A CORRESPONDENCE THEORY OF MUSICAL REPRESENTATION

BY

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DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation defends the place of representation in music. Music's status as a representational art has been hotly debated since the War of the Romantics, which pitted the Weimar progressives (Liszt, Wagner, &co.) against the Leipzig conservatives (the Schumanns, Brahms, &co.) in an intellectual struggle for what each side took to be the very future of music as an art. I side with the progressives, and argue that music can be and often is a representational medium. Correspondence (or resemblance) theories of representation, such as the one I offer, have been much maligned in philosophy since the 1960s. Most theories assimilate representation under "meaning," which has usually been thought to belong primarily to language. As a result, representational content has been taken to be purely conventional in the way that sentential meaning is. People want to know what music "means," and these theories interpret this as "what does it refer to?" or "what propositions does it express?" I argue that propositional communication is only one (small) part of the issue. Once we overcome the bias of conceiving of musical works as essentially linguistic items, speech acts (performed) or sentence tokens (written), we can begin to take music on its own terms to discover how it represents—one way in which it "means."

The first step is to "naturalize" music's representational content. Influenced by recent discussions in the philosophies of mind and science, I argue in Chapter 1 that composers represent extra-musical objects, events, and states of affairs through their works by exploiting antecedent relations (such as similarities in pitch, timbre, and structure) in order to secure reference to them. In Chapter 2, I survey and respond to the main challenges that those

skeptical of music's representational possibilities would raise against my theory of musical representation. In Chapter 3, I explore a number of ways through which music has been claimed to represent in order to show how my theory accounts for these diverse phenomena better than its conventionalist rivals, both in terms of the metaphysics and the epistemology. Chapter 4 extends this discussion by offering an account of how we perceive, understand, appreciate, and interpret sophisticated musical representations. I conclude by teasing out some of my theory's implications and suggesting areas for further research.

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CHAPTER 1

EXPLICATING MUSICAL REPRESENTATION:

DEFINITIONS, CLARIFICATIONS, AND PROBLEMS

In the following chapters I present a theory of musical representation. Correspondence (or resemblance) theories of representation, such as the one I offer, have (with few exceptions) been much maligned in almost every area of philosophy—including aesthetics and epistemology, as well as the philosophies of language, mind, and science— since at least the 1960s. Most other theories assimilate representation under "meaning," which has been thought to belong primarily to linguistic communication. Since Donald Davidson's "Truth and Meaning," linguistic meaning, and as a consequence meaning in general, has been assumed to be truth (reference and satisfaction) conditions. Linguistic meaning is obviously conventional, and as a result representational content has been taken to be purely conventional in the way that sentential meaning is.

People want to know what music "means," and conventionalist theories have interpreted this as "what does it refer to?" or "what propositions does it express?" No doubt there is some of that. Music can be a medium of propositional communication. But I contend that this is only one very small part of the issue. Once we overcome the implicit linguistic imperialism in semantics that has led many to think of musical works (and works of art in general) as essentially linguistic items, as either speech acts (performed) or sentence tokens (written), we can begin to take music on its own terms in order to construct a more satisfactory account of musical meaning.

The main mode of musical meaning is expression. How patterns of organized sound express human emotions is one of the central and most vexing questions of musical aesthetics. It is also one that I do not plan to address. There is no question (at least, anymore[1]) as to whether music can express emotion. But the very possibility of musical representation, another important mode of artistic meaning, has of late caused a great deal of controversy within musical aesthetics. (The historical landscape of the debate surrounding musical representation leading up to the most recent rounds of argumentation is surveyed in the next chapter.) Thus, I feel clarifying and attempting to resolve many of the more pressing issues that pertain to musical representation constitutes a more worthwhile contribution to the field than offering another account of musical expression. My theory of musical representation takes the first step toward clarification and resolution by treating the question of communicative meaning independently from that of representational content.

On my theory, composers *represent* objects, events, and states of affairs through their musical works by exploiting antecedent resemblances or relations, such as similarities in pitch, timbre, loudness, and structure, in order to secure reference to them. Reference is secured when the music communicates those objects, events, or states of affairs to its audience, which, in turn, informs and shapes how the audience perceives, appreciates, and understands the music. To illustrate this, take an almost too obvious example: Ralph Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending*. In hearing a particular passage as ascending, we recognize that the lark that is its intended subject is likewise ascending.

Exploiting antecedent relations to achieve reference in this way almost never happens in linguistic communication. Pure reference, which almost all linguistic communication is, is

purely conventional (non-natural), since the relationship between words and their objects is almost entirely arbitrary. But structures, such as that of ascent (a change in position from lower to higher), and the other sorts of resemblances that I take to be central to musical representation, possess their potential for exploitation *intrinsically*—i.e., independently of anyone's intention to exploit them. For instance, the similarity between a lark's ascent and *any* melodic ascent, understood more broadly as a change in position, exists regardless of whether the composer (or anyone else) intends the melody to represent a lark's journey. As a result, a musical work's representational content cannot be purely conventional in the way that most linguistic content is. Music simply does not "mean" in the same way that sentences "mean."

My goal is not to ignore the fact that conventions sometimes play an important role in certain musical representations. I recognize the fact that music in the Western classical tradition (broadly conceived), which is my sole focus, may be as highly convention-bound as languages are. The difference, though, is that there are no musical correlates to words, whose meanings remain somewhat fixed regardless of context. Moreover, many of the representational techniques I explore in the following chapters have become conventional within the tradition, at least by David Lewis' widely accepted definition of "convention," as "a regularity in behavior produced by a system of expectations."[2] My goal, rather, is simply to decentralize the role of language-like conventions in how we generally conceive of musical representation.

That we perceive and understand the musical line of *The Lark Ascending* as ascending, rather than as exhibiting some other structure, is certainly connected with our thinking of

some notes as high and others as low, which is relative to the conventions of music in the Western tradition. Because of this, certain melodic lines ascend similarly to how larks ascend. Any other binary relation could have been selected to describe relative pitch-difference, but, as a matter of historical fact, was not. Labeling pitched sounds as "high" and "low," terms originally referring to the vertical position of physical objects, occurred as the result of a mixture of metaphor and linguistic convention—the metaphorical transference of predicates from one domain into another, which was governed by the conventions of the linguistic tradition in which it originated.

That we label pitches in this way is what allows us to recognize the similarity of structure between the music and the world that Vaughan Williams has exploited to depict the journey of a lark. In this case, and in every similar case, while the linguistic convention *facilitates* our *recognition* of the representation, it neither *creates* nor *grounds* the representation. The features of the work relevant to its resemblance to its subject exist antecedently as a result of sharing features with other musical works. Our current auditory perception of music is, to a large extent, *pre-structured* based on learned mental schemas derived from our prior musical experiences of a wide variety of works within the Western repertory,[3] which were once guided (perhaps consciously at first) by a conventional vocabulary of both literal and metaphorical predicates, but which (over time) have become internalized as tacit listening dispositions that cause us, among other things, to form expectations as to how a given musical line will progress from one moment to the next. This is examined at length in Chapter 4.

So, while historically rooted in linguistic conventions, the fact is that perceiving and understanding a musical line as ascending, or as drooping, lethargic, spritely, bright, and so on, have over time become an essential part of the tacit listening dispositions of those entrenched within music in the classical tradition. Were a listener not to experience Vaughan Williams' piece as ascending, we would strongly question how attuned they were to the musical surface and thus whether they understood the music. It is this fact that Vaughan Williams and other composers exploit in their composition practices when arranging works of both program and absolute music.

This case exemplifies the main upshot of my theory, which is to show that we do not have to fall back on linguistic reference when attempting to makes sense of musical representation. My theory shows that there are musical properties and structures with antecedent relations to extra-musical objects, events, and states of affairs that composers can exploit and, as a matter of historical fact, have exploited in order to represent things musically. But those relations (such as "change in position") exist whether or not they are intentionally exploited for the sake of representation, and I argue that they often have their influence on both composers and audience members whether they are aware of it or not—i.e., that we perceive and understand a good deal of a work's representational content *unreflectively*.

Offering an explication of musical representation largely in terms of the exploitation of resemblances is the most productive way to deal with the philosophical controversies surrounding the topic for the following reasons. First, it captures the most important features of how we generally use the term "representation" across contexts. Second, within the

musical context, it captures the diverse and complex phenomena captured by the term "musical representation" better than any of its competitors. Third, it provides us with the clearest standards by which to demonstrate that certain musical works are representations, contrary to the arguments of several skeptics.[4] Fourth, it conforms to and captures the complexities of the actual ways in which we perceive, understand, and appreciate musical representations. Finally, it offers the most fruitful means by which to evaluate musical representations in terms of accuracy and success, which conform to our actual interpretive practices.

1. Definitions and clarifications

Following tradition, I call the class of purportedly representational works "program music," since such works are normally accompanied by programmatic aids—"text, title, program, or other literal hint that they are not to be taken as pure musical structure"[5]—that give us information about what is represented. The complementary class is "absolute music," whose members are those works that both lack such textual aids and, more importantly, are not representations. While absolute music comprises the majority of instrumental works within the Western classical tradition, program music constitutes a sizable minority, utilizing a wide range of musical techniques that, while not class-specific, are exhibited less often by absolute works. So in addition to investigating program works in order to discern their representational capabilities, I also offer an explication of these techniques that will aid our understanding of their use by *any* musical work, program or absolute.

On my theory, a program work, *w*, represents some subject, *s*, only if *w* resembles *s*. Some distinctions need to be made at the outset to avoid any confusion. When investigating

questions surrounding musical representation, we need to recognize that the following three issues, though related, are separate: (1) whether *w* represents *s* (and how accurately), (2) whether *w* is used to represent *s*, and (3) whether *w* communicates *s* (and how successfully).

The first is an ontological issue that pertains solely to whether *w* resembles *s* and, if so, to what degree. Resemblance *simpliciter*, however, is much too broad to be theoretically or practically helpful as part of a definition of representation. Nelson Goodman's main argument against resemblance theories of representation is that anything can resemble anything else in almost an infinite number of ways.[6] If everything innumerably resembles everything else, then the concept of representation becomes vacuous and can do little philosophical work. Resemblances can function representationally, Goodman believes, but only if they are couched within a symbol system that is wholly bound by conventions.

My theory turns Goodman's on its head. In Chapters 3 and 4, I argue that such conventions function representationally only if they are couched within an overarching system of resemblances. Nevertheless, I take Goodman's skepticism regarding the vacuity of resemblance seriously. Composers cannot just exploit any sort of resemblance in order to represent their intended subjects. The concept of resemblance, therefore, needs to be restricted in order for my theory to be acceptable.

My theory does so by letting purely musical properties, structures, and relations delimit the set of resemblances that are of interest to a discussion of musical representation. These include similarities in pitch, timbre, loudness, expression, and tempo. But the most important and prevalent sort of resemblance exploited in works of program music is *similarity of structure*; and of particular interest are melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic structures. This

stems from the fact that musical works are themselves structures—arranged patterns of sound. As I demonstrate, it is the exploitation of structural similarities that allows music to break free from representing purely auditory phenomena (natural and manmade sounds), to which the first list of similarities just offered would largely restrict it, and confers to music the ability to represent non-auditory objects, events, and states of affairs. For this reason, shared structure is the most philosophically interesting sort of resemblance, in addition to being (empirically) the most prevalent sort exploited by composers. Consequently, the majority of the subsequent discussion focuses on structural similarity.

The most restrictive type of structural similarity (apart from strict identity) is *isomorphism*. Composers often exploit isomorphisms between musical and extra-musical structures to represent their intended subjects. At its base, an isomorphism is an information preserving transformation. In abstract algebra, an isomorphism is defined as a mapping from one structure, the *home domain*, to another, the *target domain*, which is both *one-to-one* (bijective) and *onto* (surjective). This means that each element of the home domain corresponds to a unique element in the target domain (one-to-one) such that the target domain's elements are fully exhausted in the mapping (onto). As a result, no relevant information from the targeted structure(s) is lost in the mapping. What the home domain preserves in the mapping are (a) the relationships between the target domain's individual elements, (b) those between multiple elements or sets of elements, and (c) the properties of those finer- and coarser-grained relationships.

The centrality of isomorphism to different types of representation has been explored and advocated by philosophers in several fields since the previous century. It has been used

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to explain such diverse phenomena as human perception, memory, and intelligence;[7] how our language and our theories capture reality;[8] how we directly translate the meanings of statements from other languages into our own;[9] and how representational paintings are created, perceived, and understood.[10] A theory constructed by synthesizing the preceding views might claim that the core of human experience consists largely of a patchwork of finer- and coarser-grained isomorphisms, which map multiple dimensions of reality. It has even been suggested that isomorphism comprises the central organizing principles of Western music in the classical tradition.[11] One could thus extend the synthesized theory to assert that we find such music pleasing because it abstractly mimics our mode of experience, dusting off Schopenhauer's old idea[12] and repackaging it in a new idiom. This, however, is not my goal.[13]

While isomorphism is needed to explain the sorts of representations explored by philosophers of mind and science (at least, according to the advocates of the theories mentioned above), it is much too restrictive to ground musical representation. That is, not every aspect relevant to a program work's status as a representation can be fully reduced to how it functions within an isomorphism. In the philosophy of music, and aesthetics in general, the precision and exactitude provided by isomorphism is not needed for our theoretical or practical purposes. Little, if anything, hangs on whether an artistic representation and its intended subject resemble each other isomorphically rather than in some other, less strict, way. That they structurally resemble each other in certain relevant respects is all that is needed to understand how the work represents its subject.

This may not be the case in, e.g., the philosophy of mind, however. Say you have a theory of mental representation that makes the following claim about visual perception: we are able to represent the visible world to ourselves only because an array of neurons in the visual cortex resembles the world as it actually is. If that resemblance (that structure of the world mirrored in the brain) were not isomorphic, according to certain theorists,[14] how we spatially navigate through the world would be incomprehensible. Only isomorphism offers a strict enough mapping for an item in the world to have the exact same location within the structure of the mental representation, allowing us to plan our action with regard to it accordingly. If there is a mismatch between a point in the world and its correlate in the brain, then actually reaching that point will become a practical nightmare. We would have to rely more on luck than on a natural ability. These theorists would contend that, as a consequence, evolution would have weeded out such ill-adapted creatures hundreds of millennia ago. Our brains, therefore, must exploit isomorphisms for the sake of our survival as a species.

Expecting this sort of (evolutionarily fine-tuned) precision from artistic representations, let alone musical ones, would be wholly unreasonable. Moreover, it does not conform to our actual listening and interpretative practices. Few listeners have or make use of the concept of an isomorphism as they attend to works of program music; the "structural similarity" relation or even simply the "sounds like" relation (for less sophisticated listeners) gets the job done. Plus, how many interpretations of works of program music have you read that (either directly or indirectly) appeal to strict isomorphisms? Instead, in dealing with musical representations, "similarity of structure," as a loosening of isomorphism, is usually all

that is needed when we are referring to structural resemblances between the music and its subject.

The second issue mentioned above that needed to be clearly distinguished pertains to whether *w* is used to represent *s*. This is a question of intentions. Since on my theory *w* could be used to represent anything it resembles in certain respects, issue (2) above needs to be qualified to inquire, "whether *w* is used *by the composer* to represent *s*." What is of specific aesthetic interest is whether *w*'s composer, rather than any random person having no direct causal relationship to *w*'s production, intended to represent *s*, and as a result arranged *w* such that it resembles *s*. This qualification is warranted because, by definition, *w* is a work of program music if its composer associates it with a text, title, or other aids that direct our attention to what it is meant to represent. These programmatic aids help to fill in *s* for the listener.

Simply by associating the music with programmatic aids, the composer licenses us to analyze his or her work as a representation rather than as a piece of absolute music. Without such a deliberate public action, acquiring this interpretive license involves significantly more work. This will often require uncovering a hidden program through a formal examination of the music, bolstered by anecdotal or other evidence from either the composer or his or her close associates. Such was the case with the discovery of the extra-musical references in Alban Berg's *Lyric Suite*, which was musically encoded with his initials (A. B.) and those of his mistress (H. F.), as well as a withheld vocal setting of a German translation of Baudelaire's "*De Profundis Clamavi*."[15] I return to examine the relevance and scope of

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composers' intentions on our interpretations and evaluations of their musical representations later in this chapter.

The third issue, regarding whether w communicates s, is largely epistemological, as it deals with how we perceive, appreciate, and evaluate w. It mainly pertains to how we recognize the resemblances between w and s, and how easily we do so, i.e., how well w conveys s to us. The distinctions between (1) representational status, (2) composer intent, and (3) communication, to my knowledge, have not been drawn explicitly within the philosophy of music. This, I contend, has led to a good deal of confusion regarding the nature of musical representation. So by drawing these distinctions, I aim to clarify the investigation into musical representation, which I hope marks an advance in the philosophical discourse. Further clarifications are needed, however.

The *representational subject*, s, consists of the object(s), event(s), or state(s) of affairs referred to or implied by the program that accompanies w. In short, s is what the composer uses w to represent; and through w, he or she intends to convey s to us. The specific aspects of s that the music targets and that are potentially recognizable in the music are w's *representational content*. In short, the content consists of just those structures, relations, and properties of s that are targeted by and thus mirrored in w.

Representational content can be thought of in terms of what I referred to above as the "home domain," which is defined by the aspects of w that have correlates in s. Similarly, those aspects of s, which I refer to as "targets," become the target domain. The home and target domains are constructed from the musical properties and patterns we perceive in w and the perceptible properties and structures (i.e., targets) that are abstracted from s, respectively.

As a consequence, *w* will not represent every aspect of *s*. How we determine which aspects of *s* are included as *w* unfolds before our ears in real time is thus of utmost philosophical concern. This issue is taken up in Chapter 4.

Since all representations are abstractions, *w* only targets certain properties, structures, and relations of *s*. *Accuracy* pertains to both the number of targets and how much *w* distorts them—i.e., *w*'s degree of similarity to its targets. *Success*, though connected to accuracy, is more strongly related to *salience*—i.e., how strongly we associate the aspects targeted by *w* with *s*. As is made clear in Chapter 4, a few salient but highly distorted targets often convey a program work's subject to us more effectively than many highly accurate targets. Our evaluations of *w*'s *status* as a representation of *s*, its *accuracy*, and its *success*, while conceptually separate, often coincide in practice.

The accompanying program provides the initial evidence for *w*'s representational status, as it indicates the composer's intention to use *w* as a representation of *s*. Whether or not *w* is in fact a representation of *s* is determined by an inspection of both its musical properties and its fine- and coarse-grained musical structures and relations, which can be done by either examining *w*'s score or attending to (authentic) performances of *w*—preferably both, with more attention paid to the latter. If there is compelling evidence that *w* resembles *s* in the right sort of ways (resembling its targets principally along the structural dimensions of melody, harmony, or rhythm) and to a sufficient degree (such that the resemblance is perceptibly recognizable), keeping in mind that the barest skeleton is all that is needed, then its status as a representation is conferred. These qualifications are examined and amplified in Chapter 3.

2. Problems for resemblance

I have just sketched the central ontological and epistemological features of my theory, which I develop in Chapters 3 and 4, respectively. With these definitions and clarifications in hand, it is worth pausing for a moment to explore some of my theory's implications and to respond to some initial obstacles that the exploitation of resemblances must overcome to be considered as the ground for musical representation. An objector could rightly claim that while the restricted notion of resemblance that I am making use of is a reflexive, symmetric, and transitive relation, artistic representation, as we normally conceive of it, is none of these.

REFLEXIVITY

Everything resembles itself. It would follow from this that since every musical work (and passage therein) resembles itself, it represents itself. Consequently, every musical work would trivially be a representation. Reflexivity is not a worthwhile result for anyone who wishes to maintain that most musical works are not representations, i.e., that most are absolute, which nearly every reasonable thinker on the subject (myself included) does. Thus, resemblance does not seem to fit with our ordinary use of "musical representation."

SYMMETRY

If w resembles s in respects $a_1\ldots, a_n$, then s will likewise resemble w in those respects. This means that not only would w represent s, but that s would also represent w. Not only would, e.g., Debussy's *La Mer* represent the sea, but the sea would also represent *La Mer*. This is another intuitively unappealing consequence for conceiving of musical representation in terms of resemblance, as it once again fails to fit with our ordinary use of the term.

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If *A* resembles *B* in respects $a_1..., a_n$, and *B* resembles *C* in the same (or sufficiently similar)

respects, then *A* will resemble *C* in those respects. Extending the previous example, if *s* [*B*]

is a stormy sea, *w* [*A*] will also represent anything that *s* resembles, e.g., the upset stomach

of a particular food-poisoning victim, *u* [*C*], so long as *s*'s aspects ($a_1..., a_n$) remain

unchanged. Consequently, *w* would target the same (or sufficiently similar) sorts of

relations and properties in *u* as it does in *s*. A section of Debussy's *La Mer* would therefore

represent gastrointestinal turmoil in addition to a tumultuous seascape. But this is strongly

counterintuitive. It suggests that any work of program music could represent an

innumerable array of wildly diverse things, almost none of which the composer could have

intended or actually did intend.[16]

I avoid these objections to resemblance's role in musical representation in the following ways.

I take them in reverse order.

The transitivity objection is unsuccessful because it fails to recognize the distinction

between status and use. While *La Mer* could resemble several important properties,

structures, and relations that arise within my upset stomach, and thereby acquire the status of

an upset stomach representation, no one (to my knowledge) has ever used *La Mer* in this way.

But more importantly, Debussy does not use *La Mer* in this way. He uses it to represent the

sea. Contrary to Goodman and others,[17] the artist's intentions do matter, at least in a minimal

sense. That is, what Debussy uses *La Mer* to represent, and thus at least part of what he

wishes it to communicate to us, is indicated by its title and the titles of its three parts, which

spur us to analyze the work as a representation. Therefore, if a composer associates his or her work with a title or any other programmatic aids that either explicitly or implicitly refer it to things beyond itself, that work will be a candidate for *representational analysis*, which will determine (first and foremost) whether the work is a genuine representation. This conclusion, which is not particularly bold, is warranted because fits with our actual interpretative practices.

Rather than being a hindrance to my theory, resemblance's transitivity is actually one of its strongest assets, for it allows me to account for two significant musical phenomena, both of which involve the transference of representational content from one organizational schema into another. The four *Sea Interludes* from Benjamin Britten's opera *Peter Grimes* instance the first phenomenon. Each interlude directly represents the sea, but they also represent the titular character's psychological states. This is achieved through a metaphor (implied by the narrative) between Grimes, who is a fisherman, and the sea. Metaphors are a type of linguistic analogy that preserve some of the properties, structures, and relations that a predicate refers to, even though it has been transferred into a schema to which it does not originally belong.[18] As a result, the predicate uses its associations within its original schema to sort and reorganize the new one.[19] The interludes, w, represent the sea, s, and the sea represents Grimes' psyche, p; and thus, by transitivity, w represents p, as long as the aspects that comprise the s-schema ($a_1..., a_n$) remain unchanged in the mappings from both w to s and s to p. Without resemblance's transitivity, it is difficult to see how the s-p metaphor could do the representational work for which Britten uses it. This is another example in which

linguistic convention secures our recognition of an antecedent (structural) resemblance between a program work and its subject(s).

The second important musical phenomenon that resemblance's transitivity accounts for is the transference of representational content from one musical work to another by either direct quotation or paraphrase, both of which are types of purely musical reference that make use of structural resemblance. "Storm," one of Britten's *Sea Interludes*, directly quotes from the second movement of Mahler's Fifth Symphony, "*Stürmisch bewegt, mit größter Vehemenz*." It is arguable whether this passage is a representation in its original setting (rather than merely expressive of certain negative emotions) and, if so, of what.[20] Mahler's title for the movement, however, suggests an association between the music and the general class of things in the world that move stormily (clouds, people, relationships, etc.). Britten exploits this connection by transferring the quoted passage into the new musical setting of "Storm" in which it acquires an explicit (and perhaps new) representational subject. Mahler's passage is used directly by Britten to qualify the sea, "it is turbulent," which in turn qualifies Grimes' psyche, "it is turbulent *like a stormy sea*." Each step, from quotation to metaphorical transference, is made possible by resemblance's transitivity. Being able to account for both this phenomenon and the previous one is a desirable feature of my theory. It is also one that my competitors, including Peter Kivy, Nelson Goodman, and Kendall Walton, have difficulty accommodating.[21]

Turning to the symmetry objection, whether or not s, the sea, represents w, Debussy's *La Mer*, has little bearing on my project. Let us assume that the English Channel, where *La Mer* was completed in 1905 (and thus may be its specific subject), on certain occasions bears

a strong structural resemblance to the work's second movement, "*Jeux de vagues*." For the sake of argument, let us even say that the play of waves on the Channel is sometimes strongly isomorphic to the music's lively rhythmic motion—the main dimension along which the work represents the sea. The music represents the sea because its rhythms are isomorphic to the movement of the waves. But why do the waves not represent the music?

The reason why resemblance (by itself) is not sufficient for representation in this (or any) case is that the waves have not been used to represent the music—i.e., no one has exploited the antecedent resemblance between the waves and the music to create an aquatic representation of Debussy's work. By exhibiting certain rhythmic (and other) structures and possessing a certain set of properties that could be shared by works of music and other things, the waves possess their potential content intrinsically, but as a matter of historical fact no one has exploited it. Were someone to point out the resemblance between these waves and the music, I would be perfectly comfortable acknowledging that she had thereby created an aquatic representation of "*Jeux de vagues*," and that she is an artist whose medium is the sea. But the aquatic representation of music is not the musical representation of the sea, and Debussy's intentions only fit the latter direction, i.e., music-to-sea representation. While resemblance is necessarily symmetric, representation is not. As a result, the symmetry objection misses the mark. But it helps to clarify the definition of representation I have been working with throughout this chapter.

The reflexivity objection further clarifies and restricts my definition of representation. While it is undeniable that musical works (and their parts) resemble themselves, their composers do not exploit or draw our attention to these resemblances in a way that would

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license us to interpret the works (or their parts) as self-representations. The subjects of works of program music are (real or fictional) *extra-musical* objects, events, and states of affairs, and not the works themselves. This is what distinguishes them from works of absolute music, which are their own subjects—though not by resembling or representing themselves, but simply in virtue of their composers not associating them with extra-musical objects, events, and states of affairs. Representation, as I am defining it, is an extrinsic relationship between a work of music and something in the world (its subject),[22] which functions as such through the composer's exploitation of the music's intrinsically possessed potential content, i.e., certain musical properties, structures, and relations that are sufficiently similar to those of its subject.

It is important to note that parts of individual works resemble, are isomorphic to, or are even identical to other parts of themselves and sometimes (in the cases of quotation, paraphrase, and allusion) to parts of other works. Indeed, self-resemblance of the (former) sort just described is one of the central organizing principles of Western music in the classical tradition. It is what prompts Kivy to refer to music as "the fine art of repetition."[23] Repetition, moreover, as I elucidate in Chapters 3 and 4, is one of the means through which program works represent their subjects. Further problems for my theory are dealt with in the next chapter, which examines and dispenses with several objections raised against it, and (for that matter) *any* theory of musical representation, by individuals who are skeptical of music's representational abilities.

3. Competing theories of musical representation

Above I mentioned three theories of musical representation with which mine is in competition. Kivy makes several significant guest appearances throughout the following

chapters, as he is currently the central figure in the philosophy of music. So I only deal briefly with certain problematic aspects of his account below. Unlike Kivy, Goodman and Walton are not taken seriously within the debate concerning musical representation, and their theories are roundly dismissed as general theories of artistic representation. Since I largely agree with the grounds for their dismissal, which I shall not rehearse here,[24] I do not deal with them at any length in the following chapters. Their theories are worth at least a few pages here, however, and not just for the sake of good philosophical housekeeping. Rather, in addition to being highly suggestive, Goodman and Walton provide helpful contrasts to my theory, which helps to distinguish some of its central features by way of negative relief.

