The musical 'layer' Pesson adds to the Ballade signifies the age of this memory in the same way coral accumulations indicate the duration for which an object has remained submerged. In many respects Pesson's depth and container metaphors are consistent with those typical in arrangement discourse and seem to imply a similar mode of 'fidelity listening'. Pesson's note for *Nebenstück* invites audiences to listen along with him as he attempts to hear 'through' the surface of his compositional style to the remembered Ballade beneath, figured as a temporally distant and psychologically mysterious point of 'origin'.

Although the metaphors of depth in Pesson's programme note seem consistent with those typical of fidelity-essentialist discourse, the apparently similar spatial metaphors he uses

[14] The psychoanalytic connotations of Pesson's depth metaphor invite comparison with the so-called 'anxiety of influence', see Chapter 3 note 94.

[15] 'Cette balade de l'opus 10 m'a hanté littéralement pendant des années : sa forme étrange, sa tessiture sans aigu, la beauté de ce mouvement de barcarolle initial, son cantando central où le chant est noyé dans une texture ondoyante, interrompu par une sorte de choral. Si elle m'a tant habité, c'est que je ne l'ai plus jamais entendu dans ma mémoire où elle s'est peu à peu oxydée, comme un objet tombé à la mer. Tâcher de la transcrire c'était la repêcher, la retrouver assimilée à mes tentatives, chargée de ce que mon propre travail musical lui avait ajouté, jusqu'à la soustraire peut-être, alors même qu'elle se pressait, comme le corail se développe sur tout matériau à sa portée, soulignant chaque forme qu'elle absorbe.' Pesson, 'Nebenstück', *Henry Lemoine*.

elsewhere suggest a different interpretation of the piece. 'I have always had the idea that behind each music there is another music', Pesson explained in a lecture given in 2006, 'and [*Nebenstück*] is a way to objectify this phenomenon'.[16] While this metaphor seems entirely conventional, positing Brahms's Ballade as the music 'behind' *Nebenstück*, the composer's comments in a recent radio programme suggest the reverse. 'Effectively in *Nebenstück* I took a work that I particularly liked and I left in it whatever fitted with the sonic colour of the music I was writing at the time', he remarks, 'So you could say that it is an orchestrat[ion]… an instrumentation…'.[17] 'It isn't a transcription?' interrupts the programme's presenter, Arnaud Merlin, to which Pesson responds:

> It isn't a transcription exactly—I call it a 'filtration', which is another way of listening, of course. For me, it is like going into the music—and it is always a utopia to descend into sound—and of course for me it is an operation of love for the music, of reverence. It is absolutely wrong to think that I eviscerate Brahms—one simply listens to the inside [of the Ballade]—and in this work, for string quartet and clarinet, one has the impression that when from time to time the clarinet is put like so, a thread of melody that is a little like the soul of Brahms that floats like this at once in our memory and over this very beautiful music.[18]

In this context, Pesson inverts the logic of the container metaphors usually applied to arrangements, describing *Nebenstück*'s unusual instrumental sonorities not as a layer applied to the *outside* of Brahms's Ballade but rather as emanating from *inside* it. From this perspective, *Nebenstück* does not represent a fidelity listening that aims to hear 'through' Pesson's arrangement to the source 'beneath', but instead manifests a desire to hear through the 'surface'

[16] 'J'ai toujours eu l'idée qui derrière chaque musique il y a une autre musique […] Et [*Nebenstück*] est une manière d'objectiver cette chose.' Pesson, 'La Composition Comme Auto-Fiction'. 28:45. The idea of a 'music behind the music' is a reoccurring concept in Pesson's compositional thinking, often mentioned alongside 'archaeology'. See the composer's note to the work *Étant l'Arrière-Son* (2011) in *Gérard Pesson: Musique de Chambre, Cantates* (2018, NoMadMusic), CD. Liner notes 14-15.

[17] 'Effectivement dans le *Nebenstück* j'ai pris une œuvre que j'ai aimé particulièrement et je l'ai laissé ce qu'on joindre avec la couleur sonore de la musique que j'écrivais à l'époque. Donc on pourrait dire que c'est une orchestrat[ion]… une instrumentation…'. Arnaud Merlin and Gérard Pesson, 'Gérard Pesson: Derrière la Musique', *Le Portrait Contemporain* (France Musique, 15 November 2017) [Radio programme]. 20:55.

[18] Merlin: 'C[e n']est pas une transcription?' Pesson: 'C[e n']est pas tout à fait une transcription, j'ai appelé ça une filtrage, qui est une autre façon d'écouter, évidemment. Pour moi c'est comme rentrer à l'intérieur de la musique—et toujours c'est une utopie de descendre dans le son—et évidemment c'est une opération pour moi d'amour de la musique, de révérence. C'est tout à fait faux de penser que je désosse Brahms. Simplement, on l'écoute de l'intérieur—et dans c'est œuvre-là, dans ces quatuor à cordes et clarinette, on a l'impression quand on entends la clarinette qui est met comme ça un filé de mélodie que c'est un peu l'âme de Brahms qui plane comme ça à la fois dans notre mémoire et sur cette si belle musique.' ibid.

of the Ballade to the skeletal sonorities 'within'. Further, Pesson does not imagine Brahms's melodious 'soul' as *Nebenstück*'s innermost essence but as floating airily above it. The composer's reluctance to call *Nebenstück* a 'transcription' is perhaps an attempt to distance the piece from the notions 'inner content' and 'outer medium' the term traditionally implies.

Reconsidering *Nebenstück*'s immediate paratexts in the context of this reversed conception of the work's 'depth' complicates their apparently straightforward compliance with the container metaphors usually applied to arrangements. For example, Pesson's title, which loosely means 'next-to-piece', is overtly spatial but need not imply the hierarchies associated with musical depth. Instead, it uses notions of both proximity and displacement to suggest sameness and difference without necessarily privileging either. This approach corresponds with Pesson's description of *Nebenstück* as objectifying not the unidirectional contamination of invention *by* memory, but the mutual contamination *between* these two processes. Similarly, the composer's account of finding the Ballade 'already charged' with his compositional concerns, as if an intrinsic part of this 'source', is not entirely captured by the straightforward layering manifested by the coral encrusted object to which he likens *Nebenstück*. It is as if the vocabulary of depth metaphors available to Pesson, and the distinction between content and medium they imply, cannot quite express the more balanced relationship between arrangement and 'original' at stake in the piece. In describing *Nebenstück* Pesson 'flips' freely between fidelity-essentialist depth metaphors and an inverse conception of the piece as a music 'behind' Brahms's Ballade, suggesting a more dynamic and unstable way of hearing arrangements than either of these models provides in isolation. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that traditional notions of 'deep' content and 'surface' medium are likely to dominate how arrangements including *Nebenstück* are heard and understood.

3.3 Noise
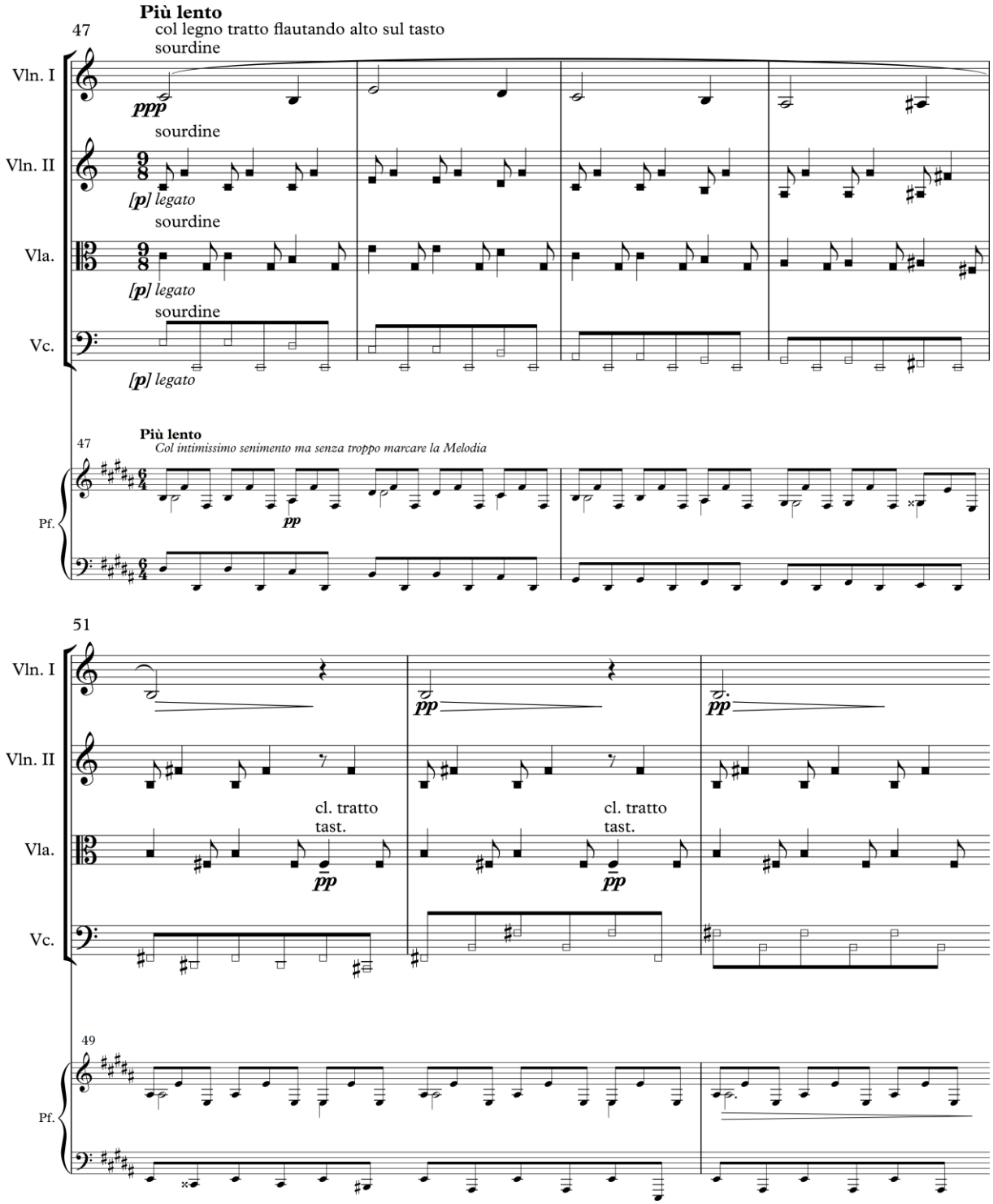
3.3.1 Pesson's 'acoustic treatment'

Pesson's striking use of instrumental timbre in *Nebenstück* provides a sonic evocation of the distinction between content and medium expressed linguistically in the depth metaphors of his programme note. 'In this approach that I took to this music by Brahms', the composer has stated, 'in short in applying to him my own acoustic treatment, my way of thinking about sound, I, effectively, in subtracting from [the Ballade], underlined it in my own way'.[19] Pesson's 'filtration' of the first *Più lento* section of Brahms's Ballade (bars 47-50) in *Nebenstück* (bars 47-54) provides a clear illustration of what this 'acoustic treatment' involves (Example 3.1).[20] The oscillating quavers in the pianist's left hand are assigned to the 'cello and the melody 'hidden' among the triplet accompaniment of the right hand is played by the first violin.[21] The triplets themselves are shared between the second violin and viola parts in an interlocking figuration. In this passage, Pesson neither adds nor removes a single pitch, such that, if bowed conventionally, it might resemble a 'historically appropriate' arrangement emulating the instrumental style of Brahms's Clarinet Quintet. Instead, however, he achieves a markedly different sonic effect by altering the *way* in which Brahms's pitches are to be performed. The melody is played by the first violin with the wood of the bow high up the fingerboard and with a flute-like sonority ('*col legno tratto flautando alto sul tasto*'), while the lower strings employ a 'tapping' technique, fingering pitches without bowing them.[22] As well as drastically reducing the volume and power of the Ballade's pitches, rendering them only very faintly, these unconventional performing techniques supplement the melody with a delicate rasping and scaping sound and add a soft but piquant percussive edge to the accompaniment. When the
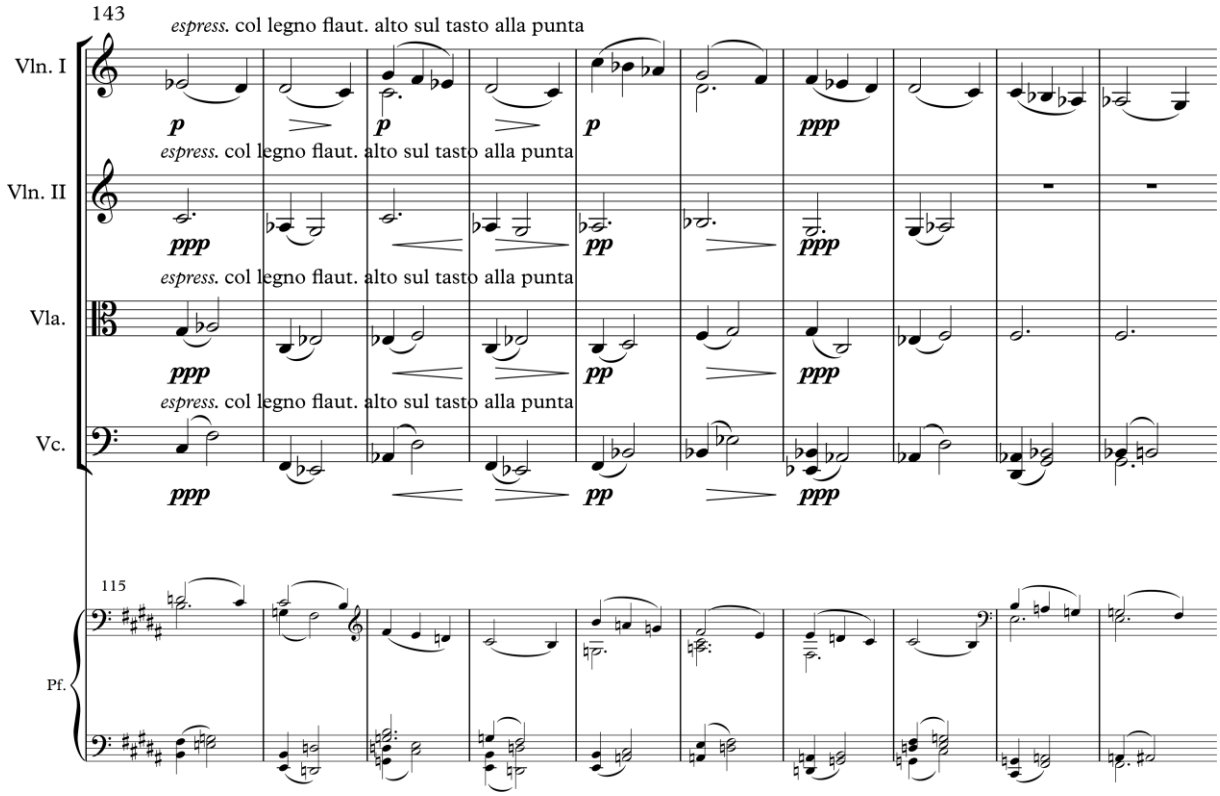
[19] 'Dans cette démarche que j'ai fait autour de cette musique de Brahms, en lui appliquant en somme mon traitement acoustique, ma manière de penser les sons, alors, j'ai effectivement en soustrayant cette musique, je l'ai souligné à ma façon.' Pesson, 'La Composition Comme Auto-Fiction'. 27:00.
[20] Note that Pesson retains a three-four time signature where Brahms switches to six-four, resulting in double the number of bars in these passages.
[21] Some notes are reassigned or transposed by an octave as required by an instrument's range.
[22] The stringed instruments are also muted in this passage.

clarinet takes over the melody in bar 62, it plays *pianissimo, sotto voce,* and after articulating the start of each note immediately reverts to barely-pitched, *détimbré* (‘detimbred’) breath tones.

Bars 143-152 of *Nebenstück*, which correspond to bars 115-124 of Brahms Ballade, present a similar approach (Example 3.2). While this passage of *Nebenstück* may look Brahmsian on the page, the sound resulting from the strings playing with the tips of the wood of their bows, very high up the fingerboard (‘*col legno [tratto] flaut[ando] alto sul tasto alla punta*’) is not. In contrast to resonant, Romantic sonorities promised by *Nebenstück*’s Brahms-inspired instrumentation, these performing techniques render the Ballade’s pitches brittle and hollow, obscured by the scaping of wood against string.



Example 3.1: Comparison of *Nebenstück* bars 47-53 (above) and Brahms, Ballade op.10 no. 4 bars 47-50 (below).



Example 3.2: Comparison of *Nebenstück* bars 143-152 (above) and Brahms, Ballade op.10 no. 4 bars 115-124 (below).

3.3.2 Objective and subjective noise

Pesson's 'acoustic treatment' of the Ballade involves using unconventional playing techniques to reduce the strength and clarity of Brahms's pitches while increasing the amount of *noise* each instrument produces. Michel Chion outlines four meanings of *bruit*, which, as he points out, is most closely translated in English as 'noise' while subject to subtly different usages and connotations:

> 1. A sonic phenomenon characterized by a nonperiodic frequency structure ('complex' in [Pierre] Schaeffer's sense).
>
> 2. The useless part of a sound signal with respect to the expression "signal-to-noise-ratio," as well as in information theory.
>
> 3. That which is neither speech nor music identified as such. This is the *taxonomical* usage […]
>
> 4. A sound considered in a negative light, as a disturbance or nuisance. This is the psychological and affective usage.[23]

[23] Chion, *Sound*. 59.

The first of these definitions is objective, distinguishing noises from other sounds on the basis of their acoustic properties, most notably a lack of the regular vibration patterns which produce distinct pitches (which Schaeffer calls 'tonic'). By contrast, Chion's second, third, and fourth definitions are subjective: a sound is a 'noise' in these senses not because of its acoustic properties but rather the attitude a particular listener adopts towards it in a given context. According to the second and third of Chion's definitions, noise is any sound which 'interferes' with a 'signal' or meaningful discourse, such as speech or music, that a listener is attempting to 'receive' or comprehend. To call a certain sound a 'noise' according any subjective criterion is to adopt a listening strategy which privileges some other sound as a 'signal' toward which a hearer's attention is directed. Such designations are influenced by the ecological, environmental, cultural, and ideological factors that impinge upon a listener in a given context. As Chion's fourth definition suggests, to label a sound a 'noise' in the subjective sense usually implies a negative value judgement. Frequently, a sound may be considered noise in both objective and subjective terms: radio static, for example, is characterized by nonperiodic frequency structures as well as impeding comprehension of broadcast speech or music. However, the objective and subjective definitions of noise need not coincide in this way. Discrete bursts of 'white noise' may be used to send a signal in Morse code by radio, and someone listening for this signal may regard the music being broadcast simultaneously as interference noise.

3.3.3 Medium as noise

The sounds produced by the unconventional playing techniques in *Nebenstück* may be considered 'noisy' in both a subjective and objective sense. Although traditional instrumental technique certainly does not eliminate acoustically 'complex' sounds, notably at the onset of each note, 'tonic' sounds are traditionally privileged over them, especially during the period a pitch is sustained.[24] In contrast, the playing methods used in *Nebenstück* emphasize 'complex'

[24] See ibid. 56.

sounds while reducing the prominence of 'tonic' sonorities. Pesson's 'tapping' technique, for example, renders the initial percussive attack of each note more conspicuous than its pitch, while *col legno* or *sul ponticello* bowing and clarinet 'breath notes' increase the acoustic 'complexity' of notes as they are sustained. Crucially, the acoustic noise produced by such techniques may also be heard as noise in the subjective sense. If the musical discourse of Brahms's Ballade is regarded as a 'signal', then the acoustically 'complex' sounds favoured in Pesson's arrangement might be heard as noise which interferes with it. Such a mode of engagement constitutes a form of fidelity listening: the distinction between signal and noise in this context maps onto that between content and medium in the context of arrangement. From this perspective, the 'content' of an arrangement, supplied by its source, is a signal and its new 'medium' is noise in a subjective sense because it impedes perception of this signal. Fidelity listening therefore posits an arrangement's 'medium' as conceptual 'noise' even if it does not emphasize acoustically noisy instrumental sounds as in *Nebenstück*. However, the elision of conceptual and acoustic noise in *Nebenstück* makes it possible to hear the piece as playing on, with, and against the association between medium and noise within and beyond arrangement discourse.

3.3.4 Pesson and noise

Before pursuing this reading of *Nebenstück* in relation to technology as a 'medium', it is useful to consider the broader significance of noise in Pesson's compositional thought. The composer's interest in noise encompasses two overlapping issues: first, the role of noise resulting from his notated instructions, notably through 'extended' instrumental techniques, and, second, the way listeners' perception of instrumental and environmental noise varies according to the context in which they listen. So-called 'extended' instrumental techniques, and the noise-inflected sounded they produce, have been an important aspect of the composer's musical style since his earliest mature works, in part due to the influence of Helmut Lachenmann. For Lachenmann such techniques constitute an aesthetic and political revolt

against a bourgeois notion of 'the Beautiful reified as the Comfortable and Familiar' by 'extending' the domain of musical sound beyond it.[25] However, as Martin Kaltenecker notes, for Pesson 'these Lachenmannian techniques are not inscribed within some mythology of politicized noise'.[26] Rather, in Pesson's music such techniques are often a continuous 'extension' of traditional performing styles which may nonetheless operate in tension with them. The composer speaks of these techniques as a *détournement* (subversive diversion) of traditional instruments, performing styles, and sounds rather than a rejection of them.[27] These noise-generating 'extended' techniques are therefore 'unconventional', 'unusual', or 'non-traditional' only contextually, by degree rather than kind, many having been in use for two centuries or more; contemporary composers such as Pesson, Lachenmann, Salvatore Sciarrino, and others are notable for elevating them beyond the status of an isolated effect.

Speaking alongside Kaltenecker at a seminar on the subject of noise in contemporary music in 2001, Pesson noted his affinity with the 'critical turn' represented by Lachenmann and Sciarrino's use of extended techniques, also distinguished his own approach.[28]

> I had to find the acoustic means of a certain musical outlook […] In the end, I arrived at techniques of erasure carried out through instrumental processes, that is to say what I have called 'unwriting'—not necessarily meaning a deletion of the musical discourse but rather an adoption of instrumental solutions that were going to distance the music, […] to dissipate the musical material. I therefore felt this critical distance from 'beautiful sound' (what [Helmut] Lachenmann calls the 'philharmonic sound') as an obvious key to a distant sound, perhaps to something inside that it was necessary to rehabilitate.[29]

---

[25] Helmut Lachenmann, 'The "Beautiful" in Music Today', *Tempo*, 135 (1980), 20-24. 21. For insightful discussion of this aspect of Lachenmann's compositional aesthetics, see Alastair Williams, *Music in Germany Since 1968* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013). 75-77, 86-88.

[26] 'les techniques lachenmanniennes ne s'inscrivent pas dans quelque mythologie du bruit politisé'. Kaltenecker, 'Gérard Pesson'.

[27] '"Modernity"—as we say a certain avant-garde—has always diverted instrumental sounds (as I have done myself)'. 'La "modernité"—disons une certaine avant-garde—a souvent détourné les sons instrumentaux (comme je l'ai fait moi-même)[.]' Pesson and Sanson, 'Entretien avec Gérard Pesson'. The Situationist concept of *détournement* provides suggestive parallels with Pesson's use of instrumental techniques and appropriation of pre-existing materials. See Guy Debord and Gil Wolman, 'A User's Guide to Détournement (1956)', in Ken Knabb (ed.), *Situationist International Anthology* (Berkeley: Bureau of Public Secrets, 2006); Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle* (Detroit: Black & Red, 1983).

[28] 'recul critique'. Gérard Pesson and Martin Kaltenecker, 'Intervention 1 par Gérard Pesson', *Langage, Style, et Écriture Aujourd'hui: Le Bruit comme Effet dans L'Écriture Actuelle* (Centre de Documentation de la Musique Contemporaine, 9 October 2001) [Recorded seminar]. 2:26.

[29] 'Je devais trouver des moyens acoustiques d'une certaine vision musicale […] J'en arrivé au fond à des techniques d'effacement qui passé par des procédures instrumentales. C'est-à-dire ce que j'ai appelé le

For Pesson, the noise resulting from the extended techniques of this 'unwriting' (*désécriture*) militates against the seemingly 'noiseless' perfection or 'beautiful sound' privileged by more traditional performing styles. 'These techniques work', Kaltenecker suggests, 'from an aesthetic point of view, to hold in check what might otherwise be a music which is too sweet […] One rather has the impression that these playing techniques are for [Pesson] a way to *interrupt* "*biensonnance*"'.[30] Kaltenecker adopts this last term from Pesson's published journal, where it is used to describe a 'sparkling' music whose 'instrumental mastery' fails to get beyond 'a technique that "goes without saying"', rendering it 'too mentholated'.[31] Like the phrase *beau son* ('beautiful sound') Pesson uses the neologism *biensonnance* (roughly 'well-soundingness') to refer to the rich, full sonority to which instrumental performance traditionally aspires. *Biensonnance* privileges the pitched aspects of an instrumental sound over the noises associated with the material means by which it is produced, positing abstracted pitch as more properly 'musical' than concrete noise.[32] The style of performing Romantic chamber and orchestral music which had become conventional by the late twentieth century is a paradigmatic example of *biensonnance*.[33]

'désécrire'—ne s'appliquer pas forcément au fait de déliter le discours musical mais aussi d'adopter des solutions instrumentales qui allait éloigner la musique […], dissiper la matière musicale. Donc, cette distance critique avec le beau son (donc ce que Lachenmann appelle le 'son philharmonique') je l'ai ressenti comme une clef évidente […] d'un son lointain, peut-être de quelque chose d'intérieur qu'il fallait restituer.' ibid. 3:17.

[30] 'Ces techniques vont […], d'un point de vue esthétique, tenir en échec ce qui serait une musique trop douce […O]n a plutôt l'impression que les modes de jeu sont chez lui une façon d'*interrompre* la « biensonnance »'. Kaltenecker, 'Gérard Pesson'.

[31] 'étincelante', 'maîtrise instrumental', 'trop mentholée'. Pesson, *Journal*. 261-262. This entry is dated Friday 20 March 1997, the year before *Nebenstück*'s publication.

[32] In this respect *biensonnance* could be understood as an illusory concealment of artifice akin to the phantasmagoria Theodor W. Adorno identified in Wagner's music. See Max Paddison, *Adorno's Aesthetics of Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). 244-245. For a critical discussion of this concept see Alastair Williams, 'Technology of the Archaic: Wish Images and Phantasmagoria in Wagner', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, 9/1 (1997), 73-87.

[33] As Pesson indicates, Lachenmann has been particularly critical of this style. See Williams, *Music in Germany Since 1968*. 92.

The way Pesson uses extended techniques to interrupt *biensonnance* is informed by what he calls 'the parasitical noises in musical performance'.[34] Using lute performance as an example, the composer explains that

> one hears with practically equal importance the notated musical discourse itself and the accidents—which it would be ridiculous to erase in editing [a recording]—sounded by the passage of the fingers over the frets, slides… at root the music's 'slag', its discarded shavings, which are perhaps eliminated by over-rigorous editing.[35]

Pesson's reference to such 'parasitical noises' as music's sonic 'slag' or 'discarded shavings' is particularly pertinent in the context of *Nebenstück*, whose title, as El Kassar observes, suggests the German word *Nebenprodukt*, 'by-product'.[36] In this piece, Pesson characteristically interrupts the *biensonnance* of conventional performance technique by accentuating the 'parasitical' noises it necessarily includes but attempts to suppress. As the composer indicates elsewhere, his extended techniques often adapt the gestures of conventional performance, turning them against themselves, rather introducing noise through entirely novel playing methods:

> I have often sought in the invention of instrumental sound the other side of gesture, perhaps the quality of what hampers it, what hinders it, or the grain of what produces it, just at its birth, sometimes rough and impure. It is the beauty of the knots of a carpet, which are not made to be seen, that is to say the labour […] which is almost always hidden.[37]

Pesson's spatial metaphor, which posits noise (implicit in his references to a 'rough' and 'impure' sonic 'grain') as the hidden underside of conventional performance gestures, expands

---

[34] 'les bruits parasite dans l'exécution musicale'. Gérard Pesson and Martin Kaltenecker, 'Intervention 2 par Gérard Pesson', *Langage, Style, et Écriture Aujourd'hui: Le Bruit comme Effet dans L'Écriture Actuelle* (Centre de Documentation de la Musique Contemporaine, 9 October 2001) [Recorded seminar]. 1:36.

[35] 'on entends c'est pratiquement égale importance le discours musicale il-même noté et les accidents—qui serait ridicule de gommer au montage—qui sonne par les passages des doigts sur les frettes, ces glissements… au fond les scories de la musique, les copeau de la musique, peut-être tombé dans un montage trop rigoureux.' ibid. 1:54. Chion offers a very similar analysis of classical guitar performance. Chion, *Sound*. 62-71.

[36] El Kassar, 'Oxidierte Musik'. 17.

[37] 'J'ai souvent cherché dans l'invention du son instrumental l'envers du geste, peut-être la qualité de ce qui le retient, de ce qui l'empêche, ou bien le grain de ce qui le produit, juste à sa naissance, parfois râpeuse et impure. C'est la beauté des nœuds du tapis, qui ne sont pas faits pour être vus, c'est-à-dire le travail […] presque toujours caché.' Pesson, Dousson, and Troche, 'Entretien avec Gérard Pesson'. 341.

upon his conception of 'unwriting' through extended techniques as an 'archaeology' which seeks to uncover the 'music behind the music'.

In *Nebenstück*, an attempt to 'objectify' this noise-based 'music behind the music', Pesson's extended techniques characteristically adjust or subvert the gestures typically employed in a performance of Brahms's Clarinet Quintet rather than simply rejecting them. Fingerboard 'tapping' eliminates the bowing aspect of ordinary playing, bringing the noise produced by left-hand fingering into relief. Bowing *col legno alto sul tasto* or the clarinet's breath tones similarly enhance the 'parasitic' noise of conventional playing and impede pitch production by making only small adjustments to performing gestures. In his score, Pesson recommends that string players clean all rosin from their bows so that *col legno tratto* playing is 'fairly smooth', offering 'the least granular sound possible', and 'in order to obtain greater transparency of sound' with ordinary bowing.[38] Extended and traditional techniques are mitigated toward one another, stressing their continuity and suggesting the possibility of multiple, subtly different approaches to performing *Nebenstück*. The Romantic *espressivo* style adopted by Grup Mixtour and clarinettist Luis Fernández-Castelló, for example, figures a Brahmsian quintet arrangement of the Ballade on the ground of Pesson's extended techniques. Ensemble Recherche's recording, by contrast, makes limited use of vibrato, figuring these extended techniques (rather than conventional modes of performance) on a Brahmsian ground.[39]

[38] 'assez lisses', 'peu granuleux que possible', 'pour obtenir plus de transparence des sons'.
[39] Compare, for example, the melody played by the first violin in bars 47-54 performed by Fernández-Castelló and Grup Mixtour (1:45) and Ensemble Recherche (1:30). See Luis Fernández-Castelló and Grup Mixtour, 'Gérard Pesson: Nebenstück for clarinet and string quartet', *YouTube* [Video], <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wHrpn4dJi1w>, accessed 18 December 2018. Ensemble Recherche's recording can be found on *Mes Béatitudes* (2001).

The second important aspect of Pesson's interest in noise concerns how it affects perception of his music heard in different environments. Most notably, he identifies 'a certain rift between two ways of listening to music', in concert and on a recording.[40]

> Listening in concert allows one to hear what one sees—this is what I have called gesture-sounds. An instrumental gesture producing a music at such low voltage that one only perceives it in linking it to the gesture from which it emerges, like the suggestion of a sonic oscillation. In a concert hall, the listener must tune, 'focus' as one says for vision, their level of perception to what they wish to hear, beyond, moreover, the parasitic noise of all concert halls (the movements, coughs, whispers that form the first circle of listening hell).[41]

The role of such 'gesture-sounds' in *Nebenstück* is ambiguous. The 'parasitic' instrumental noises enhanced by extended techniques in *Nebenstück* are mostly very soft and so difficult to hear above the 'parasitic' environmental noise inevitable in the concert hall. Visually, Pesson's extended techniques often closely resemble the gestures of conventional performance. As a result, a listener 'hearing what they see' may attempt to 'tune their perception' to *Nebenstück*'s pitched elements despite their 'low voltage', 'hearing beyond' the 'parasitic noises' of extended techniques and concert hall alike. This mode of engagement is a form of fidelity listening, because *Nebenstück*'s pitches are derived from Brahms's Ballade. However, as Pesson suggests, the effect of these gesture-sounds depends on what a listener 'wishes' to hear. Seeing performers 'tapping' their fingerboards without bowing may cue listeners to 'hear' the quiet sound this produces despite it blending sonically with the 'parasitic' noise of the performing environment.

The acousmatic experience of listening to a recording, however, eliminates the ambiguous effect of these gesture-sounds.

> In recordings one obviously loses the stratum of erasure that comes not only from relative distance [from the performers], but also the volume of the concert hall. What I give to hearing is sometimes

[40] 'un certain déchirement entre les deux manières d'écouter la musique.' Pesson, Dousson, and Troche, 'Entretien avec Gérard Pesson'. 342.

[41] 'L'écoute en salle donne à entendre ce que l'on voit—c'est ce que j'ai appelé des gestes-sons. Un geste instrumental produisant une musique à si bas voltage qu'on ne la perçoit qu'en la reliant au geste qui se dessine, comme la suggestion d'une oscillation sonore. Dans une salle, l'auditeur doit régler, « accommoder » comme on dit pour la vue, son niveau de perception à ce qu'il souhaite entendre, par-delà d'ailleurs les bruits parasites de toute salle de concert (mouvements, toux, chuchotements qui forment le premier cercle d'un enfer de l'écoute).' ibid. 342.

> thin, the microphone then functions like a microscope—which leads to another utopia, probably recurrent for all composers: the descent into sound.[42]

Pesson's depth-based description of *Nebenstück* as objectifying a music 'behind' or 'inside' Brahms's Ballade frames the piece as a manifestation of precisely this desire to 'descend into sound'. The close microphone placement used in Ensemble Recherche's studio recording of *Nebenstück* demonstrates the microscope-like effect of recording with particular clarity.[43] Although the depleted pitches of Brahms's Ballade are 'magnified' alongside the noises produced by Pesson's extended techniques, the exclusion of environmental noise means that listeners are better able to 'tune' their 'level of perception' to soft instrumental noises if they wish. For example, Ensemble Recherche's recording reveals the *glissandi* of a 'parasitic' noise-melody caused by the violinist's bow as they play the notated melody in bars 47-54 (1:29) unlikely to be heard in concert.[44] As its kinship with Pesson's reversal of the depth metaphors conventionally used to describe arrangement suggests, such a recording affords greater opportunity than concert performance for approaches other than fidelity listening.

3.4 Technology

3.4.1 Technology, listening, and arrangement

It is significant that consideration of Pesson's noise-producing extended techniques should edge so seamlessly into a discussion of the ways recording affects how his music is heard. As well as referring to the instrumentation and style of an arrangement, the word

---

[42] 'Dans l'enregistrement, on perd évidemment la strate d'effacement qui vient non seulement de l'éloignement relatif, mais aussi du volume de la salle. Ce que je donne à entendre est parfois ténu, le micro fonctionne alors comme un microscope—ce qui conduit à cette autre utopie, sans doute récurrente pour tout compositeur : la descente dans le son.' ibid. 342.

[43] *Mes Béatitudes* (2001). The impression of being 'inside' the sound is increased if the recording is heard through headphones.

[44] This effect is also evident in other recordings with close microphone placement including those by Grup Mixtour alone (1:45) and with Fernández-Castelló (2:11). See Grup Mixtour, 'Grup Mixtour: Nebenstück - Gerard Pesson', *YouTube* [Performance video], <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8T13QX5P9LU>, accessed 4 April 2019; Luis Fernández-Castelló and Grup Mixtour, 'Gérard Pesson: Nebenstück for clarinet and string quartet', ibid.[Video], <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wHrpn4dJi1w>, accessed 18 December 2018. The noise-melody is not audible in MDI Ensemble's recording, perhaps due to the microphones being slightly more distantly placed (1:55). MDI Ensemble, 'Gérard Pesson - Nebenstuck - mdi ensemble 2016', *Vimeo* [Performance video], <https://vimeo.com/160444584>, accessed 16 April 2019.

'medium' can also be applied to the technological means by which sound, including music, is stored and reproduced, from wax cylinders, LPs, and CDs to digital downloads and streaming. Recording and arrangement are both forms of musical mediation; the way contemporary listeners hear arrangements is inevitably informed by the pervasive experience of technologically-mediated listening. This is the case even if the arrangement in question is heard 'live' and performed on 'acoustic' instruments. The 'rift' between listening in concert and to a recording is not as great as Pesson suggests: the technologies and practices of sound recording and reproduction both reflect and inform listening in other contexts, including the concert hall. This continuity is implicit, for example, in the composer's identification of the 'parasitic' noises of performance as those (unwisely) eliminated by 'over-rigorous editing'. Chion also hints at this connection:

> There is […] a significant share of noise in a transversal flute (the clacking of the keys), a violin (scraping), and of course 'acoustic' or classical guitar, but the Western listener gets used to not hearing these noises and 'scotomizes' them in his or her mind—if the recording itself doesn't try to rub out the sounds of breathing or of instrumental mechanics.[45]

Pesson and Chion's comments indicate how technological mediation may reflect and facilitate certain ideas about what 'the music itself' is (and is not) and the mode of listening these ideas imply, in this case a fidelity listening directed towards the Work. Pesson's description of the microphone as a prosthesis enabling a 'descent into sound' similarly demonstrates the links between listening and technology but evokes a contrasting way of listening directed towards music as sound. Recording 'represents' particular ways of hearing music in the same way that Peter Szendy suggests arrangements do.[46] Conversely, arrangement might be considered a 'technology' for sharing and reflecting upon the experience of listening to a musical work, an experience itself influenced by the ubiquity of recordings.

---

[45] Chion, *Sound*. 64-65.
[46] See 1.4. On Szendy's conception of the links between arrangement and technology in this regard, see Chapter 7.

This connection between arrangement and recording is particularly relevant to the prominent role of noise in *Nebenstück*. The widespread adoption of fully digital recording technologies in the 1990s meant that the noise which had been an inevitable feature of earlier, analogue methods could be almost entirely eliminated. 'Until quite recently in the history of recording', noted Stan Link in 2001, 'a noticeable level of documentary and transduction noise was unavoidable during both the recording and playback processes'.[47] However, he suggests that by the early 1990s 'we were approaching a point where, given the identity of a digital source and its bit-perfect transfer, what remains was not a "recording" as much as the pure duplication of an original. "Recording" in the sense of successive generations and progressive degeneration of transcription, was ceasing to exist'.[48] In this context, Pesson's concurrent compositional use of delicate noise-based effects can be understood as facilitated and even informed by digital recording technologies. 'High fidelity' recordings reproduce the softest of 'parasitic' performance noises in remarkable detail, unobscured by transduction noise, suggesting the viability of similar sounds as compositional material. For the same reasons, digital recordings make such quiet noise-based compositional material audible in a way that earlier technologies, or listening in concert, did not, as Pesson's description of listening to recordings of his music suggests. *Nebenstück*'s subtle palette of delicate noise-inflected timbres seems composed with a digital recording such as Ensemble Recherche's in mind as much or perhaps more than concert performance.

3.4.2 Added noise

As well as being facilitated by the possibility of digital recording, Pesson's use of noise in *Nebenstück* can be understood as evoking the noise associated with older recordings in order to represent musical memory. Link argues that the avoidably of undesired transduction noise in the digital era enabled such noise, or rather digitally synthesized imitations of it, to be used to

[47] Stan Link, 'The Work of Reproduction in the Mechanical Aging of an Art: Listening to Noise', *Computer Music Journal*, 25/1 (2001), 34-47. 36.
[48] Ibid. 34.

meaningful effect. In particular, deliberately added transduction noise suggests pre-digital experience of technologically mediated listening, and, in drawing attention to the recording's status as a document, the past more generally:

> Noise serves as a chronometric marker and carrier. By distancing us from the event, noise tends toward the quality of memory. The interference of noise parallels or even mimics the resistance to recall imparted by temporal remove. Indeed, […] from a listener's perspective, noise ages a signal, actively ripens it […] Static, compressed dynamic ranges, or just a tinny speaker can, in effect, bypass the present and write the signal directly into the pages of memory […] *Noise renders everything in past tense*.[49]

This 'pastifying' effect of noise can be induced artificially using a 'filter' to attenuate or reduce frequencies of an audio signal, mimicking the poor audio quality offered by archaic sound reproduction technology. Link draws his examples of such 'retro filtering' from popular music in the 1990s, exactly contemporary with the composition of *Nebenstück*. It perhaps the noise in Pesson's piece as much as its instrumentation's reference to late Brahms that prompts Callum MacDonald to describe it as a 'youthful presentiment of fate, clothed in the colours of mature melancholia'.[50]

In this context, Pesson's description of the work as a 'filtration' of Brahms's Ballade is highly significant, framing his extended techniques as an acoustic imitation of 'retro filtering'. This idea informs Nicolas Donin's interpretation of *Nebenstück* as an unusual form of 'instrumental resynthesis', a compositional process which 're-creates' recorded sounds using acoustic instruments by computational analysis of the recording and a given 'algorithm' of reproduction. Although focusing on examples which use computer-assisted methods, Donin also suggests that instrumental resynthesis 'might be seen as a "hardcore", technologically instrumented instance of ancestral practices such as transcription, arrangement, and borrowing':

> This proximity is perceptible in many places among a vast body of contemporary scores explicitly based upon works of the past that are rewritten, altered, or expanded. I cannot listen to Gérard Pesson's *Nebenstück*, for example, without thinking that its noise-oriented 'filtering', meant to reflect the author's idiosyncratic listening and process of remembering, also pertains to some kind of handcrafted resynthesis. The 'algorithm' of *Nebenstück*, metaphorically speaking, would

[49] Ibid. 39. Emphasis added.
[50] Calum MacDonald, 'First Performances; Viitasaari: Musiikin Aika 2009', *Tempo*, 64/251 (2010), 56-58. 57.

> include both awareness of electroacoustic filtering and nostalgia of the times and places where the essential infrastructure of music reproducibility resided in human and instrumental bodies.[51]

Although *Nebenstück* is an instrumental work, much of its potential for meaning as an arrangement arises from its evocation of noisy analogue recording and reproduction media in a noiseless digital era. In this respect, Pesson's arrangement constitutes an instrumental, art music example of the 'lo-fi aesthetics' Adam Harper identifies in contemporary popular music.[52]

Sciarrino's earlier use of noise in an explicit evocation of sound reproduction technology and recollection in *Efebo con Radio* ('the youth with the radio', 1981) provides a useful point of comparison with Pesson's implicit allusion to such technologies in *Nebenstück.* Given his interest in Sciarrino, *Efebo con Radio* may even have been a direct influence on *Nebenstück* in this regard.[53] Pesson's role as a producer and presenter at the radio station France Musique, especially his eclectic weekly late-night programme *Boudoir et Autres*, may also relate to *Nebenstück*'s tone and themes.

> *Boudoir et Autres*, a murmured book of notes, borrows changeable forms, privileging the intimate journal, the list, the enumeration, the lexicon, the short form. […] To remember, to listen to the margins, this is the way to these boudoirs which from the muffled studio would like to have the intimacy of the feminine dressing-room[.][54]

Nebenstück can fruitfully be interpreted as probing the same combination of distance, intimacy, memory, and auditory attention associated with sound reproduction technology outlined in France Musique's description of *Boudoir et Autres* (likely the composer's own).

Heard as an instrumental response to 'retro filtering', *Nebenstück* engages with the continuities between concepts of medium in both arrangement discourse and the context of sound reproduction technology, using noise to foreground its own status as a mediation.

---

[51] Nicolas Donin, 'Sonic Imprints: Instrumental Resynthesis in Contemporary Composition', in Gianmario Borio (ed.), *Musical Listening in the Age of Technological Reproduction* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2015), 323-341. 338-339. On *Nebenstück* and nostalgia see El Kassar, 'Oxidierte Musik'.

[52] Adam Harper, 'Lo-fi Aesthetics in Popular Music Discourse', D.Phil. thesis (Oxford University, 2014).

[53] See Pesson, 'Héraclite, Démocrite et la Méduse. Sur Salvatore Sciarrino'.

[54] '« Boudoir et autres » , carnet de notes murmuré, emprunte des formes changeantes, privilégiant le journal intime, la liste, l'énumération, le lexique, la forme courte. […] Se souvenir, écouter les marges, voilà le chemin de ces boudoirs, qui, du salon ouaté voudrait avoir l'intimité du vestiaire féminin[.]' 'Boudoir et autres', *France Musique* <https://www.francemusique.fr/emissions/boudoir-et-autres>, accessed 5 April 2019.

Pesson's addition of noise to the pitches of Brahms's Ballade (and the sonority of his Clarinet Quintet) can be fruitfully contrasted with Jonathan Berger and Charles Nichols' contemporary attempt to denoise a degraded wax cylinder recording of the Brahms playing his Hungarian Dance No.1 made in 1889.[55] In contrast to the added noise of 'retro filtering', Berger and Nichols used digital filtration techniques to 'eliminate a significant amount of masking noise and focus on the piano sound'.[56] Employing the fidelity-essentialist depth metaphors that Pesson in part subverts, Berger describes the filtration as a form of 'sonic archaeology' which involved 'painstakingly removing layers of noise to reveal the music embedded within'.[57] Having extracted a MIDI file of the composer's solo piano performance of the piece, Berger and Nichols reconstructed 'a performance of the original four-hand version of the piece as if performed by Brahms playing with himself'.[58] This scholarly 'instrumental resynthesis' conflates increased audio 'fidelity' with fidelity to the work, positing Brahms's solo piano arrangement of the Hungarian Dance as another layer of 'noise' obscuring a supremely 'authentic' but necessarily hypothetical performance of the 'original' work. As Link notes, 'the ultimate subtext of noise reduction is the realization of an independent, pure, almost sacrosanct musical object'.[59] Berger and Nichols' technologically-assisted act of fidelity listening, impossible before the digital era, manifests a continuous concept of medium cutting across discourses of denoising and arrangement. *Nebenstück* merges these discourses in the opposite direction, suggesting a quintet arrangement of Brahms's Ballade heard through the noise of a degraded historic recording. Berger and Nichols present their reconstructed duet as 'denoising'

[55] The recording also includes a brief excerpt Johann Strauss's Waltz 'Libelle', and a voice giving a spoken introduction. For details regarding the production of this recording and its subsequent history, see Jonathan Berger and Charles Nichols, 'Brahms at the Piano: An Analysis of Data from the Brahms Cylinder', *Leonardo Music Journal*, 4 (1994), 23-30; Stephan Puille, 'Johannes Brahms in the Lindström Recording Studio', *11th International Conference of Discography* (Hildesheim, 9 May 2010) [Conference paper]; Alexander Rehding, 'Wax Cylinder Revolutions', *The Musical Quarterly*, 88/1 (2005), 123-160. 126.

[56] Berger and Nichols, 'Brahms at the Piano'. 26. The results can be heard at Jonathan Berger, 'Sonic Archeology: An Analysis and Transcription of the 1889 Cylinder Recording of Johannes Brahms' Performance of a Segment of His First Hungarian Dance', *Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics, Stanford University* <https://ccrma.stanford.edu/groups/edison/brahms/brahms.html>, accessed 20 December 2018.

[57] Berger, 'Sonic Archeology'.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Link, 'Listening to Noise'. 37.

the Work and offering it unmediated by arrangement or technology, even though their filtration is heavily mediated in both these ways. By contrast, the noise added by Pesson's 'filtration' enables *Nebenstück* to be heard as foregrounding and thematizing the role of mediation in the contexts of both recording and arrangement. 'If […] we define "high fidelity" concerns in recording as *the pursuit of truth*', writes Eliot Bates, then noise, as a technological 'glitch', is '*the betrayal of the simulation*'.[60] An arrangement which, like *Nebenstück,* evokes transcriptional or technological 'low fidelity' eschews 'pursuit' of the 'true' or 'authentic' work, instead enacting a 'betrayal of the arrangement' which allows musical 'medium' to become a subject as well as means of musical discourse.[61]

Importantly, however, *Nebenstück*'s invitation to listen *to* its 'medium' does not exclude the possibility of attempting to listen *through* it to the Ballade 'beneath' the noise. If 'noise engenders listening strategies' as Link indicates, then some of these strategies are consistent with fidelity listening, as Pesson and Chion's comments about 'parasitic' instrumental noise illustrate.[62] In parallel with technological 'tactics' for 'dealing' with noise in pre-digital recordings, Link suggests that listeners adopted psychological ones:

> Listeners learned to 'hear through' noise. The dust and nicks on vinyl recordings, amplifier hum, or speed inaccuracies of tape mechanisms produced types of noise that were basically as predictable as potholes on the familiar road. We knew where and when these things occurred and simply drove around them, so to speak. […] Paradoxically, noise could focus our attention away from itself and onto the non-noise part of the recording where we may even be forced mentally to reconstruct or imagine the signal. […] Within a remarkably wide range of both variety and intensity, noise was rendered translucent by its conceptual displacement from the underlying object of our attention. Listening had its own virtuosity in that regard.[63]

Although noise added to recordings in a digital era when noise is avoidable may be heard as meaningful, 'retro filtering' does not preclude the 'denoising' listening Link describes. This

[60] Eliot Bates, 'Glitches, Bugs, and Hisses: The Degeneration of Musical Recordings and the Contemporary Musical Work', in Christopher Washburne and Maiken Derno (eds.), *Bad Music: The Music We Love to Hate* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 275-293. 288.
[61] In this sense, arrangement may be a 'meta-discursive practice' like the forms of 'glitch composition' Bates considers. Ibid. 289.
[62] Link, 'Listening to Noise'. 36.
[63] Ibid. 36.

point may be extended to the instrumentally added noise in *Nebenstück*. It is possible that a listener initially struck by the arrangement's palette of noise-inflected sonorities may elide objective and subjective conceptions of noise, and 'focus' on Brahms's Ballade as a 'signal'. Faced with pitches which have been depleted and, in some cases, omitted, such a listener may 'mentally reconstruct' this 'underlying object of attention' in the way Link describes.

3.4.3 The listening persona

Crucially, however, awareness that noise has been added deliberately offers listeners an interpretative incentive to hold fidelity listening in tension with other ways of hearing. These modes of engagement may uphold added noise *as noise*, as opposed to turning it into a signal by reframing it as simply another timbral resource, without attempting to psychologically 'tune it out'. Link states that 'noise compels us to experience the reproduction rather than the original, the document rather than the event'.[64] He suggests that, as a result, noise adds an additional subjective 'dimension' to a recording:

> The inclusion of transduction noise disavows the attempt to hear the pure musical object, putting in its place what we know to be an image. The signal can no longer be perspectiveless, having had a view layered upon it. […] Even if we dwell in the nostalgic surface of retro filtering, nostalgia intrinsically involves the act of remembering, and therefore reflects a consciousness. Indeed, regarding noise as interference with, or degradation of, a signal inherently implies a sentience perceiving it as such.[65]

According to Link, applied noise indicates the presence 'not only […] of a listener *to* the recording in question, but potentially a listener *in* the recording as well'.[66]

> Retro filtering allows us to hear the recording as a type of narrative world, reconfiguring music as a type of place. The recording becomes a fictional space that allows us the indirect experience, perhaps, of listening to someone else listening. Applied transduction noises can create a context for a kind of auditory voyeurism. Someone is there, listening. The presence at the scene of audition, then, is not necessarily ours alone.[67]

[64] Ibid. 39.
[65] Ibid. 37.
[66] Ibid. 37. Emphasis added.
[67] Ibid. 37-38.

Link's conception of applied noise as enabling listeners to 'listen to someone listening' is tellingly reminiscent of Peter Szendy's theorization of musical arrangement as allowing arrangers to share their own way of hearing a musical work.[68] Again, the 'medium' of an arrangement operates in the same way as 'noise' in other contexts, whether it is acoustically noisy, as in *Nebenstück*, or not. However, while Szendy only considers arrangement as a faithful or autobiographical transcription of the arranger's experience of a work, Link characterizes noise as evoking a 'scene of audition' which is 'fictional'. Link does not conflate the 'listener in the recording' with the creative personality who added the noise in the same way Szendy conflates the 'listener in the arrangement' (to adapt Link's phrase) with the arranger.

Link's more nuanced approach suggests ways to revise Szendy's theorization of arrangement to expand the interpretative possibilities it offers. In contrast to Szendy, the 'medium' of an arrangement can be productively understood as representing the experiences of a 'virtual listener' or 'listening persona' akin to the personal 'I' in a lyric poem. In representing a subject who is *listening* arrangement constitutes a special and reflexive case of the more general notion of music projecting a virtual subjectivity.[69] An arranger may attempt to represent one of their own listening experiences, or combine many such experiences, lending arrangement an 'autobiographical' quality. However, the experiences of the listening persona may also adapt, embellish, or exaggerate those of an arranger, or adopt a more 'fictional' approach. It is in part this ability to reflect listening experience as well as speculatively representing alternative modes of engagement that constitutes arrangement's critical potential. An arrangement's 'medium' is a form of conceptual (and, in *Nebenstück*, acoustic) noise which separates the subject positions of the listening persona, the persona 'in' the 'original' work, the arranger, and

[68] See 1.4.

[69] For discussion of virtual subjectivity in music from a range of perspectives, see Edward T. Cone, *The Composer's Voice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974); Eric F. Clarke, *Ways of Listening: An Ecological Approach to the Perception of Musical Meaning* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Arnie Cox, *Music and Embodied Cognition: Listening, Moving, Feeling, and Thinking* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016); Naomi Cumming, *The Sonic Self: Musical Subjectivity and Signification* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000). Cone's foundational text offers passing observations on how such virtual subjectivity operates in the case of musical arrangement, see Cone, *The Composer's Voice*. 76-77, 135.

'empirical' listeners (those listening to the arrangement). However, as Link's discussion of noise suggests, the subject position of such 'empirical' listeners is not fixed: they may temporarily adopt or identify with other subject positions implied by an arrangement.

> [T]he potential richness of listening to music through noise stems not only from becoming located, but from the possibility of changing locations. We can listen in various ways that may reconstruct the sound of the recorded object, appreciate the qualities of the recording itself, or focus on the sound as we receive it by the features our listening environment. Noiselessness attempts to substitute each of these for the others while, in terms of the experience of listening, noise modulates our attention to and among them.[70]

Although the 'medium' of any arrangement, as subjectively-determined 'noise', affords such modulation between subject positions, Link's observations are especially relevant to *Nebenstück*, whose 'medium' is also infused with noise in the acoustic sense.[71]

3.5 Listening to *Nebenstück*

3.5.1 Opening section

In describing *Nebenstück* as a musical representation of his own attempt to remember Brahms's Ballade, Pesson posits the work as an 'autobiographical' arrangement. However, a lecture given by the composer in 2006, entitled 'Composition as Auto-fiction: Face, Portrait, and Substratum in Musical Writing', acknowledges the necessarily fictitious and 'layered' quality of any musical 'autobiography'.[72] It is therefore unsurprising that *Nebenstück* should complicate and deconstruct the subject positions suggested by the notion of arrangement as well as modulating among them, in particular that of the listening persona. Using added noise, Pesson reconfigures this persona as *remembering* as much as listening, representing the composer's 'present' self attempting to recall Brahms's Ballade. *Nebenstück* therefore also posits a displaced listening persona, Pesson's 'past' self whose many experiences of hearing

[70] Link, 'Listening to Noise'. 38. For an empirical perspective on the ambiguities of sonic perception, see Daniel Pressnitzer, Clara Suied, and Shihab A. Shamma, 'Auditory Scene Analysis: The Sweet Music of Ambiguity', *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, 5 (2011), Article 158.
[71] A similarly dynamic modulation among subject positions in the context of allusions to pre-existing music is discussed in Alastair Williams, 'Swaying with Schumann: Subjectivity and Tradition in Wolfgang Rihm's 'Fremde Szenen' I-III and Related Scores', *Music and Letters*, 87/3 (2006), 379-397.
[72] Pesson, 'La Composition Comme Auto-Fiction'.
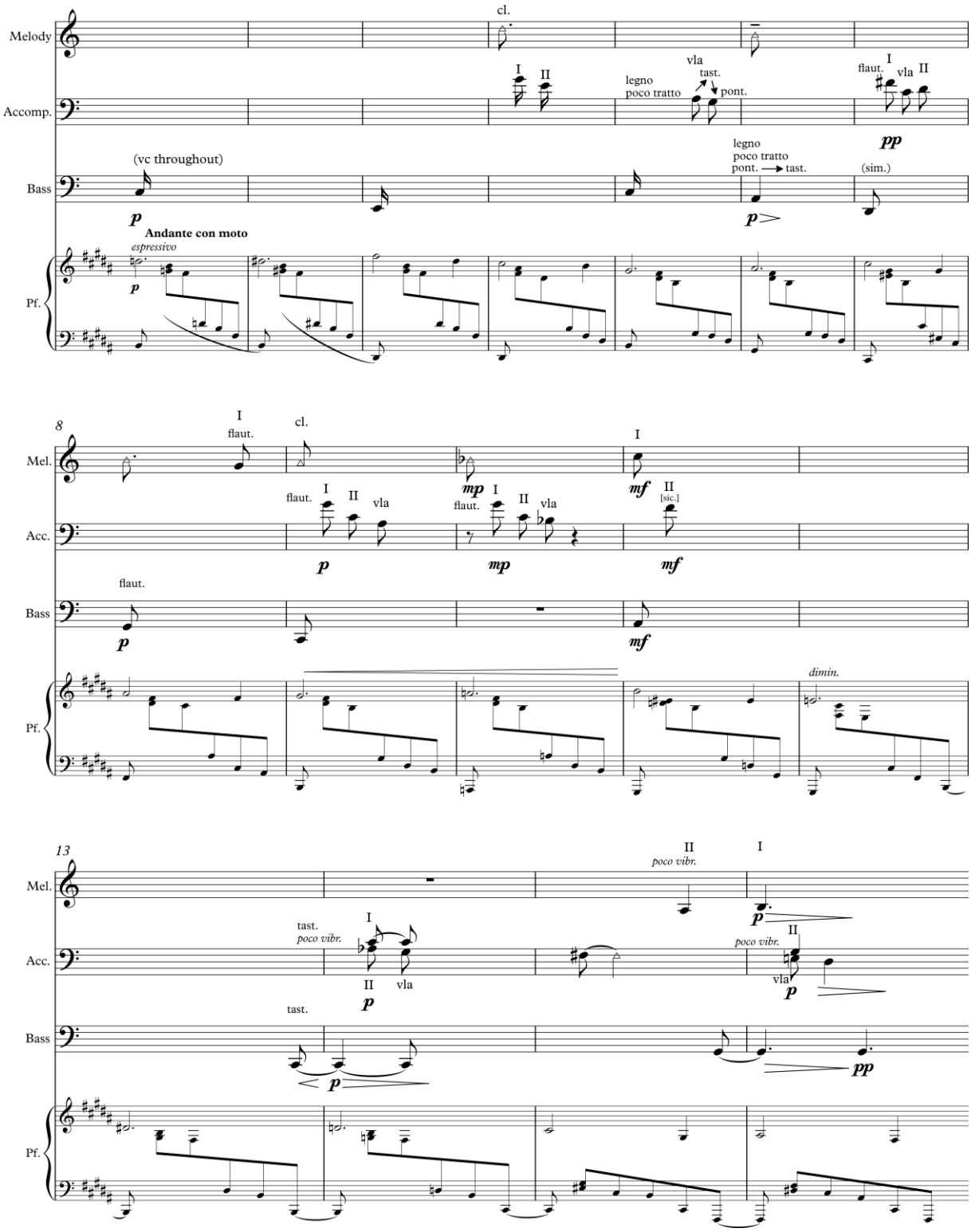
the Ballade have become conflated into a single memory of the work, 'hazy' due to this multiplicity and the way it has become distorted over time. *Nebenstück* presents the 'empirical' listener with two nested 'autofictional' experiences, present remembering and past listening, that complicate the idea of a single listening persona coterminous with the arranger. This fracturing of the listening persona multiplies the possibilities for identification available to the 'empirical' listener, highlighting the fragility to this subject position. The experience of the 'empirical' listener is necessarily composite, modulating between awareness of their own context and adopting the subject positions of arranger, remembering and listening personas, the persona implied by Brahms's Ballade (or Clarinet Quintet), and so on. All listening, in particular that of the 'empirical' listener, is constructed upon a similar melange of fictional experiences.

Nebenstück not only affords but invites continual modulation among subject positions and their attendant modes of listening due its constant 'sonic flux'.[73] The passages shown in Example 3.1 and Example 3.2 apply a broadly constant 'acoustic treatment' to Brahms's Ballade, analogous to a 'retro filter' applied consistently to an entire recording. This consistency enables listeners to psychologically 'denoise' *Nebenstück* in the way Link describes, or, to borrow Pesson's phrase, 'tune their level of perception' to the pitches of the Ballade, displacing the composer's added noise. However, the consistency of passages is not representative of the piece as a whole; Pesson's 'filtration' in *Nebenstück* continually changes, the level and quality of 'added' noise is subject to almost perpetual flux. The effect of this variation in noise is twofold, both *reflecting* the experience of a listening (or remembering) persona and *affecting* the listening strategies adopted by the 'empirical' listener.

This twofold effect can be illustrated by a close listening of *Nebenstück*'s opening section (bars 1-46). As well as continual fluctuation in noise levels, the passage also exhibits a

[73] The concept of sonic flux is adapted from David Metzer, *Musical Modernism at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). 175-237.

'timbral trajectory', moving broadly from noise to greater *biensonnance*. The first 16 bars of the piece present isolated pitches from the Ballade, while the continuous quavers of Brahms's accompaniment are retained by the string players bowing on the wood of their instruments or directly on the bridge, producing an unpitched 'breath effect'. Pesson suggests the Ballade's outlines to varying degrees, altering how much of the melody, bass, and accompaniment are heard in differing combinations (Example 3.4). Over the opening 11 bars, these textural strands become steadily more apparent, but Pesson avoids combining all three elements. He hints at the Ballade most strongly where the melody and bass coincide (in bars 6, 8, 9, 11), but one of these two elements is missing when the accompaniment pattern is more complete (bars 7 and 10). These teasing intimations of the Ballade appear to promise its ever-increasing presence, an anticipation supported by the dynamic level of the pitches increasing from *pianissimo* to *mezzo forte* in bars 7-11. However, such expectations are thwarted when the texture drops back to the breath-effect accompaniment with which the piece opened in bars 11-13. The Ballade's harmony is implied more strongly with the sustained notes in bars 14-16, but without any continuity of melody.



Example 3.3: Comparison of pitch material in *Nebenstück* bars 1-16 (above) and Brahms, Ballade op. 10 no. 4 bars 1-16 (below).
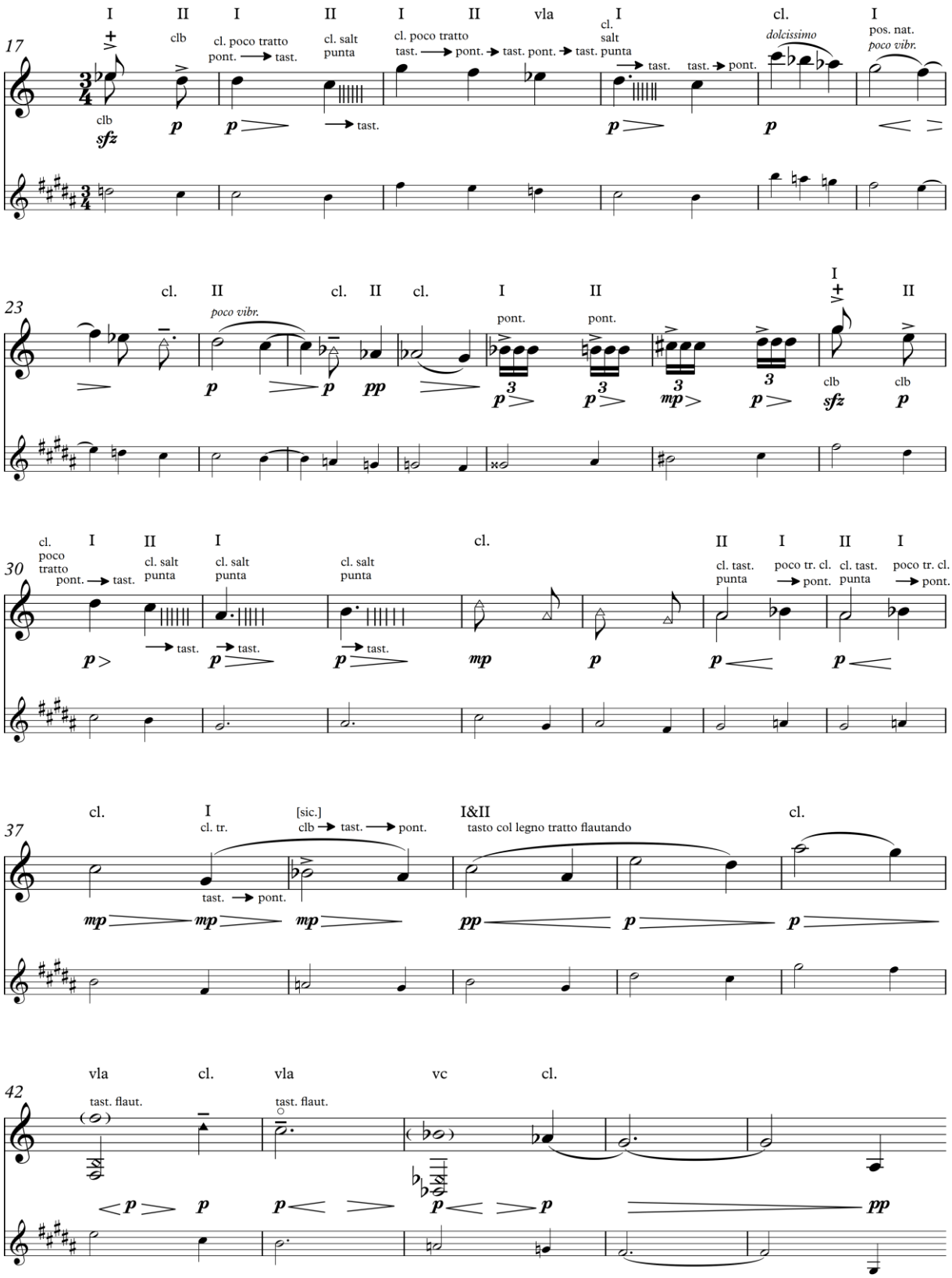
Pesson's use of extended instrumental techniques offers timbral nuances of presence and absence in this passage beyond the binary inclusion or exclusion of pitches. Over the opening 16 bars, the noise-inflected pitches emerging from the breath-effect accompaniment display steading increasing *biensonnance*. The pitches in bars 1-4 are played normally but are

halved in duration and performed at an extremely low dynamic level. As Brahms's pitches become less sparse, they are presented with various distorting effects. The clarinet D in bar 4 is played with a breathy *détimbré* tone which immediately gives way to breath alone, an effect repeated until bar 10. The string pitches play sliding between the bridge and fingerboard with some wood of the bow (bars 5-7) and *flautanto* (bar 7). Moving towards *biensonnance*, the strings begin to play pitches with no distorting effects in bars 8-11 and in bars 14-16 notes are sustained to form chords articulated with a slight vibrato reminiscent of Romantic chamber performance (albeit on the fingerboard). Bars 11-13, however complicate this trajectory, reverting to the breath effects of the opening.

The rest of *Nebenstück*'s opening section (bars 17-46) both continues and repeats the often-compromised drift towards *biensonnance* manifested in its first 16 bars. From this point until the next section, Pesson retains every note of Brahms's Ballade in some form.[74] In bars 17-20, both melody and accompaniment are scattered among the clarinet, two violins, and viola, a fragmentation reinforced by the diversity playing techniques employed (Example 3.4). Alongside various bowed articulations, sliding from fingerboard to bridge mid-note, the strings use more percussive *col legno battuto* and left-hand pizzicato techniques. The melody is fractured across this texture, making it difficult to distinguish from the accompaniment, which is also timbrally fragmented. However, in bars 21-26 the melody becomes ever more distinct: instead of appearing pointillistically it emerges from the surrounding texture in short clarinet and violin phrases played conventionally and marked *dolcissimo* and *poco vibrato*. This melodic clarification continues through the final bars of the section (33-46), despite remaining fragmented. The accompanying parts sometimes mirror this movement towards *biensonnance*, and sometimes offset it. For example, the *sul ponticello* tremolos which accompany the first significant outburst of melodic *biensonnance* in the clarinet in bar 21 return more prominently

[74] The only exceptions being the substitution of a C for the expected A in the second violin in bar 37 (a possible misprint), and an omitted C in bar 45, which would have doubled the bass an octave above.

in bars 27-28. The following bars revert to the melodic discontinuity of bars 17-20 (29-30) before being reduced to mechanistic repetitions (31-32). Such moments of greater noise and textural fragmentation are fleeting eddies that temporarily disrupt the passage's drift toward *biensonnance*.



Example 3.4: Comparison of melodic material in *Nebenstück* (above) and Brahms, Ballade op. 10. 4 (below) bars 17-46.

The movement from noise to *biensonnance* in *Nebenstück*'s opening section can be heard as representing the experience of a persona 'in' the arrangement within two related 'scenarios'. In the first scenario, the gradual reduction in noise suggests a listening persona

psychologically ‘tuning out’ the transduction noise on a recording and focusing attention on the musical work ‘beneath’ in the manner outlined by Link. In the second scenario, sketched in *Nebenstück*’s programme note, the same reduction in noise evokes a remembering persona, ‘Pesson in the present’, steadily building up a stronger recollection of Brahms’s Ballade. These scenarios are mutually reinforcing; the ‘pastifying’ connotations of transduction noise facilitate representation of Pesson’s musical memory. In either scenario, the increase in *biensonnance* across the arrangement’s opening passage indicates a transcendence of an intervening medium, be it recording or memory, to achieve ‘direct’ access to music from the past. The fidelity listening represented by this timbral trajectory can be understood as conflating various subject positions implied by *Nebenstück*. The persona listening to the recording becomes ‘absorbed’ into it, ‘Pesson remembering in the present’ nostalgically retreats through time to join ‘Pesson listening in the past’. Such merging of subject positions may affect the listening strategies adopted by the ‘empirical’ listener, depending on which of these subject positions they assume, if any. The overall movement from noise to *biensonnance* in *Nebenstück*’s opening passage invites the ‘empirical’ listener to identify with the primary listening-remembering persona and so espouse fidelity listening. While this strategy is facilitated by the passage’s broad timbral trajectory, its momentary reversions to more noise-based sonorities resist continuous and straightforward identification with this persona. The continual fluctuation in noise across the first section of *Nebenstück* encourages the rich ‘modulation’ among different subject positions Link regards as characteristic of listening to music through noise. To regard Pesson’s ‘filtration’ as a uniform ‘patina’ of noise ignores the complex ‘modulation’ between listening strategies the piece implies.

