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**INVESTIGATIONS CONCERNING MUSIC AND THE SOUNDSCAPE:
HEIDEGGER, INGARDEN, REIK**

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German
by
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Abstract

Investigations Concerning Music and the Soundscape: Heidegger, Ingarden, Reik seeks to approach the phenomenon of music from the level of perception, as opposed to presuming a definition of music as either *prima facie* known or gleaned solely from a specific cultural tradition. Methodologically, this work draws from phenomenology, particularly the field of modern phenomenology as inaugurated by Edmund Husserl and its promulgation by Martin Heidegger, sound studies, and, in terms of rhetorical style, deconstruction, though it considers the work of thinkers from a wide variety of other fields, from Theodor Reik's psychoanalysis (albeit short-circuited through phenomenology) to archaeology to Ato Sekyi-Otu's political writings. Performing a slow argument throughout, this work unfolds not unlike a piece of music itself. After identifying common rhetorical missteps in terms of approaching music from a few archetypical thinkers of music, most especially Nietzsche and Schopenhauer, the argument begins by questing after the lowest level of perception in the experiencing of what has traditionally been called "music," viz. listening. Reading Heidegger's examination of listening, especially as it is presented in *Being and Time*, in tandem with the founder of R. Murray Schafer, widely acknowledged as the founder of sound studies, in addition to using my own phenomenological ear, I conclude that listening is related inherently to a separation from the origin of a sound (that is, we never have unmediated access to the origin of a sound) and, in fact, apprehends the soundscape (the entirety of one's sonic surroundings) monolithically, prior to the sounds being sorted and categorized according to experience and concepts. These two conclusions are applied to "normative" music (i.e., the song, the 'work' of music, etc.), in particular as it is elaborated by one of the most trenchant thinkers of the phenomenology of music, Roman Ingarden, to arrive at the point that

there is no meaningful separation of music and the wider soundscape – what I now called the musical manifold. I develop the musical manifold in conjunction with the typographical compositions of La Monte Young, the music of the Mbuti tribe, the poetry of Ernst Meister, and Theodor Reik’s idea of the “haunting melody,” to argue for music, broadly construed, as being understood as a series of schizophonic mimesis – essentially a manifold of haunting, mediated access, echoes, and resonances. This has implications for the constitution of the self, which is to say ontological implications; if the body is viewed as a resonating chamber, it both receives and contributes to the musical manifold in a way that marks the self as constituted by and constitutive of this haunted existence, in a way that is both the subsumption of the self into the musical manifold but always deeply individual simultaneously. The fact remains, however, that this is not the prevailing mode of perceiving music that passes over this ontological understanding. Mobilizing the earlier research in Heidegger in tandem with the phenomenological writings of Jean-Luc Marion, the possibilities and limits of understanding music on this ontological level are explored, particularly by looking at music from the perspective of Marion’s “saturated phenomenon,” albeit with a Nietzschean twist – music as saturated phenomenon. Through several studies on the various modalities of existence that can render the individual open to experiencing the musical manifold as such, including a novel interpretation of Peter Brötzmann and Han Bennink’s *Schwarzwaldfahrt* and a reading of Daniel Paul Schreber’s memoirs, I arrive at the conclusion that “music,” as a linguistic signifier, is ultimately a paleonym, but this need not be the case. The rest of the work is spent exploring a variety of ethical possibilities that are concomitant with this sort of understanding of music and sound, on the levels of community, postcolonialism, the body, ecocriticism, and, finally, politics as such. Ultimately, this work spins into the very hall of echoes that it describes, seeking various paths forward with an eye towards overturning the Enlightenment’s outward

spread of its universalizing agenda. If this is a universalizing project, in that it intends to seek a non-exclusive understanding of music, it is one that actively disavows the universalism inherent in the logic of the modern age – the logic of capitalism, the logic of the cult of reason, and the spread of that logic throughout the world with little compunction.

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Introduction

An Introduction in Four Movements with a Coda

To open with Trakl.

(“*Verhallend eines Gongs braungoldne Klänge.*“

(“Echoes away the gong’s browngolden blasts.”¹

So begins Trakl’s “*Traum des Bösen*“ (“Dream of Evil“), and so we begin here, not with a ‘scholarly’ point of departure, but with what might be referred to as my own *Traum des Bösen* to discuss my path to this topic – the topic of the philosophy of music, a topic much on which much has been written, perhaps because music will always lie outside of our ken. As Heidegger noted once after listening to some music: “*Das können wir mit der Philosophie nicht.*”² (“We cannot [do] that with philosophy.”) Maybe it is only with the opening of a *Traum des Bösen* that we can open on to music; given Heidegger’s foreclosure of philosophical approach, we are left with poetry and (oto)biography.

Several years ago, due to a variety of factors, I was experiencing a severe, multi-month episode of panic disorder, a mental health condition characterized by frequent – if not constant – panic attacks and general dissociation; in short, I was experiencing a nervous breakdown. At the time, I was not entirely sure what was happening, only that something was out of joint. I was having trouble concentrating on reading, my short-term memory was non-existent (and, indeed, I remember very little of those few months), I took less joy in activities I normally enjoyed, such as

¹ Translation mine. *Klänge* most certainly is not “blasts,” at least if one is striving for a direct translation. This opening line is taken from a translation I completed to show my students two different styles of translation. I kept the rhyme scheme, which in the first stanza is ABBA; “blasts” is paired with “masts.” That being said, I quite like the vorticist echoes of opening with a blast.

² Georg Picht, “Die Macht des Denkens,” in *Erinnerung an Martin Heidegger*, ed. G. Neske and M. Heidegger (Klett-Cotta Verlag, 2003), 205. Translation mine.

cooking, and, of course, there was the obsessional idea that I had actually died or was comatose. Everyday sounds of modernity had transformed; an errant car alarm became the steady beat of an EKG. In moments like that, it can be hard to find a foothold. For me, this was not music (though credit is due to the Butthole Surfers for being one of the last groups to affect me), but, rather, its seeming absence, as my ability to appreciate or even apprehend music apparently disappeared. This version of hypoacusis was the most troubling of my symptoms, the one which stuck out to me as profoundly abnormal. After all, music has always been an important part of my life; I spent a year volunteering for La Monte Young, and braved the flu to serve as an usher for two of his rare concerts. So to confront his minimalist masterpiece *The Well-Tuned Piano* only with coldness was existentially frightening.

Before this all, I had wanted to study ‘normal’ literary pursuits, with an emphasis on discourses surrounding the occult, but all of that was quickly wiped from my mind as I slowly recovered. I was struck by how much the loss of ‘traditional’ music (which is to say what we think of as ‘works’ or discrete song entities) affected me, and I wanted to find out why. Was the transformation of my own sonic experience of the world into something sinister and oppressive actually an overshadowing of what is normally called music, rock, jazz, and the like, or was it an opening towards another layer beyond conscious or intentional musical (re)production? Was not the song of my heart deeply, insistently, desperately trying to become the siren call that would lead me to the land of the waking?

All of which leads me to this project, which we might call liner notes. In a shattered world, where definitions did not hold as much weight as years of sedimented experience should have concretized them, I felt as though everything I knew about music was wrong. Given that it is a universal human phenomenon, this troubled me greatly – nothing I knew or had learned prepared

me for my months ‘in the wild.’ So, what I seek is an understanding of how the aural dimension might serve as a point of departure for discourses surrounding the self and its place in the world. Obviously, that is a lifework, so I am starting, at this moment, with the quest for a definition, however tentative, equivocal, dubious: what might music be?

* * *

Music has, through history, scored the apices and nadirs of humanity. From the depths of depravity and evil, the apocryphal Nero fiddling while Rome burned and the orchestras in Auschwitz, to the heights of ecstatic joy, the archetypal ‘chorus of angels,’ humanity has ascribed to music an almost mystical power. It is, variously, ritualistic, sacrificial, healing, bestial, taming, and arousing, to name just a few. And, indeed, music is a seemingly universal phenomenon; like language, it is spread among all peoples of the world. Given all of this, it is striking how there is no definition of music from a phenomenological perspective, which is to say at the level of our perception. We have categorized and collated music’s effects, but we seemingly cannot decide whether the chirping of the songbird that rousts us from our slumber in the morning is music, despite a lengthy, albeit frequently non-musicological discourse on precisely that topic from Johann Gottfried Herder, to Theodor Adorno, up through R. Murray Schafer, which generally focuses on the songbird as a limit case; while the role of birds as a marker of ecology, a division bell between man and nature, is deserving of further study, what strikes me as salient here is whence this necessity of a limit case emerges. The lack of discourse at this moment, the definitional moment, to me, seems like something of an oversight.

For how can we think through the effects and affects of something without understanding it in its place in the world? How can we not know that we have not elided something simple and basic – yet nevertheless crucially important? Or, perhaps even more importantly, that we have not run something over, violently throwing a concept over something that, in the end, may be impossible to conceptualize? It is this way with all objects and concepts that we take for granted; complexity is gladly imprisoned under the seemingly placid sea in favor of an eased life. Naturally, this tendency towards simplification should not and cannot be condemned. If we lived in the world where everything appeared in all its complexity all the time, we would surely be overwhelmed, dragged under its sirenic depths.

Yet it is nevertheless important to consider *how* a phenomenon *is* in the world, and that is the goal of the current philosophical project. It aims to consider:

1. the constitution of music, possibly in contradiction with commonly accepted definitions of music, with as few preconceptions as possible (and these noted).
2. the topology and sources of music with regards to the reconsideration of its constitution.
3. the human relationship with music, especially with regards to our own ontological (self-) constitution.

This is to say, in a somewhat less schematic way, that I wish to evaluate what we know about music in terms of its definition, its sources (i.e., human construction/composition and natural noises), and, in light of these two prior considerations, the relationship between music and the listener – possibly in ways that run counter to commonsense judgments of music that have been historically advanced. I aim to pursue this track by placing emphasis on the listener *itself*, as opposed to a strictly objective/empirical analysis; this philosophical maneuver will be accomplished by methodologically adhering for the most part to a deconstructively-minded version

of the modern phenomenological tradition inaugurated in the work of Edmund Husserl and passed down through Martin Heidegger and the various subsequent schools of phenomenology (particular attention will be paid to Jean-Luc Marion, e.g.). Eventually, I arrive at the position that music is *potentially* all-surrounding – an ontology of music will fall into *hauntology*, with the spectre of the primordially of the experiencing of music affecting the very ontology of the listener (*Dasein*, perhaps), allowing for the potential of listening for the communication of the soundscape, be that the whine of a species on the edge of extinction, a stomach shuddering in hunger, or the ecstatic fall rain heralding the magical appearance of mushrooms. This is a project engaged with and seeking to unsettle issues of exclusionary politics, anthropocentric views towards the environment, and other modalities of the universalizing project and normative agenda(s) of the Enlightenment that seek to draw boundaries that prevent connection, communication and encourage violence, figurative or vastly literal. In other words, where “missionaries and naturalists,” the great Alexander Humboldt among them, as we will explore in the final chapter, “made an effort to include foreign music in their travel accounts[, b]ut their impressions generally amounted to a drastic Europeanization of what they observed... At worst, the attempts to transcribe foreign [and we should be wary already of this marker of otherness] music lopped off its distinctive qualities and turned it into a grotesque approximation of European music.”³ The same can be said, if not with greater emphasis, of possible examples of natural music that surround us. We here seek, if not to undo these intellectual and literal trends, then to chart a path, tenuous, tremulous, though it may be, forward.

Essentially, I want to consider definitions of music from the perspective of the listener, both vague and unique, as opposed to definitions that strive for (scientific or verifiable) objectivity.

³ Harry Liebersohn, *Music and the New Global Culture From the Great Exhibitions to the Jazz Age* (University of Chicago Press, 2019), 3.

This has the potential to be an extremely broad definition –radically so – and, indeed, I am attempting to formulate a definition of music that *does not impinge on its practice throughout the world*. This means considering the possibility of musical experiences to be emergent in aural spaces that might not otherwise be considered in an historical definition of music: the space between notes of a chorale, breaks between movements, ritualistic noise ignored or scorned by colonial logic, a forest rent by fracking, and even bodily noises. “It might even mean accompanying the *Goldberg Variations* – in particular the rollicking fifteenth variation – on the Ghanaian drum,” as Ato Sekyi-Otu evocatively put it.⁴ Such a redefinition would open up a space to interrogate how what we always stutteringly and hesitantly call “subject” constitutes itself in the world, as it quests after foundational questions of naming, conceptualization, and even the separability of itself from its surroundings. I will argue that just as music can be constituted as such by the listener, so too can the listener be constituted by the aural experience of the world, specifically in the case of music. The intellectual movement at work here can be linked with what Adrienne Janus has called, following Martin Jay, the “anti-ocular turn” in theory and philosophy – but I would caution against the use of “anti.” I’m not “anti” film, painting, or optometrists. Simply, I wish to focus on the sense that has been occluded by the domination of the *eidos*, the ocularcentrism in the tradition of Western thinking, “from the shadows of Plato’s cave and the divine light of Augustine to Descartes’ ‘steadfast mental gaze’ and the Enlightenment faith in the sensory observation.”⁵

I am less concerned with proffering what a Marxist theoretician might (with probity) accuse of being an idealist vision of music, but instantiating a critique (*Kritik*) of music as it has been

⁴ Ato Sekyi-Otu, *Left Universalism, Africentric Essays* (Milton: Routledge, 2018), 63.

⁵ Adrienne Janus, "Listening: Jean-Luc Nancy and the "Anti-Ocular" Turn in Continental Philosophy and Critical Theory," *Comparative Literature* 63, no. 2 (2011), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41238506>.

heretofore defined and put to use by society. While we can speak of the various tragedies with which ‘music’ (even traditionally defined) has been complicit (though more on that later), including, but certainly not limited to a certain social infantilization via the medium of popular music and, even more perniciously, music made popular, *in and through the culture industry, in and through habituation and commercialization*, we here turn our eyes and ears towards understanding the constitution of music and how it constitutes us as broadly as possible, in order to open up to a critical horizon that is, in fact, able to more deeply analyze not only these tragedies but to seek out gaps where Capital may yet not hold sway, moments of the disavowal of Capital, disavowal of paternal logic, disavowal of a rationality that cannot but steamroll individual uniqueness – a quality held as, ironically, universal in both Derrida and Adorno. Simply put: Without a definition of music capacious enough to include *what might be ignored despite its cries to the contrary*, we lack the critical apparatus necessary to adequately imagine another sort of world or even to hear the world as it is now (and therefore develop a plan of action, a musical strategy, however much of an improvisation that might be). If this is a universalizing project, it is one that actively disavows Enlightenment and Capital universalizing in favor of an understanding of the individual ear, mouth, skin, membrane, and gust of wind as able to be communicative, generative, and ontologically disclosive. We do not abandon critique of socially constituted forms of music but view them as *insufficiently radical to confront the cry of the other, the hope, and the betrayal of that hope*. Thus: here, prolegomena.

Methodologically, I will employ a lengthy formal analysis that will unfold throughout the project – indeed, not unlike the classic symphonic form. There will be five interconnected ‘movements’ of the piece (after the introductory statements), each building on the last while introducing new ideas and interlocutors to refine the incipient reconsideration of music. Terms

employed early on may change; as the argument deepens, certain phrases and ideas will hold less currency. Sonic manifold to musical manifold, subject to subjectivity, ontology to hauntology. Essentially, I am following the methodology of deconstruction, taking as my cue Jacques Derrida's formal, argumentative structure in *Of Grammatology* and elsewhere. The work at hand,

obeys an *analytic* exigency, at once critical and analytic. It is always a matter of *undoing, desedimenting, decomposing, deconstituting* sediments, *artefacta*, presupposition, institutions... What is put into question by its work is not only the possibility of recapturing the originary but also the desire to do so or the phantasm of doing so, the desire to rejoin the simple, whatever that may be, or the phantasm of such a reunion. At issue here is a movement of deconstruction that is not only counter-archaeological but counter-genealogical: the 'genealogy' of the genealogical principle no longer derives from a simple genealogy.⁶

I am thus employing a wide range of sources (though, admittedly analyzing all from a deconstructively-minded phenomenological perspective), seeking pressure points in established theories, to see where they may run ahead of themselves or reveal historical legerdemains, i.e. the aforementioned ocularcentrism. As Ezra Pound (he an oft-overlooked composer himself, he whose Canto LXXV sings itself) noted, if one pardons the pun, the goal at hand is "the search for sound criteria."⁷ This goal is not an overcoming, still less a polemic, but rather, in the words of one of my teachers, to traverse that most difficult extra inch, travelling with comrades in joyful dialogue.

I will explain these sections in greater depth later; for now, these movements can be summarized as the following:

1. It will begin with a consideration of the conceptions and preconceptions in the discourse surrounding the topic of music before arguing for the relevancy of the phenomenological approach. This chapter will take the form mostly of short case studies. The thought of

⁶ Derrida, Jacques. *Resistances of Psychoanalysis*. Translated by Peggy Kamuf, Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2008, 27.

⁷ Moody, Anthony David. *Ezra Pound, Poet: A Portrait of the Man and His Work. Volume I, the Young Genius, 1885-1920*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007, 29.

Friedrich Nietzsche, Arthur Schopenhauer, and Pascal Quignard will be considered, after briefly touching on the current state of scientific thought on the origins of music (specifically in the field of archaeology).

2. Taking as points of departure two thinkers equally obsessed with ‘the world’ and our perception thereof, Martin Heidegger and R. Murray Schafer, the concepts of silence and noise will be questioned in order to more broadly consider listening as a prelude to thinking more directly about music and the noises that surround us.
3. Continuing upon these foundations, music and the musical experience will be analyzed against the backdrop (in a very literal sense) of the soundscape and the phenomenology of noise put forth by the previous chapter. The psychoanalytic thought of Theodor Reik (divorced slightly from his Freudian context) and the second-generation phenomenologist Roman Ingarden will be added as interlocutors to Schafer and Heidegger, in order to more broadly consider the limits of what can be considered music. This chapter will include several musical case studies.
4. After establishing the possibilities of what can constitute music in the ears of the experiencing subject, the societal preconceptions of music will have to be considered. These ideas were and remain popular for a reason – the goal here will seek to explain *how* the listener interacts with music in multiple possible ways. The methodology of phenomenological art criticism, particularly drawing inspiration Jean-Luc Marion, will be here utilized. Fundamentally, this chapter will deal with a phenomenology of attention, which is to say an exploration of how and why a subject ‘pays’ attention in certain ways and contexts.

5. Finally, we will conclude with a recapitulation of the major themes, before thinking about the application of these ideas of music. The goal here will not be to provide any clear answers. Rather, it is hoped that many paths for future study and examples of applications of the advanced theories can be opened up.

Of course, these breakdowns are all too hasty, and such radical claims will need to be thoroughly explored over many, many pages, hence my proposed use of a more processual form, as opposed to a series of case studies of individual 'compositions' tied together only at the very end. In other words, there will be no chapter-length analysis of, say, Mozart or any composer, performer, music maker, tradition, lost or found; I have no desire to uncover a lost great truth, to become a Schliemann, for one or a few musical practitioners, preferring instead to remain open to a (personal) archive gathered or constellated through many years (indeed, those reading may notice clusters of quotations a certain, following Walter Benjamin and black metal band Urfaust, "constellatory practice"). Considerations of individual pieces and musical events will, naturally, be integrated into the text, but they will be **but** a few examples from a world of music that proffers many should we but listen. In addition, I will not be focusing on the phenomenology of musical *creation*, be that manifest in the playing or composing of music, although I will discuss the performance of free improvisational music in chapters 4 and 5.⁸ Still less do I deal with issues of dissonance, atonality, and other terms that I view as *ex post facto* normative judgements based on historical sedimentations of the very cultural norms that I wish, if not to dispense with, then, at the very least, to interrogate. I am more concerned with the phenomenology of music writ large than the history of a particular style, tradition, figure, or epoch, even as I am necessarily bounded by

⁸ Free jazz percussionist Milton Graves, however, will note, "That mouth and that ear has always worked as a combinational thing." We will deal with issues of interiority in chapter 2 and the latter half of chapter 3, but this is a worthwhile intervention to keep in mind – it may yet be beyond this project. Milton Graves, "Milton Graves: Sounding the Universe," (New Music USA, 2018), YouTube video. <https://youtu.be/rl144y8cIAk>.

my own instantiation in the current era; however, this aversion to history stems not from a lack of desire to delve into the catacombs, but rather to avoid what Hobsbawm calls “invented tradition[s,] set[s] of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition. which automatically implies continuity with the past.”⁹

To put all this another way, I wish to provide something like liner notes to the world.

* * *

I will now explain the individual chapters in greater depth.

Chapter one will consist, appropriately, of a broad historical overview of philosophical approaches to music. It will, by no means, be exhaustive and will, instead, focus on a few examples from the literature – generally those antecedent to the rise of phenomenology in the early twentieth century. In so doing, I hope to contextualize this project and clearly identify the tradition in which I am working, even while I remain skeptical of genealogies. Obviously, the study of music is global, broad, and endless. An exhaustive overview, if not impossible, would result in something several volumes long (not including the appendices). As I am engaging with the phenomenological philosophical tradition, I have chosen the following thinkers as points of departure, as they open up or gesture towards questions that might be better answered using phenomenology: Pascal Quignard, Arthur Schopenhauer, and Friedrich Nietzsche.

Before engaging with these thinkers, however, I will begin with the beggared questions apparent in a contemporary empirical discussion about the ostensible ‘birth’ of music in humanoid

⁹ Eric Hobsbawm, "Inventing Traditions," in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. E. J. Hobsbawm and T. O. Ranger (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1.

species. The opening sentence of Jeremy Montagu's "How Music and Instruments Began" neatly shows the problematic at hand: "Music must first be defined and distinguished from speech, and from animal and bird cries."¹⁰ Montagu's supposition is reliant on several preconceptions that deserve to be interrogated. Why must music be separated from speech? Further, it is based on an ostensible *objective reality* of music, as opposed to something far more subjective. Finally, this assertion is anthropocentric without justification. These logical leaps are all based on an incomplete definition of music, one which is based solely around human creation, despite the fact that the stated definition of music used in the piece is "sound that conveys emotion."¹¹ While we can perhaps assert that the birdcalls that animate the forest were not 'made' to convey emotion, they can nevertheless be identified as conveying emotion on the part of the recipient ear. But does this secondary appropriation of the sound by the listener allow it to be music? These are exactly the questions that are motivating the study at hand. Hopefully, by employing this very mainstream piece, alongside another survey text, Iain Morley's *The Prehistory of Music*, I can introduce the basic issues at hand and gesture towards the need for a stronger, less arbitrary definition of music that is not necessarily beholden to anthropocentrism on the level of rhetorical tenability.

But beyond concerns of logic and definitions, it seems deeply clear that music is deemed to be very powerful, even after only a cursory glance at the literature. Pascal Quignard, a French thinker, takes an altogether pessimistic view of the subject, linking music to subjugation, obedience, power, and destruction. He notes that, "Music violates the human body. It makes one stand up. Musical rhythms enthrall bodily rhythms. When exposed to music, the ear cannot close

¹⁰ Jeremy Montagu, "How Music and Instruments Began: A Brief Overview of the Origin and Entire Development of Music, from Its Earliest Stages," *Frontiers in Sociology* 2 (2017): 8, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2017.00008>.

¹¹ Montagu, "How Music and Instruments Began."

itself.”¹² Music, for Quignard, is an imposition, and a violent one, as well. For example, in his reading,

music is the only one [of the arts] to have collaborated in the extermination of Jews organized by the Germans between 1933 and 1945. It was the only form of art to be specifically requested by the administration of the *Konzentrationslager* [concentration camps]. To the detriment of this art form, it has to be emphasized that it was the only one capable of adapting to the organization of the camps, the hunger, the destitution, the work, the pain, the humiliation, and the death.¹³

Quignard, then, is very aware of the power of music, and he speaks of it in terms of almost religious power. But still, we are left without a clear understanding of music – only traces of its existence in historical wounds.

To go back in time, slightly, Arthur Schopenhauer, a thinker who was deeply influential on our final case study, Friedrich Nietzsche, also ascribed to music an almost mystical power. Particularly in §52 of his *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* (*The World as Will and Representation*), Schopenhauer privileges music above all the other arts.¹⁴ He claims that it is, at bottom, essentially identical to the thrust and dynamism of the world (what he terms “will”). As such, music and the experience thereof are revelatory, an unmasking of the ‘true’ existence of the world, which remains partially uncaptured by, for example, painting. Still, however, he was writing in the bourgeois world of nineteenth century Europe. The music he wrote about is highly limited, hemmed in by societal expectations and Eurocentrism – not that he provides a clear definition for even this narrow perspective on the subject. Again, there is an analysis of music’s *effects*, not music.

¹² Pascal Quignard, *The Hatred of Music*, trans. Matthew Amos and Fredrik Bönnbäck (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), 133.

¹³ Quignard, *The Hatred of Music*, 129.

¹⁴ Arthur Schopenhauer and Karl-Maria Guth, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* (Berlin: Hofenbergr 2016). Also see Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, ed. Christopher Janaway, trans. Judith Norman and Alistair Welchman (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

This aversion to definitional questions continues in the work of Friedrich Nietzsche, who drew a great deal of inspiration from Schopenhauer's concept of the will – which likely plays a part in Nietzsche's life-long fascination with music, from his early flirtation with Richard Wagner's aesthetics to his later poetic explorations. Nietzsche, in *Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik* (*The Birth of Tragedy Out of the Spirit of Music*), loosely correlated the arts into a dyad: Apollonian and Dionysian.¹⁵ The visual arts (i.e., painting) were labelled as Apollonian; they were related to conceptuality and light, which is to say that they were more or less static in the world in terms of their existence. Music, in Nietzsche's schema, is Dionysian, which was associated with intoxication and flux. The Apollonian and Dionysian are, in the Nietzschean formulation, emphatically *not* equivalent. Indeed, as the title of the book says, Nietzsche figures the Dionysian (and hence music) to be primordial with regards to the Apollonian, ventriloquizing the figure of Schiller to advocate for a “*musikalische Stimmung*” (“musical mood”) at the heart of *all* art and its production.¹⁶ All of this means that Nietzsche often comes the closest to providing a definition of music out of all of our case studies. However, he still lacks clarity when it comes to the *being* of music; in tracing its effects, he circumscribes the possibilities of music, its intoxicating, Dionysian power, but not necessarily what constitutes music either broadly or narrowly. Key here is his emphasis on primordality of the “*musikalisch*” (“musical”) experience, as there is, in fact, a philosophical tradition that engages with questions of perceptions, namely phenomenology. Where Nietzsche places the Dionysian before the Apollonian, he is making a statement pertaining to the roots of perception, and it is precisely here where the intervention of phenomenology becomes most obviously necessary and salient, as phenomenology

¹⁵ Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

can investigate these affective claims and formulate the boundaries (or lack thereof) necessary for a definition of music. It should also be noted that this leap, from Nietzsche to phenomenology, is not a strange one, as Nietzsche has been frequently placed in conversation with phenomenological thinkers – most especially Heidegger, whose lectures on Nietzsche were transformed into a massive tome.

Thus chapter two will introduce the phenomenological investigation, which consequently means that I will be starting from the first levels of experience, bracketing, as much as possible, what is ‘normally’ taken for granted – a process which Husserl called the *ἐποχή* (*epoché*) and which Heidegger thematized as the history of philosophy after the first moment of wonderment, the *θαυμάζειν* (*thaumazein*). (Many of the thinkers I am engaging with in this and the following chapters will be serving mostly as *methodological* inspirations; I am more concerned with perception than a strict philosophical history.) At bottom, questions of music are questions of the experiencing of listening, the study of which will form the basis of this chapter. To consider listening, I will engage with Martin Heidegger’s phenomenological conception of the world, especially his notions pertaining to the sense of hearing. Heidegger is a thinker deeply concerned with these topics: hearing, hearkening, attunement. These form the subject of a decent amount of his discourse in *Sein und Zeit* (*Being and Time*) where he outlines a form of listening (hearkening) in §34 “*das selbst phenomenal noch urpsrünglicher ist als das, was man in der Psychologie ‘zunächst’ als Hören bestimmt, das Empfinden von Tönen und das Vernehmen von Lauten*” (“is itself phenomenally more primordial than what the psychologist ‘initially’ defines as hearing, the sensing of tones and the perception of sounds”).¹⁷ Heidegger deepens the importance of listening, as we will deepen our understanding of listening beyond hearkening, in his later lecture “*Zeit und*

¹⁷ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2010), 158, 63.

Sein” (“On Time & Being”), where he implores us to listen to the “*Unruhig*” (“disquiet”) of being, the goal of which is “*nicht eine Reihe von Aussagesätzen anzuhören, sondern dem Gang des Zeigens zu folgen*” (“not to listen to a series of propositions, but rather to follow the movement of gesturing”).¹⁸ What is this disquiet? What is this movement that is not merely a series of propositions – discrete tones? We will think through the acoustics of Heidegger’s statement phenomenologically.

Heidegger, however, was no acoustician, so the founder of sound studies, R. Murray Schafer will be added as a rhetorical interlocuter. Schafer’s concept of the “soundscape,” which he defined as “the sonic environment,” is one of the most sustained analyses of the aural phenomena of the surrounding world, and he approaches it, by and large, phenomenologically, though his work is often polemical (he advocated for a process called “ear cleaning”).¹⁹ More so than just a consideration of the soundscape, we consider its ‘counterpart’ – the body. Not merely the ear, but the whole body as affected (and possibly effected) by vibratory acoustical experience. (While more work will need to be done on the matter, it is hoped that this short discussion of the body at least gestures towards a philosophy of music for the hearing-impaired or deaf communities, who can still appreciate music at the level of vibrations, in particular, bass-heavy music.) By considering the wholeness of the ‘acoustic’ (which is to say listened-to or belistened) world in terms of the soundscape, it is hoped that we will, in answer to and in conjunction with Heidegger, be able to tease out questions of listening and how the listener experiences it.

¹⁸ Martin Heidegger, *On Time and Being*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (New York, NY: Harper & Row Publishers, 1972), 2, 6.

Translation modified. “*Gesturing*,” drawing from the Heideggerian *Zeigen*, will be a tremendously important word for this piece. It will re-occur often. Perhaps too often.

¹⁹ Raymond Murray Schafer, *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World* (Rochester, VT: Destiny Books, 2006), 274.

Schafer, however, did not merely limit the soundscape to an experience of listening. More boldly and controversially, he drew a direct connection between the soundscape and music, stating that “the term [soundscape] may refer to actual environments, or to abstract constructions such as musical compositions and tape montages, particularly when considered as an environment.”²⁰ I wish to take his claim both seriously and phenomenologically.

To do so, in chapter three, I will engage with the art analysis of Roman Ingarden, who worked precisely in the field of phenomenology and who presciently questioned what happens in moments of stillness in musical experiences, such as the gap in a concert hall between movements of a symphony – gaps where the wider soundscape would be perceptible.²¹ These gaps are “not merely... interruption[s],” but rather “exist in a much deeper sense.”²² What is this deeper sense? I posit that it is related to the musicality of the soundscape; Ingarden, however, for all his acumen, nevertheless was profoundly beholden to nineteenth century ideas of art and thus he did not account for the possibility of the soundscape being at least potentially music itself – though I argue that, by his own analysis, he might have reached this very conclusion. Indeed, following Schafer (and the twentieth century avant-garde musical tradition at large, especially Cage’s work *4’33”*, which, per Schafer, “is merely one protracted caesura”), we cannot be satisfied with the binary between music and noise (or sound) as it so commonly appears, and we interrogate the noise of the world *as being musical* in, at the very least, some instances.²³

Of course, then, what are we to do with ‘traditional’ music? The Mozart, the Velvet Underground, the Mbuti elephant-hunting chant. While displacing music away from an

²⁰ Schafer, *The Soundscape*, 274-75.

²¹ Roman Ingarden, *Ontology of the Work of Art: The Musical Work, the Picture, the Architectural Work, the Film* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1989), 99-102.

²² Ingarden, *Ontology of the Work of Art*, 100.

²³ Schafer, *The Soundscape*, 5.

anthropocentric definition may seem iconoclastic and almost sacrilegious, I wish to show that, in fact, we need not discard these composers as superfluous shapers of the soundscape. Rather, I simply want to complicate their relationship with the surrounding world, to argue in favor of a modified understanding of ‘traditional’ music as *part of* the soundscape, which would thus be a constitutive ontological element for *all listeners*, which is to say, at the level of *their* being.

However, this mode of thought runs the risk of falling prey to the reification of philosophies of presence, which is to say, a view of the world that posits the possibility of immediate/unmediated contact between subject (the perceiver) and object (the perceived). Thinking through sonicity as a constitutive ontological element of the listener would seemingly imply direct contact or understanding – especially in the case of the soundscape because, as has been frequently pointed out, the perceiving human has no “earlids” with which to ‘shut off’ the experiencing of the soundscape. Yet philosophies of presence have been, in my eyes, convincingly debunked, especially in the twentieth century, and especially in the phenomenological thought of late Heidegger and Jacques Derrida, who displaced the subject away from itself and understood it as engaging in a field of traces and signifying/metonymic chains, instead of direct objects.²⁴ Derrida (and others) provocatively linked philosophies of presence with the violence, figurative or literal, inflicted on behalf of the Enlightenment project, and I agree with these thinkers; Derrida refers to the costs of the Enlightenment project as being obfuscated by a “white mythology,” which no doubt similarly obscures the existing practice of music that is not (easily) schematizable or classifiable according to traditional logical categories.²⁵ So I must find a way to explore the music

²⁴ See, for example, Jacques Derrida, "Différance," in *Margins Of Philosophy* (1982), 1-27.

²⁵ See, for example, Jacques Derrida, "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy," *New Literary History* 6, no. 1 (1974): 5-74, <https://doi.org/10.2307/468341>. “What is metaphysics? A white mythology which assembles and reflects Western culture: the white man takes his own mythology (that is, Indo-European mythology), his *logos* – that is, the *mythos* of his idiom, for the universal form of what which it is still his inescapable desire to call Reason... What is white mythology? It is a metaphysics which has effaced in itself that fabulous scene, which

of the soundscape which can account for both individual musical compositions, while simultaneously eliding the trap of philosophies of presence – this is especially true given that I am drawing heavily from early Heidegger, one of the pre-eminent ‘Nazi philosophers.’²⁶

Thus, I wish to mobilize the concept of the “haunting melody” of the psychoanalyst Theodor Reik to explain the presence of music in nature and the presence of nature in what is traditionally thought of as music. It may be objected that the psychoanalytic tradition is incompatible with the phenomenological framework that will have been established here. This would ordinarily be true, yet Reik himself admitted that his “attempt... failed” theoretically on the level of psychoanalysis, and that his text is filled with “wide gaps”; he is operating at the limits of experience, not necessarily the internecine vagaries of the interplay between the ego and the id, for example.²⁷ Indeed, seemingly haunted by Husserl, Reik’s study is, by his own admission, mostly observations of himself.²⁸

Reik’s great insight was that music can be decentered away from direct experience, focusing on cases where “haunting melod[ies]... invade... the mental sphere,” forming what Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, in his essay on Reik, “The Echo of the Subject” (“L’echo de sujet”), calls echoes.²⁹ In the Reikian view, individual pieces of music are all, necessarily, “haunting melodies,” arising from the soundscape folding in on itself, not a product of a metaphysical view of music as a single, apprehendable object. Music is always, by the very fact that it is internalized and apprehended, split from its ostensible source, yet nevertheless present in the subject’s

brought it into being, and which yet remains, active and stirring, inscribed in white ink, an invisible drawing covered over in the palimpsest.”

²⁶ This is especially true given that I plan to, aside from some theoretical justification for this choice, ‘skip’ Husserl in favor of Heidegger’s more ‘world’-based phenomenology. Derrida’s early lectures on Heidegger will be instrumental here.

²⁷ Theodor Reik, *The Haunting Melody: Psychoanalytic Experiences in Life and Music* (New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Young, 1953), 228, 14.

²⁸ Reik, *The Haunting Melody*, 14.

²⁹ Reik, *The Haunting Melody*, 166. Emphasis mine.

experiencing of the soundscape. This internalization and apprehension is consistent with what Schafer refers to as “schizophonia,” though it extends the term’s original mandate, which referred specifically to electroacoustic divisions, following Steven Feld and Rolf Goebel, yet it also allows one to consider the relationship between the soundscape and the pieces that we formerly viewed as discrete entities (i.e. pieces of music that we view in terms of the “work” paradigm, as in the case of Ingarden – and Reik, for that matter).³⁰

Of course, if we follow the radical track that the whole world is potentially animated by music and that what we heretofore have considered discrete musical pieces are simply echoes of the soundscape, we are confronted by the simple, commonsense fact that, with perhaps a few rare exceptions, this is emphatically *not* our experience of the world – and it is not how society (or our case studies, especially the empirical views of Montagu and Morley) often speaks of music. I will follow the Heideggerian track alongside the methodology of contemporary, post-Derridean phenomenologist Jean-Luc Marion, whose trenchant criticism of the art experience chimes well with what will have been established at this point in our project.³¹ Reading Marion’s method with Heidegger, I posit that the soundscape can be ‘heard’ as both music *and* something other depending on one’s orientation and attunement. In *God Without Being*, Marion specifically draws the division between the “idol” and the “icon” (with the icon being more closely related to the ontological – which is to say deeper – level of perception), yet he complicates the division of the two; indeed, I posit that Marion’s method is actually articulating a phenomenology of *attention* in the specific context of the art experience, thinking through the problem of *how* we can seemingly take

³⁰ For further information on the work paradigm, please see: Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works* (Oxford University Press, 2007).

³¹ I have chosen Marion as opposed to, for example, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, because of his skepticism with regards to pure affect; in my opinion, theories pertaining to affect often re-establish notions of *unmediated* perception, which, as mentioned above, are potentially fraught with philosophical and literal violence. This will be explained in greater depth in the chapter itself.

something that should be profoundly affecting (in my case music) and simply let it pass us by. This is made clear in the following quote from early on in the text: “the idol can only be approached in the antagonism that infallibly unites it with the [icon]... [T]he historical succession of two models of ‘art’ permits one to disclose a phenomenological conflict – a conflict between two phenomenologies. The idol does not indicate, any more than the [icon], a particular being or even class of beings.”³² Thus we can begin to understand how a “class of beings” (i.e. sonic phenomena) can be apprehended as *both* an idol and an icon, or, in the case of this study, *both* ignored noise and music, depending on one’s attunement. Various possibilities of exploring ways to draw our attention to the soundscape will be explored, including the experience of free improvisational music.

Where, then, does this schema, this equivocal understanding lead us? What does it point to? What is its potential? Chapter five will be devoted to exploring these sorts of tracks. Like chapter one, it will by no means be comprehensive, but I wish to show the applicability of the research presented in this project to a variety of areas. The most obvious points of departure are the relatively nascent fields of sound studies and ecocriticism. If music does, indeed, convey *something*, then what does it mean for nature to ‘speak’? Indeed, there seems to be a profoundly ethical dimension lurking just beneath the surface of this project. The weaponization of music (in capitalism, per Theodor Adorno, and domination, per Quignard), the use of music as rebellion (in the case of Sun Ra, for example), the notion of extra-linguistic communication – on the part of perhaps nature and maybe even bodily sounds – would all seem to call out for further analysis. Hopefully, one part of that scholarly toolkit will have been provided here. I don’t plan to have all

³² Jean-Luc Marion, *God Without Being: Hors-Texte* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 7.

the answers; I wish merely to explore, tarry, resonate. To listen inquisitively and openly and to let what I hear guide the following meditations.

* * *

What might this be? What could it be? It might be, in the end, questing after another outside. This is to say that, after the death of the author, we, the observers, the phenomenological apprehenders, *we* get to decide what is art. This notion has existed in the visual arts for much of the twentieth century, especially with the idea of ready-mades. This project, then, is nothing but a philosophical exploration in the tradition of Jean Dubuffet, his translator, Roger Cardinal, and, most recently, Jonathan Eburne. We are looking for the outside, an alternative, for that which “crops up in all the places where Art is considered to have no place.”³³ In music, this division between inside and outside is all the more rigorously enforced, especially with the advent of the category of “sound art” – yet simultaneously all the more blurred. Presciently, Eburne refers to Cardinal’s schema as an “ecology.”³⁴ After the death of the author, what is left *but* an ecology? I am speaking here in an abstract sense in terms of a manifold necessary for the creation and experiencing of art, but this manifold must *also* be, quite literally, an ecology. The metaphorical “soil” in which ideas are planted is, in other words, guaranteed by real soil – even as it is frequently left out of our quotidian ruminations (and poisoned by the rapacity of capitalism, just as the metaphorical soil is often similarly “industrialized,” to return to Eburne).³⁵ I would like us to take seriously these lines of thought: the death of the author, the possibility of music outside of its

³³ Roger Cardinal, *Outsider Art* (New York, NY: Praeger Publishers, 1973), 5.

³⁴ Jonathan P. Eburne, *Outsider Theory: Intellectual Histories of Unorthodox Ideas* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2018), 5.

³⁵ Eburne, *Outsider Theory*, 10.

institutional (and even anthropocentric) confines, and the necessity of a literal ecological manifold in (or on) which this possibility might be explored and apprehended phenomenologically as music *qua* music (not merely “sound art” or some other hedge).

Let us consider, then, the situation as described by Boris Groys, who begins his essay, “The Weak Universalism” thus:

In these times, we know that everything can be an artwork. Or rather, everything can be turned into an artwork by an artist. There is no chance of a spectator distinguishing between an artwork and a "simple thing" on the basis of the spectator's visual experience alone. The spectator must first know a particular object to be used by an artist in the context of his or her artistic practice in order to identify it as an artwork or as a part of an artwork. But who is this artist, and how can he or she be distinguished from a non-artist-if such a distinction is even possible?³⁶

He is, of course, speaking specifically within the context of the field of visual arts. But the questions that he asks can be applied to any of the various media or genres we associate with the aesthetic experience deemed to be art/artistic. He hits upon the salient question of the identification of a work of art, which partially motivates this current study. To take seriously the philosophical criticisms of anthropocentrism, I would like to spin Groys’ dialectic of spectator and artist one more time, however; we the spectator must also be able to deem an artist as such. Following the turn away from the idea that, to recontextualize Protagoras slightly, “πάντων χρημάτων μέτρον ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος” (“man is the measure of all things”), it seems to me that the notion of “artist” as human must be similarly interrogated. In the visual arts, this has been already tested within the court systems with the famous “monkey selfie” case, where a monkey took a photographic self-portrait and animal rights groups believed that it should retain ownership of this image, in terms

³⁶ Boris Groys, "The Weak Universalism," *e-flux* 15 (April 2010): 103, <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/15/61294/the-weak-universalism/>.

of intellectual property law. (The monkey lost.)³⁷ In music, the questions have been gestured towards in a variety of ways, such as “inviting” nature to participate – certain practices of soundwalking, the incorporation of field recordings into recorded music, and, of course, the Cagean notion of “silence” (a troubling concept that we will touch on in chapter two). But I assert that these have not been elaborated in a philosophically satisfactory way (or, often, at all) without recourse to the domesticating terminology of “sound art,” which serves often as a fetish-concept for those wishing to maintain the purity of art without engaging in the messy questions of what constitutes a musical experience. As self-professed “perhaps (not) a sound artist” Yan Jun put it, the rise of “sound art” means that “music is over, music is not worth extending and challenging.”³⁸ In this sense, beyond differences in our interlocutors (and beyond similarities in our ideas of aurality and background noise), I am placing myself against someone like Christoph Cox and his ontologizing of sound art, particularly because of its notion of framing and delimitation, but also because I do believe music and the musical experience is so universal that, to speak of it solely within the context of a Western “art” tradition is to efface any number of musical practices and, in fact, extends a sort of Westernizing, anthropomorphizing logic (which will be unpacked further in chapters 3, 4, and 5) that once again, despite Cox’s recourse to natural (which is to say, environmental) flows and fluxes, nevertheless privileges a human ‘conduit’ (in the form of the sound artist) to channel and relate his understanding of sonicity to other observers. I am questing after what is gestured beyond, towards understanding music up to the point where it might “burst.”³⁹

³⁷ For a good summary of this in specifically legal terms, please see: Michael Dorf, "Specious Speciesism in the Monkey Selfie Case," *Dorf on Law*, May 2, 2018, <http://www.dorfonlaw.org/2018/05/specious-speciesism-in-monkey-selfie.html>.

³⁸ Yan Jun, "Perhaps I'm (Not) A Sound Artist," *The Wire*, December, 2018, <https://www.thewire.co.uk/in-writing/columns/perhaps-im-not-a-sound-artist-by-yan-jun-ed-edward-sanderson>.

³⁹ Christoph Cox, *Sonic Flux: Sound, Art, and Metaphysics* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2019), 5.

We are thinking music *on the margins*. I mean this in the Derridean sense, which is to say that “other” sounds remain excluded and under-thought (and perhaps even under-experienced, as we will discuss in chapter four), while nevertheless being essential to the experiencing and appreciation of what has traditionally been called music. It is the other that we use to enframe the “art” of music. If the (Western) visual arts have fought to break out of the frame in the twentieth century, exemplified best, perhaps, by Wassily Kandinsky’s use of negative space as a self-reflective frame itself (as seen in “On White II,” among others), there deserves to be a theorization of the same, latent, perhaps unconscious and haunting, movement in the terms of music.

Just as outsider art is not truly “outside,” but often frequently marginalized, we might consider the marginalia of the experience of music, those incidental sounds, one’s own insistent heartbeat – in a word, the soundscape – to not be truly “outside” either, except perhaps in a very literal sense. After all, wouldn’t the experiencing of a soundscape present in a natural soundwalk be the ultimate in an *outside(r)* art experience?

* * *

The scope of this project is thus daunting. It will touch on art, philosophy, and even the human subject itself (if we haven’t yet overcome the “subject”). The goal, however, is clear: a wholesale consideration of the musical experience. This need not always be a re-thinking, as many of the paths available to us have already been wended through by the thinkers we take as our interlocutors here. Like all phenomenological reflections, it must begin, as much as possible, with

Despite my quibbles, Cox is an invaluable theorist of sonicity and ‘reader’ of various instantiations of sound art, and we will return to him numerous times. Further, I must insist that this is not a polemic against the *enactment* of sound art – I simply find the term to be, as noted, a hedge or fetish that does not accurately present itself. Or perhaps it does, and it is merely yet another genre classification of music.

an *έποχή*; much as one is instructed to turn off their cellphones in a concert hall, I would ask that you please bracket what you know about music and the experiencing thereof and set it to the side.

Chapter 1: An Imaginary Museum of Musical Thoughts

This project's stated goal is to consider a large-scale re-evaluation of the definition of music from the phenomenological position. Part of the phenomenological method is the bracketing of prior assumptions and to start by honestly contemplating the 'object' of inquiry. In some cases, this is relatively easy; the canonical examples of desks, tables, and chairs are frequently employed for a reason. These objects are relatively stable, have clearly defined social purposes, and are so common that their use is often second nature.⁴⁰ It is simpler to consider how precisely our relationship with these objects is mediated via the concretion of memories, the intervention(s) of social norms, and our perceptive apparatus when the object is, in many cases, being used by the reader of phenomenological texts. It becomes thornier with music (and will become yet thornier in later chapters), which is many things to many people. For example, in the history of Christianity in the West, it has inspired both centuries of liturgical music and the Satanic panic of the 1980s. Chairs maintain some level of formal constancy across the various societies of the world; music is as wide-spread as language (and probably more universal than chairs), and there is a shocking amount of structural diversity among its various iterations. Compare the polyphony of the Mbuti of Africa to the simplicity of Hank Williams to the machine gun attack of Peter Brötzmann, and no one would blame you for being a little confused about where to go from there.⁴¹ Thus, if we are to consider music broadly, we must first acknowledge that the operation of bracketing will be considerably more difficult. To accomplish this, I will be reviewing a variety of writings that pertain to music.

⁴⁰ This is, indeed, not always the case, which is why the intervention of disability studies in phenomenology is so valuable.

⁴¹ Montagu, "How Music and Instruments Began," 1.

Music, given its universality, has attracted no shortage of critical commentaries from the canonical to the deeply strange. To attempt to gather all of these ideas in a single place is so impossible as to be nearly unthinkable. Decisions about what to include had to be made. I eventually decided on a relatively bipartite structure: studying first the empirico-scientific and then the philosophico-critical. In the order of their appearance, I will engage with two contemporary anthropological thinkers, Iain Morley and Jeremy Montagu, before moving on to a prophet of music's power, Pascal Quignard, and the tracing of an (overly simplistic) line of nineteenth century European thought that gestures towards what would eventually become phenomenology, with Arthur Schopenhauer and Friedrich Nietzsche. I hope to show that, despite their seemingly disparate status, there are some unifying tropes that will have to be set aside before engaging in the phenomenological analysis that will make up the bulk of this work, although they may yet make appearances in later chapters if they are rhetorically supportable.

* * *

Given my stated emphasis on the phenomenological paradigm, which is normally fairly hostile towards certain iterations of scientific theory,⁴² it may seem odd that I am including these two texts by Jeremy Montagu and Iain Morley here. It might seem especially odd that I chose to work with archaeologists. The reason for this is that, out of all the various disciplines, archaeology

⁴² For an in-depth critique of scientism in the field on phenomenology, please see Edmund Husserl, *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie: Eine Einleitung in die phänomenologische Philosophie* (Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976). Also see Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Donald A. Landes (London: Routledge, 2013). While these two works differ in the methodology that will be employed in this paper (see chapter 2), the essential thrust of their arguments are relevant to phenomenological study at large.

must concern itself with *definitions*.⁴³ If one, for instance, wants to think about the evolution of knives in humanity, one must first have a clear understanding of what a knife is. The same pertains to more abstract concepts, like language⁴⁴ and music – as Alexander Rehding put it in reference to nineteenth century musicology (though I believe it still holds now in these sorts of texts), “to know the origin of music, it was believed, means to know what music *is*.”⁴⁵ Thus our ears should prick up when we encounter the titles of Montagu and Morley’s works, “How Music and Instruments Began” and *The Prehistory of Music*, respectively. These texts were chosen not just because of their contemporaneity but also their survey-type nature; while, naturally, engaging with the whole of the field in more minute detail would be desirable, it is important to consider the larger task at hand. I hope in this section to outline some of the mainstream empirico-scientific definitions of music (and, indeed, these two pieces were met with almost universal acclaim in the field) and think through why they might be philosophically self-contradictory in productive ways. The goal here is not to cast aspersions on these particular authors, especially as they continue to do necessary work to understand the role of music in human evolutionary development. I do not mean to pick cross-disciplinary fights, merely to think through some of common scientific apprehensions of music, such as the aforementioned emphasis on origins, a skeptical eye towards received wisdom, and, yet, a distinct anthropocentrism, and uncover their biases, be they tacit or acknowledged. How might these biases color our way of viewing music in the world?

In seeking to more deeply understand the views of society with regards to music, it becomes necessary to take stock of the objective preconceptions that have been posited. In this sense,

⁴³ While the two works with which we concern ourselves here are explicit in their attempts to delineate a definition, many are tacit. In any case, one should proceed methodologically from the same skepticism that animated Jacques Derrida’s critique of Claude Lévi-Strauss’s *Triste Tropiques* in *De la grammatologie (Of Grammatology)*.

⁴⁴ With regards to language, one can easily see this in the works of Noam Chomsky in his theorization of Universal Grammar, which, while no longer truly *au courant* in the field of linguistics, is a good paradigm to consider here.

⁴⁵ As quoted in: Ana María Ochoa Gautier, *Aurality: Listening and Knowledge in Nineteenth-Century Colombia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), 46. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822376262>.

Montagu's piece is deeply instructive. He begins thus: "Music must first be defined and distinguished from speech, and from animal and bird cries."⁴⁶ Already we have an anthropocentric bias. And we have a desire to categorize music somewhat strictly. In Montagu's view, then, music is neither speech nor natural sounds. Montagu provides, then, a definition of music, namely "sound that conveys emotion."⁴⁷ This definition would seem *prima facie* to contradict his opening statement. Further, it should be noted that Montagu is reliant on the creation of an objective definition of music as a worldly phenomenon exterior to the human subject. This is to say that music is something identifiably external from the decision-making process of the listening subject or that that decision-making process has a mechanism within it to somehow 'favor' recognizably human sonic production as music.

Admirably, Montagu rejects out of hand the notion that music must have a set type of architecture or structure. He mentions at the outset that there is no "consistent tonality" in all the musical cultures of the world.⁴⁸ And he rejects that music must be "organized" (presumably according to the dominant Western paradigms), noting that, unorganized sounds meet his definition. After all, "an unorganized series of sounds can create a sense of fear or of warning."⁴⁹ It would thus seem that his definition of music as "sound that conveys emotion" quite wonderfully oversteps many of the pitfalls in the discourses that surround tribal and aboriginal music, which, traditionally (though certainly less frequently since the rise of ethnomusicology as a distinct subfield) applied Western organizational norms (such as temperament) to non-Western music. There are, however, rhetorical snags, most of which derive from the desire to separate music from the experience of the subject and create a classifiable object categorial definition, though these are

⁴⁶ Montagu, "How Music and Instruments Began," 1.

⁴⁷ Ibid. Montagu, "How Music and Instruments Began."

⁴⁸ Ibid. Montagu, "How Music and Instruments Began."

⁴⁹ Ibid., 2. Montagu, "How Music and Instruments Began," 2.

from the perspective of philosophy and in no way tarnish the massive accomplishment that is Montagu's work.

Montagu's position is most easily identifiable when he notes that music, in his theorization, "cannot just be random noises meaning nothing."⁵⁰ Nothing to *whom*? Combined with his separation of music from speech and natural sounds, we have a complete absence of the sonic dimension of one's environmental surroundings being meaning-giving, at least in a musical sense – whatever that might be. Montagu, to his credit, is upfront about this, noting that

we, as musicologists and ethnomusicologists alike, are generally agreed to ignore bird song, animal cries, and rhythmic movement as music even if, later, we may regard it as important when we are discussing origins below. We ignore these sounds, partly because they seem only to be signals, for example alarms etc., or "this is my territory," and partly, although they are frequently parts of a mating display, this does not seem to impinge on society as a whole.⁵¹

A lot of this seems like mental gymnastics to avoid classifying non-human noises as potentially musical. Why, for example, would not an agitated bird call known by a human listener to signal the presence of a predator fall under the paradigm of music established in Montagu? Would it perhaps be too identifiably semiotic and thus too much like language? But let us take Montagu at his word for now and continue on with his theorization of the origins of music. We will find that he spends much of his essay productively contradicting himself; he noted that it is important to consider the importance of natural sonicity on the origins of music but, even then, the division is not necessarily as clear cut as one might want it to be.

In attempting to think through the origin of instruments in the pipe family, Montagu asks if "someone hear[d] the wind whistle over the top of a broken reed and then tr[ie]d to emulate that

⁵⁰ Montagu, "How Music and Instruments Began."

⁵¹ Montagu, "How Music and Instruments Began."

sound with his own breath? ... Or were instruments first made to imitate [animal] cries?"⁵² This quote neatly illustrates the problem. The creation of music becomes a motivated act of *mimesis*. This is to say that there is something about the human capacity for (re)interpretation and (re)production that fundamentally makes it more artistic than the original sound *even to and above* the subjective judgment that initially places it upon a pedestal that deems it to be worthy of the mimetic act. Perhaps the sound of a reed whistling in the wind or an animal did not itself 'produce' emotion, but the sound nevertheless *conveyed and was inspirational of* emotion, such to the point that the listener felt compelled to re-produce it. This strikes me as an unanswered problematic in the internal logic of Montagu's position that music should be defined in terms of externality and objectivity according to his *own definition*.

Iain Morley, in his excellent book-length survey *The Prehistory of Music*, traverses similar problematics. This text is considerably longer than Montagu's article (which cites it), and, as such, it deals with a wider range of issues. Particularly important to Morley is thinking through issues of how our distant ancestors may have used music and musical objects; this line of thinking is borne out through a fairly exhaustive review of the field of archaeology, chronicling our continuing discoveries of artistic objects that gesture towards extremely complex human cognition even at temporally earlier stages of our development as a species. Indeed, given the use of a few quotes from Keith Richards of the Rolling Stones in a book so centered on prehistory, one might be able to extrapolate a new subtitle for the text: *The more things change, the more they stay the same*. This is a text, then, that makes the bold and necessary effort to pursue the deeper questions of human engagement with the world and how that is, perhaps, mediated through art.

⁵² Montagu, "How Music and Instruments Began," 4-5.

Somewhat in opposition to Montagu, Morley places far greater emphasis on the necessity of perception, though he rarely explicitly admits it. In a section on genetics and anatomy, for instance, he makes this extremely clear: “the production and perception of sound are inextricably linked.”⁵³ On the whole, Morley subscribes to the same definition of music as Montagu, although his definition is more restrictive than Montagu, and he emphasizes that music “involve[s] the encoding of sounds into pitches (usually between three and seven) which are unequally separated across the scale... [and a] favouring [of] consonance and harmony over dissonance.”⁵⁴ But this emphasis on perception places additional strain on the notion of music as something purely human.

This is especially true when Morley falls back on notions of mimesis when defining his terms, such as when he notes that musical sound “may resemble the types of sounds that would be threatening in an ecological environment.”⁵⁵ Of course, it need not be threatening and could be simply enjoyable, such as Montagu’s wind-played reeds. When Morley says that “many [instruments] require little, if any, modification before use,” we wonder *what difference there is* when it comes to the experiencing of these seeming ‘readymades.’ What would it matter that suddenly a human was listening to another play a reed versus a reed reverberating in the wind if they produce sounds that “resemble” one another? On the level of perception, could we find a difference, especially if the *source* of the noise were rendered invisible due to distance? If we begin to shake off our Western blinders (or ear plugs, as it may be), we can observe that “the fact that music is *most often* performed in groups has led to the assumption that music’s most important function was at the group level, when this need not be the case,” meaning that music need not be

⁵³ Iain Morley, *The Prehistory of Music: Human Evolution, Archaeology, and the Origins of Musicality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 169.

⁵⁴ Morley, *The Prehistory of Music*, 7. We can see here, even with the use of a scale, that we are dealing predominantly with a Western idea of music – a mapping of scalar relationships of music that may not have any basis in the actual practice of other forms of music from around the world. However, Morley is admirably quick elsewhere to decenter readers from a “background in the Western musical tradition,” 99.

⁵⁵ Morley, *The Prehistory of Music*, 260.

socially determined.⁵⁶ This means that the position from which music must be determined objectively or via some notion of consensus is, at the very least, incapable of standing up to limit cases, even within the strictly empirical paradigm set up by Morley. To use an example, consider a lone hunter gatherer who hears the whistling of a reed over a ridge – he need not necessarily know whether it was played by another human, and this certitude as towards the sounds’ source(s) may be impossible, only that he enjoyed it.

We can see that, if we focus on the level of perception *in the world* (as opposed to, say, neurology), we can begin to question implicit anthropocentric biases. Putting aside our emphasis on perception and subjectivity, some cracks are already apparent from the objective scientific standpoint, in zoology and paleoarchaeology. The most well-known example is the rhythmic behavior of the great apes, in particular, chimpanzees and gorillas, as documented by Jane Goodall, among others. However, there, as yet, remains no consensus on whether or not this constitutes musical behavior in the eyes of scientific researchers, who note that these actions may be “derived purely from biomechanical function of learned motor sequences,” as opposed to the supposed cognitive musical ability of *Homo sapiens*.⁵⁷ (This lack of consensus, however, leads Morley to ask “whether this represents a genuine incapacity to [engage in musical behaviors] or a lack of ecological impetus.”)⁵⁸ More intriguing is the discovery of BPS (beat perception and synchronization) behavior among non-human animals, most often parrots, with the strongest evidence being observed in the case of a sulphur-crested cockatoo and a grey parrot.⁵⁹ BPS

⁵⁶ Morley, *The Prehistory of Music*, 288.

⁵⁷ Morley, *The Prehistory of Music*, 245.

⁵⁸ Morley, *The Prehistory of Music*.