3.1. Kivy's Gricean account

In the next chapter I use Kivy's work as a source of both support for my theory and resistance to its skeptical challengers. Kivy's negative arguments against the skeptics are, unfortunately, much more convincing than his positive account of musical representation. This is not to say that his positive account is not illuminating—far from it! The reason that it is inadequate, however, is that Kivy falls victim to the linguistic bias in semantics discussed above by modeling representation on linguistic communication. This gives rise to two related and deeply problematic beliefs that Kivy maintains concerning musical representation: (first) he conflates a program work's status as a representation with its communicative success, from which (second) he concludes that in most cases how we *describe* a work lies at the heart of its ability to *represent* its subject.

Following J. O. Urmson, Kivy believes that artistic representation is an "intentional" concept.[25] "I cannot represent unintentionally," he says, "although I can unintentionally make

something that might (mistakenly) be taken for a representation, just as the winds and the tides can make a piece of driftwood appear to be a representation of a human figure, say, by virtue of its having a striking 'human' shape."[26] In order for w to represent s, according to Kivy, the composer must intentionally use w to communicate s to his audience.[27] Taken by itself, this is unproblematic. What separates artistic representations from those of other sorts, e.g., edge detection in the visual cortex,[28] is that they have an explicit representational function. In the case of musical representation, this is made readily apparent by the programmatic aids accompanying the works that associate them with their subjects. But for Kivy representation is also a "success" concept. "[A] certain modicum of success," he claims, "is required beyond the intention to represent, to make the intended representation a representation in fact."[29] His account is strongly Gricean: in order for w to represent s, the composer's intention to communicate s using w must be met by his or her audience, demonstrated by their ability to grasp what he or she meant by w.[30] If the audience does not grasp the composer's intention, w fails to represent s.

One way the audience demonstrates their grasp of the composer's intention to represent s is through the vocabulary they use to describe w. Kivy argues that most works of program music successfully communicate and thus represent their subjects because we describe some of their respective features using the same predicates. In these cases, Kivy suggests that the operative linguistic conventions (e.g., calling both musical forms and psychological states "happy" or "sad") create the correspondence between w and s, which, when recognized by the audience, secures w's status as a representation of s because the composer's intention has been successfully grasped. Kivy takes this to be his account's most

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important discovery, since he contends that arranging pieces of music such that they can be described in the same way as their intended subjects is the main method that composers use to represent them musically.[31]

Since *w*'s composer almost certainly desires it to succeed as a representation (why else would he create it or bother associating it with a program?), which will only happen if he or she can make listeners aware of *w*'s particular connections to *s*, I agree with Kivy's point that the composer often arranges *w* such that it shares a descriptive vocabulary with *s*, since this will likely facilitate the listeners' awareness of *w* and *s*'s connections. But success should not be confused with status. The presence of a shared descriptive vocabulary (a fact about our linguistic practices) cannot underpin *w*'s status as a representation of *s* (a fact about the music). It is not necessary by Kivy's own lights because he contends that there are other unrelated ways through which program works represent their subjects, which I introduce in the next chapter and evaluate in Chapter 3. And it cannot be sufficient because we describe works of absolute music using the same sorts of predicates that Kivy mentions—"ascending," "descending," "dark," "bright," "melancholy," "tender," etc.—and they do not thereby become representations; nor are we treating them as such by describing them with these predicates.

Contrary to Kivy, I do not consider shared descriptions (when they apply) to be representationally constitutive. Instead, their role is epistemic. Shared descriptions serve as reliable indicators of the corollary properties, structures, or relations that comprise *w*'s representational content. Kivy fails to acknowledge that the reason *w* and *s* share a vocabulary is because they *perceptibly resemble* each other—i.e., because we have perceived

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(often unreflectively) the cross-modal similarities that the composer exploits to represent *s* with *w*. Consequently, the fact that we use the same or sufficiently similar predicates to describe aspects of both *w* and *s* should serve to direct our attention toward the ways in which *w* and *s* are similar. In such cases, representation, which (on my view) is established by *w*'s exploitation of its underlying resemblances to *s*, secures *w*'s reference to *s*, not (as it is on Kivy's view) the converse.

My theory divorces musical representation from the linguistic baggage Kivy saddles it with by arguing that *w*'s status as a representation is separate from its communicating relevant information about *s* to us. But Kivy's account clarifies an important aspect of my theory. While actual success does not affect a work's representational status, since the audience could fail (*en masse*) to recognize in *w* many salient and accurately rendered aspects of *s*, a piece of music is a representation only if it can *potentially succeed*. This qualification helps delimit the sorts of resemblances that program works can exploit to represent their subjects. Namely, those resemblances must be at least potentially recognizable as such by the audience. If the composer is exploiting resemblances that do not fit with our learned mental schemas based on previous musical experiences (i.e., the norms and conventions of Western art music we have internalized as tacit listening dispositions), or is targeting *s* along nonmusical dimensions of *w*, then *w* is not a *musical* representation of *s*.[32]

Kivy seems to have something similar in mind in his (previously mentioned) reference to the piece of driftwood, his example of a seemingly successful representation that is not a representation in fact because it lacks an intentional act. The reason the viewer mistakenly believes the driftwood to be a representation of a human is presumably because of how

quickly and effortlessly she recognizes their "striking" structural resemblance. If someone were to exploit this resemblance, perhaps by doing little more than titling the driftwood "human," the driftwood's potential representational content, which it possesses intrinsically, would be activated, and it would thereby represent a human. Perhaps simply by mentally tokening, "human," upon recognizing the structural similarity, the driftwood represents a human to the viewer—a possibility Kivy overlooks.

An artwork's title, similar to the presence of a shared descriptive vocabulary, does not create the resemblances and thereby secure its status as a representation, but rather calls attention to resemblances that the artwork already bears to its subject.[33] This is the main role that titles and other programmatic aids play in our experience of works of program music, though there are interesting complications explored in Chapter 4. The use and function of programmatic aids is by no means uncontroversial, as it leads to a certain set of skeptical objections to the possibility of musical representation that the next chapter examines.

If suitably educated and receptive listeners (despite our best efforts) cannot perceive the resemblances between w's properties, structures, and relations, and their targets in s referred to or implied by the program, then w does not succeed as a musical representation of s. Since w's representational content will not be available to perception, we cannot understand and evaluate w as a musical representation. If the resemblances between w and s are sufficiently tenuous, the selected correspondences sufficiently unfamiliar, or the dimensions along which w targets its corollaries in s sufficiently oblique, i.e., if the perceived mismatch between w and s is sufficiently strong, then w may not just be a *poor representation* of s, but a *misrepresentation* of s, which (despite even a large-scale skeletal correspondence

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between *w* and *s*) may be treated in practice as a non-representation. Similar to accuracy, success varies in degrees, and the distinction between a poor representation and a misrepresentation is not at all sharp, since it is largely contingent upon our interpretative and evaluative practices.

Another possibility for why we take *w* to fail as a representation of *s* in these cases is that we are witnessing a poor *version* of the composer's work: a poor *performance,* and thus the blame gets shifted onto the conductor and performers; or a poor *arrangement* of the work, one that modifies (by addition, omission, or alteration) its representational content, and thus the blame gets shifted onto the composer(s) who arranged it.

The final possibility in cases where we fail to perceiving *w* and *s*'s similarities, which I hinted at earlier and discuss at length in Chatper 4, is not that the composer's attempt to represent *s* is simply poor or an unmitigated failure, but that we (his audience) are failing to attend to certain relevant aspects of *w* or are attending to them incorrectly, or have misunderstood the program such that our initial beliefs about *s* are misguided and are thus improperly guiding our experience of *w* as it unfolds in real time. As participants in and co-creators of an aesthetic experience enabled by the composer, some of the burden for *w*'s success falls to the sophistication of our interpretive and evaluative abilities. Kivy recognizes this,[34] but ends up placing too much weight on us (the audience) by making success constitutive of status. He also misunderstands our actual interpretive practices.

As I mentioned above, it is central for Kivy's account that the audience grasps the composer's intention to represent *s* with *w.* Our grasp of his or her intention can be immediate, as Kivy believes happens when we hear the striking melodic and timbral

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similarities between the cuckoo call in Beethoven's *Pastoral* Symphony and an actual cuckoo call,[35] or it can be mediated by a deliberate interpretative effort involving an appeal to extrinsic evidence, which the majority of cases require (to varying degrees). It would seem that the most obvious evidence we have for the composer's intention to represent is the presence of programmatic aids he or she has associated with the music. But Kivy disagrees.[36] "In almost all cases," he contends, "the only evidence we have for the composer's intention to represent is that a representational interpretation of the music works. So we cannot be saved from the hard work of interpretation by the evidence of lack of intention."[37] By Kivy's lights, to ask whether the composer intended to represent *s* with *w*, from the standpoint of our interpretative practices, is (despite its constitutive import) one thought too many. Evidence for a composer's intention to represent, therefore, is not sufficient to spur us to provide a representational interpretation of his or her music.

What actually spurs us to interpret a musical work as a representation, Kivy claims, is when, already involved in the hard work of formally interpreting a piece of music, we become perplexed by an eccentric passage that a purely musical interpretation cannot accommodate.

> [W]e are driven to seek a representational or pictorial answer to a problem [of formal understanding] in those instances where […] a purely musical one will not suffice, or is not available at all, and where we have some at least prima facie reason for believing representational or pictorial features might be present.[38]

Programmatic aids are (consequently) relevant to the hard work of interpretation only *after* we are confronted with a purely musical puzzle.[39] Where no such puzzles arise, not only can programmatic aids do no interpretative work, but we also are not licensed to perceive, understand, or evaluate the music as representational. For Kivy, perceiving and

understanding a work of program music as a representation is secondary to perceiving and understanding it as a purely formal object. This instances the strong formalist position he has advanced throughout his career,[40] since representational content and musical form are wholly divorced on his account—or, at least, representational content only results (or perhaps emerges) from musical *de*formations, passages we have difficulties perceiving and understanding *as music* without appeal to their extra-musical aspirations.[41]

But Kivy's formalism pushes him even further, as he subsequently proceeds to deny that our understanding of a program work's representational content can positively influence our understanding of its purely formal aspects. "If I have a genuine difficulty with a work of music," he states, "an interpretation will resolve it for me by calling my attention to features of the work I may have missed, or by redescribing features with which I may already be familiar in such a way as to bring to them a significance and (therefore) an intelligibility they did not have for me before." This is correct. It is precisely how I believe deliberate interpretive effort can sometimes resolve perceived mismatches between *w* and *s*. But Kivy follows this by stating, "If I do *not* have a question, there can be no answer, and in such a case an interpretation becomes a gratuitous appendage that can really describe nothing about the work."[42] Accordingly, a representational interpretation is merited only when a formal interpretation fails to account for a perplexing musical phenomenon. Representational interpretations, therefore, only make up for deficiencies in our formal understanding of the music; Kivy bars them from extending or deepening that understanding—a claim I challenge in Chapter 4.

The upshot of Kivy's account is that if a work of program music succeeds purely musically, i.e., if we can perceive and understand its formal properties, structures, and relations without appealing to the accompanying programmatic aids or other extrinsic evidence, then it necessarily fails as a representation. But this is extremely counterintuitive. Very few works of program music pose many (if any) puzzles to our purely musical understanding. Kivy's theory consequently fails to tell us much about musical representation because on it few program works need to or should be explained in representational terms on pain of superfluity, and thus their representational content, i.e., their relationships to their subjects, adds nothing to our perception and understanding of them as works of music.

Kivy is forced into this position by his desire to make composers' intentions necessary for musical representation while at the same time trying to avoid the intentional fallacy.[43] To be a representation *w*'s composer must intend it to be so, Kivy claims, but those intentions can neither motivate nor figure into our formal interpretive efforts; rather, they are wholly discovered in the music as a result of those efforts. This is wholly untenable. Since most program works do not require representational interpretations in Kivy's sense, their status as representations is denied because we are unable to discover from the musical alone whether their composers intended them to be representations, and thus they do not meet Kivy's standard of success. By modeling musical representation on a Gricean theory of linguistic communication, Kivy is unable to account for many of the most important phenomena and works of music that any adequate theory of musical representation must be able to accommodate.

Despite these problems with his (version of the) Gricean model, Kivy is correct that a theory of musical representation must account for the composer's intention to represent *s* with *w* in some way. As discussed earlier, my theory does so by maintaining that if a composer accompanies his or her work with programmatic aids, it is automatically a candidate for representational analysis. That is, the presence of programmatic aids provided by the composer, rather than the emergence of formal interpretive puzzles, is sufficient to prompt us to interpret and evaluate his or her work as a representation of the subject referred to or implied by those aids. *W*'s status a representation of *s* is subsequently secured by the perceptible resemblances between *w* and *s* that the audience, suitably primed by the program, *discovers* in their experience of the music. This is contrary to the skeptics, who claim that the audience uncritically *selects* those resemblances through a process of free-association. On my view, perceiving and understanding musical representations centrally involves active (and largely unreflective) associations, but they are by no means "free." Instead, as I discuss in Chapter 4, the complex interactions between the programmatic aids and the music restrict the (associative) interpretive space.

Program works target some features of their subjects[44] but not others and, of the features they do target, many are altered. Our interest in program music resides as much in the similarities between *w* and *s* as in how *w* diverges from *s*, and clarifying this is part of our interpretative and evaluative tasks. The similarities and differences between *w* and *s* factor into (a) how accurately *w* represents *s*, i.e., how faithful *w* is to *s*, and (b) how successfully *w* communicates *s* to us. These questions can only be satisfactorily answered by formal

comparisons of the music and its subject, and give rise to related questions that can only be answered by appealing to the composer's intentions.

Why were aspects $t_1..., t_n$ of s, but not other properties, structures, or relations, targeted by w? Why does w target them along such-and-such dimensions rather than along others? Why does w alter $t_1..., t_n$ thusly, thereby weakening their resemblance, rather than leaving them unaltered or altering them in other less deleterious ways? These questions can be partly answered by appealing to anecdotal evidence from the composer or his or her close associates. But oftentimes no such evidence is readily available to account for the composer's specific decisions within the work. As a result, while the explicit intentions and specific choices behind a work's composition matter to and often guide our understanding, appreciation, and evaluations of works of program music as aesthetic objects, they rarely settle issues of interpretation, as Kivy rightly observes, though overstates.

3.2. Goodman's nominalist theory

Similarly to those skeptical of music's representational possibilities, whose arguments I survey and respond to in the next chapter, Goodman originally reserved the term "representation" for pictures. Later, convinced by Vernon A. Howard,[45] he conceded that musical works could be representational, but only in virtue of their scores' non-notational features.[46] For Goodman, a musical score is a set of performance directions that determines which note or notes are to be played from moment to moment.[47] A score cannot determine *how* the notes are to be played, but merely their order and relative durations. All performances that adhere to this strict serial requirement will match the score note-for-note, and thereby count as "authentic" versions of the same work. By Goodman's definition, a

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musical work is the set of all performances that fully comply with a given score in this way.[48] Non-notational written instructions, such as those indicating tempo, timbre, dynamics, and expression, can be ignored in realizing an authentic performance of a work, as their conceptual borders are so vague—e.g., the *forte* in the performance of one work may be played identically (in respect of loudness) to the *fortissimo* in the performance of another work (or possibly of the same work), and both can be correct within their respective performances. However, if there is even the slightest mismatch between a performance and the score's notational aspects, be it through the omission, addition, or substitution of notes, whether intentional or unintentional, the performance will count as one of a different work.

Similarly to Kivy, Goodman models artistic representation on a theory of linguistic communication—his own. Goodman casts representation as a type of denotation, which is the mode of reference in which predicates stand for other things.[49] On his view, *A* represents *B* when *A* functions as a symbol for *B* within a symbol system bound by arbitrary (i.e., non-natural) conventions that is both syntactically and semantically dense and relatively replete. Western standard musical notation is not syntactically dense, since between any two notes there is not always a third.[50] Nor is it replete, since the only relevant features for interpretation are the shapes of the notes and their vertical and horizontal arrangements on the staff.[51] Western standard notation, therefore, does not provide a symbol system suitable for representation by Goodman's lights, and thus musical scores are nonrepresentational.

It follows from this that on Goodman's theory musical representation can only occur at the level of performance. But none of a score's notational aspects that are realized in its performances can count as part of their representational content. So melody, harmony, and

rhythm, which scores prescribe, cannot figure into any work's representational content. The only aspects that are potentially representational are those that Goodman believes are not prescribed by the score: tempo, timbre, dynamics, expression, and perhaps others. This theory is deeply problematic for several related reasons.

First, as a theory of musical representation, it is markedly anemic. Unlike pictorial representations, not every feature of a performance of a program work has potential representational significance; and thus in practice composers (unlike painters) cannot draw upon all of their medium's resources in their attempts to represent. In fact, only the properties indicated by a score's directional markings (*fortissimo*, *vivace*, *dolce*, etc.) count toward a performance's representational status. But since these markings are unrelated to a work's identity, performers can ignore them. As a result, musical form and representational content are wholly unconnected on Goodman's theory, and the latter rests not with composers, but with conductors and performers. This implausible consequence is one that my theory avoids by arguing that a work's melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic structures, as well as its composer's intentions, are central to its ability to function as a representation.

Second, Goodman's theory ignores actual composition and listening practices. It is mainly through melody, harmony, and rhythm that most composers of program music, and their listeners, take program works to be representations of their alleged subjects. In Chapter 3, I show how the representational techniques employed by composers are underpinned by resemblances along precisely these dimensions of structure. A divorce from practical concerns does not pose a problem from Goodman's perspective, however. The intentions, beliefs, and desires of composers do not enter into his conception of the relationship between

scores and performances (and thus authenticity and identity), so they also would not feature in his account of musical representation. Goodman's theory can make sense of a composer using his or her work to represent something only if he or she is also conducting or performing it.

To discount composers' intentions as Goodman does, however, is to disregard the distinction between program music and absolute music, since it allows for any work of music to be used by anyone to represent almost anything as long as an appropriate symbol system can be constructed in which the music denotes that thing. This is all but guaranteed by Goodman's insistence on the arbitrariness of symbol systems.[52] But as I argued above, such cases hold only a cursory aesthetic interest. In practice, the main evidence that warrants a representational analysis of a work of music is that its composer has accompanied it with a program that associates it to things outside itself through either direct reference or implication. On my view, representation and reference, while separate, are intimately linked. Their relationship will be investigated in detail in the following chapters.

Finally, Goodman's theory cannot accommodate the fact that many musically educated individuals are able to pick out at least some of a program work's representational content through the inspection of its score. These individuals are able to do this because melody, harmony, and rhythm are not only central to musical identity, but also, contrary to Goodman, to musical representation. Goodman would respond by claiming that these individuals are treating the score as a diagram instead of as a notational scheme. While denotations, diagrams are not representations in his sense because they are neither

syntactically nor semantically dense.[53] In no way, he would conclude, can Western standard notation be relevant to a work's representational status.

To this I reply that educated individuals are able to recover some of a work's representational content just from inspecting its score due to a fact that Goodman ignores that the score structurally resembles its authentic performances along the dimensions of melody, harmony, and rhythm. A score is a canonical set of performance instructions, which due bear certain structural resemblances to their performances—e.g., a rising musical line notated in the score (*qua* series of marks on a page) is reflected in a rising auditory line (*qua* series of pitched sounds). Goodman ignores the fact that scores and performances share structures because he conceives of their relationship as purely conventional and thus wholly arbitrary. There certainly could be systems of musical notation that bear no resemblance to the auditory structures whose production they direct. But Western standard notation, the system Goodman and I are dealing with, is not one of them. Ironically, since Goodman's criterion for authenticity within this system is note-for-note matching, scores and authentic performances end up being strongly isomorphic on his view. In fact, the isomorphisms that Goodman requires are so strong as to be impractical, as there are probably very few actual performances that meet Goodman's identity requirement, and as a result most of our talk of "musical works" is illusory. Consequently, I contend that the view I advance in the following chapters offers a more satisfying account of what a musical work is while remaining faithful to our ordinary practices in a way that Goodman's admittedly[54] does not.

3.3. Walton's make-believe theory

Walton contends that music is capable of representation because it can be used as a "prop" in a "game of make-believe." By this he means that musical works can prompt "imaginative listening," which induces us to perceive fictional worlds.[55] We are listening to music imaginatively in Walton's sense any time we recognize, e.g., a melody as rising or falling, joyful or yearning; a gesture as timid or aggressive; a rhythm as languid or urgent; and, most importantly, the core binaries of tension and release, and motion and rest.[56] According to Walton, we pretend (or imagine) to perceive in these musical forms actual instances of rising (et al.) and as a result the music comes to represent them to us. If this is correct, musical form and representational content (contrary to Kivy) are intimately joined in our musical experience by our ability to listen with imagination. And for Walton this ability is both necessary and sufficient to perceive music as music rather than as mere sound.

In an important respect, I agree with Walton's conjoining of form and content in perception, which I discuss in Chapter 4. I also agree with Walton's further claim that we are licensed to listen to program works in this way by their composers.[57] On my view, the "rules" of the "game" are found in the accompanying program, which indicates some of what we should be listening for in the music, since it refers to or implies many of the work's targets. But despite these agreements, three related problems arise for Walton's theory that mine either avoids or overcomes: (1) it conflates imaginative perception and representation; (2) it stipulates (without adequate support) that all musical perception is imaginative in the relevant sense; and as a result (3) it is unable to capture adequately the complex epistemology that it actually suggests.

On Walton's theory, the fact that we perceive musical forms imaginatively within the proper context entails their representational status. Any melody that rises, e.g., represents rising in virtue of our hearing it as such. The same problem that arose for Goodman above arises for Walton, namely, that even works of absolute music can be representational on his theory.[58] Whenever we listen to a musical work imaginatively in Walton's sense, which is always, since we must do so in order to hear the sounds as music, it functions as a prop in a game of make-believe. All music is representational because, according to Walton's theory, we must perceive it with imagination.

But the belief that we perceive musical forms as such imaginatively does not automatically commit one to their status as representations. Skeptic Roger Scruton, on whom I spend a good deal of time in the next chapter, agrees that imaginative perception is epistemically primitive within our musical experience, but denies that it entails representationality.[59] By equating imaginative perception with representation, Walton appears to beg the question against a position like Scruton's from the outset. This is not the case, however, since their notions of imagination differ.

For Walton, imagining *x* means pretending that *x* is real within a certain set of rules. Imagining that a small boulder is a bear, e.g., involves treating it *as if* it really were a bear by adopting appropriate bear-attitudes, -beliefs, and -desires toward the boulder, which generates numerous "fictional truths."[60] In this way the boulder is used as a prop in a game of make-believe in which, according to the rules, large objects of a certain sort are bears. By appealing to fictional truths, Walton (similarly to both Kivy and Goodman) remains within the purview of the linguistic bias in semantics mentioned above, which conceives of meaning (and

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representational content) in terms of truth conditions. Scruton likewise maintains this bias. His notion of imagination is Fregean: imagining *x* means entertaining the proposition 'x' without asserting its truth or falsity.[61] Unlike Walton, however, Scruton does not take his definition of imagination to be (ontologically) coextensive with that of representation. Instead, he claims that the ability to imagine in this way is (psychologically) necessary to perceive and understand any kind of artistic representation.

Scruton casts his notion of imaginative perception as one of several necessary conditions for representation, all of which (as we shall see in the next chapter) he argues music fails to satisfy,[62] whereas Walton makes his notion both necessary and sufficient for representation. One could object to Walton's sufficiency claim and argue that Scruton's attitude toward his own notion of imagination should be applied *mutatis mutandis* to Walton's with regard to musical representation. That is, while perceiving musical forms as rising, falling, and the like, may be necessary for *recognizing* a work's representational content, imaginative listening on its own does not guarantee a work's *status* as a representation. Instead, our ability to hear music in this way should be taken as part of the epistemological and psychological foundation from which musical representations are composed and experienced as such.

While I believe this to be correct, I feel that an even stronger argument is warranted. Skeptic Stephen Davies, who largely agrees with Scruton's position and, as such, likewise receives an extended treatment in the next chapter, offers just such an argument. In doing so, he simultaneously questions Scruton's notion of imaginative perception.

Davies casts doubt on Walton's claim that the type of imagination required to perceive basic musical forms as music must rest on an appeal to make-believe.[63] He contends that the notion of imaginative perception employed by Walton is altogether implausible, and thus can be neither necessary nor sufficient for musical representation. The type of imagination that Davies believes is involved in musical perception is found in veridical perception, functioning (in a fairly Kantian way) as an organizer of the perceptual manifold. Focusing on musical themes, which for both Walton and Scruton are imaginary objects in their respective senses, Davies states, "I do not hear the notes *as if* they are a theme, I do not *entertain* the thought that they constitute a theme—for I would make no mistake in taking them for a theme. […] It is not fictional that those notes make up the theme, and it is not fictional of me that I hear the theme."[64]

Similarly, when we hear a musical line as rising or falling, or as exhibiting any other *proto-representational features*—i.e., musical properties, structures, and relations that could be exploited by composers of program music to represent extra-musical objects, events, or states of affairs, since they comprise part of our pre-structured mental schema based on our prior musical experiences—we neither treat the notes as if they are rising or falling nor entertain the thought that they are.[65] Instead, we perceive a genuine instance of a change in position, a structure (an antecedent relation) that belongs to more than one sense modality. In short, we correctly assert the proposition, "this musical line is rising." When it occurs in a work of absolute music, since the composer does not use the rising line to correspond to anything extrinsic to the music, we experience it as a purely musical phenomenon. But, as I

discuss in Chapter 3, when a musical line rises in a work of program music, it very well could comprise a part of the work's representational content.

Davies' argument is bolstered by recent evidence from the field of cognitive psychology, which suggests that the most fundamental aspects of our musical experience, including those mentioned by both Walton and Scruton (which I dubbed "proto-representational"), can be fully accounted for by veridical perception, which fits with our listening practices.[66] Both Walton's appeal to "make-believe" to account for musical representation and Scruton's appeal to "metaphorical experience" to deny this status to all works of music[67] are thus wholly inadequate because they fail to capture the epistemology and underlying psychology of our actual listening practices.[68] For this reason, I agree with Davies' conclusion that imagination in neither philosopher's sense is involved in perceiving and understanding musical forms as we actually do, and thus that the accounts of musical representation that they draw from their accounts of imaginative perception are misguided.

The final problem for Walton's theory relates to the first. Since imaginative perception is epistemically basic, so too is representation; and thus, as I stated above, all music is representational. One might object that if this were the case, the concept of musical representation could do no philosophical work because the distinction between program and absolute music would be blurred beyond recognition. On Walton's theory, as on Goodman's, the objector would continue, it would be a distinction without a difference.

To this Walton could rightly respond that different games of make-believe have different rules, and thus the distinction between absolute and program music marks a genuine difference—though it is one of degree rather than one of kind. Simply to hear music in

organized patterns of sound requires a set of very low-order "rules" developed over time within the Western tradition, which strongly and tacitly influences our listening practices. But the set of rules that govern works of program music are of a much higher order, and have a less nebulous source. These rules, which the composer outlines (both explicitly and implicitly) in the program, shape and guide how we should perceive and understand the music just as strongly as the (almost entirely tacit) low-order rules do; they simply operate at a higher level of conscious awareness and listeners can exert more control over how they are applied as the music unfolds in real time. As a result, on Walton's theory there could be multiple levels of representation within a given work. In fact, it is representation all the way down to the most basic level.