3.5.2 Noise as structure

The passage from noise-based sounds to greater *biensonnance* manifested in the opening section of *Nebenstück* is repeated both in subsequent sections and on a larger structural scale over the course of the entire work (see Table 3.1). In this way, Pesson edges towards

biensonnance as if taking two steps forward in each section and one step back at the start of the next. After the degree of *biensonnance* achieved by the end of the first section, the start of the second, 'cantando' (*Più lento*) section (bar 47, Example 3.1) reverts to more noise-based timbres, but not to the level of noise with which the piece began. Nevertheless, this change disrupts the identification between 'empirical' listener, listening-remembering persona, and Brahmsian 'source' suggested by the *biensonnance* of the previous bars, re-scattering these subject positions which had been steadily bound together. This section, however, retraces the same shift from noise to *biensonnance* as the opening section, despite similar momentary reversions to noise and 'premature' bursts of Romantic sonorities (bars 47-100). The next section once again begins by returning to more noise-based sounds (strings bowing on the wood of their instruments) and again creeps towards further towards *biensonnance*, despite not reaching it as clearly as in previous sections (bars 101-162). Significantly, when the cantando section returns (from bar 163) it displays much greater *biensonnance* than its previous incarnation. Instead of the percussive 'tapping' effect and scraped *col legno tratto* melody of bars 47-68, in bars 163-172 the strings play with the hair of their bows (albeit *flautando* and *sul tasto*) while the clarinet intones the melody. Despite minor fluctuations, the level of *biensonnance* is increased through to bar 189, which corresponds with Brahms's penultimate bar. In this way, the tendency to fidelity listening and its continual disruption staged in *Nebenstück*'s opening section is both reiterated and continued throughout the work as a whole.

Table 3.1: Structural comparison of *Nebenstück* and Brahms, Ballade op. 10 no.4.
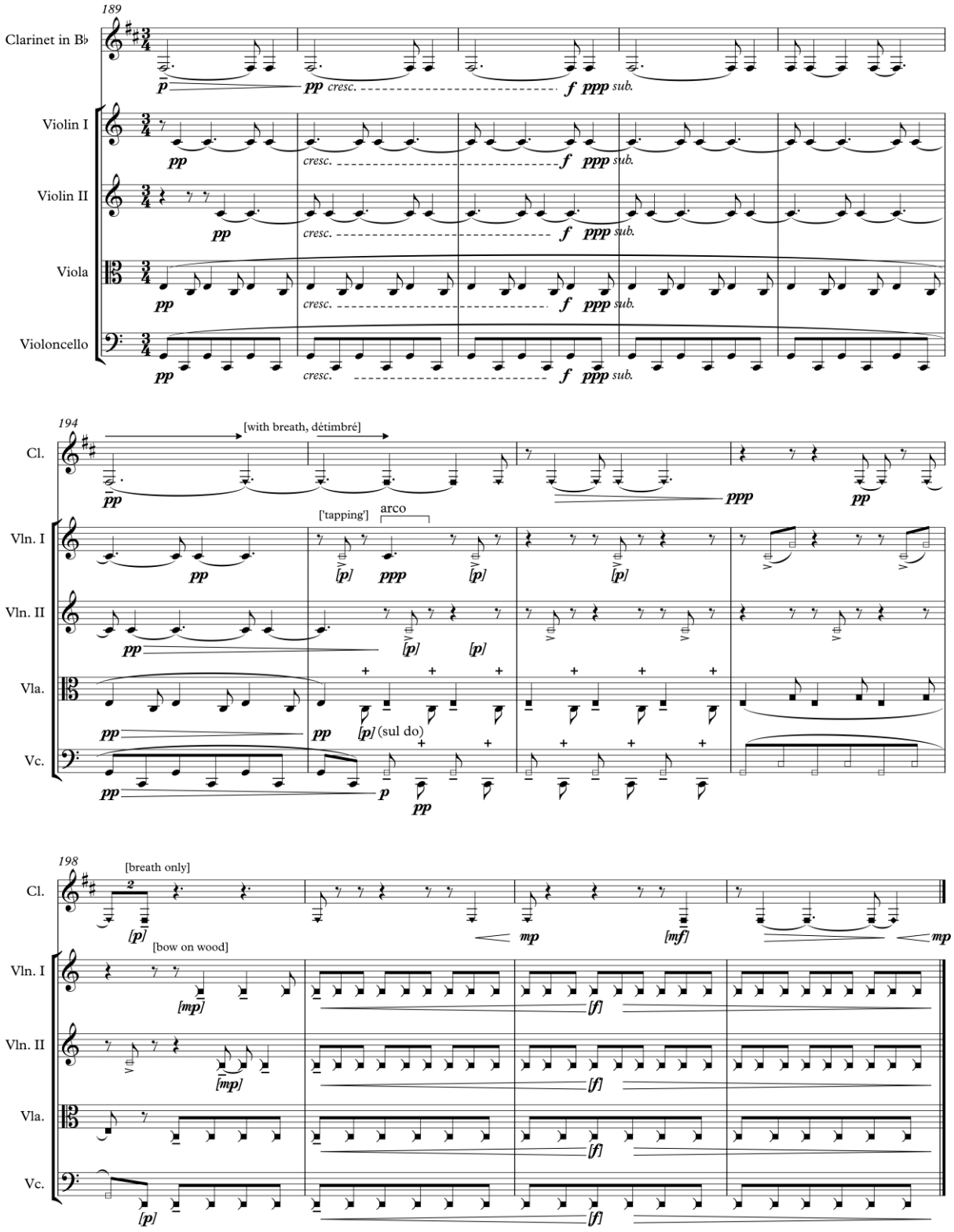
Section	Material	Ballade	*Nebenstück*	Expansions
A1	Barcarolle	1-16	1-16	
A2	Barcarolle	17-46	17-46	
B1	Cantando	47-54	47-62	
B2	Cantando	55-72	63-100	64→82-83
A1'	Barcarolle	73-88	101-116	
C	Chorale	89-114	117-142	
A2'	Chorale	115-124	143-152	
C'	Chorale	125-134	153-162	
B'	Cantando	135-148	163-201	138→171-172, 147-148→181-201

3.5.3 Closing section

The apparent structural teleology of *Nebenstück* towards *biensonnance* is, however, undercut in the final bars of the piece, in which Pesson draws Brahms's final two bars out to fill thirteen (189-201, Example 3.5). The composer describes this and two other similar expansions in *Nebenstück* as reflecting his recollection of the Ballade: 'My memory has multiplied various measures where Brahms makes a chord turn in upon itself—to be faithful to this impression, I have transcribed them like this'.[75] Pesson employs such multiplication on two previous occasions in the piece, which form a significant context for the longer expansion in *Nebenstück*'s final bars: bars 81-84 and 169-172 and 'multiply' bars 64 and 138 of the Ballade respectively. Both of Brahms's bars sustain a single pitch class over four octaves, enacting a crescendo before the next phrase begins *piano*. In *Nebenstück*, Pesson not only doubles the length of these bars but re-sculpts their timbral and dynamic contours.[76] In bars 81- 84 the soft, quasi-pitched tapping of the previous six bars is halted in favour of ordinary bowed playing. Over these four bars, the dynamics move from *pianissimo* to *mezzo forte* and back, while the strings shift from ordinary bowing (albeit with the tip) to grainy *sul ponticello* and finally softer *sul tasto* playing; *biensonnance* is promised, only to be distorted at higher dynamics. Tracking the increasing *biensonnance* over the course of the piece, bars 169-172 employ only ordinary playing, with a dynamic contour increasing from *pianissimo* to *mezzo forte*, but then dropping suddenly to *piano* at bar 171. The start of Pesson's final expansion (bars 189-194) follows the pattern of this second 'multiplication', the final tonic triad being sustained over a crescendo from *pianissimo* to a full *forte*, with no distorting effects, at the end of bar 191. This is the loudest point in the piece, its *biensonnance* apparently achieving the fidelity-inspired goal of eliminating the noisy medium separating the listening-remembering persona from Brahms's Ballade. This dynamic peak is immediately followed by a sudden *pianississimo*, sustained for

[75] 'Les quelques mesures où Brahms fait tourner un accord sur lui-même, ma mémoire les a toujours démultipliées—pour être fidèle à cette impression, je les ai transcrites ainsi'. Pesson, 'Nebenstück', *Henry Lemoine*.
[76] Note Pesson's bars are half the length of Brahms's here.

another three bars and ending in a decrescendo over bar 195. Instead of simply dying away into silence, however, Pesson follows this decrescendo with a final twist, suddenly re-introducing noise-inflected sounds produced by extended techniques. During bars 194-195, the *biensonnance* of the clarinet's final E slides towards a semi-pitched *détimbré* sonority and finally to a 'breath only' effect, techniques used alternately until the end of the piece. At bar 195, the accompanying string texture continues, but is articulated through 'tapping' effects and left hand pizzicato. From bar 198 on, the strings revert to the rhythmic bowing on the wood of the instruments with which it opened, swelling and reducing its dynamic level as the piece ends.



Example 3.5: *Nebenstück* bars 189-201.

The effect of this conclusion is unsettling. Despite returning to the rhythmic noise that began the work, this final passage does not construe a straightforward reversal of its opening section; Brahms's music does not recede into noise-based 'fog' from which it initially emerged. The crescendo, abrupt reduction, and subsequent decrescendo of the final chord in bars 189-

194 does not compromise its *biensonnance*. Brahms's music (the material of the Ballade and the sonority of the Clarinet Quintet) seems to recede from the listening persona but, crucially, is not re-immersed in noise. It is as if through memory Pesson's 'present self' is finally united with his 'past self' listening to the Ballade, and the 'empirical' listener is forced to withdraw from both back into the present. Importantly, however, at this point no noise returns to remind the 'empirical' listener of *Nebenstück*'s status as a mediation, leaving fidelity listening momentarily unchallenged. The abruptness of the return to noise effects at bar 195, and their relative loudness with respect to the very quiet *biensonnance* of the preceding bar, do not readily suggest a 'patina' layered 'over' the Ballade. While this chilling twist affords several interpretations, it can be compellingly heard as a reflection of Pesson's concept of 'the music behind the music' and the 'descent into sound'. In *Nebenstück*'s final bars, the *biensonnance* of Brahms's music seems to be a surface 'layer' which is stripped back to reveal the noises 'underneath'. To elaborate Pesson's metaphor, the 'soul' of Brahms which 'floated' overhead departs, leaving the 'empirical' listener confronted by the materiality of sound production illustrated through extended techniques. This conclusion is disquieting in part because the expressive subjectivity of Brahms's Ballade, the ultimate goal of fidelity listening, is revealed as an auditory mirage as its sound is reduced to its objective, material causes. The effect is akin to the clicks of the needle in the final groove of an LP that plunge a listener engrossed in the fictional 'world' of the recording, populated by virtual subjects, back into their own, in which they find themselves alone. Heard in this way, *Nebenstück*'s final bars ultimately deny the fidelity listening that Pesson's arrangement seemed represent and encourage, despite moments of resistance, until this point. The illusion of an 'original' work or authentic content 'behind' the medium is withdrawn.

3.6 Haunting

3.6.1 *Nebenstück* and haunting

Nebenstück's potentially chilling conclusion suggests the references Pesson makes in his programme note to being 'literally haunted' and even 'possessed' by Brahms's Ballade are more significant than they initially appear. While the composer's own allusion to ghosts and haunting is limited, these themes abound in critical and artistic responses to his 'filtration'. 'Like most of Pesson's pieces', comments Pierre Gervasoni, 'this score […] assumes a ghostly character'.[77] This 'ghostly character' results partly from the way Pesson depletes Brahms's pitches with noise-based timbres, suggesting a translucent, insubstantial phantom. Laurent Feneyrou, for example, describes *Nebenstück* as 'crossed with detimbred breath like a subtle, spiritual body'.[78] These haunting motifs are not simply poetic turns of phrase but attempt to describe and interpret Pesson's sonic 'treatment' of the Ballade, reflecting broader discourses about how the meaning of an arrangement arises from the interaction of 'content' and 'medium'. References to haunting in *Nebenstück*'s reception function both thematically, indicating the potentially 'ghostly character' of musical arrangements, and metaphorically, as an implicit expression of ideas about their aesthetic structure.

3.6.2 Recording, haunting, hauntology

Nebenstück's oblique relationship with recording technology is one reason that this piece in particular should be described through metaphors of ghosts and haunting. Since their invention in the late nineteenth century, audio recording technologies have allowed sounds to be separated from their material sources and reproduced even if those sources no longer exist. This capability has proved especially striking in the case of the human voice. 'If there was a

[77] 'Comme la plupart des pièces de Pesson, cette page […] revêt un caractère fantomatique.' Pierre Gervasoni, 'De l'Èpure à l'Impur', *Le Monde* (12 September 2004) <https://www.lemonde.fr/archives/article/2004/09/12/p-de-l-epure-a-l-impur-p_4294289_1819218.html>, accessed 19 April 2019.
[78] 'Mâtinée de souffle, détimbrée, comme d'un corps spirituel, subtil'. Laurent Feneyrou, 'Reminiscences', in *Rihm, Pesson, Widmann*, Minguet Quartet, Stefan Lifin, and Jörg Widmann (Opèra National de Paris Bastille, Paris, 20 October 2004), [Concert programme note], <https://www.festival-automne.com/uploads/Publish/archive_pdf/FAP_2004_MU_06_PRGS.pdf>, accessed 19 April 2019.

defining figure in early accounts of sound recording', Jonathan Sterne argues, 'it was the possibility of preserving the voice beyond the death of the speaker'.[79] He suggests that this idea continues to affect our relationship with such technologies in the present.

> [S]ound recording, even as we know it today, bears the residual traces of late-Victorian death culture […] Recording was the product of a culture that had learned to can and to embalm, to preserve the bodies of the dead so that they could continue to perform a social function after life. […] The ethos of preservation described *and prescribed* the cultural and technological possibilities of sound recording.[80]

In seeming to preserve and reanimate the 'dead' subjectivities of the past in the present, technologically reproduced sounds may be understood as exhibiting a revenant or ghostly quality as well as engaging notions of fidelity.

While, as Sterne suggests, we have largely come to 'dwell without comment among these voices of the dead', the onset of the digital audio era precipitated a renewed awareness of recording's ghostly connotations.[81] Jason Stanyek and Benjamin Piekut have discussed how the period's spate of 'posthumous duets', which combine the voice of a living singer with that of a deceased counterpart, indexed the advent of the fully digital studio. Their account forms part of a discourse connecting recording technologies and the ghostly, attributing to the dead singer an agency which challenges rigid distinctions between life and death. In posthumous duets, Stanyek and Piekut assert, 'the living do not one-sidedly handle the dead, but participate in an inter-handling, a mutually effective co-laboring'.[82] As Link suggests, the near elimination of transduction noise enabled by digital technologies lent such noise a greater capacity to thematize sound reproduction musically. This change also seems to have facilitated a corresponding engagement with the ghostly associations of recording. The popular music genre 'hauntology', and the discourse that surrounds it, is an important manifestation of this emerging

[79] Jonathan Sterne, *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003). 288.
[80] Ibid. 291-292.
[81] Ibid. 289.
[82] Jason Stanyek and Benjamin Piekut, 'Deadness: Technologies of the Intermundane', *TDR/The Drama Review*, 54/1 (2010), 14-38. 14.

possibility. Simon Reynolds argues that from the turn of the present century hauntology intensified the 'spectral undercurrent' of recording in its use of pre-existing sound samples alongside the 'crackles, pops and hiss of vinyl surface noise' to '[draw] attention to the fact you were listening to a recording made out of other records'.[83] The term 'hauntology' is borrowed from Jacques Derrida's *Specters of Marx* (1993), which used the liminal figure of the ghost to deconstruct the apparently stable temporal ontology of political history.[84] Distanced from its initial Derridian context, the word has since been used to describe various cultural engagements with the ghoulish or undead including, significantly, 'spectres of Brahms' in contemporary art music.[85]

Reynolds and Mark Fisher coined 'hauntology' as the name of a popular music genre in the early 2000s to describe releases from the Ghost Box label. However, Reynolds identifies an 'immediate ancestor' to the genre in Boards of Canada's album *Music Has the Right to Children*, which appeared in 1998, the same year Pesson composed *Nebenstück*.[86]

> Boards of Canada […] pioneered the hauntological approach to creating old-timey and elegiac atmospheres through the use of sound treatments suggestive of decay and wear-and-tear. Our cultural memories are shaped not just by the production qualities of an era […] but by subtle properties of the recording media themselves […] These properties include the medium's specific rate of decay […] It's like watching the fading of your own memories.[87]

Similarly, Harper describes 'the phonographic aesthetics and assumptions of the "hauntological moment"' as premised on

> the association […] of various outmoded analogue media (sonic and visual) with each other in contradistinction to the digital media of the present. With the analogue decay of hauntology, time

[83] Simon Reynolds, *Retromania: Pop Culture's Addiction to its Own Past* (London: Faber, 2012). 312, 330. For Reynolds' discussion of hauntology and the potentially ghostly quality of recording more generally (which draws explicitly on Sterne's work) see chapter 10 'Ghosts of Futures Past: Sampling, Hauntology, and Mash-Ups', 311-361. See also Harper, 'Lo-fi Aesthetics'. 322-329.
[84] Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (New York: Routledge, 2006). Note that 'hauntology' is a near-homophone of 'ontology' in French.
[85] See Edward Venn, 'Thomas Adès and the Spectres of Brahms', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association,* 140/1 (2015), 163-212. On the wider usage of hauntology, see Fisher Mark Fisher, 'What Is Hauntology?', *Film Quarterly*, 66/1 (2012), 16-24. Reynolds, *Retromania*. 328-330.
[86] Reynolds, *Retromania*. 330.
[87] Ibid. 331.

> itself became [a] 'bad listener', causing recordings not to be reproduced properly, to become imperfect, and establishing a historicising distance.[88]

Pesson's aesthetic aims and means in *Nebenstück* are strikingly similar to those of hauntology in concurrent popular music. In describing his 'filtration' as a reflection on memory's involuntary power and deterioration over time, the composer associates it with typically hauntological themes. 'Hauntology', Reynolds suggests, 'is all about memory's power (to linger, pop up unbidden, prey on your mind) and memory's fragility (destined to become distorted, to fade, then finally disappear)'.[89] *Nebenstück*, like popular music hauntology, draws on the 'lo-fi' associations of noise in the digital era as a way to represent these opposing aspects of memory.

3.6.3 Two haunting tropes

Frequently, references to haunting in *Nebenstück*'s reception reinforce a conceptual distinction between content and medium rather than deconstructing it, despite their apparent connections to Derrida-inspired 'hauntology'. Feneyrou's programme note for *Nebenstück*, which discusses the piece alongside responses to Brahms and Schumann by Jörg Widmann and Wolfgang Rihm, is characteristic in this regard.[90] 'In the haunting of sounding bodies without flesh, unharkened, elusive but visible, in the course of these conversations with some ghost, arises an authentic dialogue with the forbear. The original, dismembered, is constrained to a wandering, to a shadowy, spectral existence'.[91] Feneyrou's description freely combines two related haunting metaphors which might be termed the 'haunted arrangement' and 'haunted arranger' tropes. The 'haunted arranger' trope concerns an arranger's relationship with either the (deceased) composer whose work they are arranging or that composer's music, often

[88] Harper, 'Lo-fi Aesthetics'. 329.
[89] Reynolds, *Retromania*. 335.
[90] Widmann's *Fieberphantasie* (1999) is inspired by Schumann's music, especially the *Fantasiestück* for clarinet and piano op. 73, and Rihm's *Vier Studien zu einem Klarinettenquintett* (2003) draws on Brahms's Clarinet Quintet op. 115.
[91] 'Dans la hantise de corps sonores sans chair, inouïs, insaisissables mais visibles, au cours de ces entretiens avec quelque fantôme, se donne l'authentique dialogue avec l'aïeul. L'original, dépecé, est contraint à une errance, à une existence ombrée, spectrale'. Feneyrou, 'Reminiscences'.

metonymically blurred in the concept of 'influence'. While Feneyrou initially characterizes this relationship as a willing and mutual 'conversation' or 'dialogue' as in a séance, he goes on to hint at an asymmetric and even malevolent relationship between Brahms and Pesson. He (inaccurately) asserts that all four of Brahms's op. 10 Ballades were inspired by the poetic Ballade 'Edvard', translated from a traditional Scottish source by Johann Gottfried Herder, which the composer used as the title for the first piece in the set.[92] 'It is a strange fact in the trajectory of this concert, in which legacy is one of the issues', observes Feneyrou, 'that the ancient Scottish legend transmitted by Herder narrates a parricide'.[93] This comment hints at an antagonistic Oedipal relationship between Pesson and Brahms akin to that Harold Bloom has called the 'anxiety of influence'.[94] Feneyrou posits *Nebenstück* as Pesson's attempt to acknowledge and 'exorcize' the influence of Brahms, which haunts him against his will. The promotional material of a concert entitled '*Musiques fantômes*', which included a performance of *Nebenstück,* also draws on this trope. 'Ghost Musics: above all they are the dream of an artist haunted by the real or imagined, sonic or visual spectres that emanate from their fantasies and fears. An artist cursed, imprisoned in his own soul, and yet refusing salvation by their guardian

[92] It is very unlikely that Herder's poem influenced the composition of any of the op. 10 ballades other than the first. See William Horne, 'Brahms's Op. 10 Ballades and His "Blätter aus dem Tagebuch eines Musikers"', *The Journal of Musicology,* 15/1 (1997), 98-115. 110-111.

[93] 'Fait étrange dans la trajectoire de ce concert, dont l'héritage est l'un des enjeux, l'ancienne légende écossaise transmise par Herder narre un parricide.' Feneyrou, 'Reminiscences'.

[94] Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (2nd edn.; New York: Oxford University Press, 1997). Musicological applications of Bloom's approach include Kevin Korsyn, 'Towards a New Poetics of Musical Influence', *Music Analysis,* 10/1-2 (1991), 3-72; Joseph N. Straus, *Remaking the Past: Musical Modernism and the Influence of the Tonal Tradition* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990). Applications of Bloom's work to arrangements specifically include Joseph N. Straus, 'Recompositions by Schoenberg, Stravinsky, and Webern', *The Musical Quarterly,* 72/3 (1986), 301-328; Joseph H. Auner, 'Schoenberg's Handel Concerto and the Ruins of Tradition', *Journal of the American Musicological Society,* 49/2 (1996), 264-313. For critiques of musicological applications of Bloom's theory, see Richard Taruskin, 'Revising Revision', *The Danger of Music and Other Anti-Utopian Essays* (University of California Press, 2009), 354-381; Martin Scherzinger, 'The 'New Poetics' of Musical Influence: A Response to Kevin Korsyn', *Music Analysis,* 13/2/3 (1994), 298-309.

angel…'.[95] El Kassar offers an even clearer instance of this trope, describing *Nebenstück* as presenting Pesson's 'confrontation with the ghost Ballade that was haunting his mind'.[96]

The 'haunted arrangement' trope, conversely, transfers this relationship between living and dead subjects completely onto the musical 'objects' they have produced in what Feneyrou calls a 'haunting of sounding bodies' by their 'spectral' sources. In this case, the 'haunted arrangement' trope posits the instrumentation of an arrangement as a *corps sonore* whose resonance registers the movements of the musical ghost of the 'original' that possesses it, as a spirit agitates the pointer on a Ouija board.[97] Gervasoni also describes *Nebenstück* in such terms: 'Its movement, at once regular and evasive, evokes that of a ballet in which only fragments of bodies emerge, a hand escaped from a Maupassant story or a head extracted from a tale by Poe…'.[98] The dead, severed hand in Maupassant's *La Main* is seemingly animated by hostile supernatural forces; Gervasoni implies that *Nebenstück* is similarly possessed.[99] This way of describing an arrangement as 'haunted' by its semi-absent source work also informs the promotional material of a concert entitled '*Le Piano sans Piano*', in which *Nebenstück* and Pesson's string quartet transcription of Scriabin's Ninth Piano Sonata, *Messe Noire* (2008), frame 'recodings' of Chopin's music by Filippo Zapponi. 'The ghost of this show, the piano is nevertheless omnipresent across the three works performed, specifically written for it but reproduced through the detour of transcriptions by Gérard Pesson and Filippo Zapponi and by

[95] 'Musiques Fantômes, c'est avant tout le rêve d'un artiste hanté par des spectres réels ou irréels, sonores ou visuels, qui émanent de ses fantasmes et de ses peurs. Un artiste maudit, emprisonné dans son âme propre, et refusant l'aide pourtant salvatrice de son ange gardien…' 'Musiques Fantômes', *Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Lyon* [Concert publicity materials], <http://www.cnsmd-lyon.fr/agenda/musiques-fantomes>, accessed 20 December 2018. This concert (8 April 2015) also included readings and dance on the theme of 'ghost'.

[96] 'Auseinandersetzung mit dem *Balladen*-Geist, der in seinem Kopf herumspukte[.]' El Kassar, 'Oxidierte Musik'.17).

[97] The *corps sonore* has long been associated with liminal thresholds between material and (seemingly) immaterial, body and spirit, death and life. See Jonathan Cross, 'Musical Spectra, l'Espace Sensible and Contemporary Opera', *Twentieth-Century Music*, 15/1 (2018), 103-124. Julian Johnson, *Out of Time: Music and the Making of Modernity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015). 288-301.

[98] 'Son mouvement, à la fois bien réglé et fuyant, évoque celui d'un ballet d'où n'émergeraient que des fragments de corps, main échappée d'une nouvelle de Maupassant ou tête extirpée d'un conte de Poe...'. Gervasoni, 'De l'Èpure à l'Impur'.

[99] At the end of Poe's 'Never Bet the Devil Your Head', Toby Dammit's severed head is literally possessed by the devil, who runs off with it wrapped in his apron.

the voices of other instruments'.[100] Musical spectres are as important as spectral music in Donin's account of instrumental resynthesis, of which he regards *Nebenstück* a 'handcrafted' example. As a result, Donin draws a direct but qualified comparison between resynthesis and Stanyek and Piekut's discussion of the intermundane 'coexistence of deadness and liveness' in posthumous duets.[101] He suggests that, 'as a paradoxical and liminal phenomenon, resynthesis is definitely closer to haunting, possession, illusion or ventriloquism than imitation. When we hear […] a shadowy voice, some pre-existing sound appears to be at once present and not fully audible'.[102] In understanding reworkings such as *Nebenstück* in these terms Donin implicitly characterizes such practices according to a similar notion of ghostly possession: the present sounding medium seems 'haunted' by an absent 'original'.

These ghost metaphors articulate implicit claims about the aesthetic structure of arrangements as well as being thematically 'spooky'. Both the 'haunted arranger' and 'haunted arrangement' tropes attempt to account for the apparent distinction between content and medium implicit in the idea of arrangement. The initial Derridian context of the term 'hauntological' might suggest that such ghost metaphors are potentially critical, deconstructing the binary distinction between content and medium as the philosopher deconstructs that between presence and absence. However, these haunting tropes rely on a binary distinction between haunter and haunted which reinforces rather than challenges a series of corresponding binaries: deadness and liveness, past and present, immaterial and material, composer and arranger, 'original' and arrangement, and, most importantly, content and medium. The convergence of hauntological and musical meanings of the term 'medium' is significant and far

[100] 'Fantôme de ce spectacle, le piano n'en est pas moins omniprésent à travers les trois œuvres interprétées, spécifiquement écrites pour lui mais restituées par le détour de transcriptions de Gérard Pesson et Filippo Zapponi et par la voix d'autres instruments.' 'Le Piano sans Piano', *Cité Musicale-Metz* [Concert publicity materials], <https://www.citemusicale-metz.fr/agenda/le-piano-sans-piano>, accessed 20 December 2018.
[101] 'One could easily transfer [Stanyek and Piekut's] analysis of the coexistence of deadness and liveness in popular music to so-called learned music, in replacing the studio recording practices they highlighted with resynthesis-related practices of sound re-engineering. Such a translation would not be without adaptation and discussion, however.' Donin, 'Sonic Imprints'. 335.
[102] Ibid. 338.

from coincidental. These haunting metaphors posit the role of an arrangement as akin to that of a medium at a séance: a material and present but passive sounding body that 'channels' the meanings expressed by someone or something immaterial and absent but active despite being 'dead'. This conception of arrangement reinforces the assumptions of fidelity-essentialist discourse.

The notion of being 'true to the spirit of the original' is telling in this context, revealing the continuities between fidelity-essentialist notions of immaterial 'spirit' and material 'letter' and haunting metaphors. Such haunting tropes often sustain traditional binaries and hierarchies of content and medium even if ascribing the living arranger creative parity with the dead 'original' composer. Donin rightly suggests that 'it would be fair to admit that true "co-labouring" doesn't really happen in resynthesis' or, by implication, arrangement: 'the dead surfaces within the living, as it were, more than it is put to work by/with it'.[103] Donin's metaphor of depth and containment aptly acknowledges the asymmetrical relationship between the dead and the living. As well as reinforcing the boundary between liveness and deadness more than it initially appears, this concept obfuscates the degree to which the apparent agency of the deceased 'original' composer is actually that of the arranger who manipulates their music, ventriloquizing through it. '[I]f not ghosts', Donin proposes, 'resynthesized sounds at least evoke some unusual—and at times unsettling—sort of contact between the *concrète* and the abstract (to put it in Schaefferian terms), the living and the artificial, or even nature and culture'.[104] The same might be said of arrangements such as *Nebenstück*. If the haunting tropes used to describe arrangements offer insights, it is not because they dissolve the binary distinctions which inform thinking on the subject but rather because they emphasize these binary distinctions in ways that cast doubt in their tenability. From this perspective, the way arrangement negotiates concepts of content and medium engages broader concerns about

[103] Ibid. 335.
[104] Ibid. 335. It is these binaries which inform what Donin calls 'the paradoxes of haunted sounds in a world of immediacy'. 339.

music's apparent materiality and immateriality. Discussions of the practice often inadvertently probe the way any *corps sonore* also seems to be a *corps hanté*.

Hauntological discourse and creative practices often blur the distinction between content and medium that haunting metaphors reinforce without attempting to transcend this binary. In contrast to fidelity-essentialism, hauntology posits medium rather than content as a primary source of meaning. 'Hauntological art', Harper suggests,

> can be thought of as having two stages, or layers. The first layer seems to present something that's in some way idealised […] The second, 'hauntological' layer problematises, compromises and obfuscates the first layer, undermining or damaging it in some way and introducing irony into the work, and represents the opinionated viewpoint of the present. […] The hauntological layer 'deconstructs' the first layer—in this way hauntological texts deconstruct themselves. […] The first layer is 'inside' the second layer ('the past inside the present'). The first layer ('the past') can only be seen through the medium of the second layer ('the present') so that we can't be entirely sure of the image portrayed by the first layer. This process of obfuscation is a metaphor for memory[.][105]

In outlining the aesthetic structure of hauntological texts, Harper uses metaphors of depth and containment similar to those conventionally used to describe arrangements. However, Harper's account reverses the usual conception of content as active in the generation of meaning and medium as passive. The meaning of a hauntological work lies less in its 'content', he suggests, than in the way it self-consciously manipulates its 'medium', in particular through '"lo-fi" effects (such as fading, dirt, or low quality materials in plastic art; noise, reverb, filters and audibly decaying or broken technology in music)'.[106]

3.6.4 Artistic responses to *Nebenstück*

While fidelity-essentialist haunting metaphors pervade *Nebenstück*'s critical reception, artistic responses to the piece adopt the hauntological approach Harper describes. Pesson's arrangement was, for example, included on double vinyl LP *Doppeldoppelgänger*, released by the art publisher Shelter Press in conjunction with a cycle of exhibitions entitled

[105] Adam Harper, 'Hauntology: The Past Inside The Present', *Rouge's Foam* (27 October 2009) <http://rougesfoam.blogspot.com/2009/10/hauntology-past-inside-present.html>, accessed 4 July 2016.
[106] Ibid.

‘Doppelgänger’ at Centre Européen d’Actions Artistiques Contemporaines in Strasbourg (2013-2014). ‘Like Gérard Pesson transcribing Brahms’s “Fourth Ballad” [*sic*] from memory years after hearing the work’, the LP’s compilers explain, ‘the task here is to recompose what haunts us and to repeat what moves us’.[107] *Doppeldoppelgänger* invites a more complex engagement with the possible meanings of medium than this straightforward evocation of the ‘haunted arranger’ trope initially suggests. Most notably, its antiquated vinyl format draws attention to technological mediation in a way that a now-commonplace format such as CD or digital streaming would not. Appropriately given its title, *Doppeldoppelgänger* requires listeners to restage *Nebenstück*’s restaging of technologically mediated listening represented in *Nebenstück*, the arrangement’s instrumental ‘retro filtering’ doubled by the additional noises associated with vinyl record use. The LP format of this recording makes the technological connotations of Pesson’s added noise more explicit and reinforces the continuities between notions of ‘medium’ applied to arrangement and sound reproduction, blurring these two ‘hauntological layers’ together. This context emphasizes the degree to which *Nebenstück*’s meanings result much more from Pesson’s manipulation of ‘medium’ than its supposed ‘content’, Brahms’s Ballade.

The hauntological connotations of Pesson’s arrangement are manifested with particular strength in a series of images by the photographic artist Isabelle Françaix entitled *Les Effilochées–Enfance; De mémoire... Regard sur regards; En écoutant* Nebenstück*, de Gérard Pesson*’ (‘The Frayed—Childhood; Of Memory… Gaze on Gazes; Listening to Gérard Pesson’s *Nebenstück*’).[108] The images present heavily distorted versions of mid-twentieth-century black and white photographs of a girl (perhaps the young Françaix) and her parents (Figure 3.1). *Les Effilochées* is typical of hauntology as Harper describes it, using the distortion

[107] 'V/A ‘Doppeldoppelgänger’ (SP053)', *Shelter Press* [Product information], <shelter-press.org/sp053-va-doppeldoppelganger/>, accessed 4 July 2016.
[108] Isabelle Françaix, 'Les Effilochées–Enfance', <http://www.isabellefrancaix.com/fr/portfolio-28303-0-40-les-effilochees-enfance.html>, accessed 20 December 2018.

and decay of a medium to evoke someone in the present remembering a distant, idyllic past. Françaix's 'gaze on gazes' offers an adroit visual translation of Pesson's aural representation of listening in *Nebenstück*, as if realizing Lambert Dousson's description of the piece as 'something like a photo yellowed with age'.[109] Importantly, the subject of both works is not what is remembered, the Ballade or childhood, but the quality of memory itself; *Les Effilochées* constitutes a convincing visual analogue to *Nebenstück* without making any reference to its specific 'content', Brahms's Ballade.[110] Instead, their similar tone and significance depends on a comparable representation of memory through allusion to the decay of a medium. This possibility demonstrates the degree to which it is possible and even likely that listeners interpret *Nebenstück as an arrangement* without regarding Brahms's Ballade the ultimate or even primary source of its meaning. The 'haunted arranger' and 'haunted arrangement' tropes reinforce the fidelity-essentialist notion that an arrangement is animated by its borrowed 'content' which is refracted through its more-or-less passive 'medium'. In contrast, hauntological responses to *Nebenstück* such as *Les Effilochées* and *Doppeldoppelgänger* posit its 'medium' as generating meaning by dynamically acting upon its more passive 'content'. Shifting the burden of meaning production from 'content' to 'medium' pushes both concepts to breaking point. A 'content' which is not the primary source of a work's meaning might seem not to be a content at all, and a 'medium' which is the subject as much or more than a means of musical discourse similarly seems to turn against its own mediating role.

[109] 'quelque chose qui serait une photo jaunie par le temps'. Dousson, 'Filtrer, Relâcher: Comment l'Espace d'une Touche (de Piano) Peut Constituer un Espace Politique'.
[110] Françaix listens to Brahms's music little, instead being fascinated by the way in which Pesson 'frays' the ballade (as indicated in personal correspondence with the artist, 15 November 2018).



Figure 3.1: Selected images from Isabelle Françaix, *Les Effilochées–Enfance*.

3.7 Conclusion

Nebenstück 'is not about […] "recharging" Brahms […] but simply shifting our listening', Pesson has insisted, 'and that is our task [as composers], to shift our listening'.[111] This description of the piece resists the fidelity-essentialist assumption that an arrangement re-expresses the content of an existing work in a new medium. Pesson characterizes Brahms's Ballade not as *Nebenstück*'s ultimate referent, an end in itself, but rather as the means to a quite different expressive end, an invitation to 'shift our listening'. One such shift, particularly

[111] 'Il ne s'agit pas de […] « recharger » Brahms […] mais simplement de décaler notre écoute. Et c'est notre travail, décaler notre écoute.' Pesson, 'La Composition Comme Auto-Fiction'. 31:10.

evident in hauntological responses to Pesson's 'filtration', involves a reversal of the traditional hierarchy and roles of 'content' and 'medium' and therefore an inversion of corresponding binaries of depth and surface, signal and noise, sounds recorded and their technological reproduction, haunter and haunted. This chapter has demonstrated the viability and potential richness of this approach, largely eschewing Brahms's Ballade as a source of *Nebenstück*'s significance and instead focusing on the meanings of medium. In particular, the import of Pesson's 'filtration' arises from the ways in which arrangement may be thematized as a paradigmatic form of musical mediation which may represent and be productively confused with others, including instrumental performance, the technological reproduction of sound, and the psychological process of memory. This approach shows that it is perfectly possible for a listener to hear and interpret an arrangement *as an arrangement* without prior knowledge of its 'source'. This 'source' need not and should not be the default starting point for scholarly studies of arrangements. From this perspective, Brahms's Ballade might even be understood as a 'medium' through which the 'content' of *Nebenstück* (Pesson's exploration of musical memory, technological reproduction, and so on) is propagated to listeners. While this conception of arrangement is particularly relevant to *Nebenstück* and Pesson's other compositional reworkings, it also offers a productive counterweight to fidelity discourse in the study of arrangement more generally. It is useful to ask how any given arrangement's meaning may be understood differently if the 'original' is regarded as a catalyst rather than source of the arrangement's significance, a 'raw material' into which an arranger may inscribe a discourse which might be *indifferent* to the 'authentic' utterance this material supposedly communicates.[112] If the 'original' is a canonical work it may act as a catalytic 'medium' in another, related sense, acting as a vehicle for the wide dissemination of an arrangement and with it the new meanings attached to the canonical work by an arranger.

[112] See 2.2.7.

The ‘shift in listening’ that *Nebenstück* invites is, however, not one-way. Rather, the constant fluctuation in the level and quality of noise in Pesson’s filtration both represents and encourages a parallel wavering between different ways of listening. Its repetitive drift from noise to *biensonnance* not only evokes a listening persona attempting to ‘faithfully’ listen to Brahms’s Ballade through a noisy distorting medium but also invites ‘empirical’ listeners to do the same. However, as soon as content and medium re-assume their traditional roles, the noise level increases again and disrupts this listening strategy. In this way, *Nebenstück* holds fidelity listening in continual and unresolved tension with modes of engagement that attend to the meanings of medium. Without this tension, the arrangement’s medium would cease to be meaningful *as medium*, becoming a mere content in the same way that noise not defined as interfering with a signal is flattened into merely another timbral resource. ‘Shifting our listening’ in this way does not simply blur the distinction between content and medium, or turn medium into content, but maintains meaningful distinctions between these categories as listeners ‘flip’ from one perspective to another. In this respect *Nebenstück* suggests a model of arrangements more broadly as comprising three discursive strands. The first is that addressed by fidelity discourse, the musical discourse of the source work as a ‘content’ expressed by the ‘medium’ fashioned by the arranger. The second discourse uses the source work as a ‘medium’ through which the arranger intentionally or unintentionally projects a ‘content’ which may be quite indifferent to it. The third discourse results from the way that the first two discourses complement and, more importantly, contradict one another. *Nebenstück*’s noise-based meditation on musical memory seems to reflect on the very possibility and elusiveness of this combined discourse. In doing so, it wrestles with the two apparently contradictory intuitions suggested by the concept of arrangement, positing its own meaning as mediated by Pesson *and* as arising from this process of mediation.

4 *Ambre Nous Resterons* and the Shadows of Time

4.1 Introduction

On 24 May 2008, the French pianist Alexandre Tharaud gave the first performance of his themed concert programme *Hommage à Couperin* at Paris's Théâtre de la Ville. This programme interspersed the composer's keyboard works with newly-commissioned pieces inspired by them, including Pesson's *Ambre Nous Resterons, d'après "Les Ombres Errantes" de François Couperin* (2007).[1] As its subtitle indicates, the piece is not simply a tribute to Couperin's music in general, but constitutes an extended allusion to one of his works in particular.[2] Upon first hearing, however, the precise nature of this allusive relationship is difficult to discern. Pesson departs strikingly from the style of Couperin's piece and makes only fleeting references to its melodic and motivic materials: the continuous quaver motion of 'Les Ombres Errantes' is eviscerated in favour of sparse textures of held notes, scraped piano strings, and sympathetic resonance punctuated by isolated gestures and rapid filigrees. In his programme note for the work, the composer describes it as 'a meditation, slow, sometimes almost stopped, lit by sparks which fall away as quickly [as they appeared]'.[3] However, Pesson immediately follows this description of near-stasis, emptiness, and insubstantiality by stating that the work's 'few pages follow the harmony of the tutelary piece step by step'.[4] This at first surprising claim hints that Pesson's apparently momentary and isolated references to this

[1] Gérard Pesson, *Ambre Nous Resterons, d'Après "Les Ombres Errantes" de François Couperin* (Paris: Henry Lemoine, 2007) [Score]. No recording is commercially available; for a performance available online, see Wilhem Latchoumia, 'Ambre nous resterons (2008) - Gerard Pesson', *YouTube* [Performance video], <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LhEiZphDU7I>, accessed 2 August 2017. The other composers commissioned for Tharaud's *Hommage à Couperin* (with the assistance of Musique Nouvelle en Liberté) were Jacques Lenot, François-Bernard Mâche, Philippe Hersant, Renaud Gagneux, and Philippe Schoeller. See Pierre Gervasoni, 'L'Exaltant Périple d'Alexandre Tharaud', *Le Monde* (27 May 2008) [Online article] <http://www.lemonde.fr/culture/article/2008/05/27/l-exaltant-periple-d-alexandre-tharaud_1050245_3246.html>, accessed 1 August 2017.

[2] 'Les Ombres Errantes' is drawn from Couperin's *Quatrième Livre de Pièces de Clavecin*, first published in 1730.

[3] Gérard Pesson, 'Ambre Nous Resterons', *Henry Lemoine* [Online programme note], <www.henry-lemoine.com/fr/catalogue/fiche/28610>, accessed 9 May 2016.

[4] 'Ces quelques pages suivent pas à pas l'harmonie de la pièce tutélaire.' ibid.

'tutelary piece' occur in the course of a much more extended and continuous allusion to its form.

Form in music is manifested with respect to time; Pesson's claim is therefore concerned with the relationship between the temporal organisation of materials in *Ambre Nous Resterons* and 'Les Ombres Errantes'.[5] The composer suggests that, through its harmony, the sequential temporal 'unfolding' of his piece corresponds with that of its source, as if yoked to it. In making this paratextual intimation, Pesson invites listeners to hear *Ambre Nous Resterons* as an *arrangement* of Couperin's piece, however inappropriate this label might initially seem. This is because arrangements are conventionally understood as altered re-presentations of a pre-existing work, and the temporal organisation of materials is considered fundamental to a musical work's identity.[6] In describing *Ambre Nous Resterons* as 'following' its model 'step by step', Pesson posits it as an altered re-presentation of that work, rather than a piece which merely draws on its musical materials. The 'after' in Pesson's subtitle carries appropriate generic implications in this regard, traditionally suggesting a complex tension between imitation of a respected model and using such a model as a springboard for new compositional invention.[7] However, the degree of invention in *Ambre Nous Resterons* stretches any sense of imitation to breaking point, and along with it not only the idea of musical arrangement but also the traditional notions of musical temporality, the Work, and, crucially, listening upon which it is founded. As a result, a close reading of Pesson's piece offers a particularly rich frame through which such concepts might be critically re-examined.

---

[5] For critical discussion of the concept of musical form with respect to time and space, see Daniel M. Grimley, 'Music's Moving Forms', in Rehding Alexander and Steven Rings (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Critical Concepts in Music Theory* [Online text], Oxford University Press (2015 [2018]), <http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190454746.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780190454746-e-23>, accessed 5 April 2019.

[6] See 2.2.

[7] The traditional connotations of the designation 'after' might be illustrated with reference to the different approaches taken in Schumann's *6 Etudes pour le Pianoforte d'après les Caprices de Paganini* op. 3 and *6 Etudes de Concert d'après des Caprices de Paganini* op. 10, or Franz Liszt's *Études d'Exécution Transcendante d'après Paganini* S.140.

4.2 Temporality and linearity

4.2.1 Linear temporal fidelity

In stating that *Ambre Nous Resterons* 'follows' its model's harmony 'step by step', Pesson characterizes his piece as a traveller who walks along a path that represents its source. Such a description is not novel, instead drawing on a longstanding and conventional way of talking about musical arrangements that is so seemingly 'natural' that its metaphorical status often goes unnoticed. Franz Liszt, for example, explained that he dubbed his keyboard version of Hector Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique* a 'Piano Score' in order to 'make more obvious the intention to *follow the orchestra* [version] *step by step*'.[8] This metaphor of 'following step by step' is but one linguistic manifestation of a more general conceptual trope according to which arrangements are understood as re-tracing the linear 'trajectory' of their sources. In their discussion of Michael Finnissy's reworking of a chorale prelude by J. S. Bach, for example, Richard Beaudoin and Joseph Moore state that 'amidst […] many alterations, Finnissy's piece generally *maintains a through line that follows Bach's counterpoint from beginning to end*, but in almost all cases the rhythms, pitches, and location of the voices are distorted'.[9] As their description makes clear, this trope of linear 'following' is concerned not with how individual moments of the source are rendered in an arrangement, but rather with the *order* in which these moments are re-presented. The trope of 'following' a 'line' is concerned primarily with the temporal aspect of arrangement, expressing an arrangement's 'temporal fidelity' to its source. This trope posits a 'faithful' arrangement as a temporal replica of its source, with each moment of a work's formal structure mapping neatly onto a corresponding moment in the arrangement, even if these moments are represented quite differently. Luciano Berio offers another example of this trope, likening the continual presence of the *scherzo* of Gustav Mahler's Second Symphony in the third part of his *Sinfonia* (1968) to

[8] 'J'ai donné à mon travail le titre de *Partition de piano*, afin de rendre plus sensible l'intention de suivre pas à pas l'orchestre'. Emphasis added. Quoted in Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*. 226.
[9] Beaudoin and Moore, 'Conceiving Musical Transdialection'. 109. Emphasis added. See 2.2.7.

> a river flowing through a constantly changing landscape, sometimes going underground and emerging in another altogether different place, sometimes very evident in its journey, sometimes disappearing completely, present either as a fully recognizable form or as small details lost in the surrounding host of musical events.[10]

Even when no element of Mahler's *scherzo* is audible, Berio suggests that its supposedly linear temporal 'flow' still continues, defining the temporal structure of his movement.

This notion of 'linear temporal fidelity' is fundamental to the idea of arrangement and the way it informs how listeners hear particular pieces of music as 'arrangements'. This is because arrangements are traditionally considered to be altered re-presentations of a source work, and musical works are in turn understood as temporal, defined not only by their musical material but also the linear order in which this material is presented. From this perspective, to re-present a musical work through arrangement is necessarily to reproduce its materials in the same order in which they appear in that work. It is on these grounds that the analytic philosopher Paul Thom distinguishes paraphrases and transcriptions:

> Paraphrases, like transcriptions, are of works rather than themes or styles. And like transcriptions, they adapt old content to a new medium. They differ from transcriptions in that they do not *track the material's content bar by bar*, but instead adopt a looser approach to it, taking bits from here and there in the material, mixing them up, and linking them by novel transitions that are not to be found anywhere in the material.[11]

Crucially, however, the idea of linear temporal fidelity (like that of arrangement more broadly) does not function as an 'in-or-out' categorical criterion, but rather as an ideal against which individual examples are judged or measured. The practice of arrangement affords, invites, and even necessitates 'departures' from this ideal. The privileging of fidelity inherent in the idea of 'following step by step' means that such 'departures' are often conceived negatively as 'deviations' from the 'straight and narrow' line which represents the source work. However full of twists and turns we imagine the 'path' representing a musical work to be, when this work is

[10] Luciano Berio, 'Sinfonia (Author's Note)', *Centro Studi Luciano Berio* [Online programme note], <http://www.lucianoberio.org/node/1494?1683069894=1>, accessed 23 April 2018. For discussion of temporality in this movement, see 5.2.2.
[11] Thom, *The Musician as Interpreter*. xvii. Emphasis added.

considered the 'original' it often seems to assume a ruler-like rectitude against which an arrangement's deviant 'path' is judged to vacillate circuitously.[12] However, such 'departures' can be understood more positively as a means by which arrangements generate significance and meaning in relation to a source rather than simply projecting that source's supposed 'content'.[13] In calling several of his looser arrangements 'rambles' on their sources, for example, Percy Grainger reimagined the walking metaphor employed by Liszt and others such that 'departures' from the 'path' of the source are understood as fancy-free wayfaring with respect to it rather than transgressive deviations.[14] In the context of musical arrangements, such metaphorical 'rambling' implies a path-like source not 'followed'; conversely, the notion that a source may be faithfully 'followed' implies a continual potential to 'ramble' or 'wander' from it.

Peter Szendy expresses the tension between an arrangement's dependence on a source and its freedom from it in tellingly linear terms.

> Arrangement […] becomes an 'original work', which still does not impose itself *in place of* the original, but can be heard *alongside* it. The status of arrangement that is thus outlined is difficult to label: it is that of a work, indeed, but one that seems destined to run alongside another, its model. To follow it without being subordinate to it, but also without being completely detached from it: a kind of *alliance*, like a shadow that, while still remaining linked to the body whose silhouette it is, has acquired a certain autonomy in its movements.[15]

Szendy's secondary, shadow-based metaphor is particularly pertinent in relation to *Ambre Nous Resterons*. In his programme note for the work, Pesson expresses an affinity with Couperin's title. 'The *Ombres Errantes* ['*Wandering Shadows*'] suited me well: shadows always appear when I write music. As for wandering, it's my inclination'.[16] *Ambre Nous Resterons* can be productively interpreted as a wandering shadow of its source, an insubstantial negative image

[12] For insightful discussion of the moral connotations of straight and 'twisted' lines, see Tim Ingold, *Lines: A Brief History* (London: Routledge, 2007). 152-155.
[13] For insightful discussion of the significance of such 'deviation' in the context of 'linear' narrative, see Simon Kemp, 'The Inescapable Metaphor: How Time and Meaning Become Space When We Think about Narrative', *Philosophy and Literature*, 36/2 (2012), 391-403.
[14] Consider, for example, Grainger's *Ramble on the Last Love Duet in Richard Strauss's Opera "The Rose-Bearer"* (1927) or *Blithe Bells* (1931), a 'free ramble' on J. S. Bach's 'Sheep May Safely Graze'.
[15] Szendy, *Listen*. 61.
[16] 'Les *Ombres Errantes* m'allaient bien : l'ombre sort toujours du tube quand j'écris la musique. Quant à errer, c'est ma pente.' Pesson, 'Ambre Nous Resterons', *Henry Lemoine*.

which signals that source's absence. Didier da Silva characterizes the piece as composed of 'will-o'-the-wisps on ash, shot through with drones, modest abysses, shadows of gestures'.[17] Crucially, however, this shadowy abyss leads him to question the composer's claim to temporal fidelity: 'Pesson follows the harmony (he says) "step by step", but in fact he stretches it, hollows it out, and pulverizes it'.[18] The idea of harmonic 'progression' in tonal music has become closely linked to the concept of an ongoing linear temporal structure.[19] Rather than emphasizing fidelity to Couperin's temporal structure through harmony, as Pesson does, da Silva describes the manipulation of that harmony, and therefore the source's temporal structure, in vividly plastic terms.[20] Pierre Gervasoni comments that Pesson's piece '[proceeds] by dreamlike extensions', a phrase suggestive of the temporal 'stretching' noted by da Silva.[21] Similarly, Antoine Pecqueur describes being 'overwhelmed by [*Ambre Nous Resterons*'] dilated relationship with time', implicitly comparing the temporal structure of Pesson's piece and its model.[22]

Pecqueur, Gervasoni, and da Silva indicate that, far from simply 'following' the 'course' of its source faithfully, Pesson's piece exhibits a temporal 'wandering' in relation to this source of the kind described by Szendy. The seemingly directionless, unhurried, and occasionally restless motion of wandering is suggested by *Ambre Nous Resterons*' expression marking, *Languissamment*, borrowed from 'Les Ombres Errantes'. Such languidness is reflected in

[17] 'feux follets sur des cendres, traversés de bourdons, d'abîmes modestes, d'ombres de gestes.' Didier da Silva, 'Pas Perdu Pour Tout le Monde', *Danses de Travers* (17 May 2015) <http://dansesdetravers.blogspot.co.uk/2015/05/pas-perdu-pour-tout-le-monde.html>, accessed 1 August 2017.
[18] 'Gérard Pesson en suit « pas à pas » (dit-il) l'harmonie, c'est-à-dire qu'il l'étire, la creuse, la pulvérise[.]' ibid.
[19] Harmonies are organised into 'progressions' which contribute to a sense of the music's ongoing 'motion' temporal 'flow'. Carl Dahlhaus, for example, states that 'harmony comprises not only the ('vertical') structure of chords but also their ('horizontal') movement. Like music as a whole, harmony is a process'. Carl Dahlhaus et al., 'Harmony', in Stanley Sadie (ed.), *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (2nd edn; London: Macmillan, 2001). Julian Johnson has described 'music's push towards the future' as '[h]ard-wired into the grammar of tonality and embodied in a musical syntax that constantly reaches beyond itself'. Johnson, *Out of Time*. 58.
[20] This metaphor of manipulating music plastically owes much to the medium of tape; its linearity also implies splicing, reversing, looping, speed alteration, and so on. See Andrea F. Bohlman and Peter McMurray, 'Tape: Or, Rewinding the Phonographic Regime', *Twentieth-Century Music*, 14/1 (2017), 3-24. On the relationship between Pesson's music and tape, see 5.3.3.
[21] '[procède] par prolongements oniriques'. Gervasoni, 'L'Exaltant Périple d'Alexandre Tharaud'.
[22] 'bouleversé par […] son rapport dilaté au temps'. Antoine Pecqueur, 'Accentus', *La Terrasse* (10 October 2008) <http://www.journal-laterrasse.fr/focus/accentus-2/>, accessed 1 August 2017.

Pesson's description of the piece as slow and meditative. As well as 'stretching out' or 'slowing down' his source, Pesson describes *Ambre Nous Resterons*' title as an 'anagrammatic play' on that of Couperin, cuing his audience to expect a degree of re-ordering of his source's material.[23] Crucially, this anagram suggests only a partial re-ordering of Couperin's material, 'pulverized' but still recognisable.[24] This suggestion of re-ordering is perhaps the clearest indication of the temporal 'autonomy' of Pesson's 'wandering shadow' from its source, 'Les Ombres Errantes'. Evoking the idea of 'following step by step' but 'departing' from it significantly, *Ambre Nous Resterons* is liminal with respect to the idea of musical arrangement. The task of this chapter is not, therefore, to determine whether *Ambre Nous Resterons* is or is not an arrangement, but rather to consider how its ambiguous status in this respect invites listeners to question the assumptions upon which the idea of arrangement rests.

4.2.2 Linearity and the work concept

The idea that an arrangement re-traces a 'line' determined by its source posits two fundamental assumptions. First, it characterises musical works as linear, regarding works as essentially temporal and temporality as essentially linear. Second, it positions the linear mediation of these works as a normative ideal of arrangement, analogous to other practices of mediation such as performance and listening. The metaphorical description of musical works as linear 'paths' is derived from the notion that works are inherently temporal, and that time is linear in nature. Ideas of time arise from the attempt to account for perceived changes in the world and express their relationship with one another. Different conceptions of time account for and relate these changes in different ways, achieving varying levels of dominance within any given culture. In the 'modern West', linear conceptions of time have become particularly pervasive, occupying the privileged position of being considered 'ordinary'. Although critical

[23] 'jeu anagrammatique avec le titre de Couperin'. Couperin used evocative or enigmatic titles for his pieces, turning interpretation of their meaning into a game, code, or puzzle. Reacting Pesson's paratextual clue and interpreting the relationship between the two titles as an analogy for that between the structures of the two pieces involves approaching *Ambre Nous Resterons* in a similarly ludic spirit. See Jane Clark and Derek F. Connon, *The Mirror of Human Life: Reflections on François Couperin's Pièces de Clavecin* (London: Keyword, 2011).
[24] 'Ambre' is clearly suggested by 'ombres', the other letters are reordered to form the rest of the title.

of what he calls 'our ordinary notion of time', Paul Ricœur defines it succinctly as the belief that time is 'a series of instants succeeding one another along an abstract line oriented in a single direction'.[25] Such linearity incorporates the ideas of both one-dimensional form and one-directional motion, implying space and movement, neither of which is literal. We might account for the pervasiveness of this linear conception of time using George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's conceptual metaphor theory. They suggest that we can only reason with abstract concepts such as time in relation to more intuitively experienced, embodied frameworks such as space and motion.[26] In their discussion of time, Lakoff and Johnson outline a ubiquitous but not universal 'Time Orientation Metaphor' which describes the present moment as the location of an observer, the past as behind them, and the future as in front.[27] Temporal events are consequently described as if located in relation to the observer, whose relative position to these events changes as they occur. Temporal change is therefore described as relative motion, the so-called 'passage' of time, giving rise to two inverse metaphors which Lakoff and Johnson call 'Moving Times' and 'Moving Observer'.[28] According to the latter metaphor, also called 'Time's Landscape', locations on an observer's path of motion are times, the motion of the observer is the 'passage' of time, and the distance moved is the amount of time 'passed'.[29]

Lakoff and Johnson argue that 'we cannot think (much less talk) about time without […] metaphors', even suggesting that time does not exist outside a metaphorical context.[30] While they leave open which metaphors we might use to think about time, they nonetheless risk treating the metaphors of motion they discuss as 'natural': 'What, after all', they ask, 'would time be without flow, without time going by, without the future approaching? What would time

[25] Paul Ricœur, 'Narrative Time', *Critical Inquiry*, 7/1 (1980), 169-190. 174.
[26] See George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).
[27] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999). 139-141. They also note that in some cultures the metaphorical orientation of past, present, and future are distributed differently.
[28] Ibid. 141-148.
[29] Ibid. 146.
[30] Ibid. 166.

be if there were no *lengths* of time?'[31] The spatial metaphors they examine (and possibly privilege) are those which underpin the 'ordinary' conception of time as linear. At the turn of the last century, Henri Bergson subjected this linear conception of time to extensive critique. He argued that such a conception of time, which he called *temps*, was an inadequate abstraction from our subjective experience of time, which he called *durée*, because it accounts for that inherently non-spatial experience in spatialized terms:

> Familiar with the […] idea [of space], and indeed beset by it, we introduce it unwittingly into our feeling of pure succession; we set our states of consciousness side by side in such a way as to perceive them simultaneously, no longer on one another, but alongside one another; in a word, we project time into space, we express duration in terms of extensity, and succession thus takes the form of a continuous line or chain[.][32]

The implied 'mental image', Bergson suggests, is 'no longer successive, but simultaneous, of a *before* and *after*'.[33] As a result, Bergson reasons that the idea of a temporal 'order' also relies on a spatialized concept of time:

> [W]e could not introduce *order* among terms without first distinguishing them and then comparing the places which they occupy; hence we must perceive them as multiple, simultaneous, and distinct; in a word, we set them side by side, and if we introduce an order in what is successive, the reason is that succession is converted into simultaneity and is projected into space.[34]

To clarify his point, Bergson asks his readers to picture a point, 'A', moving down a line. 'If this point were conscious of itself', he suggests,

> it would feel itself change, since it moves: it would perceive a succession; but would this succession assume for it the form of a line? No doubt it would, if it could rise, so to speak, above the line which it traverses, and perceive simultaneously several points of it in juxtaposition: but by doing so it would form the idea of space, and it is in space and not in pure duration [*durée*] that it would see displayed the changes which it undergoes.[35]

---

[31] Ibid. 166.
[32] Henri Bergson, *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness*, trans. F. L. Pogson (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1910). 101. See Henri Bergson, *Essai sur les Données Immédiates de la Conscience* (7th edn.; Paris: Quadrige, 2001).
[33] Bergson, *Time and Free Will*. 101.
[34] Ibid. 102.
[35] Ibid. 103.

Unlike Lakoff and Johnson, Bergson maintains an admirable dissatisfaction with habitual and privileged ways of thinking about time on the grounds that they are inadequate to the 'pure' experience of *durée*.

Subjective experience, however, is never 'pure'; it is always mediated by and inseparably bound up with cultural assumptions and familiar modes of thought. The idea of linearity does not simply distort our subjective experience of time, but rather plays a role in constituting it: the pervasive influence of the metaphors Lakoff and Johnson describe must be recognized. It is therefore necessary to acknowledge the linear conception of time which powerfully frames temporal experience whilst being attentive to the ways in which such experience exceeds or deconstructs this frame.

In considering how a linear conception of time affects our understanding of music, it is important to keep such complications in mind.[36] In his *Grove* entry on the subject, Justin London states that time is 'the essential medium for music and musical performance, a non-spatial continuum of past, present and future in which music exists and is understood'.[37] He goes on to advance what Benedict Taylor calls '[o]ne of the least disputed claims routinely made about music and temporality', that music 'reflects the temporal sensibilities of its cultural milieu'.[38] The dominance of linear conceptions of time means that this process of reflection often compromises its ostensibly 'non-spatial' quality. Mark Johnson and Steve Larson

[36] A comprehensive discussion of 'musical time' is beyond the scope of the present thesis, but it should be noted that the thesis follows Raymond Monelle and Philip Alperson in being sceptical of the many writers, Jonathan D. Kramer notable among them, who have claimed that a 'musical time' which is experienced while listening to music allows us to escape the dominant linear conception of 'absolute time'. Alternative temporalities are represented by music rather than experienced within it (as Monelle suggests), understood only in relation to ideologically dominant, linear conceptions of time. See Raymond Monelle, *The Sense of Music: Semiotic Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000). 81-114; Philip Alperson, "'Musical Time" and Music as an "Art of Time"', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 38/4 (1980), 407-417; Jonathan D. Kramer, *The Time of Music: New Meanings, New Temporalities, New Listening Strategies* (London: Collier Macmillan, 1988); Jonathan D. Kramer, 'Multiple and Non-Linear Time in Beethoven's Opus 135', *Perspectives of New Music*, 11/2 (1973), 122-145. For others who advocate a concept of musical time see, for example, Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (London: Continuum, 1997); Susanne K. Langer, *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art Developed from Philosophy in a New Key* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1953); Benedict Taylor, *The Melody of Time: Music and Temporality in the Romantic Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

[37] Justin London, 'Time', in Stanley Sadie (ed.), *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (2nd edn; London: Macmillan, 2001).

[38] Taylor, *The Melody of Time*; London, 'Time', (2001).

demonstrate that conceptual metaphors describing time spatially reoccur in descriptions of musical temporality. The 'Time's Landscape' metaphor, they suggest, finds specifically musical application in what they term the 'Musical Landscape' metaphor:

> Just as in the 'Time's Landscape' metaphor the present moment is wherever the moving observer is, likewise in the music the present moment is where the listener is at a particular point along their journey. In other words, where the musical traveler is in the music-landscape is what the listener hears at that moment. Consequently, what has already been heard is conceptualized as points in the landscape that are behind the listener-traveler, whereas parts of the music not yet heard are future points on the path that one will encounter later.[39]

Although Johnson and Larson also suggest a mapping between the 'Moving Times' metaphor and a corresponding 'Moving Music' metaphor, it is only when they outline the 'Musical Landscape' metaphor that the notion of the musical work slips into their discussion. This metaphor construes the 'musical work' as an 'extended three-dimensional landscape through which the hearer moves': 'The listener takes a journey over the path that defines the particular piece of music being heard'.[40]

That Johnson and Larson describe such a path as 'defining' a work attests to what Lydia Goehr terms the work concept's 'regulative' character, which she argues arose around 1800.[41] It is in roughly the same period that Karol Berger contends that, as part of a 'larger transformation in the way educated Europeans began to conceive of time', 'music added the experience of linear time […] to its essential subject matter'.[42] 'Music', he argues, 'could no longer be experienced with understanding unless one recognized the temporal ordering of events'.[43] One need not accept Berger's potentially totalizing historical claim to understand the

[39] Mark L. Johnson and Steve Larson, '"Something in the Way She Moves": Metaphors of Musical Motion', *Metaphor and Symbol*, 18/2 (2003), 63-84. 71. On the metaphorical description of time as motion in music see Cox, *Music and Embodied Cognition*; Janna Saslaw, 'Forces, Containers, and Paths: The Role of Body-Derived Image Schemas in the Conceptualization of Music', *Journal of Music Theory*, 40/2 (1996), 217-243. For critical approaches see Judy Lochhead, 'The Metaphor of Musical Motion: Is There an Alternative?', *Theory and Practice*, 14/15 (1989/1990), 83-103; Robert Adlington, 'Moving Beyond Motion: Metaphors for Changing Sound', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 128/2 (2003), 297-318.
[40] Johnson and Larson, 'Metaphors of Musical Motion'. 71.
[41] Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum*.
[42] Karol Berger, *Bach's Cycle, Mozart's Arrow: An Essay on the Origins of Musical Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007). 9.
[43] Ibid. 9.

claim itself as evidence for the present dominance of linear conceptions of the work. 'By Mozart's time', Berger states, 'the form of a musical work is temporal; that is, it consists of a number of phases or parts that succeed one another in a determined order'.[44] Here, Berger's language elides and even equates the temporality of the work and its supposed linearity. From a Bergsonian perspective such an elision spatializes the musical work, placing it outside time as it is dynamically experienced and petrifying it as if all its parts existed simultaneously. Such a spatialized conception of the work is facilitated, but not necessarily determined, by the graphical representation of musical forms on the page which Mark Evan Bonds argues came slowly into use from around 1825 in conjunction with a 'growing sense of linear time in music'.[45] This petrified, seemingly non-temporal conception of the musical work continues to influence academic and less formal discourse today.[46]

4.3 The work as heard and imagined

4.3.1 Temporal fidelity and structural listening

The idea that 'following' or 're-tracing' a path-like source is a normative characteristic of musical arrangements is informed by a spatialized, linear conception of the musical work. Because this idea is fundamental to the constitution of arrangement as an interpretative category, this category necessarily perpetuates and reinforces an understanding of musical works in linear terms. In positioning itself ambiguously at the borders of arrangement as a category, *Ambre Nous Resterons* is able to engage with this conception of the work critically. Considering the relationship between arrangement and listening indicates the stakes of understanding *Ambre Nous Resterons* as constituted by interacting temporal 'lines'. Expanding Szendy's perspective of arrangements as inscriptions of the experience of listening to a work, they might be regarded as representations of imagined, composite, or ideal listening experiences

[44] Ibid. 179.
[45] Mark Evan Bonds, 'The Spatial Representation of Musical Form', *The Journal of Musicology*, 27/3 (2010), 265-303. 273.
[46] It is embraced with particular enthusiasm in Robert P. Morgan, 'Musical Time/Musical Space', *Critical Inquiry*, 6/3 (1980), 527-538.

as well as singular, 'real' or 'actual' ones.[47] This interpretation of arrangements is facilitated by an understanding of listening as a mediation of a work akin to arrangement or performance. Just as performances of works (or performances of arrangements of works) supposedly mediate those works to listeners, so listening may be understood as a process by which one aurally mediates a work to oneself through such performances. The notion of mediating the source work by 'following' it 'step by step', inherent to the idea of musical arrangement, corresponds to a certain 'temporally faithful' mode of listening, often called 'structural listening'. This ideal finds its classic formulation as the first of the 'listening types' outlined by Theodor W. Adorno, discussed in order of diminishing 'adequacy' to the work heard. 'Spontaneously following the course of music', the 'expert' or structural listener 'hears the sequence, hears past, present and future moments together so that they crystallize into a meaningful context'.[48] The supposed goal of such structural listening is to assemble a mental representation of the spatialized linear work from the dynamic experience of hearing it performed; the structural listener mediates this work to themself by 'following' it 'step by step'. Through the notion of linear temporal fidelity the idea of arrangement reflects and represents such a mode of listening as normative. Individual arrangements, however, can represent alternative experiences of listening in relation to this norm, in turn proposing alternative conceptions of the musical work.

4.3.2 Phenomenology and structural listening

Interpreted as reflecting upon and representing the experience of listening, musical arrangement may be productively understood in relation to phenomenology, the philosophical enquiry into perception and experience. The first step in such an enquiry, as conceived by

[47] See 3.4.3.

[48] Theodor W. Adorno, *Introduction to the Sociology of Music*, trans. E. B. Ashton (New York: Continuum, 1989). 4. For critical approaches to structural listening see Rose Rosengard Subotnik, 'Towards a Deconstruction of Structural Listening: A Critique of Schoenberg, Adorno, and Stravinsky', *Deconstructive Variations: Music and Reason in Western Society* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 148-176; Andrew Dell'Antonio (ed.), *Beyond Structural Listening? Postmodern Modes of Hearing* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); Szendy, *Listen*. 99-128. For a more sympathetic exposition of Adorno's concept of structural listening see Richard Leppert, 'Music "Pushed to the Edge of Existence" (Adorno, Listening, and the Question of Hope)', *Cultural Critique,* 60 (2005), 92-133.