⁵⁹ Morley, *The Prehistory of Music*. There is also a possible case of an Asian elephant, but this has only been observed via video, and it is therefore too early to speculate whether or not this is simply a fluke or the genuine article.

behavior, essentially, is that which “entrain[s] to an external rhythmic stimulus.”⁶⁰ What this means is that, opposed to the documented cases of the gorillas and the chimpanzees whose rhythmic behavior may derive from biomechanistic functionality (think a reflex), certain animals can understand and ‘enjoy’ external rhythms and join in with them (think about how one bobs one’s head when hearing a ‘headnodic’ hip-hop beat) – a presumed necessity for musical apprehension. (This seems to place greater evidence on subjective experience than is tenable within the scientific system that has been established.)

From the paleoarchaeological perspective, there is also a growing body of evidence that earlier human species had, at the very least, the capacity to engage in musical behaviors. Montagu notes that the lower larynx of *H. heidelbergensis* (700,000-300,000 years ago) would have been sufficient for advanced vocalizations, such as singing.⁶¹ There is also evidence that Neanderthals engaged in artistic behavior (jewelry/adornment). Given that many of the earliest instruments would have been ‘readymades’ (as noted earlier) or created using organic material, which would not have survived in the archaeological record, it is extremely likely that we will never know precisely when musical behavior emerged among the humanoid species – but it seems likely that our musical lineage extends beyond *H. sapiens*. In any case, it seems that, even from a perspective centered around objective evidence, an anthropocentric view of music, at least one specifically delimited towards *H. sapiens*, likely doesn’t hold.

But to return to the philosophical perspective, we can see, especially given the rise of modern ecological criticism, that anthropocentrism is often an un(der)interrogated bias within the Western tradition. This is problematic in that it limits the discourse surrounding ecological issues

⁶⁰ Morley, *The Prehistory of Music*. It’s important here to insist on the idea that rhythm need not be *exact or machinic*; “rhythm” derives from the Greek ῥέω – to stream or gush. From the perspective of acoustics, all sounds have a sine pattern, which follows regular intervals. This, however, is markedly different from, say, $\frac{3}{4}$ time.

⁶¹ Montagu, “How Music and Instruments Began,” 5.

and robs communicative agency from natural processes – a criticism all the more relevant in this age of the profound exploitation of nature. As Pettman puts it:

What insight about cross-species sympathy or quasi communication is lost, then, if we insist that humans are the *only* animal that can “sign” rather than merely produce an acoustic signal? Is a metaphysics of human exceptionalism being perhaps even unconsciously smuggled into rigorous scientific accounts of the long (pre)historical emergence of vocal musicking? Is it possible to acknowledge that humans are the only animal we know that has fashioned a flute from organic materials and learned to play a melody upon it, while appreciating that dogs are now pounding on their domestic pianos and howling in increasingly uncanny mimetic expression?⁶²

It is here that we begin to appreciate some of the ethical registers for arguing against an anthropocentric definition of music, a track we will follow for the rest of this project.

Despite the potential ethical registers of the term, however, ‘anthropocentrism’ is *not* necessarily a normative ethical judgment. The theorist Ben Mylius perhaps defined it best:

1. A paradigm [horizon of thought and experimentation] will be *descriptively anthropocentric* if it is ‘centered upon’ *Homo sapiens* or the concept of ‘the human’ in one (or many) ways.
2. Such a paradigm will also be ‘passively normatively anthropocentric,’ because by virtue of its descriptive centeredness-upon-the-human, it will constrain thinking in certain ways, and tend to generate certain lines of inquiry, which orbit around, emerge from, or are anchored by ‘the human.’
3. And such a paradigm may also **become actively normatively anthropocentric** if I use it to articulate value judgments, moral ‘truths,’ ethical or legal norms, like ‘humans are the most valuable beings in the universe,’ ‘humans are superior to nature,’ ‘humans have inherent dignity,’ ‘do not disrespect humans,’ etc.⁶³

This is to say that, in order to broaden the horizons of thought, one must pay particular attention to anthropocentric biases, especially the benign and banal descriptive anthropocentrism, which is so common as to be nearly inextinguishable – Montagu even acknowledged this in the formulation that “we are human and animals are not.”⁶⁴ But we can see that, for our phenomenological project,

⁶² Dominic Pettman, *Sonic Intimacy: Voice, Species, Technics (or, How To Listen to the World)* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2017). Emphasis original.

⁶³ Ben Mylius, "Three Types of Anthropocentrism," *Environmental Philosophy* 15, no. 2 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.5840/envirophil20184564>. Italics original, bold mine.

⁶⁴ Montagu, "How Music and Instruments Began," 2.

that we must be especially clear in our bracketing of this sort of descriptive anthropocentrism when it comes to musical apprehension.

A subtler reason why I chose to analyze the work of Morley here was because he is a truly transdisciplinary thinker, “examin[ing] the evidence from a wide range of areas of research, including neurology, music psychology, developmental psychology, and primatology.” Absent from this list, perhaps unsurprisingly given the balkanization of the academy, is philosophy.⁶⁵ While I think it is clear that these thinkers (and fields at large) are valuable for the discourse surrounding music (and are perhaps closer to the mark than some of the more abstract thinkers), I hope that I have nevertheless (too) quickly outlined some basic logical objections to their conclusions, namely that they are too objective in their focus and that they are exclusionary of non-human actors both as producers and receivers of musical sound (which is to say, they are anthropocentric). In order to proceed, we will examine the issue of music from another side – the philosophical discourse surrounding music.

* * *

Whereas archaeological and other empirical disciplines often seek, if tacitly, a definition of music, philosophy tends towards descriptions of music’s effects and affects. This is to say that, as opposed to being too objective, philosophical treatments of music often tend towards something approaching pure subjectivity, a possible pitfall in phenomenology, as well. Music, in these cases, appears as a discrete phenomenon, something to be clearly experienced, like a single piece of art, and/or something which one is *in*, a communal or societal act/behavior/ritual. Obviously, this is

⁶⁵ Morley, *The Prehistory of Music*, 178.

far too simplistic of a reading of a rich (and voluminous) tradition of thinking about music, but, especially since the eighteenth century and the rise of the printing press in the West (and musical “culture”), these are the two dominant trends, even within the corpuses of relatively heterodox or nonsystematic thinkers.⁶⁶

I have chosen three ‘case studies’ from the Western philosophical tradition, Pascal Quignard, Arthur Schopenhauer, and Friedrich Nietzsche (who will appear in that order here). They were plucked to be imbricated because, first of all, their temporal, geographical, and genealogical proximity to the modern phenomenological practice of philosophy that this project will use as a guiding light, which arose in Germany with Husserl in the early twentieth century. Quignard can be probably most accurately be called in the context of this study a post-phenomenological thinker, sharing various rhetorical methods and tropes of thought with the broader field of French post-structuralist philosophy, especially Cixous, Derrida, Jean-Luc Nancy, and Julia Kristeva. All of these thinkers, however, were strongly influenced by the early phenomenological thinkers, most especially Husserl and Heidegger; Quignard is no different. Nietzsche and Schopenhauer, on the other hand, preceded the birth of phenomenology, yet they can be strongly genealogically implicated with its foundation. Though this is an avowedly ungenealogical project, it’s worthwhile to point out that Schopenhauer’s thought was highly influential on the work of Nietzsche, who was, subsequently, a great influence on Martin Heidegger, who delivered a famous series of seminars on Nietzschean thought. The line is, of course, not straight, and various interlopers, and false paths (not the least of which was the rise of Nazism) complicate this story. But, for the purposes of this section, let us keep our focus on how

⁶⁶ For a longer explication of some tropes common to the Western philosophical tradition, please see: Peter Hadreas, "Deconstruction and the Meaning of Music," *Perspectives of New Music* 37, no. 2 (1999), <https://doi.org/10.2307/833509>, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/833509>.

these thinkers views of music may or may not be compatible with a phenomenological exploration thereof.

Secondly, these thinkers all devoted a significant amount of space in their writings to thinking through the ‘problem’ of music. For Quignard, ‘problem’ is perhaps the best word, as he concerns himself with the potential violence of music. In not-quite-opposition, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche place music as central to their respective conceptions of the world. None of these thinkers provides a definition of music, though they all skirt the issue in interesting ways. I hope, in this section, to show not necessarily a direct genealogical or historical reading (though these facts and facets provide me with some license), but rather to consider how these thinkers circumscribe the horizon of music’s effects and affects on the perceiving listener. Put another way, the question here is: what has music’s power been understood to be? Later, then, we will be able to reflect on this and use it to supplement any conclusions towards which we may edges.

Pascal Quignard is, undoubtedly, best known for his literary output, with his *Les Ombres errantes (Roving Shadows)* winning the Prix Goncourt. His famously interdisciplinary approach to fiction is notably permeated by music, however, and he organized the International Festival of Baroque Opera and Theatre. These facts make his eventual publication of an aphoristic book titled *The Hatred of Music* all the more surprising. But Quignard is an adroit theorist of history, and he came to view music as a fundamentally violent proposition. He is, perhaps more than any other author or theorist, willing to chase the musical experience all the way to the end of its logical path, towards the dark alleys of masochism, sadism, and control, drawing from a variety of influences, philosophical and artistic (should one choose to separate these spheres). Where others might speak of Romantic ecstasy or rapture (especially the Germans, such as Novalis) Quignard would take

pains to remind us that the root of rapture is *rapere*, to rape, one the strongest and most violating exercises of power.

The most provocative assertion that Quignard makes is to accuse music – all music – of culpability in the Holocaust. This passage is worth quoting in full once more, although it appears in the introduction:

[M]usic is the only one [of the arts] to have collaborated in the extermination of Jews organized by the Germans between 1933 and 1945. It was the only form of art to be specifically requested by the administration of the *Konzentrationslager* [concentration camps]. To the detriment of this art form, it has to be emphasized that it was the only one capable of adapting to the organization of the camps, the hunger, the destitution, the work, the pain, the humiliation, and the death.⁶⁷

Perhaps this provocation is provocative as such because of how *unprovocative* it should be. The facts simply bear this reality out. From Wagner being played over the loudspeakers to the monstrous orchestras at Auschwitz, music was an integral part of camp life – so integral and synonymous with camp life that Wagner was famously (unofficially) banned from the cultural life of Israel. Photography and film were, naturally, limited in the camps, giving rise to a small (albeit potent) archive. Painting was practically nonexistent. Perhaps it would not be an exaggeration to say that the only other art complicit in the genocide was decorative ironworking, but even it persisted only liminally as a border: *ARBEIT MACHT FREI*.

Yet we feel the rush to defend music against these charges. A colleague of mine, when he encountered this quote in some of the early sketches of this project, disagreed strongly with its sentiment. I, too, felt a certain queasiness when encountering it, almost a dismissal. After all, an overwhelming majority of people derive a great deal of enjoyment and even empathetic comfort from music; it's not odd to encounter someone who has a 'sad album' that they like to put on when they're having a rough day. More relevant is the fact that music was also used as a form of

⁶⁷ Quignard, *The Hatred of Music*, 129.

resistance in the camps⁶⁸ and has been used, sometimes quite strikingly, to memorialize the Holocaust, such as Maurizio Bianchi's industrial masterpiece *Symphony for a Genocide*. So to think through this complicity requires a certain re-evaluation of the horizons of music. Only if we decenter music away from its banal, quotidian status as an artform working within the confines of a continuum of comfort and discomfort can we begin to approach what Quignard takes to be its true existential power: a fundamental excess. Somewhere beyond Umberto Eco's "ugliness"⁶⁹ or the harmony of the spheres, the idea that there is only a celestial, musical order, lies Quignard's understanding of music.

It is precisely in this way that Quignard can note that "when Myron [of Eleutherae] wanted to represent the god of music, he sculpted Marsyas, tied to a tree trunk, in the process of being skinned alive."⁷⁰ This is not a simple condemnation of music, but a reference illustrative of music's nearness to the psychoanalytical concept of *jouissance*, specifically through the classical figure of masochism, Marsyas, whose name has been evoked in the annals of sexual history from Leopold von Sacher-Masoch himself to the more contemporary theorization of the skin-ego by Didier Anzieu. In this way, music, in Quignard, can be said to edge up against a nearly mystical world, related closely to ecstasy in the most precise use of the term: an evacuation of the self. To continue on the psychoanalytical register, the titular "hatred," then, becomes, if not an affirmation, an interpenetration with love and mystical power. It is a hatred that cannot be relinquished – nor would one want to be freed from it; Quignard "hates music for the way it can make you love it."⁷¹

⁶⁸ The most famous example – Messiaen's "Quatuor pour la fin du temps" – was composed in a prisoner-of-war camp, markedly different from the *Konzentrationslager*. The work deserves to be recognized, but I would not feel comfortable linking it, in the main text, at least, with modalities of resistance during the Holocaust.

⁶⁹ See: Umberto Eco, *On Ugliness*, trans. Alastair McEwan (New York, NY: Rizzoli International Publications, 2015).

⁷⁰ Eco, *On Ugliness*, 116.

⁷¹ Ann Smock, "No Music..." *MLN* 132, no. 5 (December 2017), <https://doi.org/10.1353/mln.2017.0089>.

This is a hatred of not necessarily music, but rather, its adaptability, as Quignard noted in the section on the concentration camp. Yet we see its adaptability in the haunting and monstrous combination of iron and music in Maurizio Bianchi's *Symphony for a Genocide*, a powerfully ethically-minded work, which uses precisely the painful element of music to memorialize the atrocities. Music is more adaptable than the other arts because it is something, for him, altogether more powerful, more ever-present. This endless adaptability would seem to be a definitional characteristic, but, in fact, it elides definition even further, estranging music nearly from the entire field of art, reckoning that it might be something far more inherent, hence his discussions of intrauterine hearing. Sound, for Quignard, is a "piercer of envelopes. Whether it be bodies, rooms, apartments, castles, fortified cities." But when does this sound become music? We are lacking here a definition, even if we have a copious amount of references to music's power over us, from the womb unto death. Quignard shows us the stakes of the argument at hand.

We have a similar case in the form of the great pessimistic philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer, who characterized music as having high mystical powers, as well, drawing deeply from the well of German Romanticism. He accords music a special place, "apart from all the [other arts]," in the philosophical cosmogony of will that he establishes in *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* (*The World as Will and Representation*).⁷² Indeed, music is closely linked to the will, for "in melody we... recognize the universal expression of the innermost history of will as it is conscious of itself, the most secret living, longing, suffering, and joy, the ebbs and flows of the human heart."⁷³

⁷² Schopenhauer and Guth, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, 283. In German, 302: "abgesondert von allen andern."

⁷³ Schopenhauer and Guth, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, 347. In German, 378: "[in] Melodie wir ja die allgemein ausgedrückte innerste Geschichte des sich selbst bewußten Willens, das geheimste Leben, Sehnen, Leiden und Freuen, das Ebben und Fluthen des menschlichen Herzens wiedererkannt haben."

For Schopenhauer, the will was a metaphysical concept related to, but distinct from, notions of essence that previously found currency in German idealist philosophy. Will was something close to the ‘primal’ or innate striving of all things biotic or abiotic; ‘gravity,’ here, would be an example of unconscious will in the world.⁷⁴ In a very precise way, we can think of Schopenhauer as a panpsychist thinker who ceded notions of agency to this unconscious striving, where all else would be denoted or inscribed in the archetypical ‘world of appearances,’ which hung like a veil atop the true perception of the world. (Taking inspiration from Eastern theological thought, Schopenhauer figured this as the ‘veil of Maya,’ which would be later picked up by Nietzsche and, then, the fulcrum of structuralism and poststructuralism, Roland Barthes.) Where the other arts – broadly conceived as visual – portrayed this world of forms (the veil itself), music “is the representation of this essence itself, a parallel form,”⁷⁵ the “clarity” of which “exceeds even that of the intuitive world itself.”⁷⁶ In such a way, music

stellt zu allem Physischen der Welt das Metaphysische, zu aller Erscheinung das Ding an sich dar. Man könnte demnach die Welt eben so wohl verkörperte Musik, als verkörperten Willen nennen: daraus also ist es erklärlich, warum Musik jedes Gemälde, ja jede Szene des wirklichen Lebens und der Welt, sogleich in erhöhter Bedeutsamkeit hervortreten läßt; freilich um so mehr, je analoger ihre Melodie dem innern Geiste der gegebenen Erscheinung ist.

presents what is metaphysical in all that is physical in the world, the thing in itself for all appearance. We could therefore just as well call the world embodied music as embodied will: this also explains why music causes every painting, and in fact every scene from real life and the world, suddenly to emerge in a state of heightened significance; and of course the more so the greater the analogy there is between the melody and the inner spirit of the given appearance.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Schopenhauer and Guth, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, 170. In German, 173.

⁷⁵ Dunton Green, "Schopenhauer and Music," *The Musical Quarterly* XVI, no. 2 (1930): 200, <https://doi.org/10.1093/mq/XVI.2.199>.

⁷⁶ Schopenhauer and Guth, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, 283. In German, 302: “*deren Deutlichkeit sogar die der anschaulichen Welt selbst übertrifft.*“

⁷⁷ Schopenhauer and Guth, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, 290. In German, 310.

In other words, for Schopenhauer, as for Quignard, the fundamental aspect of music is its status as something that *pierces*. For Quignard, of course, what is being pierced is left multifariously vague (variously walls, the body, the ego, etc.), but, in Schopenhauer, it is completely clear: the veil of Maya, the world of representation. (The invocation of interiority in “piercing” will be picked up in far greater detail in chapter 3.) In such a way, music takes on a revelatory capacity that allows the truth of Schopenhauer’s metaphysical system to shine through: the cognizance of the innermost structure of will. The reason for this is that music is *not* representational or beholden to a mimesis of the phenomenal as the other arts are; music is fundamentally related to the *noumenon* (or, perhaps more accurately, *hypokeimenon*). This is the Will and flux of the universe itself, which, as noted is present (though not necessarily phenomenally so) in all modalities of existence from humanity to the physical forces, such as gravity or magnetism.

Thus in the work of Schopenhauer, music once again takes on a mystical character. Where in Quignard, it can be said that music is linked to something akin to *jouissance*, Schopenhauer’s phenomenology and noumenology of music is a profoundly revelatory one, which lays bare the inner workings of the world, its innermost history.⁷⁸ Music functions, in other words, at a nearly higher level of philosophy than Schopenhauer’s own work, which naturally seeks to elucidate the same metaphysics that is ‘natural’ or inherent to music, as it is “an *unmediated* objectivation and copy of the entire *will*.”⁷⁹ In the words of James Luchte, for Schopenhauer, music is “a universal language... [it] is a [method] and [*topos*] a higher, non-scientific philosophy... constitut[ing] the

⁷⁸ I am following Luchte and Welten here in ascribing to Schopenhauer a phenomenology; while, as will be made clear, I strongly disagree with Welten’s reading, his phenomenological intervention into Schopenhauer scholarship is welcome and should be built upon. See: James Luchte, “The Body of Sublime Knowledge: The Aesthetic Phenomenology of Arthur Schopenhauer,” *The Heythrop Journal* 50, no. 2 (2009/03/01 2009), <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2265.2009.00404.x>. Also see Ruud Welten, “What Do We Hear When We Hear Music? A Radical Phenomenology of Music,” *Studia Phaenomenologica* 9 (01/01 2009), <https://doi.org/10.7761/SP.9.269..>

⁷⁹ Schopenhauer and Guth, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, 285. In German, 304: “eine so unmittelbare Objektivation und Abbild des ganzen Willens.”

content of his aesthetic phenomenology.”⁸⁰ It is no accident that Schopenhauer himself was a musician, dedicating a reasonable amount of his time to practicing his flute. Music has a tremendous existential power that can be fundamentally overwhelming. The precise mechanism of this would be ontological decentering; in other words, where we normally content ourselves with the world of appearances (the phenomena) and define our terms of being and existence thereupon, music reveals that our footing in that world is merely illusory by exposing us to the innermost *essence* of things, as opposed to the outward appearance of things as they are apprehended in quotidian, unexamined existence; put differently, for Schopenhauer, music accomplishes this “by bypassing ordinary perceptual consciousness and directly expressing our inner selves.”⁸¹

Schopenhauer, in other words, considers music’s power as parallel to the world as he sees it – and, contra the world of appearances, music functions in a revelatory capacity.

Nietzsche’s critical position on music, especially that outlined in *The Birth of Tragedy Out of the Spirit of Music*, remains a high-water mark and an excellent opening to contemporary art and sound studies. The existential effectivity (and, indeed, affectivity) that Nietzsche attributes to music, especially in the key of the Dionysian, is crucial to understanding approaches to the philosophy of music.

At the very outset of *Birth of Tragedy*, in the first paragraph in the first section immediately after the later addition of “An Attempt At Self-Criticism,” Nietzsche names the Dionysian, as an aspect of music, the art of “the nonimagistic,”⁸² nothing other than the existential aspect of the music, that most nonimagistic of the nonimagistic art of music:

⁸⁰ Luchte, "The Body of Sublime Knowledge," 237.

⁸¹ Hadreas, "Deconstruction," 9-10.

⁸² Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *Nietzsche: "The Birth of Tragedy" and other writings*, ed. Raymond Geuss and Ronald Speirs (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 33.

Even when the tone-poet expresses his composition in images, when for instance he designates a certain symphony as the ‘pastoral’ symphony, or a passage in it as the ‘scene by the brook,’ or another as the ‘merry gathering of rustics,’ these two are only symbolic representations born of music – and not the imitated objects of music – representation which can teach us nothing whatsoever concerning the *Dionysian* content of music.⁸³

Despite the aspirations of a composer, the Dionysian will have the potential to shine through – or, in a certain sense, occlude the intended imagery, disrupt and destroy the intended prompt to signification. It is important, naturally, to also note that simply because the Dionysian and, likely music at large, is nonimagistic and disruptive of the process of signification, the “visual” aspects of the Dionysian do not exist. “Nonimagistic” and “non-significatory” are specific negations of specific processes, namely the identification/solidification of an appearing phenomenon (the ability to define phenomenon *qua* image) and the naming and/or recognition thereof (signification). This is key, as Nietzsche quotes Schopenhauer as upholding the visual possibilities of the Dionysian: “Whoever gives himself up entirely to the impression of a symphony, seems to *see* all the possible events of life and the world take place in himself; yet if he reflects, he can find no likeness between music and the things that passed before his mind.”⁸⁴ As important as the affirmation of the visual in the quoted passage is, equally important is the inability of Schopenhauer and, in earlier and later sections, Nietzsche to *name* what is conjured in the mind’s eye. They can merely dance around it; “all the possible events of life and the world” is vague enough, but the situation is further obfuscated by the use of the verb “to seem.” What is seen is, appropriately for a temporal art, *no-thingness*, the absence of thingness (*Dingheit*). This utter malleability, beyond alphabetization, categorization, systematization, on the edge of meaning, is on the edge of *all meanings*: “Amid the ceaseless flux of phenomena I am the eternally creative

⁸³ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*.

⁸⁴ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 102. Emphasis mine.

primordial mother.”⁸⁵ The Dionysian is both part of and revelatory of this flux, this utter excess in creativity and phenomena.

Let us recapitulate Quignard’s associations with music: war, power, sex, and so on. Our filmic age has revealed just how strongly a piece of music can wrest control of our emotions away from us. At the central core of music, then, is a loss of control; giving into lust, striking fear, becoming reverent in the presence of a god, boiling blood. Beyond the emotional feelings that are evoked, there is the simple fact that music *can* evoke, that it *is by its nature* evocative, as Montagu says, “sound conveying emotion.”

Again, it is wise to return to Nietzsche here: “The Dionysian reveler sees himself as a satyr, *and as a satyr, in turn, he sees the god*, which means that in his metamorphosis he beholds another vision outside of himself” (emphasis Nietzsche’s).⁸⁶ Here is a movement whereby the self is seemingly moved out of the confines of the “self.” This is not to necessarily speak of a dualism (as in Schopenhauer’s metaphysics), nor to (re)introduce the mind/body divide, but rather to drive home the point that the unity of mind and body is still fractured and shuddering upon exposure to music, *as a unity*. The self is, to literalize a cliché, moved.⁸⁷

Yet, the provocative latter half of the above turn of phrase by Nietzsche runs the risk of passing the metamorphosis by. Before man sees “the god,” man must become a satyr – the larval man pupates upon exposure to music, to Dionysian revelry, to the excess of givenness, into the *imago* of the satyr. What is a satyr? What does it mean to be metamorphosed into a satyr? It must be said that one needs to go deeper than the mere evolution of *σάτυρος* into *saturae*, though, purely

⁸⁵ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 104.

⁸⁶ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 64.

⁸⁷ One is tempted here to compare this movement with R. D. Laing’s definition of “ontological insecurity,” as elucidated in *The Divided Self*, as well as Avital Ronell’s meditations thereon in *The Telephone Book*. We will see more similarities in the third chapter.

superficially, the links between the orthography of *saturae* and *satis* (and the subsequent derivation of *satur*) – satyr/satyr-play, to sate, and sated/satisfied, respectively – prove intriguing, even if the etymological research is lacking. One must go deeper still than the associations with buffoonery and the phallos, which, though instructive, do not explicate the transformation of man to satyr. Nor does a simple evolutionary ladder (man to satyr, satyr to god [Dionysus]) explain things, especially given the not infrequent interactions between man and god in Greek mythology. What does Nietzsche mean by signaling the satyr as the next stage in the metamorphosis in Dionysian revelry, the apprehension of music, the subsumption of self by symphonics (συμφωνία)?

The satyr is, at ground, in the most primary analysis, near-human. It is chimerical, an outgrowth of an alchemical view towards speciation. It is beastly man and anthropoid beast, simultaneously; it is an unresolvable contradiction. It speaks to refined ferality. The satyr is maddeningly impossible – in a word *monstrous*.⁸⁸ The monstrous, especially in this reading of the satyr, remains utterly outside of either/or thinking, embodying, literally, the both/and paradoxical nature which reveals the utter malleability of nature, that it is in ceaseless flux. Only in the endless creative possibilizing can a monstrous creature such as the satyr emerge into a phantasmal existence. The idea of the satyr pulls the rug out from under the idea of univocity, of the facticity of comprehensibility's possibility except in the abstracted and bracketed hermetic halls of the laboratory.⁸⁹ The satyr is “a border figure[. It] shores up communal freedom while fusing perceived

⁸⁸ And do we not see echoes of the satyr throughout the world? Is not the satyr, taken at its most basic definition as near-human, analogous to the agogwe, the yeti, the sasquatch, the orang-pendek and others? Does not the monstrous essence of the satyr persist in these global myths? Indeed, these cryptids are less associated with music than the satyr, but they share the basic physical descriptors and, especially in the case of the agogwe and the orang-pendek, some level of sacrosanctity.*

* For further information, please see, for example: Scott Weidensaul, *The Ghost with Trembling Wings: Science, Wishful Thinking, and the Search for Lost Species* (New York, NY: North Point Press, 2003).

⁸⁹ That this critique should emerge from *outside* the scientific worldview is, indeed, proper. Further, that this critique should be so intimately linked to alchemy, or, at the very least, an alchemical view of the world, which acknowledges the mutability of the elements, is also proper, or, at the very least Benjaminian.

opposites.”⁹⁰ The idea of the satyr, and the fact that the satyr existed in the imagination of the Greeks – especially the Greeks of Nietzsche – hints towards the monstrous nature of music.

This has contemporary resonances, as well, for, as Mulhall notes,

the metamorphosis of the term ‘orchestra,’ from naming the site of the chorus to that of the players of musical instruments. on Nietzsche’s understanding... marks and effects both change and continuity, signifying a transfiguring recurrence or re-creation: the... orchestra is a mask of the tragic chorus, which was itself a mask of the satyr chorus.⁹¹

This is to say that the modern expression of music (idealized in *Birth of Tragedy* as Wagner), in certain cases, is contiguous with the role of the satyr chorus, not merely symbolically and metonymically, but *actually*. Music thus maintains, if not increases, its metamorphic, which is to say, Dionysian, power even in the modern era.⁹²

It has already been discussed that music displaces man in the Nietzschean view, but it also dis-figures man, in the sense that it removes the artificial boundaries that separate man from nature – it erases the lines, opening the door to the overwhelming and seemingly contradictory *waves of existence*, threatening to pull man away from the shore. Is this what Nietzsche intended by speaking of envisaging the god? That the transformation (which could be interpreted literally, which is to say corporeally, or mentally, which is to say within the realm of the imagination), this *becoming a monster*, must occur before the beholding of Dionysus – and that this transformation

⁹⁰ Christopher J. Gilbert, "Toward the Satyric," *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 46, no. 3 (2013): 283, <https://doi.org/10.5325/philrhet.46.3.0280>.

⁹¹ Stephen Mulhall, "Orchestral Metaphysics: The Birth of Tragedy between Drama, Opera, and Philosophy," *Journal of Nietzsche Studies* 44, no. 2 (Summer 2013): 252, <https://doi.org/10.1353/nie.2013.0021>.

⁹² “The envisaged architecture of Bayreuth emphasizes one central continuity by placing every seat in the audience at exactly the same level, thus echoing the egalitarianism implicit in the encircling terraces of the original Greek theater. In both dispositions, matters of social distinction recede in the face of an essentially communal identification with the drama about to unfold—the expression of an existing or passionately desired sense of unity with one another, and with the truth dramatized on stage. the central discontinuity lies in the fact that the location whose liminality serves to effect this transcendence of individuation is occupied not by singing and dancing seers, and thus by words interwoven with music and action, but by makers of music alone. If the pairing of attic tragedy and Wagnerian opera allows each to illuminate the other, this (un)masking tells us that music is the often-occluded essence of the phenomenon of Greek tragic drama, and that Wagner’s way of rearticulating that aesthetic original nevertheless gives an unprecedented dominance to the role of music within the envisaged totality of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*.” Mulhall, "Orchestral Metaphysics," 252-53.

is prompted by music – should signal the utmost power that Nietzsche ascribes to the apprehension of music. Not just music itself, but what it can provoke *in the process of this apprehension*, namely, the monstrous.

It is also, then, valuable to note the theme of the monstrous (*ungeheur-*) in Nietzsche's work. In section 12 of *The Gay Science*, "monstrous" recurs:

Vielleicht ist [die Wissenschaft] jetzt noch bekannter wegen ihrer Kraft, den Menschen um seine Freuden zu bringen, und ihn kälter, statuenhafter, stoischer zu machen. Aber sie könnte auch noch als die *grosse Schmerzbringerin* entdeckt werden! – Und dann würde vielleicht zugleich ihre Gegenkraft entdeckt sein, ihr ungeheures Vermögen, neue Sternenswelten der Freude aufleuchten zu lassen!

[Science] may still be better known for its power of depriving man of his joys and making him colder, more like a statue, more stoic. But it might yet be found to be the *great dispenser of pain*. And then its counterforce might be found at the same time: its monstrous⁹³ capacity for making new galaxies of joy flare up.⁹⁴

The monstrous, in the above quotation, is used to draw attention to an inherent contradiction, namely that joy can, in fact, be linked with monstrous. This linking is coming on the heels of Nietzsche's assertion that joy and pain are themselves indelibly linked; pain and joy, two extremes, exist truly within the realm of one another. This paradoxical interpenetration is signified and underscored by the use of the term "monstrous." (And let it not be ignored that this is used as a description of *Wissenschaft*, which can be both wisdom or science, two terms equally beholden to the expression of some form of truth.) It is small wonder, then, that Nietzsche's satyrs are "most subtle artists."⁹⁵

⁹³ While the rest of this section corresponds exactly to Kaufman's translation, in the instance of "*ungeheures*," Kaufman translates this as "immense." However, "immense" does not carry the same weight, especially with regards to the idea of interpenetration of pain and pleasure that Nietzsche speaks of in this section, as "monstrous," which is also a correct – perhaps more correct – translation of "*ungeheures*."

⁹⁴ Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *The Gay Science: with a Prelude in Rhymes and an Appendix of Songs*, trans. Walter Arnold Kaufmann (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1974), 86. In German, 40. Emphasis Nietzsche's. Also see Friedrich Nietzsche, *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft* (L. Fritzsche, 1887).

⁹⁵ Martha C. Nussbaum, "The Transfigurations of Intoxication: Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, and Dionysus," *Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics* 1, no. 2 (1991), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20163469>.

The monstrosity of the satyr and the paradoxicality of joyful pain/painful joy are twinned motions towards the broader existential power of music, which Nietzsche regards, echoing Schopenhauer, as “the real idea of the world.”⁹⁶ And what can Dionysian art reveal? The satyric quality of existence, the monstrosity, and the utter displacement of the self. It is therefore instructive to quote Nietzsche at length once more – the reader is advised to compare the following excerpt from *The Birth of Tragedy* with the above quote from *The Gay Science*, as well as the reading of the satyr as monstrous and metaphoric:

Wir sollen erkennen, wie alles, was entsteht, zum leidvollen Untergange bereit sein muss, wir werden gezwungen in die Schrecken der Individualexistenz hineinzublicken – und sollen doch nicht erstarren: ein metaphysischer Trost reisst uns momentan aus dem Getriebe der Wandelgestalten heraus. Wir sind wirklich in kurzen Augenblicken das Urwesen selbst und fühlen dessen unbändige Daseinsgier und Daseinslust; der Kampf, die Qual, die Vernichtung der Erscheinungen dünkt uns jetzt wie nothwendig, bei dem Uebermaass von unzähligen, sich in's Leben drängenden und stossenden Daseinsformen... Trotz Furcht und Mitleid sind wir die glücklich-Lebendigen, nicht als Individuen, sondern als das eine Lebendige, mit dessen Zeugungslust wir verschmolzen sind.

[In Dionysian art, w]e are to recognize that all that comes into being must be ready for a sorrowful end; we are forced to look into the terrors of the individual existence – yet we are not to become rigid with fear: a metaphysical comfort tears us momentarily from the bustle of the changing figures. We are really for a brief moment primordial being itself, feeling its raging desire for existence and joy in existence; the struggle, the pain, the destruction of phenomena, now appear necessary to us, in view of the excess of countless forms of existence which push one another into life... We are pierced by the maddening sting of these pains just when we have become, as it were, one with the infinite primordial joy in existence.⁹⁷

Out of music, the flux of existence is revealed, the existential simultaneity of coming into being and passing away – a chiasmic unity, which remains, following Schopenhauer’s anti-Hegelianism, non-dialectizable.⁹⁸ For Nietzsche, this is the structure of music. As a note comes into being, it is

⁹⁶ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 129.

⁹⁷ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 104-05.

⁹⁸ For more on the idea of the “chiasmic unity” please see the works of Friedrich Ulfers, from whom I initially learned it, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Northwestern University Press, 1968).

always already marked for a certain death. Whether melodically, percussively, or harmonically, each note reveals itself as becoming and reveals itself as utterly in motion, holding up a mirror to the status of man in the cosmos, of all *things* in the cosmos.⁹⁹ Though the sustain of man may ultimately last longer than that of a note in an aria, the sustain will just as inevitably fade into nothingness, just as it emerged from nothingness – or is it more proper to say no-thingness?

By enacting the realization of the ephemerality of life, music functions as a tearing open of space as it is normally perceived, which is to say a world of static objects. The traditional phenomenological example of the chair or table is perceived as being nearly concrete in its permanence. By touch, it is affirmed to be solid, to have heft. By further observation, the chair or table is ruled to be inorganic – lifeless, an abiotic factor. It cannot eat, it does not breathe, though it may swell or warp if exposed to humidity, and it does not sire more of its own kind, either asexually or sexually, unless designed to do so (i.e. a nesting table – see, in particular, the sweeping organic forms of Breuer’s 1936 tables). Yet, it can also be observed that another “solid” object, the rock – more solid, assuredly, than the chair, or at least denser, probably – can be brutally worn down by existence; if it were placed in a wind tunnel or a faux rill, it would slowly pass away, just as surely as it can come into existence as a phenomenon. The world of heft, of solidity, of appearing permanent, is just as impermanent as mankind. Coming into being and passing away, simultaneously: this structure opens up the possibility for understanding several facets of existence, which differ from the world which we normally allow for ourselves (or are allowed by our own consciousnesses – which surely understand that we are not yet meant for this type of understanding), a world in which the abiotic chair will be forever in existence, where we can look at a rock and just see a rock, not a phenomenon that will disappear just as assuredly as it dis-

⁹⁹ The reader is invited here to explore the connections between Nietzsche and Ernst Mach as elaborated by Friedrich Ulfers.

appears upon the shutting of the observer's eyes and dis-appears yet further when skipped into the sea by a flick of the wrist on an idle summer day.

By creating *this* "space," music both enacts and opens the possibility for understanding this existential aspect. Slavoj Žižek has referred to such a space, in an explicitly political context, as a "Hegelian wound."¹⁰⁰ In this reading of music, which dis-figures man into a satyr, it can be said that music, the Dionysian art form, emanates from this "Hegelian wound," which is to say that it inaugurates the very tearing, the very caesura that it itself, by its very structure, manifests and embodies. And it is this radical indeterminacy, this radical wounding, which simultaneously opens up the possibility of some modicum of understanding (though never grasping [*Begreifen*], never conceptualizing), of seeing "the god," as Nietzsche put it.

Nietzsche, then, like Schopenhauer, at least in his earlier writings (though, again, we see it attested to in *The Gay Science*) viewed music as an art capable of communicating something like the 'truth of the world,' if not, in an intensification of Schopenhauer, *being* the truth of the world. In such a way, we can see music here as being 'transcendent' and separate from the plastic arts because it can serve as a revelatory experience that opens our ears to the world as it is, instead of the world of appearances (in Nietzsche's case, the world of solidity, concepts, and unicity) as we perceive it in a quotidian fashion. Thus, Nietzsche, at least in *The Birth of Tragedy*, maintains the metaphysics of Schopenhauer, even as he departed from such a clearly systematic project. Tracy B. Strong goes even further: "Nietzsche's analysis here... reflects his nuanced understanding of Schopenhauer; [for both,] music permits the annihilation of the individual and thus a release from the pain of individuation."¹⁰¹ It may be said that, indeed, Nietzsche even deepened it with his

¹⁰⁰ Slavoj Žižek, *The Hegelian Wound* (New York, NY: New York University Cantor Film Center, 2014).

¹⁰¹ Tracy Strong, "Philosophy of the Morning: Nietzsche and the Politics of Transfiguration," *The Journal of Nietzsche Studies* 39 (03/01 2010): 57, <https://doi.org/10.1353/nie.0.0063>.

evocations, however philologically pertinent, to “the god.” In this way, Nietzsche’s departure yet reliance on Schopenhauer (and thus, in certain ways, Kant, as well), even as he figured transformation and analysis metaleptically, cagey and suspicious of metaphysics, marks him as, in the words of Heidegger (who may have been accidentally pointing at himself), the last metaphysician – the great theorist of the *Geist der Musik* (spirit of music), that which is “music prior,” “[t]he original music which unfolds, understood but too deep or too high to attain the threshold of the audible, within the Apollo-Dionysos couple.”¹⁰²

Both Nietzsche and Schopenhauer provide something close to a definition of music in their works. Clearly, they both ascribe to it fantastical powers, but they find themselves hemmed in by their contextual and historical positions, namely Europe of the nineteenth century. We will find that their understanding of music is ill-suited for the contemporary, global world (and, in fact, was never well-suited for it) – and the phenomenological approach we will develop. To quote Christoph Cox on the matter, “Schopenhauer’s theory of music is constrained by the Kantian language of representation, appearance, and thing in itself. Yet it offers an important start toward the construction of a materialist philosophy of sound and music.”¹⁰³ Similarly: “The Kantian-Schopenhauerian language Nietzsche often employs in *The Birth of Tragedy* can be read as endorsing... transcendent,” which is to say, metaphysical, “dualisms... Yet this does not sit well with Nietzsche’s” more materialist impulses.¹⁰⁴ Both, while facing constraints of philosophical/rhetorical language, time, and place, which we will now explore, nevertheless gestured beyond these limits towards something that I hope to develop here with the help of phenomenology.

¹⁰² Michel Haar, *The Song of the Earth: Heidegger and the Grounds of the History of Being* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1993), 75, 79.

¹⁰³ Cox, *Sonic Flux*, 21.

¹⁰⁴ Cox, *Sonic Flux*, 23.

Schopenhauer, for all of the power he ascribed to music, was nevertheless extremely capricious when it came to the evaluation of music. Not only does he never take into account folk music (except once, and in passing, in his section on lyric poetry)¹⁰⁵ and non-European forms (which is especially odd given his general familiarity with near Eastern culture – the *Bhagavad Gita*, after all, translates loosely to “the Lord’s song”), but his interactions with the ‘high’ musical culture of Europe often drift towards something that might best be called ‘fickleness.’ Moreover, beyond even his theoretical ruminations on the philosophical meaning of thoroughbass,¹⁰⁶ his personal consumption of music could similarly be prone to fits of violence; one popular apocryphal tale (perhaps as valuable, if not more so, than actual biographical truth) holds that he once threw a woman down a flight of stairs for singing in a way he found objectionable.¹⁰⁷

The seeming precision, idiosyncratic though it be, that Schopenhauer uses to describe pieces of music and aspects of musical theory, such as thoroughbass, would seem to be in direct contrast to his rather broad analysis on the power of music. Surely other cultures would similarly be able to apprehend the power of music. The flaw in Schopenhauer is that he views “works of art” as being “pure aesthetic content.”¹⁰⁸ “Finished” individual works are somehow walled away from exterior concerns; in such a sense, they are held to be similar to the Platonic world of forms.¹⁰⁹ The emphasis on the autonomy of art functionally disallows any sort of varied critical apparatus except one that is based on a sort of objectivity (in this case, the rigid application of musical theory, “ventur[ing] from the surety of [acoustical] mathematics to the frailty of music theory,” especially

¹⁰⁵ Schopenhauer and Guth, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, 276.

¹⁰⁶ Dale Jacquette, *The Philosophy of Schopenhauer* (Montreal, Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 52.

¹⁰⁷ He did, indeed, throw a woman down the stairs, this much is clear. Schopenhauer paid her a yearly stipend until her death, upon which he allegedly wrote “*Obit anus, abit onus*” (“the ass is dead, the debt is done”) in his ledger book or diary. As opposed to the woman singing, many hold that she was, in fact, merely conversing too loudly with a friend in the house in which Schopenhauer was boarding. Jacquette, *The Philosophy of Schopenhauer*, 8.

¹⁰⁸ Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works*, 171. Emphasis mine.

¹⁰⁹ Jacquette, *The Philosophy of Schopenhauer*, 149.

music theory of that era).¹¹⁰ This is why Schopenhauer can find Haydn's *Schöpfung* insufficient and imitative (*nachbildend*) for its limited (and arguable) use of tone painting;¹¹¹ although he is (clearly) using his own subjective interpretive apparatus (as one can see in any number of seemingly arbitrary declarations on all the arts),¹¹² he can make a claim towards objectivity and thus establish a hierarchical view of music that would exclude, necessarily, some of the various tonalities in the world "by twisting his metaphysics of representation and the will in such a way as to implausibly exclude them."¹¹³ If, in other words, absolute music (without an attempt at mimetizing nature or emotion and no use of language) is the highest goal of all the arts, what is the point of the other iterations of music except as points in a teleology that must be overcome to reach a form of purity.

Schopenhauer's philosophy is, unsurprisingly, echoed in the work of Nietzsche, though in profoundly different ways, as he attempted to throw off some of Schopenhauer's more idiosyncratic tendencies towards judgment. The major locus of this influence and simultaneous disavowal in *The Birth of Tragedy* is the (early) oeuvre of Richard Wagner, with whom, as with Schopenhauer, Nietzsche would later claim to break. As we saw above, Nietzsche viewed music as, at least potentially, transcendental in a very classical sense (related to overcoming the human towards "the god"). But he limited most of his musical discussion to German composers of the past century and a half, "from Bach to Beethoven, from Beethoven to Wagner," though he also

¹¹⁰ Lawrence Ferrara, "Schopenhauer on Music as the Embodiment of Will," in *Schopenhauer, Philosophy and the Arts*, ed. Dale Jacquette, Cambridge Studies in Philosophy and the Arts (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 183. For an elaboration of Schopenhauer's music theory, please see the section "Schopenhauer on Rameau" in the same chapter.

¹¹¹ Schopenhauer and Guth, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, 291. In German, 311-312. "Imitative" here means something close to *mimesis*, such as one, allegedly, finds in pastoral symphonies.

¹¹² A personal favorite of mine is Schopenhauer's view, expounded in §40, that still-life paintings that include edible items are "unworthy of art," though he maintains that fruit is "still admissible" because it, somehow, does not remind "us of its edibility."

¹¹³ Jacquette, *The Philosophy of Schopenhauer*, 172.

mentions earlier touchstones, such as Palestrina.¹¹⁴ Despite his engagement with major, ‘normal’ foci of the musical landscape at the time, a musicological analysis is, in (early)¹¹⁵ Nietzsche, lacking, with, instead, emphasis on its emotive/affective quality (in noted contradistinction to Schopenhauer who believed in monkish contemplation to quiet the will and who incorporated, however loosely, the musicology of Rameau). His analysis is therefore similarly hemmed in by the European bourgeois artistic culture at the time, even as he strove to exceed it with his notion of the spirit of music and the revolutionary aspect of Wagner (who, we should not forget, made bombs with Bakunin at Dresden in 1849).

Recalling the predilection of both Nietzsche and Schopenhauer to single out specific pieces governed by their respective taste-judgments (Wagner and Beethoven, respectively), we find that, at bottom, this is a deeply subjective system of analysis that, while invaluable for its understanding of the effects and affects of music, does not provide a definitional understanding of music outside of this paradigm. The tropes of music present in Nietzsche and Schopenhauer can be attributed to the dominant way of thinking of music in Europe at the time (and still now), namely the “work-concept.” In the work of Lydia Goehr, who will be discussed more later, the work-concept is idealized by Beethoven’s *Fifth* (not accidentally the first piece performed by the Berlin Philharmoniker to be captured by the phonographs of Deutsche Grammophon¹¹⁶), though it could just as easily apply to Haydn or Wagner. Indeed, it can even *retroactively apply* to pieces that were composed prior to the societal construction and adoption of it – Palestrina emplaced into Pfitzner’s *Palestrina*, etched into a vinyl record. In the work-concept, “works, once created, are fully formed and permanently existing entities,” such that they are autonomous and closed off from the rest of

¹¹⁴ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 94.

¹¹⁵ He would later develop something of a theory of rhythm, and it is known that he corresponded late into his sanity with musicologist Carl Fuchs.

¹¹⁶ Liebersohn, *Music and the New Global Culture*, 238.

the world;¹¹⁷ to recapitulate, this is nearly Schopenhauer's exact position, only with specific reference to the world of appearances. The work-concept is based on a tacit or explicit assumption "that the tonal, rhythmic, and instrumental properties of works are constitutive of structurally integrated wholes that are," especially in the European case, which has come to dominate much of the world alongside other colonial-intellectual practices, "symbolically represented by composers in scores."¹¹⁸ The work-concept is clearly an insufficient way of thinking through the problem of music.

But do we need to discard all thinking that is based, consciously or not, on the work-concept? Of course not. It is nevertheless of utmost importance that we recognize the inability of these theories to account for music that cannot be captured by the score-paradigm (one thinks of Coltrane's chord wheel) or tonalities that are outside of a Western consciousness (such as the more advanced systems of just intonation in Carnatic music and its use in the works of La Monte Young or the contemporary metal band Bong, who experimented with "Ra tuning"¹¹⁹ on their album *Mana-Yood-Sushai*)¹²⁰ – to say nothing of aboriginal music or avant-garde practices such as soundwalks, which, intriguingly, often share some structural similarities. Let us not also ignore its implicit anthropocentric bias. Yet, the tradition of trying to categorize and ascribe to music some sort of power is one of the oldest continuous theoretical lineages in the West and beyond. The goal here is not to *discount* this tradition, for assuredly, there are innumerable attestations of musical power, ranging from the simple (conveying emotion) to the complex (as we see in Nietzsche); we can safely, and with an overwhelming amount of historical evidence from all over the globe,

¹¹⁷ Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works*, 44.

¹¹⁸ Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works*, 2.

¹¹⁹ "Ra tuning," also sometimes called "natural" tuning, uses as its base 424Hz, as opposed to the standardized 440Hz.

¹²⁰ This fact about Bong was, initially, just a hunch on my part, but the band confirmed it in an online message. I would like to thank them for their time. Subsequent albums, such as *Thought & Existence*, have been recorded in open C.

expand the idea that fifty million Elvis fans can't be wrong to read something like 'billions of music fans can't be wrong.' The task is rather to think about *what* they leave fallow – as noted in the introduction, to tarry with these thinkers as we quest to move in the direction of the difficult extra inch. *What* is this aural experience that drives so many to ecstatic revelries and descriptions of transcendence?

* * *

We have a diverse array of opinions on the matter. Now, I will argue for the necessity of my phenomenological method, in such a way that it may better address some of the problematics in the extant theories that we have all too quickly summarized: the empirico-scientific perspective of the archaeologists, the post-phenomenological philosophy of Pascal Quignard, and the pre-phenomenological philosophies of Arthur Schopenhauer and Friedrich Nietzsche.

Jeremy Montagu and Iain Morley, in contradistinction to the philosophical thinkers, provide us with a frequently robust and fallow definition of music, namely that, to quote the former, it is “sound that conveys emotion.” This sort of broadness is frequently absent from the philosophical works that are mostly beholden to nineteenth century theories of music, especially with regards to what Goehr calls the “work-concept,” which is the idea that works (songs, pieces, sonatas, etc.) are discrete aesthetic objects with a high degree of autonomy. However, both Montagu and Morley strive for a sort of objectivity that is nevertheless exclusive; they posit that music is “sound that conveys emotion,” but they do not clarify *from* or *to* whom this vague concept of emotion is conveyed. The definition is broad enough to be meaningful, but this is, naturally, given the field, philosophically far enough in their own works as to adequately account for the

range of musical experiences nor for the well-attested power of music. Further, we noted that the two thinkers, by their own admission, were anthropocentric, thus fundamentally closing off the possibility of nature's communicative (or conveyant) abilities, even in the human creation of sound that is, suddenly (even magically), declared to be music. This is especially egregious given that there is a body of research which suggests that proto-humans had, at the very least, the potential to create music, as in the case of *H. heidelbergensis*, and that certain animals, parrots in particular, display the ability to recognize and 'join' themselves to an external rhythm in beat perception and synchronization (BPS) behavior, thought, in the scientific perspective, to be a key element of the nascence of musical behavior and experience.

What seems to be of most importance, then, is that there is an acknowledgement, even within empiricism, of the complete malleability of music across the infinite variety of human cultures – to say nothing of the broader environment. “[E]ither humanity has no inbuilt sense of consonant tonality, or that other people’s sense of consonance is different from ours,” notes Montagu.¹²¹ Yet the limits of empirico-scientific thought emerge precisely here, as it risks foisting an *objective* definition onto what is tacitly admitted to be a *subjective* experience. This is precisely where the philosophical intervention must be made.

Yet the philosophical tradition is often too concerned with the effects and affects of music to approach something like a definition. The various powers of music are incredibly well-attested in the philosophical tradition, but the thinkers that we have engaged with have not necessarily broached questions of *why*. Such a question would necessarily require something close to a coherent definition; theorizing photosynthesis without a concept of the phenomenon of light would be equally fruitless. The thinkers, especially Schopenhauer and Quignard, take ‘music’ (as a

¹²¹ Montagu, "How Music and Instruments Began," 1.

signifier) as something that is *prima facie* understood (though it must be noted that Quignard does admirably chafe at the perceived boundary between sound and music). Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, in particular, are also beholden to the aforementioned work-concept, which shunts music into a ‘frame,’ almost like a painting, closing it off from the rest of the world – and even human influence on it – which is undergirded by a belief in the possibility of the verifiably real, present, and, I do not think this an exaggeration, sacred, especially given the pair’s strange *ménage à trois* with Wagner.¹²² Such a perspective carries its own risks, as we see in Schopenhauer, who uses it to advocate for a hierarchy of norms in music; this is part of the broader trend toward universalization in the European Enlightenment, which is inextricably linked to the violence of reason and imposition of these norms on non-Europeans (to say nothing of non-humans).¹²³ Even as Schopenhauer is occasionally considered an ‘irrationalist,’ with his emphases on the body and the passions, he still is notably concerned with promulgating a top-down system of judgment. Thus, aside from the fact that these thinkers do *not* provide us with a definition, even their cursory attempts should be greeted with at least some skepticism, as it is doubtful that Schopenhauer would have a place in his metaphysical system for, say, the music of the Kaluli people of Papua New Guinea, despite the fact that their ‘sonic production’ is identifiable as music by ethnomusicologists and neophytes alike.¹²⁴

Therefore, on the one hand, we have from the empirical perspective a definition that may be too objective and, in fact, may be transgressed by examples in its own logic. On the other hand,

¹²² Music’s close relationship to transcendence in the historical tradition more clearly lends itself to this sort of sacralization. This is seen in any number of examples, the most prominent of which would probably be the construction of hymnody, especially in the Catholic Church.

¹²³ I borrow the term “hierarchy of norms” from the influential liberal judicial theorist Hans Kelsen not just because it is apt, but to underscore the relations between cultural projects and politics – especially the politics of medico-judicial regimes, such as we find in the era of capitalism.

¹²⁴ Indeed, the process of dismissing aboriginal music as ‘noise’ is a common trope in colonialist writing. For more information, please see Ana Maria Ochoa Gautier, who has analyzed exactly this in the extremely influential travel writings of Alexander von Humboldt; we will return to this track in chapter 5.

we have a rigorous cataloguing of the effects and affects of musical experience which should, necessarily, rest upon a definition that seemingly cannot be found. Moreover, if such a definition were to be found or inferred from the various tacit hints strewn about the texts, it would also likely be exclusionary and based on a hierarchy of norms that would not be amenable to the wide variety of tonalities and musical traditions in the world. We seemingly need to toe the line between objectivity and subjectivity without lapsing into a strong anthropocentrism in our definition or a metaphysical idealism that cannot help but be exclusionary. Both paths are insufficient for providing an account of music as it exists in the world.

Fortunately, *phenomenology* offers a potential way out. As opposed to the metaphysical desire to strive towards the thing-in-itself (*Ding-an-sich*, to use the terminology of the German idealist tradition), phenomenology points us towards the thing-itself – not necessarily essence or will, but simply the experiencing of ‘it.’ In this case, the ‘it’ would be music. I will not spend a lengthy amount of time on the vagaries of the multifarious trends and diverse methodologies of phenomenology, but I think it is important to delineate precisely why I believe that it can provide us with a more satisfactory account of music.

Phenomenology, in its modern sense, began with the work of Edmund Husserl at the beginning of the twentieth century, though it has its roots in the thought of Descartes. As noted, thereafter emerged a rich and vital philosophical tradition; yet all of these various strands carry a few of the same tropes and methodologies. Phenomenology seeks something like a middle ground between objects and subjects, placing its emphasis on perception; it prizes study of the world as it is given to us in our senses and experiences, forming concepts from this ‘raw data,’ instead of unquestioningly accepting paradigms or concepts that are handed down by the philosophical tradition. In the archetypical example, the chair is no longer simply a fallen expression of a Platonic

ideal form of “chairness,” but rather it is something directly apprehendable by us. Because of this, we can begin to interrogate the chair prior to the imposition of the metaphysical concept of “chairness,” the chair *qua* object, and the process of this imposition of conceptualization on the object, as well. The phenomenological method allows us to consider the sedimentation of re-occurrent experiences, as they gradually become ‘worn down’ and ‘smooth’ like well-used tools; the ‘nearer’ or more common these experiences are, the more they need to be examined without the prejudice of this sedimentation, conceptualization, and ideology, as these related processes warp our perception of these objects in important ways. Martin Heidegger wondered why often we treat a tool as though it was merely an extension of our body, instead of an object in the world. Maurice Merleau-Ponty thought about the various ways we erroneously fill in the ‘gaps’ of the world instead of noticing them, such as the Kanisza triangle (see figure 1.)

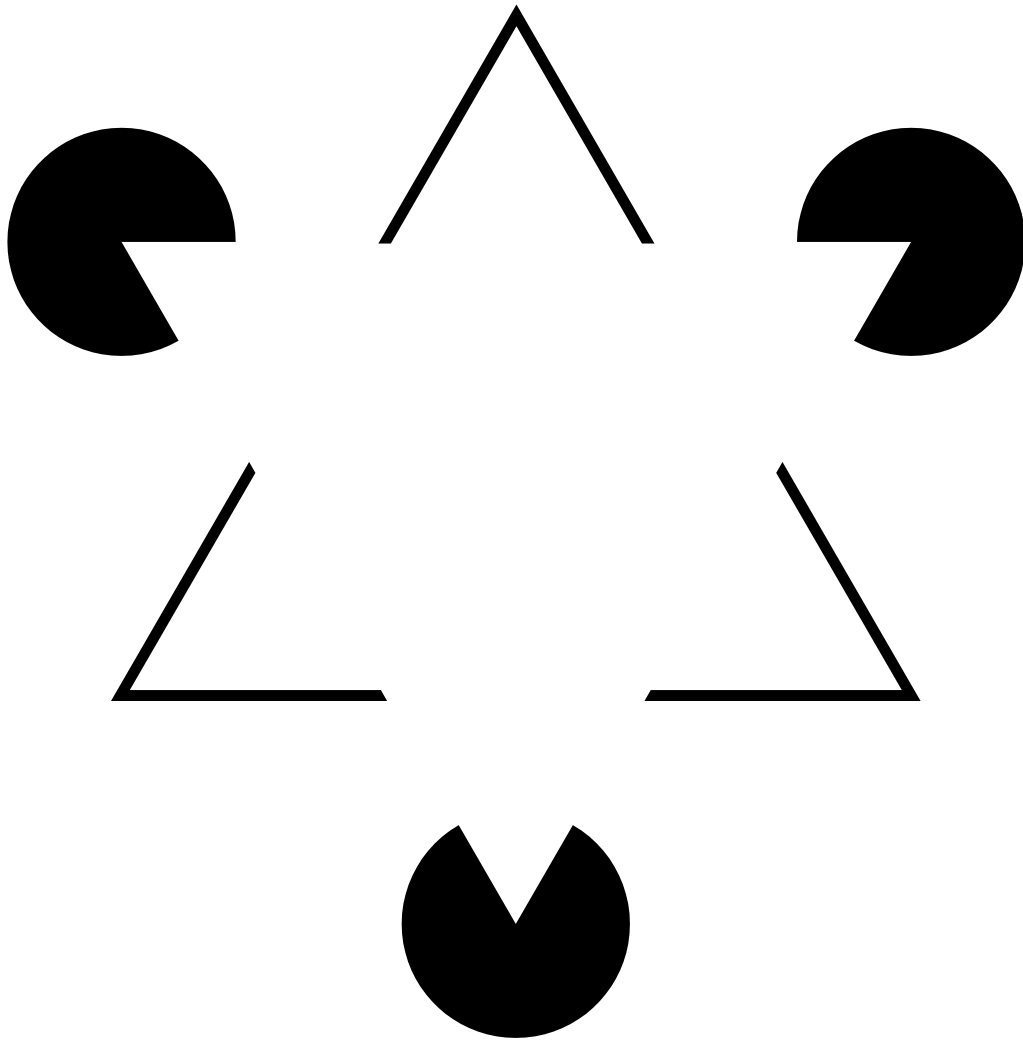


Figure 1: *Kanisza Triangle*

Indeed, is not the Kanisza triangle an excellent representation of the problem of music as we have heretofore examined it? Music's definition – and music itself – is both there and not-there. Its power, the various contours of its presence are extremely well-attested, just as one would say that the 'white'/'invisible' triangle is, in some sense, there. But we cannot ignore the fact that the triangle is also not empirically present; according to a strict definition of triangles, there is only

negative space. What we must do is to dig into the very substrata of perception – *posing the question of why before we can begin to consider questions of what.*

I will be drawing much of my methodological inspiration from Heidegger, Husserl's first major student (and eventual Oedipal rival). The precise rhetorical reasons why will be made clear in the next chapter, but I wish to highlight some of the historical reasoning behind this decision as well, especially given the paucity of space that Heidegger gave to music (odd given poetry's traditional dithyrambic connection to music). As with all attempts at genealogies, this is doomed to failure and is necessarily a projection of linearity onto the ever-woolly past, but it helps to illuminate the fraught mental path that leads to this project.