This consequence is highly suggestive. But the question that must be asked is whether there are any relationships between the levels. If each level of a complex representational system is ontologically or epistemically sealed off from the others, then every program work could conceivably represent numerous incommensurable subjects simultaneously. This would pose a problem for a coherent theory of musical representation and for anyone trying to offer a coherent representational interpretation of a given program work. If the levels are not sealed off, which it seems must be the case for the sake of coherence, then each higher-level representation must depend upon a lower-level one, which in turn must depend upon an even lower-level one, all the way down to the ground-level representations, which are those by which we perceive the auditory patterns as music.

This picture of multi-leveled nestings of musical representations suggested by the make-believe theory is deeply interesting, but it is one that Walton never articulates or

explores. My theory captures the ontological and epistemological complexities suggested by this picture, which are explored in Chapter 3, because it follows from having structural resemblances ground most musical representations that a mapping of a target by a higher-level musical structure will be brought about by mappings of targets by each of the lower-levels. I argue that to understand a work of program music's subject, we identify the representational content at just the highest levels rather than at every level either simultaneously or in a quick ascension, which is what Walton's theory seems to entail. In other words, in *reflectively* perceiving and understanding the higher-level correspondences, we *unreflectively* recover the lower-level ones in our perception and understanding.[69] Moreover, if it is make-believe all the way down, as Walton's theory seems to entail, then it seems as though there must be reflection all the way down. While this may be the correct picture of how we *describe* a program work's representational content when offering a (post hoc) discursive interpretation of the work, our actual moment-to-moment *experiences* with works of program music as they unfold in real time do not bear it out. Unlike Walton's theory, mine is able to accommodate both the reflective and unreflective aspects of our musical experience. (How it specifically does so is explored in Chapter 4.) And in doing so, my theory possesses an epistemological economy that Walton's lacks.

CHAPTER 2

ON THE VERY POSSIBILITY OF MUSICAL REPRESENTATION

RESPONDING TO THE SKEPTICAL CHALLENGE

In the previous chapter, I explained that musical representation is achieved through the

exploitation of resemblances between a musical work's properties, structures, and relations and

those of the objects, events, or states of affairs referred to or implied by its accompanying

program. The next two chapters explore the ontological and epistemological aspects of this

account. The current chapter clears the way for this exploration. In what follows I argue for the

plausibility of the claim that music is sometimes a representational art. The idea that musical

representation is a genuine possibility has become one of the most controversial topics in the

philosophy of music. As such, I survey and evaluate the current philosophical debate, which

converges on whether works of program music can and do qualify as genuine artistic

representations. Instrumental music is of central concern because nearly everyone who writes on

the subject agrees that when accompanied by sung text, stage action, or both (as in opera and

musical drama), music can contribute to the representational whole of such hybrid artworks.

Philosophers differ only with regard to the degree and kind of music's contribution in these

cases. The question, then, is whether music (as an artistic medium) has enough resources to

represent things external to itself, similar to how, say, painting does.

Music's status as a representational art has been hotly contested since the mid-nineteenth

century, and the roots of the current philosophical debate trace back to what has come to be

known as the "War of the Romantics." During this period, progressive and conservative

composers, musicians, critics, and theorists were pitted against each other in a struggle for what

each side took to be the very future of music as an art. I begin with a brief discussion of the history of program music and the original debate surrounding musical representation, as it forms the basis of the current debate, which is this chapter's central concern. My main goal is to cast suspicion on the shared assumptions and arguments—many of which derive from the Romantic conservative movement—advanced by Roger Scruton and Stephen Davies, both of whom are skeptical of music's representational possibilities. Peter Kivy has been the most vocal opponent of the position advanced by these skeptics over the last three decades, and his arguments against their position, which I take to be largely successful, are surveyed and evaluated throughout the discussion. It is important to note at the outset that despite their fundamental differences regarding music's representational possibilities, both Kivy and the skeptics conceive of musical representation largely in terms of conventional meaning modeled on linguistic communication; a model my theory strongly resists.

1. A brief history of program music

Program music, as I have been using that label, has been a going concern in the Western "classical" tradition since the Renaissance. From the Renaissance to the Romantic period, where the art form reached its zenith, and up through the present day, a number of techniques have been developed, employed, and refined by composers to represent extra-musical objects, events, and states of affairs. During the Renaissance, works such as Martin Peerson's *The Fall of the Leafe* and William Byrd's *The Battell*, the second of which may be the earliest work of properly so-called program music (written c.1591), helped establish the practice of associating intentionally representational works of music with external aids—texts, titles, programs, etc., used to guide and shape the audience's perception and understanding as the works unfold in real time by referring the audience to their intended subjects. This period also saw the genesis of several

musical techniques for representation, which were further developed during the baroque and classical periods in both purely instrumental music and music set to texts in operas, musical dramas, choral music, and songs. One technique is auditory imitation. A section of Byrd's *The Battell* titled "The Marche to the Fighte," e.g., contains the imitation of a horn fanfare (by virginals) after which the music builds to an energetic passage meant to indicate that the soldiers have joined the battle. Both have relevant inscriptions, "tantara tantara" and "the battells be joyned," in the score under their respective measures.[1] The earlier passage is an instance of musical sounds imitating other musical sounds, while the later passage musically imitates the sounds of battle.

"Tone-painting," another technique developed during Renaissance, is concerned with the musical expression of a text's broader emotional character. Few examples illustrate tone-painting better than baroque master J. S. Bach's aria "*Erbarme dich*" from the *Matthäus-Passion*. The solo violin can be recognized as weeping along with the alto, whose voice expresses the melancholy and grief of the event upon which the lyrics comment: the moment Peter, after having denied Jesus, weeps bitterly upon recalling that the man he has forsaken had predicted he would do so. As a result of the melodic lines, the tone qualities of the violin and voice, and their harmonic interplay, the music not only reinforces the lyrical content, but further intensifies it, which renders more fully the scene referred to by the lyrics and depicted by the music, and thus communicates it to us more successfully. In tone-painting, reference and representation, by way of the exploitation of an expressive resemblance between the music and its target, work in unison to offer a more emotionally impactful musical experience.

"Word-painting," the third main technique developed during the Renaissance, involves "the use of musical gesture(s) in a work with an actual or implied text to reflect, often pictorially,

the literal or figurative meaning of a word or phrase."[2] This technique is perhaps most famously

exemplified by the *Credo* section of Bach's Mass in B-minor, in which the phrase *descendit de*

caelis ("He came down from heaven") is set to a falling musical and vocal line. Another

instance is minor classical composer Carl Friedrich Zelter's setting of Goethe's poem "*Um*

Mitternacht," in which the word *Gestirn* ("star") is mirrored musically by an ascending leap of a

ninth.[3] These two cases, as well as the energetic passage from Byrd's *Battell*, succeed

representationally because we recognize them as sharing perceptual properties with their targets.

Moreover, in each case we use the same words to describe the passages and their targets[4]—both

Jesus and the music can be correctly said to "descend;" both the star (relative to our standpoint)

and the note corresponding to it (relative to those surrounding it) are "high;" and both the battle's

onset and the music are "energetic"—and the composers are fully exploiting these linguistic

conventions. The relationship between music's ability to represent and how we describe it is

examined at length at the beginning of the next chapter, as it figures in our experience of most

works of program music.

    I am now in a position to begin constructing a typology of musical techniques composers

in the Western classical tradition have made use of to represent things musically. In the works

discussed above, taken in reverse order, the music either (i) shares properties with (auditory or

non-auditory) objects, events, or states of affairs; (ii) expresses emotions corresponding to

general scenes or specific characters; (iii) imitates auditory (musical or non-musical) objects; or

some combination thereof. To this list three more techniques should be added: (iv) bald

stipulation, (v) conventional association, and (vi) nonstandard instrumentation. In the next

chapter, I show how each of these six techniques involves the exploitation of resemblances and

explore their relationships, where they exist, to linguistic conventions. The use of these

techniques was most prevalent during the Romantic period, culminating in the development of the concert overture (Felix Mendelssohn), the *idée fixe* (Hector Berlioz), the symphonic poem (Franz Liszt), the leitmotif (Richard Wagner), and the tone poem (Camille Saint-Saëns), which are instanced (respectively) in such purely instrumental program works as *Die Hebriden*, *Symphonie Fantastique*, *Eine Faust-Symphonie* (after Goethe), *Siegfried Idyll*, and *Le rouet d'Omphale* (after Hugo).

Technique (iv), bald stipulation, is best exemplified by Wagner's leitmotifs, in which a recurring musical theme is associated with a particular character, location, event, or idea. The theme need not share any relevant properties with, express the mood of, or imitate its target(s) in the work's subject. Instead, the association between theme and target is achieved solely by the composer's (explicit or implicit) stipulation, secured by conventional reference established by the composer in this piece of music, usually in the form of an explicit linguistic act. I show in the next chapter, however, that this stipulative act of reference by itself is not sufficient for the theme to represent its intended subject; rather, it must function within (or as a part of) the unfolding global correspondence scheme (i.e., the maximally large-scale resemblance) between the work and its subject.

Technique (v), conventional association, is instanced by both Beethoven's *Wellingtons Sieg* and Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture*. Beethoven develops part of "God Save the King" as a fugato to target the jubilant English crowds after Wellington's victory over Napoleon's armies at the Battle of Victoria. In doing so, he is exploiting the conventional association between the song, to which the fugato bears a recognizable auditory resemblance, and Britain's military leader. In a similar way, Tchaikovsky uses "*La Marseillaise*" and "*Bozhe, Tsarya khrani!*," the respective anthems of France and Russia at the time, to stand for their country's armies within

the context of the piece. As with bald stipulation, composers make use of (explicit or implicit) reference to extra-musical objects, events, or states of affairs in order to secure them as targets within the global correspondence scheme between the work and its subject. Unlike bald stipulation, however, conventional association is underpinned by a recognizable auditory resemblance, i.e., auditory imitation, rather than a purely stipulative act. But once again, this technique, which makes use of conventional linguistic reference, functions representationally only in conjunction with the exploitation of antecedent resemblances.

Technique (vi), nonstandard instrumentation, is also instanced in the previous two works. Beethoven includes muskets as part of *Wellingtons Sieg*'s orchestration and Tchaikovsky scores cannon fire in the *1812 Overture*. When sounded, these nonstandard instruments are meant to represent barrages of artillery by the represented armies. Thus, the sound of muskets and cannon is represented in these works by actual musket- and cannon-fire. (It is worth noting that the cannon called for in Tchaikovsky's score is often replaced by a bass drum, which is the standard instrument in the Western classical tradition that most closely resembles the sound of cannon-fire.) As with the previous two techniques, the nonstandard instruments employed by technique (vi) target certain aspects of a work's subject through the combination of resemblance and reference. When a composer employs this technique, the instruments refer to themselves by sounding exactly like themselves.[5] The instruments draw attention to themselves in ways that standard musical instruments typically do not precisely because they are unexpected within their musical surroundings—i.e., because they are non-traditional or unconventional. The representation here occurs at the level of auditory resemblance, in this case, the exploitation of auditory identity.

These six techniques, which I thoroughly examine in the next chapter, are deeply entrenched within the Western tradition. As such, suitably educated listeners can draw upon their background knowledge of them in understanding the relationship between a program work's musical form and its representational content. These epistemological claims regarding how we perceive and understand works of program music as representations are discussed at length in Chapter 4, where the account of musical representation I develop in the next chapter will be applied to an extended analysis of a sophisticated work of program music. Before I can begin my response to those currently skeptical of music's representational possibilities, their position must be clarified. To do so requires elucidating its historical roots, which trace back to the mid-nineteenth century.

2. Romantic skepticism

Romanticism in music is marked by such features, instanced in both absolute and program works, as departures from established formal conventions (especially from sonata form); bolder melodies, richer harmonies, and denser textures; explorations of chromaticism, pentatonicism, dissonance, and key modulation; the use of a wider range of pitches, dynamics, and tone-colors; the expansion of the orchestra; and greater structure and unity to lengthier works. These features can be accounted for in part by their foundations in the attempts of many of the above-named (and other) composers to represent extra-musical objects, events, and states of affairs.

Liszt famously proclaimed, "New wine demands new bottles." By this, he meant that the stale musical formulas of the past could not contain the ideas he and others wished to convey with their compositions.[6] We can take Liszt's proclamation as the motto for the Weimar progressives, a group aligned both ideologically and compositionally with Berlioz, and

championed by critic Richard Pohl, of which Liszt and Wagner were the most prominent members. One key progressive belief was in music's representational abilities, and Liszt's symphonic poems are often held up as embodiments of this belief. However, according to Liszt scholar Alan Walker, not only did Liszt not believe that his works were representational, but also that music was not generally a representational art form.[7] Walker claims that Liszt believed music could express the mood that a poem, picture, object, or event evoked in one who experienced it; he did not believe that music could directly present those things to be experienced by the audience.[8]

But even if Liszt was correct that his works were only capable of expressing feelings, by explicitly associating them with extra-musical subjects, as he in fact did, Liszt's works nevertheless count as representations by my lights, as they are instances of tone-painting—technique (ii) above. So despite Liszt's alleged assertion to the contrary, his works are genuinely representational, and, moreover, they represent by making use of more than just expressive similarity. For instance, Liszt does not attempt to represent the narrative of Goethe's drama in his *Eine Faust-Symphonie*—i.e., he does not attempt to reflect the large-scale narrative structure of the drama in his work's large-scale symphonic structure. Instead, he offers, as the work's full title (*in drei Charakterbildern*) indicates, character sketches of the drama's three main characters: Faust, Gretchen, and Mephistopheles. In doing so, Liszt is making use of bald stipulation to connect themes to the aspects of characters to which he intends them to correspond.

The dimensions along which Liszt targets these aspects of the characters are mainly expressive, and thus each part represents its subject largely by expressing emotions appropriate to (or about) them. Additionally, thematic material developed in one sketch often reappears, and is further developed, in another. From the purely musical perspective, this lends a sense of unity

and coherence to the entire symphony, which is quite lengthy—its performances normally clock

in at over seventy-five minutes. But it also deepens our understanding of the characters sketched

by the work by rendering them and their relationships to one another more fully. And in order to

better convey the characters to his audience, as well as give his symphony greater unity, Liszt

had to depart from musical formulas established during the classical period. This was common

practice for Liszt and his progressive allies, who often felt stifled by the rigid "rules" of the past

and had no problem bending them to suit their purposes.

This was not true of the progressives' ideological rivals, the Leipzig conservatives. This

group, aligned with Mendelssohn and championed by critic Eduard Hanslick, included such

composers and musicians as Robert and Clara Schumann, Joseph Joachim, and Johannes

Brahms. Interestingly, early in their careers, each of these composers wrote works of program

music, not unlike their progressive rivals. In fact, Mendelssohn's *Die Hebriden*, also known as

Fingal's Cave, is considered a masterpiece within the genre: a musical seascape based on his

experience with the famed Scottish cave, as well as on the Ossianic poems that made it famous

and paintings that were based on them.[9] Furthermore, the thirty-eight pieces of Robert

Schumann's *Carnaval* and *Davidsbündlertänze* suites for solo piano are each supposed to

provide a musical portrait of a person (real, e.g., individual conservatives, or Chopin and

Paginini, or fictional, e.g., characters from the French *commedia dell' arte*) or a sentiment.

Carnaval's last piece, "*Marche des 'Davidsbündler' contre les Philistins*," is actually

Schumann's attempt to depict the Leipzig conservatives' (who he referred to as "The League of

David") defeat of the Weimar progressives (the Philistines) in the battle for the future of music—

a wish that, as a matter of historical fact, went unfulfilled. Finally, even though Brahms is

considered the premier writer of absolute music of the Romantic period, the first of his Ballades,

Op. 10 (for piano), titled "Edward," was intended as a representation the Scottish saga of that name.

The above examples illustrate that the focus of the disagreement between the Romantics regarding musical representation was normative rather than ontological, which is what distinguishes it from the current debate. The Romantics were not concerned with whether or not music is capable of representing things beyond itself. All assumed (to varying degrees) that it can and sometimes does. Instead, they were concerned with whether they should continue the practice of composing works of program music. Influenced in part by Schopenhauerian ideals, the debate centered on musical "purity." The question was whether music should be beholden to references to literary and other works of art in order to convey ideas—mainly the expression of emotion, which the extra-musical references would help to specify by giving the listener particular targets for the emotions expressed by the music—or whether composers should attempt to develop purely musical means through which to convey ideas. Those who opted for the latter option, as the conservatives did, believed that attempts at musical representation would only get in the way of music's progress toward this goal—mainly, the creation of a purely musical vocabulary of the human emotions. In order to ensure music's future as the "highest" art form, i.e., the one toward which all others would aspire, they concluded that the production of program music needed to be halted, and a good deal of intellectual effort was spent attempting to do just that.[10]

The schism between the progressives and conservatives, which we now know as the War of the Romantics, grew for several years before finally hemorrhaging during the mid-1850s. Both camps, choosing vitriolic attacks through the press more often than the presentation of reasoned arguments, took themselves to be fighting for the very future of music and its viability

as an art form. The debate centered on a set of competing ideas, which are nicely summarized by Walker: "programme music versus absolute music, form versus content, the oneness versus the separateness of the arts, newness versus oldness, revolution versus reaction."[11] From the first three binaries, it is apparent that the philosophical conversation with which this dissertation is concerned traces its roots to exactly this period of music history. As will become clear in the discussion to follow, Kivy and I have sided with the progressives, while Scruton and Davies have taken up the mantle of conservatism.

Music critic and theorist Eduard Hanslick has had the most lasting impact among those advancing conservative ideals, as he originally expressed the line of attack most vigorously pursued by current skeptics against the possibility of musical representation. Hanslick contends that music's content resides solely in itself, i.e., in its purely formal structure; consequently, he collapses the traditional distinction between form and content—a consequence with which, as will be made clear in the next two chapters, I am largely comfortable. On his account, "to *represent* something, is to clearly exhibit it, to distinctly set it before us."[12] Music, he argues, is incapable of meeting this (Cartesian) standard of clearly and distinctly presenting a subject to us. "The composer of instrumental music never thinks of representing a definite subject," he claims; "otherwise he would be placed in a false position, rather outside than within the domain of music. His composition in such a case would be *programme music*, unintelligible without the programme."[13] He singles out Liszt's symphonic poems as instances of such unintelligible instrumental music. In this passage, Hanslick establishes the standard, adhered to by contemporary skeptics, that the subjects of works of program music should be understandable through our experience of the musical alone, without appeal to the program. If a program is

required to understand any aspect of a work's musical structure, then, according to Hanslick—and, as we shall see, his skeptical successors—it fails as music.

In spite of the efforts of Hanslick and his conservative allies, the progressives emerged victorious, at least in terms of the direction Western art music was to take. The Romantics' successors, the Impressionists, chiefly Claude Debussy, Maurice Ravel, and Ralph Vaughan Williams, increasingly moved away from the musical formulas of the past and offered additional examples of program music, including, *La Mer*, *Miroirs*, and *The Lark Ascending,* respectively. The twentieth century saw several movements that took advantage of the greater experimentation and formal freedoms offered by their Romantic and Impressionistic predecessors. During this period many paradigmatic works of program music were produced. To focus just on America, as examples of movements and works on both sides of the Atlantic are too numerous to list here, modernist Charles Ives gave us such compositions as *Central Park in the Dark* and *The Unanswered Question*; John Alden Carpenter gave us *Adventures in a Perambulator*, a symphony detailing a baby's outing with his nurse; and George Gershwin fused jazz, imitations of urban sounds, and a classical sensibility in *Rhapsody in Blue*, the most famous program work by an American composer of that (or any) period. My goal in what follows is to succeed philosophically where Liszt and the progressives succeeded musically: by presenting a theory that leaves little doubt as to music's status as a representational art form.

3. Contemporary skepticism

There are two forms of contemporary skepticism regarding the possibility of musical representation. Scruton is a hard-core skeptic because he withholds the status of representation from every work of program music, since he believes that music (as an art form) cannot meet the

standards set by his theory of artistic representation.[14] As such, his position is strongly aligned

with Hanslick's—though, unlike Hanslick, Scruton does not deny music's ability to express

emotions. Davies' skepticism is significantly more moderate. While Davies largely defends

Scruton's position, he contends that there is a class of properly so-called musical representations;

he simply believes that it is too small to merit extended philosophical analysis.[15] Despite this

difference, Scruton and Davies advance a "seeing-in" theory of representation from which they

derive the two strongest arguments that any theory of musical representation must overcome to

get of f the ground.

I call Scruton and Davies' first argument against the possibility of musical representation

the *confirmation bias argument*, which directly stems from Hanslick's assertion that music can

never clearly exhibit a definite subject. This argument states that for any musical work, *w*,

regardless of whether it is programmatic or absolute, we can supply it with any program

whatsoever and discover musical correlates to aspects of *w*'s alleged subject, *s*, which we will

take to comprise its representational content and use to confirm *w*'s status as a representation of

s. In short, the evidence we collect from *w* to confirm that it is a representation of *s* will be

biased from the outset by the simple fact that we are given a program that suggests a relationship

between *w* and *s*. The program leads us to believe that there ought to be perceptible *s*-correlates

in *w*, and, according to the skeptics, we will find them because any work will bear numerous

resemblances of various sorts to *s* from which we could selectively produce a number of

reasonable correspondence schemes to *s*.

The skeptics conclude from this that, because there are no program-independent, purely

musical ways through which musical works can indicate that we should treat them as

representations of their alleged subjects, music's status as a representational art is called into

question because, once again following Hanslick, it seems that the (extra-musical) programmatic aids do most of the "representational work"—i.e., it is the program, rather than the music itself, which secures w's status as a representation (of s). They further conclude that if any musical work can (come to) represent anything as a result of the mere suggestion of a relationship to that thing, then the notion of musical representation becomes conceptually vacuous and, as such, can do little helpful theoretical or practical work. Moreover, if every musical work is potentially representational, then, according to the skeptics, the distinction between absolute and program music is illusory, a consequence that few philosophers of music of any stripe would be willing to accept.

The second skeptical challenge to the possibility of musical representation, which I call the *assimilation bias argument*, is closely related to the first. While the confirmation bias argument focuses on the relationship between a musical work and *any* program, the assimilation bias argument problematizes the relationship between a work of program music and the program specifically associated with it by its composer. By doing so, it calls into question the very nature and practice of program music. As a result, it presents the largest hurdle that any theory of musical representation must overcome.

The assimilation bias argument begins with the correct assumption that the primary function of the programmatic aids accompanying a work of program music, w, is to prime our musical expectations by referring to or suggesting a set of objects, events, or states of affairs that comprise its intended subject, s. From our background beliefs about s, we create a "schema" (or interpretation framework) that encompasses the sorts of properties, structures, and relations, i.e., "s-correlates," that we expect to hear in w. On my theory, this schema, the creation of which need not be a fully (or even mostly) reflective endeavor, would consist of a weighted list of

possible targets in *s* to which *w* could correspond—i.e., aspects of *s* that would likely be mirrored in *w*, perhaps arranged by degree of likelihood.

The skeptics claim that, were the above account accurate, listeners would have to modify each new bit of auditory information as *w* unfolds in real time to fit our (program-induced) schema, *regardless of its musicological import*—i.e., regardless of whether the properties, structures, or relations that we interpret and evaluate as *representationally* significant are *musically* significant. The skeptics conclude that those aspects that we take to comprise *w*'s representational content may not be genuinely "musical" aspects of *w*, and, as a result, our understanding and appreciation of *w*, *qua* representation, could be independent of our understanding and appreciation of *w*, *qua* music. In other words, the bits of the musical progression that we mark off as individual units of musical significance (motifs, recapitulations, transitions, changes in key or mode, etc.) may have no bearing whatsoever on those we mark off as having representational significance (as targeting characters, their returns, changes in location or personality, etc.)—i.e., genuine musical boundaries may not be reflected in our interpretation schemas. That musical form and representational content could come apart in works of program music in such a way that our *representational understanding* and our *purely musical understanding* of a given program work can be wholly unrelated, the skeptics conclude, casts serious doubt on whether the sort of representation concerned is actually "musical," rather than merely "auditory." If this is the case, as they claim it is, then music can only be said to function as a vehicle for representation of another sort. Consequently, works of program music are not properly so-called representations, *qua* works of music.

In my estimation, no theory of musical representation presently on offer has yet overcome these two challenges adequately. The main reason for this, I contend, is that most

theories are guilty of the two major problems diagnosed in the previous chapter: (first) maintaining the linguistic bias in semantics, and (second) failing to clearly delineate between (1) a work of program music's status as a representation, (2) its composer's intentions, and (3) how accurately it renders and how successfully it communicates its subject to us. The confirmation and assimilation bias arguments exploit these major weaknesses of the other theories by also buying into the linguistic bias and conflating these three issues.[16] I cannot hope to overcome these skeptical challenges until my theory has been laid out in Chapter 3 and is fully up and running in Chapter 4. As a result, in the following discussion I am only able to begin to cast doubt on them. The majority of the present chapter is spent dispensing with many of their other arguments against the possibility of musical representation as a way to clear the ground for my main arguments against the skeptical position, which I complete in Chapter 4.

4. Scruton's representational skepticism

Scruton begins his hard-core skeptical argument with the perfectly reasonable thought that in order to test music's representational possibilities there first need to be clear conditions that any musical work must satisfy to count as a representation. Since painting provides the clearest and most uncontroversial examples of artistic representation, Scruton derives five necessary conditions for artistic representation from it. An artwork is representational, according to Scruton, only if (1) we can become aware of what it represents without help from external aids, such as its title or an explicitly associated text; (2) we can distinguish between the work's medium and its intended subject; (3) it makes us interested in its subject; (4) it expresses definite thoughts about its subject to us; and (5) our interest in it as a representation of its subject is not in its "truth," but may be an interest in its "lifelikeness," i.e., we can evaluate its representational content using standards of accuracy, but not truth conditions.[17] The first three conditions

comprise Scruton's "seeing-in" account of representation, which he appropriates from Richard Wollheim.[18] The last two conditions comprise the semantic aspects of his account, expressing his belief that "representation is [...] essentially propositional."[19] Given the above conditions, it is clear that Scruton believes artistic representation to be in the communication business in the same way that language is. As such, I begin with the semantics before turning my attention to the "seeing-in" aspect of his account.

4.1. Semantics

Scruton strongly conflates an artwork's representational status with both its artist's intention to represent and its communicative success. This is because the model for the semantic aspects of his account, although he never explicitly acknowledges it, just like Kivy, is almost certainly Gricean. In fact, one of the most important of these aspects is directly analogous to Grice's theory of non-natural meaning. According to Grice, an agent means something (non-naturally) by an utterance or gesture if and only if she intended her utterance or gesture to produce some effect in an audience by means of their recognizing her intention.[20] Simply qualify "agent" as "artist," and swap "artwork" for "utterance or gesture," and we get what Scruton takes to be the core of artistic representation. This fact becomes all the more apparent when we make the relevant replacements in Grice's account of what he calls "the occasion-meaning of indicative-type utterances," a later refinement to his account of non-natural meaning, which refers to what given utterances meant when they were originally produced.[21] According to Scruton (following Grice), by creating a representational artwork, r, its artist means to convey proposition p about r's intended subject, s, if and only if for some audience, the artist created r intending (i) that the audience should believe that she believes p about s, (ii) that the audience should believe that she intended (i), and (iii) that (i) should be achieved by means of achieving

(ii). This, for Scruton, is how artistic representations "mean," which is precisely how Grice

believes that sentences "mean."

Scruton believes that representational works of art are essentially linguistic items. This is

clear from the statement of his condition (4) for artistic representation.