Edmund Husserl, is to suspend or 'bracket' the 'natural attitude' according to which our perceptions form the basis of beliefs regarding the existence of objects in a world external to our consciousness. Husserl, who called this 'bracketing' of the external world the *epoché* (or 'reduction'), intended it to enable a 'pure phenomenology' which is concerned with perceptions alone.[49] However, as Bergson's comparison of *temps* and *durée* attempts to demonstrate, any attempt to examine perception in isolation is unavoidably influenced by preconceptions about what is perceived, particularly in the case of time. Despite their claim to describe perception alone, phenomenological discussions of music have traditionally affirmed a spatialized conception of the work consistent with that posited by notions of structural listening. This approach can be traced to a 1905 lecture on the consciousness of 'internal time' in which Husserl used a musical melody to exemplify his concept of the 'temporal object':

> That several successive tones yield a melody is possible only because the succession of psychic events is united 'at once' in a total formulation. They are in consciousness successively, but they fall within one and the same total act. […] The tones […] form a successive unity with a common effect, the apprehension-form. Naturally, the latter is consummated only with the last tone. There is, accordingly, a perception of unities that succeed one another in time, just as there is a perception of coexisting unities[.][50]

Husserl proposes that we can perceive the melody as a unity because we 'hold onto' each tone as it 'recedes' into the past as a 'retention' in our consciousness. 'The points of the temporal duration', he states, 'recede for my consciousness in a manner analogous to that in which the points of an object stationary in space recede for my consciousness when I remove "myself" from the object. The object keeps its place, just as the tone keeps its time'.[51] Husserl represents this process of retention in a linear, spatialized fashion, with the ordered series of 'now points' neatly corresponding to an identically ordered series of retentions which constitute an 'immanent temporal object', such as a melody.[52] Although aiming to describe the temporal

[49] See Edmund Husserl, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology* (London: Routledge, 2012). 55-60.
[50] Edmund Husserl, *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time (1893-1917)*, trans. John B. Brough (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1991). 22-23.
[51] Ibid. 27.
[52] Ibid. 29-30.

experience of perceiving a melody, Husserl slips into the spatialized conception of time Bergson argues is alien to that experience.

While Husserl's discussion of melody was probably intended more to illustrate his theory than as an insight into the perception of music, it has proved influential on phenomenological approaches to the musical Work. In the mid-twentieth century, Alfred Schutz and Roman Ingarden both extrapolated Husserl's analysis of melodic perception to the structure of the whole musical work, constituted as an 'ideal' or 'purely intentional' object.[53] Thomas Clifton and, more recently, Eugene Montague have also adopted similarly Husserlian approaches to the musical work.[54]

4.3.3 Sartre and the imaginary work

Although rooted in the phenomenological tradition, Jean Paul-Sartre's investigation of the imagination in *The Imaginary* (1940) presents a subtler conception of the musical work which is particularly relevant to *Ambre Nous Resterons*. Sartre concludes with a discussion of artworks, proposing that 'the work of art is an irreality', that is to say imaginary.[55] He argues that painting, poetry, drama, and music all present us with real objects, 'analogons', by which we can become conscious of irreal objects, or 'images'. As an example, Sartre considers a portrait of Charles VIII:

> So long as we consider the canvas and the frame for themselves, the aesthetic object "Charles VIII" does not appear […] It appears the moment that consciousness, effecting a radical conversion that requires the nihilation of the world, constitutes itself as imaging. […] And as this

[53] Alfred Schutz, 'Fragments on the Phenomenology of Music', in F. Joseph Smith (ed.), *In Search of Musical Method* (New York: Gordon and Breach, 1976), 5-72; Roman Ingarden, *The Work of Music and the Problem of its Identity*, trans. Adam Czerniawski (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1986). For further discussion see Dahlhaus, *Esthetics of Music*. 74-83.

[54] Thomas Clifton, 'Music as Constituted Object', in F. Joseph Smith (ed.), *In Search of Musical Method* (New York: Gordon and Breach, 1976), 73-98; Eugene Montague, 'Phenomenology and the "Hard Problem" of Consciousness and Music', in David Clarke and Eric F. Clarke (eds.), *Music and Consciousness: Philosophical, Psychological, and Cultural Perspectives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 29-43. For a critical account of this approach responding to Jacques Derrida's critique of Husserl see David Clarke, 'Music, Phenomenology, Time Consciousness: Meditations After Husserl', ibid., 1-24.

[55] Jean-Paul Sartre, *The Imaginary: A Phenomenological Psychology of the Imagination*, trans. Jonathan Webber (London: Routledge, 2004). 188. 'Sartre's "*iréel*" does not denote, as "unreal" seems to, the class of images that could exist but do not. Rather, an irreal object in this work is an object as imaged by consciousness.' xxviii. First published as Jean-Paul Sartre, *L'Imaginaire: Psychologie Phénoménologique de l'Imagination* (Paris: Gallimard, 1940).

> Charles VIII, who is an *irreality* in so far as he is grasped *on* the canvas, is precisely the object of our aesthetic appreciation […], we are led to recognise that in a picture the aesthetic object is an *irreality*.[56]

A work of 'absolute' music, Sartre concedes, appears to be real rather than irreal because, unlike figurative painting, it seems to refer to nothing but itself. However, Sartre argues that while the sounds of a performance 'are dated and unfurl in our time', and are therefore real, these sounds function as an analagon for the irreal musical work. Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, he suggests,

> is entirely outside the real. It has its own time, which is to say it possesses an internal time, which flows from the first note of the allegro to the last note of the finale […] The Seventh Symphony is in no way *in time*. It therefore entirely escapes the real. It is given in person, but as absent, being out of reach.[57]

On first consideration, this conception of the musical work appears consistent with that suggested by the discourse of structural listening or Husserlian phenomenology. However, the strange properties Sartre attributes to irreal objects earlier in his book suggest that his position presents a challenge to traditional conceptions of the work.

In *The Imaginary*, Sartre's primary aim is to argue against a conception of the imagination reliant on what he calls the 'illusion of immanence', the idea that consciousness is 'a place peopled with small imitations' which are the 'images' of imagination.[58] To demonstrate that this is not the case, Sartre considers imagining the columned façade of the Panthéon in Paris. If our image of the building was simply a 'small imitation' of it, as the illusion of immanence suggests, we would be able to count its columns, but if we try to do this we find that it is quite impossible. According to Sartre, 'the Panthéon exists *elsewhere* and it is given precisely as existing elsewhere: what is present is, in some way, its absence'.[59] The illusion of immanence, Sartre claims, involves the construction of a 'mirage': the image seems real and

[56] Sartre, *The Imaginary*. 189.
[57] Ibid. 192
[58] Ibid. 5.
[59] Ibid. 87.

tangible, but 'involves an inner contradiction, a radical defect in constitution'.[60] The image, Sartre asserts, 'has wrapped within it a certain nothingness. Its object is not a simple portrait, it asserts itself: but in asserting itself it destroys itself. However lively, appealing, strong the image, it gives its object as not being'.[61]

Significantly for his later discussion of the musical work, Sartre argues that the essential nothingness of the irreal is temporal as well as spatial:

> Duration is also a quality of the [irreal] object and, no more than one can align in image the columns of the Panthéon, one cannot make explicit and count the moments of an irreal action. It is rather a case of a vague consciousness of flow and a coefficient of duration projected onto the object as an absolute property […] Thus the time of irreal objects is itself irreal. It has none of the characteristics of the time of perception: it does not *flow* […], it can be extended or contracted at will and remain the same, it is not irreversible. It is a *shadow of time*[.][62]

Sartre explicitly states that this irreal time is not Bergson's *durée*, but rather resembles the spatialized *temps*, which, being an abstraction from perception, is irreal. The irreal temporal 'flow' Sartre identifies in his discussion of the Seventh Symphony suggests that he allows conventional ideas about the temporality of musical works to dominate his more startling conception of irreal 'time' in the abstract. In referring to the 'absolute succession' of the Symphony's themes Sartre himself seems to fall into the illusion of immanence. The spatialized conception of the musical work as an 'immanent temporal object' on which the notion of 'following step by step' relies is an example of this 'illusion'. Our image of the spatialized linear work seems 'lively, appealing, and strong' like the imagined Panthéon, but ultimately shares its 'radical defect in constitution'; it posits its own absence and nothingness. Unlike the Panthéon, however, the musical work can *never* be given as present: though musical moments can be present, the musical work is always absent. The seemingly dynamic temporality of the musical work is merely a 'shadow of time'.

[60] Ibid. 87, 88.
[61] Ibid. 14.
[62] Ibid. 131-132. Final emphasis added.

For Sartre, 'the image and the perception […] represent the two great irreducible attitudes of consciousness' that necessarily 'exclude one another'.[63] However, he also contends that 'I always *perceive more and otherwise* than I *see*' because the imaginary lurks everywhere in our perception of the world, folded into our experience of it.[64] 'For example', Sartre suggests,

> it is understood that this ashtray before me has an 'underneath', that it rests *by means of this underneath* on the table, that this underneath is white porcelain, etc. These diverse pieces of knowledge come either from a mnemonic knowledge, or from antepredicative inferences. But what must be noted well is that the knowledge, whatever its origin, remains unformulated, antepredictive: it is not that it is unconscious but that it sticks to the object, it merges into the act of perception. What is aimed at is never explicitly the invisible aspect of the thing, it is that visible aspect of the thing such that an invisible aspect corresponds to it, it is the upper face of the ashtray such that the very structure as an upper face implies the existence of an 'underneath'.[65]

According to Sartre it is these incursions of the imaging consciousness 'that give the perception [of the ashtray] its fullness and richness'.[66] Bergson's insistence that descriptions of *durée* will be unavoidably influenced by the spatial thinking of *temps* can be interpreted in these terms.

Sartre's philosophical novel *Nausea* (1938) offers a literary exploration of the way perception and imagination 'merge' ambiguously in our experience of time. Watching an old woman in the street from his upstairs window, the narrator, Antoine Roquentin, conceives temporal experience spatially through her slow but predictable movements. 'I suppose', he muses, 'she is going to turn right, into the boulevard Noir. That gives her a hundred yards to cover: at the rate she's going it will take her a good ten minutes'.[67] Continuing, however, Roquentin experiences increasing dissatisfaction with this initial equation of time and space:

> I can *see* the future. It is there, stationed in the street, hardly any paler than the present. Why does it have to be fulfilled? What advantage will that give it? The old woman hobbles away, she stops, she tugs at a lock of grey hair escaping from her shawl. She walks on, she was there, now she is here… I don't know where I am any more: am I *seeing* her movements, or am I *foreseeing* them? I can no longer distinguish the present from the future and yet it is lasting, it is gradually fulfilling itself; the old woman advances along the empty street; she moves her heavy mannish shoes. This is time, naked time, it comes slowly into existence, it keeps you waiting, and when it comes you

[63] 'As long as I *look* at this table, I cannot form an image of Pierre; but if all at once the irreal Pierre surges up before me, the table that is under my eyes vanishes, leaves the scene'. Ibid. 120.
[64] Ibid. 120.
[65] Ibid. 121.
[66] Ibid. 120.
[67] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Nausea*, trans. Robert Baldick (London: Penguin, 2000). 50.

> are disgusted because you realize that it's been there already for a long time. The old woman nears the corner of the street, and she's nothing more now than a little bundle of black clothes. All right then, that's new, she wasn't there a moment ago. But that's a tarnished, deflowered newness, which can never take you by surprise. She is going to turn the corner of the street, she turns it—during an eternity of time.[68]

Read alongside Sartre's theory of the imaginary this passage strongly suggests the difficulty of isolating 'naked time', which proves illusory as soon as Roquentin identifies it. Irreal, spatialized time infects its real counterpart such that past, present, and future seem to exist all at once like locations along the woman's path of motion. As a result, events which should be 'new' seem to have already happened; time seems at once to pass and not pass at all, dynamism is continually implied everywhere implied but never experienced.

This enfolding of the imaginary into our perceptions of the world and how it changes through time is not explicitly mentioned in Sartre's account of listening to musical works, but can be used to enrich it. From this perspective, just as Sartre's experience of his ashtray consisted of a visible face and imagined 'underneath', so our experience of musical works consists of perceived musical sound supplemented by the 'mnemonic' or 'antepredictive' knowledge provided by the irreal work. Similarly, the work as an imagined temporal structure is much like the path of motion traced by the old woman watched by Roquentin; it attempts to account for perceived musical changes in relation to an irreal 'backdrop' that seems puzzlingly static, as if given 'all at once'. From this perspective, while a work like Beethoven's Seventh Symphony may appear to 'flow from the first note of the allegro to the last note of the finale', such a 'flow', upon closer consideration, is as unsettlingly elusive and inert as the movement of the old woman in Sartre's novel.

[68] Ibid. 50.

4.4 Analysing *Ambre Nous Resterons*

4.4.1 Openings

Ambre Nous Resterons can be fruitfully interpreted as representing the temporal experience of listening to 'Les Ombres Errantes', in the same way Sartre describes the experience of watching the old woman hobbling down the street in *Nausea*. Her halting movement, seemingly disjointed but inevitable, provides a productive analogue to Pesson's hesitant and fragmentary 'progress' through Couperin's piece in *Ambre Nous Resterons*. The 'shadowy' nothingness of the irreal source work is revealed through a tension between 'following' this source and 'wandering' from it. Before examining the piece in detail, it is necessary to set out the broad principles of the analytical approach employed. Most fundamentally, an analysis of *Ambre Nous Resterons*' temporal structure as 'following' and 'wandering' from that of 'Les Ombres Errantes' relies on the interpretation of correspondences between the two pieces. The harmonic correspondences suggested by Pesson's claim to 'follow' Couperin's harmony 'step by step' are supplemented by melodic and motivic correspondences between the two works. Sometimes these two forms of correspondence reinforce one another; at other times one undercuts the other. The charts below indicate potential correspondences that should be understood as interpretative and speculative not authoritative or comprehensive. Their hard-edged boxes and solid connecting lines are not intended to suggest certainty, an isolation of boxed material from its context, or that all potential correspondences are perceived in the same way. Perception of these correspondences will vary according to interpretative decisions taken by the performer, how many times *Ambre Nous Resterons* is heard by a listener, and whether or not 'Les Ombres Errantes' is heard alongside it as in Tharaud's *Hommage à Couperin* programme. While the correspondences which underpin the analytical argument below can mostly be heard without referring to a score, it is also fruitful to consider correspondences more likely to be perceived only by performers engaging with *Ambre Nous Resterons* through notation as well as aurally. That the piece was commissioned by and is

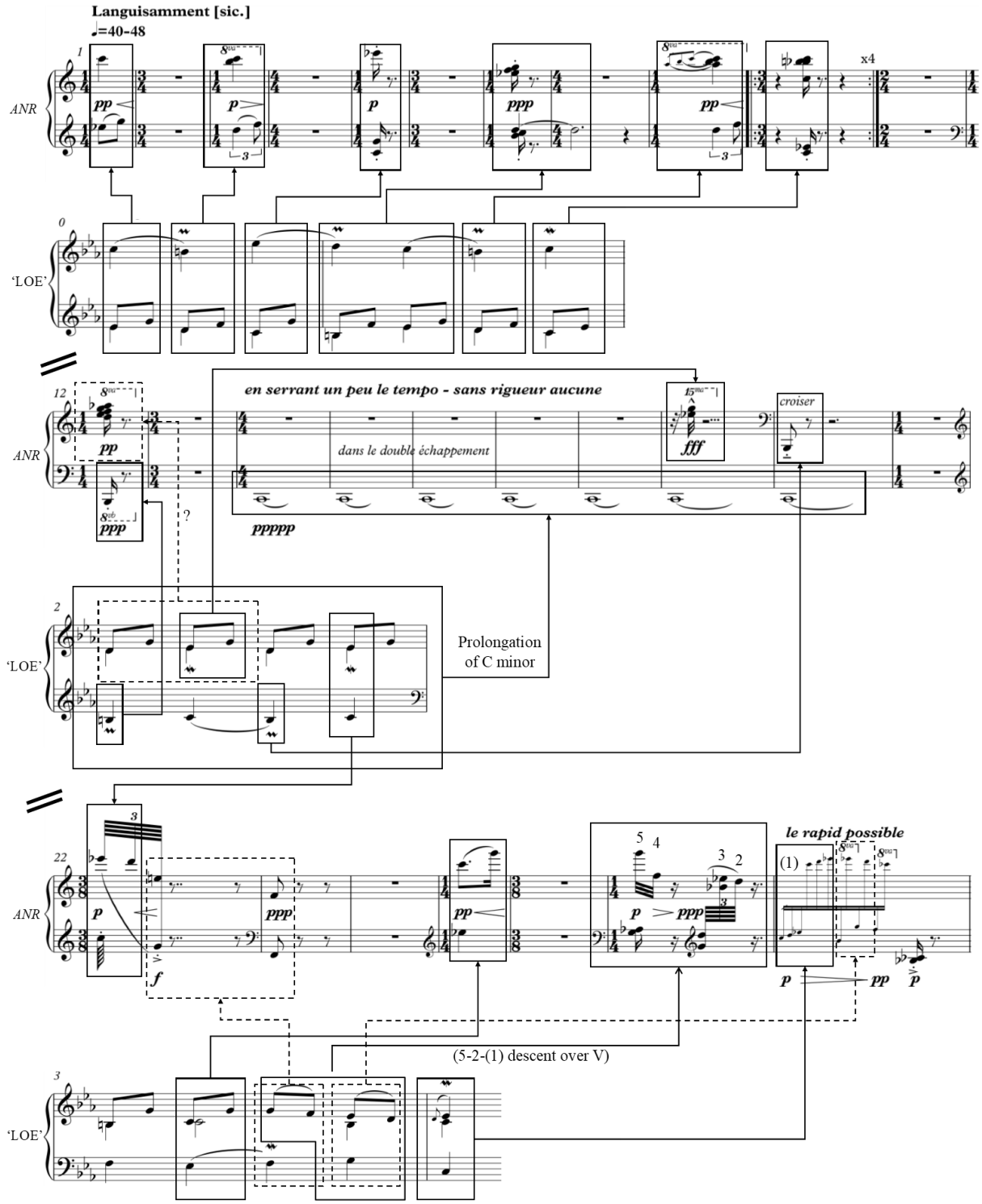
dedicated to a pianist, Tharaud, suggests that the work's puzzle-like character encompasses this mode of engagement.

The opening bars of *Ambre Nous Resterons* (1-28) can be understood as corresponding to the opening phrase of 'Les Ombres Errantes' (bars $0\text{-}4_1$), gratifying the expectations of temporal fidelity suggested by his claim that the work 'follows the harmony of the tutelary piece step by step' (Example 3.1).[69] The first phrase of Couperin's piece strongly establishes the tonic, C minor, oscillating obsessively between tonic and dominant chords before ending in a clear IV-V-I cadence. While Pesson's opening does not employ functional harmony in this way, it nonetheless manifests a corresponding C minor harmonic centre, most conspicuously through the sustained C in bars 14-20. Additionally, the more fleeting pianistic gestures draw their pitch material almost exclusively from the diatonic pitches of C minor. Tonic chord tones produce additional sympathetic resonance due to C and E-flat strings over three low octaves remaining undampened throughout the piece using the sostenuto pedal, an effect especially evident in the long rests in this passage. It is, however, melodic and motivic allusions which establish a particularly strong correspondence between the opening of *Ambre Nous Resterons* and that of its model. Bars 1-10 explicitly reproduce the first seven crotchet beats of 'Les Ombres Errantes', rendering each as an isolated gesture with interpolated rests. As well as making octave transpositions, Pesson uses harmonic 'blurring', sounding the pitches of Couperin's ornaments simultaneously and in one case even combines two chords (bar $1_{1\text{-}2}$) into single gesture.[70] Consequently, a trace of Couperin's alternation between tonic and dominant remains but is 'blurred'.

Motivic connections are obscured to a greater degree in bars 12-21 of *Ambre Nous Resterons*, which 'stretches out' the insistent C minor harmony in Couperin's second bar, alluding to the B-C alternation in its lowest voice. While bar 22-23's oddly emphatic (if tonally

[69] Subscript numbers in references to 'Les Ombres Errantes' refer to crotchet beats; bar numbers alone refer to all beats in the given bar.
[70] Occasionally Pesson adds pitches to increase this 'blurring' effect.

ambiguous) ‘progression’ onto F might be regarded as referring to the introduction of bass Fs in Couperin’s third bar, Pesson alludes more clearly to the cadential progression which ends his model’s first phrase. In addition to isolated motivic allusion to Couperin’s material (as in bar 25), Pesson maintains the cadence’s melodic descent from the fifth scale degree, albeit distorting it through octave transpositions. Importantly, however, this allusion retains only the faintest impression of Couperin’s decisive V-I harmonic closure. While Pesson’s opening section clearly corresponds to the initial ‘step’ of its model’s harmonic structure, it avoids this model’s sense of directed progression towards a cadence, instead presenting C minor as a ‘static’ harmonic centre. Similarly, although Pesson explicitly alludes to Couperin’s motivic-melodic material and the order in which he presents it, such allusions are disconnected, conveying little sense of temporal ‘motion’. The passage remains strangely inert, seemingly faithful to the linear temporal structure of Couperin’s opening phrase, albeit ‘stretching’ it, but without the sense of directed temporal motion such linearity implies.



Example 4.1: Comparison of *Ambre Nous Resterons* (bars 1-28) and Couperin, 'Les Ombres Errantes' (bars 0-41).

4.4.2 Following 'step by step'

The principles of correspondence pertaining to the openings of 'Les Ombres Errantes' and that of *Ambre Nous Resterons* can be used to interrogate Pesson's claim that his piece 'follows' the harmony of its model 'step by step'. As is conventional, Couperin's binary form moves from the tonic to the relative major and back again, embellishing this trajectory by

touching on other key areas (Table 4.1). Notably, the second portion of this binary form features cadences in C minor (AC), G minor (HC, AC) and E-flat (AC) before conclusively returning to the tonic. Each cadence in 'Les Ombres Errantes' might be considered as marking a harmonic 'goal' and therefore the completion of a 'step' of the kind that Pesson claims to re-tread. However, as in the opening section, Pesson does not use harmonic progressions directed towards cadences as Couperin does, but rather shifts between broad harmonic centres marked by sustained notes, the use of particular diatonic pitch sets, and the harmonic implications of allusions to the motivic-melodic material of his model. On this basis, the principal harmonic areas of *Ambre Nous Resterons* might be broadly mapped onto those of 'Les Ombres Errantes', as Pesson claims, although these harmonic areas are often interspersed with more harmonically indeterminate passages (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Comparison of cadences in *Ambre Nous Resterons* and Couperin, 'Les Ombres Errantes'.

Cadence	AC Cm	AC E-flat	AC E-flat	AC Cm	HC Gm	AC Gm	AC E-flat	HC Cm	AC Cm	AC Cm
'Les Ombres Errantes'	4	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28
Ambre Nous Resterons	28	51… 56	58…	61 66	70	72	78…?		95?	144…?
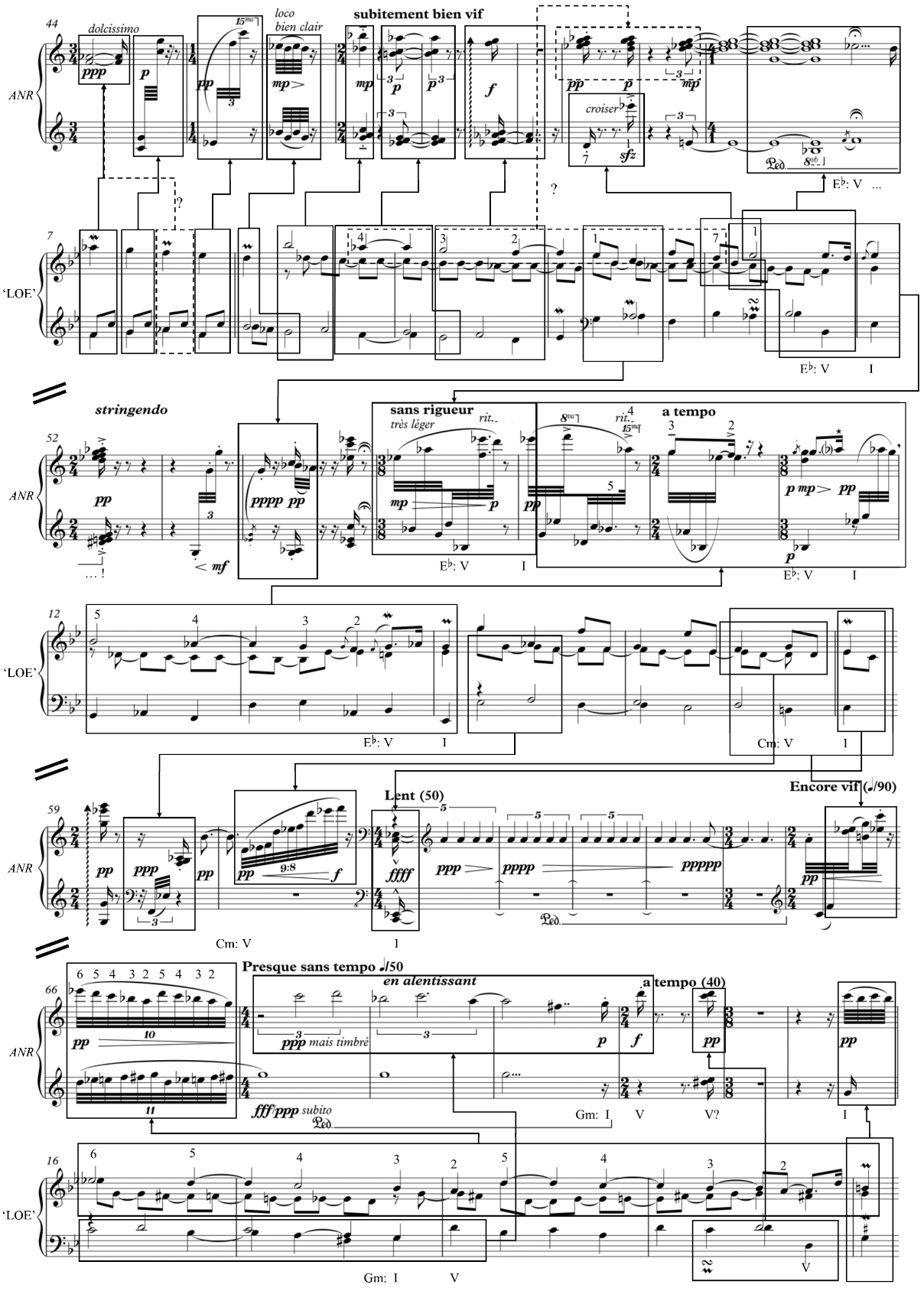
4.4.3 Complicating correspondence

The already vague sense of 'following' the temporal sequence of Couperin's piece 'step by step' becomes more ambiguous as the piece progresses, especially in relation to the dense web of motivic-melodic allusions to its source. After the reference to Couperin's first cadence, bars 30-43 of *Ambre Nous Resterons* present an apparent 'wandering' from the temporal structure of its model; its material is difficult to interpret as corresponding to any one passage of 'Les Ombres Errantes'.[71] However, bars 44-80 of Pesson's piece present a mesh of continuous motivic-thematic allusions to bars 7-22$_1$ of its model, exhibiting extensive

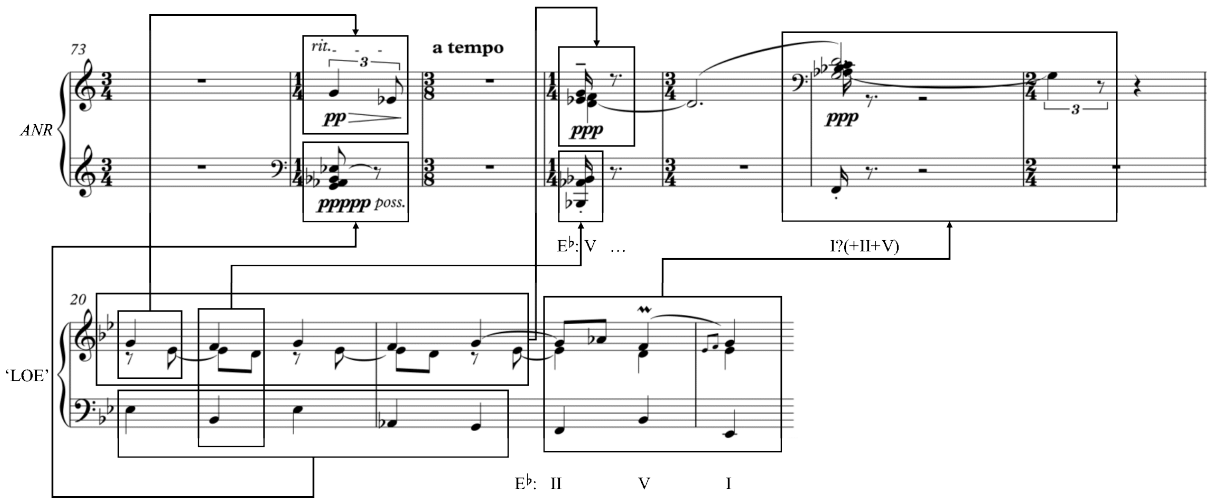
[71] Bars 30-38 could perhaps be interpreted as an especially harmonically 'blurred' allusion to Couperin's bars 8$_2$-9. If so, this would constitute the first reordering of the piece, given that bar 44 onwards refer to the passage following Couperin's bar 7.

manipulation of Couperin's temporal structure (Example 3.1). While Pesson's allusions to bars 7-8_1 of 'Les Ombres Errantes' (bars 44-45) are hazy, the suspensions in the approach to Couperin's first cadence in E-flat (bars 8_2-9) are clearly recognizable in *Ambre Nous Resterons* (bars 46-48). Pesson subjects the texture's descending voices to harmonic 'blurring', sounding dissonant notes simultaneously with their resolutions. The clusters in bars 49-50 could be understood as an extreme form of this blurring, condensing the descending top line of Couperin's bars 8_4-11_1 into chords. More important, however, is Pesson's prominent rendering of Couperin's first cadence in E-flat. After re-presenting the 7-8 melodic motion of bars $11_{1\text{-}2}$ with octave displacement (bar 49), Pesson interposes a harmonically alien E-natural (bar 50). As this note fades away in bar 51, the harmony settles comfortably back into E-flat major, lingeringly re-presenting Couperin's I-six-four to V cadential preparation. This harmonic clarity is not continued in the cadence's expected 'resolution': the tonic chord tones are clouded with other pitches.

Crucially, however, Pesson presents this cadence a *second time* (bar 55-56), providing clear melodic 8-7-8 motion with its underlying harmony and granting the cadence a more satisfactory resolution. This second presentation disrupts the one-to-one mapping of moments from source to arrangement suggested by the idea of linear temporal fidelity. It is not a question of choosing which of these cadences is the 'actual' re-presentation of Couperin's, but rather hearing them both as different renderings of this cadence. Nor could either of the cadences be taken for a re-presentation of Couperin's second cadence in E-flat (bars 12-14_1), which Pesson re-presents with perhaps the closest stylistic allusion to his ornamented baroque model in *Ambre Nous Resterons* (bars 56-59).



Example 4.2: Comparison of *Ambre Nous Resterons* (bars 44-79) and 'Les Ombres Errantes' (bars 7-22).



Example 4.2: (continued).

This disruption of the linear temporal fidelity implicit in Pesson's claim to 'follow' his model 'step by step' increases throughout the rest of *Ambre Nous Resterons*. Couperin's cadence in C minor in bars 15-16$_1$ is also re-presented twice in Pesson's piece, most emphatically at bars 60-61, and more fleetingly at bar 65. Pesson subjects the passage which follows Couperin's C minor AC, which features a HC and AC in G minor, to startling temporal manipulations. Pesson's bar 66 condenses the melodic motion of Couperin's upper two voices from bars 16-20$_1$ into a single rapid gesture. The right hand re-presents the two melodic descents of the soprano voice from E-flat to A then D to G, while the left hand re-presents the alto voice, reversing its initial chromatic descent into an ascent. In bars 67-70, Pesson then treats the tenor and bass voices of the first of Couperin's two paired phrases (bar 16-18$_1$), combining them into a single slow melody heard over a G pedal-point, ending with an explicit reference to Couperin's G minor HC. Following this, Pesson simply skips over the second G minor phrase to a skeletal allusion to its final AC, recognisable through its retention of Couperin's distinctive mordent on the final chord. This more pared-down approach continues in bars 74-79, which condenses Couperin's rocking between tonic and dominant chords into three isolated gestures interspersed with rests (bars 20-22$_1$). The first two present a single 'tonic' and 'dominant' harmony respectively, retaining the repeating G-E-flat-F-D melodic pattern of Couperin's upper two voices. Instead of presenting a conclusive cadence in E-flat as in 'Les Ombres

Errantes', the third chord is a diatonic cluster which blurs together the cadence's subdominant, dominant, and tonic harmonies.

4.4.4 Linearity and circularity

Up to bar 80, *Ambre Nous Resterons* broadly 'follows' Couperin's sequence of harmonic 'steps' faithfully, alluding to them in the order in which they appear in 'Les Ombres Errantes', despite being 'stretched', 'hollowed out', and 'pulverized' as da Silva suggests. Couperin's motivic-melodic material is not only subjected to similar manipulations, but also to duplicated re-presentation, 'wandering' from the linear sequence in which Pesson's model presents them. The effect of these manipulations, however, remains structurally localized, such that a looser sense of linear temporal fidelity is maintained. From bar 80 to the end of *Ambre Nous Resterons* this approach changes. Although 'following' Couperin's return from the relative major to the tonic, Pesson first avoids direct reference to Couperin's motivic-melodic material (bars 80-105), then concludes the piece with allusions not to the *end* of 'Les Ombres Errantes', but to the *opening* of *Ambre Nous Resterons* (bars 106-117).

'Following' Couperin's harmonic manoeuvre in the final bars (21_4-28) of 'Les Ombres Errantes', Pesson subtly hints at two cadences, in E-flat then C minor, using the sympathetic resonance produced by the continuously undampened C and E-flat strings. The B-flats of the tonally ambiguous cluster chords in bars 80-88 are sustained through the rests with which they alternate on the undampened E-flat strings. The short, *fortissimo* chord in bar 89, effectively an E-flat triad with added D and A-flat, leaves a resonance of E-flat through similar sympathetic vibration. Such vibrations therefore suggest a barely-articulated 'spectral' AC cadence in E-flat major.[72] Couperin's three final cadences, all articulating his return to the tonic (a HC and two ACs, bars 22_2-28) are also reflected in *Ambre Nous Resterons* using sympathetic resonance, condensed into one drawn-out but inconclusive AC. The strong expectation of I after the

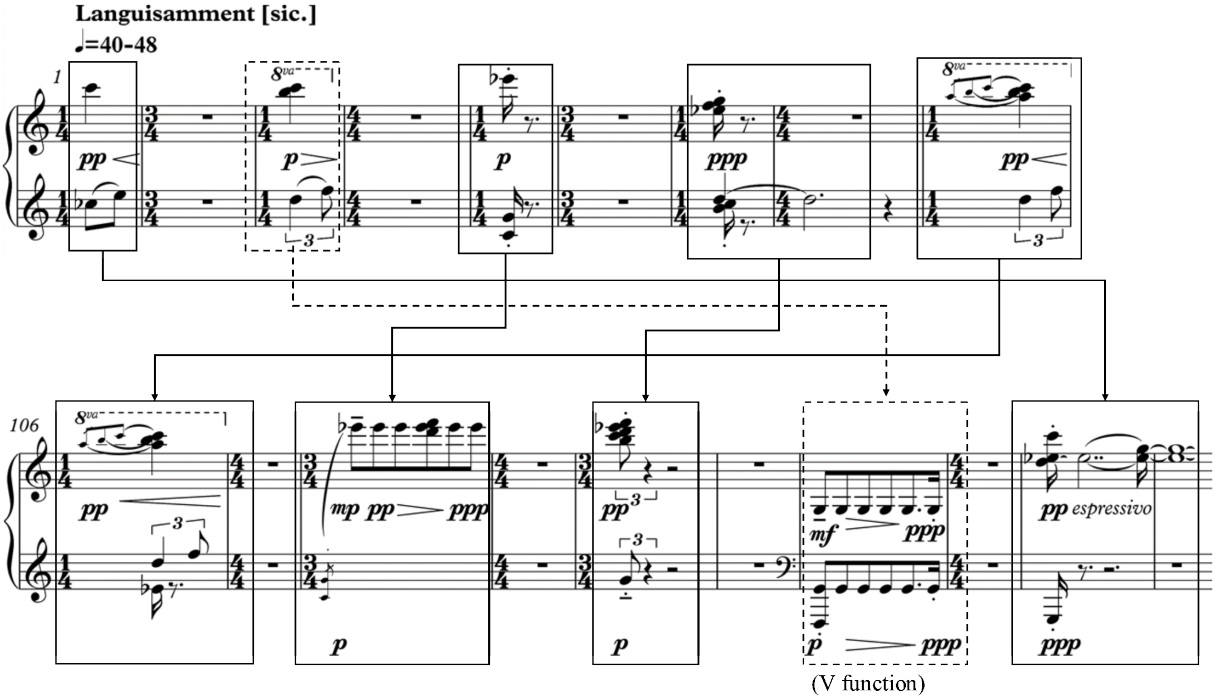
[72] The repeated B-flat-D-flat dyad of bars 89-92 might be interpreted as the sixth and seventh overtones of the middle of the three undampened E-flats, a spectral resonance of an E-flat harmonic centre. It could also be related to Pesson's sustained use of the same dyad in bar 30.

emphatic V^7 at bar 94 is at first only gratified by the sympathetic resonance heard in the subsequent rests, which outlines a 'spectral' C minor due to the E-flat Pesson adds to the dominant chord.[73] This tentative 'resolution' anticipates the sparing references to the tonic provided by the C-E-flat dyad suggested in bars 96-105, again interspersed with long rests in which these pitches resonate. In this passage, 'step by step' linear re-presentation of Couperin's harmonic structure is uncoupled from a re-presentation of, or rather allusion to, the source's corresponding motivic-melodic material. Although Pesson certainly implies an AC in C minor (bars 94-105), its lack of motivic-melodic detail means that it does not correspond to either one of Couperin's concluding ACs in C minor specifically.

The closing bars of *Ambre Nous Resterons* (106-117) articulate its most dramatic 'wandering' from the linear temporal structure of 'Les Ombres Errantes'. Although Pesson re-presents the C minor harmony of Couperin's final bars, he does not allude to their motivic-melodic material. Instead, the final five isolated gestures of *Ambre Nous Resterons* correspond with the five similarly isolated gestures with which the piece opens (Example 4.3). This opening itself corresponds with the opening material of 'Les Ombres Errantes'. Rather than 'following' the motivic-melodic material of its model 'step by step', *Ambre Nous Resterons* ends with an apparent return to the start of its temporal structure. This 'return', unexpected in the context of linear temporal fidelity, is emphasised through a final localized example of temporal manipulation. The first of Pesson's closing gestures (bar 106) is a verbatim duplication of the fifth of his opening gestures (bar 9) with an added E-flat. Similarly, bar 108 uses the same pitches at the same registers as bar 5, briefly adding an F and D adjacent to its top E-flat, while bar 110 reconfigures the chord in bar 7, raising it an octave and bringing its top G down as a lower, isolated pitch. Bar 112, while not alluding motivically to bar 3, clarifies its dominant harmony. The last gesture of *Ambre Nous Resterons* (bars 114-117) is simply a drawn-out

[73] The dominant chord's F produces a 'spectral' C root.

repeat of its first gesture, with an added G in the bass.[74] Although Pesson re-presents his five opening gestures as his five closing ones, these gestures are re-presented in almost exactly *reverse order*. This localized reversal vividly reinforces the idea of the piece wandering back on itself articulated by the larger-scale structural return to the material with which it begins, and therefore to the opening, rather than conclusion, of its model. The structural circularity, as opposed to linearity, suggested by this 'return' and 'reversal' of the work's opening material does not, however, create any sense of closure. Pesson's closing bars maintain a sense of dominant harmony (notably through the prominent Gs in bars 110, 112, and 114) which suggests a C minor tonality without conclusively resolving to the tonic chord. More significantly, however, this structural circularity is the culmination of *Ambre Nous Resterons*' many 'wanderings' from the temporal structure of its source. Such apparently undirected temporal 'motion' eschews the impression of closure afforded by the more linear notion of temporal fidelity as 'following'.



Example 4.3: Comparison of *Ambre Nous Resterons* bars 1-9 and 106-115.

[74] The added D in bar 114 is almost unnoticeable.

4.5 Conclusion

As this comparative analysis of *Ambre Nous Resterons* and its source demonstrates, the work's relationship with the idea of linear temporal fidelity is far from straightforward. On the one hand, Pesson does broadly 'follow' the harmonic structure of his model 'step by step', and even alludes to much of its motivic-melodic material in the same order in which Couperin presents it. On the other hand, however, *Ambre Nous Resterons* constantly 'wanders' from the supposedly linear temporal structure of its source. The piece distorts conception of Couperin's temporal structure according to what Ricœur calls our 'ordinary representation of time' as a 'series of instants succeeding one another along an abstract line oriented in a single direction'. In *Ambre Nous Resterons*, 'instants' of Couperin's piece are drawn out into longer periods, longer periods compressed into instants. The piece also undermines a sense of temporally linear 'orientation in a single direction' corresponding to that of its source, instead seeming directionless and inert. Concentrated musical gestures are separated by long expanses of textural sparseness and inactivity, such that they fail to 'join up' into a single 'flow'. This impression is highlighted by the polarization of harmonic signifiers into the 'background' and 'foreground', broad harmonic areas are contrasted with solitary pitches, motives, and quasi-ornamental filigrees with nothing to ornament. This lack of connecting harmonic 'middleground', which contributes much to the sense of substantiality and onward temporal 'motion' characteristic of tonal music, leaves *Ambre Nous Resterons* without such qualities. Understood as a representation of the experience of listening to 'Les Ombres Errantes', *Ambre Nous Resterons* suggests a succession of fragmentary perceptions which do not cohere into what Husserl would call an 'immanent temporal object', the Work. Furthermore, the sequence of these 'perceptions' alludes to but distorts the sequence of material in Couperin's piece, as if representing the apparent coherence but actual nothingness of irreal temporality as described by Sartre.

These points can be clarified by a comparison with another passage from Sartre's *Nausea*, in which Roquentin has an attack of his eponymous existential malady in a café.

> My glass crushes a puddle of yellow beer, with a bubble floating in it, against the marble table top. The bench is broken just where I am sitting, and to avoid slipping I am forced to press the soles of my shoes hard against the floor; it is cold. On the right, they are playing cards on a woollen cloth. I didn't see them when I came in; I simply sensed that there was a warm packet, half on the bench, half on the table at the back, with some pairs of arms waving about. […] There are three or five of them, I don't know how many, I haven't the courage to look at them. […] On my right, the warm packet starts rustling, it waves its pairs of arms. 'Look, there's your trump.' 'What are trumps?' Long black spine bent over the game: 'Hahaha!' 'What? There's the trump, he's just played it.' 'I don't know, I didn't see…' 'Yes, I've just played trumps.' 'Ah, so hearts are trumps.' He sings softly: 'Hearts are trumps, hearts are trumps, hea-arts are trumps.' Spoken: 'What is it, Monsieur? What is it, Monsieur? I'll take it!' […] I make a great effort and turn my head. There are four of them. […] The cards fall on the woollen cloth, spinning through the air. Then hands with ringed fingers come and pick them up, scratching the cloth with their nails. The hands make white patches on the cloth, they look puffy and dusty. More cards fall all the time, the hands come and go. What a peculiar occupation: it doesn't look like a game, or a rite, or a habit. I think they do that to pass the time, nothing more. But time is too large, it refuses to let itself be filled up. Everything you plunge into it goes soft and slack. That gesture, for example, of the red hand falteringly picking up the cards: it's all flabby. It ought to be unstitched and cut down.[75]

Roquentin's nausea seems to consist in part of an involuntary *epoché*; he is unable to adopt the 'natural attitude' according to which perceptions specify existing objects in the world. Instead, he experiences vivid but isolated sights, sounds, and sensations which fail to cohere into the existing objects and people in the café. Roquentin's sees his drink as a bizarre assemblage of beer, glass, air, and the forces which relate them. A game of cards becomes a flurry of hands and voices detached from the individuals who play, the exact number of whom is initially unclear. Roquentin is nonetheless aware of them as a 'warm packet' to his right, suggesting that a residue of the 'natural attitude' persists despite his nausea. He retains vague awareness of things and people in the café and their positions with respect to him but struggles to relate his more precise and isolated perceptions to it, as if the 'middleground' details of the café are missing.

[75] Sartre, *Nausea*. 33-36.

A similar effect can be identified in cubist visual art, of which Juan Gris *Glass of Beer and Playing Cards* (1913) is an appropriately representative example (Figure 4.1).[76] Gris does not straightforwardly depict these objects, but rather invites the viewer to piece them together from fragmentary impressions of their properties: the profile of the glass, the foaminess of the beer it contains, the marbled surface of the table top, the motifs on the cards, and so on. The picture abandons linear perspective centred on a single point of observation in favour of multiple perspectives.[77] The temporal sequence implied by this multiplicity of impressions is collapsed into a single, unchanging image. Rather than depict the scene as a unified whole, Gris seems to present a striking array of isolated perceptions of it. Some perceivable facets of the scene are absent from the picture, others are presented in distorted form, still others are presented more than once in different ways. Nonetheless, the image hints at such a unified conception through the layout of these 'perceptions'. The varied depictions of the glass and table, for example, are grouped together in roughly the positions these objects would occupy in a more naturalistic painting of the scene. This positioning suggests a residue of the natural attitude despite the *epoché* enacted by the picture, reminiscent of Roquentin's nausea.[78] Crucially, this nausea affects the way Sartre's narrator experiences time: the isolated events of the card game do not follow one another in a coherent linear 'flow', but instead fail to 'fill up' a temporality in which events become 'all soft and slack'.

---

[76] Compare with Michael Finnissy's notion of transcription of as 'like still-life or representational art in some way'. Fox, Brougham, and Pace, *Uncommon Ground*. 2. Sartre's own interpretation of cubism in *The Imaginary*, like his conception of the musical work, benefits from the application of the insights offered in the rest of the book. See Sartre, *The Imaginary*. 190.

[77] See 5.4.2.

[78] On the connections between cubism and phenomenology, see Pau Pedragosa, 'Multiple Horizons: Phenomenology, Cubism, Architecture', *The European Legacy*, 19/6 (2014), 1-18.



Figure 4.1: Juan Gris, *Glass of Beer and Playing Cards*.

Ambre Nous Resterons might be interpreted as a twenty-first-century musical equivalent to the literary and visual representations of temporal experience provided by Sartre and Gris in the early twentieth century. Pesson presents the experience of listening to 'Les Ombres Errantes' as a succession of fragmentary but vivid perceptions on the hazy backdrop provided by the irreal time of the work. Sometimes he presents the motivic distinctness of Couperin's material, at others its underlying cadential harmony, tonal centre, or delicate baroque ornamentation. Pesson treats the temporal constitution of 'Les Ombres Errantes' much as Gris

does the spatial constitution of the beer glass and cards: some moments of Couperin's piece are not re-presented, others are re-presented multiple times. Crucially, these scattered 'perceptions' do not bind themselves into a single re-presentation of 'Les Ombres Errantes' conceived as a spatialized whole, but nonetheless suggest such a whole. In *Ambre Nous Resterons*, isolated 'perceptions' of 'Les Ombres Errantes' become 'all soft and slack' rather than being able to 'fill up' Couperin's temporal structure, which is revealed to be a bottomless abyss of irreality. As in the examples presented by Gris and Sartre, *Ambre Nous Resterons* sits uneasily between an external, non-temporal perspective implied by the notion of structural listening and the rejection of any such single, linear perspective from which to constitute 'Les Ombres Errantes' as a totality.[79] Instead, *Ambre Nous Resterons* seems to represent an 'in-the-moment' experience of listening to 'Les Ombres Errantes' temporally, as succession of musical events (in Bergson's sense) rather than an ordered series of them.

However, the apparent *epoché* performed by *Ambre Nous Resterons* is not total, leaving a residue of the linear order which, according to the 'natural attitude', defines it. Despite its fragmentation into almost isolated perceptions, we recognise the form of 'Les Ombres Errantes' in *Ambre Nous Resterons* as we recognise a glass of beer and a game of cards in Sartre's novel and Gris' painting. Even in the presence of Couperin's music, a listener is never in the presence of 'Les Ombres Errantes' conceived as a temporally linear work: it is always absent. Expressed through the corresponding ideals of arrangement's linear temporal fidelity and structural listening, this spatialized conception of the work seems real and present but is a 'mirage', exhibiting the 'radical defect in constitution' Sartre regards as inherent to irreal objects. Pesson extends, contracts, and reverses the supposedly linear temporality of his source at will, as Sartre describes is possible with irreal time, contributing only to a 'vague consciousness of flow'. The bizarre properties of irreal time are perhaps most powerfully represented by Pesson's suggestion

[79] For a discussion of linear perspective in relation to musical temporality and the work, see 5.4.1.

of a circular structure: time seems to 'flow' onwards but the piece, apparently impossibly, ends up back where it started.

In engaging with the central ideal of arrangement as a category, linear temporal fidelity, Pesson's piece can be interpreted as subjecting it to critical pressure. While arrangements are traditionally regarded as bringing a source work to presence, *Ambre Nous Resterons* hints not only at the absence of its source, but at the nothingness of musical works more generally. 'This work', Pesson explains in his programme note, 'has allowed me once again to test the extent to which invention and memory are linked'.[80] Describing how he has played and listened to Couperin's music since his adolescence, the composer poses *Ambre Nous Resterons* as 'a snapshot, or rather an autochrome, of this suspended time—a sort of madeleine for me, as much as a lifebelt in the often tumultuous torrent of ideas'.[81] In representing a remembered hearing of Couperin's music, Pesson's piece evokes the necessary absence and insubstantiality of the work on which it is based. Continuing the theme of memory, he alludes to Ravel's *Le Tombeau de Couperin* (1917), stating that 'Couperin already has a very beautiful tomb [*Tombeau*]—I therefore made this cenotaph'.[82] While both cenotaphs and tombs are types of monument, a cenotaph is 'hollow', housing no bodily remains. Similarly, *Ambre Nous Resterons* reveals the nothingness of the work it initially appears to 'contain'. The 'shadow of time' presented by the piece acts like an empty resonating chamber, echoing listeners' preconceptions about the temporality of music back to them as seeming-perceptions. Listeners continue to be trapped within these linear preconceptions like an insect inertly petrified in amber: 'amber we will remain'. *Ambre Nous Resterons* is a wandering shadow not of a body-like work, as Szendy's description of arrangements suggests, but rather of more wandering shadows, the nothingness where, or rather *when*, 'Les Ombres Errantes' might be.

[80] 'Cette œuvre […] m'ont permis d'éprouver une fois encore combien l'invention et la mémoire ont partie liée[.]' *Nebenstück* and *Wunderblock* also engage with this idea, see 3.2.2 and 5.1.2.
[81] 'un instantané, plutôt un autochrome, de ce temps arrêté—sorte de madeleine pour moi, autant que bouée dans le torrent souvent tumultueux des idées.' Pesson, 'Ambre Nous Resterons', *Henry Lemoine*.
[82] 'Couperin a déjà un bien beau Tombeau—j'ai donc fait ce cénotaphe.' ibid.

5 *Wunderblock* and the Analysis of Absence

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Recomposition 'bar by bar'

On 17 October 2013, one member of an internet forum devoted to discussing classical music recordings began a new thread, asking fellow fans to recommend their favourite performances of Anton Bruckner's Sixth Symphony. Other users of the online group quickly began to evaluate and compare the recordings available, indicating their preferences by referring to their conductor, orchestra, and record label. 'I like the live Dresden one by Haitink, on Profil, but it is not perfect', writes one discophile; 'Any opinions on Lopez-Cobos on Telarc?' questions another. Other contributors simply list their choice versions: 'Dohnanyi/Cleveland. horst stein/Vienna Phil. Blomstedt/Leipzig' or 'Celibidache/Munich PO on EMI (so long as you can take a slow slow movement). Klemperer/Philharmonia, also on EMI, is good'.[1] Very soon, in only the fifth response of a total fifty-six posted to date, 'hiker_rs' offers a more unusual suggestion:

> I'm sure that you'll get many of the usual rec[ording]s but, just as an aside, I wanted to point out a recording that I think many Bruckner 6 lovers may enjoy. That's Gerard Pesson's Wunderblock (nebenstück II)—essentially an amusing rescoring of the 1st movement of the 6th for accordion and small ensemble[.][2]

From one perspective, hiker_rs's post is truly an 'aside' to the thread's main topic, commending not a conventional recording of Bruckner's symphony but rather Pesson's inventive 'rescoring' of its opening *Majestoso* movement. *Wunderblock (Nebenstück II)* (2005) is a follow-up to Pesson's 'filtration' in *Nebenstück*, expanding this approach for solo accordion and large

[1] 'Bruckner 6 recommendations', *Google Groups* [Online forum thread], <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/rec.music.classical.recordings/RbkPqrJAhKU>, accessed 4 April 2019.. The original non-standard orthography of this and all further quotations from internet sources has been retained. Editorial interventions have been in cases in which the intended meaning is unclear.

[2] Ibid. This post was published around three hours after the initial query. After the initial flurry of posts in October 2013 (in which Pesson is mentioned by two users across three posts), there were only two posts between 2016 and 2017, followed by several more over October and November 2018.

orchestra, including harmonium and a sizable battery of auxiliary percussion.[3] Hiker_rs's mistaken description of the work as composed for 'small ensemble' probably results from the characteristically soft sonorities Pesson employs. In *Wunderblock*, writes Paul Griffiths, the composer 'rescores' Bruckner's movement with 'the wisps and fairy dust of his own orchestral manner'.[4] From another perspective, however, hiker_rs suggests parallels between *Wunderblock* and the other recordings being discussed on the forum, and, more broadly, between arrangement and performance. Like Bernard Haitink, Sergiu Celibidache, or Otto Klemperer, Pesson seems to re-present Bruckner's *Majestoso* in a new and individual way. He offers a *rendition* of the movement which, while more transformative than those supplied by these conductors, differs from them in degree rather than kind.

A subsequent post by another forum user, 'maready', indicates the basis of this potential kinship, using it to justify *Wunderblock*'s significance for Bruckner fans and relevance to the thread's topic.

> [hiker_rs's] recommendation is highly seconded for the Pesson piece;—any Brucknerian should have a listen to the unlikely-sounding prospect. Pesson's piece is, indeed, an arrangement of the first movement of the Bruckner Sixth for accordion and orchestra. This may sound like a one-joke idea, but the actual effect of hearing it is (for someone familiar with the Bruckner movement) curiously moving. Pesson is a sort of Gallic Helmut Lachenmann, for those familiar with contemporary music, meaning that he uses the orchestra in an unconventional manner but with slightly less of the sturm and drang of Lachenmann. And it should be clarified that 'Wunderblock' isn't a free arrangement of a couple of themes, but a recomposition of the entire movement, bar-by-bar.[5]

Wunderblock is of interest to the thread's audience of 'Brucknerians', maready suggests, because it is a true 'arrangement' of its model rather than a mere 'free arrangement' that draws on its musical material. Reflecting conventional assumptions about arrangement, maready posits *Wunderblock*'s apparent linear temporal fidelity, its 'bar-by-bar' treatment of a source in its entirety, as essential to its status as an arrangement 'proper'.[6] In doing so, maready frames

[3] Gérard Pesson, *Wunderblock (Nebenstück II) pour Accordéon et Orchestre* (Paris: Henry Lemoine, 2005) [Score]. For a recording see *Aggravations et Final* (2009, Aeon), CD.
[4] Griffiths, *Modern Music and After*. 414.
[5] 'Bruckner 6', *Google Groups*.
[6] See 4.2.

Pesson's recomposition as a re-presentation of Bruckner's *Majestoso*, however unusual, rather than as merely quoting from it, aligning the *Wunderblock* with the more orthodox renditions of the movement offered by conductors. Crucially, maready's post implies that *Wunderblock* remains a genuine arrangement or re-presentation of Bruckner's movement despite its Lachenmannian, that is to say un-Brucknerian and 'unconventional', orchestral stylistic idiom.[7] This is because Pesson maintains a strict bar-to-bar correspondence with the temporal ordering of each moment in the *Majestoso*, however different these moments sound in their 'recomposed' form.[8]

5.1.2 *Wunderblock*, memory, and absence

The linear temporal fidelity of an arrangement to an existing musical work such as Bruckner's Sixth Symphony, like that of a recorded performance, promises to bring that work into listeners' presence. The 'curiously moving' effect of *Wunderblock* described by maready, however, arises as much, if not more, from the way it represents Bruckner's movement as insubstantial and absent. This tension is evident the way maready associates *Wunderblock* and the missing *Majestoso* movement of a recording held in high esteem by many of the forum's other users, that made by Wilhelm Furtwängler and the Berlin Philharmonic in 1943. Fellow posters describe this wartime recording as 'fabulous' and even 'the very best', but lament its poor sound quality and, most especially, the loss of its first movement.[9] For maready, *Wunderblock* seems to offer a response to this regrettable situation:

> Yes, the Furtwangler is amazing, but heart-breakingly without a first movement. I suggest, only semi-unseriously, substituting the Pesson work 'Wunderblock' mentioned by Hiker RS for the missing first movement. Pesson's take on the first movement of Bruckner's Sixth is rather

[7] *Wunderblock* was commissioned by Harry Vogt and the WDR orchestra Köln as a 'tribute' to Lachenmann on his seventieth birthday. See Pesson and Sanson, 'Entretien avec Gérard Pesson'. 4.
[8] This difference perhaps accounts of maready's suggestion that only a 'knowing' listener familiar with its Brucknerian model may fully appreciate Wunderblock's effect, dependent as it appears to be on its status as an arrangement.
[9] 'That fabulous Furtwangler 6th […] missing the first movement is not to be missed'; 'if you want the very best: Furtwängler. But monophonic with the sound quality of the time'. 'Bruckner 6', *Google Groups*.

> ghostly and haunted, almost as if the missing Furtwangler movement were attempting to rematerialize through supernatural means.[10]

In this context, maready understands the linear temporal fidelity of Pesson's recomposition not as bringing the *Majestoso* to presence, but rather as enabling it to act as a 'placeholder' for the movement which indicates its continuing absence. *Wunderblock* resembles the missing movement without simply replacing it: the arrangement's 'bar-by-bar' correspondence with the *Majestoso* ensures that it occupies the same temporal 'space' as Furtwängler's absent performance without making it fully present, emphasising the void left by the lost recording. Chapter 3 addressed the relationship between the use of instrumental noise to represent archaic sound reproduction technologies, its metaphorical evocation of 'fading' memory, and metaphors of ghosts and haunting in relation to *Nebenstück*. As maready's comments attest, this suggestive combination of ideas is just as relevant to how listeners have understood its orchestral sequel. Michael Dervan, for example, also associates *Wunderblock* with themes of haunting and decay, characterizing it as 'a wheezing, gasping, tickling ghost': 'The effect is surreal and nightmarish, like the ruin of a great building that's at once magnificent and ridiculous'.[11]

In his programme note for the piece, Pesson explicitly posits *Wunderblock* as addressing the same 'contamination' between listening, memory, and compositional invention represented in *Nebenstück*.[12] The work's title alludes to Sigmund Freud's essay, 'A Note on the Mystic Writing Pad', which the composer adopts to illustrate the impossibility of a musical *tabula rasa*.[13] In this essay, Freud uses a child's toy, the '*Wunderblock*', as an analogy for his concept of unconscious memory: traces of writing erased from the visible surface of the writing pad are

---

[10] Ibid.
[11] Michael Dervan, 'Gérard Pesson: Aggravations et Final', *Irish Times* (9 October 2009) <https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/classical-1.749565>, accessed 2 April 2019.
[12] Gérard Pesson, 'Wunderblock (Nebenstück II)', *Henry Lemoine* [Online programme note], <https://www.henry-lemoine.com/fr/catalogue/fiche/28367>, accessed 1 August 2017.
[13] Sigmund Freud, 'A Note Upon the "Mystic Writing Pad"', *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (XIX; London: Hogarth Press, 1961), 227-232.

retained on the resin base beneath.[14] Employed by Pesson, this analogy evokes the metaphors of depth which inform conceptions of arrangement and, more specifically, those the composer uses to describe *Nebenstück*'s engagement with memory.[15] *Wunderblock*'s title suggests that memories of hearing a work, in this case Bruckner's symphony, can never be forgotten, however much a listener may try to 'repress' them. 'Is Bruckner my repressed?', Pesson asks in his programme note, invoking a composer he admires but whose grandiose music seems far removed from the delicacy of his own.[16] 'An artisan of economy and short forms', writes Gilles Macassar, 'Pesson nonetheless confesses a tenacious passion for the oversized music of Anton Bruckner—his symphonic mastodons, the disproportionate elongation of his adagios, the overwhelming roars of his tuttis'.[17] However, Gérard Condé suggests that this contrast belies a subtler affinity between these composers: 'if [Pesson's] music does not resemble that of Bruckner, which he loves, it is because one does not know how to listen to the symphonies of the organist of Saint Florian with an ear as subtle as his'.[18] While Pesson has sometimes suggested that Ravel's music, which more clearly resembles his, is a 'repressed' influence, he elsewhere emphasises the more unlikely connection with Bruckner. 'There is of course nothing

[14] Although not explicitly cited by Pesson, Jacques Derrida's commentary on Freud's essay is relevant in this context. Reading Freud's account of memory as a deconstructive gesture, Derrida posits erasure as a necessary condition for writing as much as the reverse. 'Traces […] produce the space of their inscription only by acceding to the period of their erasure'. Jacques Derrida, 'Freud and the Scene of Writing', *Yale French Studies,* 48 (1972), 74-117. 112. In this way, Pesson's erasure might be understood through Derrida's more general strategy of writing 'under erasure' (*sous rature*). As Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak explains, '[t]his is to write a word, cross it out, and then print both word and deletion. (Since the word is inaccurate, it is crossed out. Since it is necessary, it remains legible). […] Derrida's ~~trace~~ is the mark of the absence of a presence, an always already absent present, of the lack at the origin that is the condition of thought and experience.' Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Corrected edn.; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997). xiv, xvii. It should be noted that Pesson's *effacement* (erasure) and Derrida's *rature* (deletion), as well as the symbolic means they use to represent them, have quite different connotations. The potentially useful analogy between the two should therefore not be pushed too far.

[15] See 3.2.2.

[16] 'Bruckner, mon refoulé ?' Pesson, 'Wunderblock', *Henry Lemoine*.

[17] 'Artisan économe des formes brèves […], Gérard Pesson n'en confesse pas moins une passion tenace pour la musique pléthorique d'Anton Bruckner—ses mastodontes symphoniques, l'étirement disproportionné de ses adagios, les rugissements écrasants de ses tutti.' Gilles Macassar, 'Gérard Pesson: "Un Compositeur N'Est Jamais Né Sous X"', *Télérama* (3 October 2008) <https://www.telerama.fr/musique/gerard-pesson-un-compositeur-n-est-jamais-ne-sous-x,34245.php>, accessed 2 April 2019.

[18] 'si sa musique ne ressemble pas à celle de Bruckner, qu'il adore, c'est qu'on ne sait pas écouter les symphonies de l'organiste de Saint-Florian avec une oreille aussi subtile que la sienne.' Gérard Condé, 'Rencontre avec Gérard Pesson, Compositeur Secret', *Le Monde* (25 October 2008) <https://www.lemonde.fr/vous/article/2008/10/25/rencontre-avec-gerard-pesson-compositeur-secret_1110987_3238.html>, accessed 2 April 2019.

in common between the grandeur of [Ravel's] art and my attempts', he states: 'Regarding Bruckner, it is the total opposite, I have always said to myself that one could not imagine music more antarctic than mine'.[19] Pesson implies that his act of creative 'repression' displaces the 'overwhelming' or 'oversized' aspects of Bruckner's music while preserving its less tangible but nonetheless powerful 'antarctic' quality.

It is this process of 'repression', the futile effort to resist involuntary musical memory, that Pesson voluntarily depicts in *Wunderblock*, which is subtitled an 'attempt at the erasure of the *Majestoso* from Anton Bruckner's Sixth Symphony'.[20] This description of attempted forgetting or repression through erasure complements maready's inverse interpretation of *Wunderblock* as the missing movement of Furtwängler's recording 'attempting to rematerialize' through arrangement. Crucially, both 'attempts' are only partially successful. Whether it is heard as representing an attempt to obliterate or 'rematerialize' Bruckner's movement, to forget or remember, *Wunderblock* seems to leave its source hovering between presence and absence.

5.1.3 Erasure and temporality

This chapter explores the complex relationship between *Wunderblock*'s apparent linear temporal fidelity to Bruckner's *Majestoso*, which promises to re-present the movement, and its status as an 'erasure', which pushes it towards absence and nothingness. Maready's initial post suggests that Pesson's process of erasure in *Wunderblock* does not compromise its linear temporal fidelity to the *Majestoso*, affecting how each bar of Bruckner's movement sounds but not their linear continuity, timbre but not temporality. Pesson appears to affirm this view in his programme note: 'I specify that the unfolding of the original score of the *Majestoso* of Bruckner's Sixth Symphony (second Leopold Nowak Edition, Vienna, Eulenburg, 1990) is

[19] 'Il n'y a bien entendu rien de commun entre la grandeur de son art et mes tentatives. Quant à Bruckner, c'est tout le contraire, on m'a toujours dit qu'on ne pouvait imaginer musique plus antarctique à la mienne.' Pesson in Alirol, *Gérard Pesson*. 48.
[20] 'Tentative d'effacement du Majestoso de la 6ème Symphonie d'Anton Bruckner'. Pesson, 'Wunderblock', *Henry Lemoine*.

strictly respected, bar number by bar number (I have in common with Bruckner a mania for counting and tallying)'.[21] However, the composer goes on to qualify this claim, stating that '[c]ertain repetitive passages of the original are here sometimes stretched (iteration being a form of erasure, of temporal suspension)'.[22] Pesson's parenthetical identification of 'temporal suspension' and erasure hints that his approach to the temporal structure of Bruckner's movement participates in its erasure rather than being independent of it. The idea that temporal adjustments to the *Majestoso* contribute to the ostensibly timbral process of erasure also suggests the reverse, that the manipulation of timbre can indirectly alter the temporal structure of this source. A close examination of Pesson's techniques of erasure, and how they vary across the course of *Wunderblock*, demonstrates how temporal and timbral forms of erasure are inseparably bound up with one another. Through this relationship, *Wunderblock* represents the absence and nothingness of its source every bit as vividly as *Ambre Nous Resterons* despite making comparably limited 'direct' alterations to its temporal 'unfolding'. In doing so, *Wunderblock* similarly undermines the architectonic conception of the Work implied by the idea of structural listening implicit in claims to linear temporal fidelity.[23]

5.2 Analysing erasure

5.2.1 Rauschenberg and Pesson, concept and form

In calling *Wunderblock* an 'attempt at the erasure' of its source, Pesson does not allude only to Freud's essay on writing, effacement, and memory. His programme note opens by identifying a more specific origin of the term 'erasure': 'Robert Rauschenberg, in 1953, erased a drawing by Willem De Kooning then exhibited it as such. But De Kooning consented'.[24] The work, entitled simply *Erased De Kooning Drawing*, took Rauschenberg a month to create; he

[21] 'Je précise que le déroulement de la partition originale du Majestoso de la 6e Symphonie de Bruckner (seconde édition Leopold Nowak—Vienne, Eulenburg, 1990) est strictement respecté, numéro de mesure par numéro de mesure (j'ai en commun avec Bruckner la manie du compte et du décompte).' ibid.
[22] 'Certains passages répétitifs de l'original sont ici parfois étirés (l'itération étant une forme d'effacement, de suspension temporelle).' ibid.
[23] On this connection, see 4.3.1.
[24] 'Robert Rauschenberg, en 1953, a effacé un dessin de Willem De Kooning puis l'a exposé comme tel. Mais De Kooning, était consentant.' Pesson, 'Wunderblock', *Henry Lemoine*.

painstakingly removed layers of crayon, pencil, and charcoal until only the faintest traces of the initial drawing were visible on the mottled and yellowing paper which remained.[25] The art critic Leo Steinberg recalls being captivated upon hearing about Rauschenberg's erasure, which had not yet been exhibited, and phoning the artist to discern his motives. Steinberg hypothesized that this 'terrifying' act was either an Oedipal gesture towards an admired and influential artist by the younger Rauschenberg, a taunt at the recent inflation in the commercial value of artworks, or both. Rauschenberg confirmed neither of Steinberg's interpretations.

> Finally, I asked: 'Look, we've now been talking about this thing for over an hour, and I haven't even seen it. Would it make any difference if I did?' He said: 'Probably not.' And that's when it dawned on me—it's easy come now, but the thought had its freshness once—I suddenly understood that the fruit of an artist's work need not be an object. It could be an action, something once done, but so unforgettably done, that it's never done with—a satellite orbiting in your consciousness, like the perfect crime or a beau geste. Since then, I've seen the *Erased de Kooning Drawing* several times, and find it ever less interesting to look at. But the decision behind it never ceases to fascinate and expand.[26]

What mattered to Steinberg was not the object that Rauschenberg produced, whose precise formal features were not of interest to him, but the ideas behind the gesture of which the object was a trace. Pesson frames *Wunderblock* as a musical repeat of Rauschenberg's 'beau geste', which, as Steinberg suggests, is no longer as 'fresh' as it was in 1953. In this respect, *Wunderblock* is conceptually derivative, but the piece holds a formal interest that the *Erased de Kooning Drawing* does not. As maready's post suggests, *Wunderblock*'s capacity to 'move' listeners depends on the 'actual effect of hearing it' rather than a concept or 'one-joke idea'.