The influence of Nietzsche on Heidegger's thought is well-documented, not least by Heidegger himself, whose lecture series on Nietzsche would retrospectively haunt and inform his growing corpus of thought. Further, the theory of music expounded by Schopenhauer ascribed to it a transcendental power greater than almost all previous positions, with the possible exception of the *musica universalis*, with which it, not coincidentally, shares several features. Schopenhauer's thoughts on music are also closely related to his ontology, to the point that Ludger Lütkehaus can, with only the tiniest amount of hyperbole, recast Schopenhauer's title as "the world as Will and music."¹²⁵ Scholarship pertaining to Schopenhauerian influence on Heidegger is rare. Partially, this is due to the fact that scholarship on Schopenhauer is, itself, at the very least uncommon, at least in comparison to the other two thinkers, but it can also be attributed to the fact that Heidegger's few direct references to Schopenhauer are, to quote one scholar on the matter,

¹²⁵ Ludger Lütkehaus, "The Will as World and Music: Arthur Schopenhauer's Philosophy of Music," in *Sound Figures of Modernity German Music and Philosophy*, ed. Jost Hermand and Gerhard Richter (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006), 95.

“virtually unanimously derogatory,”¹²⁶ calling him, at one point, “petulant” (“*maßlos*”).¹²⁷ (Of course, the same could be said of the later works of Nietzsche, who, nevertheless, maintained at least some trace of Schopenhauer’s thought despite his best efforts to purge them from his system.) Dale Jacquette, however, provocatively argues that “*Da-sein... Sorge... Zuhandenheit... and Gelassenheit*,” major Heideggerian concepts, some of which will be employed in this study as well, can be traced back to Schopenhauer.¹²⁸ Indeed, it is known that Heidegger read Schopenhauer, so some familiarity with terminology is not necessarily surprising. Where Heidegger departs from Schopenhauer is methodology. Schopenhauer worked primarily in abstract metaphysical terms to formulate a philosophy of the all-pervasive Will, with which music was co-incidental, a supposition “in the mode and tone of (an additional) metaphysics without proof, logical or empirical.”¹²⁹ Heidegger, on the other hand, started from the fundamentally materialist phenomenological perspective for his ontology. In sum, while the phenomenal register was of great importance to both thinkers, Schopenhauer attempts to escape it, instead of inhabiting it, thus “employ[ing],” as is *de rigueur* in metaphysical discourses, “the dualism between two worlds.”¹³⁰

Neatly, Heidegger’s rejection of the sort of dualism present in Schopenhauer is roughly the same intervention that I propose to make here with Schopenhauer’s “additional metaphysics” of music. I do not have any pretensions towards creating an ontological system, though, undoubtedly,

¹²⁶ Jacquette, *The Philosophy of Schopenhauer*, 245. One choice quote: “[Schopenhauer’s discussion of art] stumbles about aimlessly.” As quoted in Julian Young, “Schopenhauer, Heidegger, Art, and the Will,” in *Schopenhauer, Philosophy and the Arts*, ed. Dale Jacquette, Cambridge Studies in Philosophy and the Arts (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 62.

¹²⁷ Martin Heidegger, *Heraklit*, ed. Manfred S. Frings (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1994). Translation mine.

¹²⁸ Jacquette, *The Philosophy of Schopenhauer*, 245.

¹²⁹ Ferrara, “Schopenhauer on Music,” 183.

¹³⁰ Lydia Goehr, “Schopenhauer and the Musicians: an Inquiry into the Sounds of Silence and the Limits of Philosophizing about Music,” in *Schopenhauer, Philosophy and the Arts*, ed. Dale Jacquette, Cambridge Studies in Philosophy and the Arts (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 220.

some of my explorations will touch on ontology. Heidegger's departure from metaphysics will be replicated in the field of sonic aesthetics; as Heidegger apprehended some of his terminology (and perhaps even some basic ideas – even oppositionally) from Schopenhauer even as he discarded much of it, we too must, ultimately, find that many of the concepts of Schopenhauer and the larger philosophical tradition to which he belongs with regards to theorizing music are worthy of appropriation and serious consideration, even if they run into some paradoxes or run ahead of themselves, for a deeper understanding of music, its relationship to the perceiving subject, and, thus, the subject's relationship to the world – a world without which, in Schopenhauer's metaphysics, “music could scandalously [still] exist, if push came to shove,” but a world that, for our purposes, is the ground of musical perception.¹³¹

I hold, in other words, that the diagnosis of music's power in Schopenhauer and others is, if not correct, then at the very least on to something. What is lacking, to continue the metaphor, is an etiology.

¹³¹ Lütkehaus, "The Will as World and Music," 95.

Chapter 2: *Now Listen Here*

“*Ndura a lufi, ndura ekondi ekimi.*”

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“The forest is listening. The forest loves quiet.”

—Mbuti saying

“[ethereal whooshing]”

—subtitles for *Twin Peaks: The Return*

“*Das Hören ist eigentlich die wichtigste Angelegenheit,
die man lernen muss.*“

—Peter Brötzmann

In the subsequent chapter, we explored a variety of perspectives on music, some of which provided definitions (which we found unsatisfactory), others skirted definitional questions, taking ‘music’ to be self-evident. We are not yet at a point where we can proffer a definition of music, and, indeed, we may never reach such a point, as we will see in chapter 4. However, we are not even yet at the point of *music itself, regardless of definition*. For now, it is important to discern the contours of listening, particularly *how* one listens. Instead of focusing on a scientifically acoustical understanding (though we will draw from anatomy), I would here like to furnish a short account of listening from a phenomenological perspective. To do so, I will first situate this work in a

broader milieu of phenomenological accounts of music. Subsequently, I will introduce phenomenological listening in the works of Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger, developing

the latter's ideas in *Sein und Zeit* particularly, notably his account of *hören und horchen* (hearing and hearking), arguing that Heidegger elides a key element in his schema, namely the functioning of the soundscape itself in 'silence.' 'Soundscape' derives from the work of Canadian composer and founder of sound studies, R. Murray Schafer, who used it to describe our sonic environment (or, as McLuhan put it, "acoustic space"). Critically assessing notions of silence (*Schweigen* in Heidegger) through the prism of theorizations of the soundscape, we will move towards a greater understanding of *ontological* silence, which we will call, following Heidegger's own practice, *Schweygen*. In *Schweygen*, we can find resonances with ontological listening. In so doing, we will be clearing a path to begin to *approach* music by providing ourselves with an account of how music is *perceived in the world* (which is to say, by listening). This chapter might be viewed, like Chapter 1, as a preparatory gesture, signaling a stuttering, cautious approach to the questions we hope to deal with here, viz. music itself.

In the phenomenological tradition, a researcher begins with a bracketing of what they think they know, so as to try to apprehend the object of their inquiry with fresh eyes (or ears, as it were). This has been true since Descartes, who began his famous philosophical system by attempting to go back to the most primary substratum of experience: *Cogito ergo sum*. The phenomenological reduction was subsequently picked up by Edmund Husserl and his conception of the *ἐποχή*. Later, Heidegger criticized the theretofore existing philosophical tradition of neglecting what came before and concomitantly with the first moment of wonderment, the *θαυμάζειν*; in historical terms, Heidegger rejected the Cartesian emphasis on the *Cogito*, claiming that it ran over and above the question posed by *sum*, the question of *being*, the very wonderment of the in-took breath itself. This study will begin no differently than these other phenomenological accounts – it desires find something as close to the bottom as possible.

When one is listening to music, as I am at this moment to Akira Ito's *Marine Flowers (Science Fantasy)*, one is not necessarily primarily listening to music, but rather always-already *listening*. One is attuned and emplaced in *being*, which is to say one is oriented towards listening, both in an interior and exterior sense (this will be dealt with in greater detail in the fourth chapter). This study, will, therefore, begin with listening before and above all else, prior to listening's differentiation into various cultural/sedimented types (i.e. 'active listening,' a thoroughly commodified element of human resources and capitalist psychology), just as the experience of the apprehension of music does in one's life. What is *listening*? To what do we listen? What is the process of listening – if there is such a thing? These are the questions that animate this section.

These questions also place me at a remove from the existing tradition of phenomenological attempts to think through music. For example, the phenomenologically trained musicologist Viktor Zuckerkandl begins his *Die Wirklichkeit der Musik* (translated, bafflingly, into English under the title *Sound and Symbol: Music and the External World*) by promptly placing himself beyond this sort of definitional question.¹³² His first quotation is not of another author but rather that great archetype of the work-concept, Beethoven himself, before spending nearly the entire rest of the book dealing with musicological theories of (Western) harmony and chord progressions in an ostensibly phenomenological way, paying no mind to the various musical traditions, even within Europe, such as Greek Orthodox music, that might trouble his preconceived notions of "music," reliant on the *archival* concept of the score, as opposed to the temporal experience of music.

F. J. Smith, a self-proclaimed *akoumenologist* (placing himself in opposition to the *eidōs* of traditional phenomenology) gestures broadly towards our problematic:

[A] phenomenological attitude is one of *listening*. It is a musical attitude, if indeed listening is important in the musical world. A phenomenologist would not judge the music of, e.g.,

¹³² Victor Zuckerkandl, *Die Wirklichkeit der Musik* (Rhein-Verlag Zürich, 1963), 15. For an example of Zuckerkandl's musicology, please see part two of section one, "Das System der Töne."

[Pierre] Boulez with categories based on traditional harmony and analysis; neither would he expect late compositions of Stravinsky, e.g. the *Canticum Sacrum* or *The Deluge* to sound like early Stravinsky, certainly not like *Le Sacre du Printemps*. In other words, one does not pre-categorize anyone's work but lets it be what it is.¹³³

Importantly, listening is highlighted as a key element of Smith's theory, and he is admirable in his opposition to traditional musicological judgments when it comes to his system. The phenomenologist, indeed, would not judge Boulez according to Western musicological tropes any more than they would black metal or bachata. Broader categories of rhythm, harmony, and even feeling can emerge beyond the schematization of the score that dominates Western musicology (even if that schematization remains important as an archival and pedagogical tool). A philosophy of music, a phenomenology of music, will stretch itself, and students thereof will, ultimately, *listen*, as opposed to adopting stale genres and genealogies that are restrictive and exclusionary.

What do phenomenologists do?

We let things...speak for themselves instead of dictating to them from prefabricated cultural and metaphysical categories...And, above all, we stop dictating western forms into music, as such...For when we study it, we do not force it into our own scientific categories.¹³⁴

In this, Smith had a profound insight, one which has had a great influence on my thinking here. And yet, "as such." Does not this "as such" tip us off to the fact that we are still working within the confines of some sort of "scientific category"? Does it not *presume knowledge* of music? Smith's radical (and, in my view, completely correct) position rests still on a concept of music that presumes that we already know what it is, that, to paraphrase Potter Stewart, we know it when we hear it. He does not fully take his own advice and listen – not just to music, for assuredly he does, but listening to *listening*.

¹³³ F. Joseph Smith, *The Experiencing of Musical Sound: Prelude to a Phenomenology of Music* (New York, NY: Gordon and Breach, 1979), 17. Emphasis original.

¹³⁴ Smith, *The Experiencing of Musical Sound*.

Much later, Eduardo Marx attempted to situate music within the works of Martin Heidegger, with whom we will shortly deal. Of all the aforementioned scholars, he comes the closest to what will be researched here, as he takes seriously the relationship between poetry and music, especially when it comes to the sonicity of Trakl. In Heidegger's reading of Trakl, Marx finds that music can be situated "*nicht nachträglich*" ("not after the fact of") the words of the page, but rather that music "*ist ursprünglich im Entstehen*" ("is primordial in the arising") of the "*gesprochene Sprache*" ("spoken language").¹³⁵ Marx then finds that Heidegger, like Nietzsche, posits, at least tacitly, something like a "*musikalische Stimmung*" at the root of the (poetic) arts, which were so lauded by Heidegger with his lengthy exegeses of Trakl, Hölderlin, and others. But, as with Nietzsche, whom we discussed a few pages ago, this ultimately provides a rather metaphysical account of music without necessarily providing a definition. Marx will attempt to take influence from "*Neue Musik*," which is to say, the Western avant-garde of the twentieth century, particularly post-John Cage, allowing himself a broader mandate to discuss music than others that are more concerned with the 19th-century bourgeois tradition, but, in this way, he will still continue to limit himself to a mostly bourgeois, work-centric scene – often taken as the apotheosis of experimental music, though by no means exhaustive of his oeuvre, Cage's "4'33"," while groundbreaking (and extremely undermining of the work tradition in ways that we will consider in the following chapter) still remains published as a score and is performed as a discrete piece, often for a group of relatively affluent listeners.¹³⁶ This reliance on this certain strain of *Neue Musik* means that Marx will find himself, at least unconsciously, within the metaphysical

¹³⁵ Eduardo Marx, *Heidegger und der Ort der Musik* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1998), 57. Translation mine.

¹³⁶ Marx, *Heidegger und der Ort der Musik*, 12. Cage had a unique and playful relationship with the score. For instance, in "45' For a Speaker," he wrote (in the score), "This work has no score. It should be abolished." In the same piece: "Reading music is for musicologists. There is no straight line to be drawn between notes and sounds." John Cage, *Silence: Lectures and Writings* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1973), 151, 72. Emphasis original.

tradition with which Heidegger attempted to break. Despite his phenomenological basis, like Zuckerkandl and Smith, Marx does not listen to *listening* itself, and he thus continues on the track of transcendental thinking that so animated the philosophical traditions' discussion of music that we probed in the previous chapter.

The continuing emphasis on the work paradigm is curious, especially given that in perhaps *the* foundational work of modern phenomenology (distinct, in other words from, say, Hegel's understanding of phenomenology), *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie (Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology)*, Husserl already begins to break with it. Already in §2, we find references to *Ton* (tone). Husserl does not opt for the more open-ended vocabulary of *Klang* (sound) or *Geräusch* (noise), but rather one that is almost *explicitly* both musical and non-musical. *Ton* after all, as the Grimms remind us,

begegnet einerseits als 'schall' im allgemeinen und vorzugsweise gerade als unmusikalisches 'geräusch', dessen dynamische kraftentfaltung gern hervorgehoben wird, andererseits als die musikalische, kunstmässige 'melodie', als 'musikstück' und 'lied' überhaupt.¹³⁷

pertains, on the one side, as 'sound' in general and especially as unmusical 'noise,' the dynamic force of convolution of which is often emphasized, and on the other side, as the musical, artistic 'melody,' as a 'piece of music' and 'song' at large.

Husserl, however, in contradistinction to the other phenomenologists we have named here, resolutely *does not* describe or ascribe anything to this *Ton*. Instead, he focuses on the *understanding* and perception of it, which places him at the level of perception, instead of positing, *ex post facto*, a certain category under which this tone can be filed. As is proper for phenomenology, Husserl refrains from judgment – even as he gestures towards the possibility of

¹³⁷ Jacob Grimm and Wilhelm Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jakob und Wilhelm Grimm*, 01/2021 ed. (Digitalisierte Fassung im Wörterbuchnetz des Trier Center for Digital Humanities), Bd. 21, Sp. 682. <https://woerterbuchnetz.de/?sigle=DWB#0>. I have maintained their aversion to the capitalization of nouns in this excerpt. Translation mine with assistance from Adam Toth.

musical apprehension. In this, he follows, albeit with greater skepticism, the earlier example of his teacher Carl Stumpf, who similarly deployed *Ton* in his work *Tonpsychologie*, which itself, according to Liebersohn, “partially echoed but also suggested a challenge to Helmholtz’s *Lehre von der Tonempfindung*, signaling a shift in focus away from [scientific or positivistic] physiological sensation” – a shift Husserl would continue.¹³⁸ Where, however, Stumpf, for all of his interest in non-Western forms (he created the first archive of recorded global music), “ceded the place of honor” in his philosophy “to the Western harmonic system,” cultivating a tension between “detachment from cultural hierarchy or a reassertion of it,” and opting for the latter, Husserl starts at the level of listening, and the indeterminacy (*unbestimmtheit*) that characterizes it, explaining in §4 that his method applies to *any type of melody at all*.¹³⁹ Husserl, wisely, refrains from providing a precise example rooted in the actual musical tradition, which, given his own situatedness, would almost definitely have been something like the archetypical Beethoven sonata.¹⁴⁰ As such, he opens up a philosophical space for thinking through music that is not beholden to the “natural attitude,” that concretion of concepts and societal influences (and the hierarchization which often accompanies them) that we can see so animate even other phenomenological authors.

Husserl is able to employ this ‘precise imprecision’ through his practice of the *ἐποχή*, commonly referred to as bracketing. This is, as Husserl later defined it, a “*sehr merkwürdige[] Zweifelsmethode*” (“very remarkable method of doubt”).¹⁴¹ One must begin in “*absolute[r]*

¹³⁸ Liebersohn, *Music and the New Global Culture*, 136-37.

¹³⁹ Liebersohn, *Music and the New Global Culture*, 139. The German “*unbestimmtheit*” comes from §47 of Edmund Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie: Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie*, vol. 3, Husserliana: Edmund Husserl – Gesammelte Werke, (Springer Netherlands, 1976).

¹⁴⁰ His use of melody may, perhaps, be troubling, but given his generally precise use of words of Greek origin, it seems likely that he is referring to something similar to μέλος – simply a musical excerpt.

¹⁴¹ Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations: an Introduction to Phenomenology* (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1977), 3. Also see Edmund Husserl, *Cartesianische Meditationen und Pariser Vorträge*, vol. 1, Husserliana: Edmund Husserl

Erkenntnisarmut” (“absolute lack of knowledge”).¹⁴² It is only then that one can begin to study phenomena in a way that is both cognizant of the beings themselves and their inculcated accumulations of cultural baggage. The latter is an element of the “natural attitude.” It is “natural” in the sense that it is a passivity with regards to the received wisdom and preconceptions of quotidian life, a process called “*passive Synthesis*” (“passive synthesis”); it is, for instance, perfectly “natural” to take a drink from a bottle without thinking of the bottle *qua* bottle, just as it was “natural” to see a triangle appear in the white negative space in the Kanisza illusion (Figure 1).¹⁴³ These phenomena are ‘synthesized’ as unities, even as they comprise a “*Substrat kennenzulernender Prädikate*” (“substrate of predicates with which [the philosopher] may become acquainted”) through *further* analysis.¹⁴⁴ The supposed “naturalness” of the natural attitude obfuscates *existential* study of the world, the whats and whys that we are currently questing after – even as it remains deeply necessary to think through the biases and tendencies of the natural attitude in order to formulate a theory of *our quotidian life* (after all, we live in that most of the time). This is why Husserl can refer to being in the natural attitude as “*in seiner Seinsgeltung sekundär*” (“a realm whose existential status is secondary”).¹⁴⁵ To return to the equivocal term of *Ton*, the question becomes: Can I refer to this sonic phenomenon *apodictically* as simply noise or simply music? *At the very outset*, no. *Ton*’s multivalence of meaning is therefore what we start with in order to broach the question of music (indeed, we cannot even take as a given the idea of whether music is *primary or secondary* existentially). This is only possible through a consideration of listening and the sonic phenomena of the world.

– *Gesammelte Werke*, (Springer Netherlands, 1991). Also see Edmund Husserl, *Husserliana: Gesammelte Werke*, ed. Herman L. van Breda and Samuel Ijsseling, vol. 1 (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1991), 45.

¹⁴² Husserl, *Husserliana*, 1, 2. (In German, 44.)

¹⁴³ Husserl, *Husserliana*, 1, 78. (In German, 112.)

¹⁴⁴ Husserl, *Husserliana*, 1, 79. (In German, 113.)

¹⁴⁵ Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations*, 21. (In German, 61.)

Sadly, Husserl, in nearly all of his works, focuses almost entirely on the visible spectrum of phenomena, hewing close to the visuality of the *eidōs* (even as he expanded its definition to encompass ‘objects of inquiry’ such as *Ton*). There are a few scattered other references in *Ideen*, such as §44, where he speaks of a *Geigenton* (violin sound), or §78, where he uses the memory of a piece of music to think through the past. (He uses “melody” to explicate his theory of inner time-consciousness, as well, though, since we, in that particular instance, would deal with an already established musical framework, I prefer that it is bracketed, if only for the moment – time being, as it were.)

Husserl’s student, Martin Heidegger, took his teacher’s basic theorization of perception and expanded it, noting that his own philosophical investigations “*sind nur möglich geworden auf dem Boden, den E. Husserl gelegt*” (“only became possible out of the ground laid bare by Husserl”).¹⁴⁶ Naturally, though, there are some differences, as Heidegger was ultimately concerned, at least in his early writings, with the construction of a fundamental ontology. Even so, roughly (not precisely) analogous to the process of the *ἐποχή*, Heidegger notes that one must begin with the “*Boden*” (“soil”).¹⁴⁷ He also, similarly, posited something akin to the natural attitude, the passivity of which means that, with regards to the terminology of being (and thus, if I may be so bold, many phenomena) “*jeder gebraucht ihn ständig und versteht auch schon, was er je damit meint*” (“everyone uses it constantly and also already understands what is meant by it”).¹⁴⁸ Thus we turn not to these secondary, “natural” concretions, but “*zu den Sachen selbst!*” (“to the things themselves!”)¹⁴⁹ “In suspending habitual assumptions, we can better appreciate the ways in which

¹⁴⁶ Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* (Tübingen: M. Niemeyer, 2006), 38. All English, unless noted, is taken from Joan Stambaugh’s translation of Heidegger, *Being and Time*. This translation is mine.

¹⁴⁷ Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, 3.

¹⁴⁸ Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, 2.

¹⁴⁹ Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, 28.

the sonic environment not only interpellates us, through ideology, but constitutes us, as ontological beings.”¹⁵⁰ Therefore, we follow this path towards Heidegger, who, crucially, spent a great deal of time concerned with questions of listening. Thus, while we acknowledge the debt that Heidegger owes to Husserl in “*Zuehrung und Freundschaft*” (“reverence and friendship”), which accrues ever more ethical interest, we will depart here with Heidegger’s theorization in *Sein und Zeit* and others in order to more thoroughly think about the process of listening, which always already accompanies musical apprehension – the two concatenated.¹⁵¹ As Heidegger notes, the “*akustische Vernehmen*” (“acoustic apprehension”) is “*gründet*” (“grounded”) in “*Hören*” (“listening”), and from there we proceed.¹⁵²

* * *

Listening as listening has been seldom dealt with in the philosophical tradition. Even the great theorist of perception, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, generally left the field fallow. Perhaps it is because “listening” is the most interior of senses – and therefore the one most often passed over and above those senses that are farther away. Nietzsche vomited and smelled in equal measure; Merleau-Ponty touched and saw. When listening is studied, it is often specifically in the context of listening to music, though, as I have argued, this is putting the cart before the horse, especially if we want to actually consider music, as we do here. With the rise of sound studies we have begun to think about other auditory phenomena, yet these works often lack a phenomenological perspective (even if one lays there, tacit).

¹⁵⁰ Pettman, *Sonic Intimacy*, 1.

¹⁵¹ Pettman, *Sonic Intimacy*, v. Translation modified.

¹⁵² Pettman, *Sonic Intimacy*, 163. Translation modified.

Jean-Luc Nancy neatly lays out the problem, and I will quote him here at length:

Assuming that there is still sense in asking questions about the limits, or about some limits, of philosophy (assuming, then, that a fundamental rhythm of illimitation and limitation does not comprise the permanent pace of philosophy itself, with a variable cadence, which might today be accelerated), we will ponder this: Is listening something of which philosophy is capable? Or—we'll insist a little, despite everything, at the risk of exaggerating the point—hasn't philosophy superimposed upon listening, beforehand and of necessity, or else substituted for listening, something else that might be more on the order of understanding? Isn't the philosopher someone who always hears (and who hears everything), but who cannot listen, or who, more precisely, neutralizes listening within himself, so that he can philosophize? [...] Here we want to prick up the philosophical ear: to tug the philosopher's ear in order to draw it toward what has always solicited or represented philosophical knowledge less than what presents itself to view—form, idea, painting, representation, aspect, phenomenon, composition—but arises instead in accent, tone, timbre, resonance, and sound.¹⁵³

Nancy's diagnosis of philosophy's generalized and severely sonophobia-presenting hyperacusis (emphatically *not* hypoacusis) is undoubtedly correct. In just the few examples that we showed above, not just Marx and Zuckerkandl, but Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, as well, we saw a broad aversion to the dictum “to the things themselves,” as if the *to*, the *zu* was somehow absent (and thus remains under-/un-interrogated). Hence, following Nancy, yet pushing just a little bit further, we ought to consider precisely the *exhortation* in this “hortator's lament” (to purloin a phrase from American doom metal band Toadliquoer) to prick up the philosophical ear. By drawing our attention, our philosophical ears, to *this exhortation*, is Nancy not already over-writing (in a quite literal sense) the experience of listening? Who or what compels the pricking up of the ear? And what are the modalities of this giving of attention – we can be compelled to listen, but we can also *choose* to listen – that Nancy points us towards? In other words, put more simply: “How might we attend to the act of listening itself, rather than to a specific sound? Moreover, how might we do so in a way that does not presume anything essential about the listener?”¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³ Jean-Luc Nancy, *Listening*, trans. Charlotte Mandell (Bronx, NY: Fordham University Press, 2007), 1-3. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/j.ctt14bs049>.

¹⁵⁴ Pettman, *Sonic Intimacy*, 1.

Martin Heidegger, early in *Sein und Zeit*, crafted something like a provisional answer to this question of understanding listening without presumption. He divides the apprehension of aural phenomena essentially into two registers, *hören* and *hорchen* (hearing and hearkening). “*Das Hören konstituiert sogar die primäre und eigentliche Offenheit des Daseins für sein eigenstes Seinkönnen.*“ (“Listening constitutes the primary and authentic openness of Dasein for its ownmost possibility of being.”)¹⁵⁵ Harkening, on the other hand, is, according to Heidegger, a ‘layer’ on top of listening, which allows us to interact with the world surrounding us; even in the later lectures on Heraclitus, when Heidegger characterizes hearkening as *the* truly authentic (*eigentlich*) sense of listening, he nevertheless characterizes it as a *modality* of *Hinhören*, which is generally translated as “attending-to,” but which may be more literally translated as a “listening-towards,” which still implies a deeper, yet more primordial listening, which can be thus directed.¹⁵⁶ However, hearkening is more primal (“*ursprünglicher*”) than what the psychologist would ‘normatively’ (or perhaps ‘empirically’) define as hearing, which would imply an activeness that would already run over and beyond this very simple and constitutive interaction with the world.¹⁵⁷ Heidegger, thus, identifies a similar problem with the consideration of listening as Nancy.

Heidegger links this primal hearing (*Hören*) directly with discourse. Yet, crucial to Heidegger, especially when it comes to the ontological constitution of Dasein in discourse, is the idea of *silence*, which is also linked with listening. To begin to understand *listening*, we take a detour into silence. Yet how can one begin to theorize silence? Approaches predicated on non-poetic language would seem to fail here, as silence, in its everyday usage (the empirical level of Heidegger’s psychologist, in other words), would be an absence. Thus the attempts to gesture

¹⁵⁵ Pettman, *Sonic Intimacy*, 163.

¹⁵⁶ Heidegger, *Heraklit*, 245. “Wir nennen *dieses* noch gar nichts ‚hörende‘ Hinhören *das* Horchen.“ Emphasis mine.

¹⁵⁷ Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*.

towards silence may appear to be merely a variation on negative theologies. This is to say that ‘silence,’ as an aporia, would manage to elude language and even, perhaps, communicability. At the same time, one wonders whether silence can even exist. R. Murray Schafer, the founder of modern sound studies, asked a group of adults what silence was; a common refrain was its impossibility, at least according to the commonsense definition of silence as absence.¹⁵⁸ We can begin to see a duality of silence emerging here: a silence of absence and a silence that is something *other*.

How might this other quality of silence be squared with the idea of silence as absence? I posit that there are, in fact, two modes of silence in Heideggerian thought. I hope to delineate the two and consider them in relation to their disclosive potential in order to reckon with listening writ large. Drawing both from *Being and Time* and contemporary sound studies, especially in the work of Schafer, I argue that, though the commonsensical notion of silence is thinkable in Heidegger, there is a deeper ontological structure of silence that is more closely related to the phenomenon of the soundscape, the sonic *manifold* of our being-in-the-world.

In order to think through the possibility of varying structures of silence in relation to the soundscape, it is worthwhile to think about similar phenomenological accounts in *Being and Time*. The most famous iteration of the trope of multiple perceptive ‘structures’ with regards to a single phenomenon is the *Zeug*-analysis, especially the derived notion of *Zuhandenheit* and *Vorhandenheit*, being-to-/being-at-hand. More salient, however, is the relationship between *Rede* (discourse) and *Gerede* (idle talk), the former of which Heidegger specifically mentions in conjunction with the primal hearing, as this pertains specifically to the aural dimension.

¹⁵⁸ Raymond Murray Schafer, *A Sound Education: 100 Exercises in Listening and Sound-Making* (Indian River, Ont., Canada: Arcana Editions, 1992), 101.

I hope to recapitulate and analyze these two phenomena in order to think through the wider problem of the soundscape as it is related to the notion or the notions of silence. Can the aural phenomenon of the soundscape be *silenced*? Is there an ontical and an ontological silence, just as there is *Gerede* and *Rede*? As both speech and soundscape pertain to listening, it becomes necessary to turn to Heidegger to speak towards an understanding of the differences of *Rede* and *Gerede*.

Between the two there is something of a desynchronicity, a slip, a lapse into passivity, which, assuredly, is natural, in the sense of the natural attitude, yet just as naturally is also a thwarting of authentic phenomenological apprehension and engagement therewith. The question emerges: What is the role of the status of “having fallen prey to...” in the language known as *Gerede*? And, subsequently, how can *Verfallenheit* be applied to silence?

Fundamentally, discourse is the possibilizing of intelligibility in Dasein’s interaction with the world around it. As Heidegger says, “Discourse is discourse about...” which is to say that it is merely a *structure*, the pathways that allow for communication and growth, and, importantly, understanding and disclosure.¹⁵⁹ However, for Heidegger, all of this is contingent on listening, which is always a listening to..., just as discourse is always already a discourse about... It requires an attunement to the other and to the world, such that our apprehension and phenomenological engagement in the act of hearing is not limited to a mere “multiplicity of tone data.”¹⁶⁰

The ultimate potential of discourse is disclosure. As language *qua* discourse (which is to say, phenomenologically apprehended as such) is one of the defining levels of the existential-ontological (as opposed to the superficial existentiell-ontical), “the disclosing of existence can

¹⁵⁹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 156.

¹⁶⁰ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 158.

become the true aim of ‘poetic’ speech.”¹⁶¹ And, as Heidegger tells us, this disclosure is that Dasein is thrown, and its ownmost possibility is death, and so on. In a far too abbreviated fashion, the fleetingness of existence is meant to motivate one to live authentically.¹⁶²

How, then, does discourse fall in stature to idle talk? Does it fall? Can one sentence be simultaneously discursive and idle? It would, of course, depend on the ears listening, but does Heidegger concede this double relationship? If discourse is defined ultimately by its potential to disclose, idle talk, being in a semi-oppositional status, limits the possibility of disclosure and/or denies it outright.¹⁶³ Heidegger refers to this as a “closing off” of disclosure.¹⁶⁴ It is also explicitly noted that idle talk is constituted by “discoursing [that] has lost the primary relation of the being [Sein] to the beings [Seienden] talked about.” As earlier in his discussion of the *Verfallenheit* (“falling prey to...”), Heidegger insists that this is not a post-lapsarian relationship; there is nothing *immoral* or *unethical* about idle talk, nor should it be condemned outright as “fallen.”¹⁶⁵ In other words, *Verfallenheit* “has for him not an axiological but only an ontological sense.”¹⁶⁶ It is not a value judgment, rather something that emerges out of *unintelligibility*. However, unintelligibility is always already defined solely by the listener, who apprehends the sounds.

Intelligibility, however, is a standard characteristic of language. What is more important, at least for the disclosive aspect of language apprehension, is *understanding*. Idle talk and discourse are both intelligible. However, what is disclosed, namely thrownness, is not necessarily

¹⁶¹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 157.

¹⁶² It is worth pointing out that this is similar to the philosophical apprehension of music as articulated by Nietzsche and Schoenberg, where man realized his own dissolving against the backdrop of the ontologically-indeterminate notes, thrown as they are out of the bell of a horn and the chimney of the bassoon.

¹⁶³ Of course, in Heidegger, the relationship between the two is explicit even orthographically: *Rede* and *Gerede*.

¹⁶⁴ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 163.

¹⁶⁵ “[The] falling prey of Dasein must not be interpreted as a ‘fall’ from a purer and higher ‘primordial condition.’” Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 169. (In German, 176.)

¹⁶⁶ William J. Richardson, *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought* (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2003), 40.

logically able to be reckoned with in a strictly intelligible manner, which is to say within the schema of language that strives for precision – a one-to-one signification. (Obviously, this is impossible given the overdetermination of language, however, it is often taken as the *goal* of speaking, see the desire for a scientific language or “languages with a specified structure,” which is to say a “formalized” language.¹⁶⁷) What therefore matters for disclosing is understanding, which has little to do with the ability to be schematized in an intelligible manner. One simply understands. That is the nature of disclosing, and it is impossible with the goal of the one-to-one signification (‘scientific’ or *verifiable*, to use the parlance of the logical positivists, see above footnote – the quote of Alfred Tarski in particular), which is likely why Heidegger so strongly linked “poetic” discourse to the potential for disclosure; one can clearly see this division in “*Die Frage nach der Technik*” (“The Question Concerning Technology”) when Heidegger opposes “*Der Rhein*” as the river that is dammed and exploited towards a singular goal (“*Zweck*”) to “*Der Rhein*” of the Hölderlin hymn.¹⁶⁸ To put it another way, the ‘scientific’ goal would be something that speaks and reveals only once (revealing the potentiality for the extraction of power), whereas

¹⁶⁷ Alfred Tarski, "The Semantic Conception of Truth," in *Semantics and the Philosophy of Language: a Collection of Readings*, ed. Leonard Linsky (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1980), 18. “To specify the structure of a language, we must characterize unambiguously the class of those words and expressions which are to be considered *meaningful*. In particular, we must indicate all words which we decide to use without defining them... and we must give the so-called *rules of definition* for introducing new or *defined terms*... If in specifying the structure of a language we refer exclusively to the form of the expression involved, the language is said to be *formalized*. In such a language theorems are the only sentences which can be asserted.” Emphasis original.

See also Rudolf Carnap’s “Empiricism, Semantics, and Ontology” in the same volume. “If someone decides to accept the thing language, there is no objection against saying that he has accepted the world of things. But this must not be interpreted as if it meant his acceptance of a *belief* in the reality of the thing world; there is no such belief or assertion or assumption because it is not a theoretical question. To accept the thing world means nothing more than to accept a certain form of language... to accepted rules for forming statements and for testing, accepting, or rejecting them. Thus the acceptance of the thing language leads, on the basis of observations made, also to the acceptance, belief, and assertion of certain statements. But **the thesis of the reality of the thing world cannot be among these statements because it cannot be formulated in the thing language.**” Rudolf Carnap, "Empiricism, Semantics, and Ontology," in *Semantics and the Philosophy of Language: a Collection of Readings*, ed. Leonard Linsky (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1980), 211. Italics emphasis in the original; bold emphasis mine. Of course, for a more “fun” take on these issues, the reader is suggested to enjoy the comic "Verificationist Man," *Existential Comics*, <http://existentialcomics.com/comic/374>.

¹⁶⁸ Martin Heidegger, *Die Frage nach der Technik* (1954), 16-17. // Martin Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, trans. William Lovitt (New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 2013), 16.

the poem of that great *Dichter* murmurs ceaselessly throughout history, always potentially revealing. This is inextricably linked with the understanding that walks hand in hand with the disclosing of ontological information that defies simple communicability such as one would find in quotidian chatter of tourists in thinking (what Heidegger refers to as a *Reisegesellschaft*¹⁶⁹) – *Gerede*.

Both idle talk and discourse can be intelligible, indeed be the same intelligible phrase, but only one is ontologically disclosive. One phenomenon can have multiple phenomenologies, which depend on the status (*Befindlichkeit*) of the apprehender thereof; this will be picked up in greater detail in the fourth chapter. This realization, based on the listening to...of *Rede* and *Gerede* can be applied to silence.

To recapitulate, silence, as a part of discourse, is related, in Heidegger, to listening.¹⁷⁰ But every listening is a listening to...as we noted. To what do we listen when we fall into a state of silence, when the word breaks off? The soundscape. One *hearkens* to the soundscape, we hear the moments that surprise us and attune us to the belistened dimension of the world, such as when a heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system kicks on, and only then is the rest of the world which had fallen into a state of disregard brought back to the fold of attention. In such a sense, Heidegger can state that “[h]eardening is itself phenomenally more primordial than what the psychologist ‘initially’ defines as hearing, the sensing of tones and the perception of sounds [*Lauten*].”¹⁷¹ Heidegger speaks of tones and sounds, individual discrete elements to which attention can be paid, though they need not be. *Lauten* are, variously, phonemes or auditory moments, events, and so forth, and the term derives from the same root as “loudness.” This is

¹⁶⁹ Heidegger, *Die Frage nach der Technik*.

¹⁷⁰ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 169. (In German, 176.)

¹⁷¹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 164.

precisely *not* what is revealed in silence. These elements (Heidegger gives the examples of “the column on the march, the north wind, the woodpecker tapping, the crackling fire”) are those which ‘grab’ our attention, so to speak, in a way that is utterly central to our being-in-the-world.¹⁷² But these would be ontic-existential, akin to idle talk. They have the potential, for us, to strike us into deeper silence, or merely be part of our everyday engagement with the world, parts of the soundscape that are strikingly removed by attention in the genuine sense of having fallen prey to the world. In this way, to return to the later Heraclitus lectures, where Heidegger will assert that hearkening is the authentic listening, Heidegger will still insist that it is “*bei*” (“through” or “with” or should we think topologically, “at”) hearkening, that we can *begin to approach* the “*Lied der Erde*” – the song of the Earth (an appellation that will make greater sense in the next chapter) – which would still necessarily imply this ontologically prior modality of listening that we have been asserting.¹⁷³ “*Das Hörendürfen auf das Lied der Erde bedingt es, daß unser Hören ein sinnliches ist, das der Sinneswerkzeuge, des Ohres, bedarf. Hören und Hören ist somit nicht das Selbe.*“ (“The ability to listen to the song of the Earth presupposes that our listening is a sensual one, dependent on our sense-tools, the ears. Listening and listening are not the same.”)¹⁷⁴ This very basic listening, the listening that is always listening, I assert, is the primordial *-hören* of the *Hinhören*, of which hearkening is only a modality – though quite possibly a very effective one in terms of gesturing towards the song of the Earth.¹⁷⁵

Hence, “*ein kleiner Wink für das Hören sei gegeben,*“ says Heidegger, in a much later essay, “*Es gilt, nicht eine Reihe von Aussagesätzen anzuhören, sondern dem Gang des Zeigens zu folgen.*” (“Let me give a little hint on how to listen. The point is not to listen to a series of

¹⁷² Heidegger, *Being and Time*.

¹⁷³ Heidegger, *Heraklit*, 247.

¹⁷⁴ Heidegger, *Heraklit*. Translation mine.

¹⁷⁵ For Heidegger, this is, with reference to Heraclitus, ἀκούειν.

propositions, but rather to following the movement of gesturing.”)¹⁷⁶ Paying attention to *all* of these small sounds, these *Lauten*, which crackle and snap and surprise us, would drive us to a sort of *curious* (*neugierig*) engagement with the world, where we would simply “*such[en] das Neue nur, um von ihm erneut zu Neuem abzuspringen*” (“seek novelty only to leap from it anew to another novelty”).¹⁷⁷ It is not possible. Heidegger rightfully points out that such an experience would be “chaos,” that must “be formed” for the “subject” to land in “a ‘world.’”¹⁷⁸ But he is speaking here not of the drone of the soundscape, the pulse, the rhythm of the world and the heartbeat, but rather attempting to explain why one cannot pay attention to all things – or, if one can, in a state of fallenness, why this would be distracting from an authentic engagement with a “‘world.’” We must not hear a “multiplicity of tone data.”¹⁷⁹ This would be like listening to a Cecil Taylor album with the intention of picking out each and every key being played on the piano, instead of engaging with the holistic experience. “Taylor’s intense keyboard dissertations hit the ear as great wedges of sound rather than single lines. It is the overall *effect* of his music to which the listener responds.”¹⁸⁰ Fred Moten refers to the phenomenon of Taylor’s playing as a “blur.”¹⁸¹ The listener, in listening, also would include the *supplementary harmony* of the rest of the worldly hum that we experience; this supplementary harmony will be explicated in greater detail in the third chapter). Silence allows one the possibility to breathe and hear one’s breath as part of a larger breathing of the world, shared *alongside and equiprimordially* with the “north wind” *ontologically*.

¹⁷⁶ Martin Heidegger, *Zur Sache des Denkens*, vol. 4 (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 2007), 6. Translation from: Heidegger, *On Time and Being*, 2. Translation modified.

¹⁷⁷ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 166. (In German, 172.)

¹⁷⁸ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 164.

¹⁷⁹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*.

¹⁸⁰ Valerie Wilmer, *As Serious as Your Life: Black Music and the Free Jazz Revolution, 1957-1977* (London: Serpent's Tail, 2018), 23.

¹⁸¹ Fred Moten, *In the Break: the Aesthetics of Black Radical Tradition* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 42-43.

We see emerging, as in the case of *Rede* and *Gerede* and *Hören* and *Horchen*, a twofold structure of silence. One is the everyday engagement with the noises of the world. This is the level of the ignored soundscape, out of which we can be shaken by ‘startling’ or ‘frightening’ noises, which contain in them the potential for ontological silence, but do not *necessarily* cause it. When the HVAC air ducts settle into the hum of everyday life, they become an average experience, much like *Gerede*. Indeed, the passivity that is suggested by the prefix *ge-* is aptly metaphoric for this type of engagement, which is a sort of active passivity, a subconscious, constant ordering of one’s own attention in order to facilitate an ease of interaction with the surrounding world. The *other* silence is the silence that is what Bernard P. Dauenhauer calls “deep” silence, the silence that stands prior to the silence that is the absence of ontically present language.¹⁸² This is the silence that is present when one cannot *but* hear the surrounding world, stand in wonder at one’s own place in the soundscape, a “settled-though-unsettleable silence which is interwoven or interspersed with sound expression.”¹⁸³ This is the silence that recognizes the structure of the *in* (the *Da*), or, per Dauenhauer, the *in* that is inherent in any such formulation of the “inter,” which characterizes his understanding of deep silence. Dauenhauer’s formulation as elaborated here is broadly consistent with Heidegger’s methodology, which as Derrida noted, requires one to pay attention not merely to the “vulgar” use of language (i.e. common, related to *das Man*, the “they,” the anonymous personages that make up a chattering, ontic world), but also the meaning that “is announced beyond it” – in this case, that which remains beyond hearkening, which is not merely given to those who quest after *λογος* but shared among all.¹⁸⁴ In such a way, we are here

¹⁸² Bernard P. Dauenhauer, "On Silence," *Research in Phenomenology* 3 (1973): 18, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24654255>.

¹⁸³ Dauenhauer, "On Silence," 19.

¹⁸⁴ Jacques Derrida, *Heidegger: The Question of Being and History*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 160.

continuing, in a very real sense, the deconstruction of logocentrism, by focusing on supplementary, yet more primordial, listening, beyond the so-called authenticity of hearkening, which leads us to the supplementary, yet deeper, silence.

Inspired by this gesturing beyond, we can, following the late Heidegger's semiotic playfulness, differentiate these in terms of spelling: *Schweigen* and *Schweygen*, an orthographic variation that is attested to in the Grimms' *Deutsches Wörterbuch*. The spelling that *seems* wrong to our modern eyes is that which contains in it, both by this perceived incorrectitude and its very status as 'more primordial' in a very literal, philological sense, the potential to consider more deeply the meaning of silence.¹⁸⁵ For *Schweygen* is what we always carry with us, as it is one of our ownmost engagements with the world. *Schweygen* is a becoming still (*sich stillen*), becoming passive (or rather, perhaps, a return to a more primordial passivity, instead of the passivity of apprehension that characterizes the Husserlian natural attitude), which allows the hearing of the world *and* the self to occur. In this sense, it is clear why silence, *Schweygen* is taken to be necessary in order to experience the "*Gewissensruf*" ("call of conscience") which is "*ein Modus der Rede*" ("a mode of *discourse*").¹⁸⁶ The self, in the call, "*ist aufgerufen zu ihm selbst, das heißt zu seinem eigensten Seinkönnen*" ("is *summoned* to itself, that is to its ownmost potentiality-of-being").¹⁸⁷ This entails a deeper modality of *Hören* (hearing) – precisely the same deeper understanding that we already gestured towards as more primordial than *Horchen* (hearkening) – that Heidegger describes as "*verloren[]*" ("lost").¹⁸⁸ The understanding of a more primordial hearing leading towards authentic/ownmost experiencing can adumbrate the following from Brandon Absher: "The ab-sent self to which one is summoned in the call of conscience is therefore not an entity

¹⁸⁵ Heidegger, *Heraklit*, 344-46.

¹⁸⁶ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 259. (In German, 269.) Emphasis original.

¹⁸⁷ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 263. (In German, 273.) Emphasis original.

¹⁸⁸ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 261. (In German, 271.)

within the world but the open space of possibilities within which any entity may be intelligible at all, the basic background in which any entity is intelligible as such.”¹⁸⁹ The “background” of intelligibility is the possibility of one’s place in the world – this is only locatable in the silence which is not commonsensical, which is not *Schweigen*, but rather in the silence that reveals the impossibility of silence, *Schweygen*.

This is why Dauenhauer can posit that “without performances of silence, neither man nor world can appear.”¹⁹⁰ Without this modality of silence, which undergirds all listening (and thus, also, in a Heideggerian sense, all discourse), we would lack the medium in which phenomenological apprehension could occur. We must remember that, for Heidegger,

while things are disclosed to us, that disclosure always takes place within a larger structure in which we ourselves as well as the things are already given together – the disclosure of things *to* us is thus properly the occurrence of a more primordial disclosure in which we are disclosed along with other entities within the world as a whole.¹⁹¹

This is precisely why I have drawn attention to the idea of the sonic manifold, as only by capitulating to it (a “performance” of silence, a being-struck-dumb) can we open ourselves up to something like the call of conscience, which is to say the ontological registers of the apprehension of being.

We risk here falling into a simple metaphysical duality, where deep silence, *Schweygen*, is held over and above the vulgar *Schweigen*. After all, Jeff Malpas, for one, asserts that Heidegger “holds to a metaphysical perspective” in this sort of division.¹⁹² Despite Heidegger’s fervent assertions that he isn’t creating a sort of metaphysical hierarchy, it certainly seems that one modality of silence is related to a more mystical experience, namely the call of conscience, which

¹⁸⁹ Brandon Absher, "Speaking of Being: Language, Speech, and Silence in 'Being and Time'," *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 30, no. 2 (2016): 222, <https://doi.org/10.5325/jspecphil.30.2.0204>.

¹⁹⁰ Dauenhauer, "On Silence," 129.

¹⁹¹ Jeffrey Edward Malpas, *Heidegger's Topology: Being, Place, World* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008), 182.

¹⁹² Malpas, *Heidegger's Topology*, 202.

brings Dasein towards a more authentic way of being. To quote Derrida on the topic, “one cannot go on in this way.”¹⁹³ A more materialist (used in the broadest possible sense) or phenomenological perspective would have no space for this sort of miraculous *Ruf*; I posit that the way out of this particular division is to incorporate the idea of the soundscape as a *sonic manifold*, something tangible and phenomenologically apprehendable. As the name would suggest, this is something akin to a “landscape, [a] field of cultivation, place of worship field of battle or conquest, raw material, and so on... [This] is historical,” which, as Derrida points out, is typically a warning that we are about to broach into a metaphysics of presence.¹⁹⁴ But the soundscape is not precisely like this, as it is not readily apprehendable, as a tool or the extractive processes that render ore available to the miner. It is, precisely, something *other*. One does not mine the soundscape; one can create field recordings, but that is simply displacing the apprehension of sound from one topos to another – or, more accurately, adding to a future soundscape in another place.¹⁹⁵ Phenomenologically speaking, we are beginning to reach the sonic manifold, in which the clatter of mining equipment is always already emplaced.

The manifold characteristic of the sonic environment has been explained in the work of R. Murray Schafer, the Canadian composer, artist, and theorist, in particular when he coined the term “soundscape.” As noted, the idea of the “landscape,” the soundscape implies an emplacement, a thereness of being – which is consonant and in harmonic alignment with the *Da* of *Dasein*, to say nothing of Heidegger’s later work on the fourfold and dwelling. Schafer was frequently a polemical writer, inveighing variously against electro-acoustic musical reproduction, noise

¹⁹³ Derrida, *Heidegger: The Question of Being and History*, 202.

¹⁹⁴ Derrida, *Heidegger: The Question of Being and History*, 208.

¹⁹⁵ One can argue that the soundscape can be despoiled, such as with noise pollution. This is a question for ecological thinkers, not necessarily something at the level of the relationship between Dasein (or subject) and the world.

pollution (“sound sewage,” he called it at one point)¹⁹⁶, and, in his eyes, obsolete music pedagogical techniques, which he viewed (probably correctly) as stifling to the children’s creativity and reinforcing (or reifying, in the commodity sense, though he was somewhat disillusioned about Marxism after an early trip across the Iron Curtain) ideas about sound and the autonomy of the work that many, notably John Cage and his colleagues and students at the Black Mountain College and elsewhere (Kurt Schwitters’s *Ursonate* also deserves a mention), had already begun to completely dismantle. These ideas can be found in his numerous pamphlets, such as the seminal and programmatic *The New Soundscape* (1969), many essays of which were later compiled into other works, like (the symptomatically-titled) *Voices of Tyranny, Temples of Silence* (1993). In such a sense, he was a sort of an ecologically minded Marshall McLuhan for the medium of sound, which makes genealogical sense, as he studied under McLuhan during his early university years.¹⁹⁷ (McLuhan’s early coinage of “acoustic space” was eventually patricidally discarded by the upstart “soundscape.”)

Given Schafer’s pedigree and association with other media theorists, one may wonder what he’s doing placed so prominently by Heidegger. Aside from the fact that they each held somewhat problematic or at least troubling views with regards to nostalgia for a past that may or may not have existed (Pettman notes simply that Schafer is “highly romantic”)¹⁹⁸ – in other words, a vague anti-modernism – Schafer was, at bottom, an eminently phenomenological thinker, as his recent biographer Scott identified.¹⁹⁹ Rarely (but by no means never), Schafer’s connection and debt to phenomenological thinking was made explicit; in his essay, “Radical Radio,” for instance, he calls

¹⁹⁶ R. Murray Schafer, *The New Soundscape: a Handbook for the Modern Music Teacher* (Don Mills, Ont., Canada: B.M.I. Canada Limited, 1969), 19.

¹⁹⁷ Biographical information in this section was gleaned from: L. Brett Scott, *R. Murray Schafer: a Creative Life* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2019).

¹⁹⁸ Pettman, *Sonic Intimacy*, 68.

¹⁹⁹ Scott, *R. Murray Schafer*, 153.

for a phenomenological approach to broadcasting before underlining the importance of *paying attention* to the soundscape (which broadcasters rarely do, according to him) in a holistic method of perception.²⁰⁰ At stake and at bottom for Schafer is the notion that the world is something to which one needs to be attuned in order to study, dispensing, much as with Husserl and Heidegger, the metaphysical biases of the Western tradition. Despite all the facts and figures, science and statistics that he employs in *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World*, he returns most often to his own experience and perception in order to extrapolate wider points about human engagement with the world. Tellingly, he begins with a quote from Whitman: “Now I will do nothing but listen...” Finally, here, we may begin to arrive at the moment where we can start to heed Nancy, and listen to listening.

And the level of, shall we say, paralleling Dauenhauer, deep listening, we can only confront the soundscape, which constantly permeates experience like background radiation. “The term [soundscape] may refer to actual environments, or to abstract constructions such as musical compositions and tape montages, particularly when considered as an environment.”²⁰¹ Soundscapes, of course, can be at least partially constructed, as we see in site-specific compositions, such as Eric Powell’s recent *Swede Lake*,²⁰² a few of Schafer’s own works, and even Richard Wagner’s original plans for some of his operas,²⁰³ not to mention, somewhat oppositionally, anechoic chambers, which strive to being the quietest places on earth. But, in the end, all of the sounds, from trombone to birdsong, are ultimately an “ensemble,” as John Andrew

²⁰⁰ Raymond Murray Schafer, "Radical Radio," in *Voices of Tyranny: Temples of Silence* (Ontario, Canada: Arcana Editions, 1993).

²⁰¹ Schafer, *The Soundscape*, 274-75.

²⁰² Eric Powell, *Swede Lake* (Bandcamp, 2013).

²⁰³ “[H]aving completed the libretto for *Siegfrieds Tod* (ultimately *Götterdämmerung*) in 1850, [Wagner] told a friend he wanted it to be performed once only, in a temporary structure in the fields outside Zurich, which would then be burned to the ground in the finale of the opera. He also imaged it being performed in a temporary structure along the banks of the Rhine, or on a floating theatre on Lake Lucerne.” Celia Applegate, *The Necessity of Music: Variations on a German Theme* (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2020), 53.

Fisher reminds us.²⁰⁴ Taken phenomenologically, the soundscape makes perfect sense as the primordial substrate of listening, and it is something which accompanies us everywhere we go. One of the reasons why silence *qua* absence fails is that, while it can be theorized, it can never be experienced. John Cage once tried an anechoic chamber, only to find that he could hear the blood pulsing through his veins and even, perhaps, neurons firing, echoing the experience of Schreber's paranoia, characterized by an endless attack on his nerves by vibratory rays.²⁰⁵ (We will revisit the case of Schreber in the fourth chapter.) While the exact veracity of this particular tale is questionable, it does hit on a very real truth; we can never escape our bodies, which are constant sources of noise. Our beating heart is always with us, with the primordial diastole/systole rhythm line animating us. Even when early astronauts were in the vacuum of space, which, as all killjoys watching science fiction will tell you, does not permit any sound to travel, their jaws audibly popped and their hearts audibly beat (all while encased in a suit made by a division of Playtex). No matter how many times Schafer may warn us that our "soundscape is changing," the existence of the soundscape, in all of its vibratory capacity, as such is a privative, originary experience, which cannot but be ontologically constitutive of the experience of Dasein (or the subject or just humankind in general) – the sonic manifold, as I have called it.²⁰⁶

The soundscape thus has several characteristics, per Schafer, that we can thus apply to the notion of *Schweygen*. While it can be *ignored* (i.e. subsumed by the ontic silence), it cannot be stopped. As Schafer notes, "[t]he sense of hearing cannot be closed off at will. There are no earlids. When we go to sleep, our perception of sound is the last door to close and it is also the first to open

²⁰⁴ John Andrew Fisher, "What the Hills Are Alive With: In Defense of the Sounds of Nature," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 56, no. 2 (1998): 233-34, <https://doi.org/10.2307/432255>.

²⁰⁵ Cage, *Silence: Lectures and Writings*, 8.

²⁰⁶ Schafer, *The Soundscape*, 3.

when we awaken.”²⁰⁷ Even this last statement strikes me as too conservative, as anyone who has been woken up by the archetypal ‘bump in the night’ can attest; Michel Serres points this out, as well, noting that “[hearing] is still active and deep when our gaze has... gone to sleep.”²⁰⁸ But the point is salient: unlike sight and engagement with the visual dimension of the world, the *eidōs*, which can be momentarily marginalized, one cannot turn off one’s sonic engagement with the world, even when that sonic world consists merely of the sounds of one’s own body or vibratory experience.

It is here worth considering that our engagement with the soundscape should not be understood in the everyday sense of ‘hearing’ either, which falls prey to the simple binaristic view of silence that we are working so hard to escape. Both in biology and philosophy it is understood that hearing is a specialized form of touch. While modern acoustics has become much more precise, Schafer’s early statement holds true: “Anything in our world that moves vibrates air. If it moves in such a way that it oscillates at more than about 16 times a second this movement is heard as sound.”²⁰⁹ This, naturally, is dependent on several factors, such as age – not to mention the various gradations of hearing-impairment. But the membrane that picks up these vibrations is named in Latin the *tympanum*. If we consider the nearly homophonous drum, the timpani, we recognize that the drumhead is merely part of a larger body, which is needed to facilitate resonance (and which can itself pick up other vibrations if one is not careful); perhaps, then, we should call the human *tympanum* the eardrumhead. The entire body is the that which resonates. We are all eardrums.

As Jean-Luc Nancy noted, after drawing the connection between timbre and *tympanon*,

²⁰⁷ Schafer, *The Soundscape*, 11.

²⁰⁸ Michel Serres, *Genesis*, trans. Geneviève James and James Nielson (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 1995), 7.

²⁰⁹ Schafer, *The New Soundscape*, 5.

[t]imbre can be represented as the resonance of a stretched skin... and as the expansion of this resonance in the hollowed column of a drum. Isn't the space of the listening body, in turn, just such a hollow column over which a skin is stretched[?] ... A blow from outside, clamor from within, this sonorous, sonorized body undertakes a simultaneous listening to a "self" and to a "world" that are both in resonance... [T]hat skin stretched over its own sonorous cavity, this belly that listens to itself... it is my body.²¹⁰

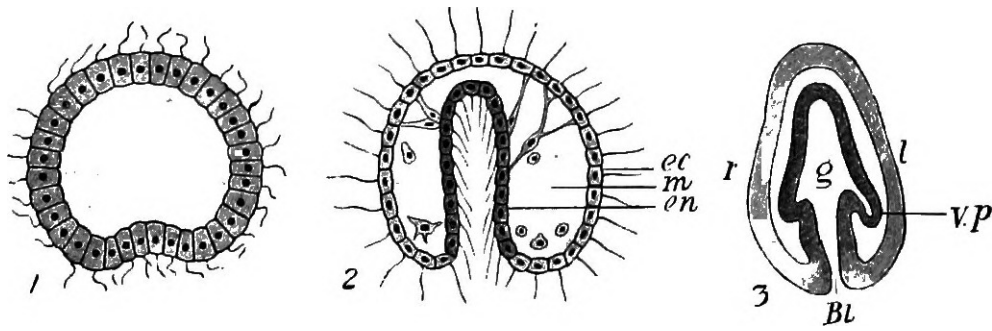


Figure 2: Arthur J. Thomson, *Gastrula Formation*

We can see the construction of the sonorous body in the above illustration of gastrula formation (Figure 2). The gastrula is one of the earliest stages of development, but one of the most crucial. Indeed, perhaps all notions of interiority go back to this primal level, as this stage heralds the construction of the endoderm, the membrane that allows for the bodily cavity to exist. It is the very possibility of the sonorous and sonorized body of Nancy, but it also shows that all insides were, at bottom, outsides turned inward. The membranous organ that we call skin, which is most associated with touch, is merely a mirror image of the wending of the various tracts of the body; the *tympanum* is merely one boundary point, but the body from which it is constructed does not stop at the ear. As Frances Dyson noted, “[b]ecause hearing is not a discrete sense, to hear is also to be touched, both physically and emotionally... In listening, one is engaged in a synergy with the world and the senses, a hearing/touch.”²¹¹

²¹⁰ Nancy, *Listening*, 42-43.

²¹¹ Frances Dyson, *Sounding New Media: Immersion and Embodiment in the Arts and Culture* (Berkeley, NY: University of California Press, 2009), 5.