> A representational work of art must express thoughts about its subject, and an
> interest in the work should involve an understanding of those thoughts. […]
> Even in the most minimal depiction—say, of an apple on a cloth—appreciation
> depends on determinate thoughts that could be expressed in language without
> reference to the picture: "Here is an apple; the apple rests on a cloth; the cloth
> is chequered and folded at the edge."[22]

As Davies notes, Scruton conceives of representation as *assertion*. In the above condition,

Scruton indicates that, similar to an assertoric sentence, the meaning of which is non-natural (as

it is, in Grice's terms, an indicative-type utterance), an artistic representation, r, must contain (a)

a subject, s, (b) a predicate, which expresses some proposition, p, that qualifies s, and (c) a "full

stop," which completes p, thereby allowing r to convey a "definite thought" about s.[23] That

Scruton models the semantics of representation on assertion is further bolstered by the

implication in condition (5) that artistic "assertions" can (although, they need not) be assessed

for truth.[24]

Scruton qualifies these semantic aspects of his account in his first (seeing-in) condition

for representation by severely limiting the epistemic resources that the audience can draw upon

to learn p about s from r. Specifically, he restricts the means through which we can discover that

the artist intends to represent s, and that the artist believes p about s, to just our perceptual

experience of r. Scruton is not so radical as to limit our experience to just the raw sense data.

He is willing to accommodate the fact that our perceptual experience of r will be strongly

affected by our (art historical) background knowledge of the relevant conventions of the artistic

tradition in which r was produced, the artist's style, and so on. The relevant sort of background

knowledge can be propositional, but will most often be knowledge by acquaintance, which has been acquired and refined by experience with many artworks by many artists working in diverse traditions, media, and genres. Scruton is simply claiming that the artwork, *qua* vehicle for perceptual experience, must be able to speak for itself—which, given how strongly Scruton maintains the linguistic bias, we can basically take literally.

In order to count as representation, therefore, a work of program music must be able to convey its (non-natural) meaning—its subject, and the composer's thoughts about it—to us through just the music alone, without relying on the assistance of the accompanying program or other epistemic aids. Scruton is concerned with discovering a "purely musical route" to representation, "a feature of music [as an artistic medium] that will enable it to present thoughts about something other than itself."[25] If works of program music cannot make us aware of, and thereby communicate propositions to us about, their intended subjects without the help of programmatic aids, then there is nothing particularly "musical" about how they represent. Instead, the representation—conceived of as the communication of propositional meaning—will be achieved through the combination of music and text. And Scruton believes that the music is the submissive partner in this relationship, since the text is what makes us aware of the work's subject in the first place. While the music may be able to participate in the act of predication by helping to qualify our understanding of the subject, because it does not assert the subject, it cannot achieve the full status of artistic representation.

Scruton goes so far as to deny that music can even participate in the predication. Consequently, works of program music fall short of condition (4). "If music is to be representational," he begins, "then its subject must be not only picked out, but also characterized."

But that requires a context, and in music the context seems to add no further precision to the "representational" parts. A certain passage in [Richard Strauss'] *Der Rosenkavalier* "imitates" the glitter of a silver rose. But what more does this passage say about the glitter except that it is a glitter (and even that may go unnoticed)?[26]

Scruton further claims that one cannot derive a definite description of the sea from Debussy's *La Mer*; and thus, it also fails to satisfy condition (4). But this is patently false. The music swells, churns, undulates, becomes dark and violent, and so on. How we find out that it is the sea that these predicates are meant to qualify, however, is wholly irrelevant to whether music satisfies condition (4). And, for Scruton, this is a non-semantic concern, since it pertains to his first condition. Moreover, what does the redness of the apple in the hypothetical still life painting that Scruton uses to explain condition (4) tell us more than "the apple is red"? Should we expect anything more from the musical glitter in *Der Rosenkavalier*? By Scruton's lights, we should have no problem recovering from this passage that Strauss intends to convey to us his belief that the silver rose provided by the program glitters.

This argument against Scruton's fourth condition comes from Kivy.[27] It is important to note that Davies cites it approvingly, and takes it even further. Scruton conceives of artistic representations as assertions, which convey definite or determinate thoughts about their subjects. As such, Davies restates Scruton's argument against *La Mer* satisfying condition (4) as: "There is […] no definite end to the description one might offer, no full stop provided by the music with which to end the characterization of the subject;" consequently, the propositions that the music communicates to us are indeterminate.[28] What Davies asks in response is, "Where is the thought expressed in a painting completed?"[29] "Pictures are said to be worth a thousand words," he proceeds, "just because there need be no end to the description of the way a subject is represented. More correctly, there is no exact number of words equivalent to a picture, because pictures do not describe as language does."[30] Scruton's fourth condition should not be taken

seriously, Davies continues, because it is so restrictive that not even uncontroversially representational paintings can satisfy it. It should be no surprise, then, that works of program music fail, as well. From this, Davies concludes, "that music fails Scruton's fourth condition can hardly count against music's being depictive, since representational paintings fail the same condition in a similar manner."[31]

To take this line of argumentation a bit farther, in Scruton's underdescribed example of the apple painting, the context in which the apple's redness is situated does not offer any further precision as to the thoughts it conveys to us. But give the example more flesh, and the apple's redness could certainly convey such additional thoughts as, "the apple is glowingly red and thus seems to be part of what we conceive as living, but will soon be rotten, *memento mori*." The musical glitter in *Der Rosenkavalier*, analogous to the silver rose's glitter, when the context Scruton fails to provide is fleshed out, could convey similar higher-order thoughts. During the time period in which the opera was set, a silver rose was a symbol of love and fidelity. And in the scene in which it appears, a young man acting as a proxy courter, known as a Knight of the Rose, asks for the hand of a wealthy young woman on the behalf of his principal. But the young man and woman fall in love, and the rest of the opera deals with their attempts to keep her from marrying the young man's principal. The rose's glitter, then, could convey the sparkling possibilities of young love, with perhaps an implied recognition that everything that glitters eventually dulls—beauty fades, youth gives way to old age, and love can slacken.

Recall that Scruton claims to derive his five necessary conditions for artistic representation from uncontroversial instances in painting. But this claim is merely asserted without argument. This, along with the arguments made by Kivy and Davies, strongly indicates that Scruton's semantic conditions, at least condition (4)—condition (5) is not particularly

problematic, as few philosophers of art believe that truth and falsity apply to works of art in any nontrivial way—, were created solely to deny the possibility of musical representation. Scruton is merely begging the question at the outset in favor of the brand of musical purism he has advanced throughout his career.

4.2. Seeing-in

Davies' skepticism is moderate precisely because he wholly disregards the semantic aspects of Scruton's account. He believes that representation is essentially non-propositional and, as a result, should not be modeled on assertion. But Davies does maintain the seeing-in aspects of Scruton's theory, with some qualifications. In what follows, I examine Scruton's first three conditions for representation and Davies' defense of them. I also show how the possibility of musical representation is perfectly consistent with Scruton's prior ontological and epistemological commitments. This is important because I agree with versions of many of them. As such, these prior commitments need to be understood before I can present and evaluate the skeptical arguments Scruton makes against musical representation that result from his version of the seeing-in theory of artistic representation.

4.2.1. Scruton's pre-skeptical commitments

Scruton argues that when listening to a performance of a musical work we are induced into the purely auditory or "acousmatic" world described at length by P. F. Strawson, a world that is wholly non-spatial.[32] The ontological status of any sound in the acousmatic world is as a non-spatial "secondary object,"[33] which precludes its reidentification across time; thus, instead of hearing the exact same sound again, we merely hear multiple instances of the same sound-universal.[34] Scruton acknowledges, however, that this appears to be invalidated by our actual

experiences with music, which seem infused with spatiality. For instance, we perceive certain notes as higher or lower than others. But more fundamentally, our experience of music would be fundamentally different were we unable to hear the repetition of a given phrase, motif, melody, or theme as a genuine reappearance, rather than another instance of the same sound-universal. Moreover, the practice of musical composition is based on the fact that we hear given aspects of the music as "(one and) the same again;" without this fact, e.g., counterpoint would be impossible.

To make sense of the phenomenology of our actual musical experiences, which seem to contradict his underlying ontology, Scruton contends that we do not attend to the sounds themselves when listening to music. Instead, we attend to their secondary properties, *tones*, whose essential features are pitch, loudness, and timbre. Tones, Scruton claims, can only be experienced by rational beings with imagination of the Fregean sort described in the previous chapter—i.e., imagining *x* means entertaining the proposition 'x' without asserting its truth or falsity. As a result, Scruton gives us the following three-layered picture of the auditory reality of musical experience: (3) *tones* supervene on (2) *sounds*, which supervene on (1) *physical air vibrations*. Many creatures perceive sounds, but Scruton stipulates (without solid evidence or argument) that only humans can perceive tones in those sounds. This is because to experience music as we do requires that we imaginatively superimpose a (disjoint and finitely differentiated) tonal structure, e.g., the twelve-tone chromatic scale, onto the (syntactically dense) pitch continuum provided by the world of physical sound.[35] This structure is quasi-spatial, admitting of only a vertical dimension ("up" and "down"), which is why musical sounds can appear to us as either "higher than" or "lower than" one another.

When saying that *sounds* are incapable of reidentification in the acousmatic world, the notion of identity to which Scruton is appealing is that of numerical identity. But *tones*, unlike sounds, are not a part of the physical world; rather, according to Scruton, they are "imagined objects." This is not to say that tones exist apart from the sounds on which they supervene. Instead, Scruton states that sounds and tones (acoustical and musical objects, respectively) are merely two incommensurable ways of conceptualizing the exact same phenomenon: our perception of the underlying physical air vibrations.[36] As a result, we can correctly talk about a musical performance using either exclusively auditory concepts, such as (changes in) frequencies and amplitudes, or exclusively musical concepts—most relevantly, in terms of harmonic, melodic, and rhythmic organization. But only the latter way is to talk about the performance *as music*.

Because tones are imagined, rather than real, objects, Scruton suggests that the proper notion of identity for music should be "intentional identity," as conceived by P. T. Geach. Take the sentence, "Hob thinks a witch has blighted Bob's mare, and Nob wonders whether she (the same witch) killed Cob's sow."[37] Hob and Nob's intentional attitudes have a common focus even though nothing exists at that focus, since there are (in fact) no witches.[38] Similarly, say we are listening to a musical performance and perceive a recapitulated theme transposed into a different key. In recognizing it as such, we intend to identify the recapitulation as the reappearance of the one and the same theme that we previously heard, despite the fact that they are qualitatively different. Furthermore, we are even able to identify one and the same theme in different works of music through the use of musical quotation—e.g., Britten's incorporation of parts of Mahler's Fifth Symphony's second movement in his fourth *Sea Interlude*, which was discussed in the previous chapter.

Even though the two themes in both these cases are not numerically identical, we treat them as if they were; and were we not able to do so, our experience of music would be completely different from how it actually is. Scruton concludes that this must be because, in the imagined world of tones, the parts of a musical work can be intentionally reidentified over time. Since tones seem to be individuals in Strawson's sense, Scruton calls them "quasi-individuals," which we treat *as if* they admit of numerical identity.[39] On Scruton's account, then, tones are somehow able to bootstrap epistemically from our capacity to identify (and reidentify) them *intentionally* to our capacity to do so *numerically*, and this is what accounts for our actual musical experience. Unfortunately, Scruton never fills in the "somehow;" and thus this move is epistemologically dubious.

Individual tones, or notes, form chords and phrases, which form melodies, which form themes, which evolve through variations to form movements, the concatenation of which constitutes the musical work. It follows from this on Scruton's view that, similar to individual tones, musical works inhabit the imagined tonal world we superimpose onto the auditory reality we perceive. As a result, Scruton defines a musical work as the "intentional object" of an auditory pattern that we *hear in* that pattern.[40] Unless they possess some peculiar feature(s), notes are generally too simple to count as quasi-individuals, since we usually cannot reidentify them across time. But phrases, melodies, and the rest are complex enough to allow for reidentification. And because a musical work is the concatenation of its parts, it admits of reidentification in the same way.

The identity conditions of a musical work, according to Scruton, are relative pitch, duration, measure, and tempo, because they contribute to the work's *tonal organization*—i.e., its rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic arrangement.[41] Authentic versions or performances of a work

can vary in all sorts of perceptibly recognizable ways, so long as they completely preserve its

tonal organization. But if a version or performance disrupts or reorders any aspect of the work's

tonal organization, whether intentionally or not, it will not count as a performance of that work;

instead, it will count as a performance of a different, though historically related, work. From

this, Scruton can be understood as holding a type of property dualism with regard to the identity

of musical works, since he believes that a work is irreducible to the specific auditory pattern in

which it is perceived, since we can hear one and the same musical work in auditory patterns with

widely divergent qualities—played on different instruments, at different tempos, with different

dynamics, etc.[42]

In the acousmatic world into which Scruton alleges music induces us, sounds exist

independently from the objects that (typically) emit them. So musical works cannot be reduced

to or explained by the instruments that are the means of their physical production. Scruton

supports this claim by appealing to the fact that an individual melody can be passed from

instrument to instrument (or between instrumental groups) without our recognizing an

interruption. That is, despite the qualitative changes, we perceive and understand it as one and

the same melody.[43] Not only is this gap between the concrete (auditory) world and the tonal

(musical) world ontological, it is also epistemological.

Scruton contends that to hear the instruments in the music, so to speak, is to make use of

a notion of causation that is debarred from our experience of a musical work, *qua* quasi-

individual in the acousmatic world.[44] Consequently, we are not allowed to infer from a sound or

series of sounds the specific (or even type of) instrument that produces it because our musical

experience, *qua* purely auditory experience, does not possess the epistemic resources to justify

such an extra-musical causal inference.[45] But this is not to say that Scruton believes causation

plays no role in our musical experience. Indeed, he takes it to be central to how we perceive and talk about music. However, instead of the ordinary, prohibited notion of causation, Scruton claims that music exhibits a "virtual causation" in which "one tone does not merely give rise to its successor; it creates the conditions which make the successor a right or appropriate response to it."[46] Scruton believes the causal order we hear in tones, *qua* quasi-individuals existing in the imagined acousmatic world, to be that of reason-governed action, which requires the Fregean sort of imaginative listening he maintains.

Scruton further believes that imaginatively listening to music produces a "metaphorical experience" of the music. In particular, he claims that our experience of music is permeated with metaphors of *life*: of space, movement, and animation.[47] These metaphors, Scruton contends, are indispensable to our experience of music—take them away, he believes, and our experience would no longer be of music, but of chaotic noise.[48] Metaphors can be eliminated from descriptions of the material world (viewed scientifically), but not from descriptions of our musical experiences (viewed aesthetically), which Scruton takes to indicate that the experiences themselves must be metaphorical.[49] While this move is highly dubious, Scruton claims that it provides further evidence for his claim that music exists in the intentional acousmatic world,[50] far removed from ordinary experience, which motivates many of his skeptical arguments against musical representation that result from the seeing-in aspect of his account.

4.2.2. Music's standing within the seeing-in theory of representation

Since it is from unequivocally representational paintings that Scruton claims to derive his seeing-in account, a painting will help illustrate its three conditions. Without prompting from external aids, the *Mona Lisa* provides the visual impression of a woman to any viewer with even the most basic familiarity with the conventions within which it was produced. As a result,

condition (1), which states that we must become minimally aware of the work's subject without external aids, is met. The painting's title merely serves to tell us who this particular woman is, rather than to indicate that the work is (in fact) meant to be a representation. Additionally, in perceiving the woman, we simultaneously perceive the flat surface of the canvas, the thickness of the painting smeared on it, and all of the other sensible features of the medium. The painting satisfies condition (2), therefore, because in viewing it we are clearly aware of both the painting's surface features and the woman we see in them—i.e., the medium and the subject are appreciably distinct.[51] Finally, we would not say that someone who failed to see a woman in the *Mona Lisa* has fully understood the painting. We would say, instead, that their aesthetic experience of the work is greatly impoverished. To be interested in the *Mona Lisa*, therefore, is centrally to be interested in the woman da Vinci has put in his painting for us to see. For this reason, the work meets condition (3).

This points to a general feature of Scruton's account that Davies highlights,[52] and which he also shares.[53] For Scruton, an artwork is a representation (of a particular subject) only if its creator intends it to be.[54] Specifically, a representational artwork is created with the intention that Scruton's first three conditions be satisfied.[55] For an artwork to be representational, then, there must be sufficient background conventions within its medium to allow for representation; otherwise, the artist's intention is merely a wish that cannot be fulfilled.[56] While the visual medium of painting allows an artist's representational intentions to be met, Scruton and Davies believe that music's auditory medium (generally) does not.

Scruton begins his skeptical argument with the thought that if music is capable of representing anything, it should be able to represent sound. Consequently, he examines musical imitation as a possible route to representation.[57] Within the Western tradition, we find that music

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imitates both musical and (natural or manmade) non-musical sounds. The popular music in

Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and the Lutheran hymn in Richard Wagner's *Die Meistersinger von

Nürnberg* provide examples of the former sort of imitation, while the birdsongs in Beethoven's

Sixth Symphony and locomotive sounds in Arthur Honegger's *Pacific 231* provide examples of

the latter sort. Scruton contends that both types of musical imitation fail to meet his second

condition because, when perceiving them, the distinction between subject and medium dissolves

due to the simple fact that both are sound.[58]

On its face, this seems to be especially true for the musical imitation of musical sounds.

Scruton says of the first example, "The light orchestra placed on the stage by Mozart in *Don

Giovanni* imitates the sound of popular music only by reproducing it. Representation is achieved

through the purely theatrical, non-musical convention that what is on the stage is part of the

action."[59] In *Don Giovanni*, the route to representation is theatrical rather than purely musical.

Moreover, contemporary light orchestra tones are both the subject and the medium of Mozart's

work. Condition (2) is thus not satisfied, and so the music fails to be representational. Davies

concurs, noting that Mozart's reference to popular music is achieved by the direct quotation of

three other contemporary works, one of which was "*Non Più Andrai*" from his own *Le nozze di

Figaro*. The reason this does not count as representation, according to Davies, is that in making

use of these works Mozart does not change their idiom or alter them to fit the style of his work;

instead, he simply presents them unaltered.[60]

While *Don Giovanni* fails to satisfy Scruton's second condition, the other example of the

musical imitation of music offered above does not. Wagner does not merely reproduce quaint

church music in *Die Meistersinger*, an opera set in sixteenth-century Bavaria. Rather, as Kivy

observes, a full orchestra accompanies a sixteenth-century hymn, which utilizes the resources of

nineteenth-century harmony.[61] No adequately educated listener would confuse Wagner's music with quaint church music; instead, we hear a sixteenth-century hymn in the work. The distinction between subject and medium is upheld, since sixteenth-century church music (subject) is represented in a nineteenth-century style (medium). Generalizing from this, as both Kivy[62] and Davies[63] do, any musical work that imitates other music in a different style or idiom should be said to represent that music because not only does it satisfy condition (2), but the other two seeing-in conditions, as well. It satisfies them because (1) any sufficiently educated listener should recognize the music it represents and (3) such a listener will certainly be interested in its presentation in its new musical surroundings. Contrary to Scruton, then, the musical imitation of music sometimes counts as representation, by his own lights.

In addition to opposing the representational status of the musical imitation of music in general, Scruton also argues that musical imitations of non-musical sounds do not count as representations because they fail to distinguish between subject and medium, thereby failing to satisfy his second condition. But given Scruton's ontology, this is patently false. As we saw earlier, Scruton claims that music is not comprised of sounds, but rather of the tones that supervene on them. Ordinary notions of spatial location and causation apply to real world sounds, but not to tones. The musical imitation in these cases are not sound-to-sound, as Scruton contends, but tone-to-sound, since the musical tones correspond to real world sounds. Because the subject-medium distinction is upheld, the musical imitation of non-musical sounds always satisfies condition (2).

A problem arises, however. By imitating non-musical sounds, composers are often attempting to represent the objects that typically emit them, and not merely the sounds themselves. For instance, by imitating a cuckoo's call in his Sixth Symphony's second

movement, "*Szene am Bach*," Beethoven may also be intending to represent the (almost certainly fictional) cuckoo that makes it within the scene targeted by the movement. But Scruton argues that this is impossible. In attending to music we are attending to the acousmatic world whose sole occupants are tones and from which concrete particulars, such as the cuckoo and the clarinet that imitates its call, have been ontologically and epistemologically exiled. Moreover, the concrete particulars themselves are not imitated by the music; rather, the sounds they emit, which exist as independent secondary objects, are. While musical imitation may "gesture" toward concrete objects, according to Scruton, it cannot represent them.[64] It seems the musical representation of non-auditory objects is doomed from the outset.

Scruton's sole reason for disallowing gesturing as a musical route to representation is that our thoughts about what is being gestured toward by the music are indeterminate—e.g., all we know is that there is a cuckoo somewhere; we do not know what it is doing, where it is specifically located, and so on. This violates condition (4) because the music tells us nothing about the cuckoo. But since this condition has been rejected, this line of argumentation is blocked. As such, departing from Scruton, Davies contends that when hearing the clarinet in the Sixth Symphony's second movement, we are licensed to move in thought from "the sound of a cuckoo's call" to "the presence of a cuckoo," which we entertain rather than affirm.[65] This particularly Fregean locution[66] is perfectly consistent with Scruton's account of the imagination's role in aesthetic experience.[67] This means that, once condition (4) is rejected, Scruton's overall theory of our musical experience has within it the resources to accommodate gesturing as a purely musical route to representation (on his seeing-in theory).

Davies believes that we can move in thought from "the sound of *x*" to "*x*'s presence" because we regularly identify (and name) sounds by the objects that typically produce them, and

accurate imitation allows us to do this with music.[68] By making use of the strong association between sounds and the objects that typically emit them, the composer invites us to imaginatively posit the objects into our musical experience—i.e., we entertain (without affirming) the idea that in listening to the music we are also attending to the objects themselves. Gesturing via imitation, then, constitutes a genuine musical route to representation. It is certainly one that composers have often employed in their attempts to represent extra-musical objects, events, and states of affairs.

To be clear, gesturing occurs when a composer, in order to remind us of and thereby refer to a particular target—an extra-musical object, event, or state of affairs, comprising part of the work's subject—uses a musical phenomenon that imitates, or "sounds like," a sound typically emitted by that target. For instance, using the previous example, Beethoven imitates a cuckoo's call to refer us to the cuckoo that comprises part of the subject of "*Szene am Bach*." Because highly accurate musical imitations of non-musical sounds make us aware of their subjects unprompted, they also satisfy Scruton's first condition. Such imitations consequently meet condition (3) by interesting us in their intended subjects—e.g., by leading us to wonder about the cuckoo's activities and whereabouts within the scene depicted. Therefore, it is consistent with Scruton's pre-skeptical commitments—and since condition (4) is no longer of any concern—that easily recognizable musical imitations of non-musical sounds should count as genuine representations.

While Scruton could possibly allow this for a few special cases, he would counter that even if musical imitations can interest us in their intended subjects, most are not accurate enough to gesture clearly to their subjects on their own, and thus must rely on programmatic aids to secure reference to them. Since this violates his first condition, Scruton would conclude that

most musical imitations fail to be representational. Thus, while it seems we can easily recognize the clarinet's cuckoo call in Beethoven's *Pastoral* without prior knowledge of the program, it is almost certain that no listener would recognize the flute's nightingale call without additional assistance, since it is not very accurate. Scruton is correct that cases of recognizing the auditory object of a musical imitation unprompted are few.

But imitation is only one way that composers have attempted to secure reference (on my view, by exploiting antecedent resemblances) to non-auditory objects, events, and states of affairs. There is an important set of works of program music that make little or no use of the imitation of musical sound, among which are Hector Berlioz' *Symphonie Fantastique* and Richard Strauss' *Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche*. By their very nature, such works require programmatic aids in order for us to recognize not only their subjects, but, more fundamentally, that they are meant to be representations in the first place. Without Strauss having provided us with a title and program, we surely would not recognize the initial horn call in *Till Eulenspiegel* as the statement of the titular protagonist's theme, which, through repetition and variation, infects the rest of the orchestra in the work's introductory measures, leading to the D clarinet's statement of his second theme, which is also unknowable as corresponding to Till without the program.[69] According to Scruton, in such attempts at representation, "the composer is apt to depend on a specific literary reference in order to secure the hearer's complicity in what is better described as an imaginative endeavor than as an inevitable perception."[70] That is, since such pieces of music, which comprise nearly all program works, cannot guarantee that the listener will recognize the intended subject through purely musical means, they fail to be genuinely representational.

So far only unprompted musical imitations, which Kivy dubs "musical pictures,"[71] fully satisfy Scruton's seeing-in theory of representation. The question before us now is whether any sort of prompted musical representation, including ambiguous imitations of non-musical sounds and non-imitational attempts to represent non-auditory objects, events, and states of affair, meet Scruton's third condition. This is just the assimilation bias argument, which cannot be answered satisfactorily until we have a full account of how this sort of representation is achieved. This is the subject of Chapters 3 and 4, in which I argue that representation is guaranteed for these works because they resemble (in the right sort of ways) the things referred to or implied by their accompanying programmatic aids. Since this cannot be developed here, the following discussion will function to clear the ground for my theory's plausibility.

Scruton's third condition, which claims that an interest in representation requires an interest in a work's subject, presents the greatest challenge to the account of representation I wish to develop, for it implies that one cannot fully understand a successful artistic representation without recognizing that it is, in fact, a representation.[72] It would be absurd for us to say that a viewer who treats the *Mona Lisa* as a pure abstraction, and thus fails to see the woman in the painting, has fully understood the painting. But Scruton contends that this is not the case for the alleged musical representations under consideration, which he believes we can fully understand while being deaf to their representational content.[73] Moreover, Scruton argues that even if we are aware of a program work's representational claims, this will very rarely influence our understanding *of the music*, as an aesthetic object understood in purely musicological terms.[74] From this, Scruton draws the conclusion that musical form and representational content are wholly independent from one another, and thus that there is nothing particularly "musical" about how works of program music represent (if they do at all).

Davies believes that evidence for Scruton's conclusion resides in that fact that, as he correctly notes, "almost without exception, composers of program music have maintained that their music should possess a musical integrity that does not depend on its being 'representational'."[75] In other words, representational works aspire to the condition of absolute music because their composers wish them to be evaluable in those terms. No musically educated listener would accept a composer's attempt at representation as a legitimate excuse for bad music.[76] This objection to the possibility of musical representation only succeeds, however, if we accept the skeptics' move of setting musical form over and above representational content, which seems to be bolstered by the wish of composers of program music for their works to be evaluated in just this way.

While my response to this objection cannot be discussed until after the next chapter, for the moment it is worth noting that the form-content distinction is one that few practicing musicians take seriously. (It is also one that Goodman gives us good reason to be suspicious of.[77]) Of course composers want their program works to possess musical integrity. Their attempts at representation would be of no aesthetic interest if the relevant passages of the works did not fit in and further the musical progressions within those works.[78] Such non-cohesive musical representations would be curiosities meriting only a passing mention within the philosophy of music, similar to how the optical illusions of *trompe l'oeil* paintings are treated by theories of pictorial representation.

Davies further defends Scruton's conclusion, which upholds the distinction between musical form and representational content, by arguing,

> Even if the phenomenal experience differs between listeners one of whom
> attends to the programmatic title of a musical work and one of whom does not,
> it is not apparent that the difference need reflect a difference in musical
> understanding such as to debar the second listener from appreciating the piece
> as the work it is.[79]

The difference between the listener who experiences a program work as a representation and the one who does not resides almost exclusively for Davies in the terms each uses to describe the same aspects of the musical structure. Using Debussy's *La Mer* as his example, Davies says that a listener of the first sort may describe the work "in suitably 'watery' terms—ebb and flow, currents, waves, spume," whereas a listener of the second sort will instead talk of "the power of the bass-line, harmonic clashes, and so forth."[80] One way to explain this difference, toward which Scruton and certainly Davies are inclined, would be to claim that the first sort of listener simply lacks the requisite musicological training and technical vocabulary to describe the work in purely musical terms. As such, their use of representational language to describe *La Mer* merely serves as epistemic training-wheels, which, with practice, should eventually be removed as they acquire a formal musical education. (As will be made apparent in Chapter 4, on my theory, a combination of both ways of describing the piece of music is what education should achieve.)