5.2.2 Timbral and temporal erasure

Wunderblock's formal features are not reducible to a single 'concept' because, unlike Rauschenberg's erasure, Pesson's does not aim to be uniform and complete. Like the analogous process of 'filtration' in *Nebenstück*, Pesson's use of erasure in *Wunderblock* varies in degree

[25] For a later account by Rauschenberg of the circumstances and method of the work's production, 'Robert Rauschenberg discusses Erased de Kooning Drawing at San Francisco Museum of Modern Art', (San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1999 [2012]) [Video interview and research materials].
[26] Leo Steinberg, *Encounters with Rauschenberg: A Lavishly Illustrated Lecture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000). 22. See also 15-22.

and quality across the course of the work. To understand the effect of this erasure, by turns 'curiously moving' and 'surreal and nightmarish', it is necessary to examine the details of this variation, rather than simply identify Pesson's conceptual 'motivations'. In any case, the motivations Steinberg posits for Rauschenberg's *Erased de Kooning Drawing* are not relevant to Pesson's arrangement. Bruckner is not Pesson's immediate artistic predecessor as De Kooning was Rauschenberg's, making an Oedipal motive less convincing in the case of *Wunderblock*, despite its Freudian title. Further, Pesson's musical erasure, unlike Rauschenberg's plastic one, does not physically destroy the 'erased' work, and therefore is difficult to interpret as a hostile comment on that work's commercial value. Ultimately, Steinberg concludes that Rauschenberg's erasure, as a piece of conceptual art, signals the end of drawing and draftsmanship as necessary skills for an artist as they had been from Michelangelo to de Kooning.[27] Again, this motivation cannot be ascribed to Pesson: rather than eschewing traditional technical skills *Wunderblock* manifests great accomplishment in the composerly craft of orchestration. As a result, Pesson's erasure does not simply project a single 'concept' but instead exhibits considerable richness and complexity of form. Before considering the possible meanings of Pesson's erasure in *Wunderblock*, it is therefore necessary to examine its formal and structural role in the work.

Although such an analysis of Pesson's erasure is important, it presents considerable methodological challenges. Some of these challenges are endemic to the analysis of arrangements more broadly. Traditionally, the object of musical analysis is the Work, and arrangements are regarded as re-presentations of an existing work; the musical features particular to an arrangement seem incidental rather than intrinsic to its status as a work and so lie outside the conventional purview of analysis. Notably, the individuality of an arrangement often rests solely on compositional parameters that have conventionally been regarded as secondary to the identity of musical works, such as timbre and instrumentation. Such

[27] See ibid. 22.

parameters are recalcitrant to many longstanding methods of musical analysis, which have instead focused on the supposedly 'primary' parameters of pitch and rhythm, which can be more readily understood in hierarchical terms. The particular case of *Wunderblock*, as an erasure, further multiplies these more general methodological difficulties. Analysis has traditionally claimed to describe the formal and structural features of a musical work as presented in a score. As an erasure, however, *Wunderblock*'s form is constituted at least in part by musical features which are absent from its score and so do not seem to constitute a form at all, at least not in the conventional sense. The meaningful patterns of 'absence' resulting from Pesson's process of erasure seem to elude formal analysis: presented with nothingness, there appears to be nothing to analyse.

David Osmond-Smith's analysis of 'obliteration as form' in the third part of Luciano Berio's *Sinfonia* (1968) outlines one approach to similar methodological challenges.[28] A consideration of the insights offered by Osmond-Smith's method and, more importantly, its drawbacks serves to contextualize the differing approach to *Wunderblock* adopted in this chapter. The parallels between *Wunderblock* and the third part of *Sinfonia* are numerous. Like Pesson, Berio uses a single late-nineteenth-century symphonic movement as what Osmond-Smith terms a 'groundplan', a model which determines the basic structure of an adaptation. In *Sinfonia*, Berio largely maintains the metrical framework of this groundplan; while he sometimes adds or removes portions of up to twenty-four bars, these alterations roughly cancel each other out, resulting in a movement of the same length as his model.[29] Berio's movement provides a 'commentary' on the *scherzo* of Gustav Mahler's Second Symphony by grafting an eclectic range of musical (and verbal) quotations into it. In a process of 'obliteration' akin to

[28] David Osmond-Smith, *Playing on Words: a Guide to Luciano Berio's Sinfonia* (London: Royal Musical Association, 1985). 43-53. For further discussion of Berio's movement and Osmond-Smith's approach to it, see Metzer, *Quotation and Cultural Meaning*. 128-139. For an example of how Osmond-Smith's methods have been adapted to facilitate the analysis of other works, see Paul Robinson, 'Repetition Tropes and Levels of Obliteration in John Adam's Saxophone Concerto and "American Berserk"', *Tempo,* 70/277 (2016), 47-62.
[29] For Berio's own description of his use of Mahler's *scherzo*, see 4.2.1.

Pesson's 'erasure' in *Wunderblock*, Berio also removes and distorts portions of his model. As Osmond-Smith observes,

> Berio […] blocked out ever greater amounts of the original material [of Mahler's *scherzo*], at first so as to provide room for the various commentary materials, but later as an autonomous process that leaves only a skeleton of Mahlerian fragments. It is this incremental obliteration that provides the large-scale shape of the movement.[30]

Osmond-Smith's conception of obliteration as an 'autonomous structural process' that is manifested through the effacement of a source, but which may operate independently of its structural features, is pertinent to Pesson's process of erasure in *Wunderblock*. Obliteration or erasure can be interpreted in the terms discussed in Chapter 3 as a type of musical 'content' projected through or carved out of the 'medium' of a source work, either Mahler's *scherzo* or Bruckner's *Majestoso*. As it happens, Pesson's process of erasure in *Wunderblock* exhibits a similar 'large-scale shape' to Berio's obliteration, with a general tendency to increased effacement as the piece progresses. Equally applicable to an examination of *Wunderblock* is Osmond-Smith's observation that, although not determined by the structure of Mahler's *scherzo*, the form of Berio's obliteration often responds to it. 'Although Berio has imposed a linear if vacillating process of obliteration upon an originally sectional composition', Osmond-Smith contends, 'he does respect the rough contours of Mahler's dramatic structure'; obliteration is 'regulated by individual features of the Mahler text rather than by some autonomous, self-regulating system'.[31]

Despite Osmond-Smith describing Berio's excisions as 'regulated' by and 'respecting' the structure of Mahler's *scherzo*, obliteration as form need not be understood through the lens of fidelity discourse. Rather, the form of Berio's obliteration interacts with the form of Mahler's movement but also works independently of it, by turns reinforcing, contradicting, or proceeding indifferently to the structure of this groundplan. *Wunderblock* displays a similar interaction

[30] Osmond-Smith, *Playing on Words*. 39. The 'autonomous' process of obliteration Osmond-Smith describes is laid bare in *Berio Mask* (1977) by the Danish composer Karl Aage Rasmussen, which presents only what is left of Mahler's *scherzo* in *Sinfonia*, stripped of Berio's additional quotations, arranged for a reduced chamber format.
[31] Ibid. 46, 44.

between the form of Pesson's erasure and the extended sonata structure of Bruckner's movement. The increasing extent of erasure as *Wunderblock* progresses is not entirely uniform or incremental but rather is uneven and inconsistent, mediated by key moments in the thematic, tonal, and textural fabric of the *Majestoso*.

To illustrate the relationship between obliteration as form in Berio's movement and the structure of its Mahlerian 'groundplan', Osmond-Smith charts each process in its entirety, graphing the use of five distinct and hierarchically ordered 'levels of "presence" of the original text' against the structural outline of Mahler's *scherzo* (Figure 5.1).[32] Despite the insights offered by such a chart, it is fruitful to consider why making an analogous chart of *Wunderblock* would both present insurmountable practical difficulties and offer a theoretically misleading representation of the piece. Osmond-Smith's graph of *Sinfonia*'s third part is viable in part because Berio's principal means of obliteration is simple omission, the excision of one or more elements of Mahler's musical texture in a given passage. He classifies each instance of omission into one of four discrete levels of 'presence', conserving respectively 'the melodic and harmonic substance of Mahler's *scherzo*', 'single—usually melodic—lines only', mere 'fragments of Mahler's text', and the 'metric framework' alone.[33] The addition or removal of bars from this silent 'metrical framework' constitutes a fifth and final level of obliteration. In addition to omission, Berio re-orchestrates strands of Mahler's texture, sometimes fragmenting them between instruments, treats them heterophonically, or subjects pitches to octave displacement. Such 'distortions' are infrequent enough that Osmond-Smith simply labels them all on his graph with a 'D'.

In contrast, such 'distortions' are too pervasive and continuously integrated into *Wunderblock* to be symbolized through a discrete label. Pesson's techniques of effacement are far more varied in degree and kind than Berio's, involving extensive changes to

[32] Ibid. 44.
[33] Ibid. 44.

instrumentation, timbre (via different playing techniques), and dynamics as well as simple omission. The diverse effects of presence and absence which result cannot be conceptualized according to a single hierarchy, expressed as either a set of discrete categories or a continuum. Such effects are highly dependent on context, making the application of a global 'yardstick' of presence or absence misleading. In addition, while Berio mostly maintains the same 'level of presence' for extended passages, Pesson's erasure is in constant flux, often changing bar-to-bar or note-to-note and differently across various strands of the orchestral texture. Given that each type of erasure cannot be framed according to a global hierarchy, these detailed fluctuations cannot be meaningfully reduced to the kind of 'middleground' representation exemplified by Osmond-Smith's chart.

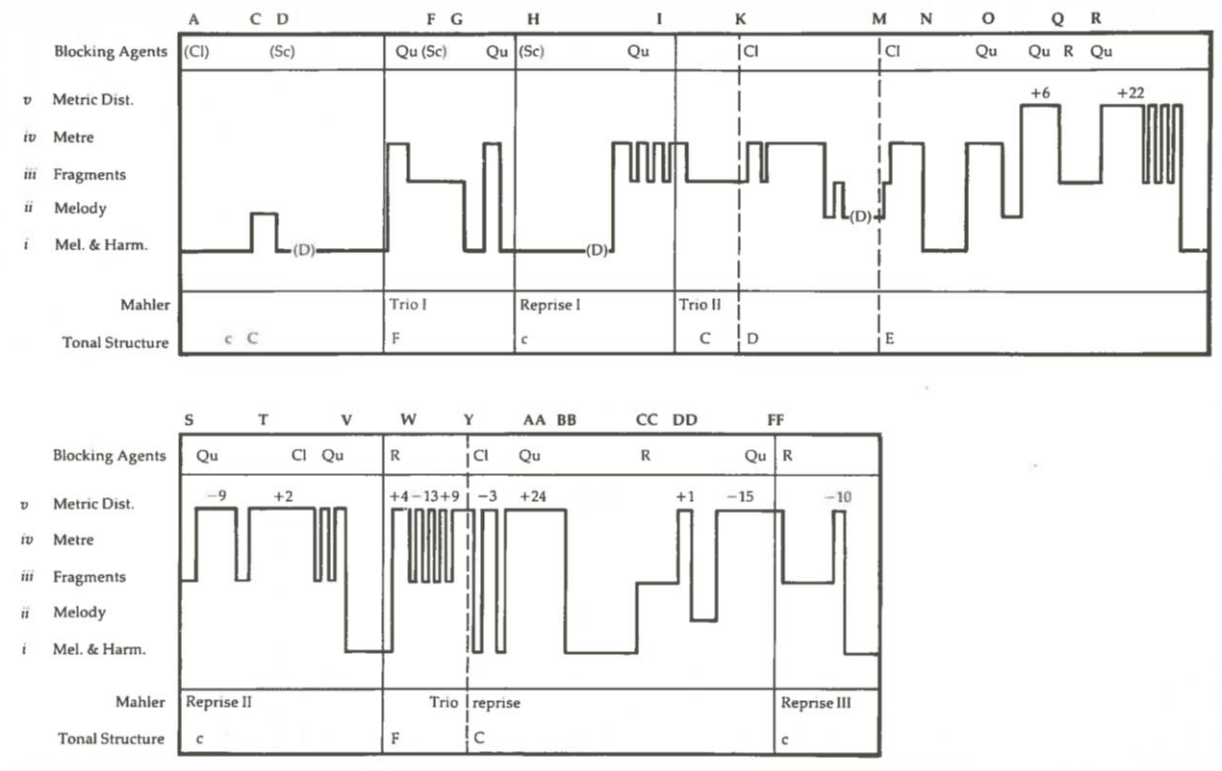


Figure 5.1: David Osmond-Smith's chart of obliteration in Berio's *Sinfonia*, part 3.

The insuperable practical difficulties of graphing *Wunderblock* in this way point to more fundamental theoretical problems with such a task. Osmond-Smith's diagram of Berio's 'obliteration as form' manifests the traditional analytical impulse to 'pin down' musical works such that their structures may be comprehended as unified wholes. As a result of this impulse, analytical diagrams often aim to condense the form of an entire work into a single, linear

representation that reveals salient structural processes and allows important moments to be (temporarily) isolated and compared with one another. In common with other analytical representations of this type, Osmond-Smith's diagram plots the variation in selected musical parameters, in this case those that constitute obliteration, on a vertical 'Y-axis', against the apparently linear 'passage' of musical time on a horizontal 'X-axis'.[34] According to a framework of this type, the plotlines of such a chart (however abstractly conceived) track the variation in selected musical parameters with respect to time, and so describe the form of the work in question.

The inherent problems presented by such graphs, which attempt to represent musical form as stable and objective when it is necessarily dynamic and elusive, are particularly acute in the case of *Wunderblock.*[35] The complexity and contextual nature of Pesson's erasure means that it cannot be meaningfully expressed according to a single 'metric' of presence as demanded by the Y-axis of a chart like Osmond-Smith's. Further, representing time as a single, linear X-axis is replete with theoretical inadequacies, as discussed in Chapter 4; to be bound by this 'common-sense' approach in considering *Wunderblock*, which interrogates the concepts of time and memory, is especially limiting. More important, however, are the assumptions such graphs make about the way these X- and Y-axes are related, or rather *unrelated*. Although ostensibly showing the way temporality and other parameters (in this case effacement) *combine* to constitute musical form, charts such as Osmond-Smith's actually sharply *separate* these elements of form, as if a work's temporal 'unfolding' continues independently of its musical material. This mode of representation implies that however much the variables charted by the Y-axis vary, musical time ticks away unaffected.

[34] This basic approach informs a wide variety of modes of analytical representation from the basic section-letter notation (ABACA for a five-part rondo, and so on) to complex Schenkerian voice-leading graphs. For a history of analytical graphs of this kind, see Bonds, 'The Spatial Representation of Musical Form'.
[35] See Grimley, 'Music's Moving Forms'.

A graph of this type promotes the idea that despite a work's musical material being obliterated or erased, its temporal 'unfolding' continues as an inviolable and untouchable 'framework' which cannot be effaced. Osmond-Smith's graph suggests a reassuring omnipresence of Berio's Mahlerian groundplan, even if it is completely inaudible, which does not necessarily reflect the highly disorientating experience of listening to the movement. The sense that the ongoing, linear temporal 'framework' of the movement will dissolve is vividly reflected in the anxious exhortations to 'keep going!' scattered throughout the Samuel Beckett text that Berio uses. 'With its beams and hinges shattered', David Metzer argues, 'the Scherzo falls apart, becoming a broken and sputtering *perpetuum mobile*'.[36] The 'vertical' elimination of musical material has 'horizontal', that is to say *temporal*, consequences. Understanding this invites a more temporally-oriented conception of what it means to 'obliterate' or 'erase' a work than Osmond-Smith provides, suggesting that the linear span of time which supposedly defines that work may itself be shattered or obliterated. As Pesson's equation of erasure and 'temporal suspension' suggests, it is this more fundamental, temporally-oriented conception of effacement that determines the stakes of erasure in *Wunderblock*, despite its apparent bar-by-bar temporal fidelity to Bruckner's *Majestoso*.

5.2.3 Adorno and dissolution

In his essay 'The Radio Symphony' (1941), Theodor W. Adorno offers a theorization of this relationship between the timbral and temporal obliteration of a musical work and how this affects listening. Considering sonic degradation wrought by sound reproduction akin to that maready and other forum users associate with Furtwängler's incomplete 1943 recording of Bruckner's Sixth Symphony, Adorno argues that symphonic music, especially that of Beethoven, is 'deteriorated or even "dissolved"' when heard via a poor-quality AM radio

[36] Metzer, *Quotation and Cultural Meaning*. 134.

broadcast.[37] In concert, he argues, the individual moments of such music constitute a single temporal arc into which a listener may be absorbed through structural listening.

> Structurally, one hears the first bar of a Beethoven symphonic movement only at the very moment when one hears the last bar. […] It is this very power of symphonic concentration of time which annihilates, for the duration of the adequate performance, the contingencies of the listener's private experiences which, in commentator phraseology, are called the elatedness of audience as a result of the sublimity of the symphony.[38]

Although largely upholding structural listening, at least for Beethoven's music, Adorno questions the possibility or desirability of such 'symphonic elation' in this context. 'At any rate', he concludes, 'radio expedites its liquidation. Its very sound tends to undermine the idea of spell, of uniqueness and of "great music", which are ballyhooed by radio sales talk'.[39] According to Adorno, the temporal cohesion of a work, its ability to 'absorb' both its individual parts and listeners, is dependent on a timbral and sonic intensity Pesson might call *biensonnance*.[40]

> Only if the sound is 'larger', as it were, than the individual so as to enable him to 'enter' the door of a cathedral, may he really become aware of the possibility of merging with the totality which structurally does not leave any loophole […] To 'enter' a symphony means to listen to it not only as something before one, but as something around one as well, as a medium in which one 'lives'. It is this surrounding quality that comes closest to the idea of symphonic absorption.[41]

The depletion of sonic intensity effected by radio broadcast, he observes, does not allow listeners to 'enter' the sound in this way: 'The tension is broken and the whole movement is on the verge of relapsing into time', the time of the individual listener rather than that of the work.[42] However, Adorno suggests that '[t]he abolition of this "surrounding" quality of music on the radio has its progressive aspects', because it is 'certainly part of music's function as a drug, the

---

[37] Theodor W. Adorno, 'The Radio Symphony: An Experiment in Theory', trans. Susan H. Gillespie, in Richard Leppert (ed.), *Essays on Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 251-270. 267.
[38] Ibid. 255-256.
[39] Ibid. 261.
[40] On the issue of timbre specifically, see ibid. 267-268. It is also productive to note the direct link Adorno makes between radio broadcast and musical arrangement (see 259-260). On *biensonnance* see 3.3.4.
[41] Ibid. 257-257.
[42] Ibid. 259.

criticism of which […] is justified and has been considerably furthered by radio'.[43] In particular, he notes this drug-like quality in the music of Bruckner's hero Wagner.

For Adorno, radio's timbral abolition of symphonic music's 'surrounding' quality resists the listener's absorption 'into' the work as a temporal 'whole', which, as a result, 'is presented like something from a context itself blurred or even absent'.[44] He suggests that radio broadcast freezes and fragments the work, facilitating and reflecting 'quotation listening' rather than structural listening. 'A Beethoven symphony is essentially a process; if that process is replaced by a presentation of frozen items, the performance is faithless even if executed under the battle cry of the utmost fidelity to the letter'.[45] In displaying bar-by-bar fidelity to the temporal structure of Bruckner's *Majestoso* while mimicking the timbral degradation of a poor-quality radio broadcast, *Wunderblock* seems a deliberately 'faithless' rendition of the movement which leaves its structure 'blurred' or 'absent'. Pesson's erasure can be interpreted as resisting the structural listening which Adorno argues Romantic music (such as Bruckner's) already begins to erode. Dervant's description of *Wunderblock* suggests a telling denial of the absorption afforded by Adorno's symphonic 'cathedral': a listener cannot 'enter' or be fully 'surrounded' by a ruin. Conversely, Adorno's account of temporal dissolution undermines the premise of Dervant's metaphor; *Wunderblock* might destroy even the intimation of former structure offered by a ruin.

5.2.4 Sartre and destruction

As the relevance of Adorno's essay to *Wunderblock* suggests, in order to understand the temporal aspects of Pesson's 'erasure' it is necessary to move beyond the approach exemplified by Osmond-Smith's graph of *Sinfonia*. Such an approach posits erasure as the measurable difference between two distributions of musical 'being', Bruckner's *Majestoso* and *Wunderblock,* rather than accounting for the experience of nothingness and absence that

[43] Ibid. 257-258.
[44] Ibid. 262.
[45] Ibid. 265.

temporal erasure precipitates. In describing this experience, it is useful to develop the phenomenological approach to nothingness offered by Jean-Paul Sartre's conception of the musical work's irreality discussed in Chapter 4. These ideas drawn from *The Imaginary* can be productively supplemented with a brief excursion into Sartre's next philosophical work, *Being and Nothingness* (1943), in particular his consideration of negation and nothingness as part of the 'structure of the real'.

Sartre is concerned with establishing that nothingness, or 'non-being' does not merely arise from the judgement of a conscious subject ('being-for-itself') but rather as a direct part of their experience of the world, 'a certain pre-judicative comprehension of non-being'.[46] To frame this question, Sartre considers an objection to his position through an example:

> I think that there are fifteen hundred francs in my wallet, and I find only thirteen hundred; that does not mean, someone will tell us, that experience has discovered for me the non-being of fifteen-hundred francs but only that I have found thirteen hundred-franc notes. Negation (we are told) is unthinkable; it could appear only on the level of an act of judgement by which I should establish a comparison between the result anticipated and the result obtained.[47]

This position, that Sartre aims to refute, is analogous to that implicitly posited by Osmond-Smith's graph of effacement. From this perspective, the apparent 'non being' presented in *Wunderblock*'s erasure of the *Majestoso* arises from a comparative judgement: Pesson's arrangement is 'missing' musical material in comparison with an expected *Majestoso* in the same way Sartre's wallet is 'missing' two hundred-franc notes.

Continuing his example, Sartre concedes the subjective basis of negation, and affirms the importance of expectation, but questions the view that nothingness is exclusively subjective:

> It is evident that non-being always appears within the limits of a human expectation. It is because I expect to find fifteen hundred francs that I find *only* thirteen hundred […] The world does not

[46] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology*, trans. Hazel E. Barnes (London: Routledge, 2003). 32. See Jean-Paul Sartre, *L'Être et le Néant: Essai d'Ontologie Phénoménologique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1970). 40-46.
[47] Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*. 30.

> disclose its non-beings to one who has not first posited them as possibilities. But is this to say that these non-beings are reduced to pure subjectivity?[48]

In pursuing a negative answer to this question, Sartre considers an example of particular relevance to Pesson's Rauschenberg-inspired act of musical erasure, probing our experience of destruction. He argues that destruction 'is an *activity* which doubtless could utilize judgement as an instrument but can not be defined as uniquely or even primarily judicative'.[49] Sartre once again maintains the importance of conscious subjects in constituting the nothingness which is destruction's aftermath:

> In a sense, certainly, man is the only being by whom destruction can be accomplished. A geological plication, a storm do not destroy—or at least they do not destroy *directly*; they merely modify the distribution of masses of beings. There is no *less* after the storm than before. There is *something else*. Even this expression is improper, for to posit otherness there must be a witness who can retain the past in some manner and compare it to the present in the form *no longer*. In the absence of this witness, there is being before as after the storm—that is all.[50]

However, Sartre reasons that the nothingness caused by destruction must be a perceptible part of the world, the 'structure of the real', because of the way people must choose how to *behave* in relation to an object ('being-in-itself') they consider fragile, that is to say an object which 'carries in its being a definite possibility of non-being'.[51]

> In order for destructibility to exist, man must determine himself in the face of this possibility of non-being, either positively or negatively; he must either take the necessary measures to realize it (destruction proper) or, by negation of non-being, to maintain it always on the level of a simple possibility (by preventative measures). […] It is necessary then to recognise that destruction is an essentially human thing and that it is *man* who destroys his cities through the agency of earthquakes or directly […] But at the same time it is necessary to acknowledge that destruction supposes a pre-judicative comprehension of nothingness as such and a conduct *in the face of nothingness*. In addition destruction[,] although coming into being through man, is an objective fact and not a thought. Fragility has been impressed upon the very being of this vase, and its destruction would be an absolute and irreversible event that only I could verify.[52]

---

[48] Ibid. 31.
[49] Ibid. 32
[50] Ibid. 32.
[51] Ibid. 32. Sartre contrasts this with the judicative idea of fragility as 'a certain probability of non-being for a given being under determined circumstances'.
[52] Ibid. 32-33.

For Sartre, destruction can only result from subjective engagement with the world but is a reality that individual subjects must confront rather than a mere judgement that they make.

As in the case of the wallet, the question of destruction teases out the difference between a judicative and more phenomenological approach to erasure in *Wunderblock*. A graph akin to Osmond-Smith's would frame the destruction of the *Majestoso* merely as a judgement of its 'distribution of masses of musical being', to modify Sartre's phrase. In contrast, the philosopher's argument suggests that it is through Pesson's act of erasure that listeners perceive Bruckner's movement as just as tangibly fragile as a vase. Erasure is not an exclusively subjective judgement about the solely objective qualities of *Wunderblock* as compared with the *Majestoso*: it arises from a listener being forced to 'determine themselves' in the face of Pesson's destruction and the potential or realized nothingness which results. In this sense, musical erasure, like arrangement, is a way of listening which involves a listener 'determining themselves' in the face of a piece of music.

To clinch his argument, Sartre considers a third example, imagining arriving late to meet Pierre in a café and finding that he has already left. It initially seems that we must judge rather than intuit Pierre's absence, because there apparently 'could not be an intuition of *nothing* and the absence of Pierre is nothing'.[53] However, Sartre insists that '[p]opular consciousness […] bears witness to this intuition. Do we not say, for example, "I suddenly saw that he was not there"'.[54] To account for this intuition, Sartre works from the premise that perception always involves the construction of a figure on a ground. 'No one object, no group of objects is especially designed to be organized as specifically either ground or figure', he insists, 'all depends on the direction of my attention'.[55] It is the capacity for negation which enables this choice of figure and ground that, for Sartre, determines the necessary freedom of a conscious subject. 'When I entre the café to search for Pierre', he proposes, 'there is formed a synthetic

[53] Ibid. 33.
[54] Ibid. 33.
[55] Ibid. 33.

organization of all the objects in the café, on the ground of which Pierre is given as about to appear. This organization of the café as the ground is an original nihilation'.[56] In this situation, the searcher does not judge Pierre's absence from specific locations in the café. Rather, Sartre argues,

> Pierre is absent from the whole café; his absence fixes the café in evanescence; the café remains ground; it persists in offering itself as an undifferentiated totality to my only marginal attention; it slips into the background; it pursues its nihilation. Only it makes itself ground for a determined figure; it carries the figure everywhere in front of it, presents the figure everywhere to me. This figure which slips constantly between my look and the solid, real objects in the café is precisely a perceptual disappearance; it is Pierre raising himself as nothingness on the ground of the nihilation of the café. So what is offered to intuition is a flickering of nothingness; it is the nothingness of the ground, the nihilation of which summons and demands the appearance of the figure, and it is the figure-nothingness which slips as nothing to the surface of the ground.[57]

Insisting that Pierre's absence is more than the judged absence of any number of other people he was not expecting to see, such as Wellington or Paul Valéry, Sartre argues that 'I myself *expected* to see Pierre, and my expectation has caused the absence of Pierre to happen as a real event concerning this café'.[58]

This notion of perceived (as opposed to judged) absence serves to orient this chapter's close examination of erasure in *Wunderblock*, an implicit strand in its consideration of musical details. Pesson's erasure of the *Majestoso* presents a 'flickering of nothingness' of the kind Sartre describes. The expectation which constitutes the absent or potentially absent *Majestoso* as a figure on the ground of *Wunderblock*'s form is suggested in part by paratextual cues and the patterning of themes in Bruckner's sonata form, both of which are relevant to 'knowing' and 'unknowing' listeners, albeit in different ways. The 'form' of Pesson's erasure is a curious mix of figures and grounds, being, non-being, and fragility experienced by listeners.

[56] Ibid. 33-34
[57] Ibid. 34.
[58] Ibid. 34.

5.3 Analysis

5.3.1 Three modes of erasure

In more practical terms, the 'form' of erasure in *Wunderblock* is articulated using three primary techniques, each of which is mentioned in Pesson's programme note for the work. The first is *repetition*, the 'stretching' of a passage through the re-iteration of certain bars. That such repetition is a form of temporal manipulation, specifically 'suspension', may be clear, but its consequent status for Pesson as a technique of erasure can only be fully appreciated through close reading of its role in *Wunderblock*. The second technique of erasure in the piece is *désécriture* or 'unwriting' which, as he indicates in his programme note, is similar to that in *Nebenstück*.[59] Unwriting might more properly be considered a style or mode of erasure which involves several related techniques, most obviously simple omission but also changes in orchestration and instrumental sonority as well as the fragmentation of melodic material across the ensemble. As in *Nebenstück,* the sustained use of extended instrumental techniques which produce depleted, noise-inflected timbres at low dynamics is a key aspect of Pesson's concept of unwriting.[60] The third technique of erasure is the *insertion* of 'two foreign objects': 'the second theme of the second movement of the same symphony [Bruckner's Sixth] (in place of measures 340-351) then a serial motif and a chord, derived from the name of the dedicatee, the French composer Mathieu Bonilla, also a great admirer of Helmut Lachenmann'.[61]

---

[59] 'With the fourth Ballade opus 10 by Brahms that provided the material of *Nebenstück I*, the unwriting came to underline the music in subtracting from it. […] This unwriting, that I have practiced in my own music, I used equally in indexing found ideas (the marginalia effect in *Rescousse*). I applied it here, in *Wunderblock*, to one of the musics which has mattered the most to me in the last few years: that of Bruckner'. 'Avec la 4e Ballade opus 10 de Brahms qui faisait la matière du *Nebenstück I*, la désécriture venait souligner la musique en la soustrayant. […] Cette désécriture, que j'ai pratiquée dans ma propre musique, je l'ai utilisée également en indexant des idées trouvées (l'effet marginalia dans *Rescousse*). Je l'applique ici, dans *Wunderblock*, à une des musiques qui a le plus compté pour moi ces dernières années : celle de Bruckner[.]' Pesson, 'Wunderblock', *Henry Lemoine*.

[60] See 3.3.4.

[61] 'deux objets étrangers s'invitent : le 2e thème du second mouvement de la même symphonie (à la place des mesures 340 à 351) puis un motif sériel et un accord, déduits du nom du dédicataire, le compositeur français Mathieu Bonilla, grand admirateur, lui aussi, d'Helmut Lachenmann.' Pesson, 'Wunderblock', *Henry Lemoine*.

5.3.2 Repetition and Bruckner

As indicated in Pesson's programme note for *Wunderblock*, the composer's otherwise 'strict', bar-by-bar fidelity to the temporal 'unfolding' of Bruckner's *Majestoso* is disrupted by the repetition of individual bars, effectively 'stretching' certain passages of this source. While the composer's description of such 'iterations' as a form of 'temporal suspension' is relatively straightforward, the reason he also labels them 'a form of erasure' is initially unclear. However, closer examination of these repetitions, the contexts in which they occur, and how they operate in relation to more explicit techniques of erasure, unwriting and insertion, reveals the insights offered by interpreting them in this way. Significantly, Pesson specifies that his iterations 'stretch' passages of Bruckner's *Majestoso* which are themselves already notable for their use of repetition. Speaking of *Wunderblock* the year after its completion, the composer expanded upon this point:

> I stretched out the dimensions [of the *Majestoso*]—it was to exploit the fact that Bruckner was sometimes truly a minimalist, that is to say someone who used panels, sequences […] which end up going around in circles. It is something that you also find in another great Catholic, that is to say Messiaen, who worked […] by successive panels.[62]

Importantly, Pesson does not simply liken Bruckner's extensive use of repetition to later music in order to label him a 'holy minimalist' akin to Arvo Pärt, but contextualizes repetitive passages as existing in relation to a sequence of 'panels'.[63] Pesson's comments position *Wunderblock* within a tradition of hearing Bruckner's symphonies as wrought from a succession of tableaux that each exhibit a degree of independence from the others. Benjamin M. Korstvedt, for example, writes that '[s]ome of Bruckner's most affecting pages […] have an odd self-sufficiency; they seem to exist microcosmically in the larger universe of the

[62] '[J]'ai étiré les dimensions—c'était pour mettre en valeur ce fait si étonnant que Bruckner est vraiment était parfois un répétitif, enfin quelqu'un qui utilisé des panneaux, des séquences […] qui tourne en ronde à la fin. C'est un chose qu'on retrouve aussi chez un autre grand catholique, qui est Messiaen, qui a travaillé […] par panneaux successifs.' Pesson, 'La Composition Comme Auto-Fiction'. 40:30.

[63] For a discussion of Bruckner's music in relation to 'holy minimalism', see James McCullough, 'Anton Bruckner: Holy Minimalist', *The Bruckner Journal* 19:3 2015) <https://www.abruckner.com/Data/articles/articlesEnglish/mccoloughjamesbru/McCullough_Bruckner_Holy_Minimalist.pdf.pdf>, accessed 2 April 2019.

symphony', noting the 'the mosaic-like second theme group' of the *Majestoso* as exemplary in this regard.[64]
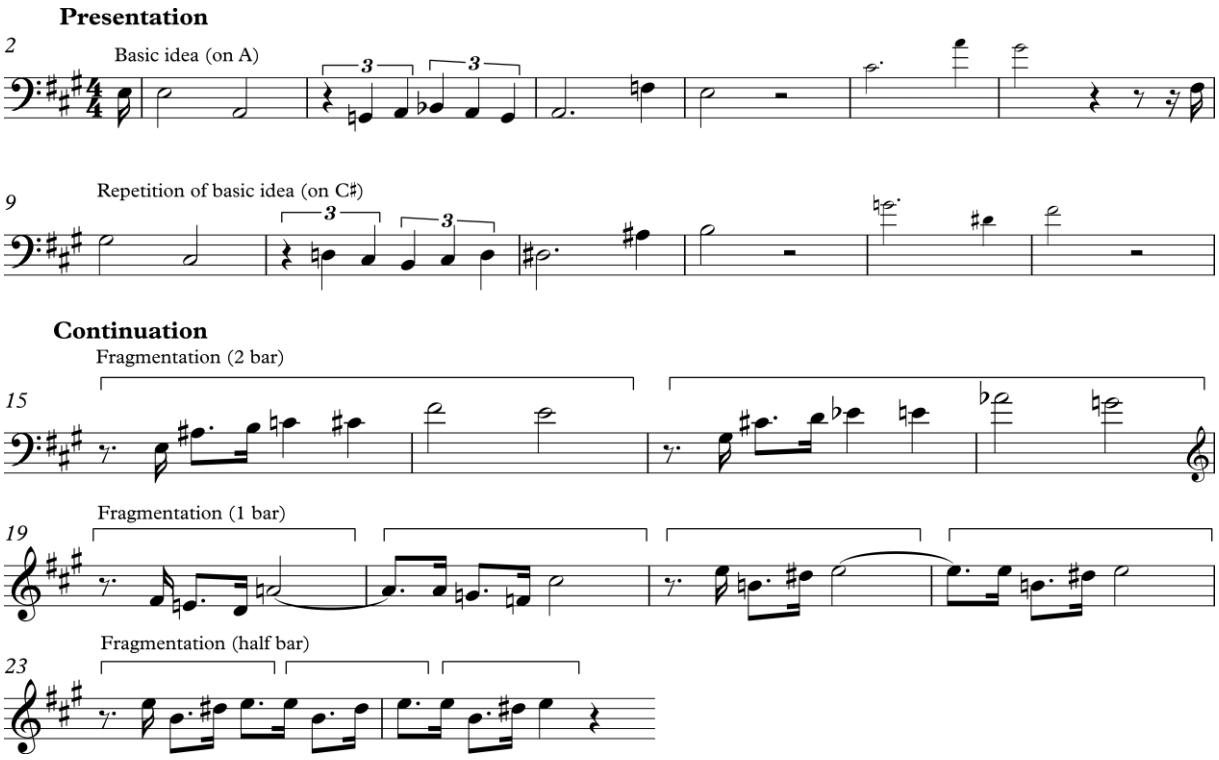
As Korstvedt and others have discussed, this understanding of the composer's music has long prompted the accusation that it is 'formless'. For example, one contemporary reviewer of the composer's Second Symphony, A. W. Ambros, complained that rather than being a 'firmly jointed musical structure' the work comprised 'tonal shapes wilfully strung one after another'.[65] Korstvedt himself views this apparently fragmentary quality in more positive terms: 'The pacing, the majesty, the reflection, the circling, the repetition that occur within individual movements and across Bruckner's symphonic oeuvre can, evidently, be objectionable to some; yet it is by them that Bruckner's music wins some of its greatest and most humane expression'.[66] Both Korstvedt and Pesson implicitly link the 'self-sufficiency' of Bruckner's thematic tableaux and the composer's use of 'circling' repetition. While the restatements that comprise Bruckner's large-scale thematic rotations contribute to the apparent 'self-sufficiency' of these panels, Pesson more specifically notes the effect of the localized repetitions by which each panel 'ends up going around in circles'.

Unsurprisingly, the first statement of the primary theme (P) in the *Majestoso*, *Wunderblock*'s source, is a paradigmatic Brucknerian 'panel' in this respect (Figure 5.1). The theme begins by presenting a six-bar idea (on A) which is then inexactly repeated a third higher (on C-sharp). This idea is then collapsed into a two-bar phrase drawing on its use of anacrusis and opening two-minim rhythm, which is also subject to repetition a third higher. This process of motivic liquidation continues, further condensing the dotted notes and minims into a single bar shape which occurs four times, the latter two centred on a single pitch, E, and finally into a half-bar fragment heard three times. As Pesson's spatial metaphor suggests, such motivic

[64] Benjamin M. Korstvedt, 'Between Formlessness and Formality: Aspects of Bruckner's Approach to Symphonic Form', in John Williamson (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Bruckner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 170-189. 188.
[65] As quoted in ibid. 170.
[66] Ibid. 189.

liquidation results in repetitive passages which seem to arrest the sense of forward progression that Bruckner's expansive thematic presentations initially suggest, spiralling back in upon themselves rather than being directed onward to the subsequent panel. The tutti restatement of the primary theme (bars 25-48) which follows its initial presentation, for example, appears to burst in upon the aimless repetitions of the succeeding thematic panel rather than arising from them. This basic pattern recurs throughout the movement: as Pesson implies, it is Bruckner's repetitious motivic liquidations that appear to fragment his music into 'successive panels' that seem independent from one another. It is such repetitive passages *between* panels that, in Ambros's negative terms, make them appear 'wilfully strung one after another' rather than 'firmly jointed' together into a musical structure. The accusation of 'formlessness' levelled by Ambros and subsequent critics results in part from the way Bruckner's music, including the Sixth Symphony, diverges from a dominant ideal of the musical work as defined by a single, linear, progressive temporal span.[67] This charge of 'formlessness' betrays the belief that in fracturing a unified temporal span into thematic tableaux Bruckner's repetitious motivic liquidations pose an existential threat to the Work itself, precipitating its dissolution.

[67] This ideal, upheld by Adorno in his essay on the 'Radio Symphony', finds its most paradigmatic manifestation in Beethoven's heroic style, which Scott Burnham describes as conveying 'the sense of an earnest and fundamental presence burdened with some great weight yet coursing forth ineluctably, moving the listener along as does the earth itself'. Scott Burnham, *Beethoven Hero* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995). 65.



Example 5.1: Bruckner, Sixth Symphony, i, primary theme (bars 2-24).

5.3.3 Repetition and Pesson

It is this capacity of Bruckner's repetitions to suggest structural fragility through a temporal disintegration of the Work that provides the basis for the way Pesson uses repetition as a technique of erasure in *Wunderblock*. As Pesson indicates, he almost always inserts repeated bars in passages in which the *Majestoso* is already repetitive. In this sense, Pesson simply pushes the temporal processes by which the movement has already begun to erase itself further than Bruckner does. Pesson's treatment of Bruckner's initial thematic statement of the primary theme provides a clear instance of this technique. The *Majestoso* opens with two bars which contain four iterations of a rhythmic ostinato on C-sharp in the violins. This ostinato continues after the entry of the lower strings in bar 3 and, beginning to shift in pitch from bar 7, continues throughout the rest of the thematic statement. In *Wunderblock*, however, Pesson delays the entry of the theme by putting a repeat sign around his transcription of the first bar of the *Majestoso*, indicating that it should be played seven times, maintaining correspondence of bar numbers. The initial bars of Bruckner's Sixth Symphony are typical of the composer's *ex nihilo* symphonic openings, in which a theme emerges from a soft and undifferentiated texture

of string tremolo or ostinato figurations.[68] In repeating Bruckner's opening bar so extensively, as well as making it even softer and higher through the use of artificial harmonics, Pesson expands and exaggerates the nothingness from which the theme springs.

Once the theme arrives Pesson lets it unfold with no interrupting repetitions until the final stages of its motivic liquidation, when Bruckner's bar 23 is heard four times, three of which are adjusted (as bar 23 bis) to enable seamless looping of the melodic material.[69] If a bar from the presentation of the theme, for example bar 11, were repeated in this way the resulting distortion of its phrase structure, and hence Pesson's intervention, would be immediately evident, even to listeners unfamiliar with the symphony. However, instead of overtly diverging from linear temporal fidelity to the *Majestoso*, Pesson waits until its linear 'progression' has been compromised by the already repetitious nature of Bruckner's motivic liquidation before initiating his own 'temporal suspension'. As a result, Pesson's intervention is subtle, and may only be recognized as such once it is already well underway, or even once it has passed completely. Realization of the 'trick' only dawns once it is 'too late', and Bruckner's music has been rendered mechanistic, as if heard through a record needle stuck in a single groove, hence the laughter that such moments often provoke. This laughter may signal unease as much as humour.[70] Coupled with the Freudian theme of repression evoked in *Wunderblock*'s title, Pesson's intensification of repetitions in the *Majestoso* hints at obsessive compulsion, echoing Bruckner's own 'mania for counting' mentioned in the work's programme note.[71] The

[68] On the reception of such openings a theological creation, or creation of music 'itself', from nothing, see Christa Brüstle, 'The Musical Image of Bruckner', in John Williamson (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Bruckner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 244-260. 252.
[69] In his score, Pesson numbers variants of repeated bars 'bis', 'ter', and 'quater'.
[70] For discussion of humour in Pesson's music, particularly that which alludes to pre-existing works, in relation to the philosophy of Henri Bergson, see Alirol, *Gérard Pesson*. 25-33. 'The mechanistic passages in Pesson's music, in which one hears the musicians act mechanically in contrast to the "attentive suppleness and lively flexibility" which normally characterizes performers, are in some way musical enactments of the comic principle of the "mechanical stiffness" described […] by [Henri] Bergson'. 'Les passages mécaniques de la musique de Pesson, où l'on entend les musiciens agir mécaniquement en contraste avec la « souplesse attentive et la vivante flexibilité » qui est normalement celle de l'interprète, sont en quelque sorte des mises en scènes musicales de ce principe comique de la « raideur mécanique » décrit […] par Bergson.' 32.
[71] For a detailed discussion of Bruckner's alleged compulsive behaviour which ultimately rejects this diagnosis, see Julian Horton, *Bruckner's Symphonies: Analysis, Reception and Cultural Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). 223-257.

composer's habit of meticulously tallying the bars in his compositions in order to check their structural 'correctness' against a 'metrical grid' has often been attributed to this 'mania'.[72] If Bruckner, countering critiques such as Ambros's, considered such metrical schemes essential to the formal integrity of his music, Pesson's wilful disruption of these schemes can be interpreted as a symbolically-charged effacement of formal unity. Over and above connotations of obsession or compulsion, however, the unsettling quality of Pesson's additional repetitions lies in the way they may slide into the *Majestoso* unnoticed.

Nearly all of the additional repeated bars Pesson inserts into Bruckner's movement operate in this way, subtly expanding passages which are already repetitious. As well as re-iterating single bars using repeat marks, Pesson sometimes repeats several bars together (as at bars 77-80) or writes out one or more duplicated bars with small adjustments (as at bars 144-144 quater). Occasionally, several reiterations occur in close succession, forming a single 'group' or 'complex' of repetitions (as at bars 137-146 bis). Counting more isolated repetitions alongside such complexes, in *Wunderblock* there are a total of fourteen instances of reiteration, which might be termed 'repetitional groups' (Table 5.1). Apart from two significant exceptions these instances of repetition occur in the context of repetitive passages of the *Majestoso*. Mostly, such passages are the result of motivic liquidation at the end of one of Bruckner's thematic 'panels'. While the repetitions that bookend the first statement of the primary theme may be heard as deviations from Bruckner's metrical scheme relatively easily, many later instances are more ambiguous in this regard. For example, Pesson's repetitions account for seven of the seventeen bars between 137 and 146 bis, repetitional group (RG) 6, which expand a passage bridging the end of Bruckner's third theme group (TG) and the start of the development section (see Table 5.2). The passage immediately prior to Pesson's additional repetitions, bars 121-136, feature a continuous triplet figuration, sometimes accompanying repetitive melodic material,

[72] Bruckner began rigorously applying this grid from his first revision period, 1876-1880; the Sixth Symphony was composed between 1879-1881. See Timothy L. Jackson, 'Bruckner's Metrical Numbers', *19th-Century Music*, 14/2 (1990), 101-131.

and exhibit a slow rate of harmonic change. Consequently, it is unlikely that listeners who are not intimately acquainted with Bruckner's symphony will be immediately aware of Pesson's additions during RG6.

Table 5.1: Repetitional groups in *Wunderblock*.

Repetitional group	Bars	Bars added	Details	Structural context
1	1	6	1 x7	Opening ostinato
2	23-23 bis	3	23, 23 bis x3	End of P statement 1
3	46-48	5	46 x3, 48 x4	End of P statement 2
4	77-80	4	77-78 x2, 79 x2, 80 x2	Preceding tutti statement of S
5	109	1	109, 109 bis	Liquidation of first idea in TG3
6	137-146 bis	7	137-138, 137 bis-138 bis, 144, 144 bis-quater, 145-146, 145 bis-146 bis	End of TG3 into development
7	155-158 bis	3	155-156, 155 bis-156 bis, 158, 158 bis	Repetitions in development
8	193-194 ter	5	193, 193 bis-193 quater, 194, 194 bis-194 ter	False retransition
9	211-212 bis	5	211, 211 bis x3, 211 ter, 212, 212 bis	Within P recap theme (!)
10	227	5	227 x6	End (liquidation) of P statement 1 (tutti)
11	240-242	4	240 x3, 242 x3	End (liquidation) of P statement 2 (tutti)
12	282	2	282 x3	End of TG2
13	349-358	6	349 x4, 350 x2, 354 x3, 357-358 x2	Into and within final P statement of coda (!)
14	354-358	4	354 x3, 357-358 x2	Final P fanfares of coda

Table 5.2: Sonata structure of Bruckner, Sixth Symphony, i.

Section		Bars
Exposition	First theme group	1-48
	Second theme group	49-100
	Third theme group	101-144
Development	Phase 1	145-158
	Phase 2 (based on TG1)	159-182
	False retransition	183-194
	False recapitulation	195-208
Recapitulation	First theme group	209-244
	Second theme group	245-284
	Third theme group	285-308
Coda		309-369

Despite being clearly delineated on the page, the extent of Pesson's repetitions is perceptually blurred rather than sharply defined and their presence is more likely to be inferred by listeners than known with confidence. As a combined result of this ambiguity and the highly

repetitive nature of many passages of Bruckner's *Majestoso*, listeners may suspect extensive intervention when in fact Pesson repeats only a small number of bars, or even none at all. For example, after Pesson's other additions to Bruckner's exposition, the intensely repetitive first portion of TG3 (bars 101-120) might be heard in part as the result of substantial 'stretching', when only one bar (109 bis) has been added. This perceptual ambiguity of Pesson's 'temporal suspension' is central to its role as a form of erasure, loosening the seams of the *Majestoso*'s supposedly stable linear temporal structure, even in passages which strictly 'respect' Bruckner's metrical scheme. The repetitive 'loops' that Pesson adds to Bruckner's movement do not simply seem to arrest or 'suspend' the forward progression of its linear temporal structure, but also contribute to the impression that its thematic panels have been assembled 'wilfully', contributing to a sense of what Ambros terms 'formlessness'. Even when Pesson's loop is finally broken by the entry of a new thematic panel, the temporal frame which has been momentarily suspended is not resumed without consequence. Due to the goalless temporal homogeneity of a musical loop, escape from the loop and onward 'progression' cannot be understood as generated from 'within' it. While Bruckner's repetitions restrict themselves to a predictable two or four iterations, Pesson's repetitional groups introduce an unpredictable number of restatements; there is no particular reason to exit the loop when he does, or any earlier or later. Pesson's loops therefore enhance the degree to which the entry of Bruckner's subsequent thematic panel seems arbitrary rather than a linear inevitability. These loops constitute a technique of 'erasure' because, in fracturing the supposed unity and inexorability of the *Majestoso*'s temporal span, they undermine the sense of linear 'progression' thought to endow musical works with a coherent, stable, and substantial form.

An exclusively fidelity-based perspective on *Wunderblock* might suggest that the 'temporal suspension' precipitated by its looping reiterations merely extends, enhances, or emphasizes a notable tendency inherent in Bruckner's *Majestoso*. However, comparison of *Wunderblock* with another of Pesson's orchestral works, *Aggravations et Final*, completed

three years previously in 2002, suggests that the *Majestoso* enabled the composer to explore an existing preoccupation with loops and cycles within his own music.[73] Such repetitions also evoke sound reproduction technology in their resemblance to tape loops, a skipping vinyl record, or reiterated digital sample, all of which may indicate a temporal 'glitch'.[74] Pesson's interest such 'closed grooves' may stem from his composition classes with Ivo Malec, who was a leading figure in Pierre Schaeffer's Groupe de Recherches Musicales.[75] In composing *Aggravations et Final*, Pesson explains, the music seemed to be 'already in its spin drying phase':

> The principle that precipitates, connects, and contradicts this rule is the loop (an idea that I addressed in 1987 in my first orchestral work, *Grand Quinconce*, a sort of sonic mobile after [Jean] Tinguely), the pure repetition, iteration by blocking, the closed groove. This rondo effect by looping refrains instils a certain structural slowness within a frenetic tempo.[76]

The mechanistic loops which begin by punctuating *Aggravations et Final* and gradually come to dominate its orchestral landscape are strikingly similar to those in *Wunderblock*, impeding temporal progression. Tellingly, Pesson goes on to liken the effect of this spiralling (rather than linear) temporal effect in *Aggravations et Final* to the 'successive panels' found in the work of Bruckner and Messiaen, the same composers to which he refers in explaining his approach in *Wunderblock*. Also alluding to Franck's *Les Béatitudes* in this context, Pesson explains that 'each "aggravation" is followed by a loop (one could say a double), precipitated by the preceding material'.[77]

---

[73] Gérard Pesson, *Aggravations et Final pour Grand Orchestre* (Paris: Henry Lemoine, 2002) [Score]. For a recording see *Aggravations et Final* (2009).
[74] 'Glitch' might be considered 'that which arrests the flow of music'. See Bates, 'Glitches, Bugs, and Hisses'. 289.
[75] On Schaeffer's us of the 'closed groove', produced using disc and tape loops, see Brian Kane, *Sound Unseen: Acousmatic Sound in Theory and Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014). 16-41. On the temporal implications of tape manipulation, see Chapter 4 note 20.
[76] 'déjà dans sa phase d'essorage'; 'Le principe qui précipite, relie et contredit cette règle est la boucle (idée que j'avais abordé en 1987 dans ma première œuvré d'orchestre, le *Grand quinconce*, sorte de mobile sonore à la Tinguely), la répétition pure, l'itération par blocage, le sillon fermé. Cet effet rondo par refrains en boucle incruste une certaine lenteur structurelle dans un tempo frénétique.' Gérard Pesson, 'Aggravations et Final', *Henry Lemoine* [Online programme note], <https://www.henry-lemoine.com/fr/catalogue/fiche/27835>, accessed 2 April 2019.
[77] 'Chaque aggravation est donc suivie d'une boucle (on pourrait dire un double), précipité de la matière précédente.' ibid.

This approach finds a direct analogue in what the composer describes as the 'successive panels' in Bruckner's music which end up spiralling in on themselves, and which he exploits to great effect in *Wunderblock*. Appropriately, as motoric 'loops' almost entirely displace 'progression' in the closing stages of *Aggravations et Final* Pesson includes allusions to repetitive passages of Bruckner's Ninth Symphony.[78] A comparison with *Aggravations et Final* suggests that in *Wunderblock* Pesson exploits repetitions in Bruckner's *Majestoso* to produce a broader structural tension between linear temporal progression and spiralling cycles that is manifested in many of his other works rather than simply emphasizing an existing feature of the movement. In turn, this concern with fragmentary forms and cycles may derive in part from Pesson's longstanding interest in Bruckner's music. His use of repetition as a technique of erasure in *Wunderblock* therefore suggests a cross-fertilization of musical ideas relating to temporality rather than a one-directional fidelity to the *Majestoso*.

5.3.4 Unwriting

Pesson's use of added repetitions in *Wunderblock* works alongside another, more 'direct' method of erasure: unwriting. As in its precursor, *Nebenstück*, unwriting in *Wunderblock* is concerned primarily with aspects of instrumentation and timbre. Musical erasure is represented as the 'degradation' of the *Majestoso*'s Romantic *biensonnance*, achieved through the use of unconventional playing techniques which produce much quieter, noise-inflected sonorities. The complete elimination of a musical line or texture through simple omission can be understood as representing the most extreme form of this unwriting. As well as performing erasure through a direct diminution of sonority, Pesson's unwriting also 'belittles' the majestic, elevated, and even sacred character of Bruckner's *Majestoso* in more figurative and emblematic terms.

> Certain aspects of the unwriting [in *Wunderblock*] come perhaps from what Lachenmann stigmatizes in my music as *magic by the void*. This magic has its danger: one is between honey

[78] Bars 463-505 of *Aggravations et Final* allude to material from the first section of Bruckner's *scherzo*, and bars 539-541 to the final passage of the first movement of the same symphony.

> and venom. It is this danger that is articulated in the orchestration of *Wunderblock*—the struggle between the paraphernalia of the marvellously childlike (the music boxes, toy piano, the glockenspiels, celesta, and also glasses tuned as for a party table) and, on the other hand, the nobility, the transcendence, the strength of Brucknerian material. This struggle occurs elsewhere symbolically, between the harmonium, a poor indication of the sacred, and the profane accordion which takes on the melodies or the chords written for God and improvised sometimes at the organ of Saint Florian.[79]

Pesson also hints that such unwriting, which is both sonic and semantic, does not merely alter how individual moments of Bruckner's movement are rendered in *Wunderblock* but also contributes to the erasure of its linear temporal structure. 'The timbral fragmentation of *Wunderblock* participates in this scintillation, in this semantic vibration that carries to the point of disintegration the manner in which Bruckner composed his large-scale forms from small units put end to end'.[80] 'Vertical' changes to timbre, Pesson suggests, distort and erase the 'horizontal', bar-by-bar temporal structure *Wunderblock* seems to strictly respect. As well as articulating an overarching structural 'disintegration' of the *Majestoso*, Pesson's process of unwriting is refracted through Bruckner's sonata form (see Table 5.2). The movement can be divided into two portions, the first of which comprises an expositional rotation of three theme groups (114 bars) and a development based largely on the primary theme (P) from TG1 (64 bars). The second portion of the movement repeats the first: a slightly truncated recapitulatory rotation of TG1-3 (100 bars) is followed by a coda, which, although different from the development, is of a similar length (60 bars) and is also based on P.[81] The repetition inherent in this design manifests the 'cycling' quality of thematic 'panels' on a larger structural scale. In

[79] 'Certain aspect de la désécriture viendrait de ce que Lachenmann stigmatise dans ma musique comme magie par le vide. Cette magie a son danger : on est alors entre miel et venin. C'est ce danger-là qui est dit dans l'orchestration de *Wunderblock*—la lutte entre l'attirail du merveilleux enfantin (les serinettes, le piano jouet, les glockenspiele, célesta et même verres accordés, comme pour une table de fête) et, d'autre part, la noblesse, la transcendance, la résistance du matériau brucknérien. Cette lutte se retrouve d'ailleurs symboliquement entre l'harmonium, déclinaison pauvre du sacré, et l'accordéon profane qui endosse des mélodies ou des accords écrits pour Dieu et improvisés parfois à l'orgue de Saint-Florian.' Pesson, 'Wunderblock', *Henry Lemoine*.

[80] 'La fragmentation timbrique de Wunderblock participe de ce scintillement, de cette vibration sémantique qui portent jusqu'à la désintégration la manière dont Bruckner composait ses grandes formes par petites unités mises bout à bout.' ibid.

[81] For more detailed formal analyses of the movement, see Jan Tripe, 'Ernst Kurth's Dynamic Formal Process and Sonata Design in Bruckner's Sixth Symphony', M.Mus. thesis (University of Western Ontario, 1997). 51-52.
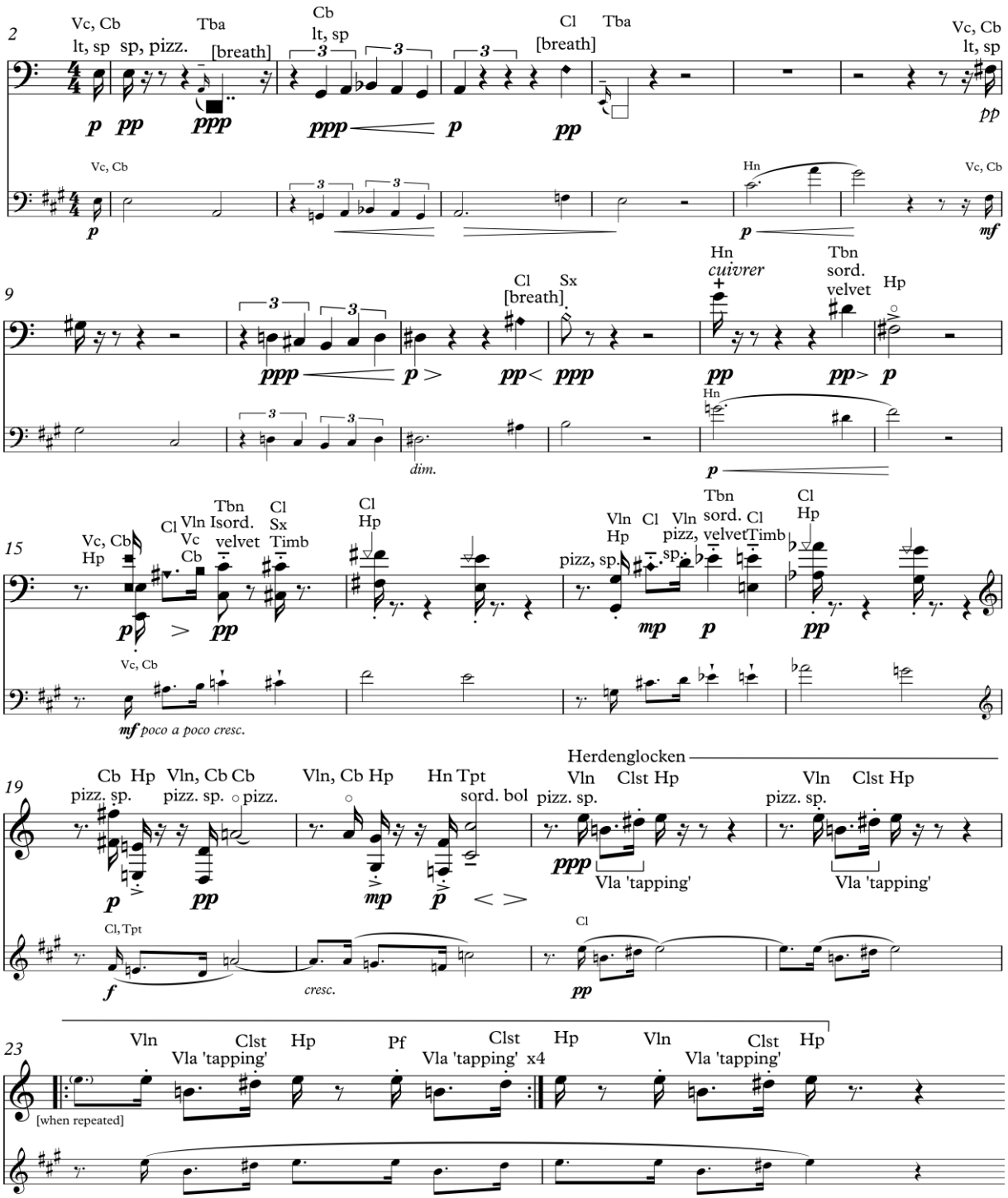
addition, it affords various effects of presence and absence as Pesson 'unwrites' it, contributing to *Wunderblock*'s process of erasure through a progressive erosion of linear temporality.

Pesson's treatment of Bruckner's TG1 makes extensive use of sonic attenuation or degradation as well as the 'timbral fragmentation' to which he refers in his programme note. As noted previously, *Wunderblock* exaggerates the *Majestoso*'s characteristically Brucknerian opening 'from nothing'. Bruckner's opening *pianissimo* violin ostinato, doubled at the octave, is reduced to *ppppp*, shifted up two octaves with a *flautando* artificial harmonic, and only reinforced by a lower octave (*pppp*) at the very beginning and end of the repeating bar. This forms the first of two textural strata during the first statement of P (bars 1-24), the second being the theme itself, which enters in the third bar.[82] As well as attenuating its pitches through a range of noise-producing extended techniques, Pesson subjects this theme to extensive timbral fragmentation (Example 5.2). The majority of the theme is fractured across the orchestra note by note, but the distinctive rising and falling triplet idea in bars 4 and 10 maintains some continuity, played the double basses (*col legno tratto, sul ponticello*). These snippets, however, are not homogeneous in timbre; unpitched 'shadowing' of the theme's rhythmic profile maintains constant variation in sonority. For example, in bar 4, Pesson adds to the melody not only a pitchless breath effect on the trombone, but a subtly changing palette of skin drums (bass tom, bendir, and bass drum) played variously with the fingers' nails or flesh. In *Wunderblock* Bruckner's P theme becomes a form of *Klangfarbenmelodie,* with each note separated from the others by its distinctive sonority. Unlike Webern's timbral dissection of J. S. Bach's continuous contrapuntal lines in his 'analytical instrumentation' of his six-part Ricercar, Pesson's *Klangfarbenmelodie* serves to disrupt melodic continuity without forging new motivic connections.[83] Rather than a coherent theme emerging from nothingness as in Bruckner's

[82] The concept of textural 'strata' is drawn from the comprehensive analysis of orchestration in Bruckner's movement in Julian Horton, 'Bruckner and the Symphony Orchestra', in John Williamson (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Bruckner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 138-169.
[83] On Webern's orchestration, see Chapter 2 note 186.

Majestoso, in *Wunderblock* the theme's constituent pitches appear but seem strangely disconnected from one another. As well as 'erasing' Bruckner's P theme by reducing its dynamic and level of *biensonnance*, Pesson's *Klangfarbenmelodie* 'dissolves' it into individual components just as his added repetitions 'dissolve' the *Majestoso*'s form into sequential 'panels'. Melody has long been associated with of time's onward linear 'passage', which has in turn been understood as binding its notes into a continuous perceptual entity.[84] In using timbre to atomize (rather than anatomize) Bruckner's P theme, Pesson's *Klangfarbenmelodie* works to disintegrate and dissolve the temporal frame of the *Majestoso* while also maintaining bar-by-bar fidelity to it.

[84] In addition to Edmund Husserl (see 4.3.2), Henri Bergson, William James, and others have understood melodies as representative of time. See Taylor, *The Melody of Time*. 72-77.
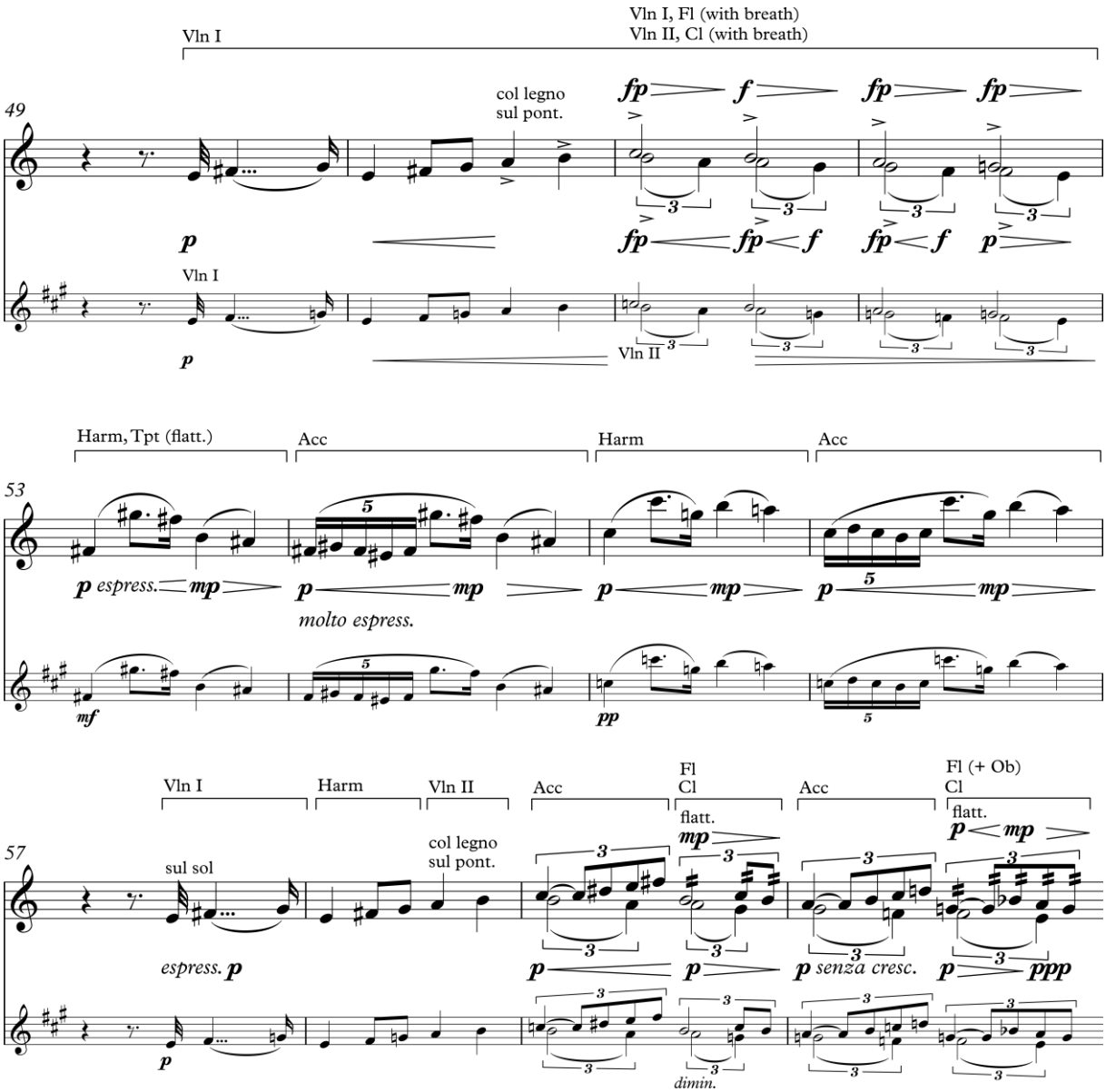


Example 5.2: Comparison of melodic material in bars 2-24 of *Wunderblock* (above) and Bruckner, Sixth Symphony, i (below).

The ostinato with which Bruckner opens the *Majestoso* gradually thickens from its initial octave doubling to two- and then three-part harmony at bars 7 and 19. In *Wunderblock*, this textural stratum is, like the P theme, subject to timbral variation, albeit at a slower rate of change. Importantly, however, Pesson maintains the *Majestoso*'s sense of thickening texture and increasing dynamics, lowering them again when Bruckner does in bars 21-24. This
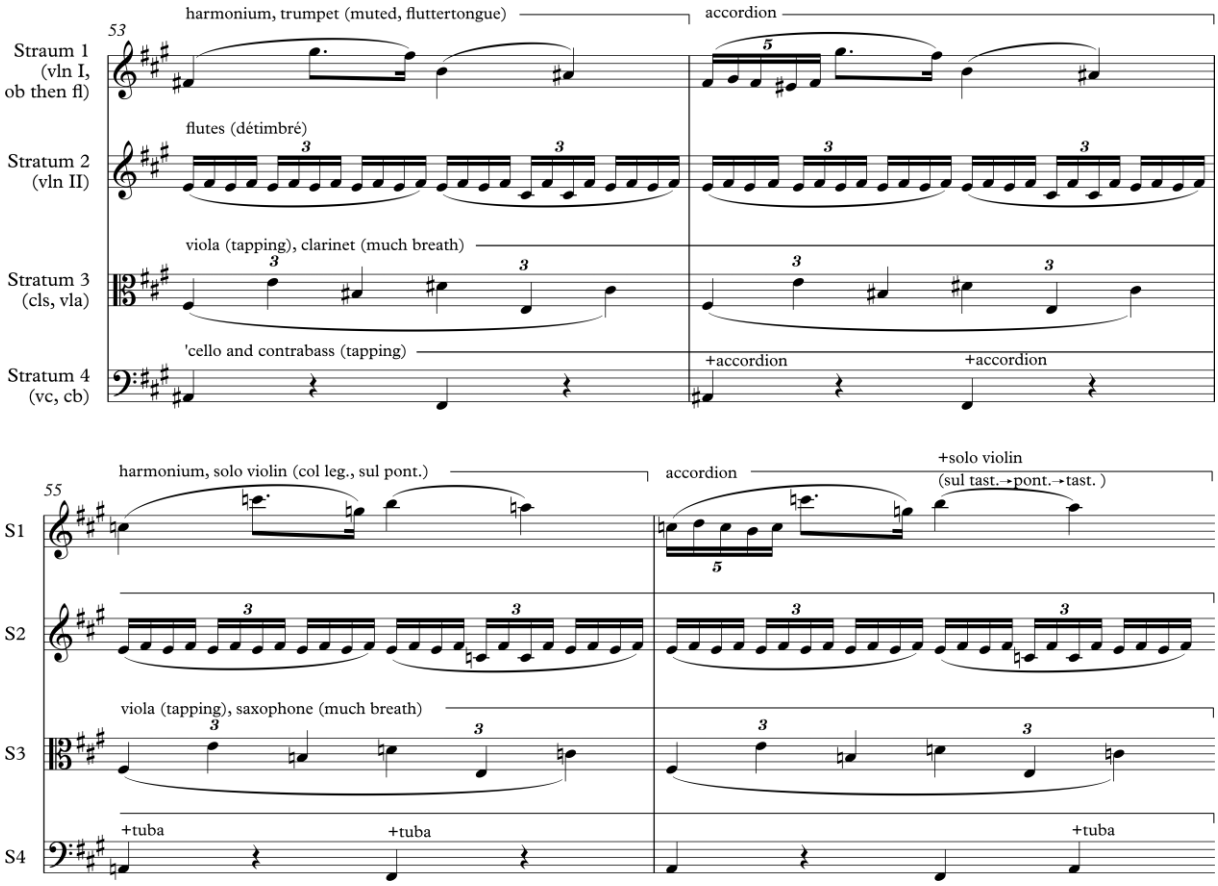
proportional approach to Bruckner's textures continues into the second statement of P (bars 25-58). In the *Majestoso*, the initial solo statement of the theme is followed by a tutti restatement, which enters with a sudden *fortissimo* and only reduces in dynamic and texturally from bar 41. In *Wunderblock*, the semiquaver anacrusis to this restatement is heard as an uncharacteristic *forte* tutti chord. While the restatement of the P theme which follows does not maintain this dynamic, Pesson nonetheless thickens his orchestral texture to match the contrast in Bruckner's movement while continuing to use a range of unwriting techniques. As if to echo the increased 'substance' of Bruckner's restatement, Pesson's manifests a reduced the level of timbral fragmentation, often linking strings of notes through a single instrumentation rather than fracturing them note by note.