Of course, Aristotle already knew this, even if he arrived here from a different perspective, as he outlined the primacy of touch in *Περί Ψυχῆς* (*On the Soul*)²¹² (Indeed, while it may seem reminiscent of Brian Wilson, one might reasonably accurately determine that the philosophy outlined here in this section is, at bottom, a theory of *vibrations* – or movement in general. As mentioned in the introduction, while much more work will need to be done on the subject, it is hoped that this at least gestures towards an approach that would not pass over the hearing-impaired/deaf communities from the, as it were, discourse. Sadly this is, for the moment, outside the scope of this work.) This is all to say that Schafer was completely correct to assert that there are no ‘earlids.’ Beyond this, the eardrum itself is something that stretches far beyond the normal confines of what is called hearing on the ontic level; our skin vibrates, too, albeit at a level that doesn’t necessarily get translated to ‘pure’ sonic perception as it is classically understood.²¹³ The sonic manifold, with all its various levels of vibration, is constantly surrounding us and constantly being perceived, if only tacitly acknowledged, pricking up our ears only when we hear *Lauten*, when we hearken to something sudden and surprising.

Thus, Schafer characterizes the soundscape in the following way: “everything is present at once... It is suprabiological.”²¹⁴ Schafer notes that the soundscape is suprabiological specifically in reference to the rapidly changing sonicity of the world during the Industrial Revolution (notably the introduction of the hum and drone of such things as the aforementioned air ducts), but it can be applied just as easily to the inquiries concomitant in questing after the apprehension of the aural dimension of the world. This is for two reasons. The first is relatively simple: the soundscape has

²¹² “Without touch it is impossible to have any other sense...”. Aristotle, *On the Soul*, trans. J. A. Smith (Cambridge, MA: The Internet Classics Archive, 1994), Online.

²¹³ Though it should be noted that the vestibulocochlear nerve is, at the very least, in “conversation” with other parts of the body, given that it is also responsible for balance.

²¹⁴ Schafer, *The Soundscape*, 78.

always been suprabiological. Much like an ecosystem at large, it is the sum (or more) of a variety of interactions between biotic and abiotic factors, such as the howling of the wind.²¹⁵ The second is that this sort of interaction with the soundscape is precisely *irreducible to* biology. It cannot be simply explained away by the firing of neurons, as it is thoroughly related to the deepest perceptual elements; to prioritize the former over the latter is to put the cart before the horse. We are part of a broader world of conflicting media (used here in its widest sense), a world that is beyond biology in a sense that is not only scientific but also perceptual.

So what does it mean that, in the soundscape, “everything is present at once”? None other than this, as I have noted elsewhere: All of the sounds occur simultaneously. While some of the birdcalls are recognizable... they are subsumed into the chorus of my surroundings. This is precisely what Schafer refers to as a lo-fi [low-fidelity] environment. To push on the lo-fi... it derives from “low fidelity.” There is a truth to these sounds, but given the topology of my surroundings, the possibility of echo, and the overwhelming nature of the soundscape, the sounds become untrue to the mechanisms of their (re)production. As Schafer puts it, “there is no perspective in the lo-fi soundscape.”²¹⁶ In yet another instance of the suprabiological, the eminently biological sounds are divorced and split from their creators by the nature of their embeddedness in the world. The soundscape is unique to every individual, every perceptual emplacement, every moment in time. Certain sounds can be picked out, given attention, but they cannot separate themselves fully from the larger background radiation that is the experiencing of

²¹⁵ This has been explored especially, if tacitly, thoroughly in the field of acoustic ecology and the works of various field recordists, such as Irv Teibel, mastermind of the popular *Environments* series, and *musique concrete*-inspired ecological composers, such as Hildegard Westerkamp, creator of the monumental album *Transformations*.

²¹⁶ Schafer, *The New Soundscape*, 78.

the soundscape that is a constitutive element of being-in-the-world; in other words, the soundscape is not the aforementioned “series of propositions,” but “rather... the movement of gesturing.”²¹⁷

What then, do we find as disclosed in *Schweygen*, that falling silent *in the face of the world*? When we fall ontologically silent (i.e. into deep silence), instead of just ignoring the soundscape, the *lack of perspective* in the soundscape is revealed – the simultaneity of a world that is nevertheless *not fidelitous* in our perception. The application of perspective in the soundscape is to pass over this more primordial engagement, to attempt to grapple with it in terms of “tone data,” instead of accepting it as necessarily “lo-fi,” to use Schafer’s term, necessarily and intricately monolithic in its wholeness, yet irreparably split by all of the strange ways that sound is permuted over distance, time, and, perhaps especially, one’s own *Befindlichkeit*, the modalities of one’s own attunement to the world, how one finds oneself at a given sliver of time. These modalities will be explored in greater depth in the fourth chapter. It is in the experiencing of the lo-fi nature of the soundscape where we can begin to see the cracks of the systematicity of Heidegger’s thinking in *Being & Time*, following Derrida towards what is gestured beyond. As a ground, the perception of the soundscape is fairly frightfully without a ground, constantly changing and never fully present, shot through with reverb and echo. It is a positive *Bodenlosigkeit*, groundlessness, in the sense that it is, of course ontologically constitutive (being that it is related to *Rede* and forms a sonic manifold of the world), but it reveals the flaws in notions of presence. It is not for nothing that Schafer defines the lo-fi in terms of schizophonia.²¹⁸ It is a splitting that is nevertheless apprehended

²¹⁷ Heidegger, *On Time and Being*, 2.

²¹⁸ Schafer, *The New Soundscape*, 90. While Schafer used “schizophonia” specifically to discuss a sound’s separation from its source via electro-acoustic reproduction, we can also see the lo-fi nature of the soundscape, where it is difficult, if not impossible, to hear the precise coordinates of things without a great deal of straining and practice. This critique of Schafer has been mounted by R. J. Goebel, “Auditory Desires, Auditory Fears: The Sounds of German Literary Modernism,” *Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift* 66 (2016). Beyond these critiques, however, there are inklings, though perhaps unconscious, of this more omnipresent view of schizophonia even within Schafer’s own corpus. In particular, his calligraphy project *The Sixteen Scribes* opens up towards this

holistically, similar to a characterization of space that Heidegger mentions in a later note, which describes “a peculiar unity of places that [is] not split up.”²¹⁹ Is the soundscape not precisely, schizophonicly, a peculiar unity, a movement, of a variety of different sounds that is *not split up*, reducible to mere tone data only when one has fallen prey to the ontical *Schweigen*? In such a manner that takes the manifold as its starting point, we can take a critical stance similar yet importantly contrary to that of Michel Serres, who asserts that “noise cannot be a phenomenon; every phenomenon is separated from it, a silhouette on a backdrop, like a beacon against the fog.”²²⁰ Where we depart from Serres is that *noise itself is always already separated from itself*. However much ‘noise’ functions as a manifold, this manifold is itself equivocally constituted ontologically. The fog obscures itself and thus reveals itself. After all, when phenomena “appear,

primordially fragmented understanding of disclosure and discourse. The project is, essentially, 16 *slightly different* calligraphic renderings of the following ‘story’:

The king has sixteen scribes and everything he spoke was copied out carefully by each of the scribes to be sent to the most distant provinces where local governors were waiting to act on the orders contained in the sixteen letters. Each day the letters left the palace in care of special messengers who sped out simultaneously in sixteen directions. It was absolutely essential for good government and prosperity of the realm that all governors should receive identical messages. For this reason, the scribes were most carefully chosen for the accuracy and neatness of their writing style. For years, this arrangement produced the most satisfactory results until one day, a scribe made a fatal mistake which plunged the entire realm into tumult. It was not known at first which of the letters contained the fatal flaw. Allegations were piled on allegations, everyone pointing to one or another detail in the scripts and accusing one or another of the scribes of having precipitated the catastrophe: for by now every government in the realm was at war with every other government. There were unlimited theories but no one knew for sure and it was generally admitted that the matter would have to wait until the wars were over and histories could assemble and compare the sixteen transcriptions of the king’s message. Only then would the matter be clear up beyond all doubt.†

Whilst it may seem that this would be directly analogous to Schafer’s criticism of electro-acoustic reproduction (i.e. as a form of mediation like the transcription), that is only the meta-perspective of the readers of the book themselves. We, the readers, are encouraged by the set-up and the text to function as detectives, to sniff out which of the scribes caused the catastrophe in the kingdom. This would be something akin to the “semiotic” reading of the book-object. A missing element in this analysis would be the scribes themselves, who were *directly present* at the aural phenomenon of the king’s oratory. If the “hi-fi” soundscape (i.e. not mediated) were truly free of schizophonia, the scribes would never make any errors, since they were specifically chosen for their accuracy. Yet, clearly, mistakes were made, mistakes on the part of the *listeners*, the scribes. Schafer, here, thus points the way towards understanding the apprehension of all sonic phenomena as being shot through with schizophonia; for who could blame the scribe who got it wrong if they were wedged into a corner with poor acoustics or were right up front and partially deafened by the voice of the king? The problem lies not necessarily in the mediation of writing (though that assuredly adds an extra layer of remove, especially for the diegetic governors and us semi-diegetic detectives), but rather in listening itself, which is always already mediated by distance, air pressure, temperature, etc. – in a few words, the vagaries of the soundscape. R. Murray Schafer and Victoria T. Attwell, *The Sixteen Scribes* (Bancroft, Ont., Canada: Arcana Editions, 1981).

²¹⁹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 101.

²²⁰ Serres, *Genesis*, 13.

they do their best to obscure the extreme fragility of their origins and the absence of their legitimacy.”²²¹ Hence: schizophonia and its misprision by the natural attitude.

The lack of perspective is something which applies to Dasein, as well, hence why the soundscape apprehended in a state of *Schweygen* can serve as the medium for the *disruptive* call of conscience. The soundscape, then, should be viewed as a fundamental ontological category (and medium) of our engagement with the world, a manifold not merely for *Rede* but *Ruf* (the call), as well, the displacement of the self into a world without clear perspectives, where the breath melds with the north wind and the heartbeat forms a polyrhythm with the woodpecker’s tap, more deeply than any sort of ‘psychological’ (or empirical) reading of listening, silence, and attention could ever hope to account for. This is predicated *not* on commonsensical silence as absence, not merely a muteness where the world fades into the background, but on the ontological *Schweygen*, the paradoxical, impossible silence, where the world and our place in it become frighteningly real. Contra Frances Dyson’s reading of Heidegger, the recipient of the call does not hear “an absence... [hear] nothing;” it hears the soundscape, for that is what *Schweygen* lays bare or unconceals as ἀλήθεια. The *Schweygen* that is concomitant with *Angst*, where the word breaks off; “[a]us der Ständigkeit des Vergehens der Zeit spricht Sein.” (“Being speaks out of the constancy of the time’s passing away.”)²²² This speaking out after the word has broken off is predicated upon listening to the sonic manifold, the soundscape.

* * *

²²¹ Serres, *Genesis*, 24. Heidegger, *On Time and Being*.

²²² Heidegger, *Zur Sache des Denkens*, 4, 7.

There are several rhetorical benefits to understanding *Schweygen* as being concomitant with an understanding of the soundscape. First and foremost, as was already mentioned, is that this could conceivably ‘free’ Heidegger’s thinking from the vestiges of metaphysics. *Schweygen* is dependent on notions of absence and cannot, by definition ever be perceived wherever there is a human being (recall that even in the vacuum of space, unto the moment of death, one would continue to hear noises self-contained within the body). This marks *Schweygen* fundamentally as a metaphysical concept – this is the silence of the *Gerede*, an ontical silence. In other words, it is a silence that is only gestured towards in the *everyday* of the they (*das Man*), instead of phenomenological study. In contradistinction, *Schweygen* as understood in terms of the soundscape no longer would require recourse to any metaphysics; instead, it is based on a ‘materialist’ understanding of the surrounding world, reorienting our perspective towards, in Heidegger’s works, being and, quite literally, being-in-the-world.

A second reason for preferring an understanding of (deep/ontological) silence as attending towards the soundscape is that this opens up some new *Holzwege* for post-Heideggerian phenomenological thought (of which this project is both necessarily and by design a part). If, at the bottom of discourse, silence still is predicated upon an experience of the world that is not absent, an experiencing that involves *listening*, the simple understanding of listening in Heidegger needs to be reconsidered. Gerald R. Bruns’s reading of Heidegger posits that listening is “preeminently social,” which I think we can take as correct, given that listening is constitutive of the experience of discourse.²²³ This resonates with the work of Dauenhauer as well, which is, by his own admission, broadly consonant with the work of Heidegger.²²⁴ He identified a quasi-

²²³ Gerald L. Bruns, *Heidegger's Estrangements: Language, Truth, and Poetry in the Later Writings* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 23.

²²⁴ Bernard P. Dauenhauer, "Silence: An Intentional Analysis," *Research in Phenomenology* 6 (1976): 64, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24658630>.

‘category’ of deep silence (which we have shown to be analogous with our understanding of *Schweygen*) that is the “silence of intimates.”²²⁵ What could be more intimate than our basic level of silence for, not merely our being-in-the-world, but our being-with-the-world than basic interaction with the soundscape? This is *still* a social relationship, related, as “social” is to following and attuning, in both Latin and Greek. With our understanding of listening that is heavily related to the silence of the soundscape, these two positions now only make sense if we broaden sociality to mean an opening up onto the world – a sociality *with the soundscape* even absent the *Mitsein* of other specifically human entities. We can thus begin to pursue a philosophical track that is not necessarily beholden to a certain anthropocentrism, a notion that we flagged as problematic and inconsistent when it came to music in the archaeological works in Chapter 1, namely a phenomenology that posits, in a way that simultaneously recalls, deepens, and somewhat defangs Schafer’s polemics against sonic sewage, “a contaminat[ion] of the world outside myself... as the *wild* outside contaminates me... a creative state of possibility.”²²⁶ In other words, a philosophy that can look at music from the more primary experience of listening that is not *outside of the constant movement of the world*.

If listening and silence are intimately (and, indeed, socially) related, we can pursue a phenomenological track that is not anthropocentric or metaphysical. This eschewing of anthropocentrism and metaphysics is deeply crucial for an understanding of music that actually approaches the phenomenon *itself in perception*, instead of obfuscating the issue with some *ex post facto historical* (in the Derridean sense) understanding of music, which infringes upon actual experience, as we saw in chapter 1 and our historical gloss at the outset of this chapter. We hear

²²⁵ Dauenhauer, "On Silence," 19.

²²⁶ Valentina Gamberi and Lucia Zaietta, "An Anthropomorphic Dilemma in Advance: A Phenomenological Insight into the Human/Non-Human Symbiosis," *Environmental Philosophy* 15, no. 2 (2018): 279, <https://doi.org/10.5840/envirophil201882077>.

that we are beginning to listen to listening itself, following Nancy. We pricked up our philosophical ears, and we heard, perhaps finally, along with Schafer, the soundscape. For listening can only be understood within the *sonic manifold* that is the soundscape. Now that this account has been put forward, we can begin to pursue an account of music that isn't always already ahead of music itself.

As we have seen, the phenomenological process of bracketing (the Husserlian *ἐποχή*) for music has been harder than most, perhaps because music is so intuitive to the human experience in the world. But we now understand that the approach of music *proceeding from listening itself* entails dispensing fully with all the accrued notions of music theory, especially within the Western tradition and context, for these are secondary concerns to the actual experience of a listening being (*Dasein*), which necessarily is 'grounded' in, at the very least, a tacit acknowledgement of the surrounding background sonic radiation that is the belistened world, whether that be a construction site, an apartment with an HVAC system, or even Heidegger's archetypical *Lichtung*, a clearing in the woods, the sun gently alighting upon the fragrant wildflowers, pillowy moss, and shimmering grasses, a rill purling down the mountainside in the adjacent enveloping darkness. A true account of music begins with the soundscape – out of *Schweygen* – alongside Husserl's fraught understanding of *Ton*, that word which is music and noise. We, therefore, take the path of one who "risks cacophony, with its etymological links to harsh, discordant, dissonant, and meaningless sound, as well as demons, poison, irresistible urges, and mania."²²⁷ But that's what we expect if we want to journey towards understanding the world of Sun Ra's *Atlantis*.

²²⁷ Dyson, *Sounding New Media*, 8.



Figure 3: Cover of *Atlantis* by artist unknown. © Sun Ra LLC. Used by permission.

For this cover shows us that, to expand on the Mbuti saying, the forest is listening, watching, and irradiating music(?) itself, like fire – which does not, according to Gaston Bachelard, exist for modern, Western science or its scientific, logical positivist exponents. For Bachelard, this mode of truth, this schizophrenic understanding of the sonic manifold or the fire at the hearth, even in its most physical, least metaphorical sense (a literal fire), is absent from “contemporary” scientific thought.²²⁸ The reality of fire as being seemingly self-contradictory, outside of a modality of “truth” which is inclusive of and perhaps even beholden to simultaneity thinking, is called into question. In broad strokes, the example of fire serves as an analogue, perhaps even allegory, for music in the concept of ontic listening – a purely objective silence, a pure absence, which cannot be. We thus pursue this chiasmic, haunting figure. We pursue Atlantis.

²²⁸ Gaston Bachelard, *The Psychoanalysis of Fire*, trans. Alan C. M. Ross (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1964), 2.

Chapter 3: *Incidental Music*

"Every single great moment of music that's come through you has come through you literally... it never originated in anything that you call yourself but actually just passed through."

- Terry Riley

"καὶ γάρ, ὠγαθέ, τό γε πᾶν ἀπὸ παντὸς ἐπιχειρεῖν ἀποχωρίζειν ἄλλως τε οὐκ ἐμμελὲς καὶ δὴ καὶ παντάπασιν ἀμούσου τινὸς καὶ ἀφιλοσόφου."

"In fact, my friend, it's inept to try to separate everything from everything else. It's the sign of a completely unmusical and unphilosophical person."

- ξένος, Plato's *Sophist*

Part I: Hold Your Applause

Listening, as we just explored, is a rather more complicated phenomenon than we often believe. We are confronted at every turn by a monolithic yet fractured wave of experience, from the gentlest wren cry drifting on the sibilant breeze through an open window to the cacophony of a concert amplifier – in some rare cases, perhaps both simultaneously. There is, strictly speaking, no such thing as empirical silence, though we may place the world on mute in order not to be overwhelmed. We described this as the differentiation between ontical and ontological silence, where the former was akin to ‘tuning out’ the world and the latter is ‘tuning in’ to the soundscape, the sonic manifold that surrounds us. In such a way, we extrapolated an understanding of listening centered around the soundscape. Yet the domain of my argument is still aimed towards a phenomenological account of music, often held to be something in opposition to the surrounding soundscape, literalized, of course, with the rigorous walls of the modern concert hall, informed by the bleeding edge of acoustics to keep the sound of program music discrete and pure. So when we acknowledge the difficulty of separating sounds through a phenomenological exploration of the soundscape and, thus also, what has been normally held as silence, we are confronted with the following question(s): Where or how does that leave us with music?

In the course and corpus of writing on music, one formulation of the problem, to me, stands quite above the rest, emerging from a student of Husserl, Roman Ingarden. Hardly a loyal pupil (more so than Heidegger, it should be noted), Ingarden broke with his mentor’s emphasis on transcendence,²²⁹ though he himself was a captive of metaphysics in his own way, as we shall see. Yet he is firmly within the phenomenological tradition, albeit too little read, likely because of his

²²⁹ See, e.g.: Roman Ingarden, "The Letter to Husserl About the VI [Logical] Investigation and ‘Idealism’," in *Ingardeniana: A Spectrum of Specialised Studies Establishing the Field of Research*, ed. Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 1976).

turn (never fully completed) towards to his mother tongue, Polish, after the catastrophe of the war, and he will provide us with a point of departure for our investigation. If the reader will forgive the rather large quote, we can follow along as, without fear or hesitation, he formulates the points of contention when it comes to a phenomenological account of music:

Someone might say: is it not only a kind of illusion when it seems to us that we commune with the same work, with [Chopin's B Minor Sonata]? And is it not just an illusion that in listening to a certain performance of a given sonata we do not have the sense that the sonata was just coming into being and was ceasing to be at the end of its last chord? Or maybe this is not an illusion but only a certain false, theoretical idea to which we succumb under the influence of historical suggestions. For we know surely that Chopin has "written" that sonata, that it was published, and that this knowledge may lead us to the false conclusion that the sonata "exists." Yet perhaps no sonata by Chopin or any other music work actually exists, but only particular performances. Perhaps we are also wrong in assuming, as we normally do, that all listeners at the same concert hear the same performance of a certain sonata. Is it not the case that when we exchange views at the end of the concert, we often reach the conclusion that there are considerable differences as to what each one of us has heard? Frequently, we are unable to agree with regard to many details of performance, one of us valuing them highly, the other responding indifferently or even very critically. Should we then perhaps agree that there are simply specific subjective phenomena that are the performance of a certain sonata, differing partially or wholly from one listener to another, while both performances and that B Minor Sonata are just conventional linguistic fictions, useful in practical life but in reality devoid of existence? [...]

[W]hat is the point of saying that one performance rather than another give a more nearly accurate account of the B Minor Sonata when the sonata does not in fact exist and there is nothing real with which these performances may be compared? Are we really going to agree that such judgments concerning the sonata itself and its performances are all false and stupid? If that which is to be "performed" does not exist, it would be senseless to invent the concept of "performance." Are we going to agree to this, too? [...]

In light of the difficulties outlined here, musical works now become puzzling objects – their essence and existence unclear – even though we have communed with them regularly as with good friends, and they have constituted a completely mundane and natural segment of our cultural world. Are not those commonsense presystematic convictions to be blamed for leading us this way? Should we not, therefore, critically examine these convictions and try to improve them or reject them altogether?²³⁰

²³⁰ Roman Ingarden, *The Work of Music and the Problem of its Identity*, ed. Jean Gabbert Harrell, trans. Adam Czerniawski (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1986), 4-7. As noted, Ingarden wrote variously in Polish and German. *The Work of Music* was originally published in Polish; I will be relying on the English translation provided here.

It is hard to see how one might improve on the above diagnosis of these issues. We may quibble (and quibble we will), as Lydia Goehr or Jacques Attali might, with the excessive (and unexamined) use of the word “work,” but it is hard to deny that the idea of a musical *work* holds dominant sway in today’s historical situation, as it has since the rise of the printing press and publishing houses – at least in the Euro-American context – regardless of the precise date of the dominance of the work-concept (a major critique of Goehr’s work by other musicologists). Yet we are left with some fundamental questions, the most basic of which is the most difficult of all, posed alongside the view of one of our archaeological interlocutors that “it is perhaps indicative of a sense that musical knowledge is somewhat intuitive that few authors consider it necessary to define the term.”²³¹ Thus: What is music? Or perhaps, formulated even more precisely, echoing Heidegger: *Was heißt Musik?* What is called music?

In the follow chapter, we will explore questions of the identity of music from a phenomenological perspective, drawing from a diverse array of thinkers, from Ingarden to Theodor Reik, Steven Feld to Roger Caillois, with detours into multimedial explorations of case studies, encompassing the visual art of Otto Dix, the textual compositions of La Monte Young, and the poetry of Ernst Meister. However, crucially, this chapter will also begin to explore more strongly the issues of colonialism and anthropocentrism – in short, legacies of the Enlightenment project that persist in nineteenth and early twentieth-century thinkers that we tarried with in chapter 1 and the beginning of Chapter 2. It is not simply enough to critique existing definitions or theories of music; I am invested more, in this chapter, with seeking something generative that nevertheless is wary of ideas of ‘generation’ with clearly identifiable points of origin – upsetting genealogies, in other words. This is instantiated most clearly by my explication of Steven Feld’s notion of

²³¹ Morley, *The Prehistory of Music*, 5.

schizophonic mimesis, which, after reading Ingarden against the grain to see what, like Heidegger, he gestures *towards* to someplace, somewhen, some music *beyond*, draws our attention to the haunting characteristic of music. Indeed, how haunted is music? This chapter will lead us to a *hauntological* understanding of music – taking this project to a point of fundamental indeterminacy. In other words, to tip my hand slightly, the answer to the question, “*Was heißt Musik?*” may simply lead us to further questions of paleonymy, overdetermination, *paying attention*, which we will explore in Chapter 4. These questions, however, are only possible through the depths of listening that we plumbed in the previous chapter, those Heideggerian questions of primordially, ontology, and *hearing*, and this we start with once more.

* * *

As noted, any account of music must first begin with an account of listening, which itself must reckon with the problem of ‘silence.’ In the prior chapter, we distinguished between two modalities of hearing in the world, an ontological and an ontic. The ontic level of hearing is the human default, part of what Husserl called the natural attitude, a sort of passive activity, radiating idealism outwards to ‘form’ discrete unities that are easily apprehendable and digestible. For listening, this means that we separate certain sounds from others; in the case of suburban life, the listener would be able to compartmentalize ambient car noises from the chirping of the cardinal, even as they are apprehended simultaneously. This is a mode of listening that overcomes and shatters the soundscape, which is the *ontological manifold of sonic experience*. Ontological listening is attuned thus towards this surround acoustic background radiation and does not

unnecessarily make these divisions between, to use Heidegger's examples, the crackling fire and military column on the march, but understands them as parts of a protean experience.

The accounts of music that were recapitulated, often all too briefly, in chapter 1 put the musical cart ahead of the horse in a variety of ways. In all cases, there was, at least partially, the preconceived notion that we already knew what music was. That this attitude is pernicious, especially when it comes to Eurocentric thinkers, should come as no surprise. In the context of a relatively early encounter between European and Arabic music that led to a continued insistence “on the naturalness of the diatonic scale” on the part of Europe, Liebersohn refers to it as “the obstinacy of Western norms.”²³² For just one example, Claude Lévi-Strauss claimed that myths are structured like music. This sounds good – almost intuitively true – given that music is, along with tale-telling, one of the few things that all societies that we know of share. But can it be said that he was working in anything other than the colonial project, as outlined so forcefully by Jacques Derrida in *Of Grammatology*? How might we overcome this subtle (and common) prejudicial attitude? In order to attempt this overcoming, the method that will be employed here will be that of classical deconstruction, nearly dialectical – looking for that which is overlooked or on the margins in order to elucidate (or perhaps adumbrate) a clearer and more inclusive perspective less violent to these “lichen on the mountain side, clinging determinedly for bare existence,” these on the edge.²³³ In a few words: limit cases.²³⁴

²³² Liebersohn, *Music and the New Global Culture*, 96.

²³³ Willis George Emerson, *The Smoky God: or, A Voyage to the Inner World* (Mundelein, IL: Palmer Publications, 1965), 32. *The Smoky God* is an early hollow-earth novel, originally published in the very early years of the twentieth century. It describes a fantastical world within the Earth, accessible via points near the poles, that rang out with choruses singing beautiful symphonies, of which “our” music is only a pale imitation – the metaphorical lichen, in other words.

²³⁴ We must already be on edge here to even speak of limits, always aware of potential violence, always aware of potential separation. We resist the urge to conceptualize. My own use of limit cases is informed by this awareness, and I hope to show in what follows how they are self-undermining.

In the Euro-American world, modernism, unsurprisingly, brought about a radical change in the conception of music, as it did with all the arts (even as we can see clear antecedents in the historical archive – we are keen to remember that there is, after all, an “it” in Pound’s dictum “make it new,” which refers to precisely these early moments and innovators). Marinetti, Russolo, and Cage blew it all up (in Marinetti’s case, literally), and the avant-garde,²³⁵ such as Sun Ra, La Monte Young, Pierre Schaefer, Alice Coltrane, Terry Riley, Captain Beefheart, Don Cherry, King Crimson, Masahiko Togashi, and, later, extreme metal, danced in the wreckage of the thankfully denuded concert halls, the rectors of the *conservatori* defenestrated. (Sadly, much of the avant-garde, especially in the case of Philip Glass, made its peace with these conservative institutions, stymieing much of its radical potential. Some even specifically view themselves as working within the tradition of European art music. Arguably, this is the case with Young, but he remains a controversial figure with few truly canonical pieces. Glass, on the other hand, writes what are

²³⁵ I take “avant-garde” here to not be associated with any particular movement (i.e. Henry Flynt’s influential coinage of conceptual art), but rather as a broad term accounting for those who have traditionally pushed the boundaries of the musical experience. One might note, correctly, that the given list is rather male – to the point of fault. As with many artistic movements of the twentieth century, experimental music has traditionally excluded female, trans, and non-binary voices. (In this sense, La Monte Young’s constant avowal of his collaborative working relationship with his long-term partner Marian Zazeela is almost refreshing.) The reasons for this are the usual culprits: barriers of entry, the cult of the masculine artist-genius, and plain old patriarchal social structures. Val Wilmer, in *As Serious As Your Life*, provides an explication of these and more specifically in the (free) jazz scene of the ‘60’s and ‘70’s. That these roadblocks to a more equitable and democratic musical scene persisted and continue to persist in traditional art music and the experimental scenes for so long is, frankly, embarrassing and, obviously, a tragedy. In recent decades, this has thankfully started to change. Kaija Saariaho premiered at that great bastion of conservatism, the Met, and there is a diverse and wonderful crop of young experimental musicians constantly churning out excellent music year after year. In 2019 alone, Brighde Chambleu, Sarah Davachi, Kali Malone, and Jana Winderen have all released excellent albums – Malone’s *The Sacrificial Code*, in particular, reinvigorated pipe organ music for me.

Sadly, it is outside the scope of the project at hand to adequately account for a history of the avant-garde, both as an idea and a phenomenon/movement. Moreover, to do so would be to fall prey to the specious and dubious practice of relying on precise genealogies and reifying the very system that ends up excluding these above-mentioned artists in the first place, especially when it comes to non-white, non-European musicians and composers – as we can see by the frequent shunting of the academic studies of the history of electronic music, especially Detroit techno and Chicago house, into sub-histories or anthropologies, ultimately re-performing the same movement of essentialization and othering (if not fetishization) of the dominant narratives and narrativity of Western philosophical thought, especially that which is metaphysically orientated. (See, for example, the thinking of Ato Sekyi-out or Vivek Chibber, *Postcolonial Theory and the Specter of Capital* (London: Verso, 2013).

clearly identifiable as “works,” in the paradigm set out by Goehr, with perhaps a few early exceptions, such as the original iteration of the rather topologically-oriented “Strung Out.”) Yet these (and many other artists – for the above list is curated mostly by my own taste) only picked up on what was latent in the experience of music anyhow: the aporias, pauses, the in-took breath before a sustained note, the occasionally awkward moments between movements of a symphony, to say nothing of those humorous and deeply instructive moments when something breaks, jolting even a jaded listener out of their reverie.

These places and spaces, to purloin an album title from Donald Byrd,²³⁶ perhaps even more so than the experimentation of the avant-garde, can be profoundly illuminating. Indeed, is not the Venus de Milo more captivating without arms?²³⁷ What made ruins so fascinating to the German romantics, Caspar David Friedrich, in particular? There is something entrancing about the abysses of destruction (I speak here of the Heideggerian *Destruktion*, as opposed to *Abbau*, which is linked to the de-structuring at the heart of the deconstructive method) and spatio-temporal gaps – moments of stutter and gasp. Yet this is frequently glossed over when one is discussing the breaths the musicians take before renewing their, to maintain the military registers of “avant-garde,” attack.

²³⁶ And perhaps with reference to Gerard Grisey’s “Les Espaces Acoustiques,” as well.

²³⁷ This is a topic of Ingarden’s as well. For more information, please see: Hans H. Rudnick, “Ingarden, the Venus of Milo, Gaps, and Concretization,” in *Ein Leben für Dichtung und Freiheit: Festschrift zum 70. Geburtstag von Joseph P. Strelka*, ed. Karlheinz F. Auckenthaler (Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, 1997). While the article veers towards a problematical engagement with Heidegger’s political worldview at the end, it does provide a simple summary of Ingarden’s view of the statue.



Figure 4: Caspar David Friedrich, *Huttens Grab*

* * *

What, then, is a work? Prior to thinking with Ingarden, we ought to be able to conceive of what a work is. This may seem obvious, perhaps even self-evident, especially in English. A work is something one has worked on. It is a piece, like the Beatles' "Hard Day's Night" or Beethoven's 9th Symphony or John Coltrane's *A Love Supreme* or one of Bach's masses or a hymn from Palestrina. It's a *thing*, readily identifiable.

In contradistinction to this commonsense view, the concept of “work” is rather more recent. To recapitulate slightly from Chapter 1, Lydia Goehr elucidated the work, which, in her formulation, came to be associated with the perceived infinitude of the score,²³⁸ which hold the “fully formed and permanently existing entities.”²³⁹ Scores function as a material synecdoche for something that otherwise would exist in pure temporality, a sort of fixation into a commodity form which would promise fidelity to an idealized object – hence the term *Werktreue* or the association of the later inscriptive technomimetic process of vinyl pressing, which shares many similarities to writing, as Adorno pointed out in his short essay “*Die Form der Schallplatte*,” with “high fidelity,” itself now so ingrained in culture as to be almost shorthand for the enjoyment of music.²⁴⁰ It is no surprise that, dovetailing with Jacques Attali’s historical studies, the idea of a specific “work” arose or more strongly became apparent, in the Western context, alongside the growth of the publishing industry, which would easily transform something rather difficult to define, namely the seeming ontological identity crisis between the score and the performance of a piece, into an easily exchangeable product, a commodity, complete with all the fetishism that that entails; as Goehr points out, this can easily lead to a clearly Platonic viewpoint of “a world severed from the world of everyday objects and concerns.”²⁴¹ This severing has certainly not always been the case and still is not the case in certain music-making traditions, as will be explored later in this chapter, and

²³⁸ The perceived infinitude of writing as a faulty notion has been explored in greater depth by many twentieth century thinkers, from Roland Barthes to Jacques Derrida and many others. While one may associate the idea of ‘mortal’ texts with the post-structuralist movement, iterations of it can be found in the early twentieth century, as in the case of Ezra Pound’s “Papyrus,” the nineteenth century, as evinced by the laudatory attitude the German Romantics took towards the ‘fragment,’ and anywhere/anytime that attributed more depth to writing because of its incompleteness.

²³⁹ Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works*, 44.

²⁴⁰ Theodor W. Adorno, “Die Form der Schallplatte,” in *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Klaus Schultz et al. (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1984).

²⁴¹ Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works*, 167.

the idea of a work as a singular object to which one would be fidelitous Moreover, the viewpoint of the work-concept is of a specific time and place in its orientation. As capitalism arose,

[T]he contemporaneous institution of copyright allowed music (in the form of the notated score) to become the legally protected private property of a particular creative individual. [And it is precisely here where one might make the Derridean intervention vis-à-vis the conception of the law and the structures inherent in legal ‘protection.’] These conditions served to fix music in the form of stable, finished products, bounded entities no longer subject to revision... The score thus came to perform [a metaphysical sleight of hand].²⁴²

This sleight of hand, indeed the whole house of cards, completely falls apart when one begins to consider folk traditions, indigenous music, site-specific music, and any number of other modalities of thought outside the (now thoroughly globalized) European capitalistic perspective.²⁴³ “Elevating the musical ‘work’ ... to the status of a transhistorical and transcultural necessity, the Platonist ignores the fact that most musical production across the globe proceeds and has always proceeded without works or score.”²⁴⁴ Goehr’s work is certainly not without controversy, but her diagnosis of the Platonism of the work concept, regardless of when it emerged,²⁴⁵ especially in relation to the score and its ascendance in modernity with publishing and copyright is abundantly clear in the 20th century, especially in the West, but, as with many concepts exported alongside

²⁴² Cox, *Sonic Flux*, 52.

²⁴³ Indeed, it is here that the critical theory of thinkers such as Adorno can most clearly be brought into the conversation. (Further reference to this is made in Appendix C.) While the works of Adorno lie outside of the scope of this work, especially given his deep hostility towards phenomenology and especially the works of Heidegger, understanding the work-concept is also predicated on understanding the intricacies of capitalist ideology. Thinker and bureaucrat, Jacques Attali, in his work *Noise*, took the heterodox opposite position, namely that music prefigured capitalism. There would seem to be a fair amount of overlap between the Marxist theory of ideology and the phenomenological theory of the natural attitude in all its permutations – pointed out by both the classical source of Marcuse, among others – which would gesture towards a broader affiliation between the two, to say nothing of their twinned oppositions to metaphysics. In any case, it seems that there is something to this relationship that needs further explanation.

²⁴⁴ Cox, *Sonic Flux*, 53.

²⁴⁵ “In many cases [of modifications and outright rebuttals] scholars have retained the gist of Goehr’s argument but have sought to push the date backwards,” notes Gavin Steingo. Gavin Steingo, “The Musical Work Reconsidered, In Hindsight,” *Current Musicology* 97, no. Spring (2014), <https://doi.org/10.7916/D8K078VG>. An example of this would be a work of Anne Barron, which, drawing on English case law, pushes back Goehr’s date but, more or less, keeps the idea of the work-concept intact. Anne Barron, “Copyright Law’s Musical Work,” *Social & Legal Studies* 15, no. 1 (03/01 2006), <https://doi.org/10.1177/0964663906060985>.

capitalism, in an increasingly global way. The work concept in recent decades might be apotheosized by the flexi-discs, slipped inside magazines or books to be played on a turntable,²⁴⁶ or the cassingle. These objects present simply the concretization of a social reality that is marked, as Pettman notes, by a tendency to “fix” musical events into clearly “bounded entities” – be that by the score, objects of consumption, or simply within social discourse. Neatly condensing this concretizing, Ornette Coleman, one of the great, early exponents of free jazz, whose “emphasis on melodic invention was a rejection of [the] borrowings” of jazz musicians from the European art music/conservatory tradition, instantiated this critique against strict reiteration and archivization inherent in the score paradigm with the playfully titled album *To Whom Who Keeps a Record*.²⁴⁷ However, the alternative modalities of music/musicking, say with Ornette, have yet to be phenomenologically reckoned with in a thorough manner, as seen in the gloss that opened the second chapter.

We must here acknowledge that Ingarden is clearly writing with the paradigm of the work-concept, which is to say the tradition of European art music as it became commodified and exhibited in a variety of manners, for example, programme music.²⁴⁸ This is apparent not just in

²⁴⁶ One of the major sticking points for many theorists regarding Goehr is Bach. Yet, Bach himself was pressed to a flexi-disc in, at least, 1963. Regardless of whether or not he was composing, in his own eyes, “works,” in the 20th century, he can certainly be found as a singular, discreet object, as modernity projects itself backwards. Johann Sebastian Bach and Rópek Jiří, “Toccata D Moll,” (Supraphon, 1963), Flexi-disc.

²⁴⁷ Wilmer, *As Serious as Your Life*, 75. Coleman did, indeed, write music down, but “all of [the tunes]. according to [James] Clay[, co-leader with Don Cherry of the Jazz Messiahs], were ‘written wrong.’” Coleman’s later period explorations in “harmolodics” were considerably more through-composed; *To Whom Who Keeps a Record* consists of outtake sessions during the apex of his ‘free’ period, although, by that point, Coleman was well aware of the finer points of musical notation. Wilmer, *As Serious as Your Life*, 86-87, 90.

²⁴⁸ There has been some debate regarding the ability of Ingarden’s approach to tackle the subject of avant-garde music. This current study seeks to read Ingarden against himself in order to show that he allows for the innovations of what he names ‘new music’ over and above his stated opposition to some of its elements, eventually culminating in analyses of avant-garde and aboriginal music(s). Nevertheless, the curious reader should refer themselves to: Zofia Lissa, “Some Remarks on Ingardenian Theory of a Musical Work,” in *Roman Ingarden and Contemporary Polish Aesthetics: Essays*, ed. Piotr Graff and Slaw Krzemien-Ojak (Warszawa: Polish Scientific Publishers, 1975). Also see Andrzej Pytlak, “On Ingarden’s Conception of the Musical Composition,” in *On the Aesthetics of Roman Ingarden: Interpretations and Assessments*, ed. Bohdan Dziemidok and Peter McCormick (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 1989). Both of are cited in perhaps the most relevant article on the subject: Michal Lipták, “Roman

his use of the term in the title (for, naturally, words are malleable), but his examples (see above the emphasis on Chopin²⁴⁹) and his deep engagement with the question of the score, which he discusses in each of the two major works that we will be analyzing here.²⁵⁰ Ingarden would seem to begin beyond of the traditional phenomenological method, starting, with the *ἐποχή*, without preconceived notions, oriented towards the things themselves. With Ingarden and with all the thinkers of the work tradition, we seem to already be past the starting line, already galloping along a bassline. But this is precisely the most appropriate place for a deconstruction of music to take as its point of departure; the most central, unimpeachable, paradigm of music in the contemporary era, with all of its sedimented historico-cultural meanings – the work. Quite literally, *in media res*. Crucially, then, Ingarden provides us with an exhaustive and rigorous phenomenological theorization of the work, and this will be our point of departure before we complicate the picture with further phenomenological analysis, counter-examples (and analysis thereof) – and, most importantly, the tensions already present within Ingarden’s own work, which often displayed an ultimately radical potential.

At the very outset, Ingarden establishes the bifurcation “*zwischen einem Musikwerke und seinen Ausführungen*” (“between a musical work and its performances”) despite the fact that this will lead to innumerable “*Schwierigkeiten*” (“difficulties”).²⁵¹ The work is then further

Ingarden’s Problems with Avant-garde Music," *Estetika: The European Journal of Aesthetics* 50 (2013), <https://doi.org/10.33134/eja.109>.

²⁴⁹ Ingarden’s conservatism with regards to his musical examples – mostly skewing towards the canonical – should not be viewed necessarily with reproach. After the war, he was accused by the Soviet-backed Polish government of “idealism” and banned for teaching for many years, so it was demonstrably in his best interest to maintain a low profile with ‘safe’ examples.

²⁵⁰ Being unfamiliar with Ingarden’s archival material and unable to read or speak Polish, I would be intrigued to see if this pattern holds for his unpublished work. Hopefully, this answer will become more readily apparent in the course of the continuing work of the Roman Ingarden Digital Archive at Jagiellonian University in Krakow, especially given that the Polish government, conservative and fascistic though it is, has declared 2020 a year for Ingarden studies.

²⁵¹ Roman Ingarden, *Untersuchungen zur Ontologie der Kunst* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010), 7. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783111717135>. Translations are drawn from: Ingarden, *Ontology of the Work of Art*.

differentiated from the score, which is something “*äußeres*” (“outside”) yet “*zugeordnetes*” (“correlated”).²⁵² Departing from these more conservative tendencies, Ingarden smartly rejects the traditional (and by then already somewhat old-fashioned, at least for the avant-garde) notion that music’s fundamental characteristics are “*Melodie, Harmonie, und Rhythmus*” (“melody, harmony, and rhythm”).²⁵³ Yet, he is repeatedly insistent that the musical work is discrete to the point of otherworldliness, a breath of heaven, unique among all the arts, even as it is readily apprehendable. That this emphasis on the division between the work and its performances seems untenable, waiting portentously to drift into a Platonism (or the alleged transcendentalism that led to Ingarden’s break with his teacher), is a fact obvious to Ingarden, who vacillates between declaring that the musical work is not a “*realer Gegenstand*” (“real object”), something “*Nicht-zu-dieser-Welt-Gehörens*” (“not-belonging-to-this-world”)²⁵⁴ and spending a large bulk of the music section of *Untersuchung zur Ontologie der Kunst* specifically on the phenomenological apprehension of the performance of a piece. This exploration of performance leads Ingarden to a key point at the end of §4 where he essentially acknowledges an abandonment of the tenability of the work-concept entirely:

Manchmal kann eine Ausführung zwar technisch und künstlerisch „gut“, aber zugleich so originell und für den betreffenden Virtuosen charakteristisch sein, daß sie dem Werke, das ausgeführt werden soll, untreu wird und dessen Erfassung wesentlich erschwert. Wenn wir dabei auf mittelbarem Wege nicht belehrt werden, um welches Werk es sich eigentlich handelt so kann es sogar dazu kommen daß sich dann für uns ein im Grunde neues Werk konstituiert, das dem auszuführenden nur bis zu einem gewissen Grad ähnlich ist.²⁵⁵

Sometimes a performance can be technically and artistically “good” but at the same time so original and so characteristic of the virtuoso that it is not fideliou to the work which is to be performed and makes its apprehension significantly more difficult. If this happens, and we do not know in some other, indirect way what work is putatively being performed,

²⁵² Ingarden, *Ontology of the Work of Art*, 27.

²⁵³ Ingarden, *Ontology of the Work of Art*, 30.

²⁵⁴ Ingarden, *Ontology of the Work of Art*, 48. Translation modified.

²⁵⁵ Ingarden, *Ontology of the Work of Art*. Emphasis mine. Translation very lightly modified.

then it can even happen that a basically new work is constituted for us, one that is only to a certain degree similar to the one that was to be performed.

Despite Ingarden's earlier (and, indeed, later) emphasis on the work of music and *its* own ontology, here we appropriately start at the "us," the perceivers, the listeners, the audience. What is important here, and what undermines the idea of the work as something discrete or autonomous, removed from social construction, is the perceptions of the listeners themselves, or, to phrase it somewhat differently, the actual phenomenological apprehension of the performance through time. The "new work is constituted for us," he says, and this "us" is, fundamentally ignorant. This us "do[es] not know," and, it is out of this ignorance, a stealthily enclosed phenomenological starting point in amongst an otherwise more studied *ex post facto* approach, the work which allegedly existed prior to this moment, no longer does and is constituted for the first time for some of the audience members. But let us consider a more erudite and informed listener – for them, this work is the one they recognized, perhaps even explicitly came to see (or hear, as it were). What of the work then? If both the informed and ignorant listeners attend the same performance, we can say that it exists simultaneously as both known and unknown, a new work and an old work all at once. In this way, Ingarden widens the scope of the possibility of the work to encompass a much more radical definition that would not seem to necessarily allow for the label of work to be truly applied to anything, at least with any degree of stability, because it can always be constituted as something else or, in the above case, reconstituted through the originality of a virtuoso performance that severs it from tradition and reinaugurates its existence as something new. "Work" is an unstable category in Ingarden's schema, then, something that is always provisional. What emerges in its stead, is, in fact, the performance and its apprehension by the listeners. For the thought experiment that Ingarden poses here could apply to any piece no matter how fideliouss it remains to an alleged original or its inscription onto parchment – what is truly key is the status of the listener. This status

could be dependent on anything from the relatively mundane (ignorance of the piece being performed) to the ontological (the Heideggerian *Befindlichkeit*). But, at bottom, Ingarden reveals here his true phenomenological colors and embraces the radicality of a more democratic conception of music. In this passage, Ingarden acknowledges, between occasional breaths of disavowal, nothing less than the death of the composer and a usurpation of *Werktreu* by apprehension and, perhaps, appreciation of the virtuoso – pieces of music borne out through performance and instantiation, as well as the ear of the listener, not some mystical construction and intentionality, as Lipták (rightly) reads in the agenda of Ingarden.²⁵⁶ To return to Ingarden’s opening salvo, “perhaps we are also wrong in assuming, as we normally do, that all listeners at the same concert hear the same performance of a certain sonata.” The above passage on which we have been meditating would seem to suggest that, in fact, the sonata in question might be very far from certain – it might be constituted anew in the minds of an audience member by the hands of a virtuoso. “[*Eine Ausführung*] ist *wesenmässig unwiederholbar*.” (“[A performance] is by its nature unrepeatable.”)²⁵⁷ Thus the work as well.

For Ingarden, however, examples where a piece is so defiantly mangled by a virtuoso so as to become unique are purely “*Grenzfälle*” – limit cases. (The question the obviously arises: does “virtuoso” still even need to apply? Ingarden is understandably cagey about establishing hierarchies between good and bad music, at least when it comes to determining the *identity* of a piece. This is not to say that there are no virtuosos or to deny their accomplishments in a brutal razing of the conservatory, but merely to acknowledge “good” and “bad” as secondary concerns, if they are to be considered at all, a task which I leave up to the reader.)²⁵⁸ Yet even an exploration

²⁵⁶ See above note.

²⁵⁷ Ingarden, *Ontology of the Work of Art*, 8.

²⁵⁸ Ingarden, *Ontology of the Work of Art*, 28. “*Auch die so-gennante ‚schlechte‘ Musik ist eben doch Musik.*” “Even so-called bad music is music, nevertheless.”

of the depths of this thought experiment reveal this as a very probable occurrence, not merely an isolated phenomenological incident. Moreover, these incidents point towards Ingarden's larger goal here, which is not just a phenomenology of the work of music but of music itself. This seemingly much larger goal is barely subtextual at points, with the occasional slippage between music and musical work, such as his response to the question of "good" or "bad" music: "*Um aber zu erklären, wodurch sich die 'gute' Musik von der 'schlechten' unterscheidet, muß man bereits wissen, was 'Musik' oder genauer: was ein Musikwerk ist.*" ("In order to explain how 'good' music is to be distinguished from 'bad' music, one must already know what 'music' or, more precisely, a musical work, as such is.")²⁵⁹ The suspension of music in the scare quotes would seem to separate it from the far more mundane concern at hand, namely the musical work. Yet the equivocation of the questions of music and the musical work broaden the scope of the project, just as the incorporation of these *Grenzfälle* broadened the scope of the "work."

Nevertheless, I would argue, despite this far more democratic theorization of the work-concept, centered more around individual performances and the attunement of its listeners than the power of the composer, we are still here working more or less within it, a fact that Ingarden assuredly recognized. While the direct intentions (and intentionality) of the composer may now matter less, while the listener becomes not just important but crucial, the figure of the work still looms as a sort of master trope here. It has many names – piece, work, composition, and, now, most importantly, *performance*. While the listener has some modicum of power, they are still subject to the specific whim of the performer. When will the performance start? How long is there

Indeed, leaving it up to the reader (or listener) would seem to be the exhortation plied by Barthes. For literature, we were given "readerly" texts. One wonders what the equivalent for music might be – "listenerly" certainly does not flow as well. Given that readerliness for both literature and music would be, at the very least, partially determined by the socio-historical situatedness of both the piece and the listener, this would seem to be another moment where the Adornian (and, to a lesser extent, Benjaminian, as embodied by the opening of his essay on Goethe's *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*) critical apparatus could be deployed.

²⁵⁹ Ingarden, *Ontology of the Work of Art*.

a pause between the movements? Is the band going to throw a cover on the set-list tonight? This exercise of power is taken perhaps to its extreme by durational music, the tyranny of Satie's *Vexations*, but here we are also cognizant of both Quignard's evocation of the *Konzentrationslager* and the attempt to maintain power over the self through music, i.e. Messiaen's compositional efforts. Even though fidelity is no longer logically tenable as a concern for a phenomenology of music (bracketing out the musicological concerns) and the work no longer seems tenably separable, in a logical sense, from the performance, we are still then confronted with a new set of boundaries that form the discrete nature of the piece, and these are temporal concerns. As ever, the question becomes one of delimitation.

Thus we turn to a phenomenological examination of the performance. Given Ingarden's own, albeit partially self-redacted, convolution of the historical cohesion of an allegedly single work, i.e. Frederic Chopin's "B Minor Sonata" or the traditional "The House of the Rising Sun," it should strike us as no surprise that he devoted much of his writings on music to thinking about onsets, ends, and aporias with regards to the performance. In a properly Husserlian sense with regards to perception across time, a performance, for Ingarden, is an "*akustischer Vorgang*" ("acoustic process").²⁶⁰ I will here quote his analysis of the various basic characteristics of the performance at length:²⁶¹

Jede Ausführung eines Musikwerkes ist vor allem ein akustischer Vorgang: eine zusammenhängende Mannigfaltigkeit von akustischen Gebilden, deren Entstehung durch einen realen, sich annähernd in derselben Zeit wie die betreffende Ausführung abspielenden Prozeß kausal bedingt ist, z.B. durch das Anschlagen der Kaviertasten mit den Fingern, durch die Schwingungen der Saiten, des Resonanzholzes, der Luft usw.

Jede Ausführung ist sowohl „objektiv“ wie phänomenal im Raume lokalisiert. „Objektiv“ in dem Sinne, daß die Tonwellen, die dabei produziert werden, sich von einer bestimmten

²⁶⁰ Ingarden, *Ontology of the Work of Art*, 8. Emphasis original.

²⁶¹ This excerpt comes from a large numbered list. I have omitted the numeration here for the sake of readability. I have also omitted one footnote that provides some explicative information on the term "*Ansichten*" in Ingarden's other works.

Stelle im Raume aus „ausbreiten,“ phänomenal dagegen in dem Sinne, daß die zu der betreffenden Ausführung gehörenden tonalen Gebilde von den Zuhörern z.B. als sich „an der Estrade“ abspielende oder von „dort her“ kommende wahrgenommen werden. Beim Hören einer Ausführung hegen wir – mit Recht oder Unrecht – die Überzeugung, daß wir uns den gerade ertönenden Tongebilden nähern oder von ihnen entfernen können. Und wenn wir es tatsächlich tun, so hören wir sie besser bzw. schlechter: sie sind uns deutlicher, prägnanter gegeben. All dies setzt das Phänomen des Gegebenseins der zu der Ausführung gehörenden Tongebilde an einer (mehr oder weniger bestimmten) Stelle des einen, intersubjektiven Raumes voraus. [...]

Jede Ausführung eines Musikwerkes ist uns im Hören, also in einer Mannigfaltigkeit von ineinander kontinuierlich übergehenden Gehörs wahrnehmungen gegeben, welche die wichtigste Grundlage ihrer Erfassung bilden. Die akustischen Vorgänge bzw. Tongebilde (Melodien, Akkorde und dgl. mehr), die zu dem Gesamtbestande einer Ausführung gehören, sind uns dabei in besonderen akustischen „Ansichten“ (in akustischen „Erscheinungen“) gegeben.

Each performance of a musical work is above all an acoustic process, a continuous manifold of acoustic formations whose coming into being is causally determined by a real process that takes place in approximately the same time space as the performance in question – by fingers striking piano keys, for example, or by vibrations of strings, sounding boards, air, and so forth.

Every performance is both “objectively” and phenomenally located in space: “objectively” in the sense that the sound waves that are produced in it emanate from a definite place; and phenomenally in the sense that the tone formations belonging to the performance are perceived by the listeners as being played “on the stage” or coming “from there.” When we hear a performance, we are convinced – rightly or wrongly – that we can approach the tone formations that are just then sounding or move away from them. And when we actually do it, we hear them less well or we hear them better, because they are clearer and fuller. All this presupposes the givenness of the tone formations belong to the performance in a (more or less definite) location in the one intersubjective space.

...

Each performance of a musical work is given to us in hearing, thus in a manifold of successive auditory perceptions, each of which merges continuously with the next; these perceptions form the most important basis of the apprehension of the performance. The acoustic process of tone formations (melodies, chords, and the like) that belong to the total stock of elements constituting a performance are given to us in special acoustic “aspects” (in acoustic “appearances”).²⁶²

²⁶² Ingarden, *Ontology of the Work of Art*. Emphasis original, and reproduced in the translation, where it is absent. Translation slightly modified, namely substituting “manifold” for “multiplicity.” Given the very clear topological emphasis of phenomenology, as well as Husserl’s early grounding in geometry and mathematics, to translate “*Mannigfaltigkeit*” as “multiplicity,” while acceptable in a purely linguistic sense, is to empty it of meaning.

At bottom, then, the work, in Ingarden's telling is predominantly processual. Moreover, understanding the performance requires an understanding of acoustics. By acoustics, here I am not referring to the "objective," as Ingarden would have it, view, which would be largely contiguous with a 'scientific' perspective – acoustics as a branch of science concerned with modulations, etc. – but rather acoustics in a phenomenological sense, the actual experiencing and apprehension of sonicity in the world. We can see this in Ingarden's invocation of how sound fills a space and how the listener's emplacement therein causes modulations of a more or less 'pure' sound, mediated as the sound is by, most obviously, distance.²⁶³ (The concert hall with its *estrade* is given pride of place in Ingarden's schema, but he does widen the field to anywhere one finds a "there" – "*dort*," related etymologically to "*da*") An acoustic process in space forms a continuous 'wall of sound,' as it were, that constitutes the performance for the listener, for whom individual elements (i.e. the given example of a chord) are noticeable but also deeply in a state of flux, radically merging with what comes both before and after in a temporal adumbration.²⁶⁴

This is a reasonably satisfactory definition of the performance (given that it occurs so early in the text, we should expect nothing more or less). It is also entirely consistent with a phenomenological conception of temporality, echoing Husserl and finding consonance in the works of Merleau-Ponty. In addition, when viewed in the context of our phenomenological explication of listening in the prior chapter, it makes complete sense. Curiously lacking, however, is the role of the work 'within' (if we can use this preposition) the performance, especially when it comes to the aforementioned issues with bounded temporalities – the beginnings, ends, and

²⁶³ If we were to invoke contemporary scientific acoustic research, we would find that any number of environmental phenomena modulate or "distort," insofar as we acknowledge that we are working in a paradigm that should not understand any sound as "pure" or "undistorted," sounds in their passage from the source to the ear, including even something as seemingly slight as temperature.

²⁶⁴ Indeed, here we can see shadows of Nietzsche's twinned infatuation with Heraclitus and music.

entr'actes of the piece, the “work,” being performed ‘there.’ While not present here at this introductory definition, these become of increasing importance through the process of Ingarden’s work. Presumably, given Ingarden’s definition of the work as a discrete quasi-object (in that it can be apprehended) or phenomena, informed by his historical situation, the performance would begin with the *performance of the* first note and end with *the performance of* whatever brings the work to its close. This is precisely why I maintained that, even though the boundary between work and performance is, in Ingarden, at the very least, porous, if not completely untenable (which our analysis would seem to suggest), we still find ourselves within the paradigm of the work, which is to say something *otherworldly* (separated out from the world) and *discrete* (being complete in itself as a totality). This is a bounded schema with supposedly definitive, if tacit, edges. Yet, here, at the edges, the discrete nature of the work begins to unravel. This situation is complicated by his emphasis on acoustics and the role of the listener. And it is towards these border wars that we turn our attention, now fully armed with the insights of Dauenhauer, Schafer, and Heidegger on silence, which we explored in the prior chapter.

That the issue of edges becomes tantamount to defining the musical work of art for Ingarden becomes clear in the latter section of his work, when he contemplates what Dauenhauer would call fore-and-after silences, particularly in the case of the gaps between movements in a symphony. These gaps usually occur as a transitional moment of a symphony, as one movement ends and another begins, a sort of pregnant anticipation of the changes that will occur, as well as an understandable moment of rest for the performing musicians, such that they can gather and reorient themselves. The question arises: despite the practical concerns that make these caesuras in a performance sensible, what is their aesthetic status within the work paradigm? They would seem to possibly stand outside of the work, but this simple answer is complicated by the fact that

they perform a structural service to the apprehension of the work. In a few words, these pauses are within the work. Yet these pauses let in trespassing sounds, from the mundane, like an old woman opening hard candies, to the extraordinary, such as the cries of a sparrow that, through a series of unlikely but not impossible misfortunes, found itself trapped within a concert hall. These trespassing sounds would seem to transgress the boundaries of the discrete work of music if we hold that the caesuras are, indeed, constitutive of the work.

Ingarden deploys several paths of approach. While insisting that, “*’nach’ dem Musikwerk... gibt es überhaupt nichts, ja überhaupt keine noch so leer vorgezeichnete Zeitform*” (“‘after’ the musical work... there is nothing at all, not even a time form”),²⁶⁵ he nevertheless questions “*ob das Vorhandensein der sogenannten ‚Pausen‘ innerhalb eines Werkes, bzw. die Unterbrechungen, die die einzelnen Sätze z.B. einer Symphonie voneinander abgrenzen, nicht die Einheit des Werkes zerstören*“ (“whether the presence of the so-called ‘pauses’ within a work or the interruptions that delimit the individual movements of a symphony, for example, from one another do not destroy the unity of the work”).²⁶⁶ We should here especially attune ourselves to the already strange character of the “pause” and the “after,” which are bracketed by scare quotes, placing them already on unstable ground, a fact that is further underscored with regards to the pause by having it be merely “so-called.” The gaps themselves are something of a gap in a definition of the musical work; “*dazwischen gibt es eben keine Musik*” (“in between there is simply no music”).²⁶⁷ But they are nevertheless present, and they, moreover, “[appear] to exist in a much deeper sense and to be

²⁶⁵ Ingarden, *Ontology of the Work of Art*, 45.