One may be tempted to think that by positing two modes of understanding works of program music, one representational and the other purely musical, Davies has sown the seeds of the skeptical position's undoing. To counter Davies, one might argue that any utterance made by one listener can be translated into the other's vocabulary. When a listener of the second sort hears one of the first sort describe a certain part of *La Mer* in terms of "violently crashing waves," she takes this to mean, "a harmonic clash ending in a crescendo," and so on for any such description. What we have, then, are two commensurable ways of understanding the same musical phenomena. Both listeners may have a genuine musical understanding of the work, therefore, but simply express it in different terms. This response misses the mark, however, because, as Davies notes, the same sort of translation into the purely musical lexicon could be

done for one who, falling prey to the confirmation bias argument, mistakenly hears *La Mer* as a representation of the composer's mother and describes the same part of the work as "an emotionally turbulent time leading to an outburst of anger."[81] By the same line of reasoning presented above, this listener points to the same salient features and thus genuinely understands the music, but merely expresses it differently.

This consequence should be unacceptable to any defender of a robust theory of musical representation who takes the composer's intentions seriously.[82] In order to respond to the skeptics adequately, one must instead show that form and content are inseparable, that a representational understanding of program works enhances our purely musical understanding of them—i.e., to listen to such works as absolute music is not to understand certain relevant aspects of the music fully—, and vice versa. In short, one must show that we have a better *musical understanding* of program works as music when we perceive and understand them as representations, which I do in Chapter 4.

I lay the groundwork for this demonstration in the next chapter, in which I analyze each of the representational techniques outlined in the beginning of this chapter. Before doing so, it is worth noting that the very existence of such a typology, produced by looking at examples of works of program music, undercuts what Davies believes to be a knockdown objection to the very possibility of musical representation. He asks,

> Are there general methods for musical depiction such that, when they are followed, many different sounds, objects, or states of affairs might be depicted? Are there conventions (as there are for perspective in various styles of pictorial depictions) for mapping musical features onto the world in a systematic fashion? I think not.[83]

The analysis provided in the next chapter should prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that Davies thinks wrongly. I turn to this task presently.

CHAPTER 3

THE REPRESENTATIONAL TECHNIQUES

RESEMBLANCE, REFERENCE, AND THE GLOBAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHEME

In the previous chapter I responded to several skeptical objections to the possibility of musical representation in order to clear the ground for my theory. As this and the following chapter unfold, more evidence will be offered to bolster my responses to the skeptics. In the present chapter, I argue in favor of my theory's central ontological claim: that the exploitation of resemblances between the music and the world lies at the heart of musical representation. To do so, I analyze the techniques introduced in Chapter 2 to demonstrate that each acquires its representational abilities—or contributes to the representational whole of a program work—only in virtue of its function within the global, maximally coarse-grained correspondence scheme between the work and its subject (i.e., the structural resemblance that the work bears to its subject at the largest scale) and by exploiting or creating local, finer-grained resemblances between the work and its subject. The result is a holistic conception of musical representation, which asserts that a complex representing structure can be so only if all sorts of smaller things are right—where what counts as rightness in those items depends on the larger context. If there are too many mismatches at the local, smaller-scale levels, then the work would count not just as a highly inaccurate representation of its subject, but worse, as a misrepresentation, and thus a failure.

The techniques adduced in the previous chapter divide into two general classes based on how (from the smaller scale) they enable a program work (as a whole) to represent its subject. Members of the first class, which I call *correspondence-enabling resemblances* (*CeR*s), (when

employed at a lower level of *w*) secure nonlinguistic reference to *s*—or create local, finer-grained correspondences to *s* through purely musical means—by resembling their targets in *s*, $t_1\ldots, t_n$, in virtue of either (i) sharing some of their auditory or non-auditory properties, (ii) expressing emotions similar to those specifically expressed by or generally appropriate to $t_1\ldots, t_n$, or (iii) imitating certain aspects of $t_1\ldots, t_n$'s auditory organization. These techniques function representationally by resembling smaller-scale targets in *s*, and thus acquire some representational content of their own, which they then impart to the increasingly higher-level correspondences between *w* and *s* into which they figure integrally as *w* unfolds in real time.

Members of the second class, *resemblance-enabling references* (*ReR*s), have little or no representational content of their own—or, at least, whatever content they do acquire factors into their representational function within *w* less than that acquired by the *CeR*s. Instead, (when employed at a lower level of *w*) they activate some of *w*'s potential content at higher levels through direct conventional (linguistic or language-like) reference to their targets in *s* by either (iv) baldly stipulating them, (v) exploiting their preexisting associations with other musical works, or (vi) using nonstandard instruments (or using standard instruments in a nonstandard way) that draw attention to themselves within their surroundings. These techniques function representationally by fixing some of *w*'s smaller-scale targets in *s*, forming the basis of increasingly large-scale resemblances between *w* and *s* as *w* unfolds in real time. That is, *ReR*s fill in some of the lower-level placeholders left open by the global correspondence scheme between *w* and *s*, consequently becoming representational content for the next levels up the compositional hierarchy.

Both classes of techniques—any member of which can be used in concert with any other, as most program works make use of multiple techniques to render their subjects both more

accurately and successfully—function at the smaller scale within their works, and whatever content they may acquire (if any) is made available for exploitation by the higher levels of organization within the global correspondence scheme. One main difference, though, is that *CeR*s correspond to their targets because of properties, structures, or relations that they possess *internally*. *ReR*s rely less on their internal features to correspond to their ultimate targets in *s* and more on their *external* relationships to other parts of *w*—or, at most, they rely on each equally, as is the case with technique (vi). As a result, their representational function in *w* is less straightforward than the *CeR*'s.

So far I have sketched my account at a very high level of abstraction. I turn shortly to filling in the finer-grained details by way of several examples, analyzing each technique in turn and highlighting their relationships to each other. Before doing so, though, it is worth pausing to discuss my appeal to a certain set of binary concepts in the preceding discussion to articulate my account—i.e., more or less local or global, smaller- or larger-scale, lower- or higher-level, finer- or coarser-grained—as they pertain to the global correspondence scheme between a work and its subject.

The relationship between higher-level phenomena (objects, properties, structures, and relations) and the lower-level ones upon which they supervene is a deeply important one in many areas of philosophy. My theory argues that not only do lower-level musical phenomena exert an organizational (causal) force on higher-level ones, i.e., influence their arrangement and resulting audible effects, but also that higher-level musical phenomena likewise exert an organizational force on the lower-level ones that (fully or partially) account for them. This latter concept, known as "downward causation," is deeply controversial within the philosophies of mind and science.[1] I recognize that a host of problems arise when philosophers in these fields appeal to

downward causation to explain naturally occurring phenomena, such as the claim that conscious states affect change at the neural level or that biological processes reach down and alter the quantum events upon which they supervene. But downward causation poses fewer difficulties when used to explain intentionally organized systems, such as works of music (whether program or absolute), and the practices associated with their composition, consumption, and comprehension.[2]

In order to achieve a certain desired higher-level audible effect, say, unity or closure, the composer must arrange the participating small-scale phenomena in a certain way, or within a certain limited range of ways, to produce it. Here, the desired effect exerts a causal influence as to how the lower-level phenomena must be arranged in order for it to be achieved. Similarly, while the work is unfolding in real time, our experience of larger-scale musical phenomena may cause us to revise our prior (reflective or unreflective) judgments regarding the smaller-scale phenomena that give rise to them. For instance, the experience of a deceptive cadence may temporarily cause us to reconsider our judgment regarding the key of the tonic, as we desire, but ultimately fail, to make the cadence fit with the progression that precedes it, which produces the sense of unease intended by the composer. More locally, whether a chord or figure sounds stable or unstable, consonant or dissonant, introductory, transitional, or resolutive, and the like, depends upon its immediate and, I claim, (less obvious) distant surroundings.

For instance, Roger Scruton says of musical dissonance that its "harmonic essence […] lies not so much in the pattern of overtones that causes us to register it, as in the relations of tension, transition and resolution that [one chord] bears to surrounding chords."[3] (As I discuss in the next chapter, Scruton wrongly denies that the properties exhibited by a given auditory phenomenon are affected by temporally and hierarchically distant musical phenomena.)

Consequently, the exact same sounds (when heard by themselves) may exhibit different properties, sometimes radically different ones, depending upon their musical surroundings. A perfectly standard jazz augmentation of a major chord, e.g., would sound intolerably dissonant in most classical works. Such differences can become so stark that the sounds may even be perceived and recognized as distinct musical phenomena. As Scruton notes, offering numerous helpful examples, "musical analysis often distinguishes identical sounds. Depending on context, a chord may be given several conflicting descriptions."[4] The identities of musical phenomena are as much dependent upon extrinsic relationships as on their intrinsic properties.

I suggest broadening Scruton's previous statement (in a way that he would likely be amenable to) to assert that, more fundamental than technical musical analysis, ordinary (largely unreflective) musical experience often distinguishes identical sounds, as divergent analyses often depend upon ordinary experience. Our abilities to discriminate both difference in sameness, as the above suggests, and sameness in difference (which psychologists call "perceptual constancy," of which there are multiple types), such as (musically) when we experience a melody played on different instruments or in different keys as "the same melody" or (visually) when we experience the objects in our rooms as retaining their shapes and colors from dawn to dusk,[5] reside near the core of our aesthetic experiences.

The properties exhibited by musical phenomenon φ, and even φ's identity, depend not only on φ's internal features but also on its extrinsic relationships to temporally near and distant musical phenomena at the same, lower, and higher levels of w's compositional hierarchy. The properties and identities of these phenomena, in turn, depend upon their relationships to both φ and other musical phenomena, from the most elementary musical objects and processes to the maximally coarse-grained aesthetic object we experience and understand as w. That is, the set of

properties exhibited by individual musical phenomena, which is the source of their very individuation, is conferred via the complex, dynamic, trans-hierarchical interplay between and amongst the parts the systematic totality of which comprises w as a unified musical whole. And there seem to be no principled grounds by which to deny the perceptual or evaluative impact that one musical phenomenon, no matter how temporally or hierarchically distant, can have on another. This account, especially the last claim, is by no means uncontroversial. It is given an extended treatment and defense in the next chapter.

Similarities to other types of art are illuminating here. Regarding visual media, Ernst Gombrich notes that, similar to musical properties, the identities of visible properties, which we might normally conceive of as "simple," are in fact necessarily relational. For instance, we perceive a white tablecloth in the shade as brighter than a piece of coal in the sunlight even if, isolated in a side-by-side comparison, the latter is in fact lighter than the former. The same is true in paintings. A swath that we perceive as bright white in one painting may appear dull or even not white in another due to their respective surroundings.[6] The identities of local visual phenomena, or at least the experiences they engender, are (thus) deeply affected by their extrinsic relations to other visual phenomena.

Turning to higher-order pictorial phenomena, consider Dutch baroque interior paintings, many of which include depictions of other paintings.[7] The representing painting's subject is a particular room and, to render it accurately, one of its particular targets, a hung painting of, say, a landscape, must be included. For simplicity, call the representing painting *Interior*, and the represented painting *Landscape*. *Landscape*, as one object among many, bears certain spatial and other visible relationships to the other objects in the room, and those relations, taken abstractly, comprise the global correspondence scheme between *Interior* and its subject (the

room). Taken in isolation from its surroundings, the stretch of *Interior*'s canvas in which *Landscape* is located may contain trees, streams, woodland creatures, and the like, but *Interior*, taken as a whole, does not—trees (et al.) were not typical seventeenth-century Dutch furniture. While *Landscape* represents a natural setting, *Interior* represents a domestic setting that happens to include a landscape-representation (*Landscape*), as well as other objects and the relations they bear to *Landscape* and to each other. So the representational whole of *Interior* affects the identity of its parts—painterly trees (et al.), rather than real ones, are among its targets, and their internally possessed properties, structures, and relations to each other comprise some of *Interior*'s representational content.

Similar to these examples from painting, higher-order linguistic phenomena play an important role in the identities (or meanings) of lower-order phenomena in both ordinary language and the literary arts. While the meanings of words are relatively fixed, they can be stretched and given shades of nuance, and their specific senses depend upon their surroundings. What a given word means in one context may be radically different in another. And the more words we put together (in phrases, sentences, paragraphs, etc.), the more opportunity there is for variation—as in metaphor, pun, double entendre, irony, and other such linguistic devices. Moreover, their specific connotations may be anticipated by earlier words (phrases, etc.) or may require revision due to later words (phrases, etc.). For instance, how we interpret the sentence, "He went to the bank where his father's belongings had been deposited," will depend upon whether we are being told about a fiduciary transaction or a steamboat wreck. This is as true of ordinary language as it is of poetry. Indeed, part of the poet's craft is to elevate this banal fact about ordinary language to the level of high art.

Moving from words to the things they are about, in works of narrative literature, as well as in plays and films, later moments in the plot can force us to revise our prior judgments regarding specific characters or events (e.g., the revelation that Norman Bates is his mother in Hitchcock's *Psycho*), which, for suitably sensitive and attentive readers or viewers, can also be anticipated (foreshadowed) by previously occurring events (e.g., that Norman's mother is never actually shown in any previous scene). This deeply interconnected, complex network of temporally unfolding lower- and higher-order, finer- and coarser-grained inferential relationships between (fictional or fictionalized) objects, events, and states of affairs comprises the narrative, which is a dynamic hierarchical structure, bears a strong analogy to works of music. It is for this reason that music is better suited to representing (dynamic) narrative subjects rather than (relatively static) pictorial ones. To return briefly to the discussion from the previous chapter, the standards set by pictures, contrary to Scruton, are simply not the right ones by which to judge music's representational possibilities.

The above suggests that musical phenomena (objects, events, and states of affairs, and the properties they exhibit), just like swaths of paint and stretches of painted canvas, words (phrases, etc.), and literary characters and events, do not acquire their properties and identities in a vacuum. Any attempt to understand them must involve an appeal to the other phenomena with which they are related within their respective artworks. As this is the case, the complex network of upward and downward relationships subsisting (through mutual feedback) between (a) a musical whole and its parts and (b) its subject, s, and the system of smaller-scale targets that (i) give rise to s and (ii) are brought about by s as a result of its association with the musical whole, are of the utmost importance to my theory. Their ontological and epistemological relevance will be made clear as the discussion proceeds in this and the next chapter, respectively.

1. Technique (i): simple property sharing

      The title of this section can be interpreted in two ways: that technique (i) functions representationally through either "simply sharing *single properties*" or "the sharing of *simple properties*." The ambiguity here is intentional, as untangling these two senses figures prominently in my analysis of the technique. I argue that the former interpretation (with some important qualifications), and not the latter, is the correct way to describe how technique (i) functions representationally within a work of program music. Peter Kivy thinks otherwise, arguing that some program works represent their subjects not only in virtue of sharing single properties with them, but more importantly by sharing simple properties with them. But the preceding discussion seriously calls this view into question, and none of the examples Kivy adduces actually support it.

      Kivy's main example is a moment from the first movement of Part I of Haydn's oratorio *Die Schöpfung*, "*Im Anfange schuf Gott Himmel und Erde*." This movement renders the words of *Genesis* 1:1-4 into music, building to the climactic moment when God introduces light into the universe. Haydn uses a C-major chord played *fortissimo* by the entire orchestra, c, to represent God's First Light, l. The reason Haydn's intention succeeds, Kivy concludes, is solely because c and l are both irreducibly bright, and not because of any structural similarities the passage in which c is embedded might bear to its larger-scale biblical target (of which l is a part).[8] But a closer examination of this passage reveals a complexity to c (and its correspondence to l) that Kivy suggests it lacks, which indicates that the mere possession of "simple" brightness by both c and l, taken in isolation from their respective organizational systems, does not and cannot bear the representational burden by itself.

C-major chords are not bright *simpliciter*. In one context, that arrangement of notes (C, E, G) may be perceived as remarkably bright, as is the case with *c* in any worthy performance of *Die Schöpfung*, while in another its brightness may be unremarkable, while in still another it may be perceived as not bright at all, perhaps even as dull. This makes musical brightness strongly analogous to visual brightness, since, as discussed above, the latter is necessarily relational. Kivy himself provides contextual clues for why we perceive *c* as bright, and thus a compelling reason to believe, despite his claims to the contrary, that its brightness is not simple (i.e., irreducible and non-contextual):

> At the opening of the *Creation*, after the representation of chaos (*Die Vorstellung des Chaos*), Haydn muddles about in the key of C minor, in subdued tones and low registers, with the chorus and bass soloist accompanied only by muted strings. The sound is dark throughout, and reaches its nadir on the words: "And God said: Let there be light, and there was…," sung by the chorus a capella, in unison. But when the word "light" occurs again, in "and there was *light*," the full orchestra, woodwind, brass, strings unmuted, comes on like Gangbusters, on the "brightest" imaginable C-major chord.[9]

From Kivy's own description, we discover that at least three larger-scale structural relations are relevant to *c*'s brightness: (1) the dynamic shift from soft to loud, (2) the move toward higher registers, and (3) the modulation from C minor to the parallel C major. Haydn establishes our musical expectations of lowness, quiet, and instability at the outset of the movement, and then violates all of them simultaneously the moment *c* is played, which is why it targets *l* so effectively. *C*'s brightness relative to what precedes it, rather than just its internal qualities is the resemblance Haydn actually exploits to represent his intended subject. Similar to the universe prior to God's intervention, what once was dark and unstable becomes extremely bright and stable. The dynamic shift serves to increase the volume of *c*'s brightness, with the *fortissimo* ("as loud as possible") contributing to make *c* sound as bright as possible.

Brightness is not only *not* a simple, irreducible property of *c*, it turns out that it is not even a single property of music in general. We use "bright" to describe numerous diverse musical phenomena. Among them are (a) *timbre*: sounds possessing fewer overtones are typically brighter than those with more overtones; (b) *harmony*: the more consonant and resonant a chord is, the brighter it typically is; (c) *pitch height*: higher registers are typically brighter than lower ones; (d) *relative pitch*: an ascending melodic line in any mode is typically brighter than the corresponding descending one; (e) *pitch contour*: keys that begin on higher notes are typically brighter than those beginning on lower notes; and (f) *relative intonation*: scale modes with less flattened intervals are typically brighter than those with more flattened intervals.[10]

The brightness of the C-major chord in "*Im Anfange schuf Gott Himmel und Erde*" is accounted for by its fewer inharmonic overtones, higher register, increased consonance and resonance, and fewer flattened intervals relative to the preceding passages. Similarly, *l*'s brightness is accounted for by its transparency, luminosity, and voluminosity relative to the preceding chaos. Within their respective contexts, *c* and *l* are relatively clear (timbrally and visibly), relatively high on a continuum (of pitch and of luminosity), and fill whatever space they occupy (the concert hall and the universe). So, contrary to Kivy's assertion, *c*'s brightness is not simple and irreducible, but complex and relational. By my lights, this only serves to enhance *c*'s resemblance to *l*, enabling it to acquire representational content of a much finer grain, which it then imparts (both prospectively and retrospectively) to the increasingly higher-level resemblances within the global correspondence scheme between *Die Schöpfung* and *Genesis*.

Kivy's conclusion that *c* represents *l* simply because they share "simple" brightness rests on his assumption that *c* could not target *l* if it were not also bright. This suggests that Kivy advances a "bottom-up" conception of musical representation in which the representation of the

whole is derived from, and is fully reducible to, the representational abilities of its parts. That is, w represents s because w's parts—smaller-scale musical objects, relations, and states of affairs (relations holding over n-tuple objects), the systematic concatenation of which ultimately gives rise to w—already represent their small-scale targets, the systematic concatenation of which ultimately gives rise to s, on their own.[11]

For Kivy, the first movement of *Die Schöpfung*, m, represents the narrative content of *Genesis'* first four lines, g, because (at the small scale) c represents l, which is due to the fact that they share a single, salient property (brightness). If c did not represent l independently of its function within m, then, according to Kivy, m could not represent the climactic moment of g. M would instead represent God's failed or aborted attempt to introduce light into the chaos, and thus *Die Schöpfung* would misrepresent the events referred to in *Genesis*. As a result, for Kivy, the representational burden depends almost entirely on the successful execution of that C-major chord. If we cannot perceive it as bright, then we have witnessed a representation of God's failure or abortion rather than the creation Haydn intended.

In arguing against this conception, I do not mean to discount the importance of c's brightness. That c is bright contributes to m's successful representation of g; however, c does not represent l simply because, similar to l, it is also bright. Brightness is a complex property that c comes to possess as a result of its relationships to other (higher-order) parts of m. C's ability to represent l, therefore, is more a function of its relations to its surroundings than of whatever features it happens to possess independently. In short, c derives its ability to represent l from m.[12]

Contrary to Kivy's account, c possesses very little representational content of its own when taken in isolation. Moreover, if context were not deeply important, as Kivy seems to

believe, it would seem to follow that every C-major chord exhibiting brightness, regardless of the work, would represent light (or, for that matter, anything else that is also bright)—an utterly indefensible consequence, as the resemblance of local properties is not sufficient for representation. Instead, I contend that c's potential representational content is activated by its surroundings in m, causing it to exhibit properties it lacked on its own (e.g., as Kivy describes it, that c is "the 'brightest' imaginable C-major chord"), which feed back into our musical experience and cause us to modify our prior judgments regarding those surroundings—that they were darker, more muddled, and less stable than previously recognized. C and its surroundings mutually qualify each other in our experience of m, enabling c to better approximate l, which (at the higher level) causes m to represent g more accurately.

My theory offers a holistic conception of representation in which Kivy's "bottom-up" approach is integrated with a "top-down" approach. Viewed from the top down, we get an overall sense of the global correspondence scheme between w and s. We get this view on *Die Schöpfung* from both its evocative section titles and the libretto to which Haydn set the music, which describes the general narrative structure the work is meant to mirror, beginning with God's creation of the universe out of chaos and concluding with Adam and Eve's first joyous hours in the Garden, which is supplemented by our background knowledge of *Genesis* (upon which Haydn relies). This gives us a very general interpretation scheme as to how the music will unfold that we subsequently employ, from the bottom up, in our experience of the musical progression as it is performed. Each section of the piece fills in the finer-grained details—the lower-order placeholders—left open by the global correspondence scheme between the work and its subject by approximating their targets by resembling some of their properties, structures, or

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relations. How this operates within our experiences of sophisticated works of program music is the subject of the next chapter.

Technique (i) functions representationally by sharing perceptual properties with lower-level, smaller-scale targets in *s*. The perceivable effect in *Die Schöpfung* of the low, muted strings in C minor is one of persistent darkness, while that of *c*, i.e., the higher, louder, abrupt shift to C major, is one of intense brightness. By sharing these properties with their targets at the lower level, the musical shift from darkness to brightness (a higher-order relationship between two lower-lower phenomena) corresponds to the visual shift described in the libretto, following the narrative presented by *Genesis*. How the properties are related to one another at a higher level within the music, rather than the properties themselves, is doing most of the representational work. But that those properties are similar to those of their correlates in the subject furnishes them with some representational content of their own within the overarching correspondence scheme, which they immediately give up to the increasingly higher levels within the scheme as *Die Schöpfung* unfolds in real time, resulting in a more accurate and successful representation of the biblical story of God's creation of the universe.

But what is it to say that the work and its subject share the properties of darkness and brightness? It certainly seems to be a category mistake to say that *c*'s brightness is of the same sort as that possessed by *l*. If *c* is bright and the passage that precedes it is dark, it is only in virtue of prior linguistic conventions—a metaphorical transference of property predicates from vision to audition. Technique (i) is unproblematic when the perceptual properties shared by *w* and *s* are auditory, such as when they have corresponding moments of loudness or quiet, but it seems less clear of properties exhibited in more than one sense modality, such as brightness, darkness, softness, hardness, thinness, thickness, sweetness, and sourness. When *w* and *s* "share"

such properties, do they share anything more than *synaesthetic predicates*—mere labels, "bright," "dark," etc., that just happen to apply to more than one sense modality as a matter of linguistic convention? Or are those shared predicates stronger than mere homonyms, directing our attention to genuine similarities between the auditory properties exhibited by parts of *w* and the other sorts of sensible properties to which they correspond in *s*?

Kivy claims that the application of "bright" to *c* and *l* is *univocal*, and thus the word points to *the same property* possessed by both. If "bright" were used equivocally, its application to both *c* and *l* would be merely homonymous and it would thus pick out two different properties. The consequence of this from the perspective of Kivy's bottom-up account is that *c* could not represent *l*, since they do not genuinely share brightness. Kivy's argument for the univocity of "brightness" as applied to auditory and visual phenomena is unconvincing because it rests entirely upon his indefensible claim that brightness is simple, irreducible, non-contextual, and thus (following Locke) "unanalyzable." As Kivy puts it, "we cannot point to anything *else* in the music, or in the light, to support our claim that both possess brightness (that is, that both are 'bright') other than the property of brightness itself."[13] However, above I pointed to numerous features in virtue of which both *c* and *l* are bright.

Kivy's account of technique (i) fails because the criterion for property sharing, strict sameness, is much too strong—the C-major chords's brightness in *Die Schöpfung*, the darkness and softness of the strings in the passage preceding it, the thin timbres of a flute, the thick timbres of a cello, and the sweetness or sourness of a note, are simply not of the same sort as their visual, tactile, olfactory, and gustatory counterparts. Albert Hayward also recognizes this defect of Kivy's account, and suggests a convincing reformulation of Kivy's criterion. Hayward argues that the univocity of predicates and (thus) the sameness of properties are not needed. He

insists, "[all that is needed] to show that there is a *resemblance* between musical and visual brightness is to establish some intersensory similarities among the things the word applies to without requiring that it name one and the same thing in each case."[14] This is precisely what I have doen above in showing how c and l are both correctly described as "bright"—i.e., that both are relatively clear, high on their respective continua, and fill the spaces they occupy. Auditory and visual brightness are similar in these and other relevant respects, but they are not identical. And it is intersensory similarities such as these that technique (i) exploits (locally) when dealing with synaesthetic properties to acquire some representational content of its own and, as a result, its function within the global correspondence scheme between w and s.

2. Technique (ii): shared emotional properties

Expressive predicates, such as "sad" and "joyful," also apply correctly to both musical and worldly objects. Like synaesthetic property predicates, their application is also equivocal. The emotions works of music express are unarguably different in kind from those exhibited by the beings that actually feel them. As a result, the fact that a work expresses certain emotions (e.g., sadness), and can thus be correctly described using expressive predicates (e.g., "sad"), can never be singly responsible for musical representation.[15] Expression's role is instead to help qualify or specify the representational content made available by other features already present in the music, and thus to fill in the finer-grained details left open by the global correspondence scheme between the work and its subject.

Kivy offers Mendelssohn's *Die Hebriden* as an example of expression's role in musical representation. The representation of a generic seascape is made possible by numerous structural similarities between the music and the sea.

> [The work] begins with the unmistakably seething ebb and flow of a heavy sea,
> represented by the persistent repetition of a musical figure obviously designed

to give the impression of a periodic wave motion or swell. The motive "ripples" and "heaves," and is both melodically and harmonically constructed to allow for its reiteration on various scale degrees, and in various keys, for the purpose of representing the lapping or the breaking of waves on the rocky coast.[16]

That this is specifically the representation of the famed Scottish seas rather than some other seascape, according to Kivy, is secured by the music's expressive qualities: the musical waves are "dark, brooding, melancholy, like the expressive quality of the Hebrides' seas themselves."[17] That the Hebrides' seas express these emotions is evidenced by (and partly accounts for) the wealth of Ossianic mythology surrounding them, to which Mendelssohn certainly alludes throughout the work.[18] Kivy's claim about the specific association between these emotions and the Hebrides, however, is too strong. Who is to say that other seascapes, say Lake Superior in the winter or certain stretches of the Bosporus, do not also express these emotions? I suggest weakening Kivy's claim to state simply that the work's expression of these emotions, (in part) by connecting it more closely to the mythology surrounding its subject, allows it to represent the Hebrides' seas more accurately and successfully than it otherwise would.