Pesson continues to reduce the level of timbral fragmentation of Bruckner's material into the start of the secondary theme (S) which begins TG2 (Example 5.3). The first four bars of TG2 (49-52) retain all of Bruckner's textural strata and most of their orchestral configuration. The strings play exactly the same pitches in *Wunderblock* as in the *Majestoso* but articulate them with a range of extended instrumental techniques: *flautando sul tasto, col legno sul ponticello*, and 'tapping' (fingering the pitches without bowing). The wind parts Pesson adds to Bruckner's texture in bars 51-52 double the two violin parts, articulating pitches with lots of breath, '*très détimbré*' (flute 1 and clarinet 1) and barely-pitched tongue rams (flute 2). In presenting Bruckner's continuation of S over the next four bars (53-56) Pesson begins to make some alterations to the source's orchestral configuration but retains the integrity of each textural stratum (Example 5.4). These strata either maintain the same basic instrumentation throughout the whole four-bar block, even if this is different to the *Majestoso*, or fluctuate between similar timbres. For example, the melody alternates between the harmonium and accordion, both keyboard wind-reed instruments. This alternation is perhaps the clearest example of the semantic oscillation between sacred and secular that Pesson associates with timbral fragmentation in his programme note. The timbral instability increases as TG2 continues,

fragmenting Bruckner's melody into ever smaller units until bar 60, but without atomizing it into individual notes (see Example 5.3). While in Bruckner's movement the melody of bars 49-60 remains in the violin I part (with added oboe in bars 53-56), Pesson assigns the first four bars to the violins, then alternates each bar between the harmonium and accordion, before changing instrumentation around every half-bar between the violins, harmonium, accordion, and winds. Bars 57-60 are melodically an altered repetition of bars 49-52, but in *Wunderblock* the timbral fragmentation of this repetition compromises its melodic cohesion. Timbral fragmentation of this kind occurs throughout the rest of TG2 from the level of the phrase down to that of the motif, but largely not individual notes as in TG1.



Example 5.3: Comparison of melody material in bars 49-60 of *Wunderblock* (above) and Bruckner, Sixth Symphony, i (below).



Example 5.4: Orchestration of the four textural strata in Bruckner, Sixth Symphony, I, bars 53-56 in *Wunderblock*.

In his treatment of TG3, Pesson retains the basic approach to unwriting manifested in *Wunderblock*'s TG1 and TG2: all (or almost all) of Bruckner's material is heard, but subjected to varying levels of timbral fragmentation and sonic degradation. TG3 is especially notable for its process of timbral 'normalization' akin to that which occurs in each section of *Nebenstück* and across whole piece, moving broadly from noise and timbral instability towards consistency and *biensonnance*.[85] TG3 begins with a tutti based on the ascending sequential repetition of a single dotted-note idea, telescopically contracting from two-bar to half-bar units at 105, before four exact repetitions of a single-bar unit (bars 106-110) coinciding with an increase in dynamic from *fortissimo* to *fortississimo*. This consistency of orchestration and dynamic contour are not reflected in *Wunderblock*, which instead projects these repetitions through kaleidoscope of different timbral configurations and dynamics. Notably, Bruckner's shift to *fortississimo* in bar 107 is rendered by Pesson at the same volume and with almost exactly the same orchestration:
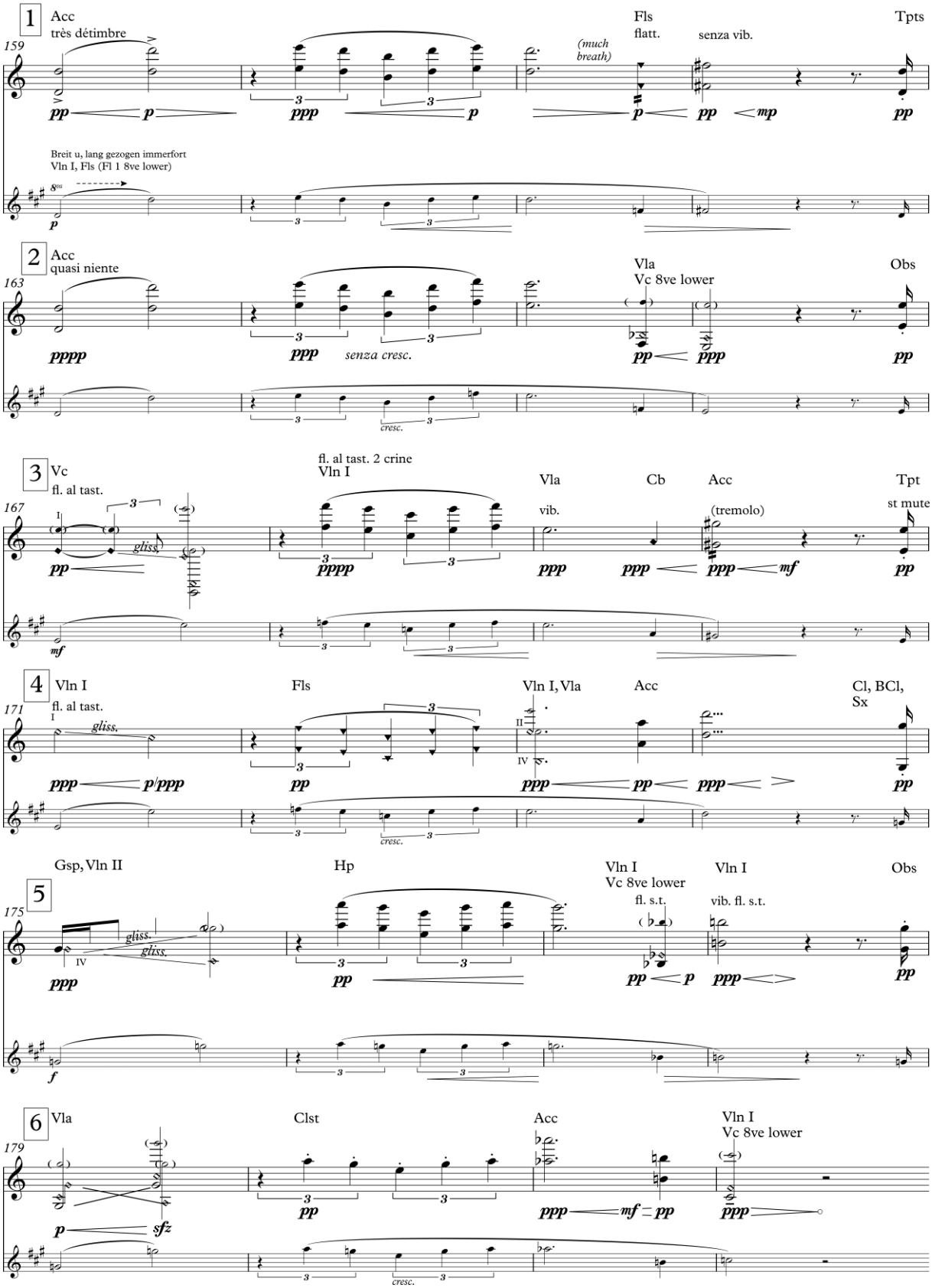
[85] See 3.5.2.

a sudden and shocking burst of the *Majestoso* in a context of mostly very soft sounds. This bar disrupts 'fidelity listening': a listener who has grown used to Pesson's usual style and begun to 'filter it out', focusing on *Wunderblock*'s Brucknerian material, will be shaken by this outburst. The overall effect of the passage is of a listening persona struggling to 'tune in' on the *Majestoso* either psychologically or by frantically adjusting audio settings at a mixing desk.[86] This attempt to 'tune in' on Bruckner's symphony continues, and by bar 129 achieves a degree of success, maintaining a consistency of timbre and *biensonnance* that foregrounds Bruckner's pitch material.

Throughout *Wunderblock*'s exposition, Pesson largely maintains proportionality with corresponding textures in the *Majestoso*, albeit significantly reducing their dynamic and level of *biensonnance*. Omission of Bruckner's material is rare, and so it is possible for a listener to 'follow' the 'unfolding' temporal structure of the *Majestoso* bar by bar despite Pesson's timbral fragmentation and degradation. The exposition echoes the 'fade in' effect evident in the first and subsequent sections of *Nebenstück*.[87] From the development section of *Wunderblock* onwards, however, Pesson takes a fundamentally different approach to erasure. Not only does omission become more prevalent from this point, but the thickness of Pesson's textures often varies in *inverse* proportion to corresponding passages in Bruckner's movement. The first phase of Bruckner's development (bars 145-158) continues textures and figurations from the end of TG3, and Pesson re-presents this material in *Wunderblock* with a degree of erasure similar to that manifested in the work's exposition. In the second phase of the development (bars 159-182), this approach changes (Example 5.5). Bruckner presents six repetitions of a four-bar melody based on P, grouped into three pairs beginning on the pitches D, E, and G. This ascent in pitch is matched by an increase in dynamic: these three pairs are played *piano*, *mezzo forte*, and *forte* respectively, with a crescendo halfway through the second, fourth, and sixth

[86] See 3.4.2 and 3.4.3.
[87] See 3.5.1.

repetitions of the melody. In addition, the scoring of this theme, high in the first violin and flute, doubled an octave lower by the second flute, lends this melody a searing clarity, making it the focal point of the passage's five textural strata. Overall, the passage is marked by a sense of increasing strength and intensity. In *Wunderblock*, by contrast, these six repetitions display the opposite tendency: the melody is audible at first but is steadily 'unwritten', dissolving into the surrounding texture. The first instance of the four-bar melody is stated by the accordion in octaves, *très détimbré* and at a very low dynamic level. The melody is then subjected first to a decrease in dynamic (statement 2) then to increasing timbral fragmentation (statements 3-6). From statement 3 onwards, the melody is hardly audible, not only because of its softness, but also because it gets lost among the other textural strata, also subjected to similar fragmentation. What in Bruckner's movement were accompanying strata momentarily stick out of the texture, first one then another, complicating any sense of a clear 'line'.



Example 5.5: Comparison of melodic material in bars 159-182 of *Wunderblock* (above) and Bruckner, Sixth Symphony, i (below).

In the *Majestoso*, Bruckner follows these six repetitions with sudden reduction of texture and dynamic (bar 183), presenting the dotted-note figures used in the continuation of P.

This material is subject to increasing motivic liquidation and repetition, with a steadily building texture and dynamic culminating in a tutti statement of P, *fortissimo,* at bar 195. Although the motivic and harmonic rhetoric of retransition which precede this statement of P and the forcefulness of its eventual presentation suggest the onset of the recapitulation, this statement is not on A, the tonic, but a tritone away on E-flat: it is a 'false recapitulation'.[88] The recapitulatory rotation actually begins later, at bar 209, with an even more forceful (*fortississimo*) statement of P. Pesson's treatment of this third phase of the development in *Wunderblock* uses Bruckner's recapitulatory feint to prepare for the extreme degree of unwriting, and erasure more generally, in the rest of the piece. In contrast to the repeated P-variants in the development's second phase, *Wunderblock*'s false retransition mimics Bruckner's thickening texture. Pesson's false recapitulation, however, continues the process of progressive erasure initiated in the development. Rather than presenting Bruckner's tutti P-theme as in the exposition, timbrally fragmented but complete, Pesson's false recapitulation makes significant omissions from it (bars 191-208). While the distinctive descending fifth which opens the theme is audible, albeit suffused with noise, the subsequent triplet motif is reduced to a rhythmic skeleton alone, articulated by the violin II and viola parts bowing on their music stands and the saxophone's breath-only effect. The rest of the thematic statement is dominated by similar omissions: only fragments of Bruckner's melody are retained.

Despite this melodic omission, the ostinato stratum of the texture preserves the harmonic contour of the theme despite the use of various extended techniques. Consequently, this passage retains a strong 'flavour' of Bruckner's P-theme, despite most of the theme being omitted. Even listeners with no *inter*-textual knowledge of the *Majestoso* have some *intra*-textual familiarity with the P-theme by this point in *Wunderblock*, having heard several
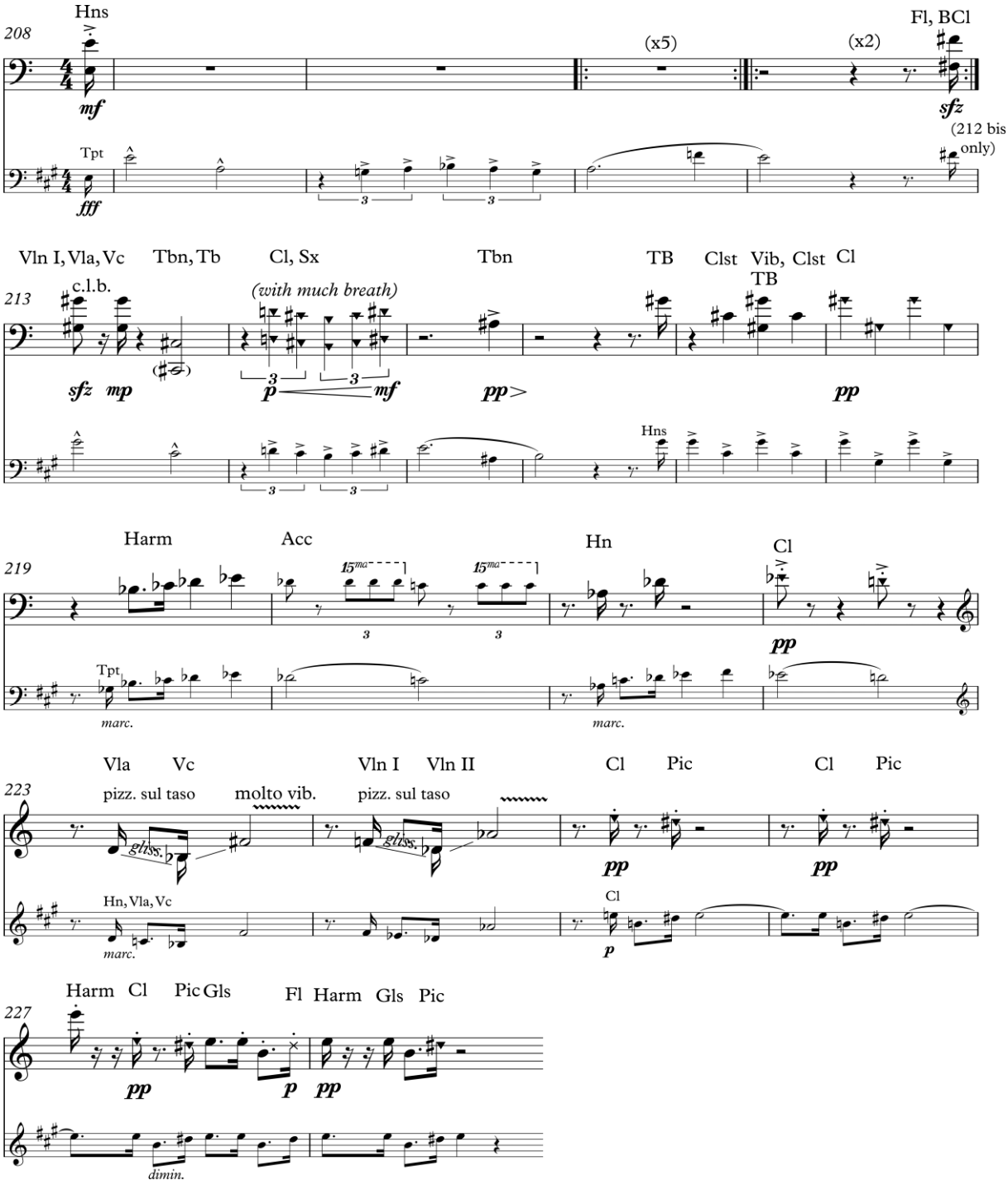
[88] Despite not being in the tonic this statement of P may be termed a 'false recapitulation' in accordance with the notion that '[t]he main feature of a false-recapitulation effect […] involves the invitation to assume inaccurately that the recapitulatory rotation has begun or at least may be beginning.' James A. Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006). 228. See also 223-228.

statements of the theme and material derived from it. The characteristic descending fifth, triplet rhythm, and ostinato accompaniment of Pesson's false recapitulation is therefore enough to suggest the theme without fully presenting it. On the one hand, this effect gives the impression that more of the theme is present than is materially sounded; Pesson's clues invite listeners to psychologically 'fill in the blanks' from their own memory. On the other hand, however, such recall serves to emphasize the almost-complete *absence* of the theme's melodic contour. 'As a Bruckner fan, it excites to hear the familiar nip at our heels', comments Grant Chu Covell: 'However[,] the actual original is so scant that it's easy to imagine stumbling across the piece and not recognizing the pentimento. Quite likely my memory tricks me into hearing more Bruckner than is there. I appreciate the symphony more without actually hearing all of it'.[89]

This process of increasing omission, and the powerful impression of the *Majestoso*'s absence which results, continues into the recapitulatory rotation. While Bruckner reinforced the dominance of his 'real' recapitulation over the 'false' one by an increase in dynamic to *fortississimo*, *Wunderblock* again works against the rhetoric of the *Majestoso*'s sonata structure. Pesson omits all but the most isolated traces of Bruckner's P-theme (Example 5.6). The omissions are particularly extensive in bars 209-212, a stark subversion of the triumphant tonic return of P that sonata principles might lead listeners to expect. Instead, listeners are confronted with an emphatically yawning gap where the theme once was, *perceiving* this absence as a real event akin to Pierre's absence from the café described by Sartre. As well as a greater level of melodic omission than in the 'false recapitulation', this statement of P is not accompanied continually by the ostinato stratum. As well as parts of these strands of the texture being omitted, it is also fragmented and articulated through unpitched sounds alone (for example in bar 212). The harmonic outline of the theme is consequently obscured, pivoting around only the broad shift from A to C-sharp in bar 213. Moreover, the unwriting of Pesson's 'statement',

[89] Grant Chu Covell, 'Graceful Illusionist: Gerard Pesson', *La Folia* (October 2012 2012) <http://www.lafolia.com/graceful-illusionist-gerard-pesson/>, accessed 4 April 2019.
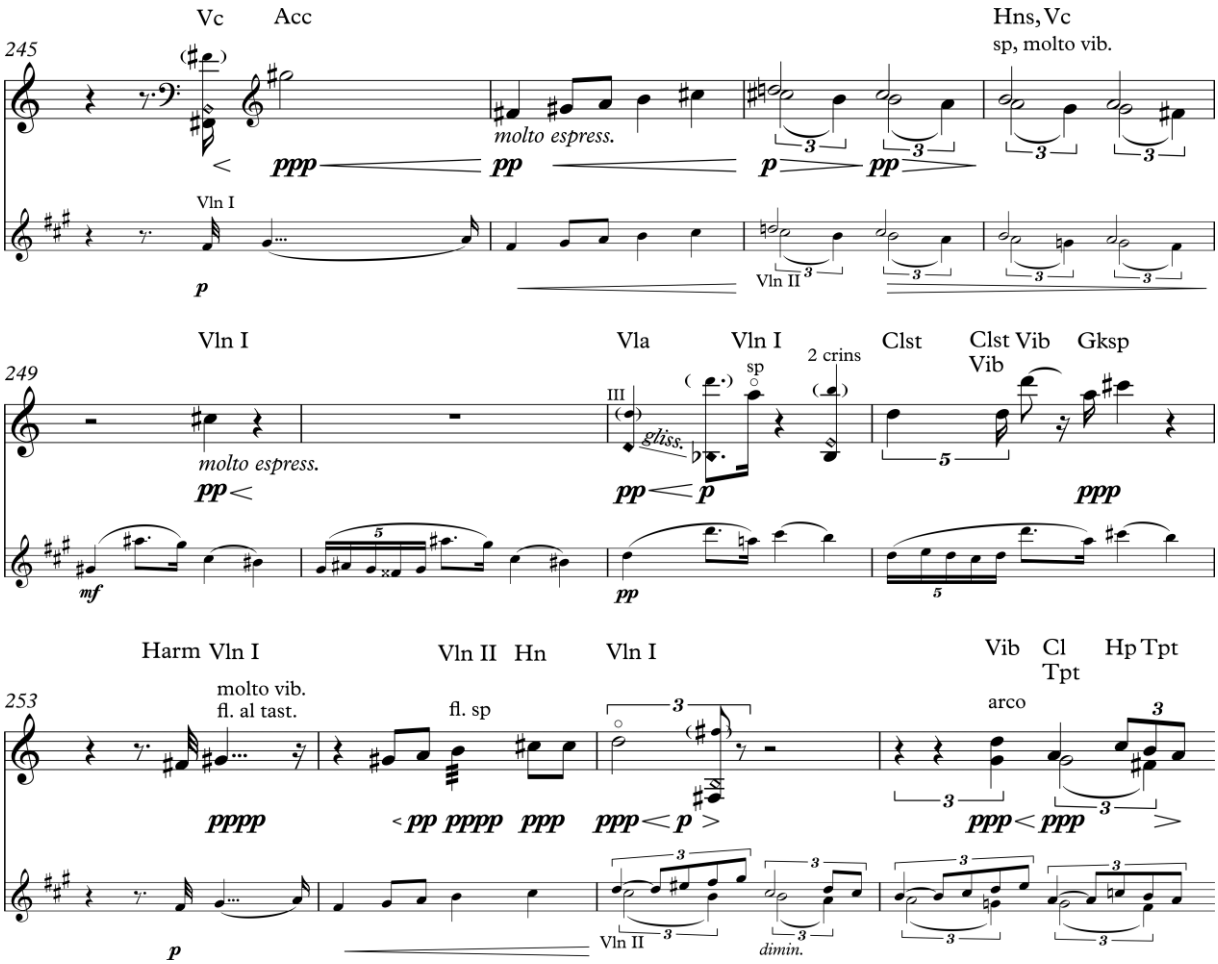
or rather non-statement, of P works in combination with another form of erasure, added repetition. Unlike the repetitional groups in the exposition and development, which slipped extra repetitions into already repetitious passages at the end of Bruckner's thematic panels, RG9 inserts an additional 5 bars into what would have been the very middle of P. If Pesson had retained the melody, this repetition would have been immediately evident, arresting the onward progression of the theme. However, in the theme's absence there is no 'progressing', linear music against which Pesson's deviation from bar-by-bar fidelity to the *Majestoso* might be easily perceived. Other than a suspicion that the harmonic shift in bar 213 comes a bit too late, the addition might pass almost unnoticed: without the 'linear' theme to shape it, the homogeneity of the ostinato makes it difficult for listeners to know exactly 'where they are' in relation to Bruckner's movement. For the rest of TG1, Pesson retains enough of Bruckner's material for a degree of melodic continuity to be restored, but sonic degradation and timbral fragmentation ensure it remains weak.



Example 5.6: Comparison of melodic material in bars 208-228 of *Wunderblock* (above) and Bruckner, Sixth Symphony, i (below).

The 'recapitulation' of TG2 in *Wunderblock* pushes the progressive erasure of Bruckner's material even further than in TG1. While an accompanying ostinato ensures that the 'empty' bars where the tonic return of P might have been maintain a clear metrical identity, Pesson's treatment of TG2 disrupts any sense of this metrical framework (Example 5.7). The first four bars of S (245-248) are identifiable despite extensive timbral fragmentation and degradation. As well as presenting the melodic stratum, metre is retained by the 'walking bass'

despite its reduction to a rhythmic outline. This opening serves as a recognisable intra-textual cue that, despite the confusions of TG1, Pesson's recapitulatory rotation has reached TG2. However, in the following bars (249-256) only isolated notes and fragments of Bruckner's four textural strata remain, and these residues are fractured across the orchestra. The remaining scraps of the theme are not only disconnected from one another but also indistinguishable from the slivers of other textural strata and so become lost amongst them. Although Pesson does not alter the temporal 'position' of these particles of Bruckner's *Majestoso*, their isolation from one another ensures that there is little or no discernible metre in this passage. The pointillist texture, which conveys only the vaguest impression of Bruckner's harmony, seems chaotic and 'formless', as if cast adrift from the rigid metrical scheme of the *Majestoso*. Although this erasure of Bruckner's initial restatement of S is particularly extreme, unwriting of various kinds remains a pervasive destabilizing force throughout the rest of the recapitulatory rotation. Throughout TG2 and TG3 the isolated notes do cohere into recognisable shards of the *Majestoso*, which, as Pesson indicates in his programme note, occur strictly at the exact bar and beat they do in Bruckner's score. However, this rigor is hardly perceptible: the high level of omission decontextualizes these shards enough for them to appear jumbled and arbitrary, as if Pesson assembled a 'collage' of fragments in the rough order suggested by his source, as in *Ambre Nous Resterons*. Two further *fortissimo* outbursts mimicking Bruckner's original orchestration at bars 269 and 285 offer glimpses of the start the *Majestoso*'s tutti statement of S and a distinctive motif from TG3. Far from being points of structural reorientation, they seem to be gratuitous non sequiturs, and in this respect are characteristic of Pesson's approach in the later stages of *Wunderblock*'s recapitulatory rotation.



Example 5.7: Comparison of melodic material in bars 254-256 of *Wunderblock* (above) and Bruckner, Sixth Symphony, i (below).
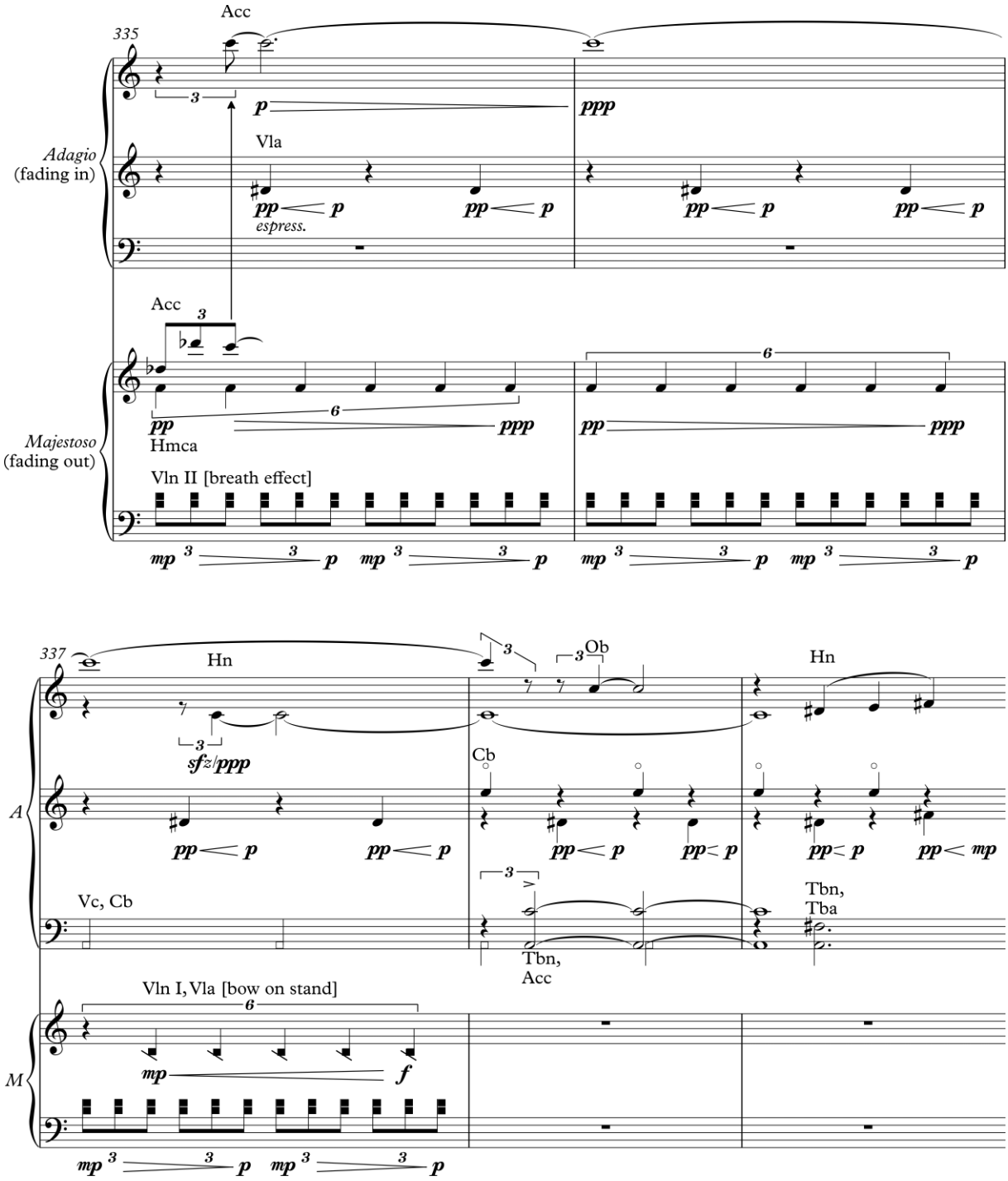
5.3.5 Insertion

In *Wunderblock*'s coda, Pesson combines repetition and unwriting, which he compounded in the recapitulation, with a third technique of erasure, insertion. As indicated explicitly in his programme note, Pesson inserts two 'foreign objects' into the *Majestoso*, or what is left of it in the latter stages of *Wunderblock*: a quotation from the *Adagio* of Bruckner's Sixth Symphony and a 'serial motif and chord'. To consider such insertion a technique of erasure may at first seem counterintuitive, but this interpretation is implied by Pesson's note and borne out by a consideration of the relevant passages of *Wunderblock*. The composer mentions these insertions alongside added repetitions as qualifications to the preceding claim that *Wunderblock* 'strictly respects' the 'unfolding' of its source bar by bar. Tellingly, he explains that his quotation of secondary theme from Bruckner's *Adagio* (bars 25-33), is inserted 'in place of bars 340-351', as if to suggest that it is 'pasted over' those bars of the *Majestoso*

without compromising its metrical structure. However, as with repetition and unwriting, this quotation constitutes a mode of erasure because it undermines perception of Bruckner's movement as a single, linear temporal span. This effect derives from the way in which Pesson works the quotation into *Wunderblock* and the significance of the material from Bruckner's *Majestoso* that it replaces. Although Pesson states that the quotation begins at bar 340, it is prepared by a transition in which the *Majestoso* segues into the *Adagio* in a 'crossfade' effect in bars 335-339. Moreover, the *Adagio* quotation ends two bars sooner than Pesson indicates, at bar 348, with bars 349-351 (including RG13) encompassing the inserted 'serial' pitches to which he also refers. Including the 'crossfade' transition the insertion entirely displaces the first of the grand *fortissimo* tuttis in Bruckner's coda, which until that point remains at low dynamics. Continuing the subversion of Bruckner's triumphant tuttis begun through unwriting in the recapitulatory rotation, *Wunderblock* eludes this sudden eruption, based on P, replacing it with the serene *Adagio* quotation.

The quotation itself is suggestive of the 'odd self-sufficiency' that Korstvedt identifies in many of Bruckner's themes. Continuing the modal inflections of the symphony's first movement, the primary theme of Bruckner's *Adagio* is harmonically ambiguous, suggesting B-flat minor as well as the movement's tonic, F. After this tonally murky opening, Bruckner's sideways slide at bar 25 into the radiant second theme in E major via the uncertain half-diminished seventh of a preceding two-bar 'pickup' is unexpected. The theme appears to transcend and stand apart from the previous material rather than provide a continuation of it. As well as the apparent 'self-sufficiency' of theme inviting Pesson's transplant into the *Majestoso*, its E major tonality is more closely related to the A major of the movement which receives it than the F major of the *Adagio* from which it is drawn. Despite this tonal affinity, Pesson's 'crossfade' maintains the quotation's separation from the *Majestoso* as well as 'blurring' it into its new context (Example 5.8). This 'crossfade' gradually reduces material from the *Majestoso* and adds elements of the 'pickup' which precedes the quoted second theme

of the *Adagio*. In bars 335-337, Pesson's violin II part articulates the triplet-quaver figuration of Bruckner's violin parts, but only through pitchless and very quiet bowing of dampened strings. In bars 335-336, the harmonica softly picks out the repeated Fs of Bruckner's violin II part in those bars, while the violin I and viola parts suggest the triplet-crotchet rhythm of the Bruckner's trumpet part. These elements have all dropped out by bar 338; meanwhile, Pesson builds up the oscillating 'pickup' figure. In bar 335, the third triplet-quaver of Bruckner's violin I part alights on a C-natural, one tone of the half-diminished seventh 'pickup' harmony: Pesson, who transfers this line to the accordion, simply 'freezes' it there, holding this note until bar 338. It is joined by the horn (bar 337) and then the trombone and oboe (bar 338). The oscillating crotchets of Bruckner's figure are suggested by a solo viola's D-sharps (on the second and fourth beats) from bar 335, which eventually grant the expected F-sharp in bar 229. The sustained bass A of this chord is introduced by the 'cellos and basses (bar 337) and then tuba and accordion left hand (bar 339); the sustained E is suggested by the basses' harmonics in bars 338-339. Once this chord is in place, the three-bar rising anacrusis in the first horn part initiates the theme.



Example 5.8: 'Crossfade' into quotation from Bruckner, Sixth Symphony, ii, in *Wunderblock* bars 335-339.

The sustained notes of this 'crossfade' and its transition to the slower tempo of the quotation itself (*molto più lento di prima*) precipitate a 'temporal suspension' similar to that of the added bars of repetition Pesson appends to the liquidations at the end of Bruckner's thematic panels. The motoric quality of the *Majestoso*'s pervasive dotted-note-triplet ostinato evaporates into the quotation, an isolated lyrical 'moment'. Moreover, while the quotation's nine bars tally numerically with the nine bars of the *Majestoso* they replace, their slower tempo means that

they last twice as long in absolute terms. This longer 'absolute' timing is important only insofar as the quotation can be heard as a temporal plateau, as if isolated from the rest of the piece. Pesson's transition back to the material of the *Majestoso*, or remnants of it, similarly marks the quotation's separateness. Initially the quoted theme is clearly audible despite timbral fragmentation and degradation, but from bar 345 this unwriting intensifies and the theme begins to dissolve.[90] Sustained pitches that are dissonant with the prevailing Brucknerian harmony are introduced from bar 344 (the flutes' C-sharp, then the clarinet's A from bar 347). These 'foreign' pitches prepare for the dissonance of the ostinato when it returns, along with the initial tempo, at bar 349, which presumably results from the intrusion of the 'serial' material Pesson mentions in his programme note.[91] Pesson's insertion vividly recalls the 'quotation listening' Adorno describes as concomitant with the breakdown of a symphonic movement's unified temporal structure.

The inserted *Adagio* quotation and intrusion of atonal harmony can be heard as dealing a fatal blow to the *Majestoso*, which is subject to increasing levels of erasure throughout *Wunderblock* up to this point. This erasure is especially extensive from the recapitulatory rotation, which offers little in the way of thematic recurrence. Instead, its intra-textual similarity with the expositional rotation allows listeners to psychologically 'fill in' the largely missing themes. It is Pesson's quotation from outside the *Majestoso*, however, that seems to seal its fate, obliterating it completely; in the rest of the coda nothing of the triumphant *fortississimo* fanfares which conclude Bruckner's movement remains. Instead, only traces of the ostinato persist, as if frantically counting off the expanse of empty bars until the end of the movement. In this context, RG 13 and 14 delay this now-arbitrary endpoint imperceptibly: the reduction of Bruckner's entire texture to a homogenous ostinato makes these additional repetitions almost

[90] The start of this timbral breakdown coincides with Bruckner's destabilizing shift to an A-flat harmony.
[91] Exactly how these pitches are derived from the name of the dedicatee, Mathieu Bonilla, or operate serially, as Pesson specifies, is unclear. The private meaning of this cipher is less significant than the contrast it provides to Bruckner's tonal harmony. Bar 215, during the significant and much-erased 'recapitulation' of P, also uses an inserted atonal harmony, apparently also derived from Pesson's serial material.

impossible to discern. The extent of the erasure compromises the degree to which even a listener familiar with Bruckner's symphony can know what material they might expect to hear in these bars. Unlike earlier in *Wunderblock*, notably the opening of the recapitulatory rotation, the absence or destruction of the *Majestoso* is, in Sartre's terms, judged rather than perceived. Finally, the ostinato is heard only on music boxes tuned to the key of A major, before coming to a bathetic, muffled halt.

5.4 Conclusion

5.4.1 Erasing time

The preceding analysis of erasure as a formal principle in *Wunderblock* invites a reconsideration of Pesson's paratextual claim that the 'unfolding' of Bruckner's 'original score' is 'strictly respected, bar number by bar number'. On the one hand, this claim to linear temporal fidelity is entirely justified: each and every bar of Bruckner's *Majestoso* is matched with a corresponding bar in *Wunderblock*, which follows their order exactly (albeit duplicating some bars though repetition). On the other, careful consideration of Pesson's erasure suggests that, far from confirming the idea of linear temporal fidelity, *Wunderblock* empties this idea of meaning, pushing it to a breaking point that reveals its inherent contradictions and simplifications. Consider, for example, Fabrice Fitch's invocation of this idea: '*Wunderblock* […] "underwrites" [*sic*] the *Maestoso* [*sic*] from Bruckner's Sixth Symphony in a manner reminiscent of Hans Zender's transcriptions. For all the distortions and parasitical incursions from elsewhere, the substructure of the original is audible throughout'.[92] Like maready's forum post, Fitch's description justifies *Wunderblock*'s status as a true transcription (or arrangement) by reference to its ostensible linear temporal fidelity. However, the way in which Pesson's process of erasure varies across the course of *Wunderblock*, rather than remaining uniform, places Fitch's assertion of linear temporal fidelity under considerable strain for two reasons.

[92] Fabrice Fitch, 'Pesson: Aggravations et Final', *Gramophone*, 87/1053 (2010), 63.

Firstly, while each bar of Bruckner's 'original' movement is 'audible' as the 'substructure' of *Wunderblock* throughout its expositional rotation, the recapitulatory rotation and coda feature many passages where almost none of Bruckner's material remains. Fragments that can be recognized are decontextualized to the extent that they cannot easily be heard as belonging to a continuous Brucknerian 'substructure'. In asserting the omnipresence of this 'substructure', Fitch's description implies that Bruckner's musical material is a superficial aspect of the *Majestoso*, whose more fundamental identity is determined by the temporal span with which it is coterminous.[93]

Daniel Chua compares this conception of events such as music occupying rather than constituting time to the way objects inhabit rather than define space in the visual linear perspective of modernity. 'In the enchanted world of the ancients', he argues, 'music was an airy substance; it did not occupy space, it was its very essence. Artificial perspective, on the other hand, drains out the substantive meaning of harmonic space to situate reality within an empty geometry'.[94] Implicit in Fitch's comments is the idea that time is a 'space' that a musical work (such as the *Majestoso*) 'occupies', and therefore that the musical time of the work is the 'space' which is 'occupied' by an arrangement of it (such as *Wunderblock*). Such a spatialized conception of musical time implies that even if an arrangement omits a work's musical material, the musical time 'occupied' by that material, the temporal scaffolding upon which it rests, remains. Pesson's erasure of Bruckner's *Majestoso* in *Wunderblock* progressively reveals the 'empty geometry' of this temporal 'scaffolding' just as Rauschenberg revealed the blank paper upon which De Kooning layered the graphite of his drawing. From this perspective, it seems that the time of the *Majestoso* remains even if it is filled with musical material from elsewhere, as Pesson's meticulous specification of the *Adagio* quotation's bar numbers suggests. Crucially,

[93] Fitch's recourse to the metaphor of depth conventionally used to describe arrangement is significant: the almost complete absence of Bruckner's musical material is understood as the presence of the *Majestoso* on a 'deeper' temporal level (a form of fidelity-essentialism). See 3.2.1.
[94] Daniel K. L. Chua, *Absolute Music and the Construction of Meaning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). 52.

however, by ‘emptying’ the temporal ‘container’ of the *Majestoso* to ever greater degrees, and the insertion of the *Adagio* quotation, *Wunderblock* reveals the absurdity of this spatial logic, following it ‘to the letter’ (or rather bar number).

The second and more important reason linear temporal fidelity is put under pressure in *Wunderblock* is that Pesson’s methods of erasure do not simply erase the Brucknerian material supported by the *Majestoso*’s ‘empty’ temporal scaffolding but also undermine the stability of the scaffolding itself. Added repetitions exaggerate the way in which Bruckner’s ‘cycling’ motivic liquidations separate the *Majestoso* into free-floating musical panels with an ‘odd self-sufficiency’, dissolving the single temporal arc which supposedly constitutes its stable ‘form’. Even without directly altering the metrical structure of Bruckner’s movement, the fragmentation and decontextualization of material caused by Pesson’s ever-increasing level of unwriting has a similar effect, disrupting any sense of a continuous, linear temporal ‘substructure’. Pesson’s insertion of material, most notably the *Adagio* quotation with its slower tempo, similarly denies the perceptual continuity of the *Majestoso*, however accurately Pesson adheres to its metrical numbers in the score. Erasure in *Wunderblock* does not scratch away Bruckner’s movement to reveal the ‘passage’ of musical time ‘beneath’, instead fracturing it into multiple fragments while alluding to its now-absent temporal structure.

5.4.2 Erasing subjectivity

The formal complexities of Pesson’s ‘attempt at the erasure’ of Bruckner’s *Majestoso* and the various modes of presence and absence they suggest cannot be reduced to a single ‘concept’ in the way Steinberg thought Rauschenberg’s *Erased De Kooning Drawing* could. Having addressed these complexities, however, it is worth re-engaging with explicit questions of *Wunderblock*’s meaning, keeping in mind how musical details shape and contribute to possible interpretations of the work. Pesson’s reference to Rauschenberg’s erasure provides a useful point of orientation in sketching potential interpretations of *Wunderblock*, which might draw on its reception by listeners as well as comments and paratexts provided by its composer.

From one perspective, Rauschenberg's *Erased De Kooning Drawing* aims at the erasure, or apparent erasure, of subjectivity.[95] De Kooning was not simply a leading artist of the generation preceding Rauschenberg, but also a proponent of the then-dominant abstract expressionism, a style characterised by 'a concern with varying degrees of abstraction used to convey strong emotional or expressive content'.[96] In particular, artists of the so-called 'New York School' sought to follow Surrealism in 'unleashing the disruptive forces of the unconscious', albeit with more serious intent.[97] In erasing a drawing by De Kooning, Rauschenberg not only destroyed the graphical traces of another artist's subjectivity, but created an artwork which rejected the premise of subjective expression; he 'literally effaced the Western view of the heroic individual creating precious objects'.[98] The Austro-German symphonic tradition after Beethoven offers a paradigmatic musical manifestation of this view of art.[99] By erasing such a symphony and explicitly aligning the result with Rauschenberg's conceptual artwork Pesson seems to posit *Wunderblock* as a similar rejection of subjective expression.

The situation presented in *Wunderblock*, however, is more complex, because Bruckner's *Majestoso* can itself be understood as rejecting direct subjective expression even before Pesson's process of erasure. Pesson professes a particular affinity with the 'antarctic' quality of Bruckner's music, suggesting a coldness and vastness that seems to eschew the personal scale and 'warmth' of human expression. Recall, for example, Macassar's description of the composer's 'symphonic mastodons' as 'oversized', exhibiting 'disproportionate elongation', and full of 'overwhelming roars': this music seems indifferent to individuality, simultaneously dwarfing listeners and freezing them out. This 'antarctic' quality can be understood

[95] See Lloyd Whitesell, 'White Noise: Race and Erasure in the Cultural Avant-Garde', *American Music*, 19/2 (2001), 168-189. 183-184.
[96] David Anfam, 'Abstract Expressionism', in Judith Rodenbeck (ed.), *Grove Art Online* (Oxford University Press, 2003).
[97] Ibid.
[98] David Craven, 'Conceptual Art', ibid. Rauschenberg's later involvement with the more impersonal approach of pop art is significant in this respect, especially given Pesson's interest in the movement (see 6.6.1).
[99] On this Beethovenian model of musical subjectivity, see Burnham, *Beethoven Hero*.

theologically, as inspired by Bruckner's religious faith.[100] His gigantic and curiously impersonal symphonies appear to subordinate individual subjectivity to the representation of an infinite and eternal divinity. That this interpretation should be significant for Pesson is suggested by the explicit connection he draws between Bruckner's formal procedures and religious faith, likening his successive, circling panels to those of Messiaen and associating this approach to form with both composers' Catholicism.

In his discussion of musical space and perspective, Chua associates such fracturing and cyclicality of form with the theologically-centred view of the world found in medieval art.

> Instead of coalescing space into a unified vision from which vantage point infinity can be perceived on earth, the transcendental vision of the ancient world was predicated on the shattering of space that defers the totality as an inconceivable vision that only God can grasp. In order for humanity to catch a glimpse of eternity, multiple glances had to be mapped over one another as decentred and fissured planes.[101]

To understand a musical Work as a single, spatialized temporal arc implies a Godlike subjective perspective from which the Work is perceived from the 'outside'; such an arc 'contain[s] music within a geometrical space that pictures the totality as a map', or score.[102] In contrast, the fractured panels of Bruckner's music places listeners 'inside' a vast structure which, like God's Creation, lies beyond their comprehension as a totality.[103] The tension between cyclicality and linearity in Pesson's interpretation of Bruckner's forms also suggests the combination of eternal divinity and the teleology of incarnation and apocalypse which structure the temporal worldview of Christianity. That Pesson also mentions Messiaen in this context, whose *Quatuor pour la Fin du Temps* (1941) among other works uses large-scale temporal cycles alongside linear elements, hints at the potential relevance of such an interpretation to *Wunderblock*.

---

[100] For discussion of Bruckner as a figure in the context of his faith and more generally, see Brüstle, 'The Musical Image of Bruckner'.
[101] Chua, *Absolute Music*. 53.
[102] Ibid. 54.
[103] On the relationship between Bruckner's music and gothic church architecture, see Johnson, *Out of Time*. 104-105.

Bruckner's representation of the individual subject 'erased' in the face of something more vast and powerful is unsettling, not least because of the cultural work this sacred aspect of his music, stripped of its explicitly Christian qualities, subsequently performed during the Third Reich. Christa Brüstle notes that 'Bruckner's music was so highly prized' within this ideology 'because of its "absolute religious content"': 'it was functionally integrated within the pseudo-religious Nazi cult, and underpinned the Nazis' aesthetic predisposition to gigantomania'.[104] Similarly, Alexander Rehding argues that the 'quasi-religious' monumentality of Bruckner's music facilitated its appropriation in the Third Reich: 'The Catholic background of Bruckner's music […] was erased in favor of a wordless semantic void, an inarticulate sense of awe and wallowing in sounds. Once replaced with the non-denominational cultish cathedral built of sounds, it could then quickly be refilled with a new significance to serve new ends'.[105] Rehding's insightful discussion of Bruckner's monumentalism in conjunction with Nazi architecture demonstrates how his music suited fascist ideology, which emphasized the submission of the individual to the supposedly vast and unstoppable force of the collective. The repurposing of the monumental aspect of Bruckner's music was perhaps most evident in the Regensburg Bruckner *Erlebnis* (1937) overseen by Joseph Goebbels, at which Adolf Hitler inaugurated a bust of the composer at the Walhalla monument. The 'musical and emotional tissues' of this monumental event, Rehding states, 'made for an inescapably awe-inspiring moment, one that cannot but reduce the individual to silence'.[106]

5.4.3 Erasing erasure

If for Pesson Bruckner's music represents an erasure of subjectivity, whether theological or politically totalitarian in inspiration, then *Wunderblock* can be interpreted as

[104] Brüstle, 'The Musical Image of Bruckner'. 258. For discussion of the role of Bruckner's music in the Third Reich, see also Horton, *Bruckner's Symphonies*. 64-91.Alexander Rehding, *Music and Monumentality: Commemoration and Wonderment in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). 180-196.
[105] Rehding, *Music and Monumentality*. 196.
[106] Ibid. 196

'erasing' that erasure. Pesson's process of erasure undermines the monumental, overwhelming, sonorities of the *Majestoso* as well as 'belittling' its grandiosity through playful parody.[107] In particular, the composer has characterised *Wunderblock*'s orchestration as a subversion of sacred dimension of Bruckner's music, transferring its monumentality to the miniaturized realm of childhood. 'I have made a translation that I hope you don't take as a blasphemy', Pesson explains: 'Bruckner was an organist, he was extremely pious, very very devout and, in fact, I offer a version [of the *Majestoso*] which is a little more popular and most importantly a little more portable, since you don't have a large organ in a child's room'.[108] Bruckner's organ at St. Florian is replaced by a 'dreadful' electronic harmonium 'which gives a bit of a kitschy colouring, sometimes close to marvellous as well'.[109] In this way, Pesson humorously humanizes Bruckner's 'antarctic' music while committing an apparent 'blasphemy' to undercut its theological emphasis on the listener's insignificance before the divine.

The formal processes in *Wunderblock* are also important in this respect. In pushing to an extreme the tendency of the *Majestoso* to fracture into an arbitrary sequence of individual panels, Pesson transforms its apparent representation of one absolute, ultimate Being, into its opposite, nothingness. From a Sartrean perspective, it is from this nothingness, the capacity for negation possessed by 'being-for-itself', that the freedom of the individual subject arises. More specifically, the perception of nothingness afforded by *Wunderblock* invites reflection on the listener's active role in constituting musical form and its 'destruction' rather than passively receiving either as an objective 'given'. Pesson may erase any sense of expressive subjectivity projected by Bruckner's 'antarctic' music but the utter 'whiteout' of *Wunderblock*'s conclusion

[107] Carl Dahlhaus noted the monumental qualities of the first movement of the Sixth Symphony in particular. See Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989). 272-274. On parody, see 6.6.1.

[108] 'J'ai fait une translation qui j'espère on n'est pas pris comme un blasphème […] Bruckner était organiste […] il était extrêmement pieux, très très croyant et, en fait, je donne une version […] un peu populaire et surtout un peu plus portable, puisque un grand orgue, on ne l'a pas dans une chambre d'un enfant.' Pesson, 'La Composition Comme Auto-Fiction'. 37:42.

[109] 'épouvantable'; 'qui donne une couleur un peu le kitsch, à coté parfois merveilleux aussi.' ibid. 38:15. On the relationship between arrangement, popularity, and kitsch, see 2.5 and 6.2.

directs attention towards listening subjects, whether those listening to Pesson's arrangement or the listening persona it implies. With no external reference points provided by the *Majestoso*, all that remains is the listening self and its musical memories.

Ideology might be understood as a complex of memories which we forget we possess but that nonetheless influence how we 'determine ourselves in the face of the world', to use Sartre's phrase. Lloyd Whitesell characterizes the avant-garde's longstanding 'fascination with nothingness' as ideologically-inspired, expressing an idea of 'erasing culture' which actually coercively posits one cultural perspective, in particular that he associates with racial 'whiteness', as an unquestioned 'background' against which meaning is determined.[110] 'Space, time, color, affect, substance: their negation inspires exhilarating dreams of transcendence and universality'.[111] For Whitesell the 'unmarked background' staged in Rauschenberg's *Erased De Kooning Drawing* and other works '*is* nothing, but predates everything and could be anything', appearing 'both neutral and universal, nothing in particular and yet representative of art in general'.[112]

Pesson's interest in 'unwriting', and especially his process of erasure in *Wunderblock*, might seem to strive for a similarly ideological 'erasure of culture', but his parallel concern with memory resists the 'dreams of transcendence' Whitesell describes.

> Full ears/empty ears: to me this axis seems very relevant in questioning a listening. I have always had the hyperesthetic sensation of being traversed by musical phrases, scraps, refrains, and in a purely internal way, without being triggered, as some people have a 'hum-sickness'. My music is, I fear, consistent with this affliction. An echo chamber, or even recording of my own ghosts, it speaks of this diachronic polyphony. However, such a flow, that writing must capture, channel, running towards its estuary, tends toward an ambition of blankness, uniqueness, in short of a vacuum by saturation.[113]

[110] Whitesell, 'White Noise: Race and Erasure in the Cultural Avant-Garde'. 170.
[111] Ibid. 174.
[112] Ibid. 184.
[113] 'Oreilles pleines / oreilles vides : cet axe me semble très pertinent pour questionner une écoute. J'ai toujours eu cette sensation, hyperesthésique, d'être traversé de phrases musicales, de bribes, de refrains, et cela de manière purement intérieure, sans que se déclenche, comme chez certains, un « mal du fredon ». Ma musique est conséquente, je le crains, à cette affection. Chambre d'écho, ou même d'enregistrement de mes propres fantômes, elle dit cette polyphonie diachronique. Pourtant, un tel flux, que l'écriture doit capter, canaliser, coulant vers son

The ‘ambition of blankness’ Pesson describes is not an erasure but a ‘saturation’, continually compromised by the incursion of musical memory: ‘There is certainly no listening which is innocent or absolutely de-ideologized’.[114] In this context, it is significant that the composer describes *Wunderblock* as an *attempt* at the erasure of Bruckner’s *Majestoso*, implying that memory will always prevent completion of this process. Most obviously, *Wunderblock* presents a residual memory of the *Majestoso*, the absence of which is omnipresent in the piece. As Covell’s account of ‘hearing more Bruckner than is there’ attests, listeners are invited to *perceive* the *Majestoso* through its destruction in the manner discussed by Sartre. More importantly, however, Pesson does not posit the linear temporal ‘background’ upon which Bruckner’s musical material is figured as either present or absent as ‘neutral’. In attempting to erase even this linear temporal ‘scaffolding’, Pesson figures it against the ‘ground’ of the *Majestoso*. This potentially critical shift in perspective throws the particularity of the linear, architectonic notion of the Work and the structural listening which ‘follows’ it into stark relief, relativizing this ideological ‘background’ rather positing it as universal.[115] From this standpoint, *Wunderblock*’s continuing linear temporal fidelity to the *Majestoso* resists rather than reflects the desire for a ‘de-ideologized listening’; this ideological ‘background’ cannot be forgotten, and Pesson’s *attempt* to erase it does not pretend to succeed. More than the unconscious memory of Bruckner’s *Majestoso*, *Wunderblock* records the traces that the idea of the temporally linear Work leaves on the experience of listening.

Given the way Bruckner’s music was used to quell the individual during the Third Reich, Pesson’s erasure of the *Majestoso*’s monumental dimensions in *Wunderblock* might be considered ‘progressive’ in the sense Adorno suggested the timbrally-reduced ‘radio symphony’ might be in case of ‘drug-like’ music. Although ultimately upholding the notion of

estuaire, va vers une ambition de blancheur, d’unicité, en somme de vide par saturation.’ Pesson, Dousson, and Troche, 'Entretien avec Gérard Pesson'. 338.

[114] ‘Il n’y a certes pas d’écoute innocente, ni tout à fait désidéologisée’. Ibid. 338.

[115] This reversal is similar to that suggested by the first *Nebenstück*, see 3.5.3 and 3.7.

structural listening, writing in 1941 in exile from war-torn Europe Adorno seems particularly aware of its totalitarian potential, the temporal totality of the Work 'surrounding' and subsuming the listener, 'annihilating' their individual existence. Implicitly, he acknowledges that the symphonic 'cathedral' he upholds may not be so different from the what Rehding calls the 'cultish cathedral built of sounds' favoured by Goebbels. Sartre describes the perception of destruction as dependent on an individual's determination in the face of the world; Pesson's erasure of the *Majestoso* invites listeners to consider how they determine themselves in the face of the Work. For Sartre working on *Being and Nothingness* in occupied France, the question of destruction and how it is perceived was not an abstract one. Decades later, maready heard *Wunderblock* as representing the destroyed *Majestoso* from Furtwängler's esteemed recording of Bruckner's Sixth Symphony, made the same year *Being and Nothingness* was published, 1943. The production and destruction of this recording in wartime is intimately bound up with the appropriation of Bruckner's music during the Third Reich: Goebbels himself appointed Furtwängler president of the propagandistic Deutsche Bruckner-Gesellschaft, even if the conductor resisted the regime in other ways.[116] Although maready does not explicitly refer to this appropriation, to hear *Wunderblock* as evoking the destruction and continuing cultural significance of Furtwängler's *Majestoso* suggests that, far from attempting an ideological 'erasure of culture', Pesson's piece has the potential to remind listeners of this music's troubling reception history. The nothingness of the *Majestoso* presented by *Wunderblock*'s timbral and temporal erasure resists a mere 'restoration' of Bruckner's overwhelming music which would allow listeners to lose themselves in, and forget the dangers of, its monumental character. In this respect, it is apt that Pesson should frame *Wunderblock* as a musical depiction of unconscious memory. Such memory is powerful but imperfect: *Wunderblock* represents the impossibility of fully forgetting or fully remembering, and the destructive potential of both.

[116] For discussion of Furtwängler's involvement with the Nazi appropriation of Bruckner, see Brüstle, 'The Musical Image of Bruckner'. 258; Roger Allen, *Wilhelm Furtwängler: Art and the Politics of the Unpolitical* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2018). 148-160.

6 Fidelity, Kitsch, and *Kein Deutscher Himmel*

6.1 Introduction

In 2003, the French chamber choir Accentus released *Transcriptions*, an album of eleven choral adaptations of existing works for other performing forces. Nominated for a Grammy Award the following year and selling over 130,000 copies to date, *Transcriptions* cemented Accentus's reputation as a 'serious' classical choir with a broad popular appeal.[1] As well as commissioning challenging new compositions Accentus performs well-known 'classical pops'; these facets of their work converge in the four tracks on *Transcriptions* which feature music arranged especially for the choir.[2] The most substantial of these, and the album's longest track, is Gérard Pesson's *Kein Deutscher Himmel*, an arrangement of the Adagietto from Gustav Mahler's Fifth Symphony setting texts by the German Romantic poet August von Platen (1796-1835), from which its title is drawn.[3] Pesson's use of these texts, which record Platen's impressions of Venice, alludes to Luchino Visconti's inclusion of the Adagietto in his film *Death in Venice* (1971), adapted from Thomas Mann's novella (1912), which ensured the movement's status as a popular classic.[4] Laurence Equilbey, the choir's director, has explained that it was the desire to record *Kein Deutscher Himmel*, created for the then newly-formed Accentus in 1997, which provided the impetus to create an album of transcriptions.[5] *Kein Deutscher Himmel* proved a catalyst for Accentus's early success which in turn exposed the transcription to a much wider audience than that of any of Pesson's other music. A *New York Times* review of one of Accentus's concerts describes *Kein Deutscher Himmel* as an 'expert

[1] The album was nominated in the 'best choral performance' category. See 'Accentus, Le Projet, Biographie', *Accentus* <http://www.accentus.fr/leprojet/accentus/biographie-2/>, accessed 9 April 2019. See *Transcriptions* (2003, Naïve), CD.
[2] The phrase 'classical pops' is used in Accentus's own promotional material. See *Transcriptions [1 and 2]* (2008, Naïve), CD. Liner notes 45.
[3] Gérard Pesson, *Kein Deutscher Himmel pour Chœur Mixte* (Paris: Henry Lemoine, 2001 [1997]) [Score].
[4] *Death in Venice* (Warner Brothers, 1971), Luchino Visconti (dir.), DVD (2004); Thomas Mann, *Death in Venice and Other Stories*, trans. David Luke (London: Vintage, 1998).
[5] 'When we recorded the first disc [of transcriptions], the idea was above all to record Mahler's Adagietto revisited by Gérard Pesson, and then we added some Wolf and another Mahler'. Equilbey in *Transcriptions [1 and 2]* (2008). 39.

and captivating' transcription by 'an otherwise unknown composer'.[6] The choir's recording was similarly warmly received as 'ravishing' in Marc Rochester's review of *Transcriptions* in *Gramophone*, and its popular appeal is indicated by the numerous ecstatic responses it has prompted on online platforms such as YouTube: 'Surely an unsurpassed ethereal beauty?', 'voices from heaven!', 'Sublime'.[7]

As these repeated references to *Kein Deutscher Himmel*'s 'beauty' suggest, the transcription embraces the *biensonnance* avoided in Pesson's other works, including his arrangements of Romantic repertoire such as the two *Nebenstücke*. In contrast to these transformative reworkings, *Kein Deutscher Himmel* seems to affirm rather than 'unwrite' or undermine its source. Pesson renders the minutest details of the Adagietto's soaring string lines and harp figurations within a sumptuous and plausibly Mahlerian choral idiom which eschews 'anachronistic' extended techniques.[8] '*Kein Deutscher Himmel is* Mahler's Adagietto', writes Alfonso Alberti, 'not one note more, not one less'.[9] The transcription is notable among Pesson's arrangements for its seemingly fastidious fidelity to its source. The more 'accessible' style implied by this approach and its conformity with the fidelity discourse prevalent in discussions of arrangement are likely to have facilitated the transcription's popularity.

However, despite being Pesson's most popular work, *Kein Deutscher Himmel* has prompted more critical suspicion than any of his other music. Negative reactions to the transcription have ranged from implicit reservations about its artistic value to more-or-less overt embarrassment, disgust, condemnation, and even moral outrage. This critical suspicion is

[6] James R. Oestreich, 'Spirits, But Not Heavenly, In a Wordless Song of Love', *New York Times*, 20 November 2000.
[7] Marc Rochester, 'Accentus Transcriptions', *Gramophone*, 81/973 (2003), 103; 'Mahler Adagietto - The Accentus Chamber Choir', *YouTube* [Video and comments], <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4H4pNFF5nBM>, accessed 11 April 2019. As in the previous chapter, the non-standard orthography of internet sources has been retained.
[8] The transcription's more modern origin is, however, signalled by the virtuosity demanded of all its singers: Equilbey describes it as 'very, very, very difficult'. Laurence Equilbey, 'A Question to... Laurence Equilbey, Conductor', *Gramophone*, 81/973 (2003), 11.
[9] Alfonso Alberti, 'Intersections 06; No German Sky: Death in Venice according to Gérard Pesson', *Limenmusic* (14 February 2011) <http://limenmusic.info/?page_id=2077>, accessed 18 April 2019. Emphasis added.

evident in the responses of a diverse array of listeners espousing a variety of aesthetic outlooks, from musical professionals to those commenting online. *Kein Deutscher Himmel* has not elicited more criticism than Pesson's other arrangements simply because of its greater public exposure. Rather, this chapter argues that this critical suspicion of *Kein Deutscher Himmel* results, directly or indirectly, from the very emphasis on 'fidelity' that has facilitated its popular success. In particular, the fraught relationship between the transcription's 'fidelity' and the popular associations of its source has led many listeners to regard it as kitsch.

Kein Deutscher Himmel's 'fidelity' has associated it with kitsch according to two different critical paradigms which are nonetheless prone to entanglement.[10] The first paradigm is broadly modernist in orientation, positing Pesson's 'faithful' transcription as kitsch which exploits and perpetuates the fetishization and commodification of Mahler's Adagietto. From this standpoint, the transcription's 'beauty' seemingly 'betrays' the more 'challenging' musical idiom of his overtly transformative reworkings and the critical stance it implies. This position is articulated, albeit ironically, in Matthew Mendez's observation that the arch-modernist composer Helmut Lachenmann 'would positively vomit if he heard Pesson's popular choral [transcription]' of the Adagietto.[11] The second critical paradigm posits *Kein Deutscher Himmel* as kitsch which 'hijacks' Mahler's Adagietto, 'betraying' its supposedly 'authentic' meaning in favour of the 'inauthentic' popular associations supplied by *Death in Venice*. The condemnation of the work on these grounds by the prominent Mahlerian Henry-Louis de La Grange is an especially noteworthy example of this 'authenticist' paradigm. The potentially deceptive quality of *Kein Deutscher Himmel*'s formal 'fidelity' to the Adagietto is crucial to both critical paradigms.[12] From a modernist perspective, this 'fidelity' reifies and commodifies an already suspiciously 'affirmative' example of Mahler's music. Conversely, the authenticist paradigm

[10] On the association between arrangement and kitsch see 2.5.
[11] Matthew Mendez, 'Lachenmann, Pesson, and Insubstantiality (or: Zombie Music)', *Soundproof Room* (27 May 2014) <http://soundproofedblog.blogspot.com/2014/05/lachenmann-pesson-zombies.html>, accessed 20 April 2019.
[12] See 2.5.1.

interprets the transcription's formal 'fidelity' as an implicit and deceptive claim to project its 'original' meaning 'faithfully' due to the 'formalist fallacy'.[13] Either paradigm may incite distain for the way arrangement reconfigures works of art music for mass consumption.

This chapter seeks to illuminate the complexities of contemporary arrangement discourse by probing the relationship between these two critical paradigms, *Kein Deutscher Himmel*, and the concept of kitsch. The longstanding modernist distain for arrangements as kitsch provides a critical context for an initial account of the marginal position occupied by Pesson's choral transcriptions in discussions of his work. The chapter then situates *Kein Deutscher Himmel* within the longer reception history of the Adagietto, a locus of debate regarding the 'Mahler revival', kitsch, and *Death in Venice*. Following this, Pesson's varied and complex comments about the transcription are interpreted as attempts to present it favourably to audiences according to modernist and authenticist critical paradigms. Finally, the chapter charts how the commercial distribution of *Kein Deutscher Himmel* has simplified Pesson's potentially reflexive engagement with kitsch, promoting discourses of authenticity and affectivity which have shaped its reception.

6.2 Modernism, kitsch, and arrangement

6.2.1 Modernism and kitsch

Modernist art and criticism can be understood as motivated primarily by an opposition to kitsch. The way that modernist discourse privileges novel forms and techniques which result in complex or 'difficult' works is motivated in part by the desire to resist the supposed formulaic banality of kitsch presented for mass consumption.[14] It is no coincidence, then, that kitsch first received extensive theoretical attention in the work of modernist critics in the early twentieth century, who articulated their artistic values in opposition to it. Clement Greenberg's essay

[13] See 2.4.

[14] For the purpose of clarity this chapter uses the term 'modernist' with this specific characterization in mind, rather attempting to provide a comprehensive definition of the term.

'Avant-Garde and Kitsch' (1939) is typical in this regard, positing the two trends of his title as antithetical but historically inseparable. Concerned with the 'tremendous interval that separates from each other two such simultaneous cultural phenomena as the avant-garde and kitsch', he characterizes the former as 'genuine' art and the latter as 'ersatz culture' that is conducive to appropriation as totalitarian propaganda.[15]

Crucially, however, Greenberg suggests that kitsch's role as a falsified substitute for 'genuine' art means that it necessarily bears a close, if superficial, resemblance to it. 'Kitsch, [uses] for raw material the debased and academicized simulacra of genuine culture', which is 'the source of its profits', while the avant-garde is in perpetual danger of becoming kitsch without being identified as such.[16] 'Kitsch's enormous profits are a source of temptation to the avant-garde itself, and its members have not always resisted this temptation', warns Greenberg: 'Ambitious writers and artists will modify their work under the pressure of kitsch, if they do not succumb to it entirely'.[17] As a result, he suggests that it can become increasingly difficult to distinguish 'genuine' art and kitsch:

> Traps are laid even in those areas, so to speak, that are the preserves of genuine culture. […] Kitsch is deceptive. It has many different levels, and some of them are high enough to be dangerous to the naive seeker of true light. A magazine like *The New Yorker*, which is fundamentally high-class kitsch for the luxury trade, converts and waters down a great deal of avant-garde material for its own uses.[18]

Greenberg is alarmed by 'high-class kitsch' in particular not because of the way it distorts the forms of 'genuine' art and the avant-garde, but rather because it so closely resembles artistic forms while distorting their meaning and purpose to serve commercial ends. From this

[15] Clement Greenberg, 'Avant-Garde and Kitsch', *Art and Culture: Critical Essays* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989), 3-21. 15, 10. '[T]he main trouble with avant-garde art and literature, from the point of view of fascists and Stalinists, is […] that it is too difficult to inject effective propaganda into them, that kitsch is more pliable to this end'. 19.
[16] Ibid. 10.
[17] Ibid. 11-12.
[18] Ibid. 11.

perspective, kitsch is a commodity whose economic value and capacity for ideological coercion relies on disguising itself as 'genuine' art by meticulously mimicking its formal features.

6.2.2 Fidelity and kitsch

While Greenberg focuses on visual media, a similar modernist opposition to kitsch is evident Theodor W. Adorno's contemporary critiques of the musical culture industry.[19] Like Greenberg, Adorno is particularly alarmed by 'high-class' kitsch because it is most easily misidentified as 'genuine' art. 'The worst kitsch', he argues, 'is kitsch with "class", which is not recognizable in advance, but has compositional ambition'.[20] In the same essay, 'Kitsch' (1932), Adorno's theorization of the phenomenon also resembles Greenberg's in associating it with the re-use of the forms of existing art without retaining their 'original' meaning and value.