²⁶⁶ Ingarden, *Ontology of the Work of Art*, 111. Translation modified.

²⁶⁷ Ingarden, *Ontology of the Work of Art*, 106.

required by the work itself.”²⁶⁸ This is because, roughly, the pauses serve as a refractory period for the listener – “we must be made receptive” to the change between the movements.²⁶⁹

Thus the lacuna between two movements of a sonata has proved to be something that performs special aesthetic functions in the whole of the work, and that therefore forms an indispensable component of the work, although *on first consideration it seems nothing but a lack of musical tone formation*. But as soon as one concedes that these interruptions between the four individual movements of the sonata (or the symphony) are indeed components of it, then the problem of the unity of the whole sonata is resolved positively.²⁷⁰

While I don’t think it is really possible to have a quibble with the idea that these lacunae serve an architectural function for certain performances of music, as noted above, can we really say that, simply because they serve this function that they resolve the question of the unity of the work? It seems to me that the *unity and character of the lacunae themselves have not even been settled*.

Yet we know that they are in between... *something*. Movements in this case. They, ostensibly, are silent moments, after one thing and before another. Bernard P. Dauenhauer elaborates on this issue, specifically in the context of music. For Dauenhauer, following a Heideggerian track, the “fore-and-after silence is an empty frame.”²⁷¹ It would seem once again that we are still dealing with a paradigm that insists on the totality of the work as a discrete entity, which Dauenhauer acknowledges, one that is based on notions of the modern concert hall, after the Wagnerian ban on what the composer deemed superfluous noise: the chatter of the listeners. Dauenhauer, however, allows for a “fringe of silence,”²⁷² an odd and seemingly contradictory term that only makes sense once one adopts the (obviously true, but strangely elusive) notion that “*silence need not be physically noiseless*.”²⁷³ This is, of course, obvious to us after our

²⁶⁸ Ingarden, *Ontology of the Work of Art*, 100.

²⁶⁹ Ingarden, *Ontology of the Work of Art*, 101.

²⁷⁰ Ingarden, *Ontology of the Work of Art*, 102. Emphasis mine.

²⁷¹ Dauenhauer, "On Silence," 17.

²⁷² Dauenhauer, "On Silence," 14.

²⁷³ Dauenhauer, "On Silence," 11. Emphasis mine.

investigation of silence in chapter 2, where ‘silence’ in an ontic sense, which is to say, absence, does not actually exist from a phenomenological perspective. Ingarden naturally acknowledges this point, emphasizing his own idea of a sort of fringe, which he associates with a “lingering reverberation” (the end of which, however, does give way to “silence,” which is a “genuine gap”), his scare-quoted “after.”²⁷⁴ The frame of the fore-and-after silence of the piece and the movements therein “join the individual parts with one another and form out of the... parts a coherent whole,” but “*this holds true... only insofar as these ‘lacunae’ are not too long and not filled by extra-musical occurrences.*”²⁷⁵

First one questions: on whose authority would the decision of how long the lacunae *ought* to be made and upheld? The sophisticated listener? We have already determined that their opinion is equal, on the level of perception, to the ignorant listener, and that the ignorant listener, by virtue of their ignorance, is much closer to a genuine phenomenological viewpoint, which is to say one that functions according to the logic of bracketing. If the boundary between the work and the performance is ultimately untenable, then who is to say that a certain virtuoso might not extend the caesura between the two movements in an act of originality in order to create a new work that might bespeak something else. After all, “the mental experiences or states of the work’s composer... contribute very little to the elucidation of the characteristics of the work of art itself and to the understanding of its artistic functions and the aesthetic values that result from these.”²⁷⁶ This brings us then to the more salient point: what is an extra-musical occurrence? Recall Ingarden’s strange formulation in his analysis of these gaps: “*on first consideration it seems nothing but a lack of musical tone formation.*”²⁷⁷ At the outset it appears unmusical, but then...

²⁷⁴ Ingarden, *Ontology of the Work of Art*, 100.

²⁷⁵ Ingarden, *Ontology of the Work of Art*, 102. Emphasis mine.

²⁷⁶ Ingarden, *Ontology of the Work of Art*, 72.

²⁷⁷ Ingarden, *Ontology of the Work of Art*, 102. Emphasis mine

what? We the readers are left to finish this analysis. To borrow from *The Sophist*, the ‘xenomusic’ would appear to be at the gate; “anybody’s music is made up of a lot of things that are not musical,” as Cecil Taylor reminds us.²⁷⁸

* * *

We have tarried with Ingarden’s exhaustive analysis of music, which so bravely trucked with tension and ambivalence to the point of nearly destroying its stated subject, the work at the altar of its performance. We move forward with this in mind, not to overcome the work, but to understand its relation to the performance in light of the tensions Ingarden identified but without necessarily reifying the work as autonomous (understanding the signifier, in other words, as a social construction), keeping in mind our opening, animating question, “What is called music?”

The ‘problem’ of musical, nonmusical, unmusical, and extra-musical sound – Ingarden’s identified lacunae – has been one of the primary sources of inspiration for the twentieth century avant-garde. The desire to deconstruct established and traditional tonalities and timbres was very much part of the modernist impulse, functioning alongside and sometimes concomitantly with such trends in visual arts and literature. As recounted earlier in this chapter, the list of experimenters is long and their influence cannot be overstated. That they were successful means that we may largely take for granted that the question of “what constitutes a musical sound” has been answered and continues to be answered every time a rap song samples a siren or a rock band uses non-traditional percussion or any other innumerable innovations. In the history of those experimentations in tonality, the most archetypical example, and the one that openly influenced R.

²⁷⁸ Plato, *Sophist*, trans. Nicholas P. White (Hackett Publishing Co, Inc., 1993). Wilmer, *As Serious as Your Life*, 53.

Murray Schafer, is clearly John Cage's "4'33"," which brought questions of silence and an alleged musicality to the fore. To gloss this work briefly, a performer allows the ambient soundscape of a space to 'become' the musical piece. Clearly, this piece is, to echo Schafer, a caesura in the history of music, but it is still roughly reliant on a *human element*, strongly associating it, despite its radicality, with ideas of human performance. Further, it is clearly bounded by temporal concerns, which, even though it seeks to deconstruct these as well, nevertheless exist as a sort of framing device.²⁷⁹ Thus this piece can fit more or less comfortably within the work paradigm, ultimately being reinscribed in the system it (may have) attempted to overcome. This is likely what Ingarden would have referred to as 'new music' that does not necessarily trouble the work paradigm at large, perpetuating an anthropocentric, Eurocentric (however influenced by Zen), and modern perspective that does not necessarily correspond to the real apprehension of music from a phenomenological perspective. If, as we noted, music is a processual experience and essentially anything, as the avant-garde taught us, can be a musical sound in a performance, we need to examine the performance *itself* phenomenologically, to truly investigate the fringes of the event of listening to music – for, at bottom, we concern ourselves, first and foremost, with listening. Here we have arrived once more at the end of the second chapter and the border wars of music, as we still lack a coherent phenomenological understanding of the fore-and-after silence of music, except that it is, perhaps, structurally necessary and is not necessarily silence, which is to say, absence. How does this all, in other words, fit into the *process of the experience of musical performance*?

Of particular note to us, then, would be compositions that take a more thorough-going approach to overcoming the aforementioned biases, sadly typical of a large portion of the western

²⁷⁹ This particular work by no means indicative of the entirety of Cage's oeuvre. It was chosen as an example because of its influence on Schafer (and almost everyone else after it) and the fact that it is undoubtedly the most well-known composition of its type. Cage experimented, a word he eventually adopted, heavily with works that are harder, if not impossible, to describe in terms of the work-concept, such as "0'00".

philosophical tradition. We will take as our example a few of La Monte Young's compositions, as enumerated in *An Anthology of Chance Operations*, the incredibly influential text that brought together the leading composers, poets, and artists of the downtown scene in New York, encompassing the works Nam June Paik, Yoko Ono, Ray Johnson, Walter de Maria, and Henry Flynt, who coined the term conceptual art, and many more. Young's centrality to the avant-garde (Euro-American) musical scene in the latter half of the twentieth century probably cannot be overestimated, influencing everyone from Terry Riley to Steve Reich to Krautrockers Can to Brian Eno to Philip Glass²⁸⁰ to drone metal pioneers Earth (and thus a large swath of modern doom metal). It is no surprise that Eno referred to him, specifically in the context of minimalists, as "the great-granddaddy of us all." While he later became known for his affiliation with northern Indian classical music, specifically Pandit Pran Nath (who named him the first or one of the first American gurus of raga), and just intonation (a tuning style where the intervals are determined by whole number fractions), which reached its apotheosis in his monumental *The Well-Tuned Piano*, his earlier works were considerably more influenced by the aleatory compositions of Cage, who was, for a time, his teacher. Young was engaged not only in the poetics inherent in typographical composition (i.e., those pieces where the 'score' is words, often terse, subjective, and, yes, readerly, instead of transcribed notes or neumes, for that matter)²⁸¹ but also adopted, occasionally, an explicitly anti-anthropocentric posture. It is small wonder that he cites the whistling winds of the Utahn steppes of his childhood as his earliest memory and an enduring influence.²⁸²

²⁸⁰ The relationship between Glass and Young is tendentious at best; Glass disavows the influence of Young. In response, "Young... objects to Glass's refusal to acknowledge the influence of his Minimalist forebears and summarizes Glass's contributions to classical music as 'record sales.'" Edward Strickland, *Minimalism: Origins* (Indiana University Press, 2007).

²⁸¹ Other notable typographical composers would be Walter de Maria and Christopher Hobbs, in the United Kingdom, who still work in the media.

²⁸² Recall our earlier reference to Willis George Emerson, a writer of the edge of existence. He founded a town in Wyoming with much the same surroundings as Young's birthplace.

Some of the works in the *Anthology* comprise the Compositions 1960, which were originally presented at Berkeley as a concert series, though not all the pieces were offered as planned, notably “Composition 1960 #2,” which called for the creation of a fire in front of the audience – this was, I suppose understandably, opposed by the safety-minded university administration.²⁸³ Though there were several, we will concentrate our attention on just a few. Young juxtaposed the ‘local’ soundscape with clearly defined phenomena that may or may not be present or even explicable in certain instances. A frequent refrain in these compositions is that the duration may be of any length, which itself begins to chafe at the edge of the delimiting (in the sense of temporal mapping) tendency of a discrete work, while nevertheless broadening the field of what may be constituted as music. This is especially clear in the works that are explicitly labeled as being for a particular instrument, such as “Piano Piece for David Tudor #3,” which consists simply of:

most of them
were very old grasshoppers²⁸⁴

There are several ways to interpret this couplet. Per John Hartman, a contemporary synth artist to whom I sent the score, “This strikes me as an almost classical poem, and I feel like I [would] need to adapt it as such.” Hartman’s suggestion would be something like a minimalist tone poem on which the onus of composition depends on the reader (and subsequent performer). On the other hand, given that it is for a piano, indeed, even a specific performer, it might be read as a set of instructions for an explicitly mimetic piece. “Most of them” could refer to the notes or

²⁸³ “Build a fire in front of the audience. Preferably, use wood although other combustibles may be used as necessary for starting the fire or controlling the kind of smoke. The fire may be of any size, but it should not be the kind which is associated with another object, such as a candle or a cigarette lighter... After the fire is burning, the builder(s) may sit by and watch it for the duration of the composition... The composition may be of any duration.” Presumably, it was this last bit that struck fear into the heart of the Berkeley administration. *An Anthology of Chance Operations*, ed. La Monte Young and Jackson Mac Low (München: Heiner Friedrich, 1970).

²⁸⁴ *Anthology*.

note clusters, which the pianist would use to mimic the sound of “very old grasshoppers.” Given that there are a variety of grasshopper species, this would give the performer quite a bit of latitude. The piece may change depending on whether the grasshoppers in question are read to be katydids or locusts. Let us take the katydid as our example; the standard noise that a katydid makes is a low, rough, percussive trilling, almost like a very, very minute power tool. Presumably, the very old (in katydid years) would slow down a bit. So the process of mimicking them on the piano would likely involve a rapid oscillation between two or three notes somewhere around the first octave, with a few of these continuous runs played simultaneously, as there are, after all, a plural amount of, in this case, katydids. I reached out to the members of the Dutch experimental duo Dead Neanderthals with a question of how they would approach this composition, and they answered, “Two notes, [one] short – [one] long, descending, continuous[ly] for about 6 - 7 minutes.” (A brief note on our other possible example: locusts, we might surmise, would require something of a wall of sound, similar to the strumming technique employed by Charlemagne Palestine, to adequately capture their association with swarming.)

But there is a much, much simpler explanation that requires neither the extensive study of the varieties of grasshoppers throughout the world nor the analysis of their noises in order to transpose them for piano: we can take Young’s score at face value and listen to very old grasshoppers. “Piano piece,” after all, does not necessitate piano playing. What would this entail? There are a few options. Probably the most palatable for a patron of the Met would be to bring several old grasshoppers into a performance space and listen to them there; this would have precedent in another of Young’s compositions, namely “Composition 1960 #5,” where the score began with the exhortation to “turn a butterfly (or any number of butterflies) loose in the

performance area.”²⁸⁵ But let’s say that the Berkeley administration says no to a swarm of locusts. Another option would be that this is a time-and-site-specific piece where the listener would go to some place where very old grasshoppers are known to be and to listen to them there. This would really begin to chafe at the edges of what would constitute a performance as a discrete moment in time, especially if the listener for this piece was *not trained in the art of listening to grasshoppers*. A listener could, for all they know, have attuned or entrained themselves to a certain beetle or even a small bird. The ‘work’ that would be constituted at that moment for them would be indistinguishable, in the ears of the listener, from the ‘work’ as it was somehow meant to be listened to. The boundaries between inside and outside begin to break down; the discreteness of the ‘performance’ would depend on any number of mitigating factors unknown to composer and perhaps the listener. Moreover, we could say that, in this option, we could understand that anytime there was a group of old grasshoppers together, this piece would be performed, regardless of whether the listener knew that this was a specific piece.

This logic reaches its apotheosis in the final option: the piece is always being performed. (Or has always been performed – the piece is literarily composed in the past tense, a fact that has gone uninterrogated thus far, but will become increasingly important later. I beg the reader patience.) One can experience this composition right now wherever they are, even if they have never heard a grasshopper before. The grasshoppers simply are in the world. We might not hear them or know that they are there, but they are. Not all grasshoppers travel in such swarms as to show up on weather maps, nor do all of them make a sound perceptible to the human ear. The apprehension of this piece would be that there is music everywhere. Thus a performance of this piece could consist of anything from the beating of one’s own heart to a broken washing machine.

²⁸⁵ *Anthology*.

There were always grasshoppers. This perpetual and all-encompassing music is nearly explicitly gestured towards by Young's "Composition 1960 #15 to Richard Huelsenbeck," which reads simply: "This piece is little whirlpools out in the middle of the ocean."²⁸⁶ This piece is the little whirlpools, but, when we listen to the piece *now* (presuming that no one is reading this in the middle of the ocean in a non-mechanical boat), we hear only our present soundscape. The ostensible absence of whirlpools in our direct presence does not mean that we stop perceiving things aurally, that we stop listening. The performance of this piece is little whirlpools, the apprehension of it is the soundscape. It might even be a few very old grasshoppers. And in this performance, "gaps" between the grasshoppers and the whirlpools, the fore-and-after silence, would be *the deep silence of the soundscape*, all of it fundamentally imbricated with what was once clearly understood as a discrete work of music. Yet, Young points us to a world where this is simply not logically tenable – moreover, a world that is materially given to us without recourse to a metaphysics.

* * *

The radicality of Young, however, would still stake its claim on the role of a composer to draw our attention to these ambiguities. In reality, he finds himself treading well-established ground, his anti-anthropocentric compositions gesturing towards a worldview that we can quite easily comprehend outside of the European art music tradition, namely many forms of aboriginal music, which are often predicated on the lack of a divergence between self and nature. In this we are following East German theorist Georg Knepler, who noted, "The modern musicologist must

²⁸⁶ *Anthology*.

take into consideration the whole world, not as peripheral regions . . . but as regions demanding, and gradually receiving, full attention.”²⁸⁷ At the intersection of “region” understood geographically and simply topographically, the intersection of non-Eurocentric music(s) and the soundscape outside of my door here in Pennsylvania’s Appalachian mountains, we follow Knepler’s advice here in this section of Chapter 3. For this, we turn to Colin Turnbull, who provided, as an anthropologist first and foremost, deep contextualization of the subjects of his field recordings. Of particular note is his work with the Mbuti people of central Africa, which yielded some of the first commercially available field recordings of tribal peoples, spanning from hunting songs to celebratory chants. I argue that his overall characterization of the Mbuti, their music, and their relationship to nature (the Ituri forest) and the subsequent publication and release of the field recordings allow for a unique reconsideration of music – in particular, its relationship to the world.

First, some very basic introductions to the tribe. Or rather, we should say Turnbull’s reading of the tribe. The risk, here, of course, is falling prey to exoticizing the Mbuti, playing into troubling stereotypes.²⁸⁸ Indeed, this move also makes logical sense within the context of this study. Turnbull, after all, is the one who made the field recordings. It is *his* contextualization that most impacts the present study, and it is the field recordings themselves (*as opposed to* the music-making act) that form the basis of this paper’s desire for a reconsideration of music.²⁸⁹

²⁸⁷ Georg Knepler, "Music Historiography in Eastern Europe," in *Perspectives in Musicology*, ed. Barry S. Brook, Edward Downes, and Sherman van Solkema (New York, NY: Norton, 1972), 234. Quoted in: Anne C. Shreffler, "Berlin Walls: Dahlhaus Knepler, and Ideologies of Music History," *The Journal of Musicology* 20, no. 4 (2003): 505, <https://doi.org/10.1525/jm.2003.20.4.498>.

²⁸⁸ One must here also be aware of the fraught legal issues of ownership in the context of field recordings. In all citations of the field recordings, the artist will be credited to the relevant tribe/band (if known). For more information on the history of legality of field recordings and a specific case study, please see: Anthony Seeger, "Ethnomusicology and Music Law," *Ethnomusicology* 36, no. 3 (1992), <https://doi.org/10.2307/851868>. In cases where the destination of royalties is unknown or explicitly stated to be the anthropologist, institution, record label, etc., consumers of field recordings are recommended to contribute money to appropriate organizations and trusts dedicated to the preservation of these cultures.

²⁸⁹ Readers are encouraged to survey the sections of Jacques Derrida’s *Of Grammatology* that deal with Lévi-Strauss, particularly pages 128-129, which emphasize the reading of Lévi-Strauss’ “description.” Jacques Derrida,

Turnbull's *Wayward Servants* states its objectives early on: "The general purpose here is to add as much as possible to our knowledge of the Mbuti pygmies and of their much misunderstood relationship with the neighboring tribes of the forest cultivators."²⁹⁰ Yet, despite his insistence that the text at hand will be primarily oriented around the relationship between the Mbuti and the forest cultivators (who are also referred to as "villagers" in the text), he nevertheless spends much of his time discussing the Mbuti themselves, and, even more than that, the relationship with the forest that he ascribes to them.²⁹¹ Towards the outset of this text, Turnbull recognizes this fact, and shows his hand thusly:

If it has been thought that this stress on the environmental factor is overweighted [in this book so far], the [observation that the Mbuti refer to the forest as "Father" or "Mother"] should make it clear why. The forest is more than mere environment to the Mbuti. It is a living, conscious thing, both natural and supernatural, something that has to be depended upon, respected, trusted, obeyed and loved. The love demanded of the Mbuti is no romanticism...²⁹²

He places, in his analysis of the Mbuti, the relationship that they have with the forest at the center of his thinking. A familial web is drawn or perceived by Turnbull, but he nevertheless wants to keep the Mbuti and the forest separate in his own analysis. Despite the centrality of the relationship that the Mbuti have to the forest, he brackets it off from the Mbuti as a living "thing" *that is separate* from the Mbuti, *despite* the familial relationship that he writes about.²⁹³ Any forest is not simply a thing, except in the eyes of a cartographer, where it is a geographical area with defined boundaries.

Of Grammatology, ed. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Judith Butler (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2016).

²⁹⁰ Colin Macmillan Turnbull, *Wayward Servants: The Two Worlds of the African Pygmies* (Garden City, N.Y. : Natural History Press, 1965), 3.

²⁹¹ Turnbull, *Wayward Servants*, 5.

²⁹² Turnbull, *Wayward Servants*, 20.

²⁹³ This also does not take into account the more recent ecocritical and systems theory work which has taught us to consider environment and agent both in tandem and as a simultaneity.

In reality, in the experiencing of the forest, of any forest, one is struck by its ineffability. We say forest as a sort of shorthand, a concept that holds even less than most concepts. Even if taken in a biological/ecological context, the forest/rainforest as a biome is an infinitely complex web of relationships between the various in-dwellers and the abiotic factors that surround them. As Eduardo Kohn wrote, in the context of the Amazon rainforest, “the tropical forest *amplifies*... in myriad directions thanks to the ways in which its many kinds of selves interrelate.”²⁹⁴ Thus to subsume the forest under the heading of a singular other, a singular thing, with an identifiable ‘thingness,’ or even a singular ‘self,’ seems to demonstrate Turnbull’s initial error of analysis – and belies his reliance on the Eurocentric, cartographic divisions (which is to say, those ideologies which uphold and are upheld by the logical law of non-contradiction). Indeed, it is here in Turnbull’s own preliminary description that his account of the Mbuti becomes complicated, and it is something that will become further complicated in the depths of this anthropological text and will become yet further complicated in the field recordings themselves – and their liner notes.

Yet, in order to consider the problems of this type of anthropocentrism, we stay with the analysis of the forest, this filial ‘figure,’ which cannot help but not be figurable in any static sense, as it is key to eventually thinking through the man-made map, the man-made music, to the deeper musico-ontological level. In Turnbull’s description of the Mbuti cosmology, the forest is central. Again, Turnbull makes the mistake of ascribing a unicity and a univocity to the forest – and, as we shall see, the Mbuti, as well. Turnbull subsumes various ineffable characteristics under the banner of the “spiritual,” which, in and of itself, is problematic, denoting a certain metaphysical religiosity to a view that is *at the very least* non-anthropocentric. While it would be foolish to object to the careful use of the term “spiritual” in certain contexts (to try to describe a society based around

²⁹⁴ Eduardo Kohn, *How Forests Think: Toward an Anthropology Beyond the Human* (Berkeley, NY: University of California Press, 2013), 182. Emphasis mine.

metaphysics and the belief in the presence of the soul or personage without using ‘spiritual’ would be a rather futile endeavor, after all), such as explicitly religious rituals, in this case, and in the terms of the forest, it seems suspect at best. I will quote Turnbull at length on the matter:

Each man and animal (and... even the inanimate and vegetable worlds) is endowed to a greater or lesser extent with [spiritual] power.

This power derives from a single source whose physical manifestation is the forest itself. Opinion differs as to whether this means the vegetable forest, or the forest totality. Again, there is a multiplicity of names to represent this single power source, and it is most easily translated simply as “the forest” (*ndura*)...

Also deriving from the prime source of spiritual power are certain disembodied spirits [*keti*, as per the term used by the Epu Mbuti]... The disembodied spirits are generally thought of as living much the same kind of existence as the Mbuti...

[*Pepo* is the] life force that animates all moving, living things... The word *pepo*... has connotations of air and wind, and breathing is thought of as a manifestation of *pepo*. A gale of wind, then, is interpreted by some Mbuti as the breath of the forest itself.

[*Keti* are] disembodied spirits, human and animal, who are not necessarily the spirits of the dead but may be independent manifestations of the forest.²⁹⁵

Does Turnbull provide us with any evidence of the Mbuti belief in the spiritual? He later says, in a further attempt to elucidate the Mbuti’s cosmology that “the forest *is* [the] godhead... not just the trees or streams, or the sky or the soil, but... the totality.”²⁹⁶ This is in spite of the fact that “the Mbuti themselves strenuously refuse to admit there is any sense in trying to describe what we here call ‘the godhead.’”²⁹⁷ Is there a separation, a demarcation *which cannot be transgressed* between the Mbuti and the forest? It seems wildly improper to speak of any such notion of totality when the very notion of “forest” cannot be univocally defined or translated. Is it the vegetable forest – whatever that may be? Are the beehives that hold the honey that is so central to Mbuti culture separated from the trees that ensure their existence because they are not “vegetable”? The

²⁹⁵ Turnbull, *Wayward Servants*, 248-49.

²⁹⁶ Turnbull, *Wayward Servants*, 252.

²⁹⁷ Turnbull, *Wayward Servants*, 251.

whole situation finds itself in a state of paradox, the instability that cannot be contained, yet nevertheless is something as basic as the source of life (*pepo*). Consider this one single example: if the *keti* are individual manifestations of the forest, that straightaway tells us that we are dealing with simultaneity thinking; no longer does the division bell ring, calling to the chamber those who will decide one way or the other; no longer is this relationship bound by the logic of the law of non-contradiction. The “forest” is both everywhere and within specific pockets, like the grains of sand on the riparian plain: it is eternally divided within itself.

The Mbuti and the forest, two separate terms according to Turnbull’s description, both breathe. Breath is the same for both the forest and the people. This, of course, makes sense given the filial relationship between the two terms. But perhaps we can no longer think of them in the language of terms. This relationship seems to be non-dialectizable, at least if we wish for a non-plastic *Aufhebung*; a simultaneity that is seemingly paradoxical.²⁹⁸ A separation that is never wholly separate. We can no longer speak of a logic of supplementarity that brackets the supplement – in this case the forest. What we are confronted with is an “ecology of selves,” engaged *together*, experiencing *one another*.²⁹⁹

Bearing this in mind, let us turn now to the music of the Mbuti, which is appropriately famed for polyphony. “All songs share the same essential nature, sharing the same power of sound. The sound ‘awakens’ the forest,” says Turnbull.³⁰⁰ The Mbuti, according to Turnbull, use song, which is to say, music, “to communicate with the forest,” but “the emphasis is on the actual sound, not on the words.”³⁰¹ So songs are not necessarily linguistic in nature, but part and parcel of the forest’s hum, the constant swirling background radiation that is life in the forest. Indeed, the

²⁹⁸ See: Andrzej Jachimczyk, *Reading Hegel after Nietzsche* (New York, NY: Atropos Press, 2013).

²⁹⁹ Kohn, *How Forests Think*, 193.

³⁰⁰ Turnbull, *Wayward Servants*, 257.

³⁰¹ Turnbull, *Wayward Servants*, 259.

structure suggested by “conversation,” which is to say “communication,” as noted by Turnbull’s reading, resonates strongly with the musical structures of “interplay” or “counterpoint.” The tradition of the Mbuti is, as noted, widely regarded as an outstanding example of polyphony; in itself, this is true, even if we limit our scope of study to the human “participants,” and has been noted elsewhere in the scholarship.³⁰² Yet, the forest’s responsorial is also part of this polyphony, and, taking into account the complicated and paradoxical nature of the relationship that we have been presented with here, the experiencing of this music, as in when one listens to a field recording (perhaps of any sort), becomes a *schizophony*, which we will recall, “refers to the split between an original sound and its electroacoustical transmission or reproduction.”³⁰³ While, for our incipient discussion of field recordings and mimesis, this definition shall prove valuable, in this precise moment of reconsidering the relation of nature to music *prior to its electro-mechanical reproduction* (from the hypothetical topos of Turnbull *as* he was recording, as opposed to listening to Teibel’s field recordings – the aforementioned intersection between geography and topography), in the experiencing of music, in an *event* of music, this definition is ultimately limiting. Let us then further consider Schafer’s position. He correctly points out that, etymologically, “schizo means split, separated.”³⁰⁴ It seems in the above definition that Schafer is considering only an *ex post facto* split, the separation of sounds from their instantaneous context, the “mechanisms that produced them.”³⁰⁵ However, in the experiencing of sound, from the position of the listener, these sounds are already split from their mechanisms of production.³⁰⁶

³⁰² Steven Feld, "Pygmy POP: A Genealogy of Schizophonic Mimesis," *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 28 (1996), <https://doi.org/10.2307/767805>.

³⁰³ Schafer, *The Soundscape*, 90.

³⁰⁴ Schafer, *The Soundscape*.

³⁰⁵ Schafer, *The Soundscape*.

³⁰⁶ Rolf J. Goebel has made similar critiques of Schafer recently, particularly in: Goebel, "Auditory Desires, Auditory Fears."

Say I am sitting in a clearing adjacent to a forest. All of the sounds confront my ear simultaneously. While some of the birdcalls are recognizable, the phoebe for instance, from my position, they are subsumed into the chorus of my surroundings. This is precisely what Schafer refers to as a lo-fi environment. To push on the lo-fi even further, it derives from “low fidelity.” There is a truth to these sounds, but given the topology of my surroundings, the possibility of echo, and the overwhelming nature of the soundscape, the sounds become untrue to the mechanisms of their reproduction. As Schafer puts it, “there is no perspective in the lo-fi soundscape (everything is present at once).”³⁰⁷ I argue that this moment of splitting, this lack of fidelity, is *also* schizophonia. It is precisely this schizophony that Turnbull experienced *as he was recording* the Mbuti.

However, this leads us only as far as *sounds*, well worn tracks that we explored in chapter 2. We still must consider music. To do so, we will set our sights, tune our ears, back to Turnbull. And it is now time to insert our copies of *Echoes of the Forest: Music of the Central African Pygmies* into the CD player. The first six tracks of this compilation were recorded by Turnbull, and it is, in fact, the very first song, “Men’s Elephant Hunting Song,” to which attention shall be devoted. This track has a duration of 7 minutes, 28 seconds – by far the longest on the CD. This song bears all of the hallmarks of Mbuti music: the social atmosphere (convivial as opposed to sterile, in a group mode as opposed to featuring solo performers – no Horowitz or Skolovsky here), the polyphony, and the polyrhythms. What is especially unique about this track is its coda; “Thunder, heard in the distance, is likely to come late any afternoon, just when singing is taking

³⁰⁷ Schafer, *The Soundscape*, 78. See also: Steven Feld, “Lift-Up-Over Soundings,” in *The Book of Music and Nature : an Anthology of Sounds, Words, Thoughts*, ed. David Rothenberg and Marta Ulvaeus (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2001).

place, brings [this song] to an end.”³⁰⁸ Is the thunder exterior to the song? Does Turnbull draw boundaries again where there are none? If the relationship between the Mbuti and the forest is in a state of collapse, what about their songs, their music? When the forest’s responsorial functions as the coda to music, is it possible to think of any separation between nature and music? What sort of theoretical grounding can we have for this perhaps radical reading of music?

With regards to these questions, Derrida’s *Of Grammatology* once again shall be of use to this study. In Chapter 3, “On the Genesis and Structure of the *Essay on the Origin of Languages*,” Derrida spends some rare time on the question of music,³⁰⁹ as the text with which this chapter deals, Rousseau’s *Essay on the Origin of Language*, originally appeared in a compendium of his musicological writings. For Rousseau, harmony was subordinated to melody.³¹⁰ It is, to quote Derrida’s summary, “a bad musical form” in opposition to “a good musical form.”³¹¹ Derrida, in his reading of Rousseau’s thoughts on speech and writing, rightfully points out how facile this point ultimately is. It is unthinkable to privilege one over the other. “Harmony is the originary supplement of melody,” says Derrida, mobilizing the logic of the supplement.³¹² If melody sings, then harmony is mere accompaniment, a shackles (per Rousseau), an outside to the allegedly pure art, and here we meet Eburne again as we did in the introduction, formulating an outsider theory. In short, it is the dangerous supplement, to use another Derridean term. However, it is because of the nature of supplementarity that we can proceed. The supplement, the logic of the supplement,

³⁰⁸ Colin M. Turnbull, "Echoes of the Forest: Music of the Central African Pygmies " (Roslyn, NY: Ellipsis Arts, 1995), Liner notes.

³⁰⁹ Indeed, the rarity with which Derrida responds to questions of music in his oeuvre has constantly struck me as odd. While I understand that his project is primarily one of language/literary/philosophical analysis, the sheer amount of writing on music by the ancient Greeks and Nietzsche (plus the hymns of Hölderlin), some of his favorite subjects and influences, would seem to cry out for analysis just as much as the “*le cri de l’écrit*.” In the future, it is perhaps the ear of Derrida that must be studied as the ear of the other.

³¹⁰ Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, 230, 33.

³¹¹ Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, 230.

³¹² Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, 233.

is that which undermines the binarizing systematization of “the logic of identity and... the principle of classical ontology (the outside is outside, being is, etc.).”³¹³ Harmony, in other words, is the wrongfully excluded other of musicology.

However, let us push on this further. Harmony is not only a supplement in the performance and composition in music, but also in the experiencing of music. It is the ‘undermusic,’ the ground out of which melody springs. It is the mode, the key, the tuning of the tambura. In composition, harmony is relational with the melody, regardless of whether the compositional style is modal or scalar. In the experiencing of music, that is to say, from the perspective of the listener, harmony is not only relational to the melody, but radically simultaneous. In the apprehension of music, the simultaneity of harmony and melody is always already a schizophonia, just as the clap of thunder for Turnbull’s recording of the Mbuti was schizophonic – it is, to return to Schafer, “without perspective,” polytonal yet monolithic. So what of the harmony of nature?

To recapitulate what we noted in chapter 2, constantly surrounding us is an ambient tone, a background radiation of noise. The wind through the boughs of the pine tree outside my window. The singing of the phoebe. The beating of my heart. This noise is everywhere. And when I listen to music, I hear not just the harmony and melody of the recording, but also the wind, the phoebe, my heart. This ambient tone becomes enfolded into my experiencing of the tones of what is ostensibly regarded and privileged as music. This ambient tone becomes *another harmony*, yet another supplement.

Why, then, do we so often separate the natural sounds from music if our apprehension of music necessarily contains both? In a phenomenological analysis of ethnomusicological field recordings, can we separate the polyphony of the Mbuti, for instance, from the peal of thunder that

³¹³ Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, 234.

interrupts it? The natural sound, the background radiation of life itself, is present as harmony within and outside of what is generally considered music, namely the variety of ‘discrete’ structures that we analyzed, i.e. work, performance, etc. We are here in the Ingardenian “after.” Though the sources of these sounds are multifarious, it seems logically wrong to demarcate what is musical and what is not. Imagine, if you will, one is attending a performance of one of Scriabin’s piano sonatas in a concert hall: the lights are low, the music begins, and, against all odds, one of the keys is flat. The worst that can be said at this moment is that it is “unmusical” – *not* that it is not music outright – and more likely complaints will be made of its disharmoniousness. In our total apprehension of music, we cannot distinguish between an outside and an inside; the accidental remains accidental, but it is still a constitutive part of our *experiencing* of musical sound. Fundamentally speaking, all of our moments of being in the world can constitute the experiencing of musical sound, giving rise to the notion that I am, following Theodor Reik, calling “incidental music.”

“Incidental music” traditionally refers to the diegetic or extra-diegetic music that gives a work for stage or screen its atmosphere or feel.³¹⁴ This is to say that it would be viewed as supplementary. Yet, as we have seen, the supplementary, when it comes to the soundscape is, in fact, all-encompassing and that what has historically been considered music is simply an emanation out of a constant radiation of *musical harmony*, the harmony that always-already functions as a guarantor of the musical experience, which never truly begins or ends, except with our birth and death (and even that is perhaps dubious, one thinks of the spectre of electronic voice phenomenon – although a question for another time). Hence Schafer’s assertion that “all sounds

³¹⁴ Some extraordinary examples would be the works of Stanley Kubrick, especially in *The Shining*, in which the use of Krzysztof Penderecki’s *Auschwitz Oratorium* expertly sets the scene for the historically inevitable attempted murder, David Lynch, and the *musique concrete* score of Tobe Hooper’s original *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. For a more ‘German’ feel, one might also consider Popol Vuh’s work with Werner Herzog.

belong to a continuous field of possibilities lying *within the comprehensive dominion of music*. Behold the new orchestra: the sonic universe! And the musicians: anyone and anything that sounds!”³¹⁵

Indeed, anything and everything, we cannot ignore the aleatory element of ‘incidental.’ We have been focusing our energies on mostly natural sounds, but the soundscape has, for several millennia, crackled with technology. Lest we find ourselves in a sort of romantic reverie, fetishizing an (exclusionary and othered) “primitivism,” we need to consider these noises as well. Schafer said it best in the preface to a small pamphlet he wrote in 1969:

Overheard in the lobby after the premiere of Beethoven’s *Fifth*: “Yes, but is it music?”
Overheard in the lobby after the premiere of Wagner’s *Tristan*: “Yes, but is it music?”
Overheard in the lobby after the premiere of Stravinsky’s *Sacre*: “Yes, but is it music?”
Overheard in the lobby after the premiere of Varèse’s *Poème électronique*: “Yes, but is it music?”
A jet scrapes the sky over my head and I ask: “Yes, but is it music? Perhaps the pilot has mistaken his profession?”

Thus, to return to Ingarden, if we speak of a “border between the musical work and a succession of uncoordinated sounds and noises,” we should understand that this *border does not, by necessity, phenomenologically exist*. The fore-and-after silence may remain a constitutive element within this paradigm of all-encompassing music in the soundscape, but it also rends the work out of its discrete confines. Instead of forming a frame, as Dauenhauer would have it, the ‘silence,’ when understood properly as deep, which is to say, ontological silence, becomes a *manifold of music*, a part of an ongoing process that cannot ultimately be separated into pieces. A jet scraping the sky, a peal of thunder echoing across the forest, very old grasshoppers, Beethoven – these are all manifestations of a constant surrounding music, at the very least, potentially, our incidental music. To recapitulate our epigraph, spoken by the Foreigner in *The Sophist*, who, as Derrida reminds us, “shakes up the

³¹⁵ Schafer, *The Soundscape*, 5.

threatening dogmatism of the paternal *logos*”³¹⁶: “In fact, my friend, it's inept to try to separate everything from everything else. It's the sign of a completely unmusical and unphilosophical person.”

³¹⁶ Jacques Derrida, *Of Hospitality*, trans. Rachel Bowlby (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000), 6.

Part II: Larks' Tongues in Aspics

If our study of Ingarden and subsequently analyzing limit cases of performance threatened the idea of the work, how then should we read what has been historically apprehended as singular, discrete sonic objects? The popularity of this idea is vast, even if riddled with tensions, as in Ingarden, and it remains the dominant idea of music today. Further, what do we do with composers? Are they reduced to background noise? Does not this emphasis on the listener take away their work?

Perhaps surprisingly, I believe that their answer may be found in psychoanalysis, namely the aural experimentation of Austrian-turned-American Theodor Reik, our source of “incidental music,” author of *The Haunting Melody*. This makes, on the face of it, little sense; psychoanalysis is typically placed in opposition to phenomenology for any number of reasons. Psychoanalysts posit that the fundamental starting point of phenomenology is always a fiction, whereas phenomenologists argue that psychoanalysis begins always ahead of itself. Obviously, this is far too much of a gloss, but I do not wish to get bogged down in this lengthy and internecine debate, which would take several books to chronicle and a few more thereafter to approach a solution – none of which I would feel qualified to write. There is nevertheless a great deal the two fields have to teach one another, and there have been some intriguing meetings, engagements, and skirmishes throughout the years (all more or less successful) which bespeak more affinity than perhaps many of their respective adherents would care to admit. The practice of *Daseinsanalyse* springs to mind, as does the existential psychology of Simone de Beauvoir and Jean-Paul Sartre, as well as its more traditionally phenomenological cousin found in the works of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, who once noted in *Phenomenology of Perception* that “it would be a mistake to imagine that even with Freud psychoanalysis rules out the description of psychological motives and is opposed to the

phenomenological method.”³¹⁷ Moreover, the work of Atwood and Stolorow in advancing “psychoanalytic phenomenology” draws a direct connection between the two fields, particularly indebted to the hermeneutic style of a ‘phenomenology of the text,’ taking influence from Dilthey, Heidegger, and others.³¹⁸ From another other side, Jonathan Eburne recently pointed out that psychoanalytic insights are often “phenomenologically resonant,”³¹⁹ employing an acoustical vocabulary that gestures towards our current interlocutor, Reik, who tried, borrowing, as he often did, from Nietzsche, to listen “with the third ear.”³²⁰

It may also seem strange given Freud’s almost legendary ambivalence towards music, especially in comparison to his zeal with regards to literature and painting, Goethean dreams and da Vinci’s childhood, yet as Reik points out, “Freud sometimes enjoyed music. (He told me once that Wagner’s *Ring des Nibelungen* did not mean anything to him, but that he liked the *Meistersinger*.)”³²¹ Yet this small anecdote bespeaks a larger trend within Reik’s work, namely that he engages with autobiography (otobiography) and personal experience perhaps more than any other psychoanalyst – more so, perhaps, even than that great autobiographer, Freud himself. While the case studies that form the basis of psychoanalysis are often autobiographical in nature, Reik takes this a step further. In his writings, which deserve to be classed alongside other great chronicles of modernity (yet remain sadly under-read and mostly out of print), he develops a singular voice and persona, not unlike the phenomenological observer, as he recounts his life from

³¹⁷ Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 183.

³¹⁸ George E. Atwood and Robert D. Stolorow, *Structures of Subjectivity: Explorations in Psychoanalytic Phenomenology and Contextualism* (Florence: Taylor and Francis, 2014).

³¹⁹ Eburne, *Outsider Theory*, 273. Given that Jonathan Eburne served as a member on the committee that oversaw the creation of this dissertation, it would be tempting to accuse me of tactically having him inject this line into his work, but I assure the readers that, though I am in the acknowledgements, I only read and commented on the introduction. Perhaps I am more haunting than I wish to admit, however.

³²⁰ Indeed, when one reads Reik, one gets the feeling that Nietzsche stands almost shoulder-to-shoulder with his beloved teacher, Freud.

³²¹ Reik, *The Haunting Melody*, 4. The parentheses here are intriguing, perhaps reflecting an unconscious urge to protect Freud the father from his own admissions.

within a psychoanalytical paradigm, probably culminating in his *Fragments of a Great Confession*. As Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe pointed out, even “Reik’s apparently more ‘theoretical’ texts... readily take the form of autobiographical narrative.”³²² Safran takes this further: “[Reik] devotes more of his writing than virtually any other analyst... to a type of confessional self-analysis.”³²³ But, more relevant to us is the analyses contained within his great work of exile literature (a genre-classification for Reik that is oft-overlooked – indeed, he mostly abandoned his German language, at least when it came to his writings, almost immediately upon arrival in America), *The Haunting Melody: Psychoanalytic Experiences in Life and Music*. For, if Derrida notes that “‘displaced persons,’ exiles, those who are deported, expelled, rootless, nomads, all share two sources of sighs... their dead ones and their language,” Reik, as a foreigner, a ξένος, would be quick to add music to that list – and he may, as our analysis will show, be speaking of a constitutive experience.³²⁴

Indeed, even if we retained some (rightful) squeamishness with regards to muddying the phenomenological waters with psychoanalysis, that I classify *The Haunting Melody* as an example of exile literature should calm our nerves, if only slightly, as should the fact that we see the word “experiences” in the subtitle. More so than that, though, is Reik’s completely upfront attitude about this book’s shortcomings, filled with “wide gaps” and a lack of “appropriate material.”³²⁵ It is, in other words, “a ‘theoretical failure,’” “though of course one is not obliged to believe him.”³²⁶ The problem of a lack of material (allegedly) leads Reik to pursue his fundamentally autobiographical style, which is rooted in a reportage of “[his] reactions to” what is “provided by analysis of other

³²² Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *Typography: Mimesis, Philosophy, Politics* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 148.

³²³ J. D. Safran, "Theodor Reik's Listening with the Third Ear and the Role of Self-Analysis in Contemporary Psychoanalytic Thinking," *Psychoanal Rev* 98, no. 2 (Apr 2011): 214, <https://doi.org/10.1521/prev.2011.98.2.205>.

³²⁴ Derrida, *Of Hospitality*, 87.

³²⁵ Reik, *The Haunting Melody*, 14.

³²⁶ Lacoue-Labarthe, *Typography*, 148.

and [*himself*],” which ultimately culminates, textually speaking, in a finale that is a presentation of his own “inner experience.”³²⁷ (I slipped in ‘allegedly’ here because, when one is reading Reik, it is difficult to disagree with Lacoue-Labarthe’s assertion that “there is in Reik a kind of ‘autobiographical compulsion’ ... a *need to confess*... a matter of auto-analytic compulsion... that is able to satisfy itself... by way of an operation of a ‘literary’ type, through *Dichtung*.”)³²⁸ Indeed, *The Haunting Melody* positively abounds with detailed descriptions of everyday experiences, interactions with objects and other phenomena – including a particularly memorable exchange with an electronic clock that, when read closely, recapitulates many of the major points of Heidegger’s *Sein und Zeit* with regards to technology, failure, *Angst*, and mortality in just a few sentences.³²⁹ Heinz Kohut claims that Reik has a “tendency to indulge” too much in this type of confession, even as “his major contribution” lies in his “rich anecdotal” accounts. This seeming simultaneity of flaw and benefit makes one think that perhaps it is not a bug, but a feature of Reik’s work.³³⁰ If Reik is at “the limits of psychoanalysis,” as Lacoue-Labarthe puts it and as Reik confessed in *Listening with the Third Ear*,³³¹ he may very well be a quite excellent, if accidental, phenomenologist,³³² and it is because of this that we might read his ideas greedily and with the

³²⁷ Reik, *The Haunting Melody*, 13. Emphasis mine

³²⁸ Lacoue-Labarthe, *Typography*, 148-49.

³²⁹ Reik, *The Haunting Melody*, 51.

³³⁰ Heinz Kohut, “The Haunting Melody: Psychoanalytic Experiences in Life and Music’ by Theodor Reik,” in *The Search for the Self: Selected Writings of Heinz Kohut, 1950-1978*, ed. Paul H. Ornstein (London: Karnac, 2011), 187-90..

³³¹ Less charitably, but probably more accurately, per Morton Israel, “Reik was rejected by the mainstream psychoanalytic establishment.” Part of this had to do with the fact that he did not possess a medical degree, which, at the time, was so scandalous that Freud had to intervene, which he did with the book-length treatment, *Die Frage der Laienanalyse*. Morton Israel, “Theodor Reik: Architect of the Subjective Approach to Psychoanalytic Treatment,” *Psychoanal Rev* 100, no. 3 (Jun 2013): 453-72, <https://doi.org/10.1521/prev.2013.100.3.453>.

³³² “We have touched the limits of psychology; we have been led into the discussion of a universal phenomenon of all living beings.” Theodor Reik, *Listening with the Third Ear: the Inner Experience of a Psychoanalyst* (New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1948), 329. It should, however, be noted that Reik did not have kind words for phenomenologists, contrasting the freedom of psychoanalysis, its unsystematicity, with a perceived deference to “definite and previously defined points” in phenomenology. Ironically, the phenomenologists would probably have similar complaints about psychoanalysis; Reik stands here as a perhaps uncategorizable figure. Reik, *Listening with the Third Ear*, 439.

ability to take them to their further conclusion – the “outer limits,” recalling the way that the Marketts took *Outer Limits* to “Out of Limits.”³³³ In a few words: “Whereas Freud starts, for example, with the forgetting of a proper name, a disturbance in memory, an art image (or even his own dreams), Reik prefers to *listen*,” report/confess, and then analyze.³³⁴

It is important, at the outset, before even defining the haunting melody, to acknowledge that Reik’s paradigm of listening is broadly consonant with the one we sketched in detail in chapter 2. He notes, bringing to the fore a dissatisfaction or skepticism with regards to language that is typical of psychoanalysis, that “our language emerges from a subsoil in which *sounds*, fleeting images, organic sensations, and emotional currents *are not yet differentiated*.”³³⁵ Whereas it is typical to focus on the unconscious elements that affect our language(s), Reik’s concern for *sounds* marks him, at least partially, as a theorist of sonicity, as opposed to simply listening to *language*. He continues this link between listening and psychic life shortly thereafter by referring to the bringing about of an affect on the psyche as “tapping the wires of unconscious life,” a, frankly, bizarre formulation that recalls not merely percussive string instruments (i.e. the piano or the hammered dulcimer) but also the growth of the technological apparatus that formed the communicative network of modernity, gesturing towards an intimate connection between sonicity, technology, and the subject that would later be picked up by Avital Ronell in *The Telephone Book*.³³⁶ If this were not intriguing enough, I want to push on the fact that he claims these sounds,

³³³ Lacoue-Labarthe, *Typography*, 199. The Marketts, *Out of Limits* (Coxsackie, NY: Sundazed, 1964).

³³⁴ Lacoue-Labarthe, *Typography*, 151. Emphasis original.

³³⁵ Reik, *The Haunting Melody*, 9. Emphasis mine.

³³⁶ Reik, *The Haunting Melody*, 12. See also: Avital Ronell, *The Telephone Book: Technology, Schizophrenia, Electric Speech* (Lincoln, NE: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1991). These connections are made nearly explicit in a passage in the final section of the book, which is, mostly, a lengthy self-analysis on music, mourning, and the haunting melody, where a colleague close to Freud (*not* Freud himself, as Lacoue-Labarthe mistakenly recounts in his summary of this passage – hauntings of hauntings!) telephones Reik to inform him of the death of Karl Abraham, and Reik, mournfully wandering around, catches himself “humming a melody [that he does] not recognize,” but which is identified upon further thought as “the first bars of the chorale from the last movement of Gustav Mahler’s Second Symphony.” Reik, *The Haunting Melody*, 222-23. Tapping the wires, indeed!

images, et al. are not yet differentiated. While it is reasonable to assume that he is referring to the fact that these form a sort of multi-media *mélange* of the mind, we can also read the sounds *themselves* (i.e. as a unit within the mind) as being undifferentiated. This has two major consequences for this paper: First of all, if these sounds are not *yet* differentiated, there is the implication that they will be. This would conform to our reading of the natural attitude with regards to the soundscape as posited in Chapter 2, in that it functions as an irradiated idealism that treats individual sounds as discrete phenomena, even though because of the schizophonic nature of listening, we apprehend them as a monolithic structure on an ontologically primordial level. The second point would be that Reik acknowledges the idea that sonic information would be apprehend in such a way, which is to say nearly overwhelmingly, before being ‘sorted.’ (This would also be consonant with the formation of the “work paradigm” of Goehr, but this will be explored in greater depth in the next section.) In short, Reik’s initial theorization of listening explicated from this short passage is remarkably consistent with our own formulation.

Yet Reik adds an interesting element: haunting. This is to say a simultaneity between absence and presence. How does that affect our formulation of music as potentially all-encompassing and, subsequently, the composition of musical works (and worlds)?

For Reik, these haunting melodies are *incidental*, which is to say forming a background to our psychic life. They themselves form part of the, as he calls it, “subsoil” of the lived experience of our life. (That he labels it as “sub-“ soil should already direct our attention to the fact that he is dealing with fundamentally ontological questions.) A “haunting melody” may also be referred to as an ear worm, or, in German, Reik’s native language, an *Ohrwurm*, with all of its fabulous dragonesque connotations intact, but we should be attuned to the fact that both “haunting” and “*Ohrwurm*” imply both interiority and exteriority, a sort of invasion from the exterior that is

nevertheless supported within, as well. That it would still be related to the subsoil of our psychic life displays the complicated interconnections of Reik's worldview. These preliminary statements will become more important later, but, for now, let us restrict our analysis to Reik's precise characterization of these haunting melodies through his observations, armed with a deconstructive logic, aided and abetted by Lacoue-Labarthe.³³⁷

The incidental music that travels with us in our psychic life is a product of "musical associations," which "are rarely connected with well-formulated thoughts, but... with thought embryos or vague images."³³⁸ Put another way, they are not the product of self-analysis but something more akin to a free associative practice. Musical associations would similarly be a product of memory; by definition, association is a mnemonic process, recalling various things that may fit together in a way that is not always governed by the domination of social logic, as anyone who has ever had a pop song stuck in their head at a funeral can attest. They would be based on the recollection of various sonic experiences, which, given that these are related to the soundscape, would also be recollections of various sonic *environments*, points in the *musical manifold* of our lives, and then incorporated or re-incorporated (or, perhaps, if we view, as Rilke did, body as sharing the grooves of a shellac record, inscribed or re-inscribed – the natural groove found in the "*Kronen-Naht des Schädels*," ["coronal suture of the skull"] which, when played "[*müßte*] ein Ton [] entstehen, eine Ton-Folge, eine Musik" ["would have to generate a tone, a series of tones, a music"]³³⁹ with other places and spaces that shared similar modalities and aspects of being-in-the-

³³⁷ Though Lacoue-Labarthe is less invested in the fundamental questions concerning music and how they might be illuminated in Reik than he is broader link between music, mourning, and the necessity of confession. He, in other words, like many of our other theorists, puts the cart before the horse, although, in this instance, no one can blame him, as Reik does this as well. Above all, however, Lacoue-Labarthe finds himself in the grip of Nietzsche. Perhaps this study, too, is only a very long attempt to understand Nietzsche – at least the Nietzsche we find in *The Birth of Tragedy*.

³³⁸ Reik, *The Haunting Melody*, 91.

³³⁹ Rainer Maria Rilke, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 6 (Frankfurt am Main: Insel-Verlag, 1966), 1085-93, 89-90. Translation mine.

world. Hence the somewhat obvious link between music and nostalgia or homesickness, which, as Reik points out, can be the invocation of trauma and anxiety, as well, a reminder of loss (“How beautiful life would have been there!” he laments, sighing his sigh, as an exile, as a foreigner, of Europe), a wound, that festers with sonic experiences that resemble “a traffic jam at the door of my recollections,” a perfectly evocative (and aurally rich) metaphor.³⁴⁰

Yet, precisely because these haunting melodies are free associative, they also *irrupt*. Reik pondered thus, curiously slipping between tenses: “Were the profound reflections on physics of Albert Einstein, who is an excellent violinist, sometimes interrupted by melodies?”³⁴¹ These “melodies express that emotional and loose, fantastic component of our thinking and manifest” these elements *within our everyday experience*, which, again, as we recall, has a link with the phenomenological concept of the natural attitude.³⁴² These haunting melodies “invade and usurp the mental sphere against resistance, and occupy its realm for hours and sometimes for days. Their victim does not know and cannot tell us why this particular melody is pursuing him. He very often cannot even identify the tune.”³⁴³ Again, there is a complication of interior and exterior, but there are some other interesting choices of topological description as well. What would it mean to be pursued from the inside? To pursue is emphatically not to catch, after all. Moreover, the *prōsecūtor* is unidentifiable, presumably related to the ontological subsoil that Reik noted was initially undifferentiated. It is unsorted and unsortable, present and not present, inside and yet still in pursuit, a conqueror of the soundscape that is, nevertheless, relatively harmless. The haunting melody comes “like an unannounced guest one has once known, but whose name one has

³⁴⁰ Reik, *The Haunting Melody*, 105, 10-11.

³⁴¹ Reik, *The Haunting Melody*, 122.

³⁴² Reik, *The Haunting Melody*, 123.

³⁴³ Reik, *The Haunting Melody*, 166.

forgotten.”³⁴⁴ Nameless and unknown, it is sometimes “heard by the inner ear” only “as a faint echo.”³⁴⁵

But haunting melodies are themselves pursued! The will to categorize and sort, so deeply part of the experience of our life-world, our *Umwelt*, an innately active passivity that desires order lest we be overwhelmed, pursues the undifferentiated experience of sonicity and seeks to violently bestow upon it a name when it does not have one, to corral it into the work paradigm out of which it has sneaked, only returning as a faint echo of its allegedly original experience, yet an experience that we already know is schizophrenic. Reik recalls that when he chased the haunting melody and the thought associations he believed were associated with it, they “seemed to evaporate as soon as I tried to catch them. They vanished whenever I approached them like a flock of birds,” or perhaps a flock of seagulls.³⁴⁶ The hunted, hunting, haunting melody, consistent with its status as haunting, is riddled with dualities that cannot be apprehended by any sort binaristic logic (either/or) and functions according to an interpenetrative logic (both/and), which is underscored by his earlier religious reference to the haunting melody as “resembl[ing] the bush that Moses saw, the bush that burned with fire and was not consumed,” perhaps the first haunting in the Judeo-Christian tradition.³⁴⁷ But, crucially, this understanding of logic, wherein, to quote Derrida, “one plus one makes at least three,” can be said to also apply to our characterization of music, as outlined in the first section of this chapter, which could not be simply quantified as either music or not-music, nor even, really, absent subjective judgment, mediated through the norms of the time and place, musical or unmusical.³⁴⁸

³⁴⁴ Reik, *The Haunting Melody*, 181.

³⁴⁵ Reik, *The Haunting Melody*, 181.

³⁴⁶ Reik, *The Haunting Melody*, 227..

³⁴⁷ Reik, *The Haunting Melody*, 9.

³⁴⁸ Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, 36.

Importantly, Reik's own characterization of the apprehension of 'exterior' or live music (though, it must be noted that he, on the surface level, works even more exclusively within the work paradigm than Ingarden, not to mention is both anthropo- *and* andro-centric) alleges that there is a difference between the "haunting melody... [and] the everyday experience when a tune occurs to us, [though] we do not know why."³⁴⁹ Yet, already the lines between the haunting melody and music are becoming blurred here, not only because "occurs" is a vague term that could denote anything from a thought to the actual experiencing of a tune that we play (the Marketts – again the Marketts! – are "occurring" right now as I write this), but also because, as Jacques Derrida wisely advised us, "'I don't know' signals a situation."³⁵⁰ Reik's system, so very much based on clearly identifiable works, becomes undermined by the very namelessness that characterizes the haunting melody, but more so because he severs the link between the composer (and all of their intentionality, as we saw with Ingarden's *Grenzfälle*) and the listener in a performance, be it live or in a moment of occurrence, which could include the experiencing of the inscription that forms the basis of its techno-mimetic mechanical reproduction. For Reik, the idea

that the inner experience of the listener is a copy or replica of that of the composer in reverse... is sheer nonsense... How should we listeners experience the same deep stirrings as the composer, the same inner tensions, torments, and joys from which his work sprang, the misery and the bliss of creation, his despair and transport, the power and glory of conquest? What we experience cannot be anything but a very weak and deluded *echo of the voices that he heard in himself*.³⁵¹

What is remarkable about this passage is Reik's acknowledgement that composers would have their own haunting melodies, their own interior voices. These would, themselves, be only an echo of their original sonic apprehensions however for the same reason that the sonic apprehension of

³⁴⁹ Reik, *The Haunting Melody*, 241.

³⁵⁰ Jacques Derrida, "Schibboleth: For Paul Celan," in *Word traces : readings of Paul Celan*, ed. Aris Fioretos (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 37.

³⁵¹ Reik, *The Haunting Melody*, 53. Emphasis mine.

the composer's own work would be reduced to an echo and itself potentially become a haunting melody. Reik notes that the listeners will only be able to hear the echo *of the voices* the composer heard, which is itself rooted in sonicity; further, these voices need not be human, as the non-human music of nature and technology often serve as muses for human composers, the former with composers of pastoral symphonies, for example, the latter with industrial music.³⁵² The haunting melody becomes distorted and passed on to the listener as an echo, the echo, as Lacoue-Labarthe notes, of the subject, from listener to listener, furthered by the creative act of one musician to another to another, and so on, until we are left with a reverberant hall of history constantly haunted by the ghosts of melodies past, fused or degraded, mutated or refined in ever new ways according to every person's sonic experience of the world, where even the act of hearing the performance of music in person is itself only a haunted act of the soundscape reproducing itself in a novel way functioning according the logic of schizophonia, which, holds that sounds are always already in a state of distortion from their purported points of origin.