Die Hebriden offers a good example of a work's overall expressiveness strengthening its general correspondence to its subject. For a case in which local moments of musical expression, targeting local moments in the subject, contribute to the large-scale representational whole, take Bach's oratorio *Matthäus-Passion*. At the highest level of the correspondence scheme, the work's two parts accurately approximate the episodic structure of the narrative presented in chapters 26 and 27, respectively, of the Gospel of Matthew—a claim supported by their evocative movement and section titles. But the work would hardly count as a successful representation if the specific content of the scenes, the large-scale arrangement of which it corresponds to globally, were not also mirrored in the smaller-scale musical phenomena that give rise to the work's structure. And on this score, Bach does not disappoint. Each scene is

masterfully rendered within the unfolding musical fabric, mainly through the exploitation of expressive similarities between particular musical events and either (a) the objects, events, or states of affairs supplied or implied by the Gospel of Matthew, or (b) an appropriate emotional response to them, as the libretto often comments upon, rather than merely describing, the scenes depicted therein.

The aria "*Erbarme dich,*" introduced in the previous chapter as an example of tone-painting, in virtue of its lyrics and, more fundamentally, because of its location within the global correspondence scheme between the work and its subject, targets the scene in which Peter laments his denial of Christ:

> Then he began to call down curses on himself and he swore to them 'I don't know the man!' Immediately a cock crowed. Then Peter remembered the words Jesus had spoken 'Before the cock crows, you will have denied me three times.' And he went out and wept bitterly. (Matt. 26: 74-5, New International Version)

In addition to its location within the correspondence scheme, "*Erbarme dich*" shares numerous finer-grained internal features with its target, the result of which is a stronger resemblance between them. There is, e.g., the descent in the natural minor scale of B in which the cellists pluck their strings in a series of triplets to evoke the tears streaming down Peter's cheeks. The most important similarities, though, are tied less strongly to the mimicry of human action and more strongly to the expression of emotion.

"*Erbarme dich*" presents three subjects for our attention. Peter (firstly) exists in the narrative past. His actions are reported and reflected upon by the evangelist, who (secondly) exists for us in the present as portrayed by the alto voice. Naomi Cumming, in her illuminating and provocative analysis of the aria, states,

> Although the narrative remains in the past tense, Peter's weeping is made present by the music, which recreates the descending melodic contours of his denial. So it is that the moment opens up to a subtle play of strongly evoked

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> presence with known absences. Peter is absent from the high-priest's
> courtyard, the stage of reported action, but his emotion is present in the
> evangelist's voice. This is not, then, his weeping alone, but incorporates the
> narrative persona. The evangelist's agency is merged with it, reinterpreting the
> emotion in the audience's present time. It is at this point, when the narrator has
> attained the transparency of identification with Peter, that the violin enters with
> an introduction to the aria.[19]

The solo violin is the aria's third subject. The violin's association with, but lack of definite

connection to, both Peter and the evangelist—i.e., the absence of an identifiable target for it—is

used by Bach, according to Cumming, to induce his intended audience of Lutheran believers to

project themselves into the unfolding musical and dramatic fabrics by empathizing with the

intense melancholy and grief that it expresses. "The music forms the listener's experience,"

Cumming states, "and in its unique negotiation of the tension between striving and grief, it

creates a knowledge of something that has been formerly unknown, something that asks to be

integrated in the mind of the hearer."[20]

The violin functions representationally by prompting suitably sensitive listeners to

sympathetically identify with Peter's emotional state, allowing us to understand its particular

quality and intensity, left wholly underdetermined in Matthew 26: 74-75, which simply states

that he "wept bitterly." Bach uses the violin, in other words, to cause his audience to feel Peter's

melancholy and grief *as he felt it*, filling in a significant detail left open by both the gospel and

the libretto, and thereby supplementing our understanding of both. In doing so, Bach exploits a

particular tenet of Lutheran theology, namely, that Peter's denial of Christ is a symbol of any

individual's movement away from God.[21] "*Erbarme dich*," then, is intended as an occasion for

both confession and repentance. The self-confession and repentance implied in Peter's weeping

prompts the evangelist, as she reports it to us, to ask God for forgiveness for her own self-

dislocation from Him, which, in turn, is meant to prompt the audience to do the same—the "I"

("*ich*") in, "*Bin ich gleich von dir gewichen, stell' ich mich doch wieder ein*," which translates as,

"Although I have strayed from thee, yet I have returned again," while sung by the alto, is ambiguous between Peter, the evangelist, and us.[22]

"An invitation for the listener to identify with the action," Cumming says, "is a strategy of liturgical Passion settings" present throughout *Matthäus-Passion*. Bach employs this strategy in "*Erbarme dich*" through the violin, which "foreshadows an aria in which an alto voice speaks repentantly in the first person, without further specification of his or her identity. This persona is that of the listener, the believer who responds to the drama by identifying with it."[23] (A similar strategy is employed by Vaughan Williams in *The Lark Ascending*, as I discuss below.) The violin's significance, therefore, in addition to being representational and dramatic, is ultimately spiritual, which is Bach's intention, as he wrote the oratorio for Good Friday services (originally in 1729 in St. Thomas' church, Leipzig) when the Passion is traditionally enacted.[24] And the violin gains all of its significance by way of its expressive content.[25]

Were the violin to express emotions other than melancholy and grief, it would inaccurately render Peter's emotional state and "*Erbarme dich*" would thus fail to target his lamentation. A performance so poor that we were unable to perceive and understand the violin as sympathizing with Peter would simply not fit the libretto's narrative content, leading to a mismatch between it and the music's representational content. In such a case, the inaccuracy would be so unforgivable that we would be inclined to say that the aria misrepresents its subject, as there would be a tension between (a) the large-scale structural resemblance between the Passion of St. Matthew and Bach's musical version of it and (b) the local expressive disagreement between Peter's lament and "*Erbarme dich*," which, within the global correspondence scheme, should correspond to each other. Such local disagreements resulting from the mismatch of finer-grained elements would negatively impact the global agreement

between the work's coarse-grained structure and that of its intended subject; as a result, the status of Bach's *Matthäus-Passion* as a representation of the relevant biblical passages would be called into question. The aria's location within *Matthäus-Passion* by itself, therefore, is not sufficient for its representational success. A complex representing structure can be so only if all sorts of smaller things are right.

3. Technique (iii): auditory imitation

Technique (iii) functions representationally through what in the previous chapter I referred to as "gesturing." Gesturing occurs, recall, when a composer, in order to remind us of and thereby refer to a particular extra-opus target, *t*, uses a musical phenomenon that imitates, or "sounds like," a sound typically emitted by *t*. By recognizing the *resemblance* between the intra- and extra-opus auditory phenomena, *i* and *e*, respectively, we recognize *w*'s *reference* to *t*, which facilitates our understanding of *s*. By resembling *e*, *i* acquires some representational content of its own, which it then imparts to *w*'s higher-level resemblances to *s* as *w* unfolds in real time. There are numerous examples of auditory imitation within the Western classical repertory, but I begin with the three birdsong-imitations from Beethoven's Sixth Symphony.

To make us aware of the birds in "*Szene am Bach*," Beethoven chose instruments that closely match the auditory qualities of their songs: flute for the nightingale's song, oboe for the quail's, clarinet for the cuckoo's. Moreover, the musical line of each voice mimics the relative pitches and pitch contours of its corresponding bird's song. The imitations are thus achieved by both timbral and structural resemblances to each birdsong. Unlike Olivier Messiaen's catalogues of musical birdsongs for piano, which involved the meticulous transcription of slowed-down recordings into musical notation,[26] Beethoven by no means offers pitch-for-pitch reconstructions of his extra-musical targets. Since the individual pitches that comprise real birdsongs occur in

such quick succession that they are inaudible to the human ear, what we actually perceive are audible slurs whose peaks, troughs, and general sonic contours Beethoven captures in the melodic lines. The resulting structural resemblances are at a much coarser grain than those in Messiaen's works, but Beethoven's birdsongs nonetheless resemble the actual ones—they simply do so more abstractly by distorting certain features of the birdsongs in order for them to fit more naturally within their (strictly "classical") musical surroundings.

In order to facilitate gesturing, musical imitations must produce a *recognizable auditory resemblance*, no matter how opaque, to the sounds they imitate. This is true not only of imitations of melody, as the previous examples highlight, but also imitations of rhythm and harmony—the latter occurring mostly in the imitation of other musical works or styles. Similar to melody, both rhythm and harmony are structurally defined: rhythm is the result of the temporal arrangement of pitches, while harmony pertains to their scalar (intervallic) arrangement. Arthur Honegger's *Pacific 231* provides an excellent illustration of the representational function of rhythmic imitation, as its accelerating and decelerating rhythms produce a recognizable imitation of the rhythm of a steam locomotive's journey.

If we accept Honegger's explanation of *Pacific 231* at face value, however, imitation was not his goal, but an auditory byproduct of the structural resemblance that he exploits to achieve his actual goal. "It has not been my intention," he said, "to imitate the sound of the locomotive itself, but rather to use musical structures to translate the visual impressions and physical pleasure conveyed by the locomotive." Later, he claims that his goal was to "create a sense of rhythm accelerating mathematically while the speed of the motion itself decelerates."[27] While the work's tempo remains basically constant, Honegger progressively reintroduces themes, whose note-values he has shortened, which he overlays onto the current musical line. The

resulting perceptible effect is that of the rhythm accelerating as the auditory texture becomes increasingly thick—i.e., as more and more parts are played simultaneously. This comes to resemble the cumulative momentum of the locomotive's vast mass gathering speed.[28] So even if Honegger did not intend to imitate a locomotive's sounds, he succeeds in doing so, as a nearly unavoidable consequence of any performance of *Pacific 231* that preserves its rhythmic relationships is the production of a musical progression that sounds sufficiently similar to the sounds of moving locomotive.

Beethoven and Honegger's works suggest that making use of a resemblance along at least one of the three dimensions of pitch-relations (melody, harmony, or rhythm) may be necessary for technique (iii)'s representational efficacy, since we do not seem to find representations in music that work without at least one of the three. For further evidence I return to Beethoven's *Pastoral*.

Besides their melodic similarities, the musical imitations of the real birdsongs were also achieved by the similarities in timbre between them and the instruments on which they were played. This seems to indicate that in order to succeed musical imitations must resemble the things imitated not just in terms of their melodic, rhythmic, or harmonic structures, but also in terms of some of their more salient nonstructural auditory properties. Consequently, Beethoven's birdsongs seem to indicate that structural and nonstructural auditory resemblances are jointly necessary for technique (iii) to function representationally. The question, though, is whether similarities in nonstructural auditory qualities are always necessary for the musical imitation of worldly sounds to be successful.

The answer is negative because, e.g., it would be possible for some listeners to recognize Beethoven's imitations of some of the birdsongs even if they were performed on instruments

whose timbres vary drastically from those of the actual birdsongs, so long as the melodic relationships are preserved in the performance. Such is the case with Messiaen's bird works for piano. Though they are less recognizable as birdsongs, they are not unrecognizable, and do not consequently lose their status as imitations due to timbral dissimilarity. Similarly, so long as their pitch contours are preserved, both Beethoven's and Messiaen's musical birdsongs would count as imitations even if they were transposed into different keys—though likely not into a different mode, from major to minor (or vice versa). This is because what generally matters for imitation are the melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic relationships between pitches and not their simpler auditory properties, such as timbre and loudness.

While this holds generally, there are cases of musical imitation for which the "sounds like" relation, and its contribution to securing the work's representation of its subject, cannot be fully accounted for by an underlying "is structured like" relation. For instance, there is a passage in the fourth movement of Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra* in which the orchestra laughs derisively following a parody of the "invasion" ostinato from the first movement of Shostakovich's Symphony No. 7 in C major, punctuated by a large, unmistakable musical "raspberry" carried out by glissandi on trilling trombones and woodwinds. (To my ears, at least, both of these moments explicitly allude to Strauss' *Till Eulenspiegel*, a discussion of which will occupy a good deal of the next chapter.) That the music sounds like laughter is partly due to its having the same rhythm as a laugh; and that it sounds like a raspberry can be partly accounted for by the similarity in vibrato and pitch contour (a quick shift from very low to high). However, another musical passage having the same rhythm as the laugh-imitation (a percussion passage, say) might not be a suitable representation of laughter unless it also *sounds like* laughter by sharing salient nonstructural properties with laughter. The same holds of the latter raspberry

imitation. At least as important as the structural features in both cases is the strong timbral resemblance between music and target, which makes the musical gestures sound more like human utterances. The selection of the trombones and woodwinds for the raspberry is significant because their timbres are strongly similar to human utterances, unlike those of, say, a flute, which, as Beethoven recognized, is more appropriate to render bird utterances musically.

In this passage from Bartók's *Concerto*, "sounds like" and "is structured like" intermix and reinforce one another to represent laughter in response to Shostakovich's symphony. But the former relation cannot be fully reduced to the latter in accounting for the passage's representational success or, more fundamentally, its status as a representation. Rhythmic similarity, a type of structural resemblance, does not seem sufficient by itself to render laughter; nor does the similarity of pitch contour alone seem sufficient to render a raspberry musically. Nor, for that matter, do the timbral resemblances in each case. Instead, the timbral and structural similarities work together to secure the passage's representational content, which Bartók uses to communicate his distaste for Shostakovich's symphony.

Bartók began to convey this attitude in the parody of the ostatino that immediately precedes the laughter and raspberry. Bartók slows down and simplifies Shostakovich's ostatino, offering a noticeably dumbed-down version of the original. (This is an instance of technique (v), which I discuss below.) It thus makes sense within the *Concerto* itself why the music, which had been dynamic and whimsical up to this point, would be so repulsed by the introduction of a relatively dimwitted theme into its fabric. So even without recognizing the passage as alluding to another work, we can perceive and understand the music as commenting upon itself. But upon recognizing the reference to Shostakovich, the music's self-commentary facilitates Bartók's extra-opus commentary.

In the *Concerto for Orchestra*, Bartók employs the representation of laughter and a raspberry, secured by the joint exploitation of structural and timbral resemblances, to achieve extra-musical linguistic reference to his beliefs about and attitudes toward Shostakovich's Seventh Symphony. The other class of representational techniques, the *ReR*s, work in the other direction, employing various sorts of conventional reference to secure a piece of program music's resemblance to its subject. I investigate them presently.

4. Technique (iv): bald stipulation

When technique (iv) is employed, the audience must rely upon the composer's overt stipulation or strong implication in the program that a given musical phenomenon (chord, figure, motif, melody, etc.), φ, corresponds to a specific target or set of targets in s. How φ relates to, transforms, and is transformed by temporally near and distant musical phenomena at the same, lower, and higher levels across w's hierarchical organization, rather than φ's internal features, is used by the composer to approximate φ's target(s)'s functional role(s) within s. To take a favorite example, when the violin line in Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending* ascends, the lark to which it corresponds also ascends; when it descends, speeds up, slows down, etc., the lark's movements are meant to correspond accordingly. The same is true of the *CeR*s, but their internal features figure much more centrally into their intra- and extra-opus relationships—i.e., how they function within their musical surroundings and (consequently) how they approximate their targets' functional roles in s, respectively; as a result, they acquire some representational content of their own due to their internal resemblances to their targets, unlike technique (iv), which only gains representational content at higher levels of the compositional hierarchy due to its relationships to increasingly higher-order musical phenomena within w that are used to approximate larger-scale targets in s.

The violin line in *The Lark Ascending* does not (i) share any relevant perceptual properties with larks, (ii) express emotions commonly expressed by or appropriate to larks (though it does express emotions appropriate to the poetic lark that is its subject), or (iii) imitate sounds emitted by a lark. Instead, it musically renders a lark's movements, which are extrinsic relations pertaining to its change in physical location, speed, and the like. However, to accomplish this, Vaughn Williams exploits the violin's emotional effect on us. The violin line, making brilliant use of a musical pun, causes the spirits of suitably sensitive listeners to "soar," similar to the lark's flight, which serves to direct their attention to the work's broader spiritual implications, as the lark's journey is intended by the composer, following the George Meredith poem that was the work's inspiration (and from which it borrows its name), as a metaphor for his hope for humanity after the horrors of World War I. The metaphor is further achieved through Vaughn Williams' use of the pentatonic scale, which frees the violin from a strong tonal center, and the metrically unspecified cadenzas, which gives the violinist greater freedom of expression, both of which suggest the liberation of the human spirit from the forces of oppression.

Taken in isolation, however, technique (iv) is quite austere, since the musical phenomena it employs need not exploit any germane internal resemblances to their targets in *s*. But because of its austerity, bald stipulation serves to highlight the complex and dynamic way in which all of the techniques operate within and help to establish the global correspondence scheme between *w* and *s*. Its *ReR* classmates specify their targets in such a way that they reduce our reliance on the program, while technique (iv) actually increases our reliance on the program—e.g., we are reliant on the title, *The Lark Ascending*, to perceive and understand that a lark is the violin's target. Techniques (v) and (vi), conversely, lessen our reliance on the program by drawing upon the resources of members of the other class, acquiring their abilities to refer to their ultimate

targets in *s*—to which they need not, though often do, bear a germane internal resemblance—by resembling intermediate targets not in *s*.

The programs of works that make use of technique (iv) explicitly or implicitly associate recurring musical themes with particular objects, events, or states of affairs. Kivy says that such themes "are not 'inherently' representational but exist merely by virtue of a convention internal to the musical work," likening them to the way in which a mathematician uses an arbitrary symbol to stand for some definite quantity.[29] The associations between the themes exploited by this technique and their targets are conventional, as they bear no relevant internal resemblance to each other, and thus representation does not occur at the local level. Representation instead occurs at higher levels up the compositional hierarchy, as the themes' relationships to their musical surroundings are revealed as the work unfolds in real time. While such themes possess no representational content of their own, the composer uses their transformations, developments, and reintroductions within the overall musical progressions to mirror the narrative structures suggested by the programs. What we end up with is a series of nested correspondences in which the appearance of finer-grained, lower-level resemblances has implications for the coarser-grained, higher-level correspondences between *w* and *s*. For instance, Kivy says of the witch's theme in Engelbert Humperdinck's opera *Hänsel und Gretel* that, while it expresses "the moods appropriate to the wicked and supernatural," it "becomes her representation simply by occurring in one form or another whenever she is mentioned, thought of, or appears [in the corresponding narrative]."[30]

Staying with this example, despite lacking much intrinsic representational content, the witch's theme possesses potential representational content because of the extrinsic relationships it bears to its musical surroundings. The theme's potential content is activated, and further

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qualified and refined, by how it functions within the increasingly larger scale musical structures in which they are nested. The theme furnishes the other levels of *Hänsel und Gretel*, as they arise within and are further developed by the musical progression, with representational content by creating higher-level resemblances to their targets. In short, the witch's theme comprises part of the higher-level phenomena's intrinsic content. These more local resemblances to their extra-musical targets give rise to larger-scale correspondences when they are repeated later. Where they reappear in the musical progression and whether they are altered or unaltered affect the representational content we initially ascribed to them. There is a feedback between the finer- and coarser-grained resemblances as the work progresses, which ultimately gives rise to the global correspondence scheme between w and s. These complex and dynamic interactions are the focus of the next chapter. The preceding will suffice for present purposes.

The initial statements of the themes employed by technique (iv) offer us a baseline from which to understand the actions of and changes in their targets through our understanding of the musical development. It does not matter that they neither structurally nor nonstructurally resemble their targets intrinsically. What matters is how the themes are transformed and developed at the increasingly higher levels within the compositional hierarchy as w progresses. Any instance of bald stipulation, therefore, is similar to the C major chord in Haydn's *Creation*, which, as I discussed above, does not represent God's First Light solely (if at all) in virtue of its internal morphology or properties, but rather because of its location within the work's large-scale mapping of the narrative. The difference, though, is that the C major chord corresponds its target in part by resembling its properties, while the themes employed by technique (iv) require conventional reference (by the composer in the program) to their targets in order to create a higher-level resemblance within the global correspondence scheme.

5. Technique (v): conventional association

Technique (v) imitates (quotes, paraphrases, or alludes to—in short, recognizably approximates) musical phenomena from other works of music and exploits their preexisting associations to specific extra-musical objects, events, or states of affairs. By translating these recognizable (most likely well-known) musical phenomena into w's musical fabric, this technique converts the things they are commonly associated with into targets for w by way of a sort of musical metonymy, which helps to establish and flesh out s by introducing finer-grained details into the maximally coarse-grained correspondence scheme between w and s. Similar to technique (iv), the musical phenomena employed by technique (v) need not bear any germane internal resemblances to their target(s) in s to fulfill their representational function(s).

In order for the extra-opus reference to function representationally, the composer must presume the audience's familiarity with the extra-musical association. If they fail to grasp either the reference to the other work or its association with the thing he or she intends it to target, they will fail to grasp his work's representational content. But failure by the listener does not imply that the composer has failed. In such cases, the burden often shifts to the listeners, who must educate themselves in order to become genuine members of the composer's intended audience, with whom he or she takes for granted a shared background. A listener can join the composer's community by acquiring knowledge of the association, an academic exercise that most often will simply involve reading about the work under consideration. Such information is usually included in the program notes provided before a performance of the work. As soon as the reference and association are apparent, the listener becomes a full-fledged member of that work's audience and she should be able to recognize the passage's target. As a result, the work will begin to make sense to her as a representation.

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Although they contain musical imitations of other melodies, rhythms, or even harmonies, as when other pieces make use of Wagner's famous "Tristan chord," passages making use of conventional associations do not represent in quite the same way that imitations do. Imitations gesture toward extra-musical objects by resembling the sounds they typically emit. Rather than imitating the sounds of their targets, technique (v) functions representationally by imitating other musical works, exploiting a preexisting relationship between the other work and something external to it. The imitated passage need not imitate or even be used to represent (within the original work) the extra-musical thing with which it is associated. All that matters is that a relationship exists between the imitated work and the imitating work's target. Just like regular imitations, conventional associations gesture to some extra-musical target, which we then import into our experience of the musical development. The recognition of the imitated passage is supposed to trigger in us the thought of the object, event, or state of affairs with which it is associated, which we then take as the imitating passage's target. In this way, conventional associations are similar to the themes employed by technique (iv). The difference, however, is that instead of stipulating the target explicitly, the composer does so implicitly by expecting the audience to recognize the imitation of the other work. Gesturing does occur—it simply involves the intermediate step of referring to another work. Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* makes use of this technique multiple times.[31]

Tchaikovsy wrote the *1812 Overture* to commemorate the Battle of Borodino, which marked the turning point in Russia's war against Napoleon. It begins with the melody of "*Spasi, Gospodi, lyudi Tvoya*", a Russian Orthodox hymn, played somberly by the strings. Any informed audience member will immediately associate the melody with the hymn, which translates as "O Lord, Save Thy People." Hymns almost always contain a note-to-syllable

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correlation between the music and text; thus, there will usually be a recognizable imitation by the melodic line of the vocal line. By making use of the melody, Tchaikovsky secures some of his work's representational content without the program's help. That is, the melody indicates to the audience that the music corresponds to what the hymn's lyrics refer to or imply. Through purely musical means, Tchaikovsky exploits the hymn's meaning to foreshadow the coming violence, offering a purely musical prayer for the Russian victims of the coming battle.

The battle is represented through a sort of musical metonymy. Due to their associations, the melody of "*La Marseillaise*" is used as the French army's leitmotif and the melodies of several Russian folk songs function as leitmotifs for their army. The initial statement of "*La Marseillaise*," a brass fanfare, which itself is commonly associated with a call to battle (as was seen in the previous chapter in William Byrd's imitation of one in *The Battell*), maps the French invasion. This is followed by the Russian folk theme "*U vorot, u vorot batjuškinyh*," which translates "At the Gate, At Grandfather's Gate," indicating the French arriving onto the battlefield. The overture has once again transformed a previously existing song's lyrics into potential representational content through purely musical means. In its next section, the musical development maps interwoven fragments of the French, Russian, and original melodies (organized contrapuntally) onto the raging battle—the soldiers as they intermingle in an exchange of blows by artillery, bullets, blades, and fists. This passage contains scored cannon shots, emphasizing that the battle is being fought. After a long passage for strings marked by several spiraling *diminuendo*, corresponding to the turn of the tide, the initial hymn returns on the full orchestra. This time it offers thanks to God for Russia's victory and liberation. It is immediately followed by a quick-stepping folk song, which maps the Russians chasing the retreating French from the country, which is played in counterpoint with "*Bozhe, Tsarya*

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khrani!" ("God Save the Tsar!"), punctuated by church bells and more cannon shots, all of which serve to indicate Russia's triumph.

While this example provides numerous instances of the technique, conventional associations do not exclusively convert lyrics into representational content—i.e., exploit a melody-lyric connection through quotation or paraphrase, thereby bringing the lyric's referents to bear on our understanding of the music. The technique can be used in other ways to secure a work's representational content. Perhaps the most famous example of such a common association is the tritone, the musical interval spanning three whole tones. Since at least the medieval period, the tritone has been known more commonly as "the Devil's chord." While the association was likely acquired because of the interval's restless dissonance, the exact reason is not important. What is important is that within the history Western music the tritone has become associated with the Devil. The association was so strong, in fact, that for centuries the tritone was explicitly prohibited by the Church for fear that it called the Devil when sounded. Perhaps this was why sometime around the early eighteenth century the interval also became known as *diabolus in musica*.

Camille Saint-Saëns exploits this historical connection between the interval and the Devil in his *Danse Macabre*. The work's program refers to a folk legend in which the Devil appears in a cemetery each Halloween at midnight to play his fiddle for the awakened dead whose skeletons dance wildly until daybreak. The association is so strong that one could imagine there being a particularly superstitious listener who even today could convince herself that Saint-Saëns has literally called the Devil into the music when the tritone is first sounded on the *scordatura* violin. Such a person might say a prayer to banish Satan from the theatre or perhaps even flee to protect her soul from his wickedness. A more secular listener would merely recognize the association

and hear it as the Devil's introduction into the unfolding narrative. The selection of the violin is also of representational interest because, similar to the tritone, the instrument has also been associated with the Devil. Thus, as will be made clear momentarily, the *Danse Macabre* also offers us an illuminating instance of technique (vi).

6. Technique (vi): nonstandard instrumentation

Turning to technique (vi), when we listen to works of music performed, we hear violins and other instruments, but we typically do not pay much reflective attention to the sounds that they make *as of* violins. We instead perceive and recognize sources tacitly while attending to their *audible effects*—the properties they exhibit (timbral, dynamic, expressive, etc.); the melodies, harmonies, and rhythms they produce; their relationships to the audible effects of other instruments; and so on. In short, when listening to music, the sounds and not their sources are the direct objects of our attention. I do not mean to suggest, as Scruton does, that we (therefore) cannot infer, or are precluded from inferring, sources from the sounds they emit while listening to a work being performed—were this the case, gesturing would not offer a route through which works of program music represent their subjects. I am merely suggesting that the instruments comprise a part of the phenomenal background of our musical experience, while the sounds they produce, and the increasingly higher-order musical phenomena that supervene on them, constitute the foreground. But as a work is unfolding, especially when we are attending to a live performance of it rather than merely listening to a recording of one, our focus easily slips between foreground and background, and doing so comprises an important part of our musical experience (and of our aesthetic experiences more generally).