> In music, at any rate, all real kitsch has the character of a *model*. It offers the outline and draft of objectively compelling, pre-established forms that have lost their content in history […] Kitsch is the precipitate of devalued forms and empty ornaments from a formal world that has become remote from its immediate context. Things that were part of the art of a former time and are undertaken today must be reckoned as kitsch. On the other hand, the objectivity of kitsch is the source of its justification. For kitsch precisely sustains the memory, distorted and as a mere illusion, of a formal objectivity that has passed away.[21]

For Adorno, as for Greenberg, the stakes of kitsch's objective but 'illusory' resemblance to 'the art of a former time' are socially and politically harmful as well as aesthetically deceptive: 'All kitsch is essentially ideology'.[22] In reproducing existing works in their entirety, arrangements seem a paradigmatic instance of musical kitsch as Adorno characterizes it, especially if 'faithfully' adapting respected 'classics' for mass consumption. It is therefore unsurprising that arrangement should be a recurrent target of critique in Adorno's essays on the musical culture

---

[19] Adorno explicitly aligns himself with Greenberg in this respect, and directly connects the refusal of kitsch with his (modernist) concern with the 'new'. 'Music participates in what Clement Greenberg called the division of all art into kitsch and avant-garde, and kitsch—the dictatorship of profit over art—has long since subjugated the particular, socially reserved sphere of art. This is why reflections on the development of truth in aesthetic objectivity must be confined uniquely to the avant-garde, which is excluded from official culture. Today a philosophy of music is possible only as a philosophy of new music'. Theodor W. Adorno, *Philosophy of New Music*, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006). 13.
[20] Theodor W. Adorno, 'Kitsch', trans. Susan H. Gillespie, in Richard Leppert (ed.), *Essays on Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 501-505. 504.
[21] Ibid. 501.
[22] Ibid. 502.

industry throughout the 1930s.[23] Echoing his description of kitsch, Adorno describes arrangement as 'the practice of refined entertainment which borrows its pretensions from the *niveau* of cultural goods, but transforms these into entertainment material of the type of hit songs'.[24]

Adorno's most extensive discussion of arrangement occurs in 'On the Fetish-Character in Music and the Regression of Listening' (1938), acting as a conceptual fulcrum by which he pivots between the essay's two topics. Under market conditions, Adorno argues, well-known works of art music function as commodities that derive their monetary value from their apparent status as 'art' which transcends this economic function. It is this commodification of the purportedly 'artistic' (and so non-commercial) status of these works that Adorno refers to as their 'fetish-character'.[25] He insists that fetishization drastically alters and even destroys the intrinsic cultural significance of a musical work even if its extrinsic features are maintained.

> The works which are the basis of the fetishization and become cultural goods experience constitutional changes as a result. They become vulgarized. Irrelevant consumption destroys them. Not merely do the few things played again and again wear out, like the Sistine Madonna in the bedroom, but reification affects their internal structure.[26]

As Adorno's reference to verbatim repetition suggests, he does not regard this fetishization and vulgarization as resulting from or causing formal distortions of a work, but a process of 'reification' which simplifies and fixes its initial complexity to facilitate its consumption as a commodity. Adorno argues that strict fidelity to a work indexes its fetishization, attempting to mask the destruction of its artistic significance and deny its vulgarization.

> [S]ince the disintegration of the fetishes puts these themselves in danger and virtually assimilates them to hit songs, it produces a counter tendency in order to preserve their fetish character. If the romanticizing of particulars eats away at the body of the whole, the endangered substance is

[23] Theodor W. Adorno, 'Commodity Music Analysed', trans. Rodney Livingstone, *Quasi Una Fantasia: Essays on Modern Music* (London: Verso, 1992), 37-52; Theodor W. Adorno, 'Music in the Background', trans. Susan H. Gillespie, in Richard Leppert (ed.), *Essays on Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 506-510; Theodor W. Adorno, 'On the Fetish Character in Music and the Regression of Listening', trans. Susan H. Gillespie, in Richard Leppert (ed.), *Essays on Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 288-317; Adorno, 'The Radio Symphony'.
[24] Adorno, 'On the Fetish Character'. 300.
[25] See ibid. 293-296.
[26] Ibid. 298.

> galvanically copper-plated [… T]he essential function of conformist performances is no longer the performance of the 'pure' work but the presentation of the vulgarized one with a gesture which emphatically but impotently tries to hold the vulgarization at a distance.[27]

According to Adorno, rigorous fidelity to the objective structure of a work contributes to its fetish-character by claiming to mitigate against it. 'Perfect, immaculate performance', he asserts, 'preserves the work at the price of its definitive reification'.[28]

Crucially, it is in the context of this critique of fidelity that Adorno addresses musical arrangement: 'Vulgarization and enchantment, hostile sisters, dwell together in the arrangements which have colonized large areas of music'.[29] In this context, Adorno's excoriation cannot be interpreted as condemning arrangements merely for being 'unfaithful' to the works they arrange.[30] Like other critics of the practice, he dismisses practical reasons given for arranging as 'lamentable pretexts' that distract from its association with the 'vulgarization' of art music.[31] Unlike these other critics, however, Adorno does not simply blame this 'vulgarization' on the formal changes arrangement makes to 'original' works, as if enforcing 'fidelity' could arrest or reverse it. For Adorno, arrangement's cultural significance lies in the way these changes reveal the 'vulgarization' a work has *already undergone*, and which is only exacerbated by a strict fidelity which attempts to conceal it. He understands the form of an arrangement as a musical barometer which records the 'constitutional changes' to the cultural significance of a work and how it is heard that are caused by reification. Adorno's discussion of salon band arrangements in 'Music in the Background' (1934) makes this conception of the practice especially clear.

> The piano does not simply replace the missing horns; the previous fullness has itself become shabby and is therefore passed on to the piano. The first fiddler does not make the noble melody ordinary with his soloistic intrusiveness; it has already lost its noble character and therefore abandons itself to the fiddler.[32]

---

[27] Ibid. 298
[28] Ibid. 301.
[29] Ibid. 298.
[30] Adorno's approach can be contrasted with Hindemith's in this respect. See 2.2.2.
[31] Adorno, 'On the Fetish Character'. 299.
[32] Adorno, 'Music in the Background'. 508.

Heard in this way, arrangements are a consequence rather than a cause of their source material becoming 'shabby'.

Adorno's apparent critique of the formal changes to a work made by arrangers in his 'fetish-character' essay should therefore be understood less as a condemnation of the changes themselves than the fetishization and 'regression of listening' they represent. Arranging, he argues, 'seeks to make the great distant sound, which always has aspects of the public and unprivate, assimilable. The tired businessman can clap the arranged classics on the shoulder and fondle the progeny of their muse. […] Radical reification produces its own pretence of immediacy and intimacy'.[33] Importantly, Adorno characterizes the formal changes striving for this pretence of intimacy as a consequence rather than cause of the prior 'reification' of the 'original'. His interpretation of other kinds of re-instrumentation is similar:

> Schubert's 'Serenade', in the puffed-up sound of the combination of strings and piano, with the silly excessive clarity of the imitative intermediate measures, is as nonsensical as if it had originated in a girls' school. But neither does the Prize Song from *Meistersinger* sound any more serious when played by a string orchestra alone. In monochrome, it objectively loosens the articulation which makes it viable in Wagner's score. But at the same time, it becomes quite viable for the listener, who no longer has to put the body of the song together from different colors, but can confidently give himself over to the single and uninterrupted treble melody.[34]

Notably, Adorno does not condemn these arrangements for impeding perception of a work's musical material, as conventional in fidelity discourse, but for rendering it with an 'excessive clarity'. From his perspective, such 'clarity' allows listeners to bypass the critical tension between part and whole perceived in 'structural listening' and facilitates a wider 'regression of listening'. 'The listener is converted, along his line of least resistance, into an acquiescent purchaser. No longer do the partial moments serve as a critique of the whole, they suspend the critique which the successful aesthetic totality exerts against the flawed one of society'.[35] Adorno's explicit assertion that arrangement actively facilitates a 'regression of listening'

[33] Adorno, 'On the Fetish Character'. 299.
[34] Ibid. 300. Adorno's comments participate in a gendered discourse surrounding arrangement in this period. See Baade, 'Radio Symphonies'. 65.
[35] Adorno, 'On the Fetish Character'. 291. See also 304-312.

addresses an effect of the practice that his broader argument implicitly posits as secondary to arrangement's status as a response to dominant modes of perception.

6.2.3 The critical potential of kitsch

In this essay, Adorno posits arrangement as a sonic analogue of the vicious cycle of the fetishization and the regression of listening perpetuated within musical culture at large; his critique of the practice is aimed primarily at these processes. In making this analogy, however, he offers a compelling theorization of musical arrangement as objectifying the subjective experience of listening to a work and enabling (or even compelling) this experience to be relived by others. The theory of arrangement implicit in Adorno's overt condemnation of the practice is remarkably similar to Peter Szendy's conception of arrangement as enabling us to 'listen to someone listening'.[36] However, Szendy characterizes arrangement positively as a practice critical of the 'structural listening' privileged by Adorno, tacitly adopting Adorno's theorization but deploying it to different ideological ends.[37] This reversal neglects a different understanding of arrangement's critical potential which is implicit in Adorno's account and more consistent with his modernist aesthetic stance. Adorno uses arrangement rhetorically as a musical means with which to force readers into a critical confrontation with music's fetish-character and a regression of listening which might otherwise go unheard.

The critical use to which Adorno puts arrangement in his essay might also be attributed to arrangements themselves: in adapting existing works, arrangements might sing the truth about how 'false' commodified listening has made them, a truth musical culture strives to keep hidden through 'fidelity' to these works. Although Adorno overtly castigates the formal 'infidelity' of arrangements, he finds a fetishized 'fidelity' even more disquieting. Adorno's essay implicitly (or perhaps inadvertently) suggests that in failing to confront listeners with a

[36] Szendy, *Listen*. 36 and throughout.
[37] In later essays, Adorno dialectically critiques structural listening. See Theodor W. Adorno, 'Little Heresy', trans. Susan H. Gillespie, in Richard Leppert (ed.), *Essays on Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 318-324. For Szendy's engagement with Adorno see Szendy, *Listen*. 99-128.

representation of degraded modes of listening, 'faithful' arrangements erase the practice's critical potential. From this perspective, a 'faithful' arrangement collusively purports to offer unmediated access to a work's artistic significance while deceptively substituting it for an economic one, and is therefore in greater danger of being kitsch than an 'unfaithful' arrangement.[38]

Adorno concludes his essay by identifying two ways to critically navigate the ideological vicious cycle it describes, both of which are pertinent to the present consideration of *Kein Deutscher Himmel*. He locates the first not in greater 'fidelity' to traditional musical materials, but explicit distortions of such material in the music of Mahler: 'his themes are expropriated ones. Nevertheless, nothing sounds as it was wont to, all things are diverted as if by a magnet'.[39] Adorno refers in particular to 'the expression of an exhausted melody, straining under the pressure of E-flat clarinets and oboes in the upper register', second-hand material given a critical edge through distortions of the kind his critique of arrangement seems to condemn. The second critical approach resides in the music of Schoenberg and Webern, which 'gives form to that anxiety, that terror, that insight into the catastrophic situation which others merely evade by regressing'.[40] Although this critical, modernist stance appears to preclude arrangement of works from the past, Adorno offers a more nuanced account of this relationship in 'Schoenberg and Progress' (1940-1941). He notes that Schoenberg's 'inexorable' twelve-tone works are complemented by 'a long series of "secondary works"', including numerous 'arrangements' and 'transcriptions' which display 'a more conciliatory approach to the public':

> The inexorable music represents the truth of society in opposition to society. The conciliatory music recognizes the right to music that society, as a false society, still has in spite of it all, just as society reproduces itself as a false society and thus, by surviving, objectively provides elements of its own truth.[41]

[38] This idea has been influential outside the explicitly modernist context in which Adorno presents it. See 2.5.
[39] Adorno, 'On the Fetish Character'. 314-315.
[40] Ibid. 315.
[41] Adorno, *Philosophy of New Music*. 93-94.

Here, Adorno understands the objective 'reproduction' of falseness presented by 'conciliatory' arrangements as an alternative expression, rather than betrayal, of the critical impulse of Schoenberg's twelve-tone compositions. The tensions between these two critical models, Mahler's 'distortion' of musical tradition and Schoenberg's false 'reproduction' of it as a 'secondary work', indicates the potential complexity of modernist responses to Pesson's apparently uncharacteristic 'faithful' transcription of Mahler's Adagietto.

6.3 Modernist suspicion of *Kein Deutscher Himmel*

6.3.1 The 'other Pesson'

Pesson himself has drawn attention to the continuing relevance debates regarding the questionable artistic status of arrangements in the era of digital file sharing.

> It is […] highly symptomatic that, in the current very tense debate on intellectual property, a sort of inflation of the remake and of the derivative product poses duplication as a questionable menace to art, itself dismissed to its own autonomy, to the legitimacy of producing self-referential simulacra in order to prove its own irreducibility.[42]

Perhaps for the reasons Pesson outlines, those wishing to advocate his music in modernist terms have frequently displayed an implicit critical suspicion towards *Kein Deutscher Himmel* as 'high class' kitsch. They have posited it as a 'secondary work' without according it any of the critical potential Adorno associates with this status. However, *Kein Deutscher Himmel* cannot easily be dismissed as an anomaly; it is only the first of several transcriptions Pesson has produced for Accentus, albeit the most popular. All of these choral transcriptions adopt a similarly 'faithful' approach to sources which may seem troublingly Romantic from a modernist perspective. The success of Accentus's first *Transcriptions* album prompted the release of a second volume in 2007, *Transcriptions 2*, to which Pesson contributed four short adaptations of music by Scriabin and Ravel.[43] Pesson has also produced two more substantial

[42] 'Il est […] bien symptomatique que, dans un débat actuellement très tendu sur la propriété intellectuelle, une sorte d'inflation du remake et du produit dérivé pose la duplication comme une menace questionneuse à l'art, lui-même renvoyé à sa propre autonomie, à la légitimité de produire du simulacre auto-référencé pour prouver son irréductibilité.' Pesson, Dousson, and Troche, 'Entretien avec Gérard Pesson'. 338.
[43] *Transcriptions 2* (2006, Naïve), CD.

transcriptions for the choir's live concerts. *Treppenmusik* (2007) transcribes Wagner's *Siegfried Idyll* and sets texts from *Siegfried* and the diaries of his wife Cosima, while *Von der Liebe* (2010) combines the *Langsam* movement from Mahler's Third Symphony with words on the theme of love from the diaries of his wife Alma as well as the work of Friedrich Nietzsche and Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock.[44]

These transcriptions constitute a significant strand in Pesson's output and have reached a wider audience than his other works, but they have been marginalized or even ignored in many discussions of his music. The biography provided by his publisher, Henry Lemoine, mentions his composition prizes, work with new music ensembles, and critically-acclaimed operas but makes no mention of his successful collaboration with Accentus.[45] There is similarly no reference to Pesson's choral transcriptions in the more extensive artistic profile of the composer on IRCAM's new music database, BRAHMS.[46] This omission is significant considering the profile was written in 2008, just after the release of *Transcriptions 2*, and that its author, Martin Kaltenecker, prepared the collaged texts for *Kein Deutscher Himmel*, *Treppenmusik*, and *Von der Liebe*.

When critics do engage with Pesson's choral transcriptions, they often struggle to reconcile their approach with the compositional interests manifested in his other works, including transformative reworkings such as the two *Nebenstücke*. This problem is illustrated particularly vividly by Grant Chu Covell's comments about *Transcriptions* in a review of several discs of Pesson's music. Covell is typical in repeatedly comparing Pesson's 'caustic vocabulary including non-standard noises' with both that of Lachenmann and Salvatore Sciarrino. He interprets the two *Nebenstücke* according to the same aesthetic criteria, as offering

[44] At the Feldkirch Festival in 2007, Accentus's performance of *Treppenmusik* was accompanied by video projections created by director Philippe Arlaud. See *Transcriptions* (Naïve, 2008), Andy Sommer (dir.), DVD (2008). Liner notes 18.
[45] Accentus's *Transcriptions* discs do not appear in the discography appended to this biography, which only includes releases containing only works by Pesson. See 'Gérard Pesson: Biographie', *Henry Lemoine*.
[46] Kaltenecker, 'Gérard Pesson'.

‘surfaces suggesting Lachenmann’s and Sciarrino’s unvarnished textures, except the rubbings and scrapings reveal others’ works underneath’.[47] By contrast, Pesson’s different approach in his choral transcriptions leads Covell to describe them as if they were the work of a creative alter ego:

> Quick sidebar: Let’s talk about the ‘other Pesson’. Top search hits connect Pesson with Laurence Equilbey’s Accentus choral ensemble. […] Pesson applied several August von Platen texts to the *Adagietto* of Mahler’s Fifth without besmirching the original. The choral transcription, *Kein deutscher Himmel* […], maintains Mahler’s loveliness.[48]

In attributing them to the ‘other Pesson’, Covell articulates disbelief that these ‘faithful’ choral transcriptions were produced by the same creative personality as Pesson’s more transformative reworkings. Eschewing the ‘unvarnished textures’ of Pesson’s *Nebenstücke,* in *Kein Deutscher Himmel* the ‘other’ Pesson ‘retains’ the ‘loveliness’ of Mahler’s Adagietto rather than ‘besmirching’ it. As well as emphasizing this stylistic difference between Pesson’s choral transcriptions and his other works, Covell seems unsure about their artistic status. The concept of the ‘other Pesson’ can be understood as a form of aesthetic quarantine that attempts to avoid the composer’s modernist music being tainted by association with ‘faithful’ transcriptions such as *Kein Deutscher Himmel*. While Covell is not overtly critical of the transcription, in attributing it to the ‘other Pesson’ he manifests an anxiety that its unbesmirched loveliness seems to undermine the modernist credentials of what is by implication Pesson’s ‘authentic’ or ‘primary’ output.

6.3.2 Transformation and transcription

The marginalization of Pesson’s choral transcriptions in modernist assessments of his work results in part from a desire to interpret the composer’s more transformative reworkings of existing pieces as artistically ‘legitimate’. According to a modernist framework that privileges the rejection of existing notions of ‘beauty’ over stylistic imitation, Pesson’s

[47] Covell, 'Graceful Illusionist'.
[48] Ibid.

recurrent engagement with historic music, especially Romantic repertoire, could be judged a regressive capitulation to kitsch. This 'problem' is particularly acute in the case of reworkings of entire pieces such as the *Nebenstücke*. For example, Susann El Kassar suggests that in *Nebenstück* 'Brahms's Ballade […] brings with it a Romantic or more specifically late Romantic musical language that, if one does not want to decimate the raw pitch material, seems to contradict new music in principle'.[49] Wishing to uphold the piece as modernist, El Kassar claims that 'even though our listening habits in [*Nebenstück*] may hear or want to hear a sentimental inclination to the past, the nostalgic impulse is slowed down and refuted by Pesson's claim to a confrontation with the given, a dialogue between past and present'.[50]

Kaltenecker also carefully distinguishes Pesson's use of historical materials from appropriation which is merely nostalgic or kitsch by emphasizing its interrogative (and hence 'modernist') quality. For Kaltenecker, Pesson's interrogative stance is most clearly indicated by his use of extended instrumental techniques. Linking these techniques to the work of Lachenmann and Sciarrino, Kaltenecker contends that the 'verve and ingeniousness' with which Pesson deploys them 'makes his work an authentic branch of *musique concrète instrumentale*, which interrogates and deconstructs the material thanks to instrumental gesture'.[51] Kaltenecker posits the erosion of *biensonnance* effected by extended techniques as a key stylistic marker of Pesson's critical, modernist relationship with pre-existing material, which is artistically productive rather than merely derivative. In Pesson's music, Kaltenecker suggests, 'clichés or found objects [are] salvaged in order to be immediately deconstructed and crushed, their fleeting verve is in contradiction with the strangulated and threadbare sonorities

[49] 'Brahms's Ballade […] bringen nun einmal eine romantische bzw. spät-romantische Klangsprache mit sich, die, wenn man das Noten-Rohmaterial nicht dezimieren möchte, der neuen Musik prinzipiell zu widersprechen scheint.' El Kassar, 'Oxidierte Musik'. 18-19.
[50] 'auch wenn unsere Hörgewohnheiten in [*Nebenstück*] einen sentimentalen Hang zu etwas Vergangenem hören können oder hören möchten, so wird der nostalgische Impuls doch durch Pessons […] Anspruch auf Auseinandersetzung mit dem Gegebenen, auf Dialog von Vergangenem mit Gegenwärtigem gebremst und widerlegt.' ibid. 19.
[51] 'verve et l'ingéniosité'; 'font de son œuvre un rameau authentique d'une « musique concrète instrumentale », qui interroge et déconstruit le matériau grâce au geste instrumental[.]' Kaltenecker, 'Gérard Pesson'.

which support them'.[52] It is in this context that Kaltenecker discusses the role of 'transcription' in Pesson's music, citing *Nebenstück* as a key example.

> Paradoxically, the activity of filtration and subtraction seems to confer *a posteriori* a status of quasi-citation to the collection of objects and figures. Hence a particular proximity in Pesson's music with the activity of transcription, which is not a merely recreational, hobbyistic, or devotional but arises from the same fundamental impulse as composition itself, with, here, the emphasis put on memory or an affective dialogue with a musical object, or the way it takes hold within a subjectivity.[53]

Kaltenecker affirms the creative and properly compositional status of Pesson's 'transcription' by distinguishing it from a more derivative and implicitly less artistically worthy form of the practice. He proposes that recompositions such as *Nebenstück* are reflexive, offering a subjective 'perspective' on a pre-existing work rather than merely expressing devotion towards it.

While Kaltenecker's critical approach affirms the aesthetic value of Pesson's transformative reworkings, it casts doubt on the artistic worth of 'faithful' transcriptions such as *Kein Deutscher Himmel*. In maintaining the material and style of its source, this transcription seems to adopt the derivative and devotional approach against which Kaltenecker favourably defines Pesson's practice of 'transcription' in other works. The concept of 'fidelity' apparently precludes the reflexive attitude towards historical material which Kaltenecker and El Kassar suggest justifies its use in 'critical' new music, offering only this material rather than a 'perspective' on it. It is therefore unsurprising that in this profile for a database hosted by IRCAM, an institution founded upon modernist principles, Kaltenecker does not mention *Kein Deutscher Himmel* or Pesson's other choral transcriptions.

---

[52] 'Clichés ou objets trouvés, sauvés pour être aussitôt déconstruits et broyés […] leur verve passagère est en contradiction avec les sonorités strangulées et râpées qui les supportent.' ibid.

[53] 'Paradoxalement, l'activité de filtrage et de soustraction paraît conférer *a posteriori* un statut de quasi-citation à l'ensemble des objets et figures. D'où une proximité particulière chez Pesson avec l'activité de la transcription, qui n'est pas uniquement délassement, vacance, dévotion, mais ressortit à la même impulsion fondamentale que la composition proprement dite, avec, ici, l'accent mis sur la mémoire ou un rapport affectif à tel objet musical, ou la façon dont il s'est installé dans une subjectivité.' ibid.

Rather than understanding transcriptions such as *Kein Deutscher Himmel* as the work of an 'other Pesson', or ignoring them entirely, Yannick Alirol attempts to interpret them as an integrated part of the composer's broader compositional project. Alirol contextualizes Pesson's interest in arrangement as an extension of his many quotations from and allusions to existing music. Noting the importance of these fleeting allusions, Alirol suggests that 'the music of the past is perhaps more present still in Pesson's music because certain of his pieces are more or less rewritings of the works of other composers'.[54] Taking *Nebenstück, Wunderblock,* and *Panorama, Particolari e Licenza* (2006) as prime examples of such 'rewriting', Alirol states that '[t]his unusual compositional practice, […] goes well beyond a simple orchestration, or a simple arrangement for another instrumentation'.[55] Like El Kassar and Kaltenecker (in his IRCAM profile at least), Alirol argues against the idea that Pesson's arrangements are derivative on the grounds that they transform their sources rather than merely re-presenting them. 'Faithful' arrangements are, once again, implicitly posited as of lesser artistic worth; Alirol's attempt to understand Pesson's choral transcriptions as an integrated part of his practice of 'rewriting' is consequently fraught.

> [The practice] admittedly finds its ultimate expression in the transcriptions that he has realized, notably for Laurence Equilbey's chamber choir Accentus (one mentions, for example, his *Kein Deutscher Himmel* […]) of which they are, as it were, the extreme case. This body of transcriptions is important in Pesson's work and signifies his dialogue with the past, but the three pieces of which we have spoken—*Nebenstück*, *Wunderblock*, and *Panorama, Particolari e Licenza*—go further: they offer to listening an object which is at once familiar and unrecognisable, a sort of memory in music of the original work. The tone in *Nebenstück* and in *Wunderblock* is reflexive (one can hear them as some sort of analysis in music of Brahms's and Bruckner's pieces) and nostalgic (one can appreciate them as memories in music of works from the past).[56]

[54] 'l'œuvre du passé peut être plus présente encore dans la musique de Pesson puisque certaines de ses pièces sont plus ou moins des réécritures d'œuvres d'autres compositeurs.' Alirol, *Gérard Pesson*. 27.
[55] 'Cette pratique compositionnelle inhabituelle, […] va bien au-delà d'une simple orchestration, ou d'un simple arrangement pour une autre formation.' ibid. 29.
[56] 'Elle trouve certes son expression ultime dans les transcriptions qu'il a réalisées, notamment pour le Chœur de chambre Accentus de Laurence Equilbey (on citera par exemple son *Kein Deutscher Himmel* […]) dont elles sont en quelque sorte le cas extrême. Cette œuvre de transcripteur est importante dans le travail de Pesson et significative de son rapport au passé, mais les trois pièces dont nous parlions […] vont plus loin : elles offrent à l'écoute un objet qui est à la fois familier et méconnaissable, une sorte de souvenir en musique de l'œuvre originelle. Le ton dans *Nebenstück* et dans *Wunderblock* est réflexif (on peut les entendre comme des sortes d'analyse en musique des pièces de Brahms et de Bruckner) et nostalgique (on peut les apprécier comme des souvenirs en musique d'œuvres du passé).' ibid. 27.

Alirol describes Pesson's 'faithful' transcriptions as the 'ultimate expression' of a practice of 'rewriting' which is in turn the most intense manifestation of a preoccupation with historic materials that is central to his compositional style. Nevertheless, Alirol evidently finds the artistic value of Pesson's more transformative reworkings easier to justify due to their 'reflexive' quality. Such reworkings, for Alirol, do not merely *re-present* their sources but also *represent* them as analysed or remembered, imposing a subjective (and potentially critical) 'perspective' on them. However, *Kein Deutscher Himmel*, completed a year before *Nebenstück*, is Pesson's first arrangement of any type, and so might be interpreted more productively as a springboard for his later practice of reworking than an aberration from it.

Although Alirol advocates Pesson's music, including *Kein Deutscher Himmel*, in implicitly modernist terms, he is more explicitly concerned with its potential status as 'postmodern'. This notoriously ambiguous term can be understood as signifying anything from a rejection of modernism to its continuation to new extremes.[57] Alirol considers Pesson's music postmodern according to Jean-François Lyotard's definition of the phenomenon as an 'incredulity towards metanarratives' on the grounds that 'the constant dialogue with the past in Pesson's music is not nostalgic, a return to [the past], or even a citation [of it]'.[58] Conversely, he argues that Jean-Jacques Nattiez's understanding of postmodern music as mixing styles merely to please listeners cannot be applied to Pesson's work.[59] Alirol concludes that the composer's music is 'characteristic of the current state of contemporary music in that it has clouded sectarian squabbles', retaining some of modernism's perceived 'difficulty' without eschewing the plurality and listener-oriented approach commonly associated with

[57] For discussions of this term in relation to music, see Gloag, *Postmodernism in Music*; Jonathan D. Kramer, *Postmodern Music, Postmodern Listening* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016).
[58] 'Le constant rapport au passé de la musique de Pesson n'est pas nostalgie, retour à ou même citation.' Alirol, *Gérard Pesson*. 34-35. Alirol appears to contradict his earlier description of the *Nebenstücke* as nostalgic.
[59] '[Postmodernism] has the tendency to think that the styles of all eras and all cultures are of equal value, as long as musical creations satisfy listeners. […] The return to tonality is welcome; it allows the conjunction of so-called "serious" music with pop and industrial music'. 'Il a tendance à penser que les styles de toutes les époques et de toutes les cultures se valent, du moment que les créations musicales satisfont les auditeurs. […] Le retour au tonal est le bienvenu ; il permet la conjonction de la musique dite « sérieuse » et des musiques pop et industrielles'. Quoted in ibid. 35.

postmodernism.[60] Tim Rutherford-Johnson's study of 'modern composition and culture since 1989' refreshingly interprets music as responding to themes such as 'permission', 'mobility', 'loss', and 'recovery' rather than taking modernism and postmodernism as its primary axes, reflecting the waning relevance of this binary distinction.[61] Pesson's compositions may be heard as drawing on the cultural prestige still accorded to supposedly 'modernist' styles while displaying a 'postmodern' aversion to the more ideologically dogmatic forms modernism has taken.[62] In either case, Alirol's comments illustrate how labels such as 'modernist' and 'postmodernist' have become less useful as stylistic descriptions of much recent music, including Pesson's, instead expressing judgements of its aesthetic or political value. Alirol wishes to affirm the artistic value of Pesson's music, and therefore regards it as postmodern according to Lyotard's approving definition of the concept but not according to Nattiez's disapproving one. Furthermore, the same reflexivity that Kaltenecker and El Kassar praise in modernist terms is understood by Alirol as admirably postmodern.

The approach of all three writers may be regarded as modernist in the sense that it prizes a reflexive engagement with existing music over a merely 'faithful' one which appears to risk being kitsch. As their comments attest, the 'fidelity' of Pesson's choral transcriptions has proved an obstacle for modernist critics wishing to affirm his significance as a composer. In contrast to the 'unwriting' of sources in the *Nebenstücke*, Pesson's 'fidelity' to Mahler's Adagietto in *Kein Deutscher Himmel* seems to 'betray' his identity as a modernist composer on three accounts. First, 'fidelity' to Mahler's expressive purposes seemingly requires Pesson to suppress or deny his own. Second, 'fidelity' to the Romantic Adagietto appears to preclude both artistic innovation and a 'critical' stance towards musical tradition. Thirdly, and most

[60] 'caractéristique de l'état le plus actuel de la musique contemporaine en ce qu'il a brouillé les querelles de chapelles.' ibid. 36.
[61] Rutherford-Johnson, *Music After the Fall*. For discussions of recent trends in musical modernism, see Metzer, *Musical Modernism*; Susan McClary, 'The Lure of the Sublime: Revisiting the Modernist Project', in Erling E. Guldbrandsen and Julian Johnson (eds.), *Transformations of Musical Modernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 21-35.
[62] For Pesson's view of his music in the context of these debates, see Alirol, *Gérard Pesson*. 39-47.

specifically, ‘fidelity’ ostensibly displaces the interrogative, reflexive relationship with pre-existing music that modernist critics have posited as a characteristic element of Pesson’s compositional style. From this perspective, Pesson’s ‘faithful’ choral transcriptions, including *Kein Deutscher Himmel*, seem to be ‘inauthentic’, the work of an ‘other Pesson’ who, unlike his modernist counterpart, produces derivative, regressive, and affirmative kitsch.

6.4 Modernist suspicion of Mahler’s Adagietto

6.4.1 The ‘other Mahler’

Among Pesson’s choral transcriptions *Kein Deutscher Himmel* has been regarded with particular suspicion due to the specific reception history of its source, the Adagietto, which has become a focal point in critical debates about the cultural significance of Mahler’s music. Like *Kein Deutscher Himmel,* the Adagietto enjoys a popularity which outstrips that of its composer’s other works but which has long prompted misgivings in critics. Commenting on early reactions to the Fifth Symphony, La Grange observes that ‘[e]ven Mahler’s admirers thought of the Adagietto as a weakness and a regrettable concession to public taste’.[63] For example, Ernst Otto Nodnagel, usually an advocate of the composer’s music, complained that the Adagietto seemed to him ‘the weakest of anything Mahler has written’: ‘It certainly sounds enchanting—indeed, it is five hundred times sweeter than sugar. But its invention is meager, truly banal, and not even deepened through elaboration […] For the public, however, this movement has become the highlight of the work’.[64] The Adagietto’s controversial reputation as a shallow crowd-pleaser that is unworthy of Mahler has persisted. As Donald Mitchell observes, the Adagietto ‘might well come out ahead in any attempt to identify the movement of Mahler’s about which most has been written or which has stimulated the most contention’.[65]

[63] Henry-Louis de La Grange, *Gustav Mahler* (3: Vienna: Triumph and Disillusion, 1904-1907; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995). 128, 127. See also 128-129.
[64] Ernst Otto Nodnagel, Karen Painter, and Bettina Varwig, 'Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 5', in Karen Painter (ed.), *Mahler and His World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 300-304. 303.
[65] Donald Mitchell, 'Eternity or Nothingness? Mahler's Fifth Symphony', in Donald Mitchell and Andrew Nicholson (eds.), *The Mahler Companion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 236-325. 308.

For Mitchell, this contention results most fundamentally from doubts about both the Adagietto's quality and its relationship with the rest of Mahler's music:

> [H]ow good is it, how faithful to—characteristic of—the creative personality whom we think we know, and whose 'truth' (his capacity to be true to himself) we think we can recognise from our own experience of his music[?] In short, could—as some have thought—the Adagietto represent some sort of 'betrayal' by the composer of his own values and ideals?[66]

Mitchell's question regarding the 'authenticity' and artistic integrity of the movement is strikingly similar to that *Kein Deutscher Himmel* has raised for modernist critics; to many, the Adagietto has seemed the work of an 'other Mahler'.

Determining whether or not the Adagietto 'betrays' Mahler's 'values and ideals' as a composer depends on what one believes those values to be. It is for this reason that the Adagietto has become such an active fault line between different interpretations of his music, especially since the so-called 'Mahler revival' beginning around 1960, the centenary of the composer's birth. The term 'revival' suggests not simply an increased interest in the composer's music after a period of relative neglect, but also the 'faithful' rehabilitation of its supposedly 'authentic' meaning. However, such a 'revival' is inevitably a process of reinterpretation, no matter how 'faithful' it claims to be; different conceptions of its 'authentic' significance have ensured that the 'revival' of Mahler's music has been a contested phenomenon. In transcribing a key node in these debates *Kein Deutscher Himmel* unavoidably participates in them, although this participation has been acknowledged to different degrees in different contexts by its arranger, performers, commercial promoters, and listeners. Before considering the significance of Pesson's transcription in this regard, it is therefore necessary to outline the Adagietto's place in the contested 'Mahler revival'.

---

[66] Ibid. 308.

6.4.2 Adorno's Mahler

The 'Mahler revival' is most usually associated with a surge in the composer's popularity among performers and audiences. However, Adorno's influential modernist reading of Mahler's music, expressed most notably in his 1960 book and centenary address on the composer, attempts a 'revival' of its own, albeit to different ends.[67] Mitchell identifies Adorno as one of the 'keenest sceptics' of the Adagietto's quality and status as a properly 'Mahlerian' composition.[68] Ironically, however, Adorno's interpretation of Mahler as a modernist frames his music as a challenge to the very ideology of 'authentic' expression affirmed by the concept of artistic self-betrayal to which Mitchell refers. Adorno criticizes 'the attempt to pin down, in the jargon of authenticity, the statement put forward by [Mahler's] music'.[69] According to Adorno, Mahler 'attributed to the traditional words and syntax of music intentions which they no longer possessed': 'The inauthenticity of the language becomes the expression of its substance'.[70] Adorno therefore countered common objections to Mahler's music by arguing that although it may appear kitsch it should be understood as critical of the kitsch that conventional musical language had become. 'Not despite the kitsch to which it is drawn is Mahler's music great', he proposes, 'but because its construction unties the tongue of kitsch, unfetters the longing that is merely exploited by the commerce that kitsch serves'.[71]

In Mahler's music Adorno hears a modernist reflexivity akin to that Alirol praises in Pesson's; as a result '[s]carcely a theme, let alone a whole movement, can be taken at face

[67] Adorno's understanding of Mahler is set out in several texts, including Theodor W. Adorno, *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); Theodor W. Adorno, 'Mahler Today', trans. Susan H. Gillespie, in Richard Leppert (ed.), *Essays on Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 603-611; Theodor W. Adorno, 'Marginalia on Mahler', trans. Susan H. Gillespie, in Richard Leppert (ed.), *Essays on Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 612-618; Theodor W. Adorno, 'Mahler: Centenary Address, Vienna 1960', trans. Rodney Livingstone, *Quasi Una Fantasia: Essays on Modern Music* (London: Verso, 1992), 81-110. For an overview and insightful discussion of Adorno's interpretation of Mahler, see Peter Franklin, '"...His Fractures Are the Script of Truth."—Adorno's Mahler', in Stephen E. Hefling (ed.), *Mahler Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 271-294.
[68] Mitchell, 'Mahler's Fifth Symphony'. 308.
[69] Adorno, *Mahler*. 3.
[70] Adorno, 'Centenary Address'. 85.
[71] Adorno, *Mahler*. 39.

value'.[72] However, in the case of the Adagietto Adorno seems forced to do just this, struggling to accommodate the movement into his modernist conception of Mahler's critical significance. As Julian Johnson observes, 'the essentially lyrical nature of the Adagietto' suggests the 'presentation of an overtly "authentic" voice' which contrasts with 'naked act of self-construction' of the Fifth Symphony's finale.[73] It is perhaps for this reason that Adorno remained suspicious of the Adagietto, complaining that it 'verges […] on shallow sentimentality'.[74] Adorno was apparently unable to convince himself that this 'song without words' adopted the critical stance towards 'authentic' expression which he regarded as the most valuable feature of Mahler's music.[75] As a result, he characterized the Adagietto as an artistically substandard anomaly in Mahler's output. 'Only an apologist nervous to the point of obduracy could dispute that there are weak pieces by Mahler', he concedes, admitting that, 'despite its important conception as an individual piece within the whole [symphony]', the Adagietto 'borders on genre prettiness through its ingratiating sound'.[76] For Adorno, in the Adagietto Mahler did not 'untie the tongue of kitsch' such that it could sing of its own inauthenticity, as in the best of his music, but rather adopted the necessarily false authenticity of kitsch's song as his own.

6.4.3 Critiques of the Mahler revival

In 1960, Adorno could interpret the neglect suffered by Mahler's music as indicative of its critical stance towards dominant aesthetic ideologies.[77] However, the 'Mahler revival' has ensured that the composer's work is now celebrated by the very musical culture Adorno argued

[72] Adorno, 'Centenary Address'. 83.
[73] Julian Johnson, *Mahler's Voices: Expression and Irony in the Songs and Symphonies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). 116, 115. Johnson himself, however, does not preclude more complex readings of the movement. See 30-31, 145, 275-277.
[74] Adorno, *Mahler*. 51.
[75] On the Adagietto as a 'song without words' see Constantin Floros, *Gustav Mahler: The Symphonies*, trans. Vernon Wicker (Aldershot: Scolar, 1994). 176. Mitchell, 'Mahler's Fifth Symphony'. 312.
[76] Adorno, *Mahler*. 136. On the Adagietto and kitsch, see Bernd Sponheuer, 'Zu Schön? Mahler, Čajkovskij und der Musikalische Kitsch', in Bernd Sponheuer and Wolfram Steinbeck (eds.), *Gustav Mahler und die Symphonik des 19. Jahrhunderts: Referate des Bonner Symposions 2000* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2001), 169-181.
[77] 'Mahler's music is critical of aesthetic illusion and of the culture in which it thrives and from whose superannuated elements it is composed.' Adorno, 'Centenary Address'. 88.

that it critiques. ‘In an age when so-called “classical” music is understood as losing its audience’, Leon Botstein observes, ‘the popular attachment to Mahler, including the burgeoning scholarly industry, is a striking exception’.[78] Yet, as Johnson suggests,

> [a] music that is more than usually reliant on tone and irony, subtle deconstructive gestures, exaggerations, linguistic cul-de-sacs, and stylistic contradictions fares badly in popular reception with whose affirmative stance the music itself is also complicit. Mahler’s music is often affirmative, consolatory, withdrawn, or sentimental, but it is never merely thus.[79]

Mahler’s popular status has consequently relied on a simpler conception of the composer’s music. ‘[T]he Mahler that has emerged victorious at the end of the twentieth century is not quite the Mahler put forth by Adorno in 1960’ Botstein argues: ‘The aspects of negativity, rebellion, innovation, and resistance Adorno located in Mahler’s music are neither heard by the audience nor communicated from the stage’.[80] Instead, ‘Mahler’s music has […] become emblematic of the very affirmative sense of meaning he sought to challenge. The facile appropriation of Mahler as offering a mirror of psychological struggle has become its own reductive cliché’.[81] Botstein is not alone in mounting a modernist, Adornian critique of the popular ‘Mahler revival’.[82] Adam J. Sacks, for example, complains that ‘Mahler’s centrality for a modernist and mediated reading of the classical music tradition has […] been displaced by one whose music has come to stand for the psychologically therapeutic while also linked […] to the torment of pathology and the kitsch of sacrificial transcendence’.[83] For Sacks, implications of this reinterpretation ‘are not limited to the degradation of art to a sugary condiment; they extend also to the commodification process itself, which can affect the inner life of a work of art as much as its external value’.[84]

---

[78] Leon Botstein, 'Whose Gustav Mahler?: Reception, Interpretation, and History', in Karen Painter (ed.), *Mahler and His World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 1-53. 2.
[79] Johnson, *Mahler's Voices*. 266.
[80] Botstein, 'Whose Gustav Mahler?'. 3.
[81] Ibid. 42
[82] See Adam J. Sacks, 'Toward an Expansion of the Critique of the Mahler Revival', *New German Critique*, 40/2 (2013), 113-136. Franklin, 'Adorno's Mahler'. Jeremy Barham, 'Introduction: Marginalia on Mahler today', in Jeremy Barham (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Mahler* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 1-4. For discussion of Botstein’s position see Johnson, *Mahler's Voices*. 265-267.
[83] Sacks, 'Mahler Revival'. 113.
[84] Ibid. 133.

Appropriately, the Mahler 'revival' is also often referred to as the Mahler 'boom', a term describing a period of economic prosperity as well as a sudden explosion of interest or attention. Modernist critics such as Sacks and Botstein advocate Adorno's conception of Mahler as an authentic corrective to the inauthenticity of the commodified, kitsch view of the composer's music resulting from its popular 'revival'. Peter Franklin, for example, suggests that Adorno might be regarded as 'one of the most authentically Mahlerian of all Mahler's critics': 'His ambivalence and worry about the experience of affirmative music derive from a cultural position and intellectual personality arguably so close to Mahler's own as to render his interpretations an almost documentary historical significance'.[85] Significantly, Franklin singles out the popularity of the Adagietto in particular as representative of the affirmative and commodified conception of Mahler's music resisted by a more 'authentic' modernist reading. '[Adorno's] greatest threat', he argues, 'is to the Adagietto-Mahler of compact-disc compilations. Restore that movement to the complete Fifth Symphony, thoroughly understood; restore that work to Mahler's complete oeuvre, and we stand once again to be neither charmed nor simply uplifted by him, but questioned, challenged, attacked'.[86] Conversely, Franklin's comment implies that the commercial popularity of the decontextualized Adagietto poses the greatest threat to an 'authentic', modernist hearing of Mahler's music.

6.5 Rhetorics of authenticity

6.5.1 Authenticity against *Death in Venice*

The popular reception of the Adagietto has also alarmed critics defining its 'authentic' meaning in more traditional terms as determined by Mahler's biography and supposed intentions. In particular, such 'authenticist' critics complain that in achieving popularity through its use in Visconti's *Death in Venice* the movement 'came to be regarded as an example of sentimentalized kitsch', its 'authentic' meanings displaced by 'inauthentic' ones supplied by

[85] Franklin, 'Adorno's Mahler'. 286.
[86] Ibid. 294.

the film.[87] The film's plot concerns a German composer, Gustav von Aschenbach, who becomes infatuated with a beautiful boy, Tadzio, while staying in Venice during an outbreak of cholera; held in the city by his obsession, Aschenbach eventually succumbs to the disease on the beach, gazing at Tadzio as the boy paddles in the Adriatic.[88] The Adagietto is a recurrent presence in the film, heard in five extended passages including the opening and closing sequences.[89] Mitchell is typical in arguing that

> the hijacking of the movement—of the supposed emotion it represented at least—surely reached its apogee when Visconti used the Adagietto […] as a sonorous symbol of Aschenbach's nostalgia, frustrated passion, and hopeless longing: one might think, ironically, that the singular performance history of the Adagietto up to this point had been nothing but preparation for the iconic, cult status with which Mahler's prelude to the finale of his Fifth Symphony found itself lumbered as a result of the film.[90]

It is presumably in resistance to the morally and musically defamatory potential of this appropriation that prompted Mitchell, purportedly acting on behalf of Mahler's daughter Anna, to try to dissuade Queen Elizabeth II from attending a gala showing of the film.[91] La Grange is similarly critical of the film, complaining that while it has 'done much to popularize Mahler's music' it has also 'prejudiced our perception of the composer—and to no useful purpose'.[92] He is particularly disturbed by Visconti's depiction of Aschenbach composing on the beach where he watches Tadzio. 'This falsehood strikes the present writer as truly irresponsible, for it implies a misunderstanding, not only of the nature of Mahler's sexual desires, but also of the act of musical creation'.[93] However, Visconti's decision to transform Aschenbach from a writer, as in Mann's novella, into a composer who strongly resembles Mahler is not without historical

[87] Jens Malte Fischer, *Gustav Mahler*, trans. Stewart Spencer (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011). 702. See also 389; William Kinderman, *The Creative Process in Music from Mozart to Kurtág* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012). 102; Henry-Louis de La Grange, *Gustav Mahler* (4: A New Life Cut Short, 1907-1911; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). 1677.
[88] For a more detailed synopsis see Will Aitken, *Death in Venice* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2011). 11-12.
[89] These passages occur at 0:00:00-0:05:27, 0:18:15-0:19:50 (diegetically as a piano transcription), 0:55:05-1:03:39, 1:38:45-1:49:11, and 1:59:20-2:05:08. *Death in Venice*, Visconti (dir.).
[90] Mitchell, 'Mahler's Fifth Symphony'. 310.
[91] Jeremy Barham, 'Plundering Cultural Archives and Transcending Diegetics: Mahler's Music as "Overscore"', *Music and the Moving Image*, 3/1 (2010), 22-47. 23.
[92] La Grange, *Gustav Mahler* (4: A New Life Cut Short, 1907-1911). 1677.
[93] Ibid. 1677.

justification.[94] Although much of Mann's story is autobiographical, he gave his protagonist the appearance and first name of composer, of whose death he learned during his stay in Venice.[95] La Grange's objection to Visconti's film demonstrates how it complicates questions of 'authenticity' by drawing on competing sources of meaning, namely the lives, work, and intentions of both Mann and Mahler.

Whether or not one shares La Grange and Mitchell's negative view of it, the strong and lasting influence of Visconti's use of the Adagietto on the movement's cultural meanings is undeniable. This influence results not only from *Death in Venice*'s role in cementing the Adagietto's popularity, but also the insistence with which Visconti weaves the music into the film's fabric of themes and iconography. As Will Aitken observes, the structure of *Death in Venice* 'is more musical than cinematic', as if the Adagietto's *sehr langsam* tempo indication 'became Mahler's direction to Visconti'.[96] The Adagietto has become what Hans Rudolf Vaget describes as the film's 'musical trademark': as Neil Brand suggests, it has become 'very hard to hear this music without seeing that ferry, that city, that beautiful boy, that fatally obsessed man'.[97] As authenticist critics such as Mitchell and La Grange fear, *Death in Venice* has unavoidably affected how the Adagietto is heard in its 'original' context within Mahler's Fifth

[94] The film also alludes to the death of Mahler's daughter. Absurdly, Visconti denied drawing any connection between Aschenbach and Mahler. See Ernest M. Wolf, 'A Case of Slightly Mistaken Identity: Gustav Mahler and Gustav Aschenbach', *Twentieth-Century Literature*, 19/1 (1973), 40-52.47-48.

[95] See ibid.; Henry Bacon, *Visconti: Explorations of Beauty and Decay* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). 156-157; Aitken, *Death in Venice*. 87-94.

[96] Aitken, *Death in Venice*. 21. 124. On the Adagietto's importance in *Death in Venice*, see James Larner, 'Music as Narrator: Mahler, Mussorgsky, and Beethoven in Visconti's "Death in Venice"', *College Music Symposium*, 49/50 (2009), 385-391; Alexander Hutchison, 'Luchino Visconti's "Death in Venice"', *Literature/Film Quarterly*, 2/1 (1974), 31; Hans Rudolf Vaget, 'Film and Literature. The Case of "Death in Venice": Luchino Visconti and Thomas Mann', *The German Quarterly*, 53/2 (1980), 159-175; Bacon, *Visconti*. 161-172.

[97] Vaget, 'The Case of "Death in Venice"'.167. Neil Brand, 'Mahler: Death in Venice', *Sound of Cinema* (BBC Radio 3, 19 September 2013) [Radio programme]. Visconti's film has had a lasting influence on subsequent cinematic engagements with Mahler's music and the Adagietto in particular. See Jeremy Barham, 'Programming Mahler: Meaning, Re-description, and the Post-Adornian Counterlife', *Nineteenth-Century Music Review*, 8/2 (2011), 255-271. 268; Barham, 'Plundering Cultural Archives and Transcending Diegetics: Mahler's Music as "Overscore"'. See also Arved Ashby, *Absolute Music, Mechanical Reproduction* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010). 238-246. The continuing cultural significance of *Death in Venice* in this regard is also manifested in the melding of Venetian setting, knowing surrender to illicit desire, and the Adagietto in a recent Gucci advertisement. See 'New Gucci Guilty 2016 featuring Jared Leto', *YouTube* [Video], <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BbpR-Td-P6E>, accessed 10 April 2019.

Symphony.[98] Grappling with this legacy, one contributor to a discussion on gustavmahlerboard.com comments that 'it's more or less common sense that [the Fifth] is the most widely known of the Mahler symphonies. ~~Think of "Death in Venice"…~~ 😉'.[99] This strikethrough and 'winking face' icon succinctly acknowledge both the authenticist desire to deny or mitigate the inescapable impact of Visconti's film on the Adagietto's cultural significance and the futility of attempting to do this. The comment frames indulgence in the 'illicit' Viscontian associations of the Adagietto as an ironized or guilty pleasure, a stance particularly relevant in the context of *Kein Deutscher Himmel*.

Authenticist critics have sought to strip the Adagietto of the associations it accrued in *Death in Venice* and replace them with a more 'authentic' interpretation of the movement by advocating a change in performance style. Commentators frequently suggest the tradition of performing the Adagietto extremely slowly, which developed in the later twentieth century, was a response to the leisured pace and elegiac mood of Visconti's film.[100] Succumbing to the formalist fallacy, authenticist critics have assumed that brisker renditions of the movement would divest it of its Viscontian associations. Gilbert Kaplan, the staunchest critic of slow performances, argues for the authenticity of a faster tempo based on the testimony of the conductor Willem Mengelberg, a friend of Mahler and advocate of his music.[101] Mengelberg's own score of the Adagietto is covered with markings which suggest that Mahler composed the

[98] For an aesthetic discussion of this 'cultural hybridization' of the Adagietto, see Anna Lisa Tota, ''When Orff Meets Guinness': Music in Advertising as a Form of Cultural Hybrid', *Poetics*, 29/2 (2001), 109-123.

[99] 'Solti's last M5 live from Zurich', *Gustavmahlerboard.com* [Online forum thread], <http://gustavmahlerboard.com/forum/index.php?topic=352.msg2899#msg2899>, accessed 10 April 2019.

[100] See Barham, 'Programming Mahler'. 268-9. Paul Banks, 'Aspects of Mahler's Fifth Symphony: Performance Practice and Interpretation', *The Musical Times*, 130 (1989), 258-265; Eveline Nikkels, 'Mahler and Holland', in Donald Mitchell and Andrew Nicholson (eds.), *The Mahler Companion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 326-337. 336; Fischer, *Gustav Mahler*. 389-390; Henry-Louis de La Grange, *Gustav Mahler* (2: Vienna: The Years of Challenge, 1897-1904; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995). 817-819. The version of the Adagietto used in the film is not particularly slow in comparison with other recordings, and, as Barham notes, some of the slowest recordings pre-date it.

[101] See Gilbert Kaplan, 'Adagietto: "From Mahler With Love"', in Jeremy Barham (ed.), *Perspectives on Gustav Mahler* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 379-400; Gilbert Kaplan and Peter Franklin, 'Mahler and Tradition: Is There or Isn't There?', *The Musical Times*, 133/1797 (1992), 559-563; Gilbert Kaplan, 'A Dirge? No. It's a Love Song', *New York Times*, 19 July 1992 19.

movement as a musical 'love letter' to his future wife Alma Schindler.[102] His own recording of the Adagietto, made in 1926, runs to only seven minutes, leading Kaplan to conclude that only such brisk performances reflect Mahler's 'authentic' expressive intentions. 'By using the Adagietto as a "love letter", Mahler clearly pointed to the mood he wanted […] In order to convey a sense of romantic love, there seem to be limits to how slowly the Adagietto can be played without distorting its essential character'.[103] Exemplifying the fetish-character of fidelity described by Adorno, this critical tradition attempts to militate against the Adagietto's association with kitsch by advocating an 'authenticity' which itself becomes kitsch. Kaplan's deluxe facsimile edition of early manuscripts of the Adagietto is one example of this process.[104] 'The problem about this lavish production', Franklin argues, 'is that it is an object for the fetishist which tries to justify itself as a piece of anti-fetishism […] I suspect we have to thank Visconti for the whole process of Adagietto-obsession which reaches its culmination in this box of facsimiles'.[105]

6.5.2 *Kein Deutscher Himmel* and *Death in Venice*

Rather than repudiating the Adagietto's popular association with *Death in Venice* as inauthentic, Pesson's CD liner note for the transcription begins by explicitly embracing them. In particular, Pesson outlines a web of connections between Visconti's film, Mann's novella, and his own decision to set texts by Platen.

> The Adagietto of the Fifth Symphony has become a myth since it entered the Venetian imaginary. As is well known, the instrument of this meeting was Visconti's film *Death in Venice* (1970 [*sic*]), after the novella by Thomas Mann; a film, moreover, which has given Mahler's music a worldwide audience. Many signs and destinies meet and are resolved in Visconti's film, at the start of which are inscribed two lines of the German poet August von Platen: "He whose eyes have seen beauty / Is from then on predestined to death". Visconti was not unaware that Thomas Mann had previously written an essay on Platen, neither was he unaware that Mann had learned of Gustav Mahler's death while he was staying in Venice and that, from then on, up to his first

[102] For discussion see Banks, 'Aspects of Mahler's Fifth Symphony'. 262; Fischer, *Gustav Mahler*. 390; Kinderman, *The Creative Process in Music*. 104; Mitchell, 'Mahler's Fifth Symphony'. 311-312, 315-317; La Grange, *Gustav Mahler* (2: Vienna: The Years of Challenge, 1897-1904). 538 n.19, 816-817.
[103] Kaplan, 'Adagietto'. 395.
[104] Gustav Mahler and Gilbert Kaplan, *Adagietto: Facsimile, Documentation, Recording* (New York: Kaplan Foundation, 1992). For a critique of Kaplan himself as a 'kitsch man', see Sacks, 'Mahler Revival'. 131-135.
[105] Kaplan and Franklin, 'Mahler and Tradition: Is There or Isn't There?'. 562.

> name, the character of his novella, Gustav von Aschenbach, was inspired by the figure of Mahler. [Mann's] character is a writer, but it is a small change that Visconti corrects in making [Aschenbach], in his film, into a composer again. In 1824, August von Platen disembarked in Venice. It was in Italy that this formalist poet, however cursed because of his unabashed love of boys, searched for his 'elsewhere', his Orient, far from the 'German sky'. In an exact pre-echo to Gustav von Achenbach, he died in Syracuse (a coastal town) wanting to flee from cholera, in 1835, aged thirty-nine.[106]

Pesson not only reinforces Visconti's blurring of Aschenbach and Mahler's identities, but adds Platen's biography as another layer to this compound Venetian protagonist. On the one hand, Pesson's preoccupation with *Death in Venice* and Platen in the note rather than Mahler's Fifth Symphony or Mengelberg's annotated score displays an ambivalence to notions of fidelity and authenticity. On the other hand, however, the intertextual detective work laid out in the note employs a 'rhetoric of authenticity', as if Pesson is legitimizing his use of Platen's texts as historically appropriate. The note seems to reassure audiences of *Kein Deutscher Himmel*'s artistic respectability by 'performing' authenticity and fidelity, however circular its chain of references. By connecting the Adagietto with Visconti, Mann, Mahler, and finally Platen, Pesson's note appears to enact an authenticist quest for origins.[107]

'Complying' with fidelity discourse, Pesson describes his transcription as a monument to Mahler as well as an exploration of the Adagietto's Venetian connotations.

> *Kein Deutscher Himmel* is therefore the umpteenth transcription in this Venetian serial, which has already known many. It is a homage to Mahler, a stele on which appear some Venetian

[106] 'L'*Adagietto* de la *Cinquième Symphonie* est devenu un mythe depuis qu'il est entré dans l'imaginaire vénitien. On sait qui l'instrument de cette rencontre a été le film de Visconti Mort à Venise (1970) [*sic*], d'après la nouvelle de Thomas Mann ; film qui allait d'ailleurs donner à la musique de Mahler une audience planétaire. Bien des signes et des destins se croisent et viennent se résoudre dans ce film de Visconti au début duquel sont inscrits deux vers du poète allemand August von Platen : « Celui dont les yeux ont vu la beauté / À mort dès lors est prédestiné ». Visconti n'est pas sans savoir que Thomas Mann a écrit jadis un essai sur Platen, pas sans savoir non plus que Mann a appris la mort de Gustav Mahler alors qu'il séjournait à Venise et que, dès lors, jusqu'au prénom, le personnage de sa nouvelle, Gustav von Aschenbach, s'inspirera de la figure de Mahler. Son personnage est un écrivain, mais c'est un léger décalage que Visconti corrige en le faisant redevenir, dans son film, compositeur. En 1824, August von Platen débarque à Venise. C'est en Italie que ce poète formel, cependant maudit, à cause de son amour non dissimulé des garçons, a cherché son ailleurs, son Orient, loin du « ciel allemand ». En exacte pré-écho à Gustav von Aschenbach, il meurt à Syracuse (ville marine), voulant fuir le choléra, en 1835, à l'âge de trente-neuf ans.' *Transcriptions* (2003). Liner notes 8.

[107] Tracing these references, perhaps because of Pesson's note, is also a feature of *Kein Deutscher Himmel*'s reception. See Alberti, 'Death in Venice according to Gérard Pesson'.

> fragments by Platen (extracts from his *Venetian Sonnets* and his journal of 1824) cut out and arranged by Martin Kaltenecker.[108]

Notions of fidelity and recontextualization are once again blurred in the technical description of the transcription with which Pesson concludes the note.

> The operation which consists of setting words to a pre-existing music was known in the Middle Ages as a *logogene trope*: it is a sort of post-synchronisation. It was necessary that the cutting-up of the text kept a collage character which does not coincide exactly with the linearity of the music so that the shift makes a cut/paste/colour of this little homage.
>
> Well beyond all the serendipities of transcription (after all, the choir is a string orchestra [of vocal cords]) the choir offers the possibility of a 'total orchestration' where control of the emission of sound is so complete that all the beautiful failings of the instruments can be, as one wishes, either imitated (in the best cases) or ameliorated. All possible nuances are then transferred to the marble of the words. The harp part, so aquatic, is combined with the word *Gondel* (gondola) circulating round the whole choir. These little cells are sometimes assigned other messages (*von Zeit zu Zeit ein Ruf* [from time to time a call]) which would cross the lagoon, so hazy, if you remember, when Dirk Bogarde's boat enters it.[109]

Pesson's concept of 'total orchestration' implies absolute formal fidelity to the Adagietto despite reassigning its instrumental parts to singers. The composer's reference to medieval trope techniques, post-synchronization, and collage conversely highlights the extent to which *Kein Deutscher Himmel* recontextualizes the Adagietto and Platen's texts. However, Pesson's closing image combines formal fidelity to the Adagietto's music with interpretative fidelity to its use in *Death in Venice*. Rather than describing its new text as investing the musical features of Mahler's movement with new meanings, Pesson characterizes this text as revealing the existing meaning of the Adagietto. For example, he claims the sung word 'gondola' *reflects* the

---

[108] '*Kein Deutscher Himmel* est donc, dans ce feuilleton vénitien qui en connaît déjà beaucoup, la énème transcription. C'est un hommage à Mahler, une stèle sur laquelle paraissent des fragments vénitiens de Platen (extraits des *Sonnets Vénitiens* et de son *Journal* de 1824) taillés et disposés par Martin Kaltenecker.' *Transcriptions* (2003). Liner notes 8.

[109] 'L'opération qui consiste à mettre des paroles sur une musique préexistante s'appelle au Moyen Age *tropes logogène* : c'est une sorte de post-synchronisation. Il fallait que le découpage du texte garde un caractère de collage qui ne coïncide pas exactement à la linéarité de la musique de sorte que le décalage fasse de ce petit hommage un coupé/collé/coloré.

'Bien au-delà de tous les hasards heureux de la transcription (après tout, le chœur est un orchestre à cordes), le chœur offre la possibilité d'une « orchestration intégral » où le contrôle de l'émission du son est si total que tous les beaux défauts des instruments peuvent être, au choix, ou imités (en mieux) ou compensés. Toutes les nuances possibles sont alors passées au marbre des mots. À la partie de harpe, si aquatique, est associé le mot *Gondel* (gondole) circulant dans tout le chœur. Ces petites cellules se chargent parfois d'autres messages, appels (*von Zeit zu Zeit ein Ruf*) qui traverseraient la lagune, si brumeuse, on s'en souvient, lorsqu'y entre le bateau de Dirk Bogarde.' ibid. Liner notes 8. Dirk Bogarde plays Aschenbach in Visconti's film.

already ‘aquatic’ nature of Mahler’s harp part, suggested by *Death in Venice*, rather than *adding* this Viscontian meaning to it.

The liner note posits *Kein Deutscher Himmel* as a transcription not of the Adagietto from Mahler’s Fifth Symphony but rather of Adagietto as it is heard in Visconti’s *Death in Venice* and, due to the film’s influence, numerous other contexts including the concert hall. Alberti’s commentary on Pesson’s note amplifies its implicit rhetoric of authenticity, bypassing even Mann’s novella in positioning Visconti’s film as the ‘source’ to which *Kein Deutscher Himmel* remains ‘faithful’. ‘Removed, Thomas Mann remains aloof, and *Death in Venice* is staged without him. We get the feeling of retrieving a lost document, which will tell us, from a completely unheard of viewpoint, the final occurrences in the life of Gustav von Aschenbach’.[110] However, Pesson’s formal fidelity to Visconti’s Adagietto might easily be construed as fidelity to Mahler’s because these two Adagiettos are formally indistinguishable. Due to the formalist fallacy, Pesson’s apparent formal fidelity to Mahler’s Adagietto confusingly seems to make an implicit claim that his transcription communicates its ‘authentic’ meaning. Pesson’s characterization of *Kein Deutscher Himmel* as a homage to Mahler and the existing connections between Mahler and *Death in Venice* invite and intensify such confusion. The transcription and Pesson’s liner note for it seem to emphasize the idea of ‘fidelity’ while maintaining an ambiguity regarding to whom or what this fidelity is directed. This ambiguity is the cause of much of the controversy which has surrounded Pesson’s transcription.

6.5.3 Authenticity against *Kein Deutscher Himmel*

Even before its first performance, *Kein Deutscher Himmel*’s ambiguous relationship with ‘authenticity’ provoked criticism from La Grange, Mahler’s most prominent biographer. Pesson’s published journal suggests that he solicited La Grange’s opinion on his transcription, and an entry for 10 December 1997 records the scholar’s negative response:

[110] Alberti, 'Death in Venice according to Gérard Pesson'.

> A letter from Henry-Louis de La Grange develops all sorts of small objections and criticisms regarding, not my transcription of the *Adagietto* as such, but rather the side-evocations summoned in this project via the Venetian theme: the poems of August von Platen that he judges too foreign to Mahler, the allusion to Visconti's *Death in Venice* which he estimates to be his weakest film, etc. I understate in saying 'small objections' since he has written on a corner of the letter: '…the autobiographical Mann-Aschenbach connection—and Venice—Visconti troubles me *enormously*'.[111]

La Grange's response suggests that Pesson offered him an account of the transcription similar to that outlined in his liner note. La Grange, however, remained unpersuaded by Pesson's rhetoric of authenticity. He condemns *Kein Deutscher Himmel* because, in alluding to Visconti and Platen, it promotes a troublesomely persistent but 'inauthentic' interpretation of the Adagietto which is not rooted in Mahler's biography or other works.[112] Pesson takes La Grange's criticism with wry stoicism: 'He is sovereign in these areas and one is never able to venture anything without risking getting rapped on the knuckles. All things considered, a strict teacher is better than an abusive widow'.[113]

While Pesson did not have to appease an 'abusive widow', his transcription apparently prompted unease in Mahler's granddaughter, Marina. On 7 January 1998, only days before *Kein Deutscher Himmel* was to be premiered by Accentus at the Musée d'Orsay, Pesson recounts:

> La Grange faxes from Marrakesh that Marina Mahler will not oppose the performance of the transcription. One was already imagining the flashing lights of police cars in front of the Musée d'Orsay to stop the third C-A.[114]

---

[111] Une lettre d'Henry-Louis de La Grange développe toutes sortes de petites objections et commentaires à propos, non pas tant de ma transcription de l'*Adagietto*, que d'évocations latérales convoquées dans ce projet via le thème vénitien : les poèmes d'August von Platen qu'il juge trop étrangers à Mahler, l'allusion au *Mort à Venise* de Visconti qu'il estime être son film le plus faible, etc. Je minimise en disant "petites objections" puisqu'il a écrit sur un coin de la lettre : " … le rapport Mann-Aschenbach autobiographique—et Venise—Visconti me gêne *énormément*."' Pesson, *Journal*. 277.

[112] Notably, La Grange disputes Mengelberg's interpretation, advocating an alternative reading based on another of Mahler's works: 'Despite Mengelberg's statement that it was meant as a love message, it seems to express the same feeling as [Mahler's song] 'Ich bin der Welt [abhanden gekommen]', lonely and blissful contemplation, away from the turmoil of the world and above all the city life which Mahler knew so well'. La Grange, *Gustav Mahler* (2: Vienna: The Years of Challenge, 1897-1904). 818.

[113] 'Il est souverain sur ces domaines et on ne doit rien pouvoir aventurer sans risquer de se faire taper sur les doigts. À toutes prendre, il vaut mieux un exégète sévère qu'une veuve abusive.' Pesson, *Journal*. 277.

[114] 'La Grange faxe de Marrakech que Marina Mahler ne s'opposera pas à l'exécution de la transcription. On imaginait déjà les gyrophares des voitures de police devant le Musée d'Orsay pour stopper la tierce *do-la*.' ibid. 279.

This incident parallels Mitchell and Anna Mahler's attempt to dissuade the queen from seeing *Death in Venice*: a coalition of descendent and scholar act as self-appointed protectors of the composer's 'authentic' legacy, endeavouring to control how his music is interpreted. Although not ultimately 'opposing' the premiere of *Kein Deutscher Himmel*, the pair's interference hardly constitutes a blessing and might even be construed as a threat.[115] Pesson's sardonic reference to police intervention alludes to the tradition of considering arrangement as criminal or immoral, mocking both La Grange and Marina Mahler's belief in their moral right to object and their legal powerlessness to enforce it, the Adagietto being in the public domain.[116]

6.6 Pesson's pre-emptive kitsch

6.6.1 Pop art nuance and pre-emptive kitsch

In his journal, Pesson offers a telling response to La Grange's objections to his transcription. 'My explanations', he claims, 'sought to dilute, in their giving a false foreground, the pop art nuance of this *Kein Deutscher Himmel* project. But it is as if the inventor of Campbell's soup was telling me off for not having understood the true taste of his recipe'.[117] These comments suggest that Pesson chose to present the transcription to La Grange from an authenticist perspective calculated to gain his approval. The 'explanations' Pesson offered to La Grange and which appear in his liner note can be understood as a deliberate ploy to avoid *Kein Deutscher Himmel* falling foul of fidelity discourse. His careful exposition of the connections between Mahler, Aschenbach, and Platen seemingly aims to appease those judging his transcription by the criterion of historical 'authenticity' rather than providing a full account of his artistic motivations. However, the reference to Andy Warhol's images of Campbell's soup cans in Pesson's journal hints at an alternative understanding of *Kein Deutscher Himmel*.

[115] In an appendix to his biography of Mahler, La Grange notes the existence of *Kein Deutscher Himmel* without offering either explicit criticism or praise. See La Grange, *Gustav Mahler* (4: A New Life Cut Short, 1907-1911). 1574.
[116] On the 'ethics of arrangement' see 2.2.2 and 2.2.3.
[117] 'Mes explications cherchaient à diluer, en leur donnant au faux premier plan, la nuance Pop Art de ce projet Kein Deutscher Himmel. Mais c'est comme si l'inventeur des soupes Campbell me reprochait de n'avoir rien compris de goût véritable de sa recette.' Pesson, *Journal*. 277.

As the composer implies, Warhol was not preoccupied with the 'true taste' of the soup as determined by its inventor, but rather with how this everyday product appears to consumers as such. Pesson intimates that in *Kein Deutscher Himmel* he is similarly uninterested in 'fidelity' to the 'authentic' meaning of the Adagietto, instead aiming to reflect how it is heard by listeners in popular contexts as a musical commodity. Like Warhol, Pesson reframes an icon from popular or consumer culture as an artwork which draws attention to its provenance, blurring the boundaries between 'popular' and 'artistic' contexts. Pesson, however, provides an additional twist by transcribing music that had already been borrowed by popular culture from the realm of art.