Lacoue-Labarthe is nearly explicit about the phenomenological potential of the haunting melody, referring to it, utilizing Reik's terminology, as "the *perception of* a kind of inner echo," which is itself something of a paradoxical statement, especially as it seems to provide unprecedented access to the interior of one's psychic life.³⁵³ But this should tip us off that we are now functioning according to a different modality of logic as it pertains to being-in-the-world. We are working here within a paradigm not of interior and exterior, a duality in other words, not a philosophy of the subject or of the object, but one of *enfolding* (we might compare this to the

³⁵² Perhaps the most powerful piece of industrial music in this vein would be Maurizio Bianchi's *Symphony for a Genocide*, each track of which is named after a different Nazi *Konzentrationslager*.

³⁵³ Lacoue-Labarthe, *Typography*, 150.

Heideggerian “*Einbruch*” – irruption³⁵⁴) – yet one that still allows for the presence, however haunting, of the interior, on which “perception” is inherently predicated. This is to say that the subsoil of our psychic life is fundamentally concomitant with a quite literal subsoil, coterminous yet severed. Consequently: “the figure is never *one*... the subject ‘desists’ because it must always confront *at least* two figures (or one figure that is *at least* double), and that its only chance of ‘grasping itself’ lies in introducing itself and oscillating *between* figure and figure.”³⁵⁵ This is why another thinker, Heinrich Racker, will assert that music can cause “the intense pleasure of experiencing the dissolution of the boundaries between the ego and the external world.”³⁵⁶ It does *not*, as such, eradicate the ego, but rather exposes it as functioning according to the logic of enfolding and traces that we have already identified.

Let us unpack this with our understanding of both listening and listening while haunted. We will have to consider the body as a tremulous and reverberant membrane. We defined the tympanum not as the eardrum but the *eardrumhead* of a larger musical space, namely the body. The mechanics of a drum are instructive here, as the interior and exterior exist in a concurrent relationship; the interior requires an exterior stimulus, yet it also contributes to an externality that can itself have yet further influence on its interiority. In simplistic, audiological terms, this would be the process of the echo, as the vibratory soundwaves return from the boundaries of the space and recur as further vibrations of the drumhead, which may or may not be easily perceptible to our ears without amplification depending on the size of the space in which the drumming occurs and how it is constructed (which is to say, does it encourage sound *dampening* or *reverberation*?). Yet

³⁵⁴ See Richardson, *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought*, 44-46. In opposition to Heidegger, I am not positing a *breakage*, as this breaking would be *ontic*, related to the outward project of the natural attitude with all its accompanying violence. I prefer to speak of “enfolding” to describe the ontological condition – with awareness that folds can easily become breaks.

³⁵⁵ Lacoue-Labarthe, *Typography*, 175.

³⁵⁶ Heinrich Racker, "Contribution to Psychoanalysis of Music," *American Imago* 8, no. 2 (1951): 6, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26301304>.

the drum is simultaneously and nevertheless regarded as a singular object despite the web of acoustic relations that mark the very possibility of its existence. Much the same can be said of the human body. The body as a web of acoustic relations can be understood as both the recipient of the soundscape and also a contributor to the soundscape as well – the vibrations of the soundscape, which is to say, as our study of Ingarden showed, the potential musical manifold, are interiorized and form a constitutive sonic envelope alongside the skin as a resonant receiver, which subsequently exports the bodily noises into the soundscape which affects others, such as the crinkling of the skin, one’s heartbeat, or intestinal noises; “being in a state of *resonance* is... an essential constituent of... everyday experience.”³⁵⁷ In the case of Daniel Paul Schreber, who will become important in Chapter 4, nerves themselves feed into the music of the world; “*die Schwingungen der menschlichen Nerven erfolgen nach einem gewissen regelmäßigen Tonfall*” (“the vibrations of human nerves follow a certain regular intonation”), which would then be themselves *affecting other human nerves*, radiating outwards.³⁵⁸ (We should here not also forget Rilke’s *Schwingungen*, which, perhaps, reached its apotheosis in an Ash Ra Tempel track of the same name.) “Being-in-the-soundscape” is a compromised figure or subject of analysis, as one is also part of the soundscape as well, inseparable from it, perhaps not as severely as in the case of Schreber, but he may only towards the outer limits. Our perceptions are fundamentally *enfolded into the world*, in such a way that we somehow maintain a quasi-unity (i.e. the skin-ego of Didier Anzieu), while also fundamentally dissolving into the background and being its product – “oscillating between figure and figure,” to recapitulate Lacoue-Labarthe. It is in this sense, and

³⁵⁷ Holger Schulze, "The Substance of the Situation," in *Music as Atmosphere: Collective Feelings and Affective Sounds*, ed. Friedlind Riedel and Juha Torvinen (Routledge, 2019), 152.

³⁵⁸ Daniel Paul Schreber, *Denkwürdigkeiten eines Nervenkranken* (Createspace Independent Publishing Platform, 2013), 114. (In English, 132.) Translation slightly modified; specifically, I changed the translation of “*Tonfall*” from “cadence” to “intonation,” in order to keep the presence of the “*Ton*.” Also see Daniel Paul Schreber, *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness*, trans. Ida Macalpine and Richard A. Hunter (New York, NY: New York Review of Books, 2000).

perhaps only in this sense that Lacoue-Labarthe can speak of his unprecedented and phenomenological access towards the interiority of the figure, “the *perception* of the inner echo.” Viewed from another side, it is here where we can return to a critique of anthropocentrism: “the *wild* outside contaminates me.”³⁵⁹

Thus our experience of the sonic manifold and, therefore, the musical manifold, would be one of a fundamental indeterminacy, where the boundaries between interior and exterior are complicated and function according to an interpenetrative logic, where the ears constantly consume broken and haunting sonicities – schizophonic fragments. The ear being confronted with the hearing of itself; with Lacoue-Labarthe’s multiplicity of the figure and Derrida’s adage of adding, we can say, “in one ear, out the other, and in the third.”³⁶⁰ With this wider definition of music as all-encompassing, with this notion of enfolding, we are perhaps following a more Heideggerian track than Heidegger did, fitting, as he gestured always beyond himself, or so Derrida says; we are drawing attention to that which is nearest and ownmost: the self’s resonant body, the musical harmony of the world folding in on itself and being aware of it. Following Heidegger’s consistent mobilization of nearness, archetypically laid out at the outset of his essay on the thing (though present in all of his works – a rarity in a philosopher so marked by change, even as he asserted that philosophers only think one thought), the musical manifold that is the soundscape is so near, in fact, that we often view it as inescapably far from us.

But let us take this one step further by incorporating our own de-hierarchizing impulses here, our infatuation with very old grasshoppers and the peal of thunder. Let us, in other words, treat man as being in an enfolded relation with the soundscape, as opposed to one of metaphysical mastery – the Mbuti’s forest, for instance, which, we recall is always listening. Derrida, in his

³⁵⁹ Gamberi and Zaietta, "Anthropomorphic Dilemma," 279.

³⁶⁰ Reik, *Listening with the Third Ear*, 145.

reading of Heidegger, asserts that the *Weltarmut* of the animal “is not an indigence, a meagerness of world. It has, without doubt, the sense of a privation (*Entbehrung*).”³⁶¹ Derrida’s use of *privation*, even in the French³⁶², is interesting because of the gesture towards *singularity* even amongst the de-privation. For privation ultimately is linked with *privio* – which carries with it the internal contradiction of both to *rob* and to *free*. This has profound implications for man as *animal rationale*, as Derrida himself noted, especially in our current discussion.³⁶³ If we are moving away from music in its anthropocentric definition, if we *insist* on the animality (thus the naturality) of man and move towards a de-hierarchization of the field of the world, we ourselves are greeted with this privation of the world. We are robbed of the mastery of the world, but we are freed in our solitary and singular experience of the soundscape, which is always schizophonicly echoed within us depending on innumerable contingencies of topography (both on a global – rainforest as opposed to tundra, e.g. – and an extremely personal level – how far one is from a particular tree boughing itself to the wind). This opens us up to an “*other* relationship.”³⁶⁴ Recall that earlier we noted that, “the soundscape, as opposed to the landscape, is precisely not useful. It is something other.” If we, contra Heidegger’s view, are world-poor, in that we lack a common, metaphysically guaranteed world, for indeed, we are on haunted grounds, haunted soil, approaching nothing other than a hauntology, then this opens up to a world rich with music – which, as we remember and explored in our approach to listening in Chapter 2, always already contains within itself the potentially to be ontologically disclosive. What we may apprehend is nothing less than the song of the Earth and our relation(s) to it. Hence Racker’s assertion that music represents a connection

³⁶¹ Jacques Derrida, *Of Spirit: Heidegger and the Question*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington and Rachel Bowlby (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 48.

³⁶² Jacques Derrida, *De l'esprit: Heidegger et la Question* (Paris: Galilée, 1987), 78.

³⁶³ Derrida, *Of Spirit: Heidegger and the Question*, 47.

³⁶⁴ Derrida, *Of Spirit: Heidegger and the Question*, 49.

to “a knowledge which we do not know that we know”³⁶⁵ – yet, in a way that does not reify a “metaphysics of *Grund*, of the natural ground,” as will become even more clear in the following section.³⁶⁶ Where Racker veered towards mathematism, we understand that this quest for order is always already at work in the phenomenological natural order, and we recognize it as an insufficient accounting of the actual experience of the world’s song and our places and spaces within, among, and enfolded into it. A fragmentary system of resonances and echoes.³⁶⁷

* * *

But we are perhaps being too hasty, even with our study of the Mbuti, even with our reading of Ingarden, even with our reading of Reik, even as animals. We still have not actually accounted for what is traditionally named as music, Ingarden’s Chopin, for instance. We mobilize this logic of enfolding; it gives new depth to the notion of schizophonic mimesis, which in turn gives further depth to our ideas.

Schizophonic mimesis was a term coined by Steven Feld to

point to a broad spectrum of interactive and extractive processes. These acts and events produce a traffic in new creations and relationships through the use, circulation, and absorption of sound recordings... [Feld wants] to question how sonic copies, echoes, resonances, traces, memories, resemblances, imitations, duplications all proliferate histories and possibilities. This is to ask how sound recordings, split from their source through the chain of audio production, circulation, and consumption stimulate and license renegotiations of identity.³⁶⁸

³⁶⁵ Racker, "Contribution."

³⁶⁶ Haar, *The Song of the Earth*, 13.

³⁶⁷ In this way, perhaps the early hominids of our archaeological interlocutors were still yet ahead of us, as there is increasing evidence to support the idea that they purposefully sought out caves and caverns not necessarily for protection but for their resonances – their ability to function as yet another rhythmic layer of experience, another level of the drum’s exoskeleton. A full accounting of the relations between speleology and music is, sadly, beyond the scope of this present study.

³⁶⁸ Feld, "Pygmy POP," 13.

Feld's initial concern pertains to the wider mobilization and permutation of Turnbull's Mbuti field recordings, which were referenced directly in Herbie Hancock's "Watermelon Man" and, subsequently, in Madonna, calling into question ideas of ownership, identity, and appropriation – especially important given that the subjects of ethnomusicological field recordings are almost always populations whose culture is threatened by passive or active assimilation (the former being, for example, the gradual adoption of modernity in ways that replace the *épistémè* of the people in question, the latter being something akin to forced conversion), violence (as we see in the genocidal acts of terror committed by mining operations in the Amazon), or some combination of the two.³⁶⁹ Yet, following our analysis of schizophonia itself and our conclusion that it need not apply simply to electronic reproduction (via the mechanics of sonic apperception and acoustics at large), we have to question whether schizophonic mimesis can merely apply to "sound recordings." For it seems like Feld is already working within a rather haunted paradigm, one of "echoes, resonances, [traces]." Would not the memory of a musical event already be a sort of inscription? A recording or palimpsest? However distorted it may be, it would persist as a haunting melody. But what of the notion of mimesis? Music, especially absolute music, is often held to be *non-mimetic* – not only just identified as such but lauded and idolized precisely for this reason, placed in opposition to the 'plastic' arts.

Feld's understanding of mimesis arises out of the work of theorist and anthropologist Michael Taussig, especially that outlined in *Mimesis & Alterity*, which, to quote Feld on the matter,

³⁶⁹ This concern is near and dear to Feld's heart. The sale of field recordings he has made of the Bosavi people has allowed for the establishment and funding of the Bosavi People's Fund, as he recounts in the introduction to the third edition of his seminal *Sound and Sentiment*. Feld recounts in the liner notes to the 3-disc Smithsonian Folkways collection of Bosavi music how this process of assimilation works with regards to music, tracing the formation of string (guitar or ukulele) groups among the Bosavi to missionaries and limited labor exchange with other areas in Papua New Guinea, developing through "cassettes... played until they disintegrated" and the "weak signal and poor reception over the mountains from Radio Southern Highlands," a classically technological example of schizophonia. See: Steven Feld, "Bosavi: Rainforest Music from Papua New Guinea," in *Bosavi: Rainforest Music from Papua New Guinea* (Smithsonian Folkways 2001), Liner notes.

holds that “the newly created object or event may desire and absorb the cumulative powers imagined to reside in what it has copied or taken over.”³⁷⁰ Yet I am convinced that, if the sense of music as a haunting melody may be mimesis, it is mimesis in the sense that Roger Caillois meant. The question, per Caillois, and for us here considering individual pieces of music in the context of both the soundscape and the haunting melody, “proves to be that of *distinction*.”³⁷¹ Moreover, “no distinction is more pronounced than the one demarcating an organism from its environment; at least, none involves a *more acutely perceptible sense* of separation.”³⁷² In order to elaborate on this, Caillois takes the perhaps strange examples of insect mimicry, which is to say the various ‘guises’ that certain species are associated with, i.e. “the Brazilian *Cholia* butterflies [that] settle in a row on little stalks so as to form bellflowers like those on lily of the valley sprigs.”³⁷³ Ultimately, he arrives at the position that this is a *magical* process, used in the strict anthropological sense, with reference to schizophrenic patients, which he describes as “*depersonalization through assimilation into space*,” a process of “enfold[ing]” resulting in an ultimate “disestablishment of perceived interior and exterior bonds.”³⁷⁴ In other words, this is fundamentally a problem of haunting, of a view towards ontology that might be described precisely as an enfolding, contingent on a fundamental disconnect from the an assumed origin point of a phenomenon. While Caillois privileges, along with Plato and the much of the rest of the Western philosophical tradition, the *eye*, it is not hard to see how this might apply to the aural mimicry of any number of species. (I cannot but think of the cry of the bobcat that so closely recalls a dying or wounded animal that it formed an ethical injunction for me to trudge out to a road in the wilderness from the safety of a

³⁷⁰ Feld, “Pygmy POP,” 13.

³⁷¹ Roger Caillois, *The Edge of Surrealism: a Roger Caillois Reader*, ed. Claudine Frank, trans. Camille Naish (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 89. Emphasis original.

³⁷² Caillois, *The Edge of Surrealism*. Emphasis mine.

³⁷³ Caillois, *The Edge of Surrealism*, 99. The essay is replete with further examples. I have chosen this one because of its poetic beauty and little other reason.

³⁷⁴ Caillois, *The Edge of Surrealism*, 100. Emphasis original.

cabin in merely a bathrobe, accompanied with only a pocket knife, a glass of wine, and a cigarette, to see if I could help whatever sounded so in pain, exposing myself to the very risk I attempted to avert for an animal other.) To paraphrase Caillois, which is to say to *mimic* him, to be haunted by him: “I know what I hear, but I don’t feel that I hear what I hear.” Schizophonic mimesis in this sense – perhaps schizophrenic mimesis at large, but let us not be too eager or digressive – would then be a relation of music to its enfolding into the ear, which would then be reproduced, either simply as resonance or reconstituted later in music-making, as a separate but related object, similar to the metonymic process. The wind whistling between the trees haunts a person who plays its melody on a pipe, which haunts a mockingbird who plays that melody, which haunts yet another person, who plays that melody on a violin, which haunts yet another person, who incorporates that melody as a motif in a sonata, *which haunts still more people...* This is what Pettman referred to, within the context of breaking free from anthropocentric worldviews, when we quoted him in the first chapter, as “an increasingly uncanny mimetic expression.”³⁷⁵ We can say that it is occasionally intentional, with respect to openly mimetic pieces, such as pastoral music, but even then it would be governed by the chance enfolding of a composer in space. That the composer might be a mockingbird or a beetle would ultimately make little difference to this schema. Thus schizophonic mimesis, the transfer of music around and around, functions more in the sense of the world talking to itself.³⁷⁶ The echoes of musical melodies are distorted and modified – never identical, even in the age of their techno-mimetic reproduction, exemplified by musicians of decay (i.e. Marclay’s *Record Without a Cover*, which took “all-but-identical mass-produced objects,” a pressing of Marclay’s performances and allowed them, through the process of damage, to “slowly

³⁷⁵ Pettman, *Sonic Intimacy*, 57.

³⁷⁶ And, in this sense, to echo Lacoue-Labarthe’s reading, there is here more than a passing similarity to the Goethean notion of the *wiederholte Spiegelung*.

diverge from one another, becoming unique works of art via the accumulated traces of their singular and contingent trajectories³⁷⁷) – and they mesh with the other echoes, reverberating in the hall of time, as haunting figures, waiting to be heard and momentarily felt. We are, therefore, not “reinvent[ing] a naïve metaphysics of presence for the animal kingdom” but rather trying to explore the various paths of stutter and gasp on the way to music that permeate the entire sonic manifold – the musical manifold.³⁷⁸ In this sense, Schopenhauer’s identification of music with world finds a new sort of truth, perhaps beyond “shar[ing] certain parallel features,” but the music *simpliciter* is not music *simpliciter* – only a constant deferral and referral.³⁷⁹

When it is understood that non-human organisms are also composers in their own right, it brings new depth to Lacoue-Labarthe’s assertion that “the absence of [traditionally musical] rhythm... is equivalent to the infinitely paradoxical appearance of *the mimetic itself*: the indifferentiable as such, the imperceptible par excellence,” which is to say the originary and equiprimordial understanding of the schizophrenic soundscape, openly, in this passage, with reference to Heidegger (though not, in fairness, to his analysis of listening, yet nevertheless harmonized perversely with it, itself a schizophrenic mimesis of thought).³⁸⁰

It is precisely in this sense that Terry Riley noted, in an interview with *Keyboard Magazine*, that “every single great moment of music that’s come through you has come through you literally, that it never originated in anything that you call yourself but actually just passed through.”³⁸¹ Let us finally return to the now long-gestating question of La Monte Young’s use of the past tense in his “Piano Piece for David Tudor #3” – “most of them/ were very old grasshoppers.” What this

³⁷⁷ Cox, *Sonic Flux*, 65.

³⁷⁸ Pettman, *Sonic Intimacy*, 57.

³⁷⁹ Ferrara, “Schopenhauer on Music,” 183.

³⁸⁰ Lacoue-Labarthe, *Typography*, 195.

³⁸¹ Terry Riley, “Sarah Cahill Interviews Terry Riley,” interview by Sarah Cahill, *Keyboard Magazine*, YouTube video, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aWDzGX3OHkg>. Also see Terry Riley and Sam Lung, “The Piano Works,” (London: Chester Music, 2015).

ultimately thematizes would be Lacoue-Labarthe's "mimetic itself," the schizophonically mimetic, the echo, and *passing through*. They *were* old grasshoppers; they have already been perceived and are therefore haunting. Young's piece here functions as a manifestation not *just* of the soundscape, as we read in conjunction with Ingarden, but also of the process of the formation of "pieces" *and their fundamental deconstruction*, their haunted and haunting potential. The piano piece has *always already happened*.

This playful notion of temporality is a common motif within Young's oeuvre, as he constantly plays with notions of time. His (generally agreed upon) masterpiece *The Well-Tuned Piano* is a quasi-improvisatory piece meant as an exploration of the limits of just intonation, constructed through a series of chords, elements, and, intriguingly for us, what Young refers to as clouds. All of these chords are named according to Young's own idiosyncratic logic, but a great many refer to the recuperation of a potential past, which may or may not have ever existed. Examples include "Young's Brontosaurus Boogie," "New Böse Brontosaurus Boogie," "Lost Ancestral Lake Region," and the "Ancestral Böse Boogie."³⁸² Terry Riley, deeply attuned to his comrade's musical tendencies from very early on (he published alongside Young in *An Anthology*), remarked, following this, that *The Well-Tuned Piano* is "a cosmic overview of life's tragedy."³⁸³

It is in precisely this sense that we can begin to understand the link between body and sound that is present in a poem of Ernst Meister, which takes Rilke's cranial *Schallplatte* yet further.

Du, mein
schwerster Begriff,
Leichman, Schädelton
noch—du lebst—und
tauber Schädel

³⁸² These were taken from the recent DVD release. The liner notes of the vinyl release (of a different performance) contain similar names throughout, as well. As a quick note, "Böse" refers to the Bösendorfer pianos that Young uses, specifically one that contains an increased octave range.

³⁸³ Strickland, *Minimalism: Origins*, 172. Also see La Monte Young, *The Well Tuned Piano in the Magenta Lights* (New York, NY: Gramavision, 1987).

unvergessender Nachton.

Behüte, Unbekannte,
mich sehr
während der Frist,

in der
meine Finger
mich zählen.

You, my
most difficult concept,
corpse, skulltone
still—you live—and
deaf skull
unforgetting aftertone.

Unknown one, shepherd
me well
during the time

allotted for
my fingers
to count me.³⁸⁴

Here, Meister utilizes a similar logic to Young, but his subject is more clearly of the earth – death and the persistence of memory. The poem traces a space in between life and death; the “most difficult concept” is associated with “skull,” “corpse,” and the time-judgment “after.” Yet still, the most difficult concept lives on, unforgetting. We do not know what the concept is, but we are given a cluster of associations that gesture towards it. It is, to use the words of Rolf Goebel writing on Rilke, a “strange and incommensurable otherness.”³⁸⁵

The skull is deaf – the skull is dead. No longer can the skull perceive; it is past the threshold of sense experience. Yet it positively *resounds*, resonant and pregnant with meaning, pregnant almost with life, decaying and feeding back into the soil of existence. What it feeds, however, is

³⁸⁴ Ernst Meister, *Of Entirety Say the Sentence*, trans. Graham W. Foust and Samuel Frederick (Seattle, WA: Wave Books, 2015), 136-37. Translation modified.

³⁸⁵ Goebel, "Auditory Desires, Auditory Fears," 428.

not merely worms and nutrients, but its own inherent sonicity, developed over years of vibratory experience of the musical manifold, inscribed almost with the precision of Rilke's shellac record, hence unforgetting. The skulltone, however, need not be played with a turntable, for it simply "still" is, "sound[ing] out the space in which... echoes – psalmic and plaintive – reverberate, and sometimes fade away."³⁸⁶ "Until I die there will be sounds. And they will continue after my death."³⁸⁷ Quiet, nearly imperceptible, and yet there it still is, part of the most difficult concept, the unknown.

If we speak of a haunting melody, we also speak of de- and re-composition, the cycle of decay and subsequent reconstitution of organic material by, say, worms, upholding the principles of mass and energy conservation. The corpse is never merely a corpse, but a bubbling cauldron of life. Must we not apply this logic to the musical manifold as well? We have discussed how the living body is resonant, but there are ways in which that resonance can be preserved seemingly after death. The first and most obvious would be related to the process of decomposition; in the process of bodily decay, there would be the creation of noise, both from the body itself, but also from the organisms that are feeding off of it, which, following the food web, would be prey of larger animals, thus providing the nourishing humus for the further cultivation of organic sound. In this sense, the haunting melody would lose its constitution as an identifiable melody, but it would be renewed in forming the possibility of other haunting melodies to arise – the corpse providing the nutrients for a sapling that will later groan, sibilant in the wind. However, there is another possibility, more in line with Young, which is that the sounds made during one's life would similarly persist throughout history. Instead of the lost lake region or the brontosaurus, this would

³⁸⁶ Meister, *Of Entirety Say the Sentence*, viii. This quotation is taken from the introduction, written by the work's translators.

³⁸⁷ Cage, *Silence: Lectures and Writings*, 8.

be as simple as surviving in the memories of others, perhaps as a belch, perhaps singing happy birthday. As David Wellbery has noted, Meister's poetry is characterized by "a temporality that combines a perennial character... with the individuality of the moment... [I]t both universalizes and specifies."³⁸⁸

Yet these are merely *part* of the unknown one, the most difficult concept. Might Meister not be invoking the problematic of the indeterminacy of the *Ton*? This is perhaps possible, but I would venture that he is asking something along the lines of "whence did this skulltone come after all?" How does it continue to crop up, by what medium is this occurring? It is not simply an identification with the musical manifold – that would be far too simple – but the ultimate disconnect of the musical manifold from any identifiable point of origin, its schizophonic aspect, in other words. This is precisely how it can provide shelter and guidance for the self, the "me." It provides this shepherdry on the predication that *it remains unknown*, cutting a deep incision that exists between all individuals and moments. We should not forget the "-greifen" in "*Begriff*," the gripping, the holding close that underpins all concepts – this incommensurable and unknowable other is held close, up to and including the skull, where it will resound with the aftersound, in the "after," when the skull finally becomes deaf, becoming part of the someone else's unknown, by biological processes or by memory, but assuredly meant for the one whose fingers can only count themselves, until they too serve as a reminder of return and reconstitution, becoming their own lost lake region, pools of sound in the resonant cavities that used to hold the eyes.

Thus: Otto Dix, whose skull teems with life, tone, and music.

³⁸⁸ David E. Wellbery, "Death as a Poetological Problem: On Texts by Erich Fried and Ernst Meister," in *Argumentum e Silentio: International Paul Celan Symposium/Internationales Paul Celan-Symposium*, ed. Beda Allemann et al. (New York, NY: Walter de Gruyter, 1987), 97.



Figure 5: Otto Dix, *Skull from the War*

This is Ingarden's suspension of the after in scare quotes, the logic of the trace. Already in 1960, with Young, and 1970, with Meister, this was a trace. And it is a trace now. Young's dedication is a *dated* piece, and, as such, follows a certain interpenetrative logic, as elaborated by Derrida in his monumental "Schibboleth," dedicated to Paul Celan, a figure to whom "Meister keeps returning," as the volume from which the above poem comes was composed partially in the wake of Celan's fatal journey into the Seine.³⁸⁹ In 1960, for David Tudor, in 1970, for Celan: "date, ash, and name were or will be the same, this same never holding in the present. And this same remains... to be sung."³⁹⁰ It is both haunted and haunting, a schizophrenically mimetic

³⁸⁹ Meister, *Of Entirety Say the Sentence*, viii. This quotation is taken from the introduction, written by the work's translators.

³⁹⁰ Derrida, "Schibboleth: For Paul Celan," 45.

moment of recall predicated on an enfolding, that nevertheless *persists in being performed as a single piece* – it is remainder and performance all at once. “This remainder *seems* to remain of what was, and was presently; it seems to nourish itself or quench its thirst at the spring of the being-present, but it emerges from being, it uses up in advance the being from which it seems to draw.”³⁹¹ The soundscape.

* * *

The compositional practice, according to Lacoue-Labarthe’s reading of Reik, would be concomitant with the “autobiographical gesture” that we find both in Reik’s work and his understanding of the fragmentary natures of autobiography itself and composition.³⁹² This is broadly consistent with Racker, whom we already know, and his ventriloquized compatriot, a certain evocatively named Pfeifer (one can really only think of Kafka’s Josefine!). Per Pfeifer, “music is an art of ‘systems of reminiscences of the ego.’”³⁹³ The same might be said of the performance of music, as well; Reik recalls that he “heard a famous pianist say he played a Mozart concerto much better now that he had not played it in a long time. ‘It is... as if my hands got new ideas during the time I did not practice.’”³⁹⁴ One could say that the hands accrued more memories, which emerge in reminiscence as “faded, sketchy *developments* of” the initial sense perception (which is itself, sonically speaking, schizophonically mediated).³⁹⁵ This system of reminiscences would function as a sort of self-recognition as enfolded *and* the perpetuation thereof. Music, as it

³⁹¹ Derrida, "Schibboleth: For Paul Celan," 46.

³⁹² Lacoue-Labarthe, *Typography*, 151.

³⁹³ Racker, "Contribution," 6.

³⁹⁴ Reik, *Listening with the Third Ear*, 209.

³⁹⁵ Reik, *Listening with the Third Ear*, 353.

has been traditionally defined for the past several centuries, which is to say the ‘work,’ can thus be read as entropic and negentropic, in that it complicates the already complicated soundscape and that it causes the soundscape to coalesce around a theme. It is like a whirlpool slowly and never freezing into place. A momentary manifestation as a haunted remainder that, like all good hauntings, is passed yet on into the future. As traditional music has developed across history, just as a song far off develops through the distance, “rhythmic movements,” and we can add here harmonies and melodies, as well, “give place to more complex... ones. But others never quite disappear.”³⁹⁶ That supremely haunted figure, Daniel Paul Schreber, saw this quite clearly in the case of Richard Wagner. According to Schreber, Wagner had been touched by prophetic rays composed of past sensory receptions while composing and writing his libretti.³⁹⁷ In a different register, though one also filled with historical traumas, madness, dissociation, disenfranchisement, in the history of jazz, we see this haunting play out as well. One of the (alleged) key figures of the invention of jazz, Buddy Bolden, had a life that we know little about; of the “dozens and dozens of jazz history works,” “[o]nly a few attempted to verify” the legends surrounding the cornet player.³⁹⁸ Jelly Roll Morton’s take on Bolden in “Buddy Bolden’s Blues,” “seemed to imply that Bolden’s legacy was a matter of rumor: a muffled echo, a faint refrain you weren’t quite sure you’d heard right” – a haunting melody reverberating throughout all the instruments that have played jazz throughout the twentieth century.³⁹⁹

If we read ‘individual’ pieces of music as coming into being and passing away through the prism of schizophrenic mimesis, we can understand the sounds of the world as being momentarily

³⁹⁶ Reik, *Listening with the Third Ear*, 327. Reik claims that the complicated movements would no longer be rhythmical. I would assert, following our various interlocutors, that they simply possess a rhythm of a different sort.

³⁹⁷ Schreber, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, 21. (In English, 28.)

³⁹⁸ Brent Hayes Edwards, *Epistrophies: Jazz and the Literary Imagination* (Cumberland: Harvard University Press, 2017), 3.

³⁹⁹ Edwards, *Epistrophies*.

suspended in time, like larks' tongues in aspic, implying already an arche-violence, a poetics of cruelty, an *Ur-teil*, understood in the sense of an originary cutting, as of a flower that whistles in the wind and serves as a locus for man and the drone of nature. These larks' tongues within the musical manifold would also, thus, prefigure one's own death – always already *were* there many old grasshoppers – as Dix and Meister remind us. “What touches or moves me in music, then, is my own mourning.”⁴⁰⁰ “*Die Leier 'ist' daher der Bogen. Dieser versendet die todbringenden Pfeile*” (“The lyre ‘is’ therefore the bow. This sends the death-bringing arrows”).⁴⁰¹ To return briefly to Nietzsche (and *his* ventriloquization by Lacoue-Labarthe) the ear is the organ of fear. But fear of what? Not merely death, but de-composition. If the human organism's lifespan is viewed as a musical composition, with its own insistent (death-)fugal rhythm, from perhaps the first cry that signals a neonate's entrance into the world to the last gasp of life. We may speak here of “the unbearable embeddedness [enfoldedness] of being.”⁴⁰² And if the human organism is enfolded into the wider manifold of sonic existence as a negentropic element, the soundscape, when apprehended ontologically, would be a constant reminder of the destruction of the body and self (the skin-ego, as Didier Anzieu would put it) and its subsequent complete de- and re-figuration, becoming skulltone, aftertone, “after” – the transformation towards Nietzsche's monstrous, the satyr, that border figure, phantasmal, “yielding temporal, psychical, emotional, and cognitive effects while remaining incomplete, partial, and tendentious.”⁴⁰³ For Nietzsche, “the satyr is a return to the rawness of the body, not to overwhelm the mind but to emphasize humans as makers... and as artists,” figures which can only exist *when raw and in touch with their character*

⁴⁰⁰ Lacoue-Labarthe, *Typography*, 193.

⁴⁰¹ Heidegger, *Heraklit*, 26. Translation mine.

⁴⁰² Atwood and Stolorow, *Structures of Subjectivity*, 108.

⁴⁰³ Gilbert, "Toward the Satyric," 284.

as *dynamically natural and bestial*, but without the guarantee of transcendence.⁴⁰⁴ “This [is] an underground movement. With Nietzsche... the voice of the suppressed instincts and disavowed impulses sounded from hidden recesses.”⁴⁰⁵ The *Ohrwurm* becomes, quite literally, a *Wurm* – the worm eating in the skull’s otic cavity in the subsoil of existence. “We cannot see the manifold organisms and life processes present in soils, but we may hear them if we listen closely.”⁴⁰⁶ Speaking of the poiesis of insects, specifically (partially) subterranean leaf-cutter ants, Stuart Cooke notes that these sorts of organisms “are with us from our earliest experiences[, and] they can also return to consume us at the ends of our lives.”⁴⁰⁷ Listen closely: the quiet yell of Dix’s skull. The musical manifold that is the soundscape is consistent with the Heideggerian understanding of death while also deepening it – and bringing it perhaps down to earth, escaping like a fugue-itive from a metaphysical worldview towards a schizophonic hauntology.

⁴⁰⁴ Gilbert, "Toward the Satyric," 288.

⁴⁰⁵ Reik, *Listening with the Third Ear*, 9.

⁴⁰⁶ Marcus Maeder et al., "Sounding Soil: An Acoustic, Ecological & Artistic Investigation of Soil Life," *Soundscape* 18, no. 1 (09/15 2019): 5, <https://www.dora.lib4ri.ch/wsl/islandora/object/wsl:21340>.

⁴⁰⁷ Stuart Cooke, "Nonhuman Complexity Poetics: Leaf-Cutter Ants and Multispecies Composition," *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* (2020): 2, <https://doi.org/10.1093/isle/isaa121>.

Part III: After-Silence

In the preceding, we covered a great deal of ground, and, thus, it seems salient that we might recapitulate (or mimic) what was already said before moving on to the penultimate section of this project.

We began with a series of questions asked by Roman Ingarden:

Musical works [are] puzzling objects – their essence and existence unclear – even though we have communed with them regularly as with good friends, and they have constituted a completely mundane and natural segment of our cultural world. Are not those commonsense presystematic convictions to be blamed for leading us this way? Should we not, therefore, critically examine these convictions and try to improve them or reject them altogether?⁴⁰⁸

In our analysis of Ingarden's own system, we found that he displayed remarkable moments of radicalism, which ultimately caused him to chafe against the work paradigm, opening the door for a broader understanding of music. Combined with a few case studies, we came to the conclusion that the world was at least potentially filled with music and that separating pieces from the soundscape seemed perhaps like a futile gesture, at least as stable objects of study and analysis.

Yet, within this new paradigm, we still did not account for the prevalence of the idea of the musical work. Moreover, though this question lay dormant at the time, we ran perilously close to reifying a metaphysical worldview. While potential accusations of trafficking in philosophies of presence should have mostly been dealt with in chapter 2 with our elucidation of the schizophonic experience of listening (recapitulated here, as well), there was still the potential for lapsing into metaphysics, especially since we maintained a mostly Heideggerian phenomenological perspective. While Heidegger argued strenuously against metaphysics in his own lifetime, he nevertheless fell victim to it, often resulting in truly obscene understandings of rootedness, as we

⁴⁰⁸ Ingarden, *The Work of Music*, 4-7.

can see in the “*Todtnauberg Festansprache*,”⁴⁰⁹ for instance – to say nothing of the various other crimes (philosophical and quite heinously literal) in which metaphysics is implicated, convincingly, in my eyes, such as the violence concomitant with the Enlightenment project (slavery, genocide, and many of the crimes associated with the Ages of Revolution, Empire, and Extremes as outlined by Hobsbawm). Many of his commentators, especially those writing from a more ecological perspective, have identified various potential strains of Heidegger’s continued reliance on metaphysics in his work. To exhaustively catalogue these various critiques would be probably impossible, so I will merely advise the reader to consult Derrida’s exhaustive approaches to the metaphysical impulse within Heidegger, such as in *The Question of Being & History* and *Of Spirit*.⁴¹⁰ Yet, when we confronted the issue of the haunting melody and elucidated schizophonic mimesis, any question of metaphysical tendencies should have evaporated. This is to say that we are positing a world of potential music which we access through traces, neither a belief that we can abstract musical moments from their social and material contexts, nor asserting the existence of an accessible realm of pure music. For all of the mentions of haunting, we are nevertheless dealing with a clearly material phenomenon – a close reading of the tune that gets stuck in one’s head. Furthermore, we addressed the lingering (potential) problem with our assertion in chapter 1 that we might “fill in the gaps.” We did so only insofar as we moved beyond commonsensical notions of silence – only to find ourselves on hauntological ground.

⁴⁰⁹ Here Heidegger tells a tale of local history and culture. Heidegger desired for Todtnauberg to stay ‘Todtnauberg,’ a desire bordering on explicit xenophobia. Martin Heidegger, “Todtnauberg Festansprache,” in *Gesamtausgabe*, ed. Hans-Helmuth Gander (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 2000).

⁴¹⁰ Bruce V. Foltz is similarly an excellent resource, especially when considering questions of the environment. For example, see Bruce V. Foltz, *Inhabiting the Earth: Heidegger, Environmental Ethics, and the Metaphysics of Nature* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus, 1995). One may also consider perusing Andrew J. Mitchell’s treatment of Heidegger’s later formulation of the *Geviert*. I myself deal with the question of Heidegger and metaphysics in “Ecogods: Heidegger, Adalbert Stifter, Nature,” available as an advance article in *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*: James M. Kopf, “Ecogods: Nature, Adalbert Stifter, and Heidegger,” *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* (2020), <https://doi.org/10.1093/isle/isaa167>.

In so doing, we accounted for the possibility of individual pieces emerging entropically and negentropically against the backdrop of the soundscape through a series of echoes, resonances, and remainders, ultimately culminating in a re-examination of the Young piece that helped us first step beyond Ingarden, as well as a reading of a poem by Ernst Meister. Using Young's work was a choice on my part governed by my familiarity with his works, the time I spent volunteering at his and Marian Zazeela's Dream House installation (a piece of topological music that deserves fuller consideration than it received here); Meister's part to play emerged from greater study than autobiographical happenstance, although he shares with Young a certain gnomic tendency. These allowed us to explore the persistence of the work tradition as a framework, as well as questions of death and temporality in the musical manifold. With regards the former, there can be no doubt that gestures towards a lost alterity abound in many, if not all, musical traditions, which seem to be imbued with the power of mourning. From black metal to the weeping of the Kaluli tribe of Papua New Guinea to Sun Ra's simultaneously pessimistic and deeply joyful invocation of Atlantis... Our experience is embedded within a life haunted with lost and unlived lives, lost and unlived worlds, skulltones and lake regions. An experience with an "alterity [that] becomes a satyric experiment with re-, if not dis-, orientation."⁴¹¹

We find ourselves thus enfolded into a sonic and/or musical manifold of echoes and acoustic shadows that, all at once, may become apparent to us as a majestic symphony, ontologically disclosive and profoundly affecting. It is, as Charles Baudelaire noted in a letter to Wagner, the "experience [of] a rather odd emotion, which could be described as the pride and the pleasure of comprehension, of allowing [oneself] to be penetrated and invaded."⁴¹²

⁴¹¹ Gilbert, "Toward the Satyric," 293.

⁴¹² Charles Baudelaire, *Selected Letters of Charles Baudelaire: the Conquest of Solitude*, ed. Rosemary Lloyd, trans. Rosemary Lloyd (Weidenfeld and Nicolson 1986), 146.

Chapter 4: White Noise and Black Metal

“The tide was coming in, and very slowly, with a snakelike energy
and remorselessness, it slid new ice-skins over old...
Soon he had taught himself to regard that noise as silence.”

- William T. Vollmann, *The Rifles*

“The tide suggests a going and a returning,
which draws itself back only in order to return,
like the very music of the world.”

- Jean-Louis Chrétien, *Hand to Hand: Listening to the Work of Art*

“[Music] is to be judged not in respect of its final moment merely,
but in respect of the perfection of its whole form;
and whether its form as a whole is perfect or not,
we cannot know...

Not for any human mind to say authoritatively,

‘This is music, wholly,’

or to say,

‘This is mere noise, fleck now and then by shreds of significance.’”

- Olaf Stapledon, *Last and First Men*

If our world, the world into which we are enfolded, the world to which we listen to vibrations, is haunted by the echoes of music past, an unrecuperable and possibly non-existent (following and departing from R. Murray Schafer and Rilke) Ur-sound⁴¹³ (*Ur-geräusch*) or perhaps Ur-noise (is there any difference? could there be? are we stuck with these paleonyms?), passing through us, forming an overwhelming symphony of incidental music, otherwise known as the soundscape or musical manifold, which itself reveals this very process of enfolding by dint of the process of listening, lays bare the haunted ground, hauntologically, ontologically constitutive. In short, if we accept the advances made by the preceding discussion, accept that the process of reading these words is a potentially musical experience (hyper-textually becoming intertextual with the soundscape – there is still no *hors-texte*), despite their muteness on the page, we find ourselves as elements traversing each other’s boundaries, phonologically and logically, in an unsteady and constantly shifting world. The notion of enfolding, the transfer of haunting melodies, these all function according to a turning, a tropism, understood through a tropology. It is the shape and emergence of the ear, the becoming interior of the blastula in the development of complex organisms, a folding inwards onto itself, the inside constructed, even anatomically, initially from the outside as noted in Chapter 2.

We displayed in the previous chapter an especially large reliance on weasel words – potentially, perhaps, maybe, possibly. We are *potentially* surrounded by music. We *might* be the recipient of ontological disclosure. All of this is, in other words, *possible*, linked by Derrida always

⁴¹³ Schafer seems to treat the idea of the *Ursound* as simultaneously real and ultimately mythical. “Everything relates back to the collision of wine and water, the creative point where sound originated,” he says before still persisting in nonetheless naming this supposed event a “mystery” with “[imprecise] data” – within a larger discussion of the Book of Genesis. Raymond Murray Schafer, *Voices of Tyranny: Temples of Silence* (Ontario, Canada: Arcana Editions, 1993), 11.

to translation, to the fall of Babel, to that which escapes as a trace of what once was; a possible that edges on impossibility, on paleonymy, that which remains to be sung.

The questions arise: How can we formulate the question of music? How can we encounter music within this poverty of the merely possible? In order to reckon with these questions, we will here take a bipartite approach. Initially, there will be a section drawing on Jean-Luc Marion's aesthetic writings, particularly those that pertain to the saturated phenomenon, which we will develop, in the context of music, into a *satyrated* phenomenon, something caught in between modalities, gesturing beyond yet not fully *always already apprehendable as saturated*. Hence the mention above of paleonymy. In order to explore, phenomenologically, the possibility of perceiving the musical manifold as this satyrated phenomenon, we will take note of several possibilities of being thrown, in the Heideggerian sense, into a *Stimmung* (attunement) that is conducive to ontological apperception. If Chapters 1 and 2 were, in large part, preparatory, and chapter 3 provided an argumentative fulcrum, we find ourselves again at a stage of preparation – asking the question: How might we perceive the musical manifold?

* * *

Jean-Luc Marion is a French phenomenologist who draws from a wide array of influences, likely the most notable of which is his Catholicism. Indeed, his works are shot through with theology – so much so that it can sometimes be overwhelming for the secular reader – which is typical for the major figures of the so-called theological turn in French phenomenology, such as the recently deceased Jean-Louis Chrétien, whose penetrating works on silence deserve more than this project can give. Yet this should not discourage us, as Marion has written some of the most

powerful phenomenological texts of the past half century; for every reference to Nicholas of Cusa or (Pseudo-)Denys the Areopagite, there are plenty to Derrida, Heidegger, Husserl, and any number of other secular figures.⁴¹⁴ Moreover, from Derrida (as well as Husserl and Heidegger), he has taken a general aversion to metaphysics. These two elements are especially true of his lengthy formulation of givenness. While we will, necessarily, gloss these innovations, for the work at hand, however, we will be focusing on his notion of the saturated phenomenon

Aesthetic criticism is one of the major hallmarks of Marion's works, and it forms the basis for almost all of his understanding of the saturated phenomenon. These two strands of this thought ultimately have something akin to a reciprocal relationship, where the aesthetics is informed by the saturated phenomenon and vice versa, particularly in the case of modern art (Rothko is a particular touchstone). Thus in order to apply the Marion's aesthetic thought to our own theories, we will first explore the saturated phenomenon.

Marion begins a study of saturated phenomena, a concept arrived at during his studies on givenness, particularly in the work *Being Given* with a question that will help guide us, namely

the question of the excess. Do phenomena always appear according to the calm adequation in them or intuition with one or several significations, or following a deficit measured from one on the other? Or instead, do not some among them – paradoxes – appear thanks to (or in spite of) an irreducible excess of intuition over all the concepts and all the significations one would assign to them?⁴¹⁵

This is, quite clearly, a rather complicated formulation that must be unpacked, but there are some key details that should be here emphasized so as to situate this question within the broader framework of this project. The first would be the reference to these phenomena as somewhat

⁴¹⁴ The intertwined roles of theology and more traditional philosophy are the subject of much contention within the field. For the most part, I hope elide these debates by focusing on his most clearly phenomenological innovation, the "saturated phenomenon." For an excellent compendium of these debates, please see Christina M. Gschwandtner, *Reading Jean-Luc Marion: Exceeding Metaphysics* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007).

⁴¹⁵ Jean-Luc Marion, *In Excess: Studies of Saturated Phenomena*, trans. Robyn Horner and Vincent Berraud (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2002), xxi.

paradoxical, which would mean that an exploration into their appearing would necessarily traverse similar ground, if not the same ground, as the problematic at hand, the seeming knottedness of music as a figure of the *potentially*, a figure both enfolded into the universality of experience, yet wholly unique. The second follows from the first: these phenomena *nevertheless appear above and beyond their ontic apprehension*, the significations, the attempts to reduce them, treat them as clear objects, in the violent grip of conceptualization – the *capiō* that binds it irrevocably to capturing and conquering. Hence the emphasis of the phenomenological recipient in the final part of the question, the one who *assigns*, a movement of outward projection, *ex post facto* – “imposed by the mind upon things which become constituted as objects.”⁴¹⁶

The question of the saturated phenomenon is thus one of excess, an excess of *intuition* over this assignment. In less schematic terms, a feeling of being overwhelmed prior to the assignation of signs and concepts, attempts to wrangle the saturated phenomenon into a conceivable box. It “gives *itself*, in effect, all at once: it leaves us without a voice to *speak* it.”⁴¹⁷ There is, in other words, no lived temporality which encompasses the apprehension of the saturated phenomenon – it comes all at once as an overflowing. And, moreover, it cannot be spoken (though, naturally, we should be wary about reducing the experiencing of a phenomenon to logological responses); it is “so saturated with given intuitions that significations are lacking.”⁴¹⁸

The excess manifests in such a way, in the case of painting (which Marion occasionally links to his technical understanding of the idol), when one *admires* a phenomenon. This phenomenon “offer[s] to our vagabond and aesthetically unfaithful sight... a visible such that it cannot, for once, perhaps even for the first time, turn away from it and go on to the next thing... it

⁴¹⁶ Gschwandtner, *Reading Jean-Luc Marion*, 21.

⁴¹⁷ Marion, *In Excess*, 44. Emphasis of “itself” original, “speak” is my own emphasis.

⁴¹⁸ Marion, *In Excess*, 54.

overwhelms and blocks the errant view.”⁴¹⁹ In other words, in the process of admiration, we become, in a sense, entranced and dominated; the saturated phenomenon in this instance is overwhelming and overcomes the potential for distraction – a lapsing movement. Because of this, the perceived “determines who I am. I am what I can” perceive.⁴²⁰ Dominic Pettman is even clearer and focused on listening: “I hear, therefore I am... [a] *cogito*.”⁴²¹

Marion speaks of the saturated phenomenon almost entirely in terms of the visible, such as painting, with influences ranging from religious art (Caravaggio’s *Conversion of St. Paul*, e.g.) to Mark Rothko (though he makes room for revelatory experience, as well).⁴²² However, he is quick to point out that these need not be entirely visible, “except in the mode of being dazzling,”⁴²³ and he is explicit about music’s status (albeit using the European art music tradition) as a saturated phenomenon. Yet between the emphasis on sight and the rather limited examples of music given, all of which seem to conform almost entirely to the work paradigm, we must question, then, whether our use of Marion is still tractable? Let us consider his characterization of the visible:

The visible surrounds us. Wherever we turn, it is unveiled, ready, brilliant, ironic. When I open my eyes, I fall on it, unfolded from head to foot all across the horizon... Would I escape from it in turning my back on it and fleeing? But if I turn around I always run into it, as it has preceded me and gets around me in advance. When I raise my head, it was already hanging over me... Wherever I turn, it surrounds me. [...]

It [is] first necessary to manage not to let oneself be dazzled by the ordinariness of the visible. For to be exposed *unwillingly* to all that which emerges that is visible does not yet allow us to see anything, but only to let us be affected by the *extravagant rhapsody of the*

⁴¹⁹ Marion, *In Excess*, 60.

⁴²⁰ Marion, *In Excess*, 61.

⁴²¹ Pettman, *Sonic Intimacy*, 1.

⁴²² There is a particularly notable exception to this in *The Idol and Distance: Five Studies*, which can be found in a footnote in his section on Nietzsche. While Marion does not refer to saturation by name in this book, it is shot through by the notion, serving as a key site of development for his notion of the idol (a category of the saturated phenomenon) and excess, both of which are explored in the relevant footnote – only in the context of *listening*. To wit: “To have fine hearing is to have the hearing of the god [Dionysus], and to hear in it the word of the god; it is thus to receive it, in the echo of a tympanum, in the labyrinth of an internal ear... in the ear where a body listens to a body.” Jean-Luc Marion, *The Idol and Distance: Five Studies*, trans. Thomas A. Carlson (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2001), 60.

⁴²³ Marion, *In Excess*, 51.

accident as it happens. To be convinced of this, it is enough to take the abandoned posture of a suddenly *inattentive* look: I only open my eyes on themselves, I *let my attention be conformed* to the simple movements of their spheres... I no longer *choose* any contour in the flux of the visible... without rupture or caesura... In order to see, it is enough to have eyes. To look demands much more: one must discern the visible from itself, distinguishing surfaces there in depth and breadth, delimiting forms, little by little, marking changes... In short, one must aim... at objectives.⁴²⁴

At first glance, this would appear to be wholly unrelatable to our project and possibly irreparably damaging to our very use of the saturated phenomenon as a term. “The painting,” after all, “is the concern of the most classic and most strict phenomenology.”⁴²⁵ Indeed, is not this project predicated on returning our understanding of listening to this sort of flux, to be as non-discriminatory towards ‘objects’ or moments as possible? To understand ‘individual works’ as haunting and haunted, ultimately echoes of this very flux?

We should be attuned to several details here, however. The first, and perhaps most important, would be the characterization of the flux of the visible as itself dazzling, a term that Marion associates with saturation. This would be to say that the visible *qua* visible would be, *prima facie*, a saturated phenomenon; applied to the soundscape, we see something akin to what emerged in our explorations in chapters two and three. It is obvious that Marion emphasizes and unduly privileges sight, which is more or less undistorted when it comes to distance absent problems with depth perception – a common trope within the philosophical tradition, from which we are only now beginning to emerge.⁴²⁶ Because of the mechanics of the natural attitude, Marion can easily demarcate framing devices, namely the chair as distinct from the floor and the wall (upon which a shadow is cast), to say nothing of his examples of visual art.⁴²⁷ As he notes, bearing in mind

⁴²⁴ Marion, *In Excess*, 54-56.

⁴²⁵ Marion, *In Excess*, 68. Of course, we could always assert that we are following F. J. Smith, who, in order to resist these strictures, decided to explore listening and music *akoumenologically*.

⁴²⁶ See for example: Janus, "Listening."

⁴²⁷ For information on the frame in art, please see the short section “The Frame of the Painting.” Marion, *In Excess*, 62-68.

possible distortion, “the knowledge and the look do not always reach the clear and the distinct, but all their objects are only extricated from the depth of the visible, in becoming arduously and tangentially *distinct* there, or rather, distinguished from the flux.”⁴²⁸ This delimiting process/movement cannot be the case with music/the soundscape, where the sense of hearing is always running behind, temporally speaking (sound travels at a rate of speed several magnitudes below the speed of light), and exposed to a distorted, muddy soundscape that one hears simultaneously and always, as we have explored with the notion of schizophonia. Recall the commonsense dictum that we have no “earlids” upon which we can begin from a possible blankness. Further, in a later analysis, Marion takes the Aristotelian and Husserlian track of privileging the flesh as that through which “all phenomenization of the world... pass through.”⁴²⁹ Were we to take this literally, as I think we almost must, we have to understand the flesh as the medium through which the vibratory (sonic) passes *prior to an understanding of it* – the medium of the haunting melody, the entirety of the eardrum beyond the eardrumhead. Therefore, framing devices do not work as well unless they are socially mediated (i.e. a concert hall – problematic for any number of reasons). If one speaks of the soundscape (and thus music) as a saturated phenomenon, one would have to do so in terms of the continuous manifold of sonic experience and would be unable to privilege one thing over the other, as they combine into a single experience – in other words, the *auditory* flux, as opposed to the *visible* flux – as we explored in chapters two and three. If painting is related to the façade that “cancels all depth,” the confrontation with the soundscape over and above the music put into the work paradigm performs or rather gestures towards this flattening, which is apparent schizophonically.⁴³⁰ In other words, in our exposure to

⁴²⁸ Marion, *In Excess*, 56.

⁴²⁹ Marion, *In Excess*, 89.

⁴³⁰ Marion, *In Excess*, 76.

the soundscape, our *default status is precisely the privileging of discrete objects (and ourselves as non-enfolded in the soundscape) that would allow music to be cordoned off from the wider world – including the listener.*

We can see this as work in the Heideggerian conception of “hearkening,” to refer to our work in chapter two, where the equiprimordial, ontological understanding of the soundscape is passed over, elided in favor of a simple and understandable objectification and, yes, following Marion, conceptualization prior to what Heidegger referred to as hearing understood in the psychological sense (and thus also prior to a deeper, more contemplative phenomenological apprehension of sonic phenomena). If we are *inattentive*, we are performing these acts of separation, attending to merely the column on the march or the cracking of the fire. If we are *attentive*, if we *choose* to listen, we are confronted with the radical simultaneity and flux of the musical manifold that underpins our sonic experience. When Marion notes that “the object only ever gives itself in evolutionary lived experience,” this is based on an “*original impression*.”⁴³¹ The primordially of the experiencing of the soundscape, which would be the radical fluxing (perhaps fluxusing), would lend to us an *original impression* out of which and simultaneously concomitant with individual musickings and sonicities may occur; this is the simple logic of a manifold, after all.

We see here emerging the possibility of understanding the soundscape itself, which is to say the musical manifold of our enfolded relationship to the world, as being understood in terms of saturation, in a mode precisely in contradistinction to Marion’s characterization of the visible, as a “habitual phenomen[on].”⁴³² If a musician, human or otherwise, succeeds in “render[ing]

⁴³¹ Marion, *In Excess*, 106. Emphasis mine.

⁴³² Jean-Luc Marion, *Being Given: Toward a Phenomenology of Givenness*, trans. Jeffrey L. Kosky (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), 129-31. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9780804785723>. Marion provides an altogether

visible as a phenomenon what no one had ever seen before,” which, in our case, would be a rendering *audible*, it is only because they themselves possess the unique emplacement and enfolding which has given to them a unique status of being haunted;⁴³³ the saturated phenomena are encountered but without giving “a univocal sense in return. [The saturated phenomenon] must be allowed, then, to overflow with many meanings, or an infinity of meanings, each equally legitimate and rigorous, without managing either to unify them or to organize them.”⁴³⁴ Elsewhere, in a rare comment on music: “It is not so much a matter of [hearing the ‘piece’] as it is of [re-hearing] it again and again... [The ‘piece’ consists] in its mode of appearing (which can be repeated each time in a new way).”⁴³⁵ This is precisely our understanding of both listening and musical composition in terms of the haunted melody and schizophonic developed in the prior two chapters.

Let us think through music *qua* saturated phenomenon through the idea of *flesh*. Our idea of “enfolding” is, further, broadly consistent with Marion’s idea of the ego⁴³⁶ “taking flesh,” as we have to understand that the “flesh,” i.e. the minerality of being,⁴³⁷ exists prior to this taking, in a precise logical sense. This is yet another way that we understand that approaching sonic

negative example of habitual phenomena in his reading of the modern cityscape, but the idea of it being all-encompassing would carry over to our reading of the soundscape as outlined in both Chapters 2 and 3.

⁴³³ Marion is also almost irredeemably obstinate in his anthropocentrism, especially with regards to art.

⁴³⁴ Marion, *Being Given*, 112.

⁴³⁵ Marion, *Being Given*, 48.

⁴³⁶ Marion’s conception of the ego differs from most mainstream accounts. For him, it is strongly linked to Heidegger’s development the idea of *Dasein*. See especially Jean-Luc Marion, “The Ego and Dasein,” in *Reduction and givenness : investigations of Husserl, Heidegger, and phenomenology* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1998). Gschwandtner notes this critique, saying that “Marion [shows] in great detail how close *Dasein* actually is to the ego, despite all of Heidegger’s protestations to the contrary,” Gschwandtner, *Reading Jean-Luc Marion*, 196-97. While the exact closeness of the two terms remains disputable, and I am inclined to side with Heidegger here, what is important to understand is that *Marion* views the two as similar and thus is working, more or less, within a Heideggerian framework here.

⁴³⁷ I draw “minerality” from a note in Emmanuel Levinas’s *Otherwise than Being*. Levinas refers to the mineral as “privative,” while I prefer a more expansive definition linked towards biological ‘thereness,’ a lapidarian understanding of the chemical makeup of anatomical being. (See also my commentary on Derrida’s use of “privation” in Chapter 3.) Emmanuel Lévinas, *Otherwise Than Being, or, Beyond Essence*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 1998), 191.

phenomena cannot be accomplished via an exact mapping of his characterization of the visible onto hearing. This flesh would be concomitant with the world, being constructed of the same matter and responding to the same vibratory frequencies which we understand as both the soundscape and the haunting melody.⁴³⁸ The saturated phenomenon as music *in its apprehension* “is referred to itself *as it auto-affects itself*.”⁴³⁹ Marion asserts that it “lock[s us] into [our] individuality,” which is certainly true, yet this individuality is only guaranteed by the semi-permeable membrane of the flesh, which retains its shape against the backdrop of the world.⁴⁴⁰ Music as related to the flesh becomes saturated precisely because it shows this “taking flesh” always and repeatedly within the world, which nevertheless vibrates through *as a haunting figure*, both present and absent, interior and exterior depending on one’s situatedness, both in terms of the time⁴⁴¹ and of the space in which one is found (or, more accurately, finds oneself) – the flesh as echo chamber, hence, auto-affectivity as echoes of both self and world.⁴⁴² The flesh can be *written as though it were shellac being pressed, the skull obtaining a tone*.

Because of this temporal and topological character, the soundscape functions, as noted, entropically and negentropically – which is precisely why we cannot refer to it in the same terms of the visible, especially with regards to the phenomenological aspect of saturation. The soundscape, precisely because of its dual character(s), its contradictory motions, its presence and

⁴³⁸ As noted in the prior chapter, it is important to recall that, despite the fact that we are speaking of the body, we are doing so only within a framework that is haunted and fragmentary. In contradistinction to many theorists of sound and music (I think especially of the affect theory present in the volume on *Music as Atmosphere*, whose privileging of the body merely reifies the mind-body dualism with the intent to favor the latter (and thus does not adequately deconstruct the logic underpinning it), I wish to emphasize that this duality is entirely insufficient not just for describing individual experience but utterly ignorant of the fundamentally porous status of the “body.” It is, in other words, not phenomenologically tenable.

⁴³⁹ Marion, *Being Given*, 100. Emphasis mine. Please refer to Chapter 3 for further discussion of auto-affection.

⁴⁴⁰ Marion, *Being Given*, 100.