We normally only take conscious note of the instrument(s) when we recognize a particular musical gesture or passage as displaying a high degree of technical difficulty, and we

admire the talents of the performer(s) accordingly when they execute it successfully. But such

mental notes are made in passing, and the instruments quickly recede once again into the

phenomenal background behind the dynamically unfolding musical fabric. The instruments

employed by technique (vi), on the other hand, e.g., cannon, wind machines, and spoons, force

themselves upon our attention and into the foreground. Due to their general unusualness in a

piece of classical music, as well as their specific unusualness relative to their musical

surroundings in w, these sounds refer to their sources by resembling (indeed, by sharing every

audible property with) the sounds emitted by them, thereby converting the sources into explicit

targets for w. Consequently, similar to technique (v), these instruments help to establish and

flesh out s by introducing finer-grained details into the maximally coarse-grained

correspondence scheme between w and s.

Nonstandard instrumentation is a version of conventional association that exploits the

relationships between sounds and the objects that make them, instead of those between melodies

and objects, events, or states of affairs (or the lyrics of vocal lines which refer to them). By

incorporating a nonstandard object's sound into the score, a composer gestures toward that

noisemaker by exploiting its unusualness within a musical setting. The object's sound calls

attention to itself, causing us to think of the object, which we consequently take to comprise part

of the work's representational content. It is a type of musical self-reference. The *1812 Overture*,

in addition to containing multiple instances of conventional association, also makes use of

nonstandard instrumentation by calling for a cannon to be fired and church bells to be rung.

To illustrate how the technique works, take the *Danse Macabre*. While the violin is a

standard instrument within the Western classical canon, its tuning in the *Danse Macabre* is, by

definition, nonstandard—this is simply what *scordatura* means. The violin has been associated

with the Devil since its invention in the mid-sixteenth century.[32] The reason for this is likely

because it quickly became the preferred accompaniment for dances, which had been associated

with wicked and licentious behavior since ancient Greece (viz. bacchanalia). Within the

Christian tradition, the Devil was taken to be the cause of such behaviors. From this, his

association with the violin was born. Much like its prohibition of the tritone, at one time the

Church denounced troubadours who played the violin specifically because of its demonic

associations—likely out of fear that the women these troubadours were wooing, possessed by

satanic forces, would be unable to control their baser sexual appetites. It is also possible that the

violin's association with the Devil came about via an intermediate association between the

Emperor Nero, an early persecutor of the Christians who they justifiably demonized, and his

fiddle. But as with the tritone, the genesis of the violin's association to the Devil is unimportant.

What matters is that such an association exists, which composers of program music can exploit.[33]

So the violin represents the Devil in the *Danse Macabre* doubly: (first) by sounding the

tritone interval, and (second) by being his folkloric instrument of choice. The work begins with

a D note sounded twelve times on the harp, which shares a rhythmic and numeric structure with a

clock striking midnight, the story's temporal setting. The tritone is then sounded, introducing the

Devil into the music, which corresponds to his appearance in the cemetery. The dance's theme,

a descending scale on the violin, is next introduced, and is subsequently repeated throughout the

work. This corresponds to the Devil calling the dead from their graves and playing for their

skeletons as the dance begins. This passage is followed by one further instance of nonstandard

instrumentation. Saint-Saën uses a xylophone early in this section to indicate the fact that

skeletons, rather than some other demonic entities, are the dancers. Since we recognize both the

violin and the xylophone through their timbres, one might be tempted to conclude that they

function representationally through simple timbral resemblance. However, as I discussed above with Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra*, these timbral resemblances work together with both local and global structural resemblances between the music and the narrative in which they are located to represent finer- and coarser-grained aspects of the work's subject.

An important fact about this representational technique is that standard instruments almost always can replace nonstandard ones. Performances of the *1812 Overture* usually replace the cannon that Tchaikovsy's score calls for with timpani. Timpani produce a similar auditory effect and work together with their location within the music-to-narrative correspondence to represent cannon fire. The use of the nonstandard instruments prescribed by the score lends more than mere epistemic saliency to these works' representation content. While other instruments could possibly be used in a performance with little affect on the work's status as a representation, the violin and xylophone in the *Danse Macabre* and the cannon in the *1812 Overture* produce stronger representations than their replacements. The violin could be replaced with another instrument, but the association with the Devil would be severed. As a result, the conductor or performers would need to stipulate in their program that the replacement instrument corresponds to the Devil. Regarding the xylophone, however, it is difficult to imagine what sort of instrument could replace it to produce the desired auditory effect, as its eerie vibrato just feels like the right instrument to depict skeletons. Were another instrument selected, a purely stipulative act would be required to secure the audience's grasp of its connection to the undulating undead.

Performances that make use of the prescribed nonstandard instruments will more accurately represent their works' subjects by putting flesh on the barebones, course-grained structural correspondence—and, in the case of the *Danse Macabre*, the xylophone actually gives

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the reanimated skeletons referred to in the program their bones. As a result, such performances will be more successful in communicating their subjects to us. The correspondence (or sometimes identity) of timbres between the music and its subject gains its general representational relevance in the same way that shared synaesthetic or expressive properties, and the themes employed by technique (v), gain theirs, namely, in virtue of their location within the overall musical structure.

7. Conclusion

The preceding examination provided brief analyses of several works of program music to illustrate how each of the representational techniques function within the global correspondence scheme between the works and their subjects. These analyses are by no means complete, as in each section I concentrated on the technique that was its focus, largely to the exclusion of other techniques that may also be functioning within the works analyzed to represent their subjects more accurately and successfully. Most program works employ multiple techniques, along multiple dimensions—both structural (melodic, harmonic, rhythmic) and nonstructural (timbral, dynamic, expressive)—, across varying expanses of the compositional hierarchy. The resulting picture of musical representation is an extremely complex one, as is the epistemology it entails. Working out the details of this picture, which I do by (a) showing how all of the techniques be integrated within sophisticated works of program music and (b) evaluating its epistemological entailments, are the next chapter's goals.

CHAPTER 4

MUSICAL UNDERSTANDING

HEARING, REHEARING, AND INTERPRETING WORKS OF PROGRAM MUSIC

Sophisticated works of program music will integrate several of the techniques examined in the previous chapter to varying degrees. As a result, they will consist of a patchwork of finer- and coarser-grained resemblances (with various degrees of nesting) to the external objects, events, and states of affairs referred to or implied by their accompanying programmatic aids. The epistemology that results from this is as complex as the ontology just described (if not more so). There is not just one rigid correspondence scheme, provided by the program notes and selected in advance, that we apply in perception to a performance in order to understand it as a representation of the work's intended subject. Understanding musical representations is rather a dynamic process. The program by no means fully determines the targets. It neither provides us with a complete picture of those properties, structures, and relations of the intended subject mapped by the music nor offers us detailed approximations of them. Instead, it gives us an imprecise description of the targets, which serves to delimit the field of possibilities for the resemblances comprising the work's representational content.

We consequently have a complex epistemic task as the work unfolds before our ears in real time. In order to recuperate its representational content and perceive, understand, and appreciate the connections between the music and its subject, we must attend to numerous resemblances, occurring along multiple dimensions, at different levels, and across varying expanses of the compositional hierarchy, whose valuations and weightings we must constantly update and revise as the work is performed. Sophisticated program works demand listeners who

are up to this task. This chapter explores what it takes for listeners to perceive, understand, interpret, and evaluate musical representations.

1. Listening with understanding

Before I address what is required to understand musical representations, I must first clarify what it is to understand music as such, since the former is integrally bound to the latter. There are multiple competing schools of thought in the philosophy of music regarding our musical understanding. One school is *concatenationalism*, whose leading advocates are Jerrold Levinson, Nicholas Cook, and Roger Scruton.[1] The basic tenet of concatenationalism is that the experience of *local coherence* is all that is required to understand a piece of music. This involves a dynamic interaction between memory, perception, and expectation such that what we perceive at any given moment of the musical progression "makes sense" or "feels right" as a continuation from the moment just perceived (now vividly remembered), which then causes us to vividly anticipate (with varying degrees of exactitude) the immediately proceeding moment.[2] The almost entirely unconscious synthesis of previous, current, and expected musical events (spanning only a few measures) constitutes our musical understanding on this view. The more vivid our memories of recently occurring musical events and the more often our expectations are fulfilled by the actual musical progression, the better we understand the work because we more strongly sense all of the work's parts as "hanging together" or cohering.[3] Since conscious reflection upon large-scale musical forms or higher-order relationships as we perceive the unfolding musical progression would only inhibit or interfere with this process, concatenationalists deny that it plays any part in our musical understanding.[4]

While concatenationalism offers many insights and is highly suggestive, the phenomenology and epistemology just described offer an incomplete picture of our actual

musical experiences. The concatenationalists are correct that as musical works unfold in real time we only *literally* perceive, *vividly* remember, and *vividly* anticipate local small-scale forms and relationships. But to claim that this accounts for *nearly all* of our musical experience and that being able to synthesize local musical events in this way from moment to moment is *all* that is needed to understand music is false. Musical works are not mere series of constantly coupled moments, and we do not experience them as such. The small-scale forms and relationships we perceive give rise to higher-order forms and relationships, which are not directly perceptible but indirectly inferred from the auditory surface features we literally perceive. Contrary to concatenationalism, being consciously aware of these architectonic structures and reflectively relating them to one another across hierarchic levels and distant temporal stretches comprises a central part of our actual musical experience. Because of their importance to our experience, these reflective abilities should figure prominently into any account of musical understanding.

Levinson, who mounts the strongest defense of concatenationalism, attempts to hedge his bet on this point. He claims that the synthesis of local events accounts for our "basic" understanding of music, which is a necessary condition for any type of higher-order musical understanding.[5] I am perfectly comfortable with this assertion, as I believe that the unreflective synthesis of small-scale musical forms and relationships gives rise to our reflective awareness of large-scale ones. However, I go a step further in contending that our reflective awareness of large-scale structures often feeds back into our unreflective synthesis of small-scale ones, and that the dynamic, mutual qualification of reflective and unreflective judgments lies at the core of our musical experience. I share this view with Leonard B. Meyer, a strong proponent of *architectonicism*, concatenationalism's principal competitor, whose other adherents include Stephen Davies and Peter Kivy. Their view, briefly stated, is that a reflective awareness of at

least some of a musical work's higher-order architectonic structures and relationships, in addition to the unreflective synthesis of small-scale forms, is required to understand the work.[6]

The concatenationalists attempt to refute architectonicism, but instead argue against a straw man. They do so by distinguishing between *intellectual listening* and *musical listening*, and claim that the architectonicists take the former to be the essence of our musical experience.[7] Musical listening is simply the (low-order) unconscious synthesis of local musical events that the concatenationalists advocate. Intellectual listening, conversely, involves the conscious application of higher-order musicological concepts (acquired from formal training) onto our moment-to-moment perceptions of the musical progression, placing what is perceived under technical descriptions. If we actually did this, the concatenationalists contend, we would miss many of the small-scale features (the raw sense-data) that make any sort of higher-order musical understanding possible. Consequently, intellectual listening must be separated from our experience of music as such. It belongs instead, they claim, solely within the purview musicology. Musicologists are often interested in the imperceptible, and thus *nonmusical*, causes of the perceived musical surface: the performance or composition practices and techniques that account for the auditory effects we perceive. These interests differ from those of the ordinary listener, whose musical understanding concatenationalism attempts to defend. But architectonicism as it is actually practiced is not incompatible with this goal. Indeed, it also claims to defend the ordinary listener's understanding.

Architectonicism contends that listeners do not need a background in music theory and analysis to become aware of a work's most important higher-order structures and to relate hierarchically and temporally distant events consciously. Central to an ordinary listener's musical understanding, on this view, is the ability to mark off stretches of the musical

progression as units of individual significance, as *individuals* in P. F. Strawson's sense, which architectonicists believe we can consciously recognize and reidentify without needing to place under technical descriptions.[8] Instead of classifying an event as, e.g., "the main theme of a rondo," ordinary listeners can simply index it as "*that* bit (of the musical progression)" and subsequently reidentify it when it is wholly or partially repeated in new musical surroundings and recognize it as an object undergoing change when it is developed or transformed in some way. An educated listener many simply replace the untrained listener's indexical ("that bit") with a definite description ("the main theme"), but her experience and understanding of the event as a musical individual will be essentially the same as her uneducated counterpart's. The difference between the musical understanding of educated and uneducated listeners, then, is one of degree rather than one of kind. The musical and intellectual modes of understanding are not absolutes, as the concatenationalists contend, but instead exist along a continuum. Understanding musical works involves a gradual process in which we make our way through numerous gradations of increasing awareness and comprehension; and any higher-order musical understanding we may achieve is an extension from the "basic" one advocated by concatenationalism.

One type of understanding that is derived from our basic unreflective abilities, I contend, is our *representational understanding* of works of program music. If this constitutes a genuine mode of musical understanding, concatenationalism must be false. This is because our experience of program works is shaped and guided by our reflective awareness of their intended subjects: the small- and large-scale narrative structures, as well as the objects, events, and states of affairs contained therein, referred to or implied by the programmatic aids accompanying the music. As a result, understanding a program work's representational content entails reflecting on

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hierarchically organized musical structures, identifying and reidentifying musical events as individuals, and consciously recognizing how these structures and individuals are related.

This sort of understanding is open to both educated and uneducated listeners. Take Richard Strauss' *Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche*, Op. 28. The musical individual identified by an uneducated listener as "that bit" and by an educated listener as "the main theme," must be reflectively connected by both listeners with the object given by the program, Till Eulenspiegel, in order to understand it as a representation. Because the program establishes relationships between both the large-scale musical and narrative structures in general and a specific seven-note figure and Till Eulenspiegel in particular, the theme's introduction into the musical progression marks Till's introduction into the associated narrative. When the theme changes in some recognizable way, Till changes in an analogous way because the musical progression must structurally resemble the narrative suggested by the program in order to represent it both accurately and successfully. If we were unable to demarcate these and other bits of the musical progression as individual units of significance, perceiving and understanding the work as a representation would be impossible.

Musical individuals vary in complexity, as do their relationships to each other. Individuals can exist on any level of the musical hierarchy, overlap with each other, share elements, admit of multiple degrees of nesting, and interact with each other to produce new higher-order individuals. Any musical object or event complex enough to be reidentified can count as an individual. This will normally exclude single notes and chords, unless they possess some peculiar feature or features causing us to consider them as such. The most basic elements of musical structure in the Western classical tradition are notes: pitched sounds arranged into accented or unaccented beats, which form chords when harmonized. The successive

arrangement of notes and chords forms short, incomplete tunes (figures and motifs), and the arrangement of beats produces rhythm. In most works, tunes are the smallest units of musical significance. The concatenation of tunes forms melodies, which in turn form themes, which evolve through repetition and variation and are often (contrapuntally) layered with other melodic lines to form movements, the aggregation of which constitutes a musical work. This progression from tunes to entire works reflects the levels of complexity achievable by musical individuals: single tunes can be reidentified later in new musical surroundings, entire works can be reidentified in separate performances, and so can any sort of sufficiently complex musical object or event in between.

Every aspect of a given work's structure that has the potential to be an individual will not always function as such in our experience of a given work. But there will always be at least *some* aspects of that work's structure such that, if we fail to recognize them as individuals, we will either misunderstand or fail to understand the work to some extent. If we do not properly set off and attribute the appropriate significance to certain musical objects and events, the musical progression will not "make sense" or "feel right" from moment to moment. And if we misunderstand a work at the most basic level, this will usually have devastating consequences for any higher-order understanding we hope to achieve. If, e.g., we do not properly distinguish the seven notes comprising Till's main theme in Strauss' tone poem as a unit of individual significance, not only will we misperceive and misunderstand their development and interactions with other musical structures from moment to moment, but we will also be unable to recognize the work's representational content. As a result of misperceiving the music, our grasp on its connection to the narrative provided by the program will be greatly loosened.

A consequence of not properly identifying Till's main theme as an individual is that the listener will experience the musical objects, events, and states of affairs as failing to match up with the extra-musical ones that Strauss intends them to represent. Upon recognizing the mismatch, a generally attentive and appreciative listener will revaluate her previous experience of the theme and attempt to recalibrate the faulty boundaries that she has projected onto the musical progression until they fit the narrative. If successful, she will now be able to recognize a central feature of the work's representational content. By modifying her representational understanding, she will simultaneously correct her basic musical understanding of the work, since the musical progression should now make sense to her from moment to moment. This case reveals that understanding the music at a higher level can influence our understanding of the work at the most basic level, as a type of reflective listening has fed back into and shaped this listener's unreflective experience of local coherence. Recognizing Till's theme as an individual, therefore, is central to our understanding of Strauss' tone poem both as music and as a representation.

The above demonstrates that understanding program works as representations can enhance our understanding of them as music—a fact the skeptics challenge in the assimilation bias argument, which I believe the discussion currently underway thoroughly disproves. To what extent our musical understanding is enhanced will vary from piece to piece. The detailed program notes of *Till Eulenspiegel* influence our moment-to-moment experience of the music more strongly than, say, the evocative section titles of Beethoven's *Pastoral* Symphony. Yet in both cases, regardless of detail, the program conveys a story that makes reference to certain local events, as well as to specific objects and states of affairs, whose relationships give rise to a hierarchic narrative structure (however imprecise it may be). Prior knowledge of these *extra-*

musical small-scale events and large-scale structures gives us a sense of how the *music* should proceed: they prime us to listen for certain sorts of musical events and structures and suggest candidate schemas for interpretation, leading us to search for ways to map the music onto the narrative both locally and globally.

We learn from the program, e.g., that Strauss' version of Till's story is episodic, and we thus expect the music to reflect this overarching structure. This expectation is confirmed by our musical experience, as the work is arranged such that Till's two themes alternate with several contrasting themes. It is further confirmed in advance to an educated listener by the work's subtitle, *nach alter Schelmenweise—in Rondeauform—für grosses Orchester gesetzt*, which explicitly states that the piece is "*rondeau*" form. Interestingly, the piece is not in rondeau form, but is in a variation of rondo form. The former was a Medieval and early Renaissance musical form based on the poetic form of the same name, and is distinct from the latter, which was developed during the eighteenth century. By mislabeling the form that the musical progression takes, Strauss intentionally destabilizes our expectations from the outset. However, he does refer us back to the historical period during which the piece is set, the fourteenth century, and he also draws our attention to the connection between music and literature so relevant to the piece. Now, if our expectations are rarely confirmed by the music, i.e., if we consistently fail to map musical to narrative structures as the work progresses, then either (a) we are attending to improperly individuated musical events, whose boundaries we must modify; (b) the work is a weak or inaccurate representation, and thus we need to expend more mental energy to perceive and understand its representational content; or (c) the work misrepresents its intended subject, and any mapping we discover between work and subject is essentially illusory.

The relationship between program and music is not unidirectional; instead, they mutually enhance our aesthetic experience and understanding. Not only does knowledge of the story suggested by the program enrich our musical experience, but the music also enriches our understanding of the story because it is "brought to life," so to speak, through the music. The program explicitly refers to certain objects, events, and states of affairs that are mirrored in the music. But the program will always underdetermine these things to some degree, as even the most detailed descriptions will fail to capture many of their features. The music also represents things that are merely implied by the program. Take the program note at measures 117–134 of *Till Eulenspiegel*: "Hop! On horseback through the market-women." It refers to the specific prank and the parties involved, but how the episode unfolds is left wholly unstated. Thus, it is from the musical development that we learn that Till overturns the women's carts, sending their goods and wares crashing to the ground. This part of the story is filled in by the music, whose structure we superimpose onto that of the narrative, thus enhancing it.

This process of achieving greater representational accuracy and gaining higher degrees of understanding is constructive: aware of a coarse-grained structural resemblance between the story and the music, we (first) recognize certain musical elements, properties, and relationships as representationally relevant, (second) actively seek out the appropriate extra-musical analogs, and (finally) furnish our understanding of the narrative with them. Recognizing that the music contains the resources for a more accurate mapping of its stated target, we improve upon the initial coarse-grained resemblance, and experience the finer-grained structures as the musical progression brings them into focus. This further refutes the skeptical claim, discussed in Chapter 2, that the extra-musical aids do *all* of the "representational work" for works of program music, with the music contributing little or nothing. In this specific case, although the program primes

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our expectations, the music assumes most of the representational responsibility by illuminating aspects of the story left open by the program.

What counts as "appropriate" analogs for the musical elements, properties, and relationships is initially delimited by the program, as it defines the realm of representational possibilities, and is then further refined by the music. In the scene under discussion, Strauss makes use of nonstandard instrumentation to imitate the banging of pots and pans. Since the music also suggests a country market (for reasons discussed shortly), a listener could reasonably infer that different sorts fruit, vegetables, and other food items appropriate to fourteenth-century Germany are among the goods that spill to the ground. Such details will vary from performance to performance and from listener to listener. The program can fully specify almost none of the connections between music and subject, as it would be too epistemically cumbersome for listeners to use as a guide for our aesthetic experiences. Likewise, the music cannot fully render everything left unstated by the program, nor would such a high level of representational accuracy be needed. Composers must abstract away from many of their subject's properties, structures, and relations, and distort those targeted by the music to varying degrees, in order to successfully represent them. They also intentionally leave some things out, as all good artists do, which must be filled in by the imaginations and interpretive abilities of both performers and listeners.

Strauss provides a telling example of entrusting some of his work's representational content to his listeners. "It is impossible for me to furnish a program to *Eulenspiegel*," he wrote in a letter to Franz Wüllner, the conductor preparing for the work's 1895 premiere in Cologne.

> [W]ere I to put into words the thoughts which its several incidents suggested to me, they would seldom suffice, and might even give rise to offense. Let me leave it, therefore, to my hearers to crack the hard nut which the rogue has prepared for them. By way of helping them to a better understanding, it is sufficient to point out the two Eulenspiegel motives which, in the most manifold disguises, moods, and situations, pervade the whole catastrophe, when after he has been condemned to death, Till is strung up to the gibbet. For

the rest, let them guess at the musical joke which a rogue has offered them.[9]

After the November premiere, upon his friend Wilhelm Mauke's request, Strauss wrote programmatic labels into the score that refer the music to the incidents they represent, which Mauke subsequently published in 1896 and on which I base my interpretation. I return to the issues of accuracy and success in Section 4. I turn presently to the issue of interpretation.

2. Interpretation and Analysis

If concatenationalism were correct, it would be nearly impossible to offer explicit interpretations of works of program music as representations founded on our experience of the music. Since on this view our musical experience is largely unreflective, our musical understanding is mostly *ineffable*: the vast majority of what we experience is incommunicable in principle.[10] (Note, though, that the ineffability of experience in no way implies the ineffability of understanding.) It is for this reason that concatenationalists believe our basic musical understanding is manifested solely in listening: in our unconscious ability to synthesize past, present, and future small-scale events.[11] As a result, being able to describe what we perceive is not only unnecessary to demonstrate our basic understanding of a work, but our attempts to do so will normally fail, since we will be forced to use metaphors and other poetic sorts of description that will inadequately capture our experience. (Note, though, that the use of metaphors by no means implies a failed description. Indeed, metaphors often are use precisely to capture aspects of our experience that literal descriptions cannot.) It is for this misguided reason that the concatenationalists take the (reflective) "intellectual" and "representational" modes of understanding as separate from the (unreflective) "musical" mode, and are forced to assert falsely that the first two cannot be brought to bear on the third in any beneficial way.

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In interpreting a program work as a representation, we must describe its representational content: those aspects of the music that have correlates in the work's subject. If our interpretation is correct, the descriptions of the narrative we recuperate from the music (aided by the program) will mirror the actual musical progression, since the two are structurally similar. Our representational interpretation of the work will express our awareness of its small- and large-scale forms and relationships, and thus our musical understanding at both the basic and higher levels. Consequently, I am in agreement with the architectonicists, who argue that our musical understanding is demonstrated by our ability to describe a work's salient features.[12] An educated listener whose descriptions illuminate more of a work's features will, accordingly, have a better understanding of the work than her uneducated counterpart. While seemingly uncontroversial, this is precisely the conclusion the concatenationalists try (unsuccessfully) to avoid by insisting upon the "pure" aesthetic experience of music.

In order to illustrate the finer points of interpreting works of program music, I now provide an extended representational analysis of the preceding discussion's central example: Strauss' *Till Eulenspiegel*. The tone poem demonstrates how all of the techniques examined in the previous chapter can be integrated to produce a complex, successful, and enjoyable musical representation. While descriptions couched in a purely nontechnical vocabulary could demonstrate a listener's great appreciation and understanding of the work, better analyses will be expressed mainly in the technical vocabulary of the musicologist, as it provides the clearest means by which to describe the musical elements, properties, and relationships that comprise the work's representational content. For this reason my analysis is largely technical. Some of the work's central features have already been discussed. For the sake of completeness, I reproduce them in full below.

The subject of Strauss' work is the fictional fourteenth-century trickster and German peasant folk hero Till Eulenspiegel, who is represented by the fine-grained musical structures of the two themes Straus associates with him. Till's misadventures are represented by the global relationships between his two themes and the work's other passages, which represent different episodes and the targets of his mischief. The representation is globally achieved by how Till's themes reappear and are changed and developed within these passages. The work contains instances of all of the representational techniques analyzed in the previous chapter. How they interact to realize the extra-musical objects, events, and states of affairs referred to and implied by the accompanying program is revealed as the present analysis proceeds.

While above I said the work is a rondo, it should be technically classed as a sonata-rondo deformation, as it does not fully conform to all of the norms of rondo form.[13] This "designed uncertainty"[14] operates on two levels. First, it emphasizes that Till is a character who will not allow his will to be bent to the established norms. Second, it indicates that Till's story cannot be adequately captured by or confined to the established norms of Western classical music.

The work can be separated into eight distinct sections, which I analyze in turn. Where appropriate, select quotations from the program notes, along with the measures to which they refer, are indicated in brackets.

PROLOGUE

The work begins in 6/8 time with the violins' statement of a brief musical phrase that many interpreters take to imitate the speech-pattern of the German phrase "Es war einmal"

("Once upon a time"). ["Once upon a time there was a knavish fool…" mm. 1–5.] Till's themes are then introduced.

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EXPOSITION

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Till's first theme is initially stated as a horn call, which begins on the unstable or "opened" inverted (6/4) chord over the dominant. ["…named Till Eulenspiegel," mm. 6–45.] This is significant because such chords rarely begin a phrase or melody. Moreover, the theme starts on an unanticipated offbeat.[15] Thus, from the very first moment of his introduction Till is presented as an unpredictable nonconformist. Ranging over almost four octaves, the theme's up-tempo melody, played *piano* (softly) for its initial statement, reaches a peak, falls downward, and is then developed to a grand conclusion with two notes sounded by the strings. This represents Till concluding one of his merry pranks. The activity peaks, he drops to the ground or bows, and the strings imitate his triumphal "ta da!" This passage presents Till as a merry character making mischief for the amusement of an audience.

While its formally notated time signature is 6/8, the theme does not conform to it. Rather, two 7/8 measures are followed by a 9/8 measure, which then settle into 6/8 time.[16] This metrically and rhythmically irregular passage maps Till's uncontainable and erratic behavior as he performs a prank. The theme utilizes two of the techniques discussed in the previous chapter. It is predominantly a complex leitmotif, as the theme represents Till's actions via a fine-grained mapping from the musical gesture to an event in the world. The theme also shares (synaesthetic) properties with the character it depicts, indicated by the fact that the terms "nonconformist" and "unpredictable" correctly describe both.

When the theme is played a second time, Strauss marks it to be played *mezzo forte* (half loudly)—Till gains confidence. The theme is then repeated and varied by several different

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instrumental groups. It is first taken by the oboe; then by the clarinets; then the bassoons, contrabassoons, violas, and cellos; and finally it is developed by several measures of quick *fortissimo* (as loudly as possible) eighth-note chords by the *tutti* (entire) orchestra. The orchestra then rests. The successive addition of instruments throughout the theme's repetitions, which is musical imitation in the technical sense (a type of purely musical resemblance), maps Till as he infects an audience with his merriment and mischief. The infection starts with one person and increasingly spreads to more until finally everyone is in on the fun.