Pesson's comparison of *Kein Deutscher Himmel* and pop art indicates that the transcription might productively be interpreted as a manifestation of what Roger Scruton calls 'pre-emptive kitsch'. He argues that, although critics such as Greenberg defined modernism as a flight from kitsch, as the twentieth century progressed the once-shocking gestures of the avant-garde themselves became kitsch, a set of predictable, institutionalized clichés. As a result, Scruton claims,

> artists began not to shun kitsch but to embrace it, in the manner of Andy Warhol, Alan Jones and Jeff Koons. The worst thing is to be unwittingly guilty of producing kitsch; far better to produce kitsch deliberately, for then it is not kitsch at all but a kind of sophisticated parody. […] Pre-emptive kitsch sets quotation marks around actual kitsch, and hopes thereby to save its artistic credentials. The dilemma is not: kitsch or avant-garde, but: kitsch or 'kitsch'—kitsch insolently laughing at itself.[118]

Scruton condemns such 'pre-emptive kitsch', which he pejoratively calls 'postmodern', claiming that it is concerned only with its own commercial value and therefore betrays the striving for authentic expression that he considers proper to genuine art, including modernist art. It is possible to draw on Scruton's account of pre-emptive kitsch and its aesthetic motivations without endorsing his negative evaluation of it. Pre-emptive kitsch can be

[118] Scruton, *Modern Culture*. 93. This concept is closely related to notions of parody and pastiche. For a useful overview of these ambiguous terms, see Peggy Zeglin Brand, 'Parody', in Michael Kelly (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics* (3; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Peggy Zeglin Brand, 'Pastiche', in Michael Kelly (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics* (3; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

understood as manifesting a modernist anxiety about the relationship between art and kitsch as well as a postmodern exploitation of kitsch's appeal. In his journal, Pesson explicitly describes *Kein Deutscher Himmel* as 'deliberate kitsch': it might be construed as setting quotation marks around the Adagietto as heard in *Death in Venice*, allowing listeners to both reflect upon and indulge in this association.[119]

As might be expected, the 'explanations' of *Kein Deutscher Himmel* that Pesson offers to audiences of a modernist orientation differ from those aiming to placate authenticist critics. In such contexts, the composer presents the transcription as pre-emptive kitsch to dispel concern that its kitsch quality is unintentional without denying the Adagietto's undeniable kitsch appeal. This ambiguity is particularly evident in a lecture given by Pesson to an audience of composers in 2006:

> [In *Kein Deutscher Himmel*] I have used a work that you know all about—because I love it, but not only because of that—because this work has become (as happens sometimes to certain works) a little reified. That is to say that it has become almost a stereotype of musical beauty. I speak of the Adagietto of Mahler's Fifth Symphony, which has become particularly fashionable through Visconti's film *Death in Venice*.[120]

While Pesson's reference to the Adagietto as 'reified' hints at a critical, modernist stance, the composer is also keen to assert that he simply 'loves it'. Earlier in the lecture he outlines his interest in 'neutralizing' such musical 'stereotypes', aiming

> to try to listen to a stereotype and reintroduce it, take it in, not at all with contempt, not at all condescendingly, but on the contrary with tenderness […] We can accommodate [stereotypes] within our music without regarding them as inherently negative, but it is still necessary to make this approach a bit critical.[121]

It is in this spirit that Pesson approached the Adagietto:

---

[119] 'kitsch délibéré'. Pesson, *Journal*. 293. See 6.6.4.

[120] 'Alors là j'ai utilisé une œuvre que vous connaissez tous sur pense—aussi parce que je l'aime, mais pas seulement pour ça—parce que cet œuvre est devenu (comme il arrive parfois de certains œuvres) un peu chosifier, c'est-à-dire qu'elle est devenue presque un stéréotype de la beauté musicale. Je veux parler de l'Adagietto de la Cinquième Symphonie de Mahler. Qui avait était particulièrement mis à la mode par le film de Visconti *La Mort à Venise*.' Pesson, 'La Composition Comme Auto-Fiction'. 46:15.

[121] 'd'essayer d'écouter ce que est un stéréotype et de le réintroduire, de le recueillir, pas du tout avec mépris, pas du tout avec condescendance, mais au contraire avec tendresse […] O]n peut accueillir [ces stéréotypes] dans notre musique sans a priori négative. Mais, encore, faut-il faire ce chemin un peu critique[.]' ibid. 10:14. See 8:43-11:13.

> I insist on the fact that I chose this work first of all because I liked it, but [also because] if you go to Venice, it is heard from all sources and in all kinds of arrangements, of which mine, basically, is only one further twist. It is a little like Vermeer's *The Milkmaid*, which is put on yogurts.[122]

Using another reference to mass-produced packaging, Pesson affectionately posits popular arrangements of the Adagietto, including his own, as sentimental kitsch which 'vulgarizes' art. Vince Hill's transformation of the Adagietto into a pop ballad, 'The Timeless Moment' (1972), released the year after *Death in Venice* offers a typical example of the genre to which Pesson refers.[123] In describing *Kein Deutscher Himmel* in this way, however, Pesson implicitly identifies it as intentional, 'pre-emptive' kitsch. Pesson also acknowledges his transcription's potential, as 'kitsch', to produce the disgust Mendez imagines Lachemann experiencing upon hearing it. After a day of working on the transcription in Paris's Arsenal quarter, by the riding school of the Garde Républicaine, Pesson writes in his journal: 'Advanced in a decisive way the transcription for choir of Mahler's *Adagietto* in an odour that envelops the Arsenal quarter and risks blending itself in the memory with the opening minor third C-A: horse manure'.[124] This tongue-in-cheek inversion of Proust's madeleine suggests an awareness of *Kein Deutscher Himmel*'s unavoidable association with the revulsion that the Adagietto can provoke in listeners who identify it as tasteless kitsch.

6.6.2 Arrangement, irony, and critique

In contrast to the more straightforward critique of arrangement mounted by Adorno, Pesson here presents his transcription as adopting an *ironic* stance toward kitsch. Irony, according to literary theorist Kenneth Burke, presents 'a perspective of perspectives', a definition adopted in Michael Cherlin's musical study of the subject.[125] As Cherlin suggests,

---

[122] 'J'insiste sur le fait que j'ai choisis cet œuvre d'abord parce que je l'aimais, mais si vous allez à Venise elle est mise à toutes les sources et à toute sorte d'arrangement, donc le mien, au fond, n'est qu'une péripétie de plus. C'est un peu comme *La laitière* de Vermeer, qui se le trouve sur des yaourts.' ibid. 50:43

[123] The song's lyrics describe a desire akin to Aschenbach's but refer (once) to a heterosexual context.

[124] 'Avancé de façon décisive la transcription pour chœur de l'*Adagietto* de Mahler dans une odeur qui enveloppe le quartier de l'Arsenal et risque de se fondre dans ma mémoire à la tierce mineure inaugurale *do-la* : le crottin de cheval.' Pesson, *Journal*. 268.

[125] Michael Cherlin, *Varieties of Musical Irony: From Mozart to Mahler* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017). 1.

irony 'usually involves a sense of distancing, if not detachment. We figuratively "step back" to encompass a synoptic perspective that includes the opposition within it'.[126] In this context it is useful to recall the derivation of the word 'irony' from the Greek *eironeia,* 'dissimulation, or ignorance purposely affected'.[127] The 'explanations' Pesson gives to La Grange and in his liner notes could be considered a 'dissimulation' of this kind, also manifested in the transcription's formal fidelity to the Adagietto. The comments the composer makes in his journal and lecture characterize *Kein Deutscher Himmel* as ironic in suggesting that it offers not just a kitsch perspective on the Adagietto but a perspective on this kitsch perspective. Szendy's conception of arrangement as enabling us to 'listen to someone listening' presents a striking parallel to Burke's definition of irony as offering a 'perspective of perspectives'.[128] Understood as musically representing the experience of listening to a work, arrangement affords arrangers and listeners particularly rich opportunities for adopting an ironic 'perspective' on that experience.[129]

From a modernist standpoint, this ironic 'perspective' may also be understood as realizing the critical potential of arrangement implicit in Adorno's theorization of the practice, even without distorting the form of a source. In these terms, *Kein Deutscher Himmel* may be heard offering a critical 'perspective' on a fetishized, kitsch mode of listening: the Adagietto is not made kitsch by Pesson's transcription but has become kitsch and so Pesson transcribes it. The way the composer signals his awareness of the kitsch quality of the Adagietto and therefore *Kein Deutscher Himmel* can be interpreted as an attempt to reassure suspicious modernist audiences that his transcription is ironic and so potentially critical. However, *Kein Deutscher Himmel*'s overt 'fidelity' to the Adagietto posits an irony so 'deadpan' that it is imperceptible;

[126] Ibid. 2.
[127] Ibid. 5.
[128] Szendy, *Listen*. 36 and throughout.
[129] This idea may also participate in depth-based and hauntological understandings of arrangement. See 3.2 and 3.6.

the transcription therefore requires considerable discursive support if its kitsch is to be heard as pre-emptive, as modernist suspicion of the piece attests.

6.6.3 'Exorcising' kitsch

One example of such discursive support is Pesson and Kaltenecker's contribution to an educational dossier on the subject of choral transcription hosted on the website of Accentus's 'centre of resources dedicated to choral art', Cen.[130] The '*entretien croisé*', in which Kaltenecker questions Pesson about his choral adaptations, was initially published in abridged form in *Sfz*, the newsletter or Accentus's educational programme, at the peak of choir's transcriptions project.[131] This didactic context afforded the pair greater scope to promote *Kein Deutscher Himmel* as ironic or 'self-aware' than the more straightforwardly commercial promotional material associated with Accentus's recordings. In this interview, the questions that Kaltenecker asks in his triple capacity as adapter of *Kein Deutscher Himmel*'s texts, musicologist, and promoter of Pesson's music are possibly more telling than the composer's answers. These questions address many of the concerns Pesson's choral transcriptions raise from a modernist perspective, allowing the composer to 'justify' them according to his broader aesthetic outlook. For example, Kaltenecker asks Pesson about his choice of Romantic rather than Baroque or modernist sources and the relative lack of extended techniques in his transcriptions for Accentus. His questions also address the tendency for vocal adaptations to be more 'faithful' than instrumental ones and the apparently secondary status of arrangements as 'a relaxation space between herculean efforts' of composition.[132] Most notably, however, he engages explicitly with arrangement's association with commercialism and kitsch. Kaltenecker begins by asking: 'Does a vocal transcription not always have a kitsch or backward-looking aspect to it, with which one can also play?'[133] Later, he refers to August Halm's complaint that

[130] Gérard Pesson and Martin Kaltenecker, 'Entretien Croisé', *La Transcription Pour Chœur: Regards* (Centre de Ressources Dédié à l'Art Choral, November 2017) [Online study dossier].
[131] Pesson and Kaltenecker, 'Entretien Croisé: Pesson/Kaltenecker'.
[132] 'un espace-détente entre des travaux herculéens'. Pesson and Kaltenecker, 'Entretien Croisé'.
[133] 'Une transcription vocale n'a-t-elle pas toujours un côté kitsch ou passéiste, avec lequel on peut aussi jouer ?' ibid.

transcriptions of fugues for orchestra lights them up like neon advertisements, enquiring whether Pesson's adaptations have any relation to those of the Swingle Singers or the jazz musician Uri Caine.[134]

These topics seem to pave the way for Kaltenecker's penultimate question, which concerns Pesson's motivations in creating *Kein Deutscher Himmel*, to which the composer responds:

> My work with Accentus has often been the result of a proposal on my part (Mahler, Scriabin, Ravel, Wagner). I have had the good fortune that Laurence Equilbey trusted me. No doubt I loved this Adagietto too much in adolescence, it was as if it were necessary to exorcise myself of it through an act of translation. No filtration here. A great fidelity to the original text. But all the same two major transformations: to provide a text where none existed and to reduce to the range of the choir that of the much larger orchestra. The 'compromise' implies the participation of a soprano soloist who must have extremely high top notes—which has moreover prevented the widespread diffusion of this score, so rare are these voices.[135]

Pesson's answer attempts to position the transcription as artistically legitimate according to broadly modernist criteria. The composer presents himself as an artist pursuing his own creative 'vision' as opposed to a technician who transcribes at Equilbey's behest. Pesson also defends his transcription against the idea that popular arrangements 'vulgarize' their sources by indicating that its technical difficulty means only the most accomplished choirs, such as Accentus, can perform it, limiting its dissemination. The rhetorical status of this claim is suggested by its implausibility: technical difficulty has not prevented extensive distribution of Accentus's recording of the transcription. More importantly, however, Pesson describes *Kein Deutscher Himmel* as a reflexive engagement with his own fetishized relationship with the Adagietto as an adolescent. *Death in Venice* was released when the composer was around

[134] See Laura Lynn Kelly and August Halm, 'August Halm's "Von Zwei Kulturen der Musik": A Translation and Introductory Essay', Ph.D. thesis (University of Texas, 2008). 65-66.
[135] 'Mon travail avec [A]ccentus a souvent été le résultat d'une proposition venant de ma part (Mahler, Scriabine, Ravel, Wagner). J'ai eu cette chance que Laurence Equilbey me fasse confiance. Cet adagietto que j'ai sans doute trop aimé à l'adolescence, il fallait comme m'en exorciser par un travail de translation. Pas de filtrage ici. Une grande fidélité au texte d'origine. Mais tout de même deux transformations majeures : apporter du texte là où il n'en existait pas et réduire à l'ambitus du chœur celui bien plus large de l'orchestre. Le « compromis » implique la participation d'une soprano soliste qui doit avoir des aigus extrêmes—ce qui a d'ailleurs empêché une large diffusion de cette partition tant ces voix sont rares.' Pesson and Kaltenecker, 'Entretien Croisé'.

fourteen years old and so may have contributed to his self-confessed obsession with the Adagietto. Crucially, despite the apparent 'fidelity' of Pesson's transcription, he presents it has an attempt to 'exorcize' his earlier love for the Adagietto. This description implies a modernist desire to adopt an ironic 'perspective' on fetishized modes of listening rather than 'indulging' in them. Nevertheless, Pesson emphasizes the 'great fidelity' of his transcription, contrasting it with the 'filtration' manifested in the *Nebenstücke*. The composer characterizes his self-exorcism as an act of translation in the geometric rather than linguistic sense (*translation* not *traduction*), suggesting a shift in context or perspective without distortion of form.

6.6.4 'Grading' listeners

In this interview, Pesson and Kaltenecker frame *Kein Deutscher Himmel* as a reflexive engagement with its own potential status as kitsch, but its 'great fidelity' to the Adagietto offers few obvious cues to hear and interpret it in this way. However, further consideration of Pesson's comments about *Kein Deutscher Himmel* and the Adagietto itself suggests that the composer is both aware of and enjoys the way his transcription can be heard in many different ways, including unselfconsciously as kitsch. In an essay of 1989 that compares the music of Mahler and Debussy, Pesson outlines a modernist, Adornian conception of Mahler's work. In particular, he notes a critical or ironic discrepancy between material and meaning in the composer's music and, in line with critics of the 'Mahler revival', its consequent capacity to be misunderstood.

> The transformation [of traditional forms] that drives Mahler's music is less technically tangible (orchestration aside) than Debussy's modernity in that it relies on putting the act of composition into critical perspective. It is, with him, the dialogue with the musical object [and] the rhetoric which are reenvisaged, all across the complex field involving meaning and history, in a play of levels which has misled courser critics, and still does today, even high above the level of commonplace Mahleriana.[136]

[136] 'La mutation qu'opère la musique de Mahler est moins techniquement tangible (orchestration mise à part) que la modernité de Debussy en ce qu'elle se fond sur une mise en perspective critique de l'acte de composer. C'est, chez lui, le rapport à l'objet musical, la rhétorique qui sont réenvisagés, tout au champ complexe qui implique le sens, l'histoire, dans un jeu de degrés qui a abusé longtemps la critique un peu grossière et qui passe encore aujourd'hui très au-dessus d'une certaine mahleriana ordinaire.' Pesson, 'Transcendance et Sensation'. 92. For an English translation of this essay see Gérard Pesson, 'Mahler and Debussy: Transcendence and Emotion', in Donald

Pesson's comments imply a hierarchy of listeners, ranging from the 'courser' listeners associated with 'commonplace Mahleriana' who do not appreciate Mahler's 'critical perspective' on his material to those 'high above' their 'level' who do. He suggests that the majority of listeners misunderstand Mahler's 'critical perspective', including many who appear artistically refined. After noting that Debussy and Proust also 'suffer a little sometimes from this type of misunderstanding', Pesson proposes that '[t]he Adagietto, "Clair de Lune", and the "*petite madeleine*" are so many iconic fly-killers which allow us to grade the amateurs'.[137] This unpleasant but vivid metaphor suggests that, like insects irresistibly attracted to an electric fly-killer's blue glow, 'course' listeners are lured by the aura of fetishized art such as the Adagietto, their subjectivity eventually 'zapped' into oblivion. By implication, listeners who adopt a Mahlerian 'critical perspective' are able to resist being misled by the mystifying aura of fetishized art, retaining their subjective autonomy.

Pesson's metaphor implies that reified music such as the Adagietto sorts listeners into a hierarchy of musical perception akin to the 'listening types' theorized by Adorno.[138] In particular, Pesson's 'course' listeners offer a counterpart to two types Adorno considers to be 'continuous' with one another, the 'culture consumer' and 'emotional listener'.[139] The culture consumer, writes Adorno, 'respects music as a cultural asset, often as something a man must know for the sake of his own social standing […] On the whole, his relation to music has a fetishistic touch. The standard he consumes by is the prominence of the consumed'.[140] The emotional listener described by Adorno is 'easily moved to tears':

> This type extends from those whom music, of whichever kind, will stimulate to visual notions and associations to men whose musical experiences approach the torpor of vague reveries. Akin to it, at least, is the 'sensuous' listener in the narrow sense of the word, the culinary taster for isolated sonic stimuli. At times such people may use music as a vessel into which they pour their

Mitchell and Andrew Nicholson (eds.), *The Mahler Companion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 153-170.

[137] 'Debussy (et Proust donc!) souffre un peu parfois de ce type de malentendu. L'*Adagietto*, le « Clair de lune », la « petite madeleine » sont autant d'icônes tue-mouches qui permettent de calibrer les amateurs.' Pesson, 'Transcendance et Sensation'. 92.

[138] See 4.3.1.

[139] Adorno, *Introduction*. 8. For a critique of Adorno's typology, see Szendy, *Listen*. 100-105.

[140] Adorno, *Introduction*. 6-7.

> own anguished […] emotions; at other times they will identify with the music, drawing from it the emotions they miss in themselves.[141]

In alluding to *Death in Venice* and its emotional content, *Kein Deutscher Himmel* seems to intensify the Adagietto's kitsch quality, increasing its value for these supposedly 'course' listeners while simultaneously exchanging a knowing wink with those who deem themselves above such 'commonplace Mahleriana'. Recalling the premiere of *Kein Deutscher Himmel* in his journal, Pesson notes that 'two old ladies cried during the Adagietto'.[142] Although he does not offer any further commentary, Pesson's interest in this uninhibited emotional response may lie in the way it suggests a 'sincere' engagement with his transcription which 'bypasses' its potentially ironic quality. The apparently condescending attitude of Pesson composer's fly-killer metaphor does not preclude his being genuinely touched by these ladies' reaction. The transcription's 'fidelity' deliberately preserves the potential for engagement of this kind despite also offering an ironic 'perspective' on it. The irony of the transcription is that inherent in considering certain modes and objects of listening a 'guilty pleasure'.

Another entry of Pesson's journal recounts an incident after a concert at which *Kein Deutscher Himmel* had been performed by Accentus alongside new and less stylistically 'accessible' works by Pascal Dusapin and Olivier Beaufils: 'An aged woman who had seen me bow after the Mahler, of which I was only the transcriber, approached me after the concert and told me that I had far more talent than my peers and that I must persevere'.[143] It is significant that this listener did not hear *Kein Deutscher Himmel* as an arrangement because it necessarily collapses the 'perspective of perspectives' offered by the transcription, 'bypassing' its potential

---

[141] Ibid. 8, 9.
[142] 'Deux vieilles dames ont pleuré pendant l'*Adagietto*.' Pesson, *Journal*. 282. Similarly, a performance of *Kein Deutscher Himmel* buy the Latvian Radio Choir reportedly 'reduced at least one member of the choir to tears!'. Clive Paget, 'Latvian Radio Choir (Sydney Festival)', *Limelight* (24 January 2015), accessed 12 April 2019.
[143] 'Une femme âgée qui m'avait vu saluer après le Mahler, dont je n'étais que le transcripteur, m'aborde après le concert et me dit que j'ai beaucoup plus de talent que mes camarades et que je dois persévérer.' Pesson, *Journal*. 314.

ironies in a way similar to the emotive responses Pesson observed at its premiere.[144] That the composer repeated this story in a newspaper interview over a decade later suggests not simply that he found it amusing, but also that he is particularly interested and even pleased with the ways *Kein Deutscher Himmel* is 'misunderstood' by listeners.[145]

In this context, Pesson also comments on a more general 'distance' between listeners' understanding of his music and his own.

> I do not aim to exclude the public, to intimidate them, but it seems essential to me not to give up the idea, the uncongenial a priori, that the listener comes to my music and not that my music necessarily goes to them. […] I don't want to be elitist, but I seem to be condemned by nature to this position of disparity, of distance.[146]

This 'disparity' is particularly evident in Pesson's comments about another performance of *Kein Deutscher Himmel* recorded in his journal.

> The *Adagietto* sung by Accentus on the stage of the Olympia for an evening of corporate philanthropy, with a psychedelic amplification and a blue-tinted light that greatly emphasized the deliberate kitsch of the project that, alas, the pathos and the irreducible beauty of the music condemn to be implicit, erasing the Double-Six aspect.[147]

Pesson appears to relish how this presentation of *Kein Deutscher Himmel* invites its audience of corporate 'culture consumers', whose prestige the music serves, to hear it without irony as kitsch. Importantly, the composer does not listen to their listening with derision, although enjoying the difference of 'perspectives' the situation presents. For Pesson, the 'irreducible beauty' of the Adagietto is genuine but double-edged, allowing the 'deliberate kitsch' of *Kein*

---

[144] That Pesson identifies three older women with listening in this way perhaps indicates a gendered stereotype in this regard. Adorno similarly cites 'philharmonic concert committee ladies' as archetypal 'culture consumers'. Adorno, *Introduction*. 7.

[145] Renaud Machart and Gérard Pesson, '"L'Impureté, Y Compris Stylistique, Est Très Féconde"', *Le Monde* (10 September 2008) <https://www.lemonde.fr/culture/article/2008/09/10/gerard-pesson-l-impurete-y-compris-stylistique-est-tres-feconde_1093521_3246.html>, accessed 11 April 2019.

[146] 'Je ne cherche pas à exclure le public, à le brusquer, mais il m'apparaît essentiel de ne pas renoncer à l'idée, peu sympathique a priori, que l'auditeur vienne à ma musique et non que ma musique aille forcément à lui. […] Je ne veux pas être élitiste, mais cette position d'écart, de distance, il me semble que j'y suis condamné par nature.' ibid.

[147] 'L'*Adagietto* chanté par Accentus sur la scène de l'Olympia pour une soirée de mécénat d'entreprise, avec une amplification psychédélique et une lumière bleutée qui soulignaient bien le kitsch délibéré de l'entreprise qu'hélas le pathos et la beauté irréductible de la musique condamnent au filigrane, gommant l'aspect Double-Six.' Pesson, *Journal*. 292-293. Members of the 1960s French a cappella group Les Double Six, which performed arrangements jazz music, later reformed as the Swingle Singers, known for their scat versions of works by J. S. Bach.

Deutscher Himmel to be downplayed. Rather than simply being kitsch, *Kein Deutscher Himmel* might be interpreted as 'untying the tongue of kitsch' and 'unfettering the longing that is merely exploited by the commerce that kitsch serves', to appropriate Adorno's phrase.

6.7 Commercial distribution

6.7.1 Accentus's *Transcriptions* brand and fidelity

When addressing audiences likely to be suspicious of *Kein Deutscher Himmel* as kitsch, Pesson characterizes it as a potentially ironic reflection on the reified and fetishized status of the Adagietto as a musical commodity. However, the transcription has not been marketed to consumers in this way. The paratexts and promotional material accompanying Accentus's recording make no suggestion that *Kein Deutscher Himmel* might be ironic pre-emptive kitsch, instead presenting it as a transcription of great artistic quality which is entirely 'sincere' in its fidelity to the Adagietto. This characterization of Pesson's transcription can be understood as commercially motivated. *Werktreue* ideology, premised on notions of authenticity, remains dominant in Western art music culture, informing the evaluative criteria of many listeners and therefore also their purchasing habits. In consequence, a transcription such as *Kein Deutscher Himmel* is more likely to achieve commercial success if it is marketed as upholding this ideology rather than critical of it. In 2008, Accentus's two *Transcriptions* albums were re-released in a double-disc edition alongside an accompanying film, *Transcription*^{s}, on DVD.[148] In turning the concept of 'transcription' into a marketable 'brand' these releases promote a particular conception of what transcription is and should be that affirms existing fidelity discourse.[149]

This strategy is evident in Equilbey's contributions to the liner notes of Accentus's *Transcriptions* releases, notably an interview with the conductor included with the double

[148] *Transcriptions [1 and 2]* (2008); *Transcriptions*, Sommer (dir.).
[149] Promotion of Equilbey's recent album of orchestrated Schubert songs adopts a similar strategy of assimilation to fidelity discourse. See 2.2.3.

album. In these paratexts, Equilbey reassures listeners of the aesthetic legitimacy of transcriptions by noting the history of the practice in art music and their compliance with *Werktreue* ideology. In this respect, she differentiates transcription and arrangement:

> It is […] important not to confuse transcription and arrangement, because sometimes there are composers or arrangers who perhaps allow themselves too much licence […] We […] tend to go more for the 'term-for-term' approach, while making the necessary adaptation to the new instrument for which the work is transposed.[150]

Drawing on the crucial notion of linear temporal ('term-for-term') fidelity, Equilbey posits the changes each transcription makes to its source as technically 'necessary' rather than artistically motivated. 'To transcribe is not to misrepresent or rearrange famous works', she reassures her listeners, '[t]ranscription is an erudite business calculated with the greatest harmonic precision, and technically extremely arduous'.[151] Here, Equilbey characterizes transcribers not as creative artists who will alter or distract from the 'authentic' meaning of the 'original', but rather as self-effacing artisans or technicians in the service of this meaning. 'Sometimes one cannot transfer all the musical terms of the original score, it would be impossible', she admits, but asserts that 'we can sense in these composers a very great respect, a very great love for the works they transcribe'.[152] Equilbey singles out Pesson's approach as exemplary: 'it's very precise!'[153] The conductor also justifies transcription through the oft-repeated notion that it 'always sheds interesting new light on the work in question'.[154] Adapting George Steiner's view of transcription as a 'lesson in practical criticism', Equilbey calls the practice 'a "lesson in practical listening" […] It will change the thickness of line, it will display another facet'.[155] Through this idea she reverses the usual hierarchy of 'original' and transcription, hinting that adaptations may provide better insight into the 'authentic' meaning of the work than its initial instrumentation. Quoting August Wilhelm Schlegel, Equilbey suggests that transcriptions offer

[150] *Transcriptions [1 and 2]* (2008). Liner notes 40. On the 'stricter' connotations of the term 'transcription', see 2.1.3.
[151] *Transcriptions,* Sommer (dir.). Liner notes 30.
[152] *Transcriptions [1 and 2]* (2008). Liner notes 41.
[153] Ibid. Liner notes 41.
[154] Ibid. Liner notes 40.
[155] Ibid. Liner notes 41. See George Steiner, *Real Presences* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1989). 19-21.

a ‘true testimony of the hidden essence’ of the transcribed work.[156] This idea culminates in a usurpation of the ‘original’ by the transcription: ‘One begins to dream’, Equilbey claims, ‘that the transcribed works might actually have been directly written for the *a cappella* medium’.[157] In an intensification of traditional fidelity-essentialist discourse, the conductor hints that the transcriptions Accentus perform are, paradoxically, more ‘authentic’ than the ‘originals’.[158]

6.7.2 Imaging authenticities

Accentus’s *Transcription*[s] film reinforces this fidelity discourse, most explicitly in a spoken introduction delivered by Equilbey and tellingly underscored by Mahler’s ‘original’ orchestral version of the Adagietto.[159] However, it also obliquely alludes to *Kein Deutscher Himmel*’s Viscontian associations. The film, directed by Andy Sommer, showcases seventeen tracks from Accentus’s two *Transcriptions* albums as a chain of multimedia sequences akin to popular music videos, which are interspersed with documentary-style footage. The film’s visual dimension can be divided into three ‘image-strands’: a built-in ‘making-of’ documentary tracking Equilbey’s preparations for a concert, images which illustrate aspects of the texts being sung, and shots of Accentus singing in various rehearsal and more abstract scenarios. All three image-strands run through Sommer’s *Kein Deutscher Himmel* sequence, respectively showing Pesson and Equilbey at work on the transcription, images relating to *Death in Venice*, and the choir miming along to the music in different locations.[160]

The supposed ‘fidelity’ and ‘authenticity’ of *Kein Deutscher Himmel* is emphasized in the making-of strand through four appearances of the score of Mahler’s ‘original’ Adagietto as

---

[156] *Transcriptions 2* (2006). Liner notes 17. Equilbey quotes Schlegel out of context: in this passage he actually advocates an organicist conception of art that would preclude transcription. See August Wilhelm Schlegel, *A Course of Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature*, trans. John Black (2nd edn.; London: J. Templeman and J. R. Smith, 1840). 340.
[157] *Transcriptions 2* (2006). Liner notes 17-18.
[158] One reviewer of *Transcriptions 2* comments that the adaptations ‘are so convincingly natural that you just might forget the originals, if just for a moment’. Anastasia Tsioulcas, 'Classical Score: Making a Quiet Splash', *Billboard,* 119/13 (2007), 49.
[159] See 00:00-01:07.
[160] The sequence occurs at 08:24-18:20.

an on-screen prop, two of which bookend the entire sequence.[161] The second and third of these appearances visually associate a study score of Mahler's Fifth Symphony first with Pesson and the score of his transcription and then with Equilbey (Figure 6.1 and Figure 6.2). This twofold visual gesture portrays Pesson's transcription as a mediation so faithful that it 'erases' itself, implying a direct connection between Mahler and Equilbey and therefore the 'authenticity' of her performance.

The fourth and final appearance of Mahler's score eliminates reference to the transcription entirely: after the music dies away Equilbey, alone, thoughtfully closes the score, as if the sequence occurred in her imagination, unmediated even as sound (Figure 6.3). 'Authenticity' is presented differently during the opening bars of Pesson's transcription, which are accompanied by a lingering close-up of a photocopy of Mengelberg's annotations to the Adagietto rather than Equilbey's study score (Figure 6.4). Even for viewers unfamiliar with it, this document, densely marked-up and yellowed with age, may nonetheless suggest a return to 'authentic' sources. Viewers who do recognise Mengelberg's score may consequently interpret *Kein Deutscher Himmel* as expressing the Adagietto's supposedly 'authentic' meaning as Mahler's 'love letter' to his future wife. In this context the particular way in which Mengelberg illustrates this meaning might be understood as conferring historical 'legitimacy' on Pesson's transcription. As well as offering indications of mood, Mengelberg provides a text for the Adagietto's opening melody: 'How I love you/ You my sun/ I cannot tell you in words/ I can only lament my yearning/ And my love for you/ My happiness!'.[162] At the bottom of the page Mengelberg adds 'If music is a language, then it is one here—"he" tells her everything in "tones" and "sounds": music'.[163] This context casts Pesson's application of Platen's texts as revealing a purportedly 'authentic' meaning of the Adagietto as Mengelberg does as opposed to these texts being an 'inauthentic' addition. Although the general sense of 'authenticity'

[161] See 8:57-9:14, 10:36-10:53, 15:36-16:04, and 18:15-18:20.
[162] See Kaplan, 'Adagietto'. 391.
[163] Ibid. 391.

offered by this connection is more important than the specific meanings involved, the similarity between Platen and Mengelberg's texts is significant. Like Mengelberg's 'poem', Kaltenecker's Platen collage eschews biographical detail but focuses on an emotion of 'lamenting yearning'. This similarity is especially evident in lines such as 'There is no means of bringing you closer to me', or Kaltenecker's final couplet, 'I could not bear to feel your absence / nor could I renounce your pleasure for eternity'.[164]



Figure 6.1: *Transcription*[s], second appearance of the Adagietto score, 10:56, 10:47, 10:50 (left to right, top to bottom).

[164] 'Euch zu missen könnt ich nicht ertragen / noch dem Genuß auf ew'ge Zeit entsagen.' *Transcriptions* (2003). Liner notes 20.



Figure 6.2: *Transcription*^{s}, third appearance of the Adagietto score, 15:37, 15:44, 15:48, 15:53 (left to right, top to bottom).



Figure 6.3: *Transcription*^{s}, fourth and final appearance of the Adagietto score, 18:17.
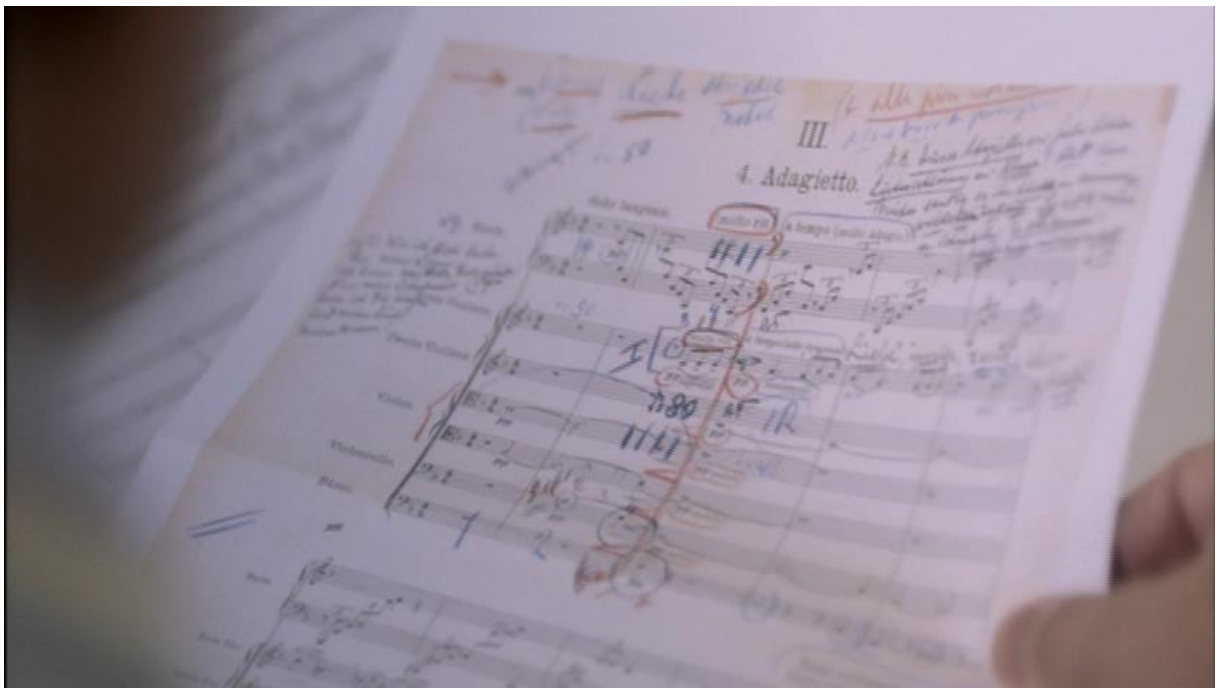


Figure 6.4: *Transcription*s, first appearance of the Adagietto score, 9:00.

The 'lamenting yearning' of *Kein Deutscher Himmel*'s sung text is closely aligned with the central themes of *Death in Venice*, to which Sommer alludes in a second image-strand. Commentators have repeatedly identified Visconti's use of the Adagietto as a 'leitmotif' symbolizing Aschenbach's yearning for Tadzio and the beauty and death he represents. Philip Kitcher argues that the repeated Adagietto 'yearns for a close it never attains […] and [is] thus a fitting accompaniment for Aschenbach's unsatisfied longings'.[165] Aitken likewise notes the 'masochistic yearning' of the music, interpreted by Vaget as a 'Tristanesque' articulation of Aschenbach's 'unconscious yearning for death' and Henry Bacon as expressing a 'yearning for unity of serenity and sensuousness'.[166] Sommer intensifies the association between these connotations of the Adagietto in *Death in Venice* and Platen's yearning for the beauty of Venice and its art in *Kein Deutscher Himmel*'s text through repeated allusions to the film.[167] These all relate to its opening scene, described in Pesson's liner note, in which the steamer carrying Aschenbach to Venice progresses across the twilit lagoon (Figure 6.5). The theme of 'longing'

[165] Philip Kitcher, *Deaths in Venice: The Cases of Gustav von Aschenbach* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013). 150.
[166] Aitken, *Death in Venice*. 123. Vaget, 'The Case of "Death in Venice"'. 167, 168. Bacon, *Visconti*. 165.
[167] These are occur at 9:15-9:25, 9:43-9:50, 12:35-12:07, 14:04-14:07, and 14:52-14:56. Sommer explicitly acknowledges including 'distant reminiscences' of films including *Death in Venice* in *Transcription*s. *Transcriptions*, Sommer (dir.). Liner notes 29.

sustained by the relation between Mengelberg's score, the transcription's text, and visual allusions to *Death in Venice* is supplemented by aspects of Sommer's third image-strand, which shows Accentus singing. In the latter portion of the sequence, singers are repeatedly seen trapped behind bars and gazing longingly at an unspecified object of desire beyond the camera in what becomes an increasingly important visual motif.[168]

Reviewing *Transcription*^{s}, Rochester interprets this motif according to the fidelity-essentialist discourse promoted by the film, describing 'a conductor [*sic*] clawing at iron bars as if trying to release the essence of the Mahler Adagietto' as one of Sommer's 'masterstrokes'.[169] However, alongside his overt allusions to *Death in Venice*, Sommer's cage motif also seems to be an abstracted representation of Aschenbach's 'yearning' gesture in the final, Adagietto-infused scene of Visconti's film, in which he reaches out to Tadzio and, finally, dies (Figure 6.6). As Pesson's transcription reaches its climactic final cadence, the singers release their grip on the cage bars and retreat into a blurry background, echoing Aschenbach 'yielding' to beauty and death at the end of *Death in Venice*. The *Kein Deutscher Himmel* sequence of Sommer's film magnifies the explicit 'authenticity' discourse of Accentus's *Transcriptions* 'brand' but is simultaneously saturated with allusions to the 'inauthentic' meanings the Adagietto accrued through its use in *Death in Venice*. Like Kaplan's Adagietto facsimiles, *Transcription*^{s} seems to fetishize 'fidelity' and 'authenticity' in order to distance itself from Visconti's 'vulgarization' of the movement while also drawing extensively on the affective associations of 'longing' it gain as a result. In earnestly protesting its status as art rather than kitsch through fidelity discourse, 'arty' camerawork, and lavish DVD packaging *Transcription*^{s} is typical of the 'high-class' kitsch that alarmed Adorno and Greenberg. From this modernist perspective, Accentus's transcriptions 'brand' combines 'vulgarization and

[168] See 12:19-12:34, 13:08-13:14, 13:28-13:34, 13:43-13:57, 14:44-14:51, 16:05-16:29, and 17:12-17:42.
[169] Marc Rochester, 'The Work of a Matchless Choir is Now Joined by Stunning Visuals', *Gramophone*, 86/1032 (2008), 105. Rochester's mistaken identification of Equilbey as the one behind bars is telling in context.

enchantment' in its use of fidelity discourse to obscure a covert appeal to the 'culture consumer' and 'emotional listener'.



Figure 6.5: Comparison of *Death in Venice* 2:57 (left) and *Transcription*^{s} 9-15 (right).



Figure 6.6: Comparison of *Death in Venice* 2:02:17 (left) and *Transcription*^{s} 16-15 (right).

6.7.3 Choral transcription and affectivity

Pesson's adaptation of Mahler's orchestral movement for choir may facilitate 'emotional listening' even without the aid of Sommer's visual allusions to *Death in Venice*. Equilbey claims that the vocal transcriptions performed by Accentus have proved popular because they afford more direct emotional engagement than the orchestral 'originals'.

> The fact that the music is being sung allows people to absorb it more directly. All of a sudden, you're presenting a work for orchestra to listeners who think 'This is *my* piece, because I could sing it'. A sort of transmission effect occurs, and that's why these works have enjoyed such success. Take the Barber Adagio [*Agnus Dei*], for example: you hear it in the orchestral version, you cry, it's magnificent, but with voices it's just as magnificent, and perhaps even more beautiful, because there is that element of human distress that you feel still more acutely.[170]

Lawrence Kramer also notes the heightened emotional effect of vocal transcriptions but construes it in negative terms, describing the 'misfortune' of hearing a 'cringe-worthy'

[170] *Transcriptions [1 and 2]* (2008). Liner notes 41.

adaptation of Barber's Adagio for wordless chorus.[171] In a parallel with authenticist critiques of *Kein Deutscher Himmel*, Kramer complains the transcription reinforces the associations of 'lamentation' the string orchestra version of the Adagio gained when popularized through its use in the film *Platoon* (1986).

> Change the instrumentation to wordless chorus and the trouble multiplies exponentially. The aestheticizing of pain and sorrow now becomes erotic, or perhaps I should say more erotic, more openly erotic, at the same time as the lamentation assumes a quasi-sacred character because of the vocal texture—so we have a witches' brew of sanctity, sexuality, sensuousness and sentiment.[172]

The transfer to a choral medium, Kramer argues,

> projects a kind of ethereal lushness, revelling in the materiality of the voice while at the same time denying it. The wordless chorus produces the willed illusion of disembodiment […] The logic is that of the fetish in its classical formulation: I know, but even so.... This double-sidedness takes advantage of a strange element of voice in the plural: that the sound of a chorus is never quite traceable to the bodies that produce it, but instead seems to hover about the performance space, not quite linked to its source, precisely because nobody—no (one) body—is producing it. For that reason this effect of disembodiment never occurs with solo singing, the sound of which can never escape the body that produces it, though it may try.[173]

Although Kramer relativizes his response as a 'judgement of taste', its indebtedness to the modernist suspicion of arrangements as fetishistic and kitsch is clear.[174]

One need not adopt either Kramer or Equilbey's differing value judgements to recognize the emotional effects of choral transcription that they describe and how these have contributed to *Kein Deutscher Himmel*'s popularity. Pesson's transcription differs from the Barber transcription discussed by Kramer in interweaving both the 'ethereal' quality of seemingly-disembodied choral singing and the 'erotic' connotations of embodied solo voices. In the opening and reprise sections of the Adagietto's ternary form, Pesson generally alters which vocal part sings the melody only when Mahler changes which instrument plays it; in the
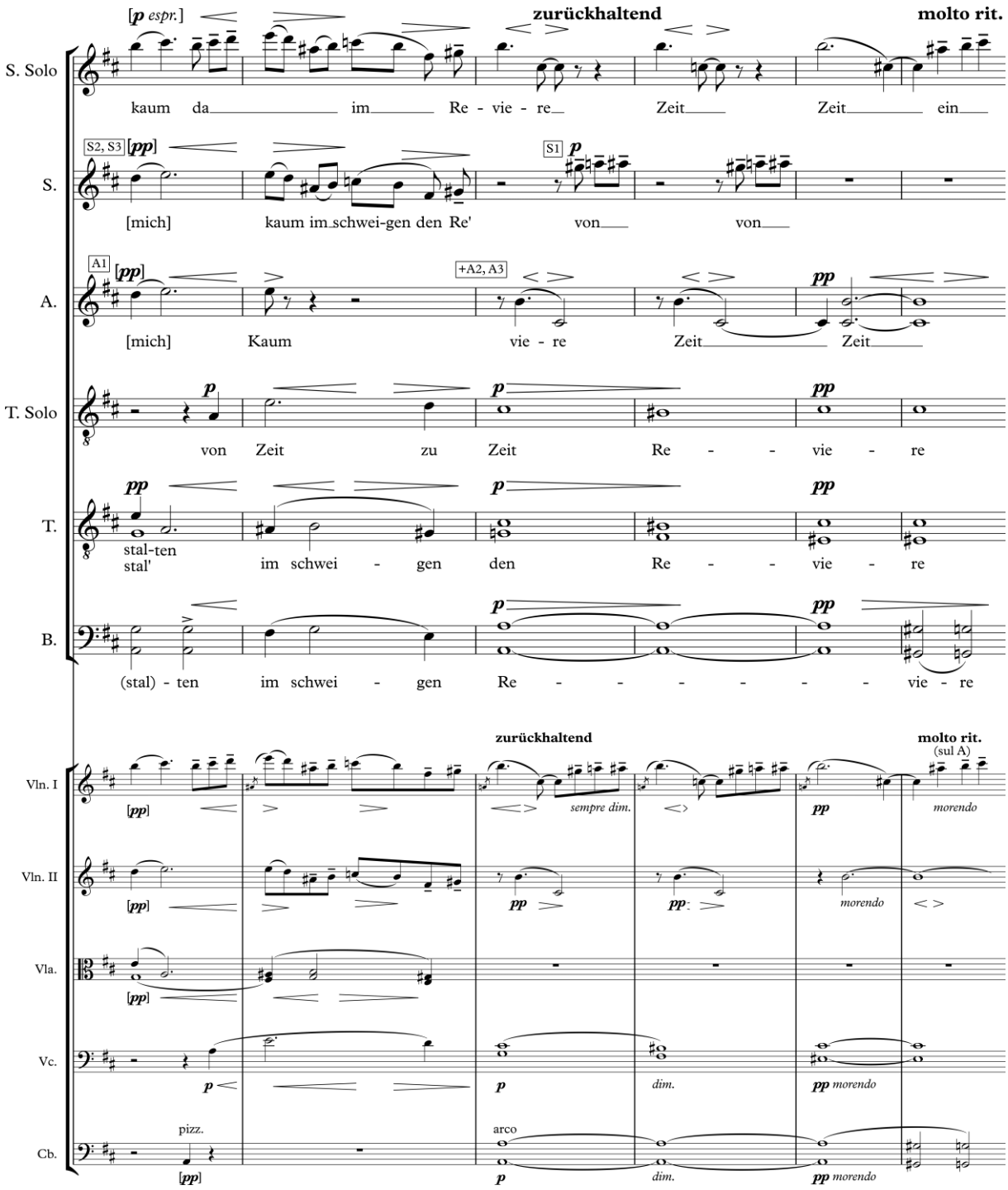
[171] Lawrence Kramer, 'Philosophizing Musically: Reconsidering Music and Ideas', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association,* 139/2 (2014), 387-404. 401. Kramer may have heard a version by Jacek Sykulski, a recording of which was released the same year as his article was published, or simply not heard the words of Barber's own transcription.
[172] Ibid. 402.
[173] Ibid. 402.
[174] Ibid. 402.

contrasting middle section, however, Pesson frequently divides Mahler's instrumental phrases among different vocal parts (Figure 6.7). The timbral and affective contrast provided by solo soprano, alto, and tenor voices as they weave in and out of the choral texture is an especially significant feature of Pesson's redistribution (Example 6.1). The near-constant presence of the soprano soloist in the middle section, ascending to the upper limits of their tessitura against the choral backdrop, is particularly striking. Francis Carlin chooses to begin a profile of Equilbey with a description of this aspect of Pesson's transcription: 'The soprano solo soars up to an E in altissimo, with the rest of the choir forming an intricate cushion of sound behind'.[175] This affective reconfiguration of the Adagietto's orchestral texture allows listeners to be absorbed by a transcendently disembodied choral texture at one moment and identify with an erotically embodied solo voice the next.

[175] Francis Carlin, '"It's a Noble Art and I'm Prepared to Fight to Get the Choir Recognised"', *Financial Times*, 28 June 2004 9.



Figure 6.7: Distribution of the melody in *Kein Deutscher Himmel* and Mahler, Fifth Symphony, iv (Adagietto).



Example 6.1: Comparison of *Kein Deutscher Himmel* (above) and Mahler, Fifth Symphony, iv (below) bars 66-71.

This reconfiguration participates in what Freya Jarman (without condemnation) terms the 'affective distribution of classical music', a phenomenon typified by the 'Adagietto-Mahler of compact-disc compilations' that Franklin critiques. '[A]t the same time as a shift towards strategies drawn from popular music marketing', Jarman suggests, 'there has been an increased focus on the distribution of classical music along the lines of a logic of affect, in which reception and consumption have become at least as central as composers and 'the music itself' to the

circulation and formation of canons'.[176] While *Kein Deutscher Himmel*'s grouping with other slow tracks on *Transcriptions* was probably motivated by such a 'logic of affect', this strategy is disguised by its claims to artistic value and 'authenticity'. However, affective distribution or 'emotional listening' explicitly joins (or even displaces) 'culture consumption' in the string of compilation albums on which Accentus's record label, Naïve, has included *Kein Deutscher Himmel*: *Turner, Whistler, Monet* (2005), *Mélancolie* (2005), *Classique & Zen* (2007), *Classical Melancholy* (2017).[177] The titles of these albums variously emphasize the emotional tone and 'artistic' status of the slow, lyrical music they contain, explicitly promoting modes of engagement that Accentus's *Transcriptions* 'brand' encouraged more discreetly. In either case, the commercial distribution of *Kein Deutscher Himmel* has exploited the very qualities of the piece which have prompted suspicion from a modernist standpoint: it has easily been assimilated as a 'sincere' agent of the 'Adagietto-Mahler' phenomenon on which Pesson implicitly claims to offer an ironizing 'perspective'.

6.7.4 Transcription, controversy, and *Kein Deutscher Himmel*

The potentially ironic dimension of *Kein Deutscher Himmel* by which Pesson has attempted to 'justify' it in modernist terms has played no part its commercial distribution and so, predictably, there is little evidence that listeners have heard it in this way. Instead, both positive and negative reactions to the piece have drawn on dominant ideological paradigms including an (implicit) modernism and, to a much greater extent, the notions authenticity and affectivity reinforced by Accentus's *Transcriptions* brand. Numerous comments on YouTube suggest emotionally intense and even ecstatic responses to *Kein Deutscher Himmel*. 'Fantastic I am weeping', 'I came to revisit ~ and am again overwhelmed', 'Sublime'.[178] Another user

[176] Jarman Freya Jarman, 'Relax, Feel Good, Chill Out: The Affective Distribution of Classical Music', in Marie Thompson and Ian Biddle (eds.), *Sound, Music, Affect: Theorizing Sonic Experience* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 183-204. 184.
[177] *Turner, Whistler, Monet* (2005, Naïve), CD; *Mélancolie* (2005, Naïve), CD; *Classique & Zen* (2007, Naïve), CD; *Classical Melancholy* (2017, Naïve), Digital album. On these albums, *Kein Deutscher Himmel* is listed as 'Symphony No. 5 in C-Sharp Minor: IV. Adagietto (arr. for choir)'.
[178] 'Mahler Adagietto', *YouTube*. This YouTube video has received over 79 000 views to date.

expresses their emotional delirium in an unbroken stream of three languages: 'i[']m melting, this is sublime je suis en transe de mourir esta delicadeza me mata en una dicha de beldad insoportable' ('i[']m melting, this is sublime I am in a dying trance this delicacy kills me in a joy of unbearable beauty').[179] This evocation of absolute and fatal surrender to sublime beauty reflects the central theme of *Death in Venice*, to which other listeners refer more explicitly: 'The Mahler Adagietto (Death in Venice theme) is heartachingly beautiful (if heartache can be beautiful, this is it!)'.[180] Another Amazon review of *Transcriptions* identifies a threefold connection between the music's emotional 'power', cinematic associations, and choral medium:

> From the first notes we are taken by a particular emotion: this disc draws from our unconscious music which is inevitably well-known, inevitably associated with images (Barber's Adagio in *Platoon*, Mahler's Adagietto in *Death in Venice*), whose suggestive power finds itself increased tenfold by the use of *a cappella* voices, inevitably of an extraordinary purity, inevitably overwhelming. Once 'gripped', the entire disc brings us happiness and serenity. A marvel.[181]

Other listeners also affirm the heightened emotional 'power' offered by choral transcriptions of orchestral works. 'This is an amazing arrangement...', comments one YouTube user, 'It is such a tragically beautiful piece to begin with, and the voices make it just a little more powerful'.[182] Listeners frequently identify the alto and especially soprano solo phrases as particularly affecting. 'The soprano's stratospheric leaps in [… the] Adagietto were stabs at my heart', states one Amazon reviewer, 'and so was the beautifully mahlerian contralto solo […] (from 1:30)',

---

[179] Ibid.

[180] 'Transcriptions', *Amazon.co.uk* [Product page and reviews], <https://www.amazon.co.uk/d/CDs-Vinyl/Transcriptions-Laurence-Equilbey-Accentus/B00008GFOH/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1502268001&sr=8-1&keywords=transcriptions+accentus>, accessed 11 April 2019.

[181] 'Dès les premières notes nous sommes pris d'une émotion particulière : ce disque puise dans notre inconscient des musiques forcément connues, forcément associées à des images (l'Adagio de Barber dans Platoon, l'Adagietto de Mahler dans Mort à Venise), dont la puissance de suggestion se trouve décuplée par l'utilisation des voix a cappella, forcément d'une extraordinaire pureté, forcément bouleversantes. Une fois « agrippés », le disque entier nous entraine dans le bonheur et la sérénité. Une merveille.' 'Transcriptions pour choeur d'oeuvres de Bach, Berg, Chopin, Ravel ...', *Amazon.fr* [Product page and reviews], <https://www.amazon.fr/Transcriptions-choeur-doeuvres-Chopin-Ravel/dp/B00008GFOH/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1507556484&sr=8-1&keywords=accentus+transcriptions>, accessed 11 April 2019.

[182] 'Mahler Adagietto', *YouTube*.

while another describes the way 'solo sopranos and mezzos take on the lines of different strings' as 'heart-rending and technically astonishing'.[183]

However, other listeners acknowledge the aesthetic suspicion that *Kein Deutscher Himmel*'s affective 'power' and consequent popular appeal might provoke. 'Some times, one must simply lay down one's defenses (e.g. one's critical sense) and give oneself entirely to the beauty of the music', protests one Amazon review of *Transcriptions*, 'This is a typical chart-breaker […] Classical music for the illeterate [*sic*] masses? No, the kind that you want to offer your friends at Christmas - even if they ARE amateurs and cognoscenti of classical music'.[184] This apology for *Transcriptions* posits modernist notions of 'critical' (rather than 'emotional') listening and the inverse proportion between artistic quality and popularity as normative evaluative criteria, inadvertently reinforcing negative views of arrangement in this regard. Other reviewers attack rather than defend *Transcriptions* according to these criteria, criticizing *Transcriptions* as an example of the affective distribution of classical music. 'This latest CD by a crack professional chamber choir […] may, I fear, be one Musical Pointer towards the future of listening and the struggling record business', argues Peter Grahame Woolf on musicalpointers.co.uk. 'Most classical music depends on integration of contrast, but here we have some fifty minutes of uninterrupted slow music', he complains, declaring that while some of the transcriptions 'work well' others are 'awful', including Pesson's 'frankly embarrassing' adaptation of the Adagietto.[185] This broadly modernist critique is also reflected by one Amazon reviewer's quip that the album's succession of slow music 'is tiresome, and would be dangerous to listen to whilst driving'.[186]

---

[183] 'Accentus: Transcriptions', *Amazon.com* [Product page and reviews], <https://www.amazon.com/product-reviews/B00008GFOH/ref=cm_cr_dp_d_cmps_btm?ie=UTF8&reviewerType=all_reviews>, accessed April 11 2019.

[184] 'Transcriptions', *Amazon.de* [Product page and reviews], <https://www.amazon.de/Transcriptions-Accentus/dp/B00008GFOH>, accessed 11 April 2019.

[185] Peter Grahame Woolf, 'Transcriptions "Adagio for Choir"', *Musical Pointers* <http://www.musicalpointers.co.uk/reviews/cddvd/accentus_transcriptions.htm>, accessed 11 April 2019.

[186] 'est même lassante, et serait dangereuse pour une écoute au volant.' 'Transcriptions pour choeur', *Amazon.fr*. For a less critical identification of *Transcriptions* with affective distribution, see James Manheim, 'Transcriptions', *All Music*, accessed 11 April 2019.

The implicit influence of modernism is less significant, however, than the way many listeners have justified and criticized *Kein Deutscher Himmel* with direct reference to notions of 'fidelity' and 'authenticity'. Peter McCallum, for example, admits that setting words to Mahler's Adagietto 'sounds like sacrilege until you hear it sung with such surpassing beauty'.[187] Several YouTube users seek to defend *Kein Deutscher Himmel* against the criticism that it is unfaithful to Mahler's Adagietto not by rejecting fidelity discourse but affirming it. 'There is always controversy about transcriptions', admits one YouTube user, but points out that 'Mahler did piano transcriptions of his symphonies'.[188] Other comments similarly appeal to Mahler's attitudes and wishes: 'Mahler said if something of his music can sound better, we should fix it. It has been done here'; 'Very nice. I think Mahler would have approved. He was open to experimental gestures like his version of Beethoven's 9th'.[189]

Some listeners, however, have adhered to less flexible notions of 'authenticity', condemning Pesson's transcription, however beautiful, as not only artistically inadvisable but also immoral:

> That [the transcription] is beautiful is undeniable. That being said, was it absolutely necessary to transcribe an Adagietto that is self-sufficient, in its own purity? The approach seems to be to be absolutely narcissistic and vain. There are some temptations that the greatest artists—and Mme Equilbey is one of them—should know to resist.[190]

Another listener concurred:

> I thought the same while listening to this. It's that burning desire to have something beautiful all to yourself, that urge to transform it into something else, into one's own medium, instead of loving

[187] Peter McCallum, 'Latvian Radio Choir Review: A Revelation and Musical Highlight of the Sydney Festival', *Sydney Morning Herald* (January 24 2015) <https://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/music/latvian-radio-choir-review-a-revelation-and-musical-highlight-of-the-sydney-festival-20150124-12xfnv.html>, accessed 11 April 2019.
[188] 'Mahler Adagietto', *YouTube*.
[189] Ibid. See David Pickett, 'Arrangements and Retuschen: Mahler and Werktreue', in Jeremy Barham (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Mahler* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 178-199.
[190] 'Que cela soit beau, c'est indéniable. Ceci étant dit, était-il absolument indispensable de transcrire un Adagietto qui se suffit à lui-même, dans sa pureté même ? La démarche me semble absolument narcissique et vaine. Il y a des tentations auxquelles les plus grands artistes—Et Mme Equilbey en fait partie—devraient savoir résister.' 'Mahler Adagietto', *YouTube*.

> it as it is, for what it is. What a difficult temptation. Narcissistic, vain, yes. And unjust to the beloved.[191]

Without challenging the basic premise of their interlocutors, a third listener attempted to justify Equilbey's performance of *Kein Deutscher Himmel*. 'Strictly speaking, you are right. Nonetheless, why give up this particular perspective on this monumental work? If the approach brings Mahler a new audience from choral singing, why not? Like this will they one day approach the *Song of the Earth*… [?]'[192] This comment aims to defend the transcription not as a creative end in itself, but merely as a means by which new audiences may be introduced to more substantial works by Mahler in their 'authentic' incarnations. This exchange demonstrates that, for a great many listeners, the traditional imperative to be 'faithful to the work' remains the core ideal against which arrangements, including *Kein Deutscher Himmel*, are heard, interpreted, and judged.

6.8 Conclusion

As responses posted on YouTube and Amazon indicate, the complex and subtle attitude towards *Kein Deutscher Himmel* suggested by Pesson's differing 'justifications' of the transcription has played little part in either its popular appeal or the controversy it has caused. This situation results partly from the continuing dominance of historical 'authenticity' and (to a lesser extent) modernist kitsch critique as frameworks for evaluating arrangements and partly from the way the commercial distribution of *Kein Deutscher Himmel* has actively promoted the ideology of 'fidelity' to an 'authentic' source. From this perspective, this commercial distribution has collapsed the tensions present in Pesson's comments about his transcription rather than maintaining them, neutralizing its critical potential.[193] However, this does not necessarily make *Kein Deutscher Himmel* a 'failure' in aesthetic or critical terms. Pesson's

[191] Ibid.
[192] 'Formellement, vous avez raison. Néanmoins, pourquoi renoncer à cet éclairage particulier à cette oeuvre monumentale ? Si l'approche d'Accentus amène à Malher [*sic*] un nouveau public issu du chant choral, pourquoi pas ? Un jour approcheront-ils ainsi le Chant de la Terre...' ibid.
[193] It should be noted that platforms such as YouTube may to some extent allow listeners to 'bypass' the official marketing strategies (like Accentus's *Transcriptions* brand) that are associated with the purchase of CDs.

transcription and his 'explanations' of it exploit and enhance multiple ways of hearing and understanding Mahler's Adagietto, and more importantly 'mishearing' and 'misunderstanding' it. The ideological 'mishearings' of *Kein Deutscher Himmel* facilitated by its commercial distribution replicate on a larger scale those that Pesson discusses and in which he appears to delight. In this sense, the commercial distribution of Pesson's transcription *realizes* rather than collapses his more complex understanding of it. Perhaps *Kein Deutscher Himmel* cannot be 'pre-emptive' kitsch for some listeners 'in the know' if it is not unselfconsciously enjoyed (and antagonistically dismissed) as kitsch by those who are not. In subtly evoking this tension between artistic 'elites' and 'courser' mass audiences Pesson's transcription appears to engage with the social antagonisms which inform notions of kitsch as an aesthetic category.[194] To understand Pesson's kitsch as pre-emptive may involve the admission that this is a 'misunderstanding' of it according to the significance it has held for most listeners.

It is, however, fruitful to sustain the multifaceted hearing of *Kein Deutscher Himmel* inferred from Pesson's various comments about the transcription against that offered by its commercial distribution, though not on the grounds that it is 'authentic'. Rather, this hearing is worth upholding because its potentially critical complexities are fragile, all too easily flattened by the commercial and ideological heft of those promoted by Accentus's *Transcriptions* brand. The supposed critical capacities of arrangement theorized by Szendy and, more implicitly, Adorno, seem absent from the reception of *Kein Deutscher Himmel*. Instead, reactions to Pesson's transcription, whether positive or negative, authenticist or modernist, indicate that entrenched ideologies of artistic value continue to determine (and perhaps limit) how arrangements are heard and understood by many listeners in the twenty-first century. By contrast, attending to Pesson's ironic and ambivalent attitude to *Kein Deutscher Himmel* and its reception by listeners suggests alternative perspectives which destabilize existing frameworks of aesthetic evaluation. The suspicion prompted by Pesson's transcription results chiefly from

[194] See 2.5.

the way it challenges the conventional assumption that the primary source of an arrangement's significance is (or should be) the work that it arranges as understood in its 'original' historical context. However, in *Kein Deutscher Himmel* Pesson does not transcribe the Adagietto as Mahler composed it but rather as he himself found it, invested with meanings derived from Visconti's *Death in Venice*. In 'working with objects already on the cultural market' in a way that blurs production and consumption, Pesson's transcription is typical of the 'postproduction' described by Nicolas Bourriaud.[195] *Kein Deutscher Himmel* exemplifies not just arrangement *as* reception, but also the arrangement *of* reception: its ostensible 'source', Mahler's Adagietto, is not the only or even primary source of its significance. Rather than attempting to escape fidelity discourse, *Kein Deutscher Himmel* displaces its traditional object, the 'original', instead offering a 'faithful' musical adaptation of *Death in Venice* through Mahler's Adagietto.

Regarding Visconti's film rather than Mahler's symphonic movement as the 'source' of *Kein Deutscher Himmel* works against the 'flattening' effect of the transcription's distribution, illuminating and amplifying its engagement with musical kitsch. In particular, Pesson's transcription can be interpreted as drawing on *Death in Venice* as a visual allegory for the way listeners, including Pesson himself, hear the Adagietto as kitsch. According to Pesson's description, such listeners are drawn to the Adagietto, a reified stereotype of musical beauty, unable to resist it as insects are unable to resist being drawn to the light of an electric fly-killer. Aschenbach suffers a parallel fate, drawn to his eventual death by Tadzio's beauty despite a short-lived attempt to tear himself away. This parallel suggests *Kein Deutscher Himmel* presents a more sympathetic representation of kitsch listening than Pesson's fly-killer metaphor initially appears to suggest. The transcription's 'great fidelity', the Venetian theme of its text, and the heightened emotional engagement afforded by its choral reconfiguration indicate that Pesson's modernist attempt to 'exorcize' his excessive adolescent 'love' for the Adagietto is as half-hearted as Aschenbach's attempt to resist Tadzio's beauty. Nevertheless, *Kein Deutscher*

[195] See 1.2.

Himmel appears to record Pesson's self-conscious listening to kitsch that simultaneously attracts and repels. The final scene of Visconti's adaptation enables both a more direct identification with Aschenbach and a reflexive distance from his situation than Mann's third-person narration. As the Adagietto plays for the final time, Visconti allows (or forces) his audience to adopt Aschenbach's point of view as he watches at Tadzio. However, the shot also includes a camera on a tripod in the foreground: Visconti confronts his audience with their own cinematic gaze without requiring them to renounce it (Figure 6.8). Pesson's transcription, however 'faithful', offers a musical equivalent to the 'perspective of perspectives' in the final scene of *Death in Venice*. *Kein Deutscher Himmel*'s 'fidelity' to the Adagietto invites listeners to listen to themselves listening to it as beautiful kitsch, hearing a tension between ironic distance and unselfconscious indulgence which would be hidden by either a transformative arrangement or the orchestral 'original'.



Figure 6.8: *Death in Venice*, final scene, 2:02:18.

7 Conclusion

La transcription est un écart, 'transcription is a gap'.[1] Pesson's definition is as suggestive as it is succinct: as well as 'gap', *écart* can mean space, distance, or interval between; discrepancy or disparity; a swerve or deviation from an expected course. The composer's maxim identifies transcription with a sense of palpable and unresolved difference made meaningful by partial or potential similarity. In this case, Pesson uses the word 'transcription' to refer to the same broad concept addressed in the present study as 'arrangement'.[2] Appropriately, given its subject, Pesson's definition might be fruitfully adopted and adapted to serve as a distillation of this thesis's central claims: *arrangement is a gap*. This 'gap' most immediately signifies the differences of form and meaning between a piece of music heard as an arrangement and the work it is heard as arranging. Through an examination of Pesson's music, this thesis has argued that such a 'gap' is arrangement's defining characteristic, intrinsic rather than incidental to the meaning of this idea and its relationship with listening. In doing so, it has resisted the limiting but tenacious notion that an arrangement's identity and significance is determined primarily by its similarity to its 'source' rather than difference from it, its 'fidelity' to an 'original'. Sustained consideration of Pesson's music suggests that listeners hear arrangements as arrangements not *despite* the 'gap' separating them from the works they arrange but *because of* this 'gap'.

The critical approach proposed in this study displaces the 'original' as the ultimate source of an arrangement's significance without dissolving its expressive potential as an

[1] Gérard Pesson, 'Panorama, Particolari e Licenza', *Henry Lemoine* [Online programme note], <www.henry-lemoine.com/fr/catalogue/fiche/28483>, accessed 28 September 2016.

[2] Pesson uses the phrase to describe the interpretative 'licence' to which the title of the transformative reworking *Panorama, Particolari e Licenza* refers: the potentially 'stricter' connotations of the word 'transcription' are hardly relevant in this context. Elsewhere, he uses similar language in discussing a host of other terms that are also either near-equivalents of 'arrangement', specific subcategories of the practice, or closely associated with it. 'Pastiche (or disguise), paraphrase, deduction, translation, instrumentation (or instrumentalization): the operation—which is a work of discrepancy that I believe to be very fertile—always returns to an almost magical examination of the referent'. 'Pastiche (ou postiche), paraphrase, déduction, traduction, instrumentation (ou instrumentalisation) : l'opération—qui est un travail d'écart, je crois, très fécond—revient toujours à un examen presque magique du référent.' Pesson, Dousson, and Troche, 'Entretien avec Gérard Pesson'. 338.

arrangement, considering alternative ways listeners may hear it as meaningful. One result of this shift away from fidelity discourse is that the interpretations of *Nebenstück, Ambre Nous Resterons, Wunderblock,* and *Kein Deutscher Himmel* presented here have revealed more about the issues raised by Pesson's music than that of Brahms, Couperin, Bruckner, or Mahler. Most obviously, these arrangements have offered a productive frame through which to consider Pesson's broader engagement with pre-existing musical materials. In particular, the composer explicitly characterizes *Nebenstück, Wunderblock,* and *Ambre Nous Resterons* as applying a 'treatment' to an existing work in order to illustrate his conception of compositional invention as unavoidably informed by musical memory. Similarly, several of Pesson's comments about *Kein Deutscher Himmel* indicate that the transcription afforded especially intense expression of his compositional interest in 'reified' musical 'stereotypes'.

Attending to Pesson's arrangements also illuminates aspects of his style that are not immediately related to the re-use of pre-existing material. In each case an appropriated work acts as a foil against which Pesson's own expressive concerns are thrown into relief. In contrast to the idea that an arrangement bears the mere traces of the creative 'personality' most evident in a composer-arranger's 'original' works, Pesson's arrangements bring his own 'personality' into particularly sharp focus. For example, the role of the 'unwriting' (*désécriture*) and 'erasure' (*effacement*) which inform the composer's pervasive use of extended techniques can be more readily appreciated when the material to which these processes are applied is stylistically removed from his own. In the two *Nebenstücke*, Pesson's '*détournement*' or subversion of traditional instrumental performance is reinforced by a parallel *détournement* of pre-existing works. This context suggests that the noise generated by these techniques can be most productively be heard *as noise* rather than a 'signal', artfully interfering with received modes of musical discourse rather than simply expanding the timbral resources used to articulate them. Similarly, in *Ambre Nous Resterons* and *Wunderblock* music by Couperin and Bruckner constitutes a backdrop against which Pesson's own approaches to form and temporality become

particularly evident. The sources of both arrangements act as temporal 'grounds' upon which the composer's preoccupation with structures that eschew 'linear' progression are figured. These 'grounds' by turns complement and contrast with Pesson's self-confessed inclination to 'wander'; the loops and cycles, fragments and panels, diversions and digressions manifested in these reworkings amplify similar structural features in his other music. The composer's appropriation of Mahler's Adagietto in *Kein Deutscher Himmel* more vividly facilitates reflection upon the disparity ('*écart*') between the way he and 'the public' hear music, including his own, than would be possible in an 'original' work.

All of these perspectives suggest that, for Pesson, the idea of arrangement as a 'gap' has been an especially rich and apt context in which to pursue a further-reaching interest in *écart*, *décalage*, and *détournement* (discrepancy, shift, and subversive diversion).[3] This interest is manifested in numerous aspects of the composer's music, including its formal concerns, use of instrumental technique, engagement with pre-existing materials, and, most importantly, the way it reflects on the experience of listening. This last theme is manifested with particular clarity in Pesson's description of *Nebenstück* as an attempt to 'shift our listening' (*décaler notre écoute*) rather than 'recharge Brahms'. However, it is also a 'shift' of this kind that enables the reflexive 'listening to listening' with which the composer associates *Wunderblock*. The tension between 'following' and 'wandering' in *Ambre Nous Resterons* evokes the inevitable diversions a listener makes from the supposedly 'linear' time of the Work, inviting a similar reflection on listening. Further, both this piece and *Wunderblock* signify the necessary absence of the architectonic Work, representing the way listening reveals the 'gap', the nothingness, where such a Work initially seems to 'be'. The 'shift' in listening encouraged by Pesson's *détournement* of the Adagietto in *Kein Deutscher Himmel* reveals an ironic 'perspective of

[3] Consider, for example, the recurrence of these and similar terms in Pesson and Sanson, 'Entretien avec Gérard Pesson'.

perspectives', probing the cultural disparities between different ways of hearing that articulate subtle but significant discrepancies between art and kitsch.