⁴⁴¹ Marion, *Being Given*, 231. Marion connects flesh to “living remembrance,” the ongoing living of the experiencing of the past, which he views as apotheosized by Proust; we can see this in Reik, as well.

⁴⁴² Heinrich Racker’s assertion that music has an “auto-erotic” character, which we mentioned last chapter, may now be illuminated as part of this auto-affectivity.

absence, fits precisely into the modality of saturation precisely because it is overwhelming in such a sense that it points towards an ontological understanding of the world over and above the influence of individual pieces, which often themselves chafe against their enforced boundaries and ultimately ‘de-grade’ themselves back towards the soundscape *against* their named status as singular, discrete objects,⁴⁴³ similar to the process of the ready-made, “from object to non-object, as a pure aesthetic” audible.⁴⁴⁴ (Ironically, because of their engagement with the poetic tradition of naming and non-naming, typographical compositions, such as that found in the early works of La Monte Young or the British Fluxus pioneer Christopher Hobbs, or Indian, particularly Northern Indian, raga forms are more precisely able to capture this element of chafing and overcoming as opposed to the, often quite literally, bound and bounded work of the score.)⁴⁴⁵ Any ‘performance’ of a particular piece, because of the influence of the surround background radiation of the soundscape, is precisely non-schematizable. It is *excess*, saturating the horizon of phenomenological experience, in a completely literal sense. And it points us once more towards another excess: our ontological status in the world as one of fundamental enfolding. To apprehend it otherwise would simply be to remove that excess in favor of a certain *aspectual appreciation* – to approach it ontically, in other words.

The ontic approach is that music becomes reduced to a conceptualized object – perhaps because of the anthropocentric biases that colored these studies and descriptions, merely a technological object (a *Zeug*, something equipmental) – even as it strains against these boundaries.

⁴⁴³ Indeed, Marion, perhaps presaging this critique hedges once in a footnote that, in contradistinction to “[the *work* of] music, the poem, film, or dance,” painting “assumes the characteristics of an object more obviously than they.” We need not recapitulate the deconstruction of music as a “work” from Chapter 3; suffice it to say, I find that to be a satisfactory enough response for the time being. Marion, *Being Given*, 336.

⁴⁴⁴ Marion, *Being Given*, 108.

⁴⁴⁵ There are other ways of overcoming the boundedness of the score. Terry Riley’s “Keyboard Study #2,” which features the score looping in on itself becoming infinite, is a perfect example. The wider trend in jazz towards pursuing *modal*, as opposed to scalar, music would be another.

For Nietzsche, as we explored in the first chapter, music, among all the arts, had to be classified as Dionysian, transformative and transgressive. It exceeds “music,” which as a sign itself becomes *paleonymic* of these failed attempts, the always haunted, never-first first encounter. We might even, following Gilbert’s “satyric,” understand music as a *satyrated phenomenon* – itself always in a state of becoming and metamorphosis, changing and phasing in and of existence, even as it causes something similar to occur to the listener. But how does one then end up with the reductive equipmental understanding of music – how does one merely hearken? Or relatedly: How does music become noise – the passed-over? What is the functioning of this *satyration*?

These questions are, indeed, simply a recapitulation and distillation of the question that began our phenomenological analysis in the second chapter: the fundamental indeterminacy of Husserl’s *Ton*. We will recall that Husserl does not choose to use a precise term that would denote either noise (*Klang* or *Geräusch*) or music (*Musik*, *Melodie*, etc.), but rather *Ton*, which contains within itself valences of both. *Ton* would be both a musical note and, simultaneously, a simple expression of sound. What is crucial here is that there is a possibility of a single phenomenon to presence itself on multiple levels depending on the status of the perceiver.

Marion explicitly deals with the question in terms of music in his work *Being Given*, where he describes the experience of the opening of a symphony, which

reaches [the listener] in such a way that, even before reconstituting the melodic line or assessing the orchestral fabric... [one] first receive[s] in [the] ear the movement... of the sonorous mass [*masse sonore*], which comes upon and submerges [the listener]... A memory of previous performances no doubt allows [one] to identify the melody more quickly and to assess the orchestral ensemble, but it does not allow me to abolish the arising [of the phenomenon].⁴⁴⁶

This provides several points of departure regarding the question of music and how we ignore it. First and foremost, Marion uses a very similar description of the experience as Ingarden,

⁴⁴⁶ Marion, *Being Given*, 216. Emphasis mine

as outlined in the prior chapter, which is to say within the work paradigm outlined by Goehr and others, yet *he hears beyond*, towards the “*masse sonore*.” He focuses in this passage, perhaps unwittingly, on the process of habituation, and he acknowledges the possibility of knowing and mastery of the piece being performed (he gives the example of the ideally symmetrical and architectural *Jupiter* symphony by Mozart – before his phenomenological description he is insistent on naming and conceptualizing the piece, which is to say work) through means of familiarity, which would possibly overcome the ability to feel wonder at its arising, even as that arising would, clearly, not be abolished. Hence the potentiality of the “sonorous mass” remains contingent on the openness of the individual. Moreover, there is no reason to think that this habituation cannot occur across the experience of symphonic at large. This is mostly a recapitulation of our analysis of Marion’s use of the framing device and the difficulty of its application to music that exists outside of the concert hall. But beyond the concert hall, he also notes that “common” phenomena are subject to the “question of establishing the objective certainty of conceptual maximums (signification, theories, etc.) on the basis of intuitive minimums (sense data, experimental protocols, statistical accounts, etc.)... The objectification of the phenomenon itself demands restricting the intuitive given to what confirms... the concept.”⁴⁴⁷ Elsewhere: “The object,” which here we can understand as an *objectified* piece of music (i.e., *Jupiter*), “of course appears and, in a sense, appears massively by occupying the phenomenal scene with its enduring persistent presence, which monopolizes presence to the extent that it succeeds in... expelling the nonobjective phenomena,” the traces of *nonrecognition of the musical manifold*; “the object still appears, but only in the condition of a phenomenon of the second order, one that has *undergone* a

⁴⁴⁷ Marion, *Being Given*, 223.

diminution capitis.”⁴⁴⁸ Simply put, Marion is describing a modality of habituation through objectification, categorization, and, ultimately, a near mathematical familiarity with a phenomenon that reduces it to the status of “common,” which is also “alienated.”⁴⁴⁹ Marion uses the example of physics and computer-aided drafting (CAD), but one can see the easy applicability of this to music in several capacities, namely music theory, the commodification and technological reproduction of music, algorithmic playlist creation, and even music ‘composed’ according to the strictures of code. Cage already noted the connection between “musical habits” and mathematics.⁴⁵⁰ However, by describing music as a saturated phenomenon and as a sonorous mass, which would be undifferentiated (a “mass”), he is already pointing towards a more nebulous understanding of music. There is *Jupiter*; there is the sonorous mass, which submerges the listener – but only until it can be identified and, once again, conceptualized. This is precisely why the musical manifold can be both a saturated phenomenon and appear wholly as ‘white noise’ in the ears of a habituated listener, whether that habituation arises because they simply are inured to the music surrounding them or, ironically, are engaged in active objective study of it. Two phenomenalities: saturated phenomenon or “only [a] weakened variant.”⁴⁵¹

As Cox notes, “our ordinary relationship to music is one of unthinking familiarity – the apprehension and production of perceptual and affective clichés, ready-made forms, conventions, and cultural associations that prevent us from hearing it as anything else.”⁴⁵² Clearly, however, this is not the *only* relationship we have with music; moreover, Cox seems to be speaking from a *very specifically media savvy* perspective – the cosmopolitan consumer of Western modernity. We

⁴⁴⁸ Jean-Luc Marion, *Negative Certainties*, trans. Stephen E. Lewis (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 162. Emphasis mine.

⁴⁴⁹ Marion, *Being Given*, 224.

⁴⁵⁰ Cage, *Silence: Lectures and Writings*, 9.

⁴⁵¹ Marion, *Being Given*, 227.

⁴⁵² Cox, *Sonic Flux*, 137.

refer again to what Donald Byrd referred to as “places and spaces” where emergent aural phenomena become apprehendable as music. To use a very online phrase, sometimes it hits different. The question of how can be thus reformulated: who has access to one or the other? And why does one instance of the subject in time have access to it, while another instance may completely let it pass by. While on the one hand, as Husserl and Heidegger have shown (and we have noted especially in chapter two), there is something almost innate within our interactions with the world that privileges mastery and control – the smooth outward projection of egoical power onto the surrounding world. This is the natural attitude that we suspend in order to begin phenomenological research. The natural attitude is, to recapitulate an earlier point, an active passivity, hence why Marion can insist on the idea that the phenomenon *undergoes* (something *is done to it*) objectification, habituation, alienation, conceptualization, etc. For Heidegger, this is manifest as the lapse or slippage in the interaction with the world known as *Verfallenheit* (falling prey to...). In both Husserl and (more often, later-period) Heidegger, this opens up a field of questions about the ability of the ego and its ability to suspend the interference of the world. While both believe this can be more or less taught, the problem arises in the mobilization of the Cartesian method, which, at bottom, privileges a ‘great man’ who is able to suspend the world and preconceptions. In other words, this would simply be a variation (albeit a very sophisticated one) on something like gnostic revelation – a “doctrine of the isolated mind... a Western cultural myth serving to evade the vulnerabilities inherent in finite human existing.”⁴⁵³

Heidegger, especially in his later (post-Kehre) conception of the world, even as many of the works from that period prize a deliberate but not ‘revealed’ (in a metaphysical sense) slowness of thought and abundance of caution, drifts into occasionally extreme references to rootedness,

⁴⁵³ Atwood and Stolorow, *Structures of Subjectivity*, 108.

perhaps even ecofascism, a strain of his thought typified by the latent historicism as identified by Derrida, most notably, in his pastoralism, which is on full display in the aforementioned “*Todtnauberg Festansprache*.” I am not denying the necessity or existence of the natural attitude within phenomenological discourse or even, simply, our existence within the world (without it, we would be constantly overwhelmed – especially when it comes to the soundscape, as noted, which would become a cacophonous Charybdis), nor even the possibility of recognizing it and, perhaps, pedagogically communicating this possibility of its recognition. I merely wish to remain skeptical towards claims of pure agency in escaping or overcoming it (in other words, de-habituating our relationship to it) – questing after the ontological *Ton* in a manner that does not ultimately seek recourse in a powerful moment of revelation from outside the bounds of perception. To place it specifically in terms of our discourse on music, some early hominid would have had to have heard the whistling of the wind through the tree as a haunting melody instead of merely noise in order to mobilize the mimetic faculty to create, for example, a bone flute – over and above the habits they had formed and which up to that point presumably subsumed the musical potential of the soundscape. It is precisely here where the archaeological explorations we studied in chapter 1 reach their apotheosis and their limit, here in these places and spaces, these schizophonic horizons of world, where something happens on the basis of a comportment towards phenomena that render them in an excess that can only be reckoned with by schizophonic mimesis. The inscription and reinscription of the reed in the bone flute – *and in the bones of the listener*. In explicitly Heideggerian terms, one would encounter the problematic of the *Stimmung* (attunement).

As Heidegger notes, “*das Dasein [ist] je schon immer gestimmt*“ (“Dasein is always already attuned”).⁴⁵⁴ This is to say that we are constantly in a state of ‘feeling,’ even as we are

⁴⁵⁴ Heidegger, *Being and Time*. (In English, 131.) Translation modified.

thrown from one to the other, a level of prismatic modality of perception; “*die Stimmung [bringt] das Dasein vor das Daß seines Da*” (“attunement brings Dasein before the that of its there”).⁴⁵⁵ Attunement serves to illuminate the ability of the self to perceive the illuminatedness or occlusion of the world; it can serve either as veil or an opening-on-to. “*Die ‘blose Stimmung’ erschließt das Da ursprünglicher, sie verschließt es aber auch entsprechend hartnäckiger als jedes Nicht-wahrnehmen“ (“‘Mere attunement’ discloses the there more promordially, but it also closes it off more stubbornly than any not-perceiving”).⁴⁵⁶ As Freeman puts it, *Stimmung* “shapes our existence and, thus, our experiences... How we exist or are faring in the world is not first revealed to us by an inference or judgment; rather, inferences and judgments are always made against the background context of” attunement.⁴⁵⁷ Further, “the way that the world appears and matters to me is directly dependent upon” how I find myself (*mich befinde*) through attunement.⁴⁵⁸ Hence, attunement is a primordial, pre-theoretical understanding of the world, which here would include the musical manifold as a saturated phenomenon, but in a ‘displaced’ attunement (*Verstimmung*), bearing its similarity to *Verfallenheit*, explored in depth in chapter 2, one would be blinded to self and world.*

Die Stimmung überfällt. Sie kommt weder von “Außen“ noch von ”Innen,“ sondern steigt als Weise des In-der-Welt-seins aus diesem selbst auf... *Die Stimmung hat je schon das In-der-Welt-sein als Ganzes erschlossen und macht ein Sichrichten auf... allererst möglich.*

Attunement assails. It comes neither from “without” nor “within,” but rises from being-in-the-world itself as a mode of that being... *Attunement has always already disclosed being-in-the-world as a whole and first makes possible directing oneself toward something.*⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁵ Heidegger, "Todtnauberg Festansprache," 136. (In English, 132.) Translation modified.

⁴⁵⁶ Heidegger, "Todtnauberg Festansprache," 136. (In English, 133.) Translation modified. Emphasis original.

⁴⁵⁷ Lauren Freeman, "Toward a Phenomenology of Mood," *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 52, no. 4 (2014/12/01 2014): 450, <https://doi.org/10.1111/sjp.12089>. I overall find Freeman’s direct collocation of “emotion” and *Stimmung*, which she takes to be translated as mood, to be a rather vulgar misreading of Heidegger that is hardly borne out in the original, and her desire to mate Heidegger with empirical psychology is, frankly, simply not fruitful. (Indeed, if we speak of disciplines of psychology, Heidegger has only found a tendentious and frequently assailed place in psychoanalysis.) But her initial summary of the topic in Heidegger is valuable as summary.

⁴⁵⁸ Freeman, "Toward a Phenomenology of Mood," 453.

⁴⁵⁹ Heidegger, "Todtnauberg Festansprache," 136-37. (In English, 133.) Translation modified. Emphasis original.

This is why, *prior to any decision about how one approaches the apperception of the world*, “*wir müssen in der Tat ontologisch grundsätzlich die primäre Entdeckung der Welt der ‘bloßen Stimmung’ überlassen*“ (“*we must, in fact, ontologically in principle leave the primary discovery of the world to ‘mere attunement’*”).⁴⁶⁰ We are always already *thrown into it*. Thus,

gerade im unsteten, stimmungsmäßig flackernden Sehen der “Welt“ zeigt sich das Zuhandene in seiner spezifischen Weltlichkeit, die an keinem Tag dieselbe ist. Theoretisches Hinsehen hat immer schon die Welt auf die Einförmigkeit des puren Vorhandenen abgeblendet, innerhalb welcher Einförmigkeit freilich ein neuer Reichtum des im reinen Bestimmen Entdeckbaren beschlossen liegt. Aber auch die reinste $\theta\epsilon\omega\rho\acute{\iota}\alpha$ hat nicht alle Stimmung hinter sich gelassen; auch ihrem Hinsehen zeigt sich das nur noch Vorhandene in seinem puren Aussehen lediglich dann, wenn sie es im *ruhigen* Verweilen auf sich zukommen lassen kann.

when we see the “world” in an unsteady and wavering way in accordance with our attunement, what is at hand shows itself in its specific worldliness, which is never the same on any given day. Theoretical looking at the world has always already flattened it down to the uniformity of what is merely present, although, of course, a new abundance of what can be discovered in pure determination lies within that uniformity. But the purest $\theta\epsilon\omega\rho\acute{\iota}\alpha$ does not abandon attunement either. Even when we look theoretically at what is merely present, it does not show itself in its pure outward appearance unless this $\theta\epsilon\omega\rho\acute{\iota}\alpha$ lets it come toward us in a *quiet* lingering.⁴⁶¹

Hence our skepticism with regards to a pure theoretical *choosing* to apperceive the world in an ontological fashion and our emphasis on the *materiality of our thrownness*.⁴⁶²

The question reformulated: what might constitute a state of being that would encourage this sort of *Stimmung* that would be characterized by an openness to the givenness that undergirds an ontological understanding of the world? *How are we thrown into the musical manifold?* Moments of ontological thinking can be arrived at by chance or experimentation (i.e. letting them appear *while still taking into account Stimmung*) and then replicated/analyzed in the process of

⁴⁶⁰ Heidegger, "Todtnauberg Festansprache," 137-38. (In English, 134.) Translation modified. Emphasis original.

⁴⁶¹ Heidegger, "Todtnauberg Festansprache," 138. (In English, 134.) Translation modified. Emphasis original.

⁴⁶² That this is crucial for understanding the machinations of capitalist ideology when it comes to the culture industry should come as no surprise.

phenomenological inquiry, such as in moments of illness, profound grief, and so on, which distort our perception, yet in so doing, draw attention to the underlying perceptive apparatus and throw it into relief (see, for example, Merleau-Ponty's extensive use of disorders just as phantom limb syndrome in understanding perception – his frequent eschewing of modalities of choice remains one of his most powerful rhetorical tools⁴⁶³), hence allowing for a repeatability of experimentation, *à la* the Ronellian conception of the “test drive,” “incessant probes, unfaltering revision, what in Nietzsche is governed by the principle of rescindability,”⁴⁶⁴ but, with particular regards to music this receptivity can also be, in a pedagogical sense, ‘primed’ by exposure to pieces, which, while possibly still inscribed within the work paradigm, result in feelings of ontological displacement away from the natural attitude – in other words, we are humbled.⁴⁶⁵ This could be music that is created by cultures with a conception of the world that places a greater emphasis on receptivity (as we see especially in the case of the Mbuti, but it is a common trope among many indigenous peoples and, therefore, their understanding of the musicality of the world, which is to say the sonic manifold in which they find themselves and the human created moments of music, as we can see in the recent ‘rediscovery’ of the importance of sonic atmospheres both in prehistorical cave sites and also in the architectural design of Catholic churches by archaeologists and historians of architecture, respectively), but it could also be ‘extreme’ music. By ‘extreme’ here I am looking towards music that gestures towards a worldview beyond the natural attitude (inspired especially by an understanding of hauntedness – more or less explicitly). Some examples would be free

⁴⁶³ cf. Part I of *Phenomenology of Perception*. While Merleau-Ponty maintains a certain fealty to the mind-body dualism (see Derrida's critique in *On Touching*), this section nevertheless adequately explicates a phenomenological study of perception based *away* from a purity of bracketing.

⁴⁶⁴ Avital Ronell, *The Test Drive* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 63. We should also here recall Husserl's exhortation for philosophy to be a *streng*e *Wissenschaft* (normally translated as “rigorous science”).

⁴⁶⁵ Marion, *Being Given*, 306.

jazz/free improvisation⁴⁶⁶ (Sun Ra, Peter Brötzmann, etc.), various subgenres of metal (doom, drone, death, and black; Earth, Melvins, etc.), harsh noise (Merzbow, etc.), tape music (early Terry Riley, etc.), the all-encompassing (and echoic) liturgical music of the Tridentine rite in traditional Catholicism, and so on.⁴⁶⁷ We will spend the rest of the chapter exploring some of these possibilities, viz. free improvisational music, particularly the experiencing thereof, madness, and other forms of *subjectivity* (the suffix bespeaking a lack of *unified, subjective agency*), variably voluntary.

We initially pay attention not through will, not through a Cartesian understanding of mastery, mastery of the senses and the world, in other words, through force and violence, but through our very status as thrown into a world of arising phenomena and modes of attunement which land, unpredictably, “according to discontinuous rhythms, in fits and starts, unexpectedly, by surprise, detached each from the other, in bursts, aleatory”⁴⁶⁸ – which is to say through chance and our very thrownness (*Geworfenheit*).⁴⁶⁹ These would be moments “of skidding,” which, we should not forget, has strong temporal registers, but, unlike the slippage of *Verfallenheit*, we find ourselves skidding into the world.⁴⁷⁰ Hence Moten’s reading of Cecil Taylor’s playing as a

⁴⁶⁶ Whether the two types of “free” music genres should be placed into an equivalence is dubious, even if the genealogy between them is clear – it is impossible to imagine Brötzmann without Ayler.

⁴⁶⁷ We do not throw the baby out with the dishwater. Just because these pieces are pedagogically useful does not mean they are the *only possible ways to encounter or train oneself or others how to listen with some sort of forgotten purity*. Feld, after all, came up with schizophonic mimesis after an encounter with Madonna – and it is hard to imagine a figure that embodies pop music more than she, regardless of her experimental impulses gleaned from the New York milieu of which she was a part.

⁴⁶⁸ Marion, *Being Given*, 138.

⁴⁶⁹ With regards to the question of “hearkening,” this has already been dealt with in Chapter 2; yes, there can be chance events in the sonic manifold of existence, which draw our attention, but they are often easily forgotten. I am pursuing the experiencing of chance phenomena that would register *ontologically*, which is to say more deeply than the phenomena of hearkening, which I linked to *Gerede* or “idle talk,” foreclosing further analysis of the world.

⁴⁷⁰ Marion, *Being Given*, 146.

“blur.”⁴⁷¹ The saturated/satyrated phenomenon, in other words, “contravenes... what previous experience should reasonably permit us to foresee.”⁴⁷²

We already are aware of an excellent example from one of our interlocutors. In perhaps an archetypal example of chance encounters of the musical manifold of the world being apprehended as saturated phenomena, we recall that La Monte Young credited the whistling of the winds through his family’s home in Utah as one of his earliest childhood memories – and a source of inspiration for his later work as a composer. And, indeed, when one hears the teetering and nauseous drones of *The Second Dream Of The High-Tension Line Stepdown Transformer from the Four Dreams of China*, one can understand this early encounter with nature, the frailty of the dwelling-place against the overwhelming power of the soundscape, which, despite the walls, slithers in like a snake, curling around the rings of the ear, before making an impermanent entrance into the inner ear, only to be schizophonicly reproduced – and the process returns as a recurrence. It is precisely that early chance encounter with a saturated phenomenon that can set this in motion, a potentiality that exceeded the simple apprehension of the whistling wind. The excess of intuition over and beyond the possibility of simple signification.

For Young, this was a relatively innocuous formative experience that may have been indicative of a relatively lonesome childhood or early exposure to the barrenness of nature, but there are other modalities of thrownness that we have yet to explore, such as illness.

Daniel Paul Schreber, the famous chronicler of his own mental illness, similarly to my own experience of anxiety, dissociation, and fractured, perceived realities as outlined at the outset of the introduction (indeed, my very inspiration for this work at large), had an interesting relationship with the soundscape. Indeed, the presence of the soundscape was one of the first instances of his

⁴⁷¹ Moten, *In the Break*, 42-43.

⁴⁷² Marion, *Being Given*, 226. Emphasis mine.

being overwhelmed by the world. He recounts a “*wiederkehrendes Knistern*” (“recurrent crackling”) in the walls, which kept him up at night. This crackling continued throughout his experience. *Knistern* is also the precisely terminology used by Adorno to refer to the experience of great art, even great painting – crackling towards the truth of the world.⁴⁷³ Intriguingly, Schreber attributed these auditory perceptions to “rays,” which he defined as old human souls, thus intimately related to the past yet hauntingly present, following our logic of the haunting melody, yet explicitly in terms of the soundscape. (Notions of haunting recurrence, specifically in terms of music and the soundscape occur with a high degree of frequency in Schreber.)

As in my case, music as traditionally defined, was, however, stymied by these apparitions, recurrences of past lives, in Schreber’s case; while I simply felt alienated from music that I had, in the past, enjoyed, in Schreber’s case, this was literalized, most particularly in the breaking of piano strings – again, attributed to the rays – though he claims that his fingers were moved away from the proper keys, resulting in something cacophonous (not unlike his fits of bellowing [*brüllen*] – but also presaging free improvisation, which we will analyze further). Schreber’s case, similar to mine, although far, far more extreme, might be called a moving-towards-the-soundscape, in all its dissonance, its overwhelming nature as a satyrated phenomenon, exemplified by the hybrid figure of Schreber, who sat uncomfortably, in his own estimation, before, to quote Nietzsche, “the god,” at “the locus of a carnevalesque command to transgress all boundaries,” including perceived interiority and exteriority and speciation. Indeed, following Nietzsche,⁴⁷⁴ Schreber ended up on a Wagnerian doorstep; after he was released from the asylum, he and his wife built a new house,

⁴⁷³ Theodor W. Adorno, *Über einige Relationen zwischen Musik und Malerei: Die Kunst und die Künste*, vol. 16, *Gesammelte Schriften*, (Akademie der Künste, 1967). https://books.google.com/books?id=a_cPAQAIAAJ..

⁴⁷⁴ Schreber, should we read him in a triad with Nietzsche and Derrida-on-Nietzsche, with his “unmanning” would be the great figure of ambiguity.

above the threshold “inscribed [Wagner’s] Siegfried motif.”⁴⁷⁵ Although he was later hospitalized again, this time until his own demise, presaged, of course, by his identification with Siegfried, he, the satyr, shattered by exposure to the transformative power of the world’s unending, haunting melody, a satyrated phenomenon, could, for a brief few years, cross a threshold meant for him.

For another example, on the edge of experimentation and chance, there is the experience of a root canal procedure, two of which (simultaneously) I had only a few months prior to my writing of this passage (so I was already somewhat attuned to the thoughts that I have been developing throughout this project). I say that this lies on the edge of experimentation and chance for the simple reason that no one ever expects to need a root canal (mine especially – despite irregular dental visits during my time in higher education, I never suffered a cavity, nor have I since; the endodontist suggests that it may have been residual trauma from childhood), yet there is a willingness to abnegate one’s own (perceived) autonomy and agency and cede this control to a dentist (a root canal thus differs in notable ways from the chance experience of dental torture, a la St. Apollonia or *Marathon Man*). The root canal procedure is a relatively simple one, albeit extremely uncomfortable; a drill is used to open the cavity of a dead tooth, the pulp is removed, and the pulp is replaced, usually with an organic compound named gutta-percha. The experience, however, draws one’s attention to the fact that we are always receiving vibratory stimulus in our heads through our teeth, though only rarely do we consider this. When the outside world is shut out, in my case both by the hermeticism of the doctor’s office and the ear plugs I brought to stave off some of the external noise (an excellent bit of advice, incidentally), it becomes radically apparent how sensitive the teeth are as instruments of hearing. As the drill vibrates and as the file wends its way through the interior of the tooth, one is quite literally forced to confront the poverty

⁴⁷⁵ Eric L. Santner, *My Own Private Germany: Daniel Paul Schreber's Secret History of Modernity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 5.

of our understanding of the senses on an everyday level, for one hears an industrial symphony crashing around in one's head seemingly without hearing it. Once again, Schreber, for whom decay was "a recurrent, even obsessive theme," is of note here; the vibratory rays that he discusses can cause toothaches, by means of affecting the interior of the tooth.⁴⁷⁶ This can help us understand how deep, both in the figurative and somato-topological senses our relationship with the soundscape is, even if we ignore it most of the time.⁴⁷⁷

If the experiencing of a root canal procedure can be said to straddle the lines between chance and experimentation, we should also turn our attention towards more openly experimental practices. There is, indeed, a rich tradition of this, which, in European art music, found perhaps its earliest exponent is the aforementioned ambitious plans of Wagner when it comes to his attempts to stage operas in outside environments, even on a river itself. The role of the avant-garde in listening to the musical manifold of existence would then be to encourage these attunements to the world that would allow for moments of breakthrough.

An example from this tradition that is particularly salient for our current explorations of a broader understanding of music and the soundscape can be found in the collaboration between percussionist Han Bennink and saxophonist Peter Brötzmann, *Schwarzwaldfahrt*, the title of which would loosely translate to "Black Forest Journey." Brötzmann and Bennink were two pioneers of the free improvisation movement (often centered around the label FMP; Brötzmann currently releases his work through Trost), which drew influence from both Cagean aesthetics and the avant-garde of jazz, especially Albert Ayler, Ornette Coleman, Don Cherry,⁴⁷⁸ and so on, to create a

⁴⁷⁶ Santner, *My Own Private Germany*, 6.

⁴⁷⁷ An earlier version of this passage appears on my blog, *The Camo Pulpit*. It was developed in "Truth Decay: Prolegomena to a Psychoanalysis of Dentistry," delivered at the 2021 American Comparative Literature Association annual conference.

⁴⁷⁸ Peter Brötzmann, *Gespräche*, ed. Christoph J. Bauer (Berlin: Posth, 2012), 90. Translation mine. Brötzmann notes with regards to Cherry, with whom both he and Bennink played on the album *Actions* (under the auspices of

particularly abrasive (though often oddly beautiful) wall of sound, typified by Brötzmann’s early *Machine Gun*.⁴⁷⁹ With a wider view, however, we can see that there were also several subtler releases, of which *Schwarzwaldfahrt* is one.⁴⁸⁰

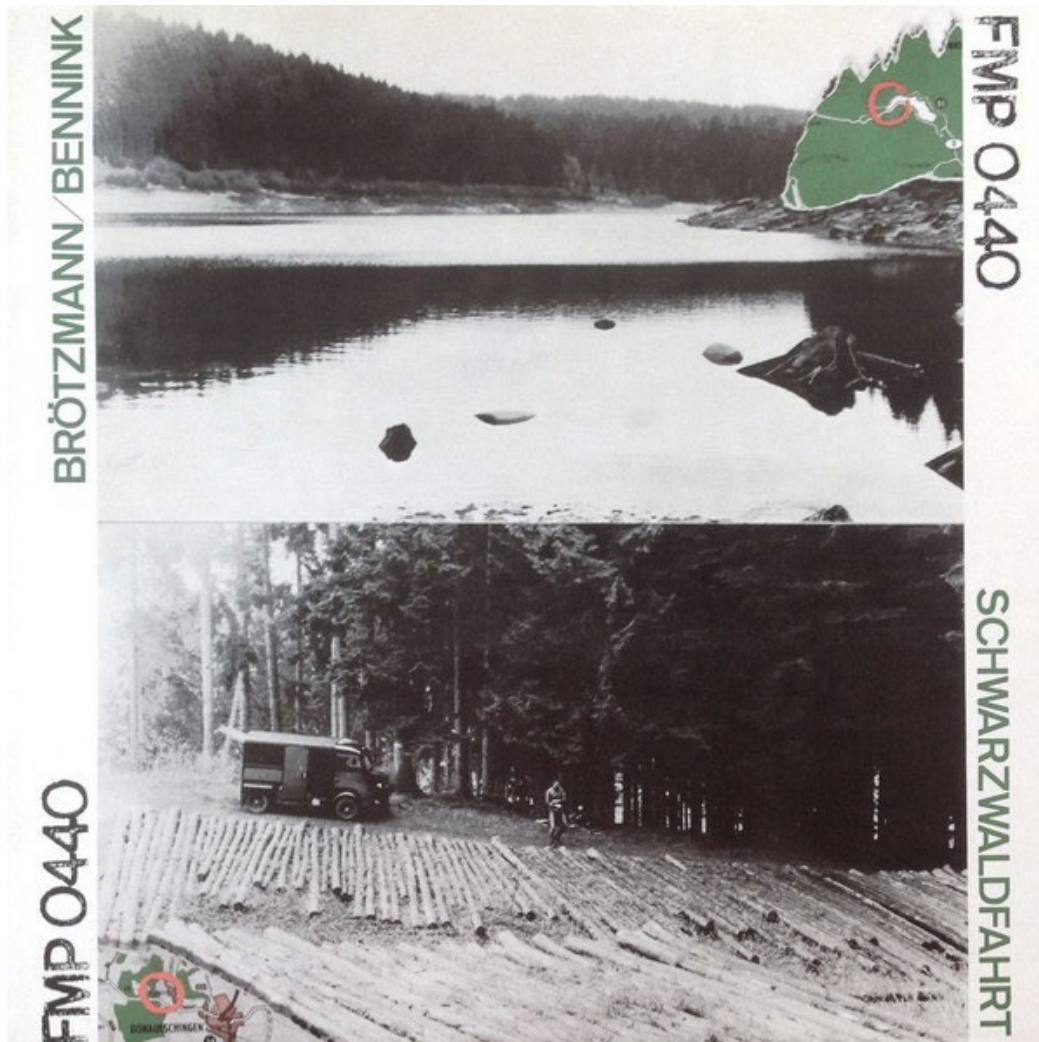


Figure 6: Peter Brötzmann and Han Bennink, *Schwarzwaldfahrt* © Brötzmann. Used by permission.

Krzysztof Penderecki, he was one of “*die zwei Pole, von denen ich anfangs am meisten profitiert habe*” (“the two poles, from whom I, at the beginning, most profited from”) – the other being Nam June Paik.

⁴⁷⁹ Bennink’s connection to more traditional jazz forms is obvious. At the age of 22, he accompanied free jazz pioneer Eric Dolphy on his final concert, later released under the name *Last Date*.

⁴⁸⁰ While I will mostly focus on the larger aesthetic implications of the piece, it should be noted that, indeed, this is quite the subtle release by Brötzmann’s standards. There are some truly delicate melodies that emerge at times – see especially on “Nr. 3” – and Bennink manages to conjure some sounds that might be best called ‘tiny,’ sitting on the verge of oblivion into the soundscape.

The album provides exactly what is promised on the tin. Bennink and Brötzmann wander around the black forest improvising, including using various found objects for percussion purposes; the recording, however, only partially focuses on the two musicians, instead taking as its horizon the forest itself. What emerges is an idiosyncratic blend of field recordings and improvisational music that ultimately confounds the boundary between anthropocentric and natural music. Is that Bennink or are acorns simply falling? Is Brötzmann harmonizing, insofar as we can speak of intentional harmonization (according to normative standards of harmony) in free improvisation,⁴⁸¹ with the baritone rumble of a nearby stream? This would be experimentation for both the participating musicians, but also for us listening to its techno-mimetic reproduction, where the schizophrenic process forecloses access to precise knowledge of the topologies of its ‘original’ production; in this sense, Jörg Fischer can speak of a “*Montage von ‘realer Welt’ und Musik*” (“montage of ‘real world’ and music”).⁴⁸² The scare quotes already presage the subversion of the difference between world and music, yet we should also insist on the radicality of the montage effect that Fischer identifies. After all, to turn to Moten, working in the medium of jazz(poetry), montage “enacts a dissemination of polyphony and pantonality within its heretofore univocal (time)line... This dissemination... is a pluri-dimensionality, heretofore repressed, of the instant, of the clearing.”⁴⁸³ In such a way, we can view this album as attempting to de-habituate our understanding of the commonly understood delimitations of the work (as Goehr outlines) and also our stance with regards to nature (moving us towards an attitude of humility, a view of nature as something like a partner), via a process of placing what would normally (and normatively) be

⁴⁸¹ “*Mir waren Harmonien scheißegal.*“ (“I didn’t give a shit about harmony.”) Brötzmann, *Gespräche*, 92. Translation mine.

⁴⁸² Jörg Fischer, “*Unser Kopf ist rund, damit das Denken die Richtung ändern kann*“. *Zur stilistischen Entwicklung Han Benninks unter besonderer Berücksichtigung von Einflüssen aus den bildenden Künsten* (Diplomarbeit, Johannes-Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, 1997), 69. Translation mine.

⁴⁸³ Moten, *In the Break*, 121-22.

considered extra- or xeno-musical sounds in the context of music. Hence Fischer's analysis of Bennink's style: "[*Alltäglichen Handlungen werden*] in *musikalische Zusammenhänge gestellt*" ("Everyday activities are placed in a musical context").⁴⁸⁴

Schwarzwaldfahrt might be the ecological apotheosis of one of the key tenets of the free improvisational style of Brötzmann, who, in 1967, commented that "*die Individualität der Musiker ist das System, die Zusammenarbeit und Musikalität die Form. Jedes Mitglied der Gruppe hat damit die größtmögliche Freiheit und ist nur durch Feeling, Toleranz, und Achtung dem Mitspieler gegenüber gebunden.*" ("The individuality of the musicians is the system, the working together and musicality, the form. Every member of the group has, therefore, the most-possible freedom and is bound to the bandmates [literally 'with-players'] only through Feeling, tolerance, and respect.")⁴⁸⁵ Brötzmann here maintains the queasy and equivocal understanding of musical intersubjectivity that we developed in Chapter 3 (i.e. the 'connection to yet separation from' inherent in the understanding of enfolding) with his bandmates; the musicians strive to maintain *freedom* for one another, which is to say that they do not impose their will or world on one another. It might be said that this is synchronization (*Synchronisation*) as opposed to synthesis. While this may appear, at the outset, dissonant according to the normative judgments of historical Western musicology (German jazz historian, Wolfgang Knauer, described Brötzmann's style, rather antiseptically, as "*ehrer unüblicher*" ["rather unusual"])⁴⁸⁶, it is ultimately clear that this is a development of harmony that seeks to take into account respect instead of domination, at least with regards to the playing of the music. "*Ob Bennink etwa auf seinem Trommelarsernal agiert... hat für den kollektiven Spielprozeß, für die Reaktionen der anderen und für das musikalische*

⁴⁸⁴ Fischer, *Unser Kopf ist rund*, 121-22. Emphasis original. Translation mine.

⁴⁸⁵ Ekkehard Jost, *Europas Jazz 1960-80* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1987), 86. Translation mine.

⁴⁸⁶ Wolfram Knauer, "*Play yourself, man!*". *Die Geschichte des Jazz in Deutschland* (Reclam Verlag, 2019). Translation mine.

Gesamtresultat nicht nur eine farbliche, sondern eine entscheidende strukturbildende Bedeutung.“ (“If Bennink uses something in his percussion arsenal... it has, for the collective playing-process, for the reactions of the others, and for the total musical result, not only a chromatic but a decidedly structure-making meaning.”)⁴⁸⁷ As noted by Todd S. Jenkins, in free music (broadly construed) the foundational “role is given... to personal expression, one’s own interpretations, and instincts as inspired by other musical and *environmental* elements.”⁴⁸⁸

The implications for *Schwarzwaldfahrt* are clear, given the status of the surrounding world as a key player – a creator of structure alongside Bennink. This is to say, the gentle purling of water that characterizes certain tracks would not be merely added texture, but a full harmonic component itself, not merely drawing attention to the overlooked natural harmony that our deconstruction of Colin Turnbull’s field recordings of the Mbuti analyzed but foregrounding it as an essential partner. Thus, it is an instantiation of viewing nature as a compositional partner or a bandmate, but it is also, then, in the context of the free improvisational style of Brötzmann and Bennink, an attempt to do so *without foisting upon it expectations* (anthropocentric or otherwise) – allowing it to reveal itself in freedom, mirroring the phenomenological passivity that counteracts the *active* passivity of the natural attitude. The *experiencing* of free improv (and *Schwarzwaldfahrt*) illuminates a respect-driven community that maintains an individuality in performance, in occasionally raucous ways or shocking ways (*schockwirkende*); what this means for nature here is that it plays, but it isn’t expected to adhere to the (human) structures of its *Mitspieler*. (In this sense, the cover, which shows two photos, a placid lake atop the aftermath of logging, surrounded by vertical stripes including the title and artist information, is an indictment

⁴⁸⁷ Jost, *Europas Jazz 1960-80*, 130. Translation mine.

⁴⁸⁸ Todd Jenkins, *Free Jazz and Free Improvisation: an Encyclopedia* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2004), xxviii. Emphasis mine.

of an extractive attitude towards nature so severe that the *piece's signifying information and the artists themselves leap out of it.*) The improvisatory attitude towards freedom may account for certain listener distaste for the genre (Amiri Baraka was a notable early critic⁴⁸⁹) – as Stomu Yamashta once noted while titling an album, “freedom is frightening,” and this is assuredly doubly so in cases where human freedom is equated with the freedom of nature. In this sense, *Schwarzwaldfahrt* emerges as a *truly satyrated* phenomenon; if music can be identified as a saturated phenomenon, the music of *Schwarzwaldfahrt* opens, inhabits, and exemplifies the uncanny space of indeterminacy that we earlier identified, following Slavoj Žižek, as a “Hegelian wound,” the space of the satyr. Brötzmann and Bennink’s work, both in its practice and in its instantiation, gestures towards precisely this.

However, the album can be said to accomplish a great deal more. Brötzmann has spoken of his musical practice as a “*Wiedergutmachen*” (“making-good-again”).⁴⁹⁰ When he mentioned this, he was referring specifically to what might be called the inherited *Blutschuld* (bloodguilt) of the post-Nazi generation, which was a tremendous influence on much of the art in Germany in the latter half of the twentieth century. Yet it is, with all of free improvisation’s respect-driven practice, not difficult to see that this type of atonement can be applied to many other modalities. We mentioned in the introduction, as well as in passing towards the end of chapter 3, our understanding

⁴⁸⁹ “[Brötzmann] is absorbed by this form qua form, projecting it as a complete aesthetic construct, thereby minimalizing its deeper philosophical and creative Use as musical innovation. So that he apotheosizes the blunt power and raw timbre of the original, but strips the paradigm of its deeper compositional and improvisational expressiveness. [...] What Brötzmann seems oblivious to is that the explosion was an introduction to new ways into the music, entrance into newer forms of a total expression. By one-sidedly emphasizing only one aspect of the new, Brötzmann transforms the music into a kind of still life, reducing it to a *style*, without concomitant creative substance. [...] [He] makes repetitious hyperbole without understanding that this music [the free jazz of Albert Ayler] reflected and was a living being, an opening not a closing, a beginning not an end. When the emotional content of this music is missing, as it is here and from a depressing number of other players of ‘the new music,’ it becomes formalist and academic. A one-sidedness that makes it superficial and drains the music of real life.” Amiri Baraka, “Peter Brötzmann, Nipples, and Joe McPhee, Nation Time,” in *Digging : the Afro-American soul of American classical music* (Berkeley, NY: University of California Press, 2009), 398-99.

⁴⁹⁰ Brötzmann, *Gespräche*, 118.

of the problematic of the Enlightenment rationality's universalizing tendency, which has been used historically as the basis for untold crimes – colonialism, the Shoah, and so on. (It is an endless list; a universalizing tendency indeed.) Yet we also noted that this applied frequently to an anthropocentric worldview, so important to note in this period of time of impending global catastrophe. Here, with this idea of *Wiedergutmachen*, paired with the radicality of *Schwarzwaldfahrt*, its elevation of the musical manifold to a constitutive *Mitspieler* in the mode of creating a satyrated whole, we might follow Brötzmann in viewing music as part of an *understanding and attunement to the environment*, something that rousts within us an imperative to *listen*. Which, as Brötzmann noted in our epigraph for Chapter 2, is “*die wichtigste Angelegenheit*” (“the most important matter”).⁴⁹¹ *To listen ontologically is to work to de-habituate ourselves from the natural attitude and face nature – face the music.*

Yet, we may even be prepared for this de-habitation, this attunement also by the visual works of art that so infatuated Marion.⁴⁹² Pursuing a type of visual experimentation (or even an experimentation of *viewing*), Jean-Louis Chrétien invokes a “musical silence inhabiting so many paintings down through the centuries” to deepen our understanding of the relationship between art and nature.

In painting there is the music one plays, the pastoral or intimate concerts, and all of the “unheard melodies” that Keats called “sweeter,” but there is also the music that one does not play, that one no longer or does not yet play, in other words the still life with musical instruments. The musical instrument placed, laid down, abandoned, has a presence all its own. Like a mind asleep, which no longer thinks anything it is the virtuality of all melodies without playing any of them. It is the very realm of sound, the royalty of the sonorous.⁴⁹³

⁴⁹¹ Brötzmann, *Gespräche*, 39.

⁴⁹² As noted earlier, I am generally avoiding questions pertaining to deafness and hearing impairment for the sake of both space and an abundance of caution, especially as someone with able hearing, I do not wish to transgress the experience of those with hearing other than mine. Hopefully, the facts of vibration and touch, as noted in Chapter 2, would allow the current argument to maintain some modicum of relevance for these individuals, Chrétien's reading of silence in painting, as we will see, is perhaps another point of departure for future study in this field.

⁴⁹³ Jean-Louis Chrétien, *Hand to Hand: Listening to the Work of Art* (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2003), 29. Emphasis mine.

In this way, we can see that it is “nature that both listens and sings through the wood of the flute and the reeds of the panpipes.”⁴⁹⁴ Here, the “silence” of the painting encourages the viewer to meditate on both the ephemerality and the perpetuity of the music of the world as the realm of sound and sonority, the world of the skull-tone. Would not this be the point of the score? But more importantly, would it also not be explanatory of why the hymnals and psalters of old were so finely illuminated – an abstracted visual representation of certain iterations of a partial and always fragmentary haunting melody?⁴⁹⁵ To ready us for music beyond just the music of the page – hence the profoundly musical style of the Utrecht psalter, which seems simultaneously rushed and meticulous, drifting from pastoralism to the clatter of war often within the same illustration, like the undulations of jazz or free improvisation.

This is Brötzmann’s *modus operandi*, as well. Frequently neglected in favor of his musical works, Brötzmann has created an expansive corpus of visual arts, as well. One particular 2010 exhibition is germane to our examination of *Schwarzwaldfahrt*, our search for the nature that sings, the appropriately named “wood & water.”⁴⁹⁶ Especially in these pieces, Brötzmann explores natural forms in a minimalist style that may surprise those who are only familiar with his *Machine Gun*; the catalog’s opening remarks, by Alan Warner, make stylistic comparisons to both Georg Baselitz and Egon Schiele, although the fragility of and utilization of negative space by some of the ink on paper pieces (particularly the *Trees on Hill* series and the various *Clouds*) recalls nothing so much as Cy Twombly, and their block-like construction is reminiscent of some of Alma Thomas’s more representational works and Picasso’s cubism, aside from the obvious Asian

⁴⁹⁴ Chrétien, *Hand to Hand*, 27.

⁴⁹⁵ Chrétien, *Hand to Hand*, 34.

⁴⁹⁶ *Peter Brötzmann: Wood & Water*, ed. Peter Brötzmann and Alan Warner (Chicago, IL: Corbett vs. Dempsey, 2010), Exhibition catalog.

touchstones.⁴⁹⁷ (This is to say nothing of the woodcuts in the exhibition, which are less German expressionist than they are American-craftsman with their simple subject matter and child-like appearance belying their formal complexity, which includes an intriguing mixture of angular forms and natural curves that stretch across the pieces, as though they were in the process of fragmentation. It is as though Wharton Esherick's prints were in the process of tearing themselves apart.) Despite this tendency towards stylistic minimalism, Warner notes an affinity towards Caspar David Friedrich, a reference we toyed with in chapter three. Indeed, the encounter with nature that Brötzmann evokes can only be called sublime; the minimalist style suggests that the world is so overwhelming that it can only be captured in a momentary and incomplete blur, a trace functioning according to the same logic as schizophonia – an absent sublimity bleeding through on the page. In this sense, his trees boughing to the wind are not so different from a cellist bowing with the winds. Taken as a companion to *Schwarzwaldfahrt*, many pieces of this show demonstrate not an attempt to dominate nature (as one sees in many realist landscapes that attempt to conjure grandeur), but to capture it in its fleetingness, a delicate brush of ink signifying a much larger and collaborative experience of the world, allowing the viewer to partake in the song of the Earth – precisely as fragmented as it appears in its phenomenological apprehension. As natural sounds are traced in the movement implied by the *-fahrt* of *Schwarzwaldfahrt*, so too are they evoked in a preparatory sense by Brötzmann's visual art.

Thus avant-garde of all media, 'extreme' music in particular, remains important, not just because they produce beautiful, powerful, and vital works, but also because they can help to ready

⁴⁹⁷ Brötzmann played with and was rather sympathetic to Japanese jazz musicians, cf. Brötzmann, *Gespräche*, 36-39.

us for new philosophical understandings, whether that is present in their inception and creation or not;⁴⁹⁸ the composer remains, after all, dead – the skull-tone yet resounds.

As to the question of how one can ignore, the answer is depressingly simple: habituation (which can and does include commodification, commercium, and alienation) as part of the natural attitude, concomitant with a projected outward mastery and emphasis on clear objectification and conceptualization of what is phenomenologically apperceived. “*Alles-gesehen und Alles-vestanden-haben*” (“having-seen-everything and having-understood-everything”), in other words, “*die Selbstgewißheit und Entschiedenheit des Man verbreitet eine wachsende Unbedürftigkeit hinsichtlich des eigentlichen befindlichen Verstehens*” (“the self-certainty and decisiveness of the they increasingly propagate the sense that there is no need of authentic, attuned understanding”).⁴⁹⁹

On the other hand, the, shall we say, in-clined *capacitas* can be defined as subjectivity – an abnegation, by chance, experimentation, or pedagogy, not always willingly, but filled with possibilities of experience, possibilities that run over and above notions of mastery and the natural attitude, over and above the ability to easily demarcate the boundaries of the apperceived within the schema of conceptualization. We are in-clined towards satyration, the grasping at the neck of the horse in an attempt to become precisely this satyric phenomenon. Per Klossowski: “I am dead... I suppress myself in order to awaken to music.”⁵⁰⁰ As Bataille noted in *On Nietzsche*, these

possibilit[ies] in fact [are] simply chance – chance that can’t be grasped without danger, since that would be the equivalent of accepting life as lifelessness and taking as something dangerous the truth of life that is chance. Hence... our fears of the ridiculous (transitory feelings, stymieing us, that we are afraid to let ourselves have). A false, vague, devious attitude, balking at impropriety... can be regarded as the panicked fear of *chance* and risk,

⁴⁹⁸ The intention of the recording or composition is ultimately a secondary concern, as we can clearly see in our reading of the Mbuti “Elephant-Hunting Chant.”

⁴⁹⁹ Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, 171.

⁵⁰⁰ Pierre Klossowski, *Nietzsche and the Vicious Circle*, trans. Dan Smith (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 175.

the fear of human [and perhaps not so human] possibility... all that we understand as chance risking itself, disequilibrium, intoxication, dementia.⁵⁰¹

We risk it all. “Music” as a signifier becomes ultimately merely a paleonym for this grand multiplicity, this manifold, yet we persist in using it because we must – laden as it is with notions of non-verbal communication (indeed overcoming itself as signifier!) that can attune us to modalities of being and greater receptivity. The musical manifold, we might say, “does not offer a prefabricated answer (a decision): it precisely puts on in the position of having to originate a way of taking up the call” – and it is some various modes of this call that we will explore in the following chapter.⁵⁰² Accordingly, we think about the musical manifold of existence according to the logic of the supplement and of *différance*: that is, often overlooked by its supposed lack of importance, in reality, it provides an obliquely hypokeimenonical effect that is always deferred which should be explored. We desire alongside Lenz to walk with our feet in the sky, to walk in between worlds, as a satyr. To understand this, we just have to listen – attentively and otherwise, whether we are thrown into it or truck with R. Murray Schafer or Hildegard Westerkamp on a soundwalk – and “‘live’ its meaning... its beautiful appearing.”⁵⁰³

⁵⁰¹ Georges Bataille, *On Nietzsche*, trans. Bruce Boone (Paragon House, 1998), 95.

⁵⁰² John Russon, "The Self as Resolution: Heidegger, Derrida and the Intimacy of the Question of the Meaning of Being," *Research in Phenomenology* 38, no. 1 (01 Jan. 2008 2008): 101, <https://doi.org/10.1163/156916408X262820>.

⁵⁰³ Marion, *Being Given*, 46.

Chapter 5: Face the Music

“A poem without a poet.”

- Michael Schmidt

“In the vast barbarian sky, my cries are unanswered.”

- Liu Shang, *Eighteen Songs of a Nomad Flute*

If we accept the experiencing of music (which is to say the musical manifold) as a satyrated phenomenon, potentially all-encompassing, ontologically disclosive, yet nevertheless *not as a fundament*, we are left with two major questions:

How did we get here?

Where are we going?

Let us start by summarizing what we have discovered in our studies, which veered from literature to the edges of phenomenology and psychoanalysis. In other words, what have I, perhaps, accomplished?

In Chapter 1, we explored several ways that music has been heretofore approached, from the theorizations of archaeology to the metaphysics of Schopenhauer to the shattered love and hatred of Quignard. These were all deemed to be lacking or contradictory in certain ways. Some, such as Schopenhauer, began with a preconceived notion of *what music was*, thus departing already with second-order concerns, running ahead of the problem. The archaeologists, on the other hand, cast a wider net, but, in seeking out the question of the origins of music in *the human species*, they ran over the possibility of non-human music(s). The challenge thus arose to formulate an understanding of music that did not run ahead of itself; for this, it was decided that phenomenology would be the most appropriate starting point, as it proceeds from the poverty of knowledge and starts with as few preconceived notions as possible.

Beginning in this way, prior to starting immediately with the question of music, we had to interrogate listening. For this, Martin Heidegger and R. Murray Schafer were mobilized to consider how one listens to the surrounding world, eventually culminating in the idea that there is no way to avoid the soundscape, thus commonsense notions of silence and gaps in our hearing are not tenable, placing us in a manifold. However, far from reifying a totalizing view of experience, the

soundscape must be approached schizophrenically, which is to say, fragmentary in itself due to the nature of the movement of sound. There is, in other words, no proper origin of sounds *in our experiencing of them*.

This led to our analysis of the philosophical approach of Roman Ingarden, who, in my opinion, comes absolutely closest to this understanding. However, in his writings, despite approaching a very radical insight, he often makes radical points only to back away from them. We discovered what might be his most radical point with regards to music: the untenability of the work paradigm of music. This is to say that music does not start and end with the first note of a sonata, but, rather, is something *other*. This was further explored in a series of case studies, particularly focusing on the work of La Monte Young (mostly his early textual compositions, associated with Fluxus) and recordings of the Mbuti tribe in Africa. These case studies, focusing on fragmentation and delay, for the former, and the possibilities of non-human musical production, for the latter, led us to reconsider schizophrenia within the realm of mimesis. This had already been theorized to a large degree by Theodor Reik, working on the autotheoretical edges of psychoanalysis, and Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, who used Reik as a valuable interlocutor, both of whom developed the idea of the “haunted melody.” We took this idea and understood it in terms of the body as a resonant chamber (an idea that we already thought through in our analysis of listening) – and we saw the body as enfolded into the soundscape, the site of output (of sound, e.g. bodily noise or the playing of an instrument) and input (of schizophrenically mediated perception of the surrounding world) – enfolded into what we theorized as a musical manifold. This places us at the edge of music, which, as a term, becomes paleonymic. *Crucially*, it does not fully do away with the work paradigm, but rather explains it as a spatiotemporal site of entropy and negentropy. This has ramifications for our understanding of the human, as well; we are not disappearing into

the flux of the world, but rather enfolded, situated at the point of something like a chiasmic unity, an interpenetration, on unstable ontological ground.

This unstable ontological ground led us to explore Jean-Luc Marion's "saturated phenomenon" as a *satyrated* phenomenon when applied to the musical manifold. This helps to explain the difficulty in apprehending the musical manifold as such; it can only be approached in moments at the edges of normalcy, primed either by the avant-garde (playing or hearing it) or by moments of self-(ab)negation, such as the madness of Schreber. In other words, limit cases of perception. This is risky, but we risk it all.

But why do we take this risk, this flirtation with madness and egoical dissolution? Where does that lead us? What is the applicability of all this theorizing and argumentation?

* * *

A sampler is a curious and, nowadays, relatively infrequent release. Perhaps they reached their heyday in the 1980s and 1990s with the rise of underground labels which functioned mostly by way of mail order. One would group together various bands on a roster and have them submit a song each in order for the listener to be able to see if they may want to order records that would then come in the mail. This chapter will more or less function in a similar way, albeit with possible ethical paths (of varying length) that we may take given the preceding research. Indeed, in an age where Auschwitz never really ended, and its ideological underpinnings inflicting untold destruction in extractive capitalism, razing to the ground, often literally, cultures and ecologies, what can be done? When discussing questions of the musical manifold, when we touch around the paleonymy at the heart of the musical enterprise, "a trajectory and toward a location that is remote

from – if not in excess of or inaccessible to – words”; in this ‘region,’ to reference once more Georg Knepler, “you cannot but help to hear the echo of Aunt Hester’s scream,” those unrepresentable cries of slavery that forever haunted Frederick Douglass and were phonographically reiterated by Fred Moten.⁵⁰⁴ We are in, if not *the* break, certainly *a* break. These are “regions demanding... full attention.”⁵⁰⁵ What might that full attention look like? What are some failed starts – and some points of departure? When we evoked the idea that ‘we risk it all,’ it was meant it all earnestness. As John Russon notes: “My responsibility is to that other on that other’s terms. And my responsibility is also such that I have nothing—nothing actual—to which to appeal to tell me how to answer to the other’s terms. It is in such a situation that ethics becomes possible.”⁵⁰⁶

I don’t claim to offer any sort of clear answer to the capitalist world’s horrors, these improprieties, these risks, but to seek out moments where we might be confronted with the other in ways that might encourage charity and openness. It is in this spirit, I believe, that Alain Badiou, to whom we will return, asked if music might “be able to express [the] dereliction [of the present time]?”⁵⁰⁷ I seek here to merely sketch possible points of departure for this question in light of the reconsideration of music that has been attempted in the preceding chapters.

⁵⁰⁴ Moten, *In the Break*, 22.

⁵⁰⁵ Shreffler, "Berlin Walls," 505.

⁵⁰⁶ Russon, "The Self as Resolution," 105.

⁵⁰⁷ Alain Badiou, *Five Lessons on Wagner*, trans. Susan Spitzer (London: Verso, 2010), 41.

Part I: Sun Ra's Arkestraphonics

"The people are the instruments. That's how the music goes, that's what the music is."⁵⁰⁸

So intones Sun Ra, decades ago presaging the philosophical argument, at least as it pertains to the specifically human and bodily elements, made in this project.

"How can you speak to the world, except through the music?"⁵⁰⁹ So asks Sun Ra, deepening the stakes of his argument. If people are instruments, music, the music beyond the work paradigm, serves as a communicative medium through which their problems and pain and suffering can be broadcast to other listeners, beyond the realm of ontical silence, so that we may open our ears to the stomach that sings in hunger, the crack of the arthritic bone that prevents its user from playing the piano anymore and beats the drum of age and loss, the ragged breathing that susurrates through the night like wind.

We will note that he speaks of music in the singular, as we have been doing in terms of the musical manifold, another name for the soundscape, and one wonders whom he is addressing, the person or the instrument or the musical manifold itself, which becomes concomitant with the instruments emerging against the backdrop of the world hurtling through space, the world that is dying. As Brother Ah, an Arkestra French horn player, once noted, Sun Ra believed that musicians, and thus, by extension, the audience of instruments, "are an extension of nature."⁵¹⁰

"There's no other way to speak to everyone through language so that each can understand except through the music."⁵¹¹ After Babel, in the shadow of Auschwitz, following the linguistic warren of the slave market, we were left with our bodies that sing in the same language. This is

⁵⁰⁸ Sun Ra, "The Music is Like a Mirror," in *My Way is the Spaceways* (Norton Records, 2013).

⁵⁰⁹ Sun Ra, "The Music is Like a Mirror."

⁵¹⁰ Thomas T. Stanley, *The Execution of Sun Ra: The Mysterious Tale of a Dark Body Sent to Earth to Usher in an Unprecedented Era of Cosmic Regeneration and Happiness* (Shelbyville, KY: Wasteland Press, 2014), 94.

⁵¹¹ Sun Ra, "The Music is Like a Mirror."

Sun Ra's ethical injunction to us: to listen to a world that "tingle[s] with an otherness that demand[s] explanation."⁵¹² Not to music, to *the* music.

This is precisely why he commands us repeatedly: "You've got to face the music."⁵¹³ To face the music means, colloquially, to confront something unpleasant. Why would *the* music be unpleasant? What would it mean to listen to *the* music? Would we not be overwhelmed? Is this not why we hearken instead of adequately confront the monolithic soundscape? But, nevertheless, this is our task.