Although the idea of arrangement as a 'gap' is particularly relevant to Pesson's music, in this thesis it has formed the basis of an approach which might be taken to a wide variety of arrangements beyond this context. The initial stage in this approach has been to identify and adopt a critical perspective on several discursive tropes and interpretative reflexes which continue to restrict the scholarly study of arrangement. Most importantly, this thesis has resisted fidelity-essentialism, the idea that an arrangement is or should be 'true to the spirit' of its source, and a host of tropes that result from this outlook. Regarding an arrangement merely as a musical translation, interpretation, analysis, or even criticism of the arranged work often involves a rush to that work as the primary source of an arrangement's import that hastily bypasses other ways it might be understood as meaningful. As a result, the ostensibly 'new' perspectives offered by such comparisons, most of which have been in constant use for well over a century, work to hide a continuing reliance on fidelity-based conceptions of arrangement.

This study has similarly questioned the distinction habitually made between an arrangement's 'content' and 'medium' and the implicit evaluation of each articulated by metaphors of depth and containment. Path metaphors which describe an arrangement as 'following' a source work 'step by step', or failing to do this, and the notion of linear temporal fidelity which motivates them have also been subjected to critical interrogation. This thesis has also advocated a more nuanced approach to the rigid differentiation between 'temporal' and 'timbral' alterations to an existing work and disputed the assumption that an arrangement necessarily 're-presents' its source, suggesting that it might also articulate that source's absence. As well as challenging these implications of fidelity-essentialism, this study has also sought to address the influence of the formalist fallacy. In particular, it has questioned the assumption that the changes in form and meaning wrought by an arrangement are directly related to one another in a proportional manner and that, consequently, individual examples may be placed

on a continuum between ‘strict’ and ‘free’. Finally, this thesis has sought to avoid the common presupposition that arrangements, especially those that ‘popularize’ canonical works, are inevitably either ‘tasteless’ kitsch or, conversely, a ‘democratizing’ force. It is necessary to adopt a critical stance towards all these longstanding tropes and assumptions in arrangement discourse before scholarly exploration of the subject can proceed. This stance does not imply a simplistic attempt to reject and transcend such assumptions, but rather an attention to their continuing influence on listening in a wide range of contexts.

As well as offering a critique of existing assumptions about arrangement, this thesis has developed a number of alternative theoretical concepts through which to approach the topic. Most significantly, the present study has sought to demonstrate the benefits of understanding arrangement primarily as an idea that informs a certain way of listening rather than as a type of musical object defined by its formal properties or the way it was produced. This approach advantageously takes existing beliefs about arrangement into account without simply adopting them, avoids the circular methods of definition proposed by analytic philosophers, and moves beyond an interpretative paradigm premised on a ‘knowing’ or ‘ideal’ listener. Theorizing arrangement as a way of listening indicates the relevance of this concept to a much wider range of music, creative practices, and discursive contexts than have usually been considered in discussions of the subject. Such a conception of arrangement is fruitfully complemented by Peter Szendy’s conception of arrangement as recording the experience of listening, or even as constitutive of it. This thesis develops and refines Szendy’s philosophical consideration of arrangement to practical ends, weaving it into a theoretical framework that can stimulate and sustain detailed interpretations of individual examples. More specifically, this thesis has presented a more flexible concept of arrangements as representative of the experience of a ‘listening persona’ who is distinct from the arranger and whose subject position the ‘empirical’ listener may or may not adopt at any given moment. Further, this investigation of Pesson’s music has indicated how the ‘listening to listening’ suggested by arrangements enables them to

exploit meaningful parallels with other reflexive, 'second order' modes of expression. These include the 'perspective of perspectives' characteristic of irony, the 'opinionated viewpoint of the present' on the past manifested in hauntological art, and comparisons between different frames of reference inherent in notions of (musical) temporality.

More generally, arrangements may be interpreted as responding to their own status as mediations of a work, playing meaningfully on their own continuity with comparable forms of musical mediation including performance, technological sound reproduction, commercial distribution, and listening. It is primarily these 'sideways' connections to other forms of mediation that enable arrangements to generate meaning without listeners necessarily attempting to hear 'back' to the 'original' work. In this way, an arrangement may be interpreted as commenting upon or 'arranging' the prior reception of a work rather than simply forming a part of that reception. These perspectives suggest productive tensions with conventional notions of 'content' and 'medium' in arrangement discourse: rather than being an arrangement's 'content', an arranged work can be considered a 'medium' through which the arrangement advances the 'content' of its own expressive discourse. It is especially important to remain alert to this alternative expressive discourse when considering arrangements that sound self-effacingly 'faithful' to the form of a prior work. This thesis has shown that although fidelity remains a dominant interpretative and evaluative criterion in discussions of arrangement, 'faithful' transcriptions, particularly those that 'popularize' canonical works, have the potential to cause greater controversy than their more overtly transformative counterparts. Such controversy results from the apparently deceptive quality of 'faithful' arrangements in the context of the formalist fallacy, which in other cases suggests an arrangement's critical potential corresponds to the extent to which it alters the 'original'. However, the theorization of arrangements' relationship with listening implicit in Adorno's overt condemnation of the practice offers a richer approach to their critical potential. This theorization suggests that 'faithful' arrangements may push the notion of fidelity to breaking point, revealing its

ideological quality and the association with kitsch more effectively than either transformative reworkings or 'authentic' performances.

As this and the other approaches developed in this thesis attest, the idea of arrangement as a 'gap' indicates a critical potential beyond that identified with the difference between individual arrangements and the works they arrange. The idea of arrangement also occupies the 'gaps' and 'cracks' in many of the conceptual and ideological frameworks by which music is conventionally understood: thinking about arrangement 'leads one quickly into awkward territory'.[4] The present study has argued that this conceptual 'awkwardness' is not a problem for scholars to overcome but rather what makes the idea of arrangement a rewarding focus of study. Such 'awkwardness' offers a productive starting point from which to question traditional ways of thinking about music. Most significantly, the critical 'awkwardness' of arrangement derives from its ambiguous relationship with the concept of the musical work, drawing arrangement into tension with a host of related concepts including originality, autonomy, formalism, organicism, and, most importantly in the present context, structural listening. 'Arrangement' is the label so often given to musical practices, experiences, and ideas which fall through the 'cracks' left by a work-based conception of music in an affirmative attempt to close them. The present study has striven to prise these 'gaps' open again, maintaining the promise of arrangement's critical potential.

The primary aim of this thesis has been to begin developing an interpretative framework which would enable existing and future scholarly explorations of musical arrangement to be contextualized in relation to one another as constituting a coherent and critical field of study. However, the present consideration of arrangement must end by urging caution in the pursuit of this goal. This thesis has repeatedly argued that arrangements such as Pesson's possess great critical potential, constituting a challenge to received notions about music and, more

[4] This phrase is used by Sandra Mangsen, see 2.2.1.

particularly, how listeners might, should, or do hear it. It is nevertheless crucial to avoid the apparent 'criticality' of arrangement becoming a 'master trope' in future studies of the subject, impeding it in the same way fidelity discourse has done. While arrangements may in some respects be 'critical' they are not necessarily always and wholly so, and often affirm existing ideologies of listening.

In *Listen: A History of Our Ears*, Szendy acknowledges that arrangements may reflect and reinforce notions of structural listening, but, as the book progresses, increasingly presents a 'critical' stance towards this concept as the practice's true or proper disposition.[5]

> To *listen to oneself listening* (if that were possible) would in fact be the first condition required to open something like a critical listening. […] It is this plastic listening, which is also my plasticity as a listener, that I experience when I listen to an arrangement of a work. For arrangers sign their listenings. We hear them hearing; and that is why, through the plastic ordeal they make the work undergo, we sometimes *believe we hear ourselves listening*.[6]

Importantly, Szendy associates the criticality of arrangement with formal 'infidelity', particularly in temporal terms; he suggests that like reading arrangement 'does not truly become *criticism* until it breaks with the temporal linearity of the stream'.[7] Szendy argues that certain arrangements by Liszt and Schumann reflect an 'active, critical listening' which finds its ultimate expression in the present century, when the 'digitalization' of music has facilitated its availability and manipulation.[8]

> Digitalizing sound is […] a form of equipment, an unusual *instrumentation* of (the organ of) listening. Generalizing what the history of Western music has called 'arrangement' or 'transcription', […] it opens new possibilities for an effectiveness of listening, that is to say for its *immediately operative* quality […] This era of listening […] is also the era when listeners become authors.[9]

---

[5] For Szendy, Schoenberg's attitude to arrangement exemplifies its capacity to reflect ideas of structural listening. See Szendy, *Listen*. 128.
[6] Ibid. 142-143.
[7] Ibid. 104.
[8] Ibid. 65. See also 35-68.
[9] Ibid. 135-136.

Although Szendy contends that arrangement presaged and continues to participate in an emancipation of the listener from submission to the Work, the extent of listeners' newfound 'authority' should be questioned.

This thesis, particularly Chapter 6, has shown that for a great many listeners arrangement continues to reinforce rather than challenge notions of the musical work, fidelity, and structural listening. The idea of arrangement remains implicated in existing social, ideological, and economic structures that inhibit its critical potential despite (and in many cases because of) the technological possibilities of digitalization. The flurry of interest in arrangement in recent decades should not be understood solely as manifesting a challenge to the work concept, structural listening, solidified canons, and traditional notions of musical value, but also as evidence of their continuing influence within contemporary musical culture. Arrangement's association with criticality reaches beyond immediately musical contexts. For example, Ivan Raykoff interprets arrangements, and especially transformative paraphrases, as socially 'transgressive', subverting heteronormative models of (re)production:

> The continuing critical debate over piano transcriptions reveals a larger struggle over the 'identity politics' of the compositional 'body' and its reproduction, as well as the 'moral' connotations inherent in this musical-physical analogy. Transcription is transgressive because of its potential not only to reconfigure an original musical text but also to rearrange the socially constructed ideals of originating (pro)creatively.[10]

Raykoff's reading is compelling, and its attentiveness to the social implications of arrangement is admirable. However, as the research context develops scholars should work to avoid the potentially stimulating idea of arrangements as an 'Other' to the work concept ossifying into an interpretative cliché that invests the practice with an aura of transgression or subversion that simplistically equates formal alteration with critical force. As this thesis aims to show, resisting the temptation to interpret arrangements as inherently critical does not preclude a concern with the concept's critical potential.

[10] Raykoff, 'Transcription, Transgression, and the (Pro)creative Urge'. 153.

Questioning the critical potential of arrangement involves questioning that of scholarly approaches to the subject. On the one hand, such study may illuminate both how particular arrangements challenge habitual ways of thinking about music and society and how they sustain and reinforce dominant ideologies. On the other hand, however, studies of arrangement may accentuate its critical potential in order to mask their own dependence on traditional approaches and values. In this case, the idea of arrangement is in danger of becoming instrumentalized in order to wring the remaining drops of intellectual, cultural, and economic capital from a petrified canon of Western art music. In this case, arrangement may function as the ultimate musical commodity, offering a comforting sense of continuity and sameness while manifesting just enough difference that such ideological collusion may be denied. Although it may not be possible to eliminate the latter, collusive approach, this thesis has sought to bring it into tension with the former, critical one. As well as addressing rather than ignoring the ways arrangement may uphold existing ideologies of the work and structural listening, the present study's shift away from fidelity discourse has avoided presenting Pesson's arrangements merely as the 'reception' of canonical figures such as Brahms, Couperin, Bruckner, and Mahler. In focusing on Pesson's highly varied reworkings, this thesis has been concerned instead with the relevance and significance of the idea of arrangement in contemporary musical culture. The most effective way to avoid blunting the concept's critical edge may be to sensitively listen to ourselves listening to the 'gap' that arrangement is.

Bibliography

'12 transformations du menuet de Mozart K.355', *Fédération des Ensembles Vocaux et Instrumentaux Spécialisés* [Concert publicity materials], <https://www.fevis.com/concert/12-transformations-du-menuet-de-mozart-k-355-par-gerard-pesson/>, accessed 1 April 2019.

'Accentus, Le Projet, Biographie', *Accentus* <http://www.accentus.fr/leprojet/accentus/biographie-2/>, accessed 9 April 2019.

'Accentus: Transcriptions', *Amazon.com* [Product page and reviews], <https://www.amazon.com/product-reviews/B00008GFOH/ref=cm_cr_dp_d_cmps_btm?ie=UTF8&reviewerType=all_reviews>, accessed April 11 2019.

ADLINGTON, ROBERT, 'Moving Beyond Motion: Metaphors for Changing Sound', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 128/2 (2003), 297-318.

ADORNO, THEODOR W., *Aesthetic Theory*, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (London: Continuum, 1997).

———, 'Commodity Music Analysed', trans. Rodney Livingstone, *Quasi Una Fantasia: Essays on Modern Music* (London: Verso, 1992), 37-52.

———, *Introduction to the Sociology of Music*, trans. E. B. Ashton (New York: Continuum, 1989).

———, 'Kitsch', trans. Susan H. Gillespie, in Richard Leppert (ed.), *Essays on Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 501-505.

———, 'Little Heresy', trans. Susan H. Gillespie, in Richard Leppert (ed.), *Essays on Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 318-324.

———, 'Mahler Today', trans. Susan H. Gillespie, in Richard Leppert (ed.), *Essays on Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 603-611.

———, *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

———, 'Mahler: Centenary Address, Vienna 1960', trans. Rodney Livingstone, *Quasi Una Fantasia: Essays on Modern Music* (London: Verso, 1992), 81-110.

———, 'Marginalia on Mahler', trans. Susan H. Gillespie, in Richard Leppert (ed.), *Essays on Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 612-618.

———, 'Music in the Background', trans. Susan H. Gillespie, in Richard Leppert (ed.), *Essays on Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 506-510.

———, 'On the Fetish Character in Music and the Regression of Listening', trans. Susan H. Gillespie, in Richard Leppert (ed.), *Essays on Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 288-317.

———, *Philosophy of New Music*, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006).

———, 'The Radio Symphony: An Experiment in Theory', trans. Susan H. Gillespie, in Richard Leppert (ed.), *Essays on Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 251-270.

Aggravations et Final (2009, Aeon AECD 0876), CD.

AITKEN, WILL, *Death in Venice* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2011).

ALBERTI, ALFONSO, 'Intersections 06; No German Sky: Death in Venice according to Gérard Pesson', *Limenmusic* (14 February 2011) <http://limenmusic.info/?page_id=2077>, accessed 18 April 2019.

ALIROL, YANNICK, *Gérard Pesson: Aspects de l'Œuvre et Entretien avec le Compositeur* (Paris: Observatoire Musical Français, 2010).

ALLEN, ROGER, *Wilhelm Furtwängler: Art and the Politics of the Unpolitical* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2018).

ALPERSON, PHILIP, '"Musical Time" and Music as an "Art of Time"', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 38/4 (1980), 407-417.

ANFAM, DAVID, 'Abstract Expressionism', in Judith Rodenbeck (ed.), *Grove Art Online* (Oxford University Press, 2003).

ARMSTRONG, SAMUEL, et al. (dir.), *Fantasia* (Walt Disney, 1940), DVD (2011, BUA0151501).

'Arrangement', in François Michel (ed.), *Encyclopédie de la Musique* (1; Paris: Fasquelle, 1958).

'Arrangement', in Marc Honegger (ed.), *Dictionnaire de la Musique* (3; Paris: Bordas, 1970 [1976]).

'Arrangement', in Don Michael Randel (ed.), *The Harvard Dictionary of Music* (4th edn; Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2003).

ASHBY, ARVED, *Absolute Music, Mechanical Reproduction* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010).

AUNER, JOSEPH H., 'Schoenberg's Handel Concerto and the Ruins of Tradition', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 49/2 (1996), 264-313.

BAADE, CHRISTINA, 'Radio Symphonies: The BBC, Everyday Listening and the Popular Classics Debate During the People's War', in Marta García Quiñones, Anahid Kassabian, and Elena Boschi (eds.), *Ubiquitous Musics: The Everyday Sounds That We Don't Always Notice* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 49-71.

BACHT, NIKOLAUS, 'Special Issue: Listening: Interdisciplinary Perspectives', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 135/Supplement 1 (2010).

BACON, HENRY, *Visconti: Explorations of Beauty and Decay* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

BAÑAGALE, RYAN RAUL, *Arranging Gershwin: Rhapsody in Blue and the Creation of an American Icon* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

BANKS, PAUL, 'Aspects of Mahler's Fifth Symphony: Performance Practice and Interpretation', *The Musical Times*, 130 (1989), 258-265.

BARHAM, JEREMY, 'Introduction: Marginalia on Mahler today', in Jeremy Barham (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Mahler* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 1-4.

———, 'Plundering Cultural Archives and Transcending Diegetics: Mahler's Music as "Overscore"', *Music and the Moving Image*, 3/1 (2010), 22-47.

———, 'Programming Mahler: Meaning, Re-description, and the Post-Adornian Counterlife', *Nineteenth-Century Music Review*, 8/2 (2011), 255-271.

BATES, ELIOT, 'Glitches, Bugs, and Hisses: The Degeneration of Musical Recordings and the Contemporary Musical Work', in Christopher Washburne and Maiken Derno (eds.), *Bad Music: The Music We Love to Hate* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 275-293.

BEARN, GORDON C. F., 'Kitsch', in Michael Kelly (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics* (2; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

BEAUDOIN, RICHARD AND JOSEPH MOORE, 'Conceiving Musical Transdialection', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 68/2 (2010), 105-117.

BERGER, JONATHAN, 'Sonic Archeology: An Analysis and Transcription of the 1889 Cylinder Recording of Johannes Brahms' Performance of a Segment of His First Hungarian Dance', *Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics, Stanford University* <https://ccrma.stanford.edu/groups/edison/brahms/brahms.html>, accessed 20 December 2018.

BERGER, JONATHAN AND CHARLES NICHOLS, 'Brahms at the Piano: An Analysis of Data from the Brahms Cylinder', *Leonardo Music Journal*, 4 (1994), 23-30.

BERGER, KAROL, *Bach's Cycle, Mozart's Arrow: An Essay on the Origins of Musical Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).

BERGSON, HENRI, *Essai sur les Données Immédiates de la Conscience* (7th edn.; Paris: Quadrige, 2001).

———, *Matter and Memory* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1978).
———, *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness*, trans. F. L. Pogson (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1910).
BERIO, LUCIANO, 'Sinfonia (Author's Note)', *Centro Studi Luciano Berio* [Online programme note], <http://www.lucianoberio.org/node/1494?1683069894=1>, accessed 23 April 2018.
BLOOM, HAROLD, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (2nd edn.; New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).
BOHLMAN, ANDREA F. AND PETER MCMURRAY, 'Tape: Or, Rewinding the Phonographic Regime', *Twentieth-Century Music*, 14/1 (2017), 3-24.
BONDS, MARK EVAN, 'The Spatial Representation of Musical Form', *The Journal of Musicology*, 27/3 (2010), 265-303.
BOSTRIDGE, IAN, 'Zender's Winterreise: Old, New, Borrowed–But Still True', *The Guardian* (12 May 2016) <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2016/may/12/ian-bostridge-zender-schubert-winterreise>, accessed 17 September 2018.
BOTSTEIN, LEON, 'Whose Gustav Mahler?: Reception, Interpretation, and History', in Karen Painter (ed.), *Mahler and His World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 1-53.
'Boudoir et autres', *France Musique* <https://www.francemusique.fr/emissions/boudoir-et-autres>, accessed 5 April 2019.
BOURDIEU, PIERRE, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (London: Routledge, 1999).
BOURRIAUD, NICOLAS, *Postproduction: Culture as Screenplay, How Art Reprograms the World* (New York: Lukas & Sternberg, 2005).
BOYD, MALCOLM, 'Arrangement', in Stanley Sadie (ed.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (2nd edn; London: Macmillan, 2001).
———, 'Arrangement', in Stanley Sadie (ed.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London: Macmillan, 1980).
BRAND, NEIL, 'Mahler: Death in Venice', *Sound of Cinema* (BBC Radio 3, 19 September 2013) [Radio programme], <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02rnp7s>, accessed 19 April 2019.
BRAND, PEGGY ZEGLIN, 'Parody', in Michael Kelly (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics* (3; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).
———, 'Pastiche', in Michael Kelly (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics* (3; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).
BRITTAN, F., 'Review: "Liszt as Transcriber" by Jonathan Kregor', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 66/1 (2013), 308-314.
BRODSKY, SETH, *From 1989, or European Music and the Modernist Unconscious* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2017).
'Bruckner 6 recommendations', *Google Groups* [Online forum thread], <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/rec.music.classical.recordings/RbkPqrJAhKU>, accessed 4 April 2019.
BRÜSTLE, CHRISTA, 'The Musical Image of Bruckner', in John Williamson (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Bruckner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 244-260.
BURKHOLDER, J. PETER, 'The Uses of Existing Music: Musical Borrowing as a Field', *Notes*, 50/3 (1994), 851-870.
BURNHAM, SCOTT, *Beethoven Hero* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).
BUSONI, FERRUCCIO, *The Essence of Music, and Other Papers*, ed. Ferruccio Busoni (London: Rockliff, 1957).
CĂLINESCU, MATEI, *Five Faces of Modernity: Modernism, Avant-garde, Decadence, Kitsch, Postmodernism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987).

CARLIN, FRANCIS, '"It's a Noble Art and I'm Prepared to Fight to Get the Choir Recognised"', *Financial Times*, 28 June 2004 9.
CELLIER, ALEXANDRE, 'Is Transcription Permissible?', *The Musical Times*, 66/992 (1925), 900-902.
CHERLIN, MICHAEL, *Varieties of Musical Irony: From Mozart to Mahler* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).
CHION, MICHEL, *Sound: An Acoulogical Treatise*, trans. James A. Steintrager (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016).
CHRISTENSEN, THOMAS, 'Four-Hand Piano Transcription and Geographies of Nineteenth-Century Musical Reception', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 52/2 (1999), 255-298.
CHUA, DANIEL K. L., *Absolute Music and the Construction of Meaning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
CLARK, JANE AND DEREK F. CONNON, *The Mirror of Human Life: Reflections on François Couperin's Pièces de Clavecin* (London: Keyword, 2011).
CLARKE, DAVID, 'Music, Phenomenology, Time Consciousness: Meditations After Husserl', in David Clarke and Eric F. Clarke (eds.), *Music and Consciousness: Philosophical, Psychological, and Cultural Perspectives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 1-24.
CLARKE, ERIC F., *Ways of Listening: An Ecological Approach to the Perception of Musical Meaning* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
Classical Melancholy (2017, Naïve [No serial number]), Digital album.
Classique & Zen (2007, Naïve V5097), CD.
CLIFTON, THOMAS, 'Music as Constituted Object', in F. Joseph Smith (ed.), *In Search of Musical Method* (New York: Gordon and Breach, 1976), 73-98.
COLTON, LISA AND MARTIN IDDON, 'Special Issue: Recycling and Innovation in Contemporary Music', *Contemporary Music Review*, 29/3 (2010).
CONDÉ, GÉRARD, 'Rencontre avec Gérard Pesson, Compositeur Secret', *Le Monde* (25 October 2008) <https://www.lemonde.fr/vous/article/2008/10/25/rencontre-avec-gerard-pesson-compositeur-secret_1110987_3238.html>, accessed 2 April 2019.
CONE, EDWARD T., *The Composer's Voice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974).
COVELL, GRANT CHU, 'Graceful Illusionist: Gerard Pesson', *La Folia* (October 2012 2012) <http://www.lafolia.com/graceful-illusionist-gerard-pesson/>, accessed 4 April 2019.
COX, ARNIE, *Music and Embodied Cognition: Listening, Moving, Feeling, and Thinking* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016).
CRAVEN, DAVID, 'Conceptual Art', in Judith Rodenbeck (ed.), *Grove Art Online* (Oxford University Press, 2003).
CROSS, JONATHAN, 'Geschichten vom Wiedererzählen', in Simon Obert and Heidy Zimmermann (eds.), *Re-Set: Rückgriffe und Fortschreibungen in der Musik seit 1900* (Mainz: Schott, 2018), 15-29.
———, 'Musical Spectra, l'Espace Sensible and Contemporary Opera', *Twentieth-Century Music*, 15/1 (2018), 103-124.
———, 'Tales of Retelling', [Unpublished essay].
CUMMING, NAOMI, *The Sonic Self: Musical Subjectivity and Signification* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000).
CURRIE, JAMES, 'Splinters in the Eye: Interpreting Webern's Bach transcription', *Journal of Musicological Research*, 21/3 (2002), 167-196.
DA SILVA, DIDIER, 'Pas Perdu Pour Tout le Monde', *Danses de Travers* (17 May 2015) <http://dansesdetravers.blogspot.co.uk/2015/05/pas-perdu-pour-tout-le-monde.html>, accessed 1 August 2017.

DAHLHAUS, CARL, 'Analytical Instrumentation: Bach's Six-Part Ricercar as Orchestrated by Anton Webern', trans. Derrick Puffett and Alfred Clayton, *Schoenberg and the New Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

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

———, *Nineteenth-Century Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).

DAHLHAUS, CARL, et al., 'Harmony', in Stanley Sadie (ed.), *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (2nd edn; London: Macmillan, 2001).

DAVIES, STEPHEN, 'Transcription, Authenticity, and Performance', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 28/3 (1988), 216-227.

DE ANDRADE, OSWALD, 'The Cannibalist Manifesto', *Third Text*, 13/46 (1999), 92-95.

DEBORD, GUY, *Society of the Spectacle* (Detroit: Black & Red, 1983).

DEBORD, GUY AND GIL WOLMAN, 'A User's Guide to Détournement (1956)', trans. Ken Knabb, in Ken Knabb (ed.), *Situationist International Anthology* (Berkeley: Bureau of Public Secrets, 2006).

DELL'ANTONIO, ANDREW (ed.), *Beyond Structural Listening? Postmodern Modes of Hearing* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

DERRIDA, JACQUES, 'Freud and the Scene of Writing', *Yale French Studies*, 48 (1972), 74-117.

———, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Corrected edn.; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).

———, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (New York: Routledge, 2006).

DERVAN, MICHAEL, 'Gérard Pesson: Aggravations et Final', *Irish Times* (9 October 2009) <https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/classical-1.749565>, accessed 2 April 2019.

DICECCO, NICO, 'State of the Conversation: The Obscene Underside of Fidelity', *Adaptation*, 8/2 (2015), 161-175.

DISCUS, 'Gramophone Notes', *The Musical Times*, 69/1020 (1928), 140-142.

DONIN, NICOLAS, 'Sonic Imprints: Instrumental Resynthesis in Contemporary Composition', in Gianmario Borio (ed.), *Musical Listening in the Age of Technological Reproduction* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2015), 323-341.

DORFLES, GILLO, *Kitsch: An Anthology of Bad Taste* (London: Studio Vista, 1969).

DOUSSON, LAMBERT, 'Filtrer, Relâcher: Comment l'Espace d'une Touche (de Piano) Peut Constituer un Espace Politique', *Spaces of Art* (Copenhagen, 3 May 2008) [Conference paper], <http://creart-phi.u-paris10.fr/cdr-creart-phi/articles-en-ligne/filtrer-relacher-comment-l-espace-d-une-touche-de-piano-peut-constituer-un-espace-politique-273154.kjsp>, accessed 13 January 2017.

DUTTON, DENIS (ed.), *The Forger's Art: Forgery and the Philosophy of Art* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

———, 'Kitsch', in Judith Rodenbeck (ed.), *Oxford Art Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

DUTTON, DENIS AND MICHAEL WREEN, 'Forgery', in Michael Kelly (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics* (2nd edn, 3; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

'Écoute musicale par Nicolas Donin', *YouTube* [Video], <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7r0a8URAH40>, accessed 1 August 2017.

EL KASSAR, SUSANN, 'Oxidierte Musik', *Positionen*, 103 (2015), 17-20.

ELIOT, T. S., 'Tradition and the Individual Talent', *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism* (7th edn.; London: Methuen, 1972).

ENGE, HÅVARD, 'The Unfinished Past: Hans Zender's Concept of Productive Listening', *Studia Musicologica Norvegica*, 36 (2010), 144-159.

Mes Béatitudes (2001, Aeon AECD0106), CD.

EQUILBEY, LAURENCE, 'A Question to... Laurence Equilbey, Conductor', *Gramophone*, 81/973 (2003), 11.

FENEYROU, LAURENT, 'Reminiscences', in *Rihm, Pesson, Widmann*, Minguet Quartet, Stefan Lifin, and Jörg Widmann (Opèra National de Paris Bastille, Paris, 20 October 2004), [Concert programme note], <https://www.festival-automne.com/uploads/Publish/archive_pdf/FAP_2004_MU_06_PRGS.pdf>, accessed 19 April 2019.

FERNÁNDEZ-CASTELLÓ, LUIS AND GRUP MIXTOUR, 'Gérard Pesson: Nebenstück for clarinet and string quartet', *YouTube* [Video], <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wHrpn4dJi1w>, accessed 18 December 2018.

FINK, ROBERT, 'Going Flat: Post-Hierarchical Music Theory and the Musical Surface', in Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist (eds.), *Rethinkinig Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 102-137.

FINNISSY, MICHAEL, 'Programme Notes', in *Michael Finnissy: Verdi Transcriptions*, Jonathan Powell (Jacqueline du Pré Music Building, St Hilda's College, Oxford, 30 April 2016), [Concert programme note].

FISCHER, JENS MALTE, *Gustav Mahler*, trans. Stewart Spencer (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).

FISHER, MARK, 'What Is Hauntology?', *Film Quarterly*, 66/1 (2012), 16-24.

FITCH, FABRICE, 'Pesson: Aggravations et Final', *Gramophone*, 87/1053 (2010), 63.

FLOROS, CONSTANTIN, *Gustav Mahler: The Symphonies*, trans. Vernon Wicker (Aldershot: Scolar, 1994).

FOUCAULT, MICHEL, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Routledge, 2002).

FOX, CHRISTOPHER, HENRIETTA BROUGHAM, AND IAN PACE, *Uncommon Ground: The Music of Michael Finnissy* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1997).

FRANÇAIX, ISABELLE, 'Les Effilochées–Enfance', <http://www.isabellefrancaix.com/fr/portfolio-28303-0-40-les-effilochees-enfance.html>, accessed 20 December 2018.

FRANKLIN, PETER, '"...His Fractures Are the Script of Truth."—Adorno's Mahler', in Stephen E. Hefling (ed.), *Mahler Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 271-294.

FREUD, SIGMUND, 'A Note Upon the "Mystic Writing Pad"', trans. James Strachey, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (XIX; London: Hogarth Press, 1961), 227-232.

FROW, JOHN, *Genre* (2nd edn.; London: Routledge, 2015).

GENETTE, GÉRARD, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

'Gérard Pesson: Biographie', *Brahms.ircam.fr* <http://brahms.ircam.fr/gerard-pesson>, accessed 22 April 2019.

'Gérard Pesson: Biographie', *Henry Lemoine* <https://www.henry-lemoine.com/fr/compositeurs/fiche/gerard-pesson>, accessed 9 April 2019.

Gérard Pesson: Musique de Chambre, Cantates (2018, NoMadMusic NMM052), CD.

GERVASONI, PIERRE, 'De l'Èpure à l'Impur', *Le Monde* (12 September 2004) <https://www.lemonde.fr/archives/article/2004/09/12/p-de-l-epure-a-l-impur-p_4294289_1819218.html>, accessed 19 April 2019.

———, 'L'Exaltant Périple d'Alexandre Tharaud', *Le Monde* (27 May 2008) [Online article] <http://www.lemonde.fr/culture/article/2008/05/27/l-exaltant-periple-d-alexandre-tharaud_1050245_3246.html>, accessed 1 August 2017.

GLOAG, KENNETH, *Postmodernism in Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

GOEHR, ALEXANDER, 'Using Models... for Making Original Music', *Common Knowledge*, 8/1 (2002), 108-123.

GOEHR, LYDIA, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (2nd edn.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

GREENBERG, CLEMENT, 'Avant-Garde and Kitsch', *Art and Culture: Critical Essays* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989), 3-21.
GRIFFITHS, PAUL, *Modern Music and After* (3rd edn.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).
GRIMLEY, DANIEL M., 'Music's Moving Forms', in Rehding Alexander and Steven Rings (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Critical Concepts in Music Theory* [Online text], Oxford University Press (2015 [2018]), <http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190454746.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780190454746-e-23>, accessed 5 April 2019.
———, '"The Spirit-Stirring Drum": Elgar and Populism', in Byron Adams (ed.), *Edward Elgar and His World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 97-124.
GRUP MIXTOUR, 'Grup Mixtour: Nebenstück - Gerard Pesson', *YouTube* [Performance video], <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8T13QX5P9LU>, accessed 4 April 2019.
HARPER, ADAM, 'Hauntology: The Past Inside The Present', *Rouge's Foam* (27 October 2009) <http://rougesfoam.blogspot.com/2009/10/hauntology-past-inside-present.html>, accessed 4 July 2016.
———, 'Lo-fi Aesthetics in Popular Music Discourse', D.Phil. thesis (Oxford University, 2014).
HAWKINS, GAY, 'Taste', in Tony Bennett, Lawrence Grossberg, and Meaghan Morris (eds.), *New Keywords: A Revised Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (Malden: Blackwell, 2005), 340-342.
HEPOKOSKI, JAMES A. AND WARREN DARCY, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).
HERMAN, MARK (dir.), *Brassed Off* (Film 4, 1996), Digital stream.
HINDEMITH, PAUL, *Briefe* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1982).
———, *A Composer's World: Horizons and Limitations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952).
HINSON, MAURICE, *The Pianist's Guide to Transcriptions, Arrangements, and Paraphrases* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990).
HORNE, WILLIAM, 'Brahms's Op. 10 Ballades and His "Blätter aus dem Tagebuch eines Musikers"', *The Journal of Musicology*, 15/1 (1997), 98-115.
HORTON, JULIAN, *Bruckner's Symphonies: Analysis, Reception and Cultural Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
———, 'Bruckner and the Symphony Orchestra', in John Williamson (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Bruckner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 138-169.
HUR, CHUNGHWA, 'Schubert's "Wanderer" Fantasie: A Creative Springboard to Liszt's Sonata in B minor', Doctor of Musical Arts thesis (University of Arizona, 1997).
HUSSERL, EDMUND, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology* (London: Routledge, 2012).
———, *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time (1893-1917)*, trans. John B. Brough (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1991).
HUTCHEON, LINDA AND SIOBHAN O'FLYNN, *A Theory of Adaptation* (2nd edn.; London: Routledge, 2013).
HUTCHISON, ALEXANDER, 'Luchino Visconti's "Death in Venice"', *Literature/Film Quarterly*, 2/1 (1974), 31.
ILLING, ROBERT, 'Arrangement', *A Dictionary of Music* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1950).
INGARDEN, ROMAN, *The Work of Music and the Problem of its Identity*, trans. Adam Czerniawski (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1986).
INGOLD, TIM, *Lines: A Brief History* (London: Routledge, 2007).
JACKSON, TIMOTHY L., 'Bruckner's Metrical Numbers', *19th-Century Music*, 14/2 (1990), 101-131.

JARMAN, FREYA, 'Relax, Feel Good, Chill Out: The Affective Distribution of Classical Music', in Marie Thompson and Ian Biddle (eds.), *Sound, Music, Affect: Theorizing Sonic Experience* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 183-204.
JOHNSON, JULIAN, *Mahler's Voices: Expression and Irony in the Songs and Symphonies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).
———, *Out of Time: Music and the Making of Modernity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).
JOHNSON, MARK L. AND STEVE LARSON, '"Something in the Way She Moves": Metaphors of Musical Motion', *Metaphor and Symbol*, 18/2 (2003), 63-84.
KALTENECKER, MARTIN, 'Concasser, Soustraire: L'Esthétique de Gérard Pesson', *Gèrard Pesson: Portrait en Dix-Sept Œuvres* (Paris: Festival d'Automne Programme 2008, 2008), 9-11 [Festival programme].
———, 'Gérard Pesson: Parcours de l'Œuvre', *Brahms.ircam.fr* 2008) <brahms.ircam.fr/composers/composer/2553/#parcours>, accessed 4 July 2016.
———, 'Sérénade Interrompue: Remarques sur les Hauteurs et sur la Forme dans "Cassation" de Gérard Pesson', *Musurgia*, 18/3 (2011), 57-72.
KANE, BRIAN, *Sound Unseen: Acousmatic Sound in Theory and Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).
KAPLAN, GILBERT, 'Adagietto: "From Mahler With Love"', in Jeremy Barham (ed.), *Perspectives on Gustav Mahler* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 379-400.
———, 'A Dirge? No. It's a Love Song', *New York Times*, 19 July 1992 19.
KAPLAN, GILBERT AND PETER FRANKLIN, 'Mahler and Tradition: Is There or Isn't There?', *The Musical Times*, 133/1797 (1992), 559-563.
KELLER, HANS, 'Arrangement for or Against?', *The Musical Times*, 110/1511 (1969), 22-25.
KELLY, LAURA LYNN AND AUGUST HALM, 'August Halm's "Von Zwei Kulturen der Musik": A Translation and Introductory Essay', Ph.D. thesis (University of Texas, 2008).
KEMP, SIMON, 'The Inescapable Metaphor: How Time and Meaning Become Space When We Think about Narrative', *Philosophy and Literature*, 36/2 (2012), 391-403.
KINDERMAN, WILLIAM, *The Creative Process in Music from Mozart to Kurtág* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012).
KITCHER, PHILIP, *Deaths in Venice: The Cases of Gustav von Aschenbach* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013).
KIVY, PETER, 'Orchestrating Platonism', *The Fine Art of Repetition: Essays in the Philosophy of Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 75-94.
KJELLMAN-CHAPIN, MONICA, *Kitsch: History, Theory, Practice* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013).
Klaviersonaten von Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart mit Frei Hinzukomponierter Begleitung Eines Zweiten Klaviers von Edvard Grieg (2007, 2L 2L-040-SACD), CD.
KNYT, ERINN, 'Between Composition and Transcription: Ferruccio Busoni and Music Notation', *Twentieth-Century Music*, 11/1 (2014), 37-61.
KNYT, ERINN E., '"How I Compose": Ferruccio Busoni's Views about Invention, Quotation, and the Compositional Process', *The Journal of Musicology*, 27/2 (2010), 224-264.
KORSTVEDT, BENJAMIN M., 'Between Formlessness and Formality: Aspects of Bruckner's Approach to Symphonic Form', in John Williamson (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Bruckner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 170-189.
KORSYN, KEVIN, 'Towards a New Poetics of Musical Influence', *Music Analysis*, 10/1-2 (1991), 3-72.
KRAMER, JONATHAN D., 'Multiple and Non-Linear Time in Beethoven's Opus 135', *Perspectives of New Music*, 11/2 (1973), 122-145.
———, *Postmodern Music, Postmodern Listening* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016).
———, *The Time of Music: New Meanings, New Temporalities, New Listening Strategies* (London: Collier Macmillan, 1988).

KRAMER, LAWRENCE, 'Philosophizing Musically: Reconsidering Music and Ideas', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 139/2 (2014), 387-404.
KREGOR, JONATHAN, *Liszt as Transcriber* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
KRISTEVA, JULIA, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, eds Leon S. Roudiez, Thomas Gora, and Alice Jardine (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1981).
KULKA, TOMAS, 'Kitsch', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 28/1 (1988), 18.
LA GRANGE, HENRY-LOUIS DE, *Gustav Mahler* (2: Vienna: The Years of Challenge, 1897-1904; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).
———, *Gustav Mahler* (3: Vienna: Triumph and Disillusion, 1904-1907; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).
———, *Gustav Mahler* (4: A New Life Cut Short, 1907-1911; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
LACHENMANN, HELMUT, 'The "Beautiful" in Music Today', *Tempo*, 135 (1980), 20-24.
LAKOFF, GEORGE AND MARK JOHNSON, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).
———, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999).
LANGER, SUSANNE K., *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art Developed from Philosophy in a New Key* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1953).
LARNER, JAMES, 'Music as Narrator: Mahler, Mussorgsky, and Beethoven in Visconti's "Death in Venice"', *College Music Symposium*, 49/50 (2009), 385-391.
LATCHOUMIA, WILHEM, 'Ambre nous resterons (2008) - Gerard Pesson', *YouTube* [Performance video], <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LhEiZphDU7I>, accessed 2 August 2017.
LAURSON, JENS F., 'Ionarts-at-Large: Munich Biennale (Part 1)', *Ionarts* (4 May 2010) <http://ionarts.blogspot.com/2010/05/ionarts-at-large-munich-biennale.html>, accessed 14 December 2018.
LAWS, CATHERINE, 'Special Issue: On Listening', *Performance Research*, 15/3 (2010).
'Le Piano sans Piano', *Cité Musicale-Metz* [Concert publicity materials], <https://www.citemusicale-metz.fr/agenda/le-piano-sans-piano>, accessed 20 December 2018.
LEECH-WILKINSON, DANIEL, 'There is No Arrangement', *Rethinking Musical Transcription and Arrangement* (Cambridge, 19 May 2018) [Conference paper].
LENAIN, THIERRY, 'Forgery', in Judith Rodenbeck (ed.), *Grove Art Online* (Oxford University Press, 2003).
LEPPERT, RICHARD, 'Music "Pushed to the Edge of Existence" (Adorno, Listening, and the Question of Hope)', *Cultural Critique*, 60 (2005), 92-133.
LEVINSON, JERROLD, 'What a Musical Work Is', *The Journal of Philosophy*, 77/1 (1980), 5-28.
LINK, STAN, 'The Work of Reproduction in the Mechanical Aging of an Art: Listening to Noise', *Computer Music Journal*, 25/1 (2001), 34-47.
LOCHHEAD, JUDY, 'The Metaphor of Musical Motion: Is There an Alternative?', *Theory and Practice*, 14/15 (1989/1990), 83-103.
LONDON, JUSTIN, 'Time', in Stanley Sadie (ed.), *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (2nd edn; London: Macmillan, 2001).
MAAS, SANDER VAN (ed.), *Thresholds of Listening: Sound, Technics, Space* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015).
MACASSAR, GILLES, 'Gérard Pesson: "Un Compositeur N'Est Jamais Né Sous X"', *Télérama* (3 October 2008) <https://www.telerama.fr/musique/gerard-pesson-un-compositeur-n-est-jamais-ne-sous-x,34245.php>, accessed 2 April 2019.
MACDONALD, CALUM, 'First Performances; Viitasaari: Musiikin Aika 2009', *Tempo*, 64/251 (2010), 56-58.
MACHART, RENAUD AND GÉRARD PESSON, '"L'Impureté, Y Compris Stylistique, Est Très Féconde"', *Le Monde* (10 September 2008)

<https://www.lemonde.fr/culture/article/2008/09/10/gerard-pesson-l-impurete-y-compris-stylistique-est-tres-feconde_1093521_3246.html>, accessed 11 April 2019.

'Mahler Adagietto - The Accentus Chamber Choir', *YouTube* [Video and comments], <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4H4pNFF5nBM>, accessed 11 April 2019.

MAHLER, GUSTAV AND GILBERT KAPLAN, *Adagietto: Facsimile, Documentation, Recording* (New York: Kaplan Foundation, 1992).

MANGSEN, SANDRA, *Songs Without Words: Keyboard Arrangements of Vocal Music in England, 1560-1760* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2016).

MANHEIM, JAMES, 'Transcriptions', *All Music*, accessed 11 April 2019.

MANKIEWICZ, JOSEPH L. (dir.), *All About Eve* (Twentieth Century Fox, 1950), DVD (2012, F1-SGB 0107601083).

MANN, THOMAS, *Death in Venice and Other Stories*, trans. David Luke (London: Vintage, 1998).

MCCALLUM, PETER, 'Latvian Radio Choir Review: A Revelation and Musical Highlight of the Sydney Festival', *Sydney Morning Herald* (January 24 2015) <https://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/music/latvian-radio-choir-review-a-revelation-and-musical-highlight-of-the-sydney-festival-20150124-12xfnv.html>, accessed 11 April 2019.

MCCLARY, SUSAN, 'The Lure of the Sublime: Revisiting the Modernist Project', in Erling E. Guldbrandsen and Julian Johnson (eds.), *Transformations of Musical Modernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 21-35.

MCCULLOUGH, JAMES, 'Anton Bruckner: Holy Minimalist', *The Bruckner Journal* 19:3 2015) <https://www.abruckner.com/Data/articles/articlesEnglish/mccolloughjamesbru/McCullough_Bruckner_Holy_Minimalist.pdf.pdf>, accessed 2 April 2019.

MDI ENSEMBLE, 'Gérard Pesson - Nebenstuck - mdi ensemble 2016', *Vimeo* [Performance video], <https://vimeo.com/160444584>, accessed 16 April 2019.

Mélancolie (2005, Naïve V5036), CD.

MENDEZ, MATTHEW, 'Lachenmann, Pesson, and Insubstantiality (or: Zombie Music)', *Soundproof Room* (27 May 2014) <http://soundproofedblog.blogspot.com/2014/05/lachenmann-pesson-zombies.html>, accessed 20 April 2019.

MERLIN, ARNAUD AND GÉRARD PESSON, 'Gérard Pesson: Derrière la Musique', *Le Portrait Contemporain* (France Musique, 15 November 2017) [Radio programme], <https://www.francemusique.fr/emissions/le-portrait-contemporain/gerard-pesson-compositeur-37975>, accessed 14 December 2018.

MESSING, SCOTT, *Marching to the Canon: The Life of Schubert's Marche Militaire* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2014).

METZER, DAVID, *Musical Modernism at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

———, *Quotation and Cultural Meaning in Twentieth-Century Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

MEYER, LEONARD B., *Music, the Arts, and Ideas: Patterns and Predictions in Twentieth-Century Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967).

MILLER, MALCOLM, 'From Liszt to Adams: the 'Wiegenlied' Transcription', *Tempo*, /175 (1990), 23-26.

MITCHELL, DONALD, 'Eternity or Nothingness? Mahler's Fifth Symphony', in Donald Mitchell and Andrew Nicholson (eds.), *The Mahler Companion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 236-325.

MONELLE, RAYMOND, *The Sense of Music: Semiotic Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

MONTAGUE, EUGENE, 'Phenomenology and the "Hard Problem" of Consciousness and Music', in David Clarke and Eric F. Clarke (eds.), *Music and Consciousness: Philosophical,*

Psychological, and Cultural Perspectives (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 29-43.

MORGAN, ROBERT P., 'Musical Time/Musical Space', *Critical Inquiry*, 6/3 (1980), 527-538.

'Musiques Fantômes', *Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Lyon* [Concert publicity materials], <http://www.cnsmd-lyon.fr/agenda/musiques-fantomes>, accessed 20 December 2018.

NANCY, JEAN-LUC, *Listening*, trans. Charlotte Mandell (New York: Fordham University Press, 2007).

'New Gucci Guilty 2016 featuring Jared Leto', *YouTube* [Video], <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BbpR-Td-P6E>, accessed 10 April 2019.

NIKKELS, EVELINE, 'Mahler and Holland', in Donald Mitchell and Andrew Nicholson (eds.), *The Mahler Companion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 326-337.

NODNAGEL, ERNST OTTO, KAREN PAINTER, AND BETTINA VARWIG, 'Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 5', in Karen Painter (ed.), *Mahler and His World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 300-304.

OBERT, SIMON AND HEIDY ZIMMERMANN, *Re-Set: Rückgriffe und Fortschreibungen in der Musik seit 1900* (Mainz: Schott, 2018).

OESTREICH, JAMES R., 'Spirits, But Not Heavenly, In a Wordless Song of Love', *New York Times*, 20 November 2000.

OLIVER, MICHAEL, 'Better by Arrangement?', *Classic CD*, 59 (1995), 32-33.

OSMOND-SMITH, DAVID, *Playing on Words: a Guide to Luciano Berio's Sinfonia* (London: Royal Musical Association, 1985).

PADDISON, MAX, *Adorno's Aesthetics of Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

PAGET, CLIVE, 'Latvian Radio Choir (Sydney Festival)', *Limelight* (24 January 2015), accessed 12 April 2019.

PARRY, HUBERT, 'Arrangement', in George Grove (ed.), *A Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London: MacMillan, 1879).

PASLER, JANN, 'Contingencies of Meaning in Transcriptions and Excerpts: Popularizing "Samson et Dalila"', in Byron Almén and Edward Pearsall (eds.), *Approaches to Meaning in Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 170-213.

PAUSET, BRICE, 'La Transcription Comme Composition de l'Écoute', in Peter Szendy (ed.), *Arrangements, Dérangements: La Transcription Musicale Aujourd'hui* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000), 131-140.

PECQUEUR, ANTOINE, 'Accentus', *La Terrasse* (10 October 2008) <http://www.journal-laterrasse.fr/focus/accentus-2/>, accessed 1 August 2017.

PEDRAGOSA, PAU, 'Multiple Horizons: Phenomenology, Cubism, Architecture', *The European Legacy*, 19/6 (2014), 1-18.

PESSON, GÉRARD, *Wunderblock (Nebenstück II) pour Accordéon et Orchestre* (Paris: Henry Lemoine, 2005) [Score].

———, *Kein Deutscher Himmel pour Chœur Mixte* (Paris: Henry Lemoine, 2001 [1997]) [Score].

———, *Nebenstück, Filtrage de la Ballade op. 10 no. 4 de Johannes Brahms pour Clarinette en Si-bémol et Quatuor à Cordes* (Paris: Henry Lemoine, 2001 [1999]) [Score].

———, *Aggravations et Final pour Grand Orchestre* (Paris: Henry Lemoine, 2002) [Score].

———, *Ambre Nous Resterons, d'Après "Les Ombres Errantes" de François Couperin* (Paris: Henry Lemoine, 2007) [Score].

———, 'Aggravations et Final', *Henry Lemoine* [Online programme note], <https://www.henry-lemoine.com/fr/catalogue/fiche/27835>, accessed 2 April 2019.

———, 'Ambre Nous Resterons', *Henry Lemoine* [Online programme note], <www.henry-lemoine.com/fr/catalogue/fiche/28610>, accessed 9 May 2016.

———, *Cran d'Arrêt du Beau Temps: Journal 1991-1998* (Paris: Van Dieren, 2004).

———, 'Ecoute Arrière', *L'Oreille* (15 October 2010) <http://droitdecites.org/2010/10/15/ecoute-arriere-gerard-pesson/>.
———, 'Entretien avec Gérard Pesson: L'Espace d'un Instant Donné', in *Gérard Pesson: Un Instantané*, Instant Donné and Marion Tassou (Nouveau Théâtre de Montreuil, Paris, 19 June 2018), [Concert programme note], <https://manifeste.ircam.fr/media/uploads/events/manifeste%202018/gerard%20pesson/prg_gerard_pesson.pdf>, accessed 18 April 2019.
———, 'Héraclite, Démocrite et la Méduse. Sur Salvatore Sciarrino', *Entretemps,* 9 (1990), 143-150.
———, 'La Composition Comme Auto-Fiction: Figure, Portrait et Substrat dans l'Écriture Musicale', (IRCAM, 13 July 2006) [Recorded lecture], <https://medias.ircam.fr/x5e4977_gerard-pesson-composition-as-auto-ficti>, accessed 3 April 2017.
———, 'Mahler and Debussy: Transcendence and Emotion', trans. Peter Righton, in Donald Mitchell and Andrew Nicholson (eds.), *The Mahler Companion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 153-170.
———, 'Nebenstück', *Henry Lemoine* [Online programme note], <http://www.henry-lemoine.com/fr/catalogue/fiche/27536>, accessed 14 December 2018.
———, 'Panorama, Particolari e Licenza', *Henry Lemoine* [Online programme note], <www.henry-lemoine.com/fr/catalogue/fiche/28483>, accessed 28 September 2016.
———, 'Transcendance et Sensation: Un Parallèle Mahler/Debussy', in Maxime Joos (ed.), *Claude Debussy: Jeux de Formes* (Paris: Editions Rue d'Ulm, 2004), 79-97.
———, 'Wunderblock (Nebenstück II)', *Henry Lemoine* [Online programme note], <https://www.henry-lemoine.com/fr/catalogue/fiche/28367>, accessed 1 August 2017.
PESSON, GÉRARD, LAMBERT DOUSSON, AND SARAH TROCHE, 'De l'Écoute Buissonnière à l'Empreinte du Geste: Entretien avec Gérard Pesson', *Geste,* 6 (2009), 334-347.
PESSON, GÉRARD AND MARTIN KALTENECKER, 'Entretien Croisé', *La Transcription Pour Chœur: Regards* (Centre de Ressources Dédié à l'Art Choral, November 2017) [Online study dossier], <http://www.cen-erda.fr/default/gerard-pesson-martin-kaltenecker-entretien-croise.aspx#_ftn1>, accessed 20 April 2019.
———, 'Entretien Croisé: Pesson/Kaltenecker', *Sfz,* 1 (2008), 4-7.
———, 'Intervention 1 par Gérard Pesson', *Langage, Style, et Écriture Aujourd'hui: Le Bruit comme Effet dans L'Écriture Actuelle* (Centre de Documentation de la Musique Contemporaine, 9 October 2001) [Recorded seminar], <http://www.cdmc.asso.fr/fr/actualites/saison-cdmc/langage-style-ecriture-aujourd-hui-bruit-comme-effet-dans-ecriture-actuelle>, accessed 18 December 2018.
———, 'Intervention 2 par Gérard Pesson', *Langage, Style, et Écriture Aujourd'hui: Le Bruit comme Effet dans L'Écriture Actuelle* (Centre de Documentation de la Musique Contemporaine, 9 October 2001) [Recorded seminar], <http://www.cdmc.asso.fr/fr/actualites/saison-cdmc/langage-style-ecriture-aujourd-hui-bruit-comme-effet-dans-ecriture-actuelle>, accessed 18 December 2018.
PESSON, GÉRARD AND DAVID SANSON, 'Entretien avec Gérard Pesson', *Cycle Gérard Pesson* (Paris: Festival d'Automne à Paris, 2008), 3-6 [Press release], <https://www.festival-automne.com/uploads/Publish/evenement/193/DP08_CyclePESSON.pdf>, accessed 1 April 2019.
PICKETT, DAVID, 'Arrangements and Retuschen: Mahler and Werktreue', in Jeremy Barham (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Mahler* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 178-199.
PRATT, WALDO SELDEN, 'Arrangement', *The New Encyclopedia of Music and Musicians* (New York: Macmillan, 1924).
PRESSNITZER, DANIEL, CLARA SUIED, AND SHIHAB A. SHAMMA, 'Auditory Scene Analysis: The Sweet Music of Ambiguity', *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience,* 5 (2011), Article 158.

'Proms Performance Archive', *BBC* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/3SsklRvCSPvfHr13wgz6HCJ/proms-performance-archive>, accessed 1 April 2019.

PUFFETT, DERRICK, 'Transcription and Recomposition: The Strange Case of Zemlinsky's Maeterlinck Songs', *Analytical Strategies and Musical Interpretation: Essays on Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 72-119.

PUILLE, STEPHAN, 'Johannes Brahms in the Lindström Recording Studio', *11th International Conference of Discography* (Hildesheim, 9 May 2010) [Conference paper], <http://www.phonomuseum.at/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/L3-Puille.pdf>, accessed 20 December 2018.

RAYKOFF, IVAN, 'Transcription, Transgression, and the (Pro)creative Urge', *Queer Episodes in Music and Modern Identity* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 150-176.

REHDING, ALEXANDER, *Music and Monumentality: Commemoration and Wonderment in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

———, 'Wax Cylinder Revolutions', *The Musical Quarterly*, 88/1 (2005), 123-160.

REYNOLDS, SIMON, *Retromania: Pop Culture's Addiction to its Own Past* (London: Faber, 2012).

RICŒUR, PAUL, 'Narrative Time', *Critical Inquiry*, 7/1 (1980), 169-190.

ROBERGE, MARC-ANDRÉ, 'The Busoni Network and the Art of Creative Transcription', *Canadian University Music Review*, 11/1 (1991), 68-88.

'Robert Rauschenberg discusses Erased de Kooning Drawing at San Francisco Museum of Modern Art', (San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1999 [2012]) [Video interview and research materials], <https://www.sfmoma.org/artwork/98.298/research-materials/document/EDeK_98.298_031/>, accessed 19 April 2019.

ROBINSON, PAUL, 'Repetition Tropes and Levels of Obliteration in John Adam's Saxophone Concerto and "American Berserk"', *Tempo*, 70/277 (2016), 47-62.

ROCHESTER, MARC, 'Accentus Transcriptions', *Gramophone*, 81/973 (2003), 103.

———, 'The Work of a Matchless Choir is Now Joined by Stunning Visuals', *Gramophone*, 86/1032 (2008), 105.

RUTHERFORD-JOHNSON, TIM, *Music After the Fall: Modern Composition and Culture Since 1989* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2017).

SACHANIA, MILLAN, '"Improving the Classics": Some Thoughts on the "Ethics" and Aesthetics of Musical Arrangement', *The Music Review*, 55/1 (1994), 58-75.

SACKS, ADAM J. , 'Toward an Expansion of the Critique of the Mahler Revival', *New German Critique*, 40/2 (2013), 113-136.

SAMSON, JIM, *Virtuosity and the Musical Work: The Transcendental Studies of Liszt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

SARTRE, JEAN-PAUL, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology*, trans. Hazel E. Barnes (London: Routledge, 2003).

———, *The Imaginary: A Phenomenological Psychology of the Imagination*, trans. Jonathan Webber (London: Routledge, 2004).

———, *L'Être et le Néant: Essai d'Ontologie Phénoménologique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1970).

———, *L'Imaginaire: Psychologie Phénoménologique de l'Imagination* (Paris: Gallimard, 1940).

———, *Nausea*, trans. Robert Baldick (London: Penguin, 2000).

SASLAW, JANNA, 'Forces, Containers, and Paths: The Role of Body-Derived Image Schemas in the Conceptualization of Music', *Journal of Music Theory*, 40/2 (1996), 217-243.

SCHERZINGER, MARTIN, 'The 'New Poetics' of Musical Influence: A Response to Kevin Korsyn', *Music Analysis*, 13/2/3 (1994), 298-309.

SCHLEGEL, AUGUST WILHELM, *A Course of Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature*, trans. John Black (2nd edn.; London: J. Templeman and J. R. Smith, 1840).

SCHOLES, PERCY A., 'Arrangement', *The Oxford Companion to Music* (London: Oxford University Press, 1938).
'The Schubert Trial 1/2', *YouTube* [Video], <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2XYBE46ySKw>, accessed 17 September 2018.
'The Schubert Trial 2/2', *YouTube* [Video], <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qqf6sitTfr4&vl=en>, accessed 17 September 2018.
SCHULLER, GUNTHER, 'Arrangement', in Barry Kernfeld (ed.), *The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz* (2nd edn, 1; London: Macmillan, 2002).
SCHUMANN, ROBERT, *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker* (3 edn., 2; Leipzig: Georg Wigand's Verlag, 1875).
———, 'Schubert's Grand Duo and Last Three Sonatas', trans. Henry Pleasants, in Henry Pleasants (ed.), *Schumann on Music: A Selection from the Writings* (New York: Dover, 1988), 141-144.
SCHUTZ, ALFRED, 'Fragments on the Phenomenology of Music', in F. Joseph Smith (ed.), *In Search of Musical Method* (New York: Gordon and Breach, 1976), 5-72.
SCRUTON, ROGER, *The Aesthetics of Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).
———, *Modern Culture* (London: Continuum, 2005).
SERVICE, TOM, 'The Proms Listening Service', in *BBC Prom 14: Sibelius, Schubert and Zimmermann*, BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, Elizabeth Watts, and Louis Lortie (Royal Albert Hall, London, 24 July 2018), [Concert programme note].
SHAW, GEORGE BERNARD, 'The Ninth Symphony', in Dan H. Lawrence (ed.), *Shaw's Music: The Complete Musical Criticism* (II: 1890-1893; London: Max Reinhart, 1981), 825-831.
SHEPHERD, IAN, *The Drawing Room Symphony: A History of the Piano Duet Transcription* (Norwich: Kingswood, 2008).
SIÔN, PWYLL AP AND LAUREN REDHEAD, 'Special Issue: Musical Borrowing and Quotation in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries', *Contemporary Music Review*, 33/2 (2014).
SITSKY, LARRY, *Busoni and the Piano: The Works, the Writings, and the Recordings* (New York: Greenwood, 1986).
———, 'Transcriptions and the Eunuch', *Quadrant*, 10/5 (1966), 30-34.
'Solti's last M5 live from Zurich', *Gustavmahlerboard.com* [Online forum thread], <http://gustavmahlerboard.com/forum/index.php?topic=352.msg2899#msg2899>, accessed 10 April 2019.
SOMMER, ANDY (dir.), *Transcriptions* (Naïve, 2008), DVD (2008, V 5116).
SONTAG, SUSAN, *Against Interpretation* (London: Vintage, 1994).
SORABJI, KAIKHOSRU SHAPURJI, 'Leopold Godowsky as Creative Transcriber', in Marc-André Roberge (ed.), *Mi Contra Fa: The Immoralisings of a Machiavellian Musician* (London: Porcupine Press, 1947), 62-70.
SPONHEUER, BERND, 'Zu Schön? Mahler, Čajkovskij und der Musikalische Kitsch', in Bernd Sponheuer and Wolfram Steinbeck (eds.), *Gustav Mahler und die Symphonik des 19. Jahrhunderts: Referate des Bonner Symposions 2000* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2001), 169-181.
STAM, ROBERT, 'Beyond Fidelity: The Dialogics of Adaptation', in James Naremore (ed.), *Film Adaptation* (London: Athlone, 2000), 54-76.
STANYEK, JASON, et al., 'Forum on Transcription', *Twentieth-Century Music*, 11/1 (2014), 101-161.
STANYEK, JASON AND BENJAMIN PIEKUT, 'Deadness: Technologies of the Intermundane', *TDR/The Drama Review*, 54/1 (2010), 14-38.
STEINBERG, LEO, *Encounters with Rauschenberg: A Lavishly Illustrated Lecture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).
STEINER, GEORGE, *Real Presences* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1989).

STERNE, JONATHAN, *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).

——— (ed.), *The Sound Studies Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

STOCKFELT, OLA, 'Adequate Modes of Listening', in Anahid Kassabian and Leo G. Svendsen (eds.), *Keeping Score: Music, Disciplinarity, Culture* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1997).

———, 'Music and Reuse: Theoretical and Historical Considerations', *Music and Manipulation: On the Social Uses and Social Control of Music* (New York: Berghahn, 2006).

STRAUS, JOSEPH N., 'Recompositions by Schoenberg, Stravinsky, and Webern', *The Musical Quarterly*, 72/3 (1986), 301-328.

———, *Remaking the Past: Musical Modernism and the Influence of the Tonal Tradition* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990).

SUBOTNIK, ROSE ROSENGARD, 'Towards a Deconstruction of Structural Listening: A Critique of Schoenberg, Adorno, and Stravinsky', *Deconstructive Variations: Music and Reason in Western Society* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 148-176.

SZENDY, PETER, *Écoute: Une Histoire de Nos Oreilles* (Paris: Minuit, 2001).

———, 'L'Arrangement Dérangé', *Arrangements, Dérangements: La Transcription Musicale Aujourd'hui* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000), 7-14.

———, *Listen: A History of Our Ears*, trans. Charlotte Mandell (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008).

———, *Musica Practica: Arrangements et Phonographies de Monteverdi à James Brown* (Esthétiques; Paris: L'Harmattan, 1997).

SZENDY, PETER, et al., 'Musique: Interpréter l'Écoute, Selon Peter Szendy', in David Vandiedonck and Émilie Da Lage-Py (eds.), *Musique Interpréter l'Écoute* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003), 17-28.

SZENDY, PETER AND NICOLAS DONIN, 'Otographes', *Circuit*, 13/2 (2003), 11-26.

TALBOT, MICHAEL (ed.), *The Musical Work: Reality or Invention?* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000).

TARUSKIN, RICHARD, *Oxford History of Western Music* (5: Music in the Late Twentieth Century; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

———, 'Revising Revision', *The Danger of Music and Other Anti-Utopian Essays* (University of California Press, 2009), 354-381.

———, *Text and Act: Essays on Music and Performance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

TAYLOR, BENEDICT, *The Melody of Time: Music and Temporality in the Romantic Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

TEACHOUT, TERRY, 'The Vulgar Virtuoso', *Commentary*, 100/4 (1995), 49-51.

THOM, PAUL, *The Musician as Interpreter* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007).

TOOP, RICHARD, 'Concept and Context: A Historiographic Consideration of Lachenmann's Orchestral Works', *Contemporary Music Review*, 23/3-4 (2004), 125-143.

TOTA, ANNA LISA, '‘When Orff Meets Guinness’: Music in Advertising as a Form of Cultural Hybrid', *Poetics*, 29/2 (2001), 109-123.

TOVEY, DONALD FRANCIS, 'Symphony in C Orchestrated by Joachim from the Grand Duo Op. 140', *Essays in Musical Analysis* (1 Symphonies; London: Oxford University Press, 1935), 215-218.

Transcriptions (2003, Naïve V4947), CD.

'Transcriptions', *Amazon.de* [Product page and reviews], <https://www.amazon.de/Transcriptions-Accentus/dp/B00008GFOH>, accessed 11 April 2019.

'Transcriptions', *Amazon.co.uk* [Product page and reviews], <https://www.amazon.co.uk/d/CDs-Vinyl/Transcriptions-Laurence-Equilbey-Accentus/B00008GFOH/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1502268001&sr=8-1&keywords=transcriptions+accentus>, accessed 11 April 2019.

Transcriptions 2 (2006, Naïve V5048), CD.

Transcriptions [1 and 2] (2008, Naïve V5151), CD.

'Transcriptions pour choeur d'oeuvres de Bach, Berg, Chopin, Ravel ...', *Amazon.fr* [Product page and reviews], <https://www.amazon.fr/Transcriptions-choeur-doeuvres-Chopin-Ravel/dp/B00008GFOH/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1507556484&sr=8-1&keywords=accentus+transcriptions>, accessed 11 April 2019.

TRIPE, JAN, 'Ernst Kurth's Dynamic Formal Process and Sonata Design in Bruckner's Sixth Symphony', M.Mus. thesis (University of Western Ontario, 1997).

TSIOULCAS, ANASTASIA, 'Classical Score: Making a Quiet Splash', *Billboard,* 119/13 (2007), 49.

Turner, Whistler, Monet (2005, Naïve V5003), CD.

URROWS, DAVID FRANCIS, 'Conscientious Translation: Liszt, Robert Franz, and the Phenomenology of Lied Transcription', in David Francis Urrows (ed.), *Word and Music Studies: Essays on Word/Music Adaptation and on Surveying the Field* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 135-160.

'V/A 'Doppeldoppelgänger' (SP053)', *Shelter Press* [Product information], <shelter-press.org/sp053-va-doppeldoppelganger/>, accessed 4 July 2016.

VAGET, HANS RUDOLF, 'Film and Literature. The Case of "Death in Venice": Luchino Visconti and Thomas Mann', *The German Quarterly,* 53/2 (1980), 159-175.

VANDE MOORTELE, STEVEN, *Two-Dimensional Sonata Form: Form and Cycle in Single-Movement Instrumental Works by Liszt, Strauss, Schoenberg, and Zemlinsky* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2009).

VELASCO-PUFLEAU, LUIS, 'Réseaux Collaboratifs et Création Musicale', *Figures de l'Art,* 30 (2015), 83-94.

VENN, EDWARD, 'Thomas Adès and the Spectres of Brahms', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association,* 140/1 (2015), 163-212.

VENUTI, LAWRENCE, *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* (2nd edn.; London: Routledge, 2008).

VENUTI, LAWRENCE AND MONA BAKER (eds.), *The Translation Studies Reader* (London: Routledge, 2000).

VISCONTI, LUCHINO (dir.), *Death in Venice* (Warner Brothers, 1971), DVD (2004, Z1 28881).

WALKER, ALAN, 'In Defense of Arrangements', *Piano Quarterly,* 36/143 (1988), 26-28.

———, 'Preface', *The Schubert Song Transcriptions for Solo Piano* (3; New York: Dover, 1996).

WATKINS, GLENN, *Pyramids at the Louvre: Music, Culture, and Collage from Stravinsky to the Postmodernists* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1994).

WATKINS, HOLLY, *Metaphors of Depth in German Musical Thought: From E.T.A. Hoffmann to Arnold Schoenberg* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

WESTRUP, J. A. AND FRANK LL. HARRISON, 'Arrangement', *Collins Music Encyclopedia* (London: Collins, 1959).

WHITESELL, LLOYD, 'White Noise: Race and Erasure in the Cultural Avant-Garde', *American Music,* 19/2 (2001), 168-189.

WHITTALL, ARNOLD, 'Arrangement', in Alison Latham (ed.), *The Oxford Companion to Music* (2002).

WILLIAMS, ALASTAIR, *Music in Germany Since 1968* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

———, 'Swaying with Schumann: Subjectivity and Tradition in Wolfgang Rihm's 'Fremde Szenen' I-III and Related Scores', *Music and Letters,* 87/3 (2006), 379-397.

———, 'Technology of the Archaic: Wish Images and Phantasmagoria in Wagner', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, 9/1 (1997), 73-87.

WILSON, CONRAD, *Notes on Schubert: 20 Crucial Works* (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 2003).

WOLF, ERNEST M., 'A Case of Slightly Mistaken Identity: Gustav Mahler and Gustav Aschenbach', *Twentieth-Century Literature*, 19/1 (1973), 40-52.

WOOLF, PETER GRAHAME, 'Transcriptions "Adagio for Choir"', *Musical Pointers* <http://www.musicalpointers.co.uk/reviews/cddvd/accentus_transcriptions.htm>, accessed 11 April 2019.

ZUR, MENACHEM, 'Reflections After Listening to Zender's/Schubert "Die Winterreise"', *Music in Time*, Winter (2000), 61-65.