This was Sun Ra's self-appointed task, as well, in all of its utopian impossibility. The "attempt to break the limits of what can be thought becomes Sun Ra's prophetic duty on earth."⁵¹⁴ Sun Ra's early work speaks of a world wracked with, among other things, racialized violence, petty cultural categorization (also, frequently, racialized), and inequality. But Sun Ra came from Saturn "to teach [white society] the real truth."⁵¹⁵ Even merely engaging with his auto-fiction (or auto-theory) demands a certain suspending of the values that reinforce the above problems; to play with myth is already to acknowledge that it has power, and dismissing that power amounts to little more than a Freudian negation and a fearful assertion of one's own egoical certitude. The latter reaction amounts to nothing less than a denial of all utopian possibilities. Utopianism is, by its very nature, impossible, but it remains a necessary fiction for those of us who dream of a better, more just world. Sun Ra was one of those dreamers, perhaps the dreamer *par excellence*, and this is radically apparent in his music, which tears through established notions of melody and harmony to quest after *the* music. While he tended towards a sometimes rigid metaphysics, he sought not

⁵¹²Stanley, *The Execution of Sun Ra*, 9..

⁵¹³ Sun Ra, "The Music is Like a Mirror."

⁵¹⁴ Edwards, *Epistrophies*, 125.

⁵¹⁵ Sun Ra, *The Wisdom of Sun-Ra: Sun Ra's Polemical Broadsheets and Streetcorner Leaflets*, ed. John Corbett (Chicago, IL: WhiteWalls, 2006), 66.

just the vagaries of categorized and catalogued music, but the idea of music that cast the widest possible net, out towards the margins.⁵¹⁶ Little wonder he was once “live from [the] Soundscape.”⁵¹⁷

This emphasis on the marginalized and the desire to explore the possibilities therein is what I believe Sun Ra meant when he noted “the music is your testing ground.”⁵¹⁸ The paleonymic understanding of music as a concept that was introduced in the third chapter and developed in the fourth subsequently means that to quest after music is to engage in a certain testing, to answer a certain call. We explored enfoldedness and the circulations of music with schizophonic mimesis and the haunting melody, and we confronted the crisis of meaning at the edge of phenomenology. But now we need to decide whether to answer the crying out, the musical call – as that of the captive Lady Wen-Chi in *Eighteen Songs of a Nomad Flute*, whose cries are unanswered by the “vast barbarian sky.” Robbed of all else, we are “Sound... like the wind.”⁵¹⁹

⁵¹⁶ One can see this especially clearly in his live album with John Cage, uniting two disparate strains of the avant-garde.

⁵¹⁷ Sun Ra, *Live from Soundscape: Sun Ra Arkestra* (Tokyo: DIW Records : Jasrac, 1994).

⁵¹⁸ Sun Ra, "The Music is Like a Mirror."

⁵¹⁹ Stanley, *The Execution of Sun Ra*, 153.



Figure 7: Liu Sheng, *Eighteen Songs of a Nomad Flute*

Part II: Native Noise (Ochoa and Humboldt)

Earlier, we deconstructed the work of the anthropologist Colin Turnbull. Despite his occasional rhetorical confusions and Eurocentric tendencies, there really can be no doubt that his work with the Mbuti people was suffused with the best intentions, and he worked tirelessly to preserve their way of life in the face of deforestation, slavery, and the losses of culture normally associated with a rapid assimilation into a world dominated by universalizing narratives of Western capitalism and the progress associated with it. While this itself may be indicative of a certain fetishization, there were concrete gains made on the part of the Mbuti. It hardly bears repeating that this cannot be said for the visiting Europeans of the so-called “Age of Exploration” and the subsequent period of organized and rapacious colonialism. One particular account involving Alexander von Humboldt is related by Ana María Ochoa Gautier in *Aurality: Listening and Knowledge in Nineteenth Century Colombia*.

During his travels in Colombia, Humboldt encountered a group of people who were mostly employed as boatmen, known as *bogas*. Gautier quotes from his journal:

[T]he most upsetting thing [about the boatmen] is the barbarous, lustful, ululating and angry shouting, which is sometimes like a lament and sometimes joyful; at other times full of blasphemous expressions... Hau Hau... Ham, Ham... Halle, Halle... if you add all that you can imagine, the tone can become a song... The heavier the work, the more angry the screaming of the *bogas*, among whom the cadence will be affected frequently by caprice. They begin with a sibilating has has has and end with exacerbated insults.⁵²⁰

Gautier draws attention to the “negative adjectives of excess” and the difficulty of classifying the sounds the boatmen made.⁵²¹ However, while on the edge of classification for Humboldt, he draws

⁵²⁰ Alexander von Humboldt, *Personal Narrative of Travels to the Equinoctial Regions of America, During the Years 1799-1804*, ed. Aimé Bonpland and Thomasina Ross, vol. 2 (London: G. Bell, 1907). Quoted in Ochoa Gautier, *Aurality*, 32.

⁵²¹ Ochoa Gautier, *Aurality*, 32-33.

attention to the potential musicality of the “unbearable racket.”⁵²² In addition to the fact that these sounds have a definite cadence (which is to say rhythm), we should also remember that a lament is not merely wailing, it is often also a song – or can “become” one. (Humboldt was by no means alone in his negative characterization of the *bogas*; “sounding like animals was the most common comparison.”⁵²³)

Focusing more precisely on what can, for Humboldt, be clearly demarcated as music, in his *Personal Narrative* (distinct from his diary), he describes a group of Amerindians, the Salives, who made a clay wind instrument, which he likened to a trumpet; it, apparently, made a “dismal sound,” which was thankfully replaced by the guitars and choral music brought by the Jesuit missionaries.⁵²⁴ Later, he goes on to describe how “savage notions love noisy music.”⁵²⁵ In both instances, Humboldt connects the music of the Amerindians to non-music, either as sound or noise, in contradistinction to the beautiful music of the Jesuits and the invading Christians. We thus see in both his characterization of the *bogas* and the identifiably musical productions of the Salives and others a certain hybridity between music and noise, as though he was approaching precisely the undecidability that has come to characterize music as a (paleonymic) concept in the course of this project.

In all of the above cases, Humboldt is projecting an idealized vision of music onto the surrounding world, which he deems to be “dismal,” “savage,” and “noisy,” instead of interacting with it on its own terms. As part of the colonial enterprise, this judgmental and hierarchical attitude towards native music amounts to nothing more than a piece of the larger project of dehumanizing the local inhabitants, as a process of rationalizing violence (i.e. the madness of Aguirre, so

⁵²² Humboldt, *Personal Narratives*, 2.

⁵²³ Humboldt, *Personal Narratives*, 2, 41.

⁵²⁴ Humboldt, *Personal Narratives*, 2, 221.

⁵²⁵ Humboldt, *Personal Narratives*, 2, 345.

masterfully captured by Werner Herzog), simply a manifestation of philosophical notions of universalization concomitant with narratives of progress, or both. And yet, Humboldt still approaches our position, precisely in his idea that the “racket” of the *bogas* can “become a song.” Become for whom, though? That is now the question. Does it not, at least for a moment, have to have already become a song for Humboldt, the perceiving ear, our phenomenologist in the field (known for his deep and accurate descriptions), such that he can make this judgment? Briefly or for a long while, this we do not know, but we can say definitively that the savage “screaming” and “shouting” was music in the ears of Humboldt, just as the music of the Salives was dismal – but still approachable as music. While we can reject the missionaries’ “civilizing” of their dismal trumpets as needlessly hierarchical and violent, we can appreciate Humboldt’s openness to the experience of music, which functions in a different register for speech, in that it confronts us as a saturated phenomenon, demanding attention (though not always receiving it, as in the cases where the howling did not “become” song).

Any attempt to approach something like real equality – or even respect – must include a musical component, the injunction that comes with listening, reverberation, the injunction that Humboldt approached but did not fully integrate in his cosmology. By rejecting categories of noise or a hierarchical understanding of music, at least in terms of progress or the work paradigm (which is to say, leaving the door open for second-order critiques, be they traditionally musicological or “critical” in the mode of Adorno), we can begin to truly engage with the musical manifold of *human society*.⁵²⁶ (Thus, there may be some truth, after all, in the Levi-Strauss quote we mentioned

⁵²⁶ As a provocation to reconsider notions of noise and hierarchy, one might consider the utilization of what is typically considered noise as a protest, which one can see very clearly in the (first) Barbadian black metal project, Conrad, which dabbles in topics such as revenge and local belief systems, in particular the transplanted African religion drawn from Yoruba. This would be an instance of taking ownership of labels of (musical) savagery, as black metal is typically associated with war, death, murder, etc., and turning it into a pointed, if unsubtle, critique of the legacies of the colonial period.

earlier that maintains that myths are structured like music. To understand the worldview, it is often necessary to *listen* attentively, attuned to the soundscape and the voices therein.)

Part III: Listening to the Body (Anzieu and Goethe)

One wonders how Humboldt only partially listened to the musicality of the Colombians when his friend Goethe explored the musicality of the very body itself.

Tanzen muß man sie sehen! Siehst du, sie ist so mit ganzem Herzen und mit ganzer Seele dabei, ihr ganzer Körper eine Harmonie, so sorglos, so unbefangen, als wenn das eigentlich alles wäre, als wenn sie sonst nichts dächte, nichts empfände; und in dem Augenblicke gewiß schwindet alles andere vor ihr.⁵²⁷

You have to see her dance! See, she is there with her whole heart and her whole soul, her whole body a harmony, so carefree, without self-consciousness, as though that were really everything, as though she thought of nothing else, felt nothing else; and, in this moment, everything before her disappears.

This comes from *Die Leiden des Jungen Werther*. The titular Werther is watching his beloved Lotte dance and is overwhelmed by the experience. It is, in many ways, typical of a German Romantic exploration of excess – certainly Lotte becomes a saturated phenomenon in the eyes of Werther, which decenters his subjectivity, as he imagines himself disappearing before her, overcome with beauty.

I would like, however, to focus on one line in particular: “ihr ganzer Körper eine Harmonie.” I find this to be rather a strange figuration, identifiable as a metonym, given the elision of a verb. It is not that her whole body *is* a harmony, but rather “her whole body a harmony,” a phrase that runs together without pausing for verbal identification or verification, something that is radically apparent, beyond the being of concepthood, as though Werther is tripping over himself to mount the impossible task of a description – the excess of intuition of Marion. This points to a truly deep understanding of the body as a harmony.

⁵²⁷ Johan Wolfgang Goethe, *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*, <https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/2407/pg2407-images.html>. Translation mine.

But why “harmony”? Of all the commonly asserted characteristics of music, rhythm, melody, and harmony, the one that seems least associable with dancing would be harmony. Rhythm is certainly the first to come to mind; as Bon Scott of AC/DC once wrote, echoing a common popular music refrain, “girl’s got rhythm.” From complicated polyrhythms to the three-step of the waltz, rhythm dominates the discussion and experience of dance, both as viewer and participant. Melody is also not uncommonly associated with dance, laying atop and conforming to the rhythmic line, providing, in a sense, clear instructions to the dancers. As a melody climaxes, one might dip a partner, for example. Harmony, however, is something of an outlier.⁵²⁸ How does it relate to the body?

We have already considered harmony in the context of the soundscape, particularly how it persists as a constant harmonic accompaniment to human music, and we have explored the sonicities of the body. Yet to be a harmony over and above “being,” which is to say in the context of the saturated phenomenon, would seem to suggest something deeper at play with regards to the hymn of the body. To answer this question, we will now turn to the psychoanalyst Didier Anzieu, who writes that the encounter with the “sounds of the other... wraps the Self in harmony.”⁵²⁹

Anzieu asserts that this

space of sound is the earliest psychical space: noises from the outside which cause pain when they are loud or sudden, gurgles from inside the body that are disturbing because it is not clear where they are coming from, cries that arise automatically at birth... a criss-cross of the signals of early psychical qualities organized neither in time nor space.⁵³⁰

It is clear from his numerous case studies that this “space of sound” (which seems to be a precise analogue of our figuration of the soundscape, down to its divorce from precise spatiotemporality)

⁵²⁸ Harmony need not always refer to music; it was often used in reference to what might be called alignment or a relation that does not cause discord. An example would be in the field of color theory. While Werther’s account is no doubt ekphrastic, its proximity to music allows the connection.

⁵²⁹ Didier Anzieu, *The Skin-Ego*, trans. Naomi Segal (Routledge, 2016), 186.

⁵³⁰ Anzieu, *The Skin-Ego*, 188.

persists into adulthood – the age of Werther. This space of sound furnishes a harmony that “presag[es] the unity that [the baby] will discover as its Self throughout the diversity of its sensations and experiences.”⁵³¹

Harmony is thus a unity and a “criss-cross” – something that might be described as a chiasm. But it is extremely clear that it is communicative both of ontological status and various statuses of the self and the other. With regards to the former, to recapitulate our points of chapters 2 and 3, it provides the manifold of existence. With regards to the latter, gurgling of one’s own stomach indicates hunger; gurgling of the other’s stomach indicates the same. All of these are part of our sonic “wrapping.”

Lotte’s status as harmony is a gesture towards an awareness towards the world, but also *an injunction to listen to the body of the other*, the incorporation of the encounter with the other into one’s harmony that is the space of sound, the soundscape. And it is, indeed, rather overwhelming, as it can open up, per Anzieu, “the delusion of a space where there is no difference between the Self and its environment and where the Self may draw strength from the stimulation or calm of the environment with which it is conjoined.”⁵³² There are several points here that help us understand the encounter with Lotte. First of all, it is clear that the disappearance of Werther is a delusion – I referred to it earlier as a decentering of subjectivity, and I think that holds. But, within this delusion, the Self is connected *to the harmony*, from which it may draw strength. Werther certainly draws strength; it deepens his (doomed) love for Lotte, and it encourages him to have a new understand of the sonicity of the world.

What, however, about *other* possibilities? While the baby may only be able to relate to the stimulation or the calm of the sonic manifold, an adult can experience a deeper range of emotions.

⁵³¹ Anzieu, *The Skin-Ego*.

⁵³² Anzieu, *The Skin-Ego*.

What interests me here would be something like empathy for the hunger of another. While Lotte *qua* harmony may arise against the backdrop of a joyous occasion, I would like us to consider the potential *sorrow* of Lotte *qua* harmony. Perhaps she is starving. Would the gurgles of her stomach mean anything less for her status as harmony? Would there not still be an overpowering encounter with the other?

Werther's encounter with Lotte *qua* harmony helps to illuminate our understanding of relating to the sonic world, but, in so doing, it also opens the door to the confrontation with the ethics of understanding the other's non-verbal communication in terms of, say, hunger. Lotte *qua* harmony gives strength; the encounter with the starving other may also give strength, the strength to give, the strength for charity. But we must never forget that, following our reading of Marion, that we can become habituated to these noises, regard them simply as such instead of as harmony, the harmony of the world crying out to us.

If there are doubts about the communicability of this suffering in an ontologically disclosive way, we remember Anzieu's question for this encounter and reflect on the music, the hymn of the body, as a saturated phenomenon: "What other term can one use here than a musical one?"⁵³³

⁵³³ Anzieu, *The Skin-Ego*, 186.

Part IV: Listening to *Environments*

We have, in this project, decentered the creation of music away from a sort of anthropocentrism and re-allocated the acknowledgement of something as music to the listener. As a matter of course, I am currently experiencing a gentle rain in a pine forest. Though I am perceiving this as music, it is evident by the idle chatter of those voices on a nearby trail that I might be the only one. Why?

Approaching the record, as made by Irv Teibel as part of his *Environments* series, one is confronted with the simple fact that, in all of its materiality, all of its minerality, this is an artifact of a sort. This is something that was meant for a specific purpose. For the sake of clarity, I am speaking of a vinyl record. I found it in my library between, oddly enough, a doom metal album (Electric Wizard) and a Pink Floyd album, both of which exhibit tendencies towards collapsing the division between noise and music. In the case of Electric Wizard, it is the pulsing feedback drone out of which the riffs erupt. In the case of Pink Floyd, it is the exploration of ambient tones and otherwise “non-musical” elements, such as vocal recordings and even samples.⁵³⁴ It is appropriate and unfortunately due to my poor record organizational skills that *Environments* emerges out of this milieu.

The question of musicality lies in our apprehension. Our apprehension thereof. Of ostensible (but impossible) silence. And of music. And, it is here that the readings of the Mbuti field recordings and *Schwarzwaldfahrt* will reach their fullest potential. The lessons learned during those analyses, especially in terms of the relation of music to nature (and the collapsed boundary between them) will now be employed to elucidate the *Environments* series.

⁵³⁴ An example of Pink Floyd using samples is the use of Delia Derbyshire’s *Doctor Who* theme (itself a fascinating moment in music history) in the opening track of *Meddle*, just slightly over the three-minute mark.

Environments is the brainchild of Irv Teibel, by all accounts a tireless salesman, and an avid photographer. While working to create a soundtrack for Tony and Beverly Conrad, he came up with the idea to package and sell the sounds of nature.⁵³⁵ The first *Environments* recording was of the ocean, smoothed out and with some overdubs, and it sold extraordinarily well – enough to merit nine full sequels, ranging from the sounds of Okefenokee swamp to a hippie be-in in Central Park. While his early records were based on tape loops, similar to the process of the *musique concrète* Teibel knew, by *Environments 4*, “he stopped looping.”⁵³⁶ An anecdote claims that Teibel used multiple pseudonyms at his own company, Syntonic Research, located at the top of the Flatiron Building, so that he could convince retailers and curious individuals that Syntonic was a bustling, professional outfit.⁵³⁷ The overdetermined nature of Teibel within his company is mirrored in the various ways that the *Environments* series has been categorized, especially in relation to whether or not the recordings (especially those with natural, which is to say, non-anthropoc subjects, however mediated – schizophonic, in other words) constitute music.

The Teibel of Syntonic Research grew out of Teibel the *musique concrète* fan. Early reviews of the *Environments* series often focus on the fact that records have “no music.”⁵³⁸ An early employee of Syntonic recalled simply that the recordings “[are] not music.”⁵³⁹ Similarly, during a New York Times profile, Gerald Walker spent much of the time talking about the

⁵³⁵ "About Irv Teibel," Irv Teibel Archive, Syntonic Research, accessed April 30, 2017, <http://www.irvteibel.com/bio/>.

⁵³⁶ Cara Giaimo, "The Man Who Recorded, Tamed, and Then Sold Nature Sounds to America," *Atlas Obscura* (04/05 2016), <https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/the-man-who-recorded-tamed-and-then-sold-nature-sounds-to-america>.

⁵³⁷ Mike Powell, "Natural Selection," *Pitchfork*, November 2, 2016, <http://pitchfork.com/features/cover-story/reader/natural-selection/>.

⁵³⁸ Jonathan Een Newton, "Extra Extra! Environments in the News," *Irv Teibel Archive, Syntonic Research*, 2016, <http://www.irvteibel.com/news/blog-post-3/>.

⁵³⁹ Powell, "Natural Selection."

(supposed) science behind these recordings.⁵⁴⁰ Yet, in these last two cases, the spectre of music appears, complicating matters. These recordings are not merely sound effects, they are not merely the psychoacoustic instruments that they were often marketed as. Walker notes that a recording of a country stream gives him a “musical rush.” The article on Pitchfork notes that Teibel’s recordings are “an early expression of what we now call ambient music.” In 1991, *InMusic* also acknowledged the debt that ambient music paid to Teibel.⁵⁴¹ The strange status of *Environments* seems to compel authors to contradict themselves, wavering between the sound effect or background noise and music. If we focus our analysis on a single *Environments* recording of nature, in this case “Gentle Rain in a Pine Forest,” Side B of Volume 4, what will we find, given that nature has already been established as a harmonic component of the musical experience? Let us return to the record that I have pulled off the shelf, and let us return to questions of its materiality, its being in the world.⁵⁴² We have already discussed in the prior chapters the various ways in which the musical manifold is constituted, so forgive some slightly ekphrastic language. As Cage notes, “dissonances and noises are welcome in this new music. But so is the dominant seventh chord if it happens to put in an appearance.”⁵⁴³ This far into our investigation, we can describe it as such.

The record begins with a very slight fade-in, lasting no more than 15 seconds, and then proceeds uninterrupted for the duration of the side – approximately 30 minutes, in other words. After this short introduction, the central motif (the titular gentle rain) rules dominant over the other element of the tracks. It forms both a rhythmic line and a central drone. There are two major

⁵⁴⁰ Gerald Walker, "The World Is Alive With The Sound of Sounds," *New York Times*, March 2 1975, 95, <https://www.nytimes.com/1975/03/02/archives/the-world-is-alive-with-the-sound-of-sounds-the-world-is-alive-with.html>.

⁵⁴¹ "Label & Recording," *InMusic* 2, no. 6 (1991)..

⁵⁴² The *Environments* series was also released on cassette and has recently been made accessible in app form. There are, obviously, many differences between these formats that deserve greater attention, especially in our digital age, which has, in a fit of nostalgia, once more seen an upswing in cassette production. However, the vinyl is accessible to me at the moment, sitting, as it is, on my shelf, and that is precisely what I will study here.

⁵⁴³ Cage, *Silence: Lectures and Writings*, 11.

rhythmic components of the rainfall. The first is that of the raindrops themselves, which form a hyper-staccato beat. But as this beat fades into itself, becomes apprehendable as a drone, there is also the rhythmic line of the waxing and waning of the rain's power, like a slow modulation. A constant hum of a bug noise becomes apparent, as well. This introduces the second major part of this piece. Whereas the drone of the rain was relatively low in the register, the sound of the insect is considerably higher – essentially, a harmonic structure has been established between these two drones (similar to the implementation of the five tones of La Monte Young's *Dream House*). Various species of birds (the winds, if you'll forgive the comparison) chime in with increasing regularity. Topologically, they are each calling from different distances from the point of recording, thus introducing dynamic diversity into the piece as well. Occasionally, the birdcalls overlap with one another, but sometimes they function contrapuntally, with each individual melody falling into a call-and-response theme. The record continues in such a way until the very end, when, again, there is a slight fade.

The question of whether or not this track is music depends entirely on the critical faculties with which one approaches it. It certainly contains musical elements, even sharing some traits with minimalist pieces, again showing how it serves as a precursor to the nascent ambient music movement. But when does one switch these critical faculties on? What is it about the record that just played on my turntable that makes one think of music, instead of a mere sonic artifact?

The record is, by definition, schizophrenically mimetic. For Derrida, to return momentarily, the link between art and mimesis was clear.⁵⁴⁴ Mimesis, like harmony, is engaged in a logic of supplementarity, an outside that is not taken into account. To recapitulate, schizophrenic mimesis

point[s] to a broad spectrum of interactive and extractive practices. These acts and events produce a traffic in new creations and relationships through the use, circulation, and

⁵⁴⁴ Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, 221.

absorption of sound recordings. By “schizophonic mimesis” I want to question how sonic copies, echoes, resonances, traces, memories, resemblances, imitations, duplications all proliferate histories and possibilities... The recordings of course retain a certain indexical relationship to the place and people they both contain and circulate. At the same time their material and commodity conditions create new possibilities whereby a place and people can be recontextualized, rematerialized, and thus thoroughly reinvented.⁵⁴⁵

It is this notion of “reinvention” that is particularly of interest. I recounted earlier that I might have been the only one experiencing a gentle rain in a pine forest as music, but that I thought later that there was something about the *record* that lent itself more to apprehensions of music. There seems to be something in the form of the record, with its cover, its process, its deep mechanicity that makes one think of art, particularly of the art of music.⁵⁴⁶ It is both a field recording, a sonic archive of a topos, and *something more*. This overdetermination of an overdetermination sends one down a dizzyingly vertiginous path of mimesis and music, where its precisely the growth and apprehension that one projects onto a work of art that comes to the fore (mirroring, in a different sort of way, Roland Barthes’ famous ‘death of the author’ for more nakedly mimetic fare, as we pointed out in our commentary on Ingarden). Vinyl versions of field recordings thus appear as a sort of mimesis of and through schizophonia, a record of the schizophony of the lo-fi soundscape mediated through the schizophony of the high-fidelity (hi-fi) contemporary environment.

This is elaborated through Michael Taussig’s reading of mimesis. There is no doubt that the vinyl pressing plant is an example of mechanical mimesis, the mimesis of modernity, recognized by Adorno and, especially, Walter Benjamin’s analysis of mechanical reproducibility. The commodity of the vinyl record is the resultant artifact of this mechanical process, the very commodity which is fetishized. The pressing of a record is, to be sure, a controlled process, first

⁵⁴⁵ Feld, "Pygmy POP," 13.

⁵⁴⁶ It is perhaps all of these reasons that has led to the cultic fascination with vinyl.

and foremost, and a very precise one, at that, which allows for extremely high-quality copies to be held within the grooves of the record, but, as Teibel himself reminds us, “distortion is inherent in each element in the chain of acoustic reproduction.”⁵⁴⁷ Schizophonicly, “the work of art,” the record of music, “blends with scientific work so as to refetishize, yet take advantage of marketed reality and thereby achieve [what Benjamin calls] ‘profane illumination.’”⁵⁴⁸ This is the reinvention and recontextualization of Feld’s schizophonic mimesis, the doubling that occurs.

Taussig further comments on this doubling nature of the mimetic faculty. Mimesis is “the self losing itself, sinking, decomposing into the surrounding world... an act of both imitation and of contact.”⁵⁴⁹ Taken with the field recording in mind, this points towards the sheer radicality of considering field recordings of nature. It is the divorce of these recordings from their source and their subsequent recontextualization through the mechanical process allows for the reconsideration of natural recordings *as music*. These mechanical processes, to refer again to Pettman, are “increasingly uncanny.” Whereas, for Turnbull, nature was a doubled harmonic line, a forgotten other, for Teibel, nature *is the music*. It is the dominance of the supplement, the reversal of fortunes of the relationship between music and nature. And this is accomplished through this mimetic process, which “is not only... duplication but also slippage.”⁵⁵⁰ This is the slippage of the schizophonic, where, in the event of musical apprehension, the raindrops hitting the pine boughs becomes appreciated as a microtonal symphony.

“Gentle Rain In A Pine Forest” thus stands alongside Colin Turnbull’s field recordings, which we explored in depth in Chapter 3, and *Schwarzwaldfahrt*, in Chapter 4, as an artifact of the

⁵⁴⁷ Irv Teibel, "Mother Nature Goes Digital," *Digital Deli* (1984), <https://www.atariarchives.org/deli/index.php>.

⁵⁴⁸ Michael T. Taussig, *Mimesis and Alterity: a Particular History of the Senses* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1993), 23.

⁵⁴⁹ Taussig, *Mimesis and Alterity*, 46.

⁵⁵⁰ Taussig, *Mimesis and Alterity*, 115.

forest's capacity for music. Internally, it is divided innumerable times, refracting endlessly on its nature in the abysses of mimesis and experience, obliterating its unicity, yet nevertheless standing as a reminder, a record of a specific place and time. Just as the peal of thunder in Turnbull's recording collapsed the boundaries between anthropocentric and natural music, so too does Irv Teibel's work subsequently raise the work of the natural "composer" to musical heights – a reminder of the ambient music that surrounds us constantly, always just looking for acknowledgement, that extra notice that will then experience it as the musical event that it always potentially is.

In this age of ecological collapse, when it becomes so necessary to listen to the world, it is good to have these sorts of reminders. In terms of Marion, they would help to attune our *capacitas* to the sort of phenomenological worldview that would be conducive to ontological thought. Kenneth Maly refers to this modality of contemplation as "earth-thinking."⁵⁵¹ Earth-thinking is similar to our thoughts and arguments, only we have focused specifically on the soundscape and the concomitant musical manifold, which, like the overdetermined Earth (and, in a different register, the earth itself and the Earth itself), demands our attention, yet can be passed over because of how familiar we are with it. They share a sensibility, an openness that phenomenological research demands of us, beginning, as we do, in the poverty of the *ἐποχή*.

Recall our notion of enfoldedness, the body emanating from the quite literal soil into the world, just as it internalizes the schizophrenic soundscape and contributes, hauntingly, to it as well, a coalescence and dissemination, not simply a romantic worldview of a mystical oneness but a complex series of interactions, without discernible beginning – no Ur-sound. Maly can drift towards this romanticism, prizing "a deep experience of being one with all life," but he

⁵⁵¹ Kenneth Maly, "Earth-Thinking and Transformation," in *Heidegger and the Earth : Essays in Environmental Philosophy*, ed. Ladelle McWhorter and Gail Stenstad (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 46.

acknowledges that this is simply one mode of being, a counterpart of “disconnectedness and contraction.” He associates earth-thinking with the former, but this only becomes recognizable, at least in adulthood, when thrown into relief by the experiences of the breakage of the latter, the incompleteness of experience in the natural attitude, which overrides the full aspectual appreciation of ontological listening, where true discreteness becomes untenable to countenance, moments that are gestured towards in our studies of the Mbuti, Brötzmann and Bennink, and, finally, *Environments*; is it so difficult to imagine an earth-listening? Would not our studies, indeed, seem to demand it? It seems hardly like a coincidence then that an essay that considers Maly’s earth-thinking would be titled “Singing the Earth.”⁵⁵²

We sing the Earth through vibration and echo. The Earth sings us through vibration and echo. Lately, those echoes have been departing – birds and insects disappearing, brooks running dry. *Environments* recordings thus function doubly as an artifact – physical and spatiotemporal; what does listening to it demand of us?

⁵⁵² Gail Stenstad, "Singing the Earth," in *Heidegger and the Earth*, ed. Ladelle McWhorter and Gail Stenstad (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2016), 63-69.

Part V: The Deepest Silence: *Götterdämmerung*

But what can these reminders do? Reminders of contact and respect of human music over and above judgment, encountering the sonicity of the body as a necessary and inescapable harmony, and the necessity of earth-listening. Let us examine just such a case that may imbricate all three cases within the utopianism of Sun Ra within the context of the preceding project, with all its insistence on the porosity of the enframing status of the concert hall: the ending of Wagner's Ring cycle, the end of *Götterdämmerung*.⁵⁵³

Rounding out Wagner's tetralogy, *Götterdämmerung* tells the story, as its name would suggest, of the twilight and eventual extinction of the gods. Valhalla, home of Wotan and others, burns, and Hagen loses his life in an attempt to retrieve the gold that was stolen from the Rhinemaidens and eventually returned there. The mythical hero, Siegfried, dies. As Alain Badiou puts it,

it relates the destruction of *all* mythologies⁵⁵⁴ since Wotan's attempts to create a free hero who would rescue mythology [Siegfried] are a total failure. The end of *Götterdämmerung* is really the twilight of the gods, the death of the gods; mythology can no longer be the solution. The only thing left, then, is humanity's gazing out over the scene of destruction, over the end of mythology.⁵⁵⁵

It is an ending that echoes Wagner's radical youth, which led him to be banished from Dresden after the 1848 revolution, and may even be more radical than that, since, in Badiou's view, "the

⁵⁵³ The arguments for and against Wagner are voluminous to the point of being a great vacuum of air in which one may easily get stuck. Both sides make some valid points, though I ultimately land, loosely, on the side of Wagner's music, though not Wagner himself (the endless variety of stagings from the radical break of Wieland Wagner upon the reopening of Bayreuth after the war to the Copenhagen Ring in the aughts would seem to attest to the possibility of moving Wagner's music in new and sometimes politically salient directions). I will leave them aside in order to more deeply focus on this one particular moment in his oeuvre.

⁵⁵⁴ As the Third Norn puts it in the prelude to *Götterdämmerung*, "*der ewige Götter Ende dämmert ewig da auf*" ("the end of the eternal gods is always at hand").

⁵⁵⁵ Badiou, *Five Lessons on Wagner*, 105.

ending consists in the fate of the world being handed over to *generic* humanity, since no specific nation is mentioned.”⁵⁵⁶

What Badiou leaves fallow is the question of how this mechanism might function for the audience. I believe that a possible path forward in answering this question may be extrapolated from our studies in the musical manifold of the soundscape. Let us consider the interior of the concert hall – even Bayreuth – at the end of this massive undertaking. It is here crucial to remember that Wagner forbade clapping and chatting during the performance of his music-dramas. When *Götterdämmerung* ended, yet prior to the applause, what does the audience hear but only themselves, the recipients of the responsibility for constructing a world in the shadow of a failed metaphysics, without a metaphysical guarantor any longer. While this can be said to be true of all performances of specific musical pieces, it is directly signaled by the ending of this opera. “The permanence [Valhalla] was meant to guarantee was but a beautiful dream; but a dream it was and remains.”⁵⁵⁷ As Baudelaire noted earlier in a letter to Wagner, “it seemed like the music was *my own*.”⁵⁵⁸ Momentarily attuned to the musical experience yet without what is traditionally defined as music (and *Götterdämmerung*, if nothing else, qualifies certainly in that regard), what we hear in this moment of responsibility is the bodily sounds of our neighbors, which radiates out as the hymn of the body, a saturated phenomenon, the satyric alterity, which re- and dis-orient us, our moment of experiencing subjective decentering, our view of Lotte – the confrontation with the *harmony of the audience that undergirded the opera throughout its entire performance and, more deeply, out of which the opera erupted*. After this “structuring absence,” we are “left appreciating

⁵⁵⁶ Badiou, *Five Lessons on Wagner*, 101. Certainly this supposition, as regards nationality, heavily depends on which staging one sees.

⁵⁵⁷ Philip Kitcher and Richard Schacht, *Finding an Ending: Reflections on Wagner's Ring* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 48.

⁵⁵⁸ Baudelaire, *Selected Letters*, 145.

the ambient and residual presence,” the haunting aspect of the musical manifold.⁵⁵⁹ As Roger Scruton notes “music... has its primordial forms, *from which* the song of the free individual emerges and into which it lapses.”⁵⁶⁰

In this ultimate evocation of the harmony that characterizes the musical manifold, at the end of *Götterdämmerung* Wagner shows us the world of the human, where “the highest love... is a relation between dying things,” which, naturally, we always already are – as is the world, as are the worms of the skull-tone.⁵⁶¹ We asked at the outset of this chapter where we were going: The ethics, which is to say also, dwelling, of listening demand an attitude attentive to this love over and above any laws supposedly guaranteed by the haze of metaphysics, a love grounded in the harmonies of the world. This is nothing other than the soundscape, the musical manifold, crying for our attention, always and in various ways, constantly showering us in fragments of spatiotemporality, cries and melodies filling us like water, always at the edge of drowning, should we but listen, truly listen. Wagner once noted that “fear of the end is the source of all lovelessness”;⁵⁶² here, in the deepest silence, as twilight turns to Celan’s twilight and gradually gloams into an enveloping darkness littered by the buckshot of stars, is where we can begin to love without imposition, as the reverberant other wends its way into our ears.

⁵⁵⁹ Pettman, *Sonic Intimacy*, 16.

⁵⁶⁰ Roger Scruton, *The Ring of Truth: the Wisdom of Wagner's Ring of the Nibelung* (London: Allen Lane, 2016), 151.

⁵⁶¹ Scruton, *The Ring of Truth*, 7-8.

⁵⁶² Quoted in Scruton, *The Ring of Truth*, 305.

Appendices

Two Notes on Terminology

and

Prolegomena to a Study of Musical Capitalism

Appendix A: Anthropocentrism

How are we to approach the problem of anthropocentrism? We well know that it is a problematical viewpoint in many aspects. Most obviously, in an era of rapidly accelerating climate destruction in the name of human convenience and comfort, anthropocentrism seems short-sighted, even if one's primary goal was merely the survival of the human race, given how our understanding of the system(s) of the biome and the vast interconnectedness of life on Earth. From a logical perspective, it has been thoroughly deconstructed, not least by Jacques Derrida in *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, though the roots of this discourse go back, in the West, at least to Aristotle's formulation of man as the speaking *animal*. Anthropocentrism is a hierarchical worldview that needlessly privileges our species over all others – often fatally, though it manifests in many ways, such as, in this essay, a view of music that restricts itself to human *poiesis* at the expense of an understanding of schizophonic mimesis, which is to say, less schematically, *where the ideation of music came from*.

And yet we are working within a phenomenological paradigm, which would seem to necessarily entail some form of anthropocentrism due to the simple fact that, in the interest of accuracy, we phenomenologists can only research *our* perceptivity. This is true. *However*, while we must avoid putting our words in the mouths of birds, we must, also in the interest of accuracy (and, indeed, in the practice of the phenomenological bracketing), *not assume a uniformity of perception, both between individuals and across speciated lines*. Moreover, we treat phenomena *equally*, regardless of point of origin (which, in any case, is at least partially obfuscated and placed at a remove from our experiencing of them, exemplified in our understanding of schizophonia outlined in Chapter 2). Hence the deconstruction of musical sounds in chapter three, which, while *dependent on the (human) phenomenologist's study*, nevertheless opens the door for musicking

beyond what is ‘normally’ perceived to be music. This is precisely why we reached the point in chapter four where we considered “music” as something of a paleonym – only in so doing can we truly begin to overcome a “strong” anthropocentrism in this study.

In sum, yes, phenomenology implies some level of anthropocentrism, but, by its method, works to minimize its influence. This is especially true of the current phenomenological project, which seeks to understand the non-linguistic communicative potential of an ontological understanding of music outside of not just the work paradigm but the view that music is necessarily human. The ζοον μουσικον is certainly harder to pin down to a single species...⁵⁶³

⁵⁶³ Though it is hard to say whether even the “speaking animal” holds, given what we now know about language use in several other species, notably among *Corvidae*.

Appendix B: What is Soundscape?

This is, after all, a project, despite its wide-ranging influences, its dislike of boundaries (both those between institutionally-mandated disciplines and those imposed by man – usually, historically, men in the sense of gender – on the surrounding world, flattening as to a paper map), and occasionally gleeful (and, self-admittedly, very American⁵⁶⁴) disregard of academic stuffiness and mores, that emerges, mostly, from the German intellectual tradition, particularly the phenomenological tradition of Husserl and his students, and its offshoots (particularly Francophone ones) and was written, mostly, under the auspices of a Germanic & Slavic Languages and Literatures department.

That fact, which I filed, more or less, in the deepest reaches of my head, has led me to wonder why, precisely, *Klangschafft*, a literal translation of ‘soundscape,’ has never really caught on amongst European scholars in sound studies – itself remaining ‘sound studies,’ not *Geräuschstudien*, nor, casting a wider net, *Tonwissenschaft*, nor *sonologie*, nor *suonologica*, nor anything else. And *this* has led me to wonder what, precisely, ‘soundscape’ means.

R. Murray Schafer provides a definition, as we well know, and with that definition and the admittedly catchy mouthfeel of the term overcame McLuhan’s “acoustic space,” but Schafer does not provide much more of a reasoning behind the term behind its derivation from ‘landscape.’ Thus we inquire: what is landscape? John R. Stilgoe asks precisely this question in a book of the same title, and it may yet provide something of a case against the term ‘soundscape,’ which I will outline, all too briefly, here.

“Landscape” comes from the old Frisian language of what is now the coast of the Netherlands and the North Sea coast of Germany. Skewed and co-opted by individuals and cohorts with their specialized narrow interests, the word once meant *shoveled land*, land thrown up against the sea. *Schop* is an old word still vibrant in modern Dutch: it means

⁵⁶⁴ An American attitude that remains distinctly *Schwarzwald*-skeptical.

shovel. Seamen introduced *landschop* to sixteenth-century alongshore Englishmen who misunderstood or mangled its pronunciation but retained its meaning in *landskep*, at least for a while...

[T]hen [it became] *landskip*, then *landscape*... Around 1600, literate Englishmen began writing the word as *landskip* or *landskep* to identify paintings representing views across water toward land. Not for decades did it designate scenery pleasing to the eye.⁵⁶⁵

This is to say that “scape” implies a manmade phenomenon. It is also one with “imperialist” overtones, as conquerors would see the work of local peoples and associate it with merely a landscape, something wild, untamed, and quite possibly savage.⁵⁶⁶ Especially, however, our current usage of the term was “skewed” by “nineteenth-century German imperialism,” especially with regards to the wars fought over what is now Schleswig-Holstein.⁵⁶⁷ Indeed, as *landskab*, it came to mean a “nexus of law and cultural identity.”⁵⁶⁸ This reached its natural apotheosis in one of the earliest uses of landscape in English, describing a play that was part of a larger propaganda campaign by King James I about the unity of the British isles and its reentry into an antelapsarian paradise under his rule.⁵⁶⁹

Over and above the idea of -scapes connoting at least some level of cultivation, it is their relation to imperialism, nation-building, and boundedness/rootedness that should trouble us. We have, in this project, inveighed against the emphases on rootedness and metaphysics that can be found in Heidegger and others. We have also found troubling Schafer’s emphasis on “ear-cleaning.” In short, this project has attempted, as best as possible, to avoid hierarchization, especially with the development of enfolding into the musical manifold. So why do we persist in using this term that would seem to inject humans into this realm? Why do we continue on using

⁵⁶⁵ John R. Stilgoe, *What is Landscape?* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2018), 2-4. Emphasis original.

⁵⁶⁶ Stilgoe, *What is Landscape?*, 60.

⁵⁶⁷ Stilgoe, *What is Landscape?*, 199-202.

⁵⁶⁸ Kenneth R. Olwig, "Recovering the Substantive Nature of Landscape," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 86, no. 4 (1996): 633, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2564345>.

⁵⁶⁹ Olwig, "Recovering the Substantive Nature of Landscape," 637-38.

the vocabulary of projects that, in a very political sense, weaponize the ravenous flattening and objectifying tendencies of the natural attitude? This project does, after all, have a political component, developed especially in the fifth chapter, though tacitly present throughout. Recently, some have begun to suggest using *pays*, deriving from the French, to avoid -scapes, though, as Jean-Luc Nancy points out, *pays* carries uncanny registers itself. Should we revert to McLuhan's arch-neutral "acoustic space," sacrificing style at the altar of philology?

We'd end up losing a lot more with that reversion, however. The -scape, deriving from *schop*, provides us with precisely the sort of "shoveling" that would illuminate the problematic of enfolding – something entirely absent in McLuhan's term. Moreover, as we noted in the above comment on anthropocentrism and the second chapter's ruminations on silence, if we are dealing with the realm of phenomenology, there *will* be a perceptive apparatus, which, for us, is human – and therefore coherent with the general philological studies we have briefly explored. Moreover, with the hidden registers of the sea and the ocean, -scape may help draw our attention to the connection that Serres draws between noise and the ocean, especially when he asserts that "we never hear what we call background noise so well as we do at the seaside."⁵⁷⁰ Perhaps the old Frisians would not have been too surprised with the coinage, then, of "soundscape."

I thus find myself using soundscape with the utmost apprehension and skepticism. *Klangschafft* may not have caught on because of the heightened German awareness of the politics of *Landschaft*, but simply using the English does not escape the problem, as we have seen, especially with the example of King James I. Yet there are some good elements of soundscape, as well, particularly as it can lead us, etymologically, to a clearer understanding of that extremely

⁵⁷⁰ Serres, *Genesis*, 7.

difficult concept of enfolding. Perhaps we might also consider the term introduced in these liner notes – musical manifold.

Appendix C

Holger Schulze has recently written the following:

There is almost no action a sonic consumer might be performing that would not qualify also as sonic labor. Sonic labor is every of your action – at least potentially it can be milked and exploited, processed and utilized for the benefit of sonic capital. Sonic labor is therefore one of the main forms of labor in sensological cultures of a panacoustic society. The conflation of sonic consumption with sonic labor is therefore an unimaginably prolific nucleus out of which sonic capital and all the glorious horrors of thanaticist capitalism can emerge and unfold more quickly than ever before. Sonic labor operates by sounds, through sounds and within sounds at the same time and probably at almost all times, all over this planet – and even beyond, as soon as it seems possible, feasible, desirable. There is not anylonger [*sic*] any distinct or separated product that would be fabricated and that can be recognized as separated from sonic labor, there is not anylonger [*sic*] any situation of sonic fabrication that would be separated from its product or even a workforce that could operate outside of its fabricated products and commodities. In sonic labor all of these categories are pervasively conflated into one, often seemingly inescapable situation. Sonic labor is the perfect *fabbrica diffusa* that entangles, envelopes, and quite possibly suffocates us all. Everything can be understood as sonic labor. Everything can be connected to sonic labor. Everything can be exploited as a form of sonic labor. This is possible, because – at the same time – this very sonic labor is so enjoyable, so pleasurable, and so endlessly desirable, right? Isn't it? Aren't you desiring a sound, a sound production, a sound design right now? Aren't you engulfed and enveloped [*sic*], maybe suffocated by some technical sound design, some entertaining sound design, some imperative and functional sound design right now? You might detest it, you might reject it, you might even try to ignore and to live outside of it. Still, you are included. Still, you are being exploited. Still, you are and remain and will be a sonic consumer. The closure in the sonic is already taking place. One single sonic consumer positioning itself outside of sonic labor might not change a lot. Sonic labor expands.⁵⁷¹

* * *

It may be objected that the preceding study was insufficiently political. There is perhaps some truth to this. It took particular umbrage with questions of sonic colonialism – the export and normalization of a Eurocentric worldview – but it did not *explicitly* engage with capitalism all that often. There were, naturally, some scattered references to, both textually and in argumentative

⁵⁷¹ Holger Schulze, "Sonic Thanaticism: A Sensology of the Sonic Capital," in *Ultrablack of Music*, ed. Achim Szepanski (Mille Plateaux / NON, 2020).

style, Adorno and Attali, the two *Objets A* of the political economy of music – but their *Objet a* stands conspicuously absent. Partially this was by necessity; despite my personal belief in their affinity, bringing Adorno into conversation with the phenomenological tradition *and* Derrida, Nancy, and Lacoue-Labarthe would require a book in and of itself (one that is in desperate need of writing). However, it was also partially by design; in the wake of centuries of sedimented, endlessly accrued social values and judgments pertaining to music, it was my opinion that the air needed to be cleared. There's something rotten about the work paradigm; as Schulze shows above, capitalism is already working beyond it.

In this sense, aside from the questions of ethics that were raised in chapter 5, I can assert my opinion that this has been a profoundly political work. I have strived here to meet the universalizing metanarratives of Capital on equal footing here. It is sometimes forgotten when criticizing both Marxism and capitalism that the former emerged as a critique of the latter, particularly with regard to its status as *possessing and reifying universalizing metanarrativity as immanently real*. This is to say that it is all well and good to criticize capitalism's status as global and universalist, but it elides the fact that *these have already been instantiated both ideologically and in reality*. Capitalism has done its job of breaking down Chinese walls, as Marx put it. I do not attempt to place Marx upon a pedestal, claiming him as a divine source of knowledge; I am well aware that he, in parts, could use a broader perspective. (Even the arch-antirevisionist Amadeo Bordiga had to acknowledge the power of race in modern capitalism's functioning, especially in America.) These vagaries aside, I believe that I have taken several crucial steps decoupling music from its understanding as a unique commodity, tied to a specific artist (though often mediated through the legal mechanisms of intellectual property as understood by record labels) being purchased and sold (it is precisely here where one might bring in the Derridean conception of the

law). By widening its import, I have shown that the musical manifold is ontologically disclosive. Many of my examples pertained to non-European musical practices that may not have been apprehendable by the work-concept or attachment to theories of Enlightenment aesthetics, the music of nature, or bodily noises. However, it should be clear that Schafer's jet scraping the sky is also music of a very different kind – the music of extractive global capitalism. Instead of merely understanding it as noise pollution, it is worthwhile to consider *what it is singing*. Here, my research might be applied, my elaboration of Feld's schizophonic mimesis might be applied to the change of the musical manifold by capitalism.

Perhaps the clearest illustration of this would be the Folkways record, *Sounds of the Sea, vol. 1: Underwater Sounds of Natural Origin*. This album hydrophonically captured the sounds of, predominantly, fish. It can be viewed as an enchanting listen, revealing the hidden sonicities of the deep, drawing attention to species that might otherwise be ignored. However, this album was compiled from United States Naval Listening posts, and thus represents the expansion of empire into other realms – which may have been phenomenologically closed to us. And with good reason: human sonic creation has drastically upended the functioning of certain pelagic ecosystems. Extractive capitalism, it is worth noting, takes place on drilling platforms at sea as well. Viewing this as music – much in the same way that we analyzed *Environments* in Chapter 5 – allows us to hear and understand leitmotifs of destruction and devastation. We are complicit in this as *sonic consumers*, Schafer, for all his polemics for ear cleaning very much included.

It is at exactly this moment where we might see as a point of departure for engaging in a more salient and equitable *Kritik* (critical practice, derived from the Frankfurt school). It may not be a surprise that Adorno's infamous excoriation of jazz played no small part in the inspiration for this project. I firmly believe that Adorno was almost entirely correct in his methodology, that his

Kritik is invaluable to living in the world today and fighting for the world we want to live in tomorrow. Was his reaction to jazz simply racist? An inability to shake off his roots in the conservatory? Was Adorno acting as a “straggler” (a figure of the “remainder,” i.e. in the Derridean sense) or an “exemplary exile” as Jatin Wagle, following Edward Saïd, suggests?⁵⁷² Or was he, after all, *right* in saying that the jazz that many white people (viz., Adorno himself, depending, of course, on whether one counts Adorno as “white” – an important question for another time) were exposed to simply did not represent all that was wonderful in jazz – that the money machine (read: culture industry) simply wasn’t conducive to the avant-garde of jazz? (When, after all, was the last time you heard Sun Ra on *any* radio, much less a commercial station?) We do not have the time or the space to meditate on these questions, and many others have given answers far more eloquently than I would trust myself proffer. The fact remains, however, that the critique was made, and that it was, at least taking jazz as a whole – filled with multifarious styles, heterodox players, utopian dreams, expressions of freedom – simply not up to the task of reality. In a very real sense, being pulled between Adorno and my love of jazz served as the germinal problematic of this work, and it led me to pursue something of a universalist project. That Ato Sekyi-Otu’s *Left Universalism* was one of the first texts cited (though one of the last citations added) is no accident; “the left universalist listens with concerned respect and educated skepticism,” but

the left universalist is no impartialist... she maintains her ‘hermeneutics of suspicion’ towards the claims of culture put forth by patriarchy’s local fabulists, indeed towards all the accredited institutions, hallowed social practices and relations in the house of difference... Mindful of the hierarchies of class, race, and gender that stand in the way of a truly shared civic membership... [left universalism] is at once partisan, critical, and visionary.⁵⁷³

⁵⁷² Jatin Wagle, *Adorno’s Transatlantic Intellectual Transfer: The Non-identical Movement* (Penn State, PA: Penn State University, February 10, 2021), Zoom lecture.

⁵⁷³ Sekyi-Otu, *Left Universalism, Africentric Essays*, 69.

We, indeed, at the behest of our sonic explorations into the musical manifold, seek out “the silenced in the world” such that we might attune ourselves to them and discover the murmurations that bespeak the state of things – and how we might gesture beyond and, following Heidegger’s hint to hearing, follow that gesturing.⁵⁷⁴ This is an attunement and a listening that recognizes, *at first*, no question of the ability of *something* to make music, beyond speech, beyond voice, beyond traditional understandings of silence, that deserves to be reckoned with. Inherent in this modality of listening, this *ontological listening*, as Sekyi-Out notes, is *Kritik*. It is this very *Kritik* that can help us cope in a world of sonic capitalism without immediately writing off those voices deemed inconvenient, shrill, inhuman, ugly, out of tune, in an orgiastic application of metaphysics to music that ignores not just the subjugated but sometimes, as Schulze gestures towards, the *very process of subjugation itself*.

* * *

To close this appendix (but to leave these liner notes open – perhaps influenced by Amiri Baraka’s penchant for open parenthetical statements in his great jazz poetry), Heidegger memorably linked metaphysics to *Verwüstung*, literally desertification. The uncritically deployed metaphysics of music is desertifying in two ways. First, it is exclusive, undemocratic, and performs violence against non-Western, non-human music makers. Secondly, it allows for the *concealment of the functioning of Capital*. Should we deem the sounds and sonicities of capitalism as mere noise, we fundamentally ignore its music of terror – in the end, only the whistling of the dunes survives. Desertification, we recall, is a process of expansion, to return to Schulze. It is this

⁵⁷⁴ Sekyi-Otu, *Left Universalism, Africentric Essays*.

political reality, the enfoldedness into the functioning of Capital, that I wish to have my research open up to.

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Discography

Composers/Artists/Performers (in order of appearance)

- Butthole Surfers
- La Monte Young
- Theodor Adorno
- R. Murray Schafer
- Ezra Pound
- Friedrich Nietzsche
- Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
- Urfaust
- Richard Wagner
- John Cage
- The Velvet Underground
- The Mbuti people
- Sun Ra (and his Arkestra)
- Yan Jun
- Hank Williams
- Peter Brötzmann
- Keith Richards/Rolling Stones *
- Olivier Messiaen
- Maurizio Bianchi
- Joseph Haydn *
- Johann Sebastian Bach
- Ludwig van Beethoven
- Jean-Philippe Rameau *
- Palestrina
- Hans Pfitzner
- John Coltrane
- Bong
- Elvis Presley
- The Kaluli people
- Akira Ito
- Pierre Boulez *
- Igor Stravinsky *
- Toadliquo
- Arnold Schoenberg
- Cecil Taylor
- Kurt Schwitters
- Eric Powell

- Irv Tiebel
- Hildegard Westerkamp
- Terry Riley
- Frédéric Chopin *
- Filippo Marinetti
- Luigi Russolo
- Henry Flynt
- Marian Zazeela
- Kaija Sariaaho
- Brighde Chambleu
- Sarah Davachi
- Kali Malone
- Jana Winderen
- Pierre Schaefer
- Alice Coltrane
- Captain Beefheart
- Don Cherry
- King Crimson
- Masahiko Togashi
- Philip Glass
- Donald Byrd
- Gerard Grisey
- The Beatles
- Erik Satie
- Yoko Ono
- Walter de Maria
- Steve Reich
- Can
- Brian Eno
- Earth
- Pandit Pran Nath
- Christopher Hobbs
- John Hartman (records under a variety of names, head of Lightfall Records)
- Dead Neanderthals
- Charlemagne Palestine
- Vladimir Horowitz
- Vladimir Skolovsky
- Krzysztof Penderecki
- David Lynch
- Tobe Hooper
- Popol Vuh

- Edgar Varèse *
- The Marketts
- Gustav Mahler *
- A Flock of Seagulls
- Ash Ra Tempel
- Herbie Hancock *
- Madonna *
- Christian Marclay
- Melvins
- Merzbow
- Han Bennink
- Albert Ayler
- Ornette Coleman
- Eric Dolphy
- Stomu Yamashta (also spelled “Yamash’ta”)
- Joe McPhee *
- Bon Scott/AC/DC
- Electric Wizard
- Pink Floyd
- Delia Derbyshire
- Tony Conrad *

* Referenced only within or in conjunction with sources.

Specific Albums/Pieces/"Works" (in order of appearance)

- La Monte Young – *The Well-Tuned Piano*
- Johann Sebastian Bach – *The Goldberg Variations*
- Ezra Pound – “Canto LXXV”
- Urfaust – *The Constellatory Practice*
- John Cage – “4’33”
- The Mbuti – “Mbuti Elephant-Hunting Chant”
- Olivier Messiaen – “Quatuor pour la fin du temps”
- Maurizio Bianchi – *Symphony for a Genocide*
- Joseph Haydn – *Schöpfung*
- Ludwig van Beethoven – *Fifth Symphony*
- Hans Pfitzner – *Palestrina*
- Bong – *Mana-Yood-Sushai*
- Bong – *Thought & Existence*
- Akira Ito – *Marine Flowers (Science Fantasy)*
- Igor Stravinsky – *Canticum Sacrum*
- Igor Stravinsky – *The Deluge*
- Igor Stravinsky – *Le Sacre du Printemps*
- John Cage – “45’ For a Speaker”
- Toadliquor – *The Hortator’s Lament*
- Kurt Schwitters – *Ursonate*
- Eric Powell – *Swede Lake*
- Hildegard Westerkamp – *Transformations*
- Sun Ra – *Atlantis*
- Frédéric Chopin – B Minor Sonata
- Kali Malone – *The Sacrificial Code*
- Philip Glass – “Strung Out”
- Donald Byrd – *Places and Spaces*
- Gerard Grisey – *Les Espaces Acoustiques*
- The Beatles – “A Hard Day’s Night”
- Ludwig van Beethoven – *Ninth Symphony*
- John Coltrane – *A Love Supreme*
- Erik Satie – *Vexations*
- TRADITIONAL – “The House of the Rising Sun”
- Johann Sebastian Bach – “Toccatà in D Minor”
- Ornette Coleman – *To Whom Who Keeps A Record*
- John Cage – “0’00””
- La Monte Young – “Composition 1960 #2”
- La Monte Yong – “Piano Piece for David Tudor #3”
- La Monte Young – “Composition 1960 #5”

- La Monte Young – “Composition 1960 #15 to Richard Huelsenbeck”
- Richard Wagner – *Tristan und Isolde*
- Krzysztof Penderecki – *Auschwitz Oratorium*
- Tobe Hooper – *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre (score)*
- Edgar Varèse – *Poème électronique*
- King Crimson – *Larks Tongues in Aspic*
- Richard Wagner – *Ring des Nibelungen*
- Richard Wagner – *Die Meistersinger*
- The Marketts – “Out of Limits”
- Gustav Mahler – *Second Symphony*
- Ash Ra Tempel – *Schwingungen*
- Herbie Hancock – “Watermelon Man”
- Christian Marclay – *Record Without a Cover*
- La Monte Young & Marian Zazeela – *Dream House*
- Craft – *White Noise and Black Metal*
- Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart – *Jupiter*
- Terry Riley – “Keyboard Study #2”
- La Monte Young – *The Second Dream of the High-Tension Line Stepdown Transformer from the Four Dreams of China*
- Peter Brötzmann & Han Bennink – *Schwarzwaldfahrt*
- Peter Brötzmann Octet – *Machine Gun*
- Eric Dolphy – *Last Date*
- Stomu Yamashta – *Freedom is Frightening*
- Joe McPhee – *Nation Time* *
- Sun Ra – “The Music is like a Mirror”
- Sun Ra & John Cage – *Live at Coney Island*
- Sun Ra – *Live from Soundscape*
- AC/DC – “Girl’s Got Rhythm”
- Delia Derbyshire – “Doctor Who theme”
- Pink Floyd – *Meddle*
- Irv Teibel – *Environments 1*
- Irv Teibel – *Environments 3*
- Irv Teibel – *Environments 6*
- Irv Teibel – *Environments 4*
- NO ARTIST – *Sounds of the Sea, vol. 1: Underwater Sounds of Natural Origins*

Soundscapes of Writing (general geographic locations)

- East Hempfield, PA – suburban/rural, notably agrarian, relatively deforested; soundscape characterized by cars, birds, weather noises, central air, pets, and the occasional construction
- State College, PA – suburban, a college town, quite deforested; soundscape characterized by cars, buses, students/people, squirrels, central air, and the occasional construction
- Waterville, PA – rural, heavily forested; soundscape characterized by a creek, weather noises (very apparent), birds, deer, amphibians (American toad, spring peepers, green frog, etc.), insects, occasional cars, trucks (fracking, logging), air conditioning unit, furnace, hikers/bicyclists, light neighbor noise

Vita

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EDUCATION

- PhD in German Literature & Culture (in-progress)
Pennsylvania State University
Dissertation: "Investigations Concerning Music and the Soundscape: Heidegger, Ingarden, Reik"
Committee: Sabine Doran, Daniel Purdy, Samuel Frederick, Jonathan Eburne, & Rolf Goebel (of the University of Alabama, Huntsville)
2015 – present
- BA in German Literature & Culture (with honors), Politics, & Comparative Literature, magna cum laude
Honors Thesis: "Formulae of Magick: A Critical Re-Evaluation of Aleister Crowley's Magickal View of the World in Light of Nietzsche's *Gay Science*," as advised by Dr. Friedrich Ulfers
New York University
2015

PUBLICATIONS

- Available as an advance article: "Ecogods: Nature, Adalbert Stifter, and Heidegger," in *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature & Environment* || 2020
- Chapter (accepted by editor, pending publisher's review): "Listening with Heidegger: Echoes in Sound Studies," in *A Companion to Sound Studies in German-Speaking Cultures*, ed. Rolf Goebel, Camden House || 2022 (tentative)