After the orchestra rests, Till's main theme, a seven-note phrase in F major, is stated once by solo D clarinet. ["He was a wicked goblin…" mm. 46–74.] The syncopation of the melody imitates Till's laughter either as he mocks those who he has just tricked or as he plans his next prank. Over the theme's last note, the oboes and English horn play a *sforzando* (made loud) chord for two measures. The rest of the orchestra then plays a *fortissimo* chord, which is immediately succeeded by a quick galloping rhythm lasting several measures. ["…up to new tricks," mm. 75–112.] This marks the end of the Exposition. It recognizably imitates the rhythm of a horse's gallop, from which we can easily infer that Till is riding a horse through the countryside as he makes his way to his first adventure.

EPISODE I. UPSETTING THE MARKETPLACE

A serene pastoral motif, containing flutes suggestive of birdsongs, represents a country marketplace where women are selling their goods and wares. Interwoven between moments of serenity are intervals of quick muted strings, the result of which is an unsettlingly tense feeling. This foreshadows the impending mischief. ["Just wait you faint-hearts!" mm. 113–116.] A rising bassoon enters, and the sudden crash of a cymbal marks the beginning of the prank in which Till overturns the carts, and the pots, pans, and other goods and wares, which chaotically

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crash to the ground. ["Hop! On horseback through the market-women," mm. 117–134.] The music, which was at first peaceful and simple, instantly becomes rapid and raucous: there are multiple *crescendos* along with discordant chords played *fortissimo* and *sforzando*. Drums, timpani, ratchet, and slapstick—the latter two of which are certainly nonstandard—support the representation because of their timbral resemblance to the sounds of the carts being overturned and the goods and wares being damaged. A quick flute motif subsequently maps Till as he flees the scene, and serves as a bridge to his next prank. ["He runs away…" mm. 151–159.] The sharing of a property, in this case quickness, once again facilitates the representation.

EPISODE II. THE MOCK SERMON

The time signature of this episode is a simple 2/4, which marks a change from the compound 6/8 of the previous sections. Additionally, the tempo slows down and the range of pitches becomes less erratic and more constrained, corresponding to the change in venue while at the same time taking on the qualities of the new venue: a church. The motif, a slow march (mostly for strings) in B flat major whose phrase-format is "wearily shopworn" and musically "orthodox," represents the serious, dull, and restrictive Teutonic clergy.[17] The first four notes of Till's main theme in F major are A, F, B, C. No matter the key of the other episodes, these four notes remain the same. But here the theme is transposed into B flat major. The transposition of Till's theme into the home key of the clergy's motif represents Till putting on the vestments of a priest. Making use of a musical pun, Till makes himself "at home" among the clergymen. ["Disguised as a parson, he oozes unction and morality…" mm. 179–182.] Musically, transposing Till's theme to the prevailing key achieves stability.[18] This indicates that Till has successfully blended in to his surroundings, having tricked both the clergymen and their parishioners.

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During the clergy motif's introduction, an augmentation of the first six notes of Till's main theme is given to the lowest instruments—contrabasses, bass clarinet, contrabassoons, low horns, and tuba—emphasized by orchestral doubling.[19] This corresponds to Till's big toe, unbeknownst to the naïve parishioners, peeking out from under his shabby priestly vestments. ["but the knave peeps out at his big toe," mm. 191–195.] The logic of this pun is a bit tortured, but it works as follows. Till's first theme is currently in B flat major, which, as we already know, represents him in disguise. The appearance of *part* of his theme maps a *part* of Till appearing. That it is given to the lowest instruments settles that it is at the lowest part of Till's body. The program specifies that it is his toe. The musical passage and the toe share the (synaesthetic) property of lowness. The orchestral doubling is used to make this moment stand out by drawing our attention to it.

After these few measures, Till's main theme, which imitates his mocking laughter, is first played on the D clarinet. It is then taken by solo violin with a change in syncopation, followed by a series of four tied chords (played by brass and other instruments) that map Till's satisfaction with the fact that he is getting away with his blasphemous sermon. More chords build to a *crescendo* and a loud drum roll sounds—Till forcefully makes some profane point. Till's main theme is then repeated twice by solo violin—the sermon continues. But on the second repetition it is developed as the pitches get incrementally higher, and then a *glissando* quickly plummets in a series of triplets from the top note all the way to the bottom note of the violin. The music mimics Till as he shudders at the thought that his blasphemy could ultimately result in his death. ["But, because of his mockery of religion, he feels a sudden horror of his end," mm. 196–199.] But Till's trepidation is only momentary, as his worry-free main theme immediately returns, providing the bridge to the next episode.

EPISODE III. A ROMANTIC INTERLUDE

The love motif next enters on the strings—Till exchanges courtesies with some pretty village maidens who are initially smitten. ["Till as gallant, exchanging dainty courtesies with pretty girls," mm. 209–212; "They've been really smitten," mm. 222–228.] Till's first theme is then developed by horns and strings. Its rhythm is no longer abrupt, but has become regular. Its first two notes are sixteenth, which are followed by and tied to (*legato*) a series of six eighth notes; there is an eighth rest, and then three tied chords; it finishes with a tied series of ten incrementally descending sixteenth notes. This maps Till wooing the pretty maidens. ["He woos them," mm. 229–232.] As he woos them, Till's "original insolence is tamed into a simpering persuasiveness, his theme, at first so galvanic, now languishing in its plaintive downward droopings."[20] The latter passages (mm. 222–232) have a dialogic form. There is a back and forth between, and intermingling of, Till's theme and the love motif, which often occur on the very same instruments: the strings. This corresponds to the verbal, and perhaps other, exchanges between Till and the maidens, all of whom appear to be speaking the same language: that of love.

But despite Till's seeming triumph, the maidens reject him. ["However fine, a basket still signifies refusal," mm. 244–252.] The music becomes violent. This musical change maps the rejected Till storming about in uncontrollable anger. The love motif is taken up by the horns, whose timbres are darker than those of the strings. It also becomes quicker, differently syncopated, erratic, and much louder (*fortissimo* and *sforzando*). Till's first theme is then repeated, slightly varied and one octave lower, as, resigned to his defeat, he swears revenge. ["Rage ends with Till's departure," m. 253; "Vows revenge on the whole human race," mm.

263–292.] Once he recovers from this extended tantrum, the main theme is played—Till laughs as he plans his next prank—and we are immediately taken to the next episode.

<center>EPISODE IV. CONFOUNDING THE SCHOLARS</center>

There is a slow, serious motif in A-minor representing (by sharing properties with) an assembly of university professors, given to the bassoons, bass clarinet, and contrabassoon. ["Philistines' motif," 293–299.] In this episode Till takes on the academy by posing impossible conundrums to these pompous philistines.[21] The beginning of this episode has a dialogic form. A musical idea related to Till's first theme, at first given to the strings but then enriched by further orchestration, is stated in A-minor, which is then answered by the rumbling bass of the professors' motif (played *piano*)—Till poses a conundrum to which the professors coyly respond. The second statement of Till's conundrum-posing is a more erratic and enhanced version of the first. Strauss notes that it is to be played *forte* and *lustig* (merrily) by the high strings and winds in quick bursts followed by slight rests over the professor's motif, which is now played *mezzo forte* with divisi cellos and basses added. This corresponds to Till merrily lobbing a series of preposterous questions over the heads of the steadily confounded professors.

The dialogic form of these passages gives way to the complete bafflement of the professors, represented by "a set of overlapping, stretto-close imitative entrances, one after another, but each implying a different tonal center."[22] For instance, an upper cello and low horn in B flat minor follows a lower cello and low horn played in A-minor, which are then followed by a viola and horn in B minor, and so on. This maps the professors as they desperately throw out answer after answer *without principle*—analogous to the lack of tonal center—to questions they cannot even understand. Till's main theme is played over this passage by the strings as he mocks their futile endeavor. The episode builds to a climax, and drums map Till abandoning the

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thoroughly confounded professors. ["After imposing a few whopping theses on the Philistines, he abandons them, baffled, to their fate," mm. 315–344.] It concludes with a superb example of musical imitation: a loud, extended trill from the trumpet, woodwinds, and violin, which mimics Till, now at a safe distance, responding to the assembly with a resounding "raspberry" (to which Bartók, as discussed in the previous chapter, is almost certainly alluding in his *Concerto for Orchestra*).

<p align="center">RECAPITULATION. TILL GOES ON HIS WAY</p>

This section begins with a light dance in 6/8 time. Making use of conventional association, this represents Till merrily dancing a jig in the street. The dance is followed by a short clarinet section, which utilizes timbral resemblance to map Till whistling a little ditty. ["Till's street ditty," mm. 375–382.] Till's first theme is then recapitulated, once again on the horn and in the same key with the same scoring. Later in this section nearly twenty bars are almost identical to eighteen of the exposition: specifically, mm. 465–484, with a few additions to fit into the new musical context, are roughly equivalent to mm. 63–80. The remainder of this section, however, is not particularly recapitulatory, although at points it refers back to previous material.[23] Till's first theme is instead developed and varied all over the orchestra, which corresponds to Till doing several unspecified tricks for an audience. Strauss leaves the specifics of these events to be filled in by his listeners' imaginations. But any informed listener should recognize that as the music becomes increasingly unconventional (both rhythmically and contrapuntally), Till's tricks become more and more erratic and subversive.

The quick flute theme from the end of Episode I returns toward the end of this section and is further developed as Till attempts to escape arrest for his misdeeds. However, the clergy's motif from Episode II returns in full force (*fortissimo*) on the full orchestra, corresponding to

Till's arrest for mocking religion. Were we unable to reflectively recognize the return of these two musical events as such, our ability to follow along with the story as it unfolds would be greatly diminished.

<p align="center">EPISODE V (CODA). TILL IS ARRESTED AND HUNG</p>

An abrupt drum roll, which was presaged in Episode II when Till shudders at the thought of his untimely end, announces the trial. Till's horrifying premonition has come true: he must pay with his life for mocking religion. ["The trial," mm. 577ff.] The loud low brass play a somber fanfare in F-minor, which, exploiting the conventional association between fanfares and ceremonies, maps the social prosecution reciting their accusations. Till's main theme on D clarinet, intervals shortened to indicate his concern and hesitance, maps Till's attempt to respond to the charges being made against him. The low brass and D clarinet themes go back and forth dialogically for five rounds.   As they proceed Till's theme becomes successively shortened and is finally silenced as Till desperately tries, but fails, to weasel his way out of execution. The keys of these two themes are important. Till's is in the original F major. The prosecution's theme is in F minor. The juxtaposition of major and minor represents the fact that the prosecution is "intent on reversing the fortunes of Till's F major."[24]

Two sudden *fortissimo* notes played by low winds announce the guilty verdict and the sentence of death by hanging. The two notes mimic the pronouncement of death in German, "Der Tod!" The D clarinet shrilly rises, distorting the first theme, imitating Till's anguished screams as he is hung. Six F major impulses by the strings—first played *pizzicato* and *piano*, then *pianissimo* (very softly)—gradually slow and become more infrequent; there is one last soft, abrupt chord; and finally all is quiet. Till's body (F major) swings back and forth; it jerks one

last time; and finally he is dead. ["Up the ladder! There he swings, the air is squeezed out of him, a last jerk. Till's mortal part has come to an end," mm. 615–619.]

<p style="text-align:center">EPILOGUE. TILL'S INDOMITABLE SPIRIT</p>

After the silence, the introductory "Once upon a time" theme returns. Many scholars interpret this to be Strauss' musical commentary on the story: an affirmation that a spirit like Till's can never truly be destroyed, which is confirmed by the mischievousness and cleverness embodied by the work itself. The work ends with a final restatement of Till's first theme, as Till's soul has one last laugh before departing, from both the music and this plane of existence.

3. Rehearing Music

From the above analysis, it is clear that Strauss draws upon all of the resources of Western classical music, exploiting all of the representational techniques examined and systematized in the previous chapter, in order to render Till's misadventures in music. He does so by mirroring the structures referred to and (more often) implied by the accompanying program in the musical structure. But the work is not merely a purely abstract formal object that we coldly contemplate at an intellectual distance. The moments of imitation, resemblance, and expression couched within the global correspondence scheme between the work and its subject make for a non-arbitrary resemblance, as they imbue the music with dramatic effect, human meaning, and other important aesthetic qualities.

We listen to works of program music not just for the sake of acquiring knowledge, but also for the sake of enjoyment. If we did not enjoy our experience, we would be significantly less inclined to listen to a work again. Rehearing works is central to both our understanding and our ability to offer in-depth interpretations and analyses. There is a mutual feedback between

understanding and enjoyment. Typically, the more we learn about the work, the greater our

enjoyment becomes. I chose *Till Eulenspiegel* as the focus of this chapter not only because it

exemplifies all of the relevant representational techniques, though this was certainly necessary

for my selection, but also because I enjoy it. In order to produce the above analysis I had to

listen to a few recorded performances of the piece dozens of times. This work lent itself well to

such extensive rehearing because I find (and still find) it exceedingly clever and delightful. The

more I have listened to it, the more rewarding my aesthetic experience of the work has become.

Meyer articulates the importance of rehearing musical works better than any philosopher

considered in this chapter. "Because listening to music is a complex art involving sensitivity of

apprehension, intellect, and memory," he states, "many of the implications of an event are

missed on first hearing."

> For to comprehend the implications of a musical event fully, it is necessary to
> understand the event itself clearly and to remember it accurately. Hence it is
> only *after* we come to know and remember the basic, axiomatic events of a
> work—its motives, themes, and so on—that we begin to appreciate the richness
> of their implications. It is partly for these reasons that a good piece of music
> can be reheard and that, at least at first, enjoyment increases with familiarity.[25]

Meyer recognizes that after listening to a piece of music too many times it can lose its original

effect on us and, as a result, become tedious. This explains the importance of conductors and

performers in the life of a work, as they have it within their power to revitalize works that have

become stale. Adopting an information theoretic approach, Meyer states,

> A piece of music is more than a series of symbols in a score. It is their specific
> realization in sound or imagined sound. The performer, guided by traditional
> practice, interprets and articulates the composer's symbols, and in so doing
> both actualizes and particularizes the potential information contained in the
> score. He shapes and confirms (or non-confirms) our expectations not about
> *what* events will take place (these have been more or less stipulated by the
> composer), but about *how* the events will take place—the manner and timing of
> their arrival. Insofar as each performance of a piece of music creates a unique
> work of art, to that extent the information contained in the performance is new.
> And by creating new information, the performer helps to make the rehearing of
> music rewarding and enjoyable.[26]

This passage demonstrates that our aesthetic interests change upon hearing new performances of a work that we (mistakenly) believe we have exhaustively perceived, understood, and appreciated. We experience the new performance with an additional interest in the subtle and non-subtle differences between it and the previously audited performances.

New performances fulfill and frustrate our expectations at different moments of the musical progression. When our expectations are fulfilled our experience will be largely unreflective, as a good deal of what we were previously reflectively responsive to will be converted into tacit dispositions. Since the musical line is progressing as we feel it should be, there is little upon which to reflect. But when our expectations are frustrated, we become acutely aware of perceptible differences. This causes us to modify our expectations of how the music will progress, as the implicative relationships between the work's parts have been altered to some degree. In such cases the performers have exposed us to more of the work's potential aesthetic significance.[27] With works of program music in particular, performers can reveal representational content that the composer has left unspecified or implicit, as I mentioned earlier with regard to *Till Eulenspiegel*.

Musical works (the good ones anyway) are highly complex aesthetic objects whose intra- and extra-opus implications—i.e., those implications that inhere solely between the work's parts and those that extend to things beyond itself (as in quotation, expression, and representation)— gradually reveal themselves through repeated exposure. Using Goodman's terminology, they are "replete": each element has potential aesthetic significance, so no interpretation can discount any element out of hand.[28] Consequently, we should not conceive of musical understanding as a closed-process within well-defined temporal and epistemic limits. Instead, it is a dynamic, open-ended process that may be in principle incompletable. We should not delude ourselves into

believing that we can ever *fully* understand some sufficiently complex works of music or, for that matter, any sophisticated work of art, as Scruton seems to do.[29] The meanings of good works are most likely inexhaustible.

Before the advent of recording and playing devices, attending multiple performances of a piece of music was the only way to facilitate the gradual process of understanding and interpretation. Depending on one's means and proximity to a decent music scene, there generally would be several sustained intervals during which this process would grind to a halt. Our plight has been greatly eased by the wide availability of recordings of individual performances in various formats that we can listen to as much as we wish to increase our understanding of a work and construct detailed interpretations, such as the one I offered above. From this one can reach the obvious conclusion that the more performances of a single work we can get to our ears, the better off we are.

The forerunner to our current situation was the piano reduction, which grew in popularity during the mid-nineteenth century. A piano reduction is a full score transcribed for just the piano, which preserves the principal melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic relations produced by the many instrumental parts of a polyphonic work. As a result, it allows individuals who were unable to attend multiple performances of a work to hear many of its relevant features at their leisure in the comfort of their own homes. All that is required is a piano and someone who can read and play music.

Due to this convenience, the piano reduction was incorporated into the salon cultures of Western Europe—most notably that of France. These gatherings of mostly intellectuals involved conversations about art and philosophy, and were ideally aimed at the refinement of taste and the expansion of knowledge. When the topic was music, the participants would often gather around

the piano to play and discuss the latest works. A few measures were played and then discussed.

A few of the subsequent measures would then be played, and the subsequent discussion would

revolve around their relationships to the previous measures and their now shared implications to

future events. When works of program music were considered, the discussion would concern, in

addition to their intra-opus implications, their extra-opus ones. This process would continue

until either the participants were satisfied with their understanding of the work or the

conversation shifted to some other subject.[30] This points to the important fact that the acquisition

of musical understanding is not a private process, but a public one in which listeners directly and

indirectly build upon and revise how they perceive and understand music. That our musical

understanding is an object of public scrutiny is further evidenced by the ongoing dialectical

project of music interpretation and analysis that has spanned numerous generations within the

history of Western classical music, from which I have drawn and to which I hope to have

contributed above.

  The concatenationalists cannot account for these facts due to their belief that our musical

understanding is mostly ineffable. As a result, they seem to be forced into a sort of private

language argument. If descriptions of a work are not needed to demonstrate one's understanding

of it, we have no way of knowing whether two listeners are attending to the same surface

features other than to look at their behaviors. But it seems perfectly plausible that two listeners

exhibiting sufficiently similar outward behaviors could have wildly divergent internal

experiences of the same work, and the concatenationalists provide us with few (if any) resources

by which to intervene and correct those that are defective. In fact, the idea of a defective musical

experience is rendered nearly incoherent by their position. For the concatenationalists our

musical experience is purely phenomenal, irreducibly sensible, and ineffable. This seems to entail that whatever *seems* or *feels* right to a listener will *be* right (to them).

This is similar to the skeptical confirmation bias argument against musical representation that I introduced in Chapter 2. Listeners can supply a musical work of any sort with *any* story they like and actively find or construct features in the music that will mirror it, the argument went; and thus, a work's representational content can vary drastically from listener to listener. But the musical experiences of attentive and appreciative listeners who select *the same story*, namely, the one provided by the composer in the program, should largely agree, and their agreement should be demonstrated by their descriptions of their experiences. Consequently, listeners must be able to discern and describe—whether in the nontechnical vocabulary of the ordinary listener or, better, in the technical vocabulary of the educated listener—the abstract formal structures of *Till Eulenspiegel* that correspond to those of the associated narrative in order to understand it properly: they must identify and reidentify the same musical individuals, establish the same boundaries and weight them to sufficiently similar degrees, and so on. But listeners must also recognize the moments of imitation, resemblance, and expression that give the work added dimensions of meaning and aesthetic significance. These dimensions are also open to interpretation and public debate, which comprise a vital part of our experience and understanding of the work.

4. Accuracy and Success

The moments just mentioned bring Till's story to life before our ears, to speak loosely, by effectively directing us to their extra-musical analogues. They do so because of their unrivaled quality combined with their locations within the global correspondence scheme between musical and narrative structures. It is due to Strauss' skillful rendering of these moments that Till's story

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emerges so vividly from our experience of the music, which leaves little doubt that his tone poem is a tremendous success. But what does this mean? When is a musical representation successful? In Chapter 1 I distinguished between success and accuracy as the main criteria by which we evaluate works of program music. But while these two concepts were introduced, they were left largely unanalyzed.

Accuracy pertains to the degree of similarity between the structures of the representation and those of its subject. Success (or effectiveness) has to do with how easily the representation communicates its subject to us—i.e., how readily we are able to recover the subject from its representational content. But for a representation of any sort, effectiveness is what really matters. For instance, a highly effective but inaccurate map of a city guides us to our destination more easily than an accurate but epistemically cumbersome one. As Robert Cummins states,

> Given limited space, a map that leaves out many features and distorts others may be more effective than a more accurate map that will fit in the available space (a single page atlas, say) only at the price of being unreadable. Approximations to a target […] are often more effective because more tractable.[31]

This is especially true of artistic representations. In terms of our aesthetic interests, accuracy is almost always a secondary concern. What matters primarily is how well the artwork conveys its subject to us. This is the hallmark of a good representation, from Titian's religious and mythological works, to Picasso's cubist portraits, to Strauss' tone poems.

All musical representations abstract away from many of their subject's features and distort those that they do preserve to varying degrees. The reason for this is that in order *also* to succeed as a good piece of music, they must adhere to the conventions of the Western classical tradition. There are two types of success, therefore, that need to be taken into consideration by any analysis of a work of program music: *representational success* and *musical success*. The first pertains to how easily we are able to recover the representational content from our

experience of the music. The second involves (among other things) the degree of small-scale coherence and large-scale unity, and how both are realized in the music. Often the more closely a work adheres to classical conventions, the more locally coherent and globally unified it is; and thus, the more easily we are able to follow along with the musical progression from moment to moment. Since the work is easier to understand at the basic level, we should be able to grasp its representational content more easily, as those structures will likely be more readily apparent. Our basic musical understanding facilitates our representational understanding of the work and, as a result, musical success gives way to representational success.

There are other cases, however, in which departures from convention are effectively used to represent some salient aspect(s) of a work's subject, as (locally) the introduction of Till's first theme and (globally) Strauss' deformation of sonata-rondo form illustrate. But such cases are the exception rather than the norm. In general, composers of program music want their works to stand alongside pieces of absolute music with respect to musical excellence. This urge can be so strong that some composers have either greatly downplayed or even disavowed their works' representational content altogether, as Liszt did with his symphonic poems and Strauss eventually did with *Till Eulenspiegel*. Not even Beethoven was immune, as he relegated his *Pastoral* Symphony's representational aspects to a subordinate status. These (and other) composers contend that, instead of representing their subjects, their works merely (or mainly) offer a purely musical expression of the feelings aroused by them. However, the historical fact that a composer has given in to this pressure out of fear that his work will not be taken seriously as music does not mitigate the ontological fact of its representational status. Status does not depend entirely on use, since the resemblances exploited by the work exist regardless of whether

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the composer officially acknowledges them.[32] Simply by associating his work with a program, the composer licenses the sort of experience that I have been defending.

The phenomenon of distancing a work from its stated programmatic goals occurred almost exclusively during the War of the Romantics when the very future of music as an art was thought to be in the balance. The stakes have been drastically lowered since then, stemming largely from the progressives' victory over conservatism with regard to the direction taken by music in the classical tradition. As a consequence, the works of program music that current audiences hold in the highest regard, which include those of Liszt, Strauss, and Beethoven, are generally those that balance representational concerns with the purely musical ones of melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic organization. Most composers wish for their program works to succeed both musically and representationally. Thus, while Strauss bent the norms of classical music, he did not break them. Incoherent music is not the product of his use of small- and large-scale deviations from convention to represent Till. Instead, they result in a musical progression that is merely unlikely, though allowable and understandable, within the tradition.

Both musical success and representational success are essentially matters of structure, admit of degrees, and depend as much on the music as they do on the listener. The more easily we perceptually recover a work's representational content, which (recall) are those aspects of the musical work that have correlates in the subject, the more successful it is as a representation. And those pieces considered most musically successful from the standpoint of the classical tradition are generally those organized such that we perceive all of their parts as "hanging together," and thus feel that they "make sense" from moment to moment. That is, our expectations of what will happen next as the music unfolds are not wholly thwarted, but if they are ever frustrated at a given moment, some subsequent musical event or events cause us to

mistrust our previous expectation(s), thereby easing the frustration. This feeling of tension and release is a central organizing principle of classical music, and it pertains to both local coherence and global unity. The greater the tension built, the stronger the possible release, and thus the more satisfaction we feel at a passage's (or work's) completion.

Till Eulenspiegel once again offers a helpful example. While the initial statement of Till's first theme is certainly jarring, its subsequent repetitions cause us to feel that it makes sense or that it is at home within its musical surroundings. Indeed, this section primes our expectations as to how the subsequent musical line will progress (i.e., it establishes norms of continuation).[33] As a result, we quickly overcome the initial shock of Till's first theme, become comfortable with it, and are able to follow along easily with the subsequent musical progression. This experience is reflected in the representation of the story. Like us (Strauss' audience), Till's audience is initially shocked by his subversive behavior, but quickly ends up joining in on his merriment. This passage, by representing an event that the program leaves unstated, enhances our understanding of the story by making us aware of an important aspect of Till's character: that his roguish personality is infectious—he was a folk hero, after all.

While this passage comes to make sense musically without any help from the program, and actually ends up adding to our understanding of the story it suggests, the work contains other moments that make little musical sense in the absence of their programmatic goals. Take the trial and execution. The music is not completely incoherent, but our sense that this section coheres from moment to moment and fits within the overall musical progression strongly depends upon our knowledge of the program. The work presents a musical puzzle that is solved by the program: the music proceeds and fits together in this peculiar way because it mirrors the final act of Till's story.

This discussion of *Till Eulenspiegel* reveals that works of program music can contain passages (e.g., the Exposition) in which the music enhances our understanding of the story by rendering *how* the events the program refers to and implies unfold. It also shows that program works can contain passages (e.g., the Coda) in which our knowledge of the program supplements our understanding of the music. These two sorts of cases demonstrate that musical success and representational success can be mutually dependent. The second case further demonstrates how musical success can positively affect representational accuracy by compelling us to seek extra-musical analogues for finer-grained musical structures whose relationships to the story are not explicitly indicated by the program. Accuracy and success will not always directly correspond, however; they will often be inversely related.

To illustrate how representational accuracy can come apart from the two types of success, compare the birdsongs in Beethoven's *Pastoral* Symphony with those written for piano by Messiaen, both of which I have previously discussed. Beethoven's birdsongs are highly inaccurate, especially that of the nightingale, but they nevertheless effectively convey the presence of birds to us, which flesh out the scene at the brook (*Szene am Bach*). The brook is itself represented by a string motif that reflects the structure of water by making use of an extended series of "flowing" sixteenth notes, which gives rise to an audible resemblance that is likely only recognizable as such with the program's help. Messiaen's birdsongs are significantly more accurate, since they were meticulously transcribed pitch-for-pitch (for the right hand) from slowed-down recordings of actual birdsongs. Some reductions and distortions were unavoidable, however, as "piano and pianist together [are] unable to render faithfully the speed, high registers and microtonal intervals of much birdsong."[34] Messiaen additionally transcribed harmonies (for the left hand) in several of these works that imitate the background noises heard in the recordings

in order to situate his birds within their natural environments: a stream, river, meadow, sea, and so on.

Beethoven and Messiaen's representations of birds rely predominantly on auditory imitation. As I have explained previously, we are able to infer the subject of a musical imitation because in ordinary experience we have coupled the original sound and its source in thought such that the sound implies (or gestures to) its source—i.e., upon perceiving the sound we are unthinkingly made aware of the object that typically makes it. This ability is preserved in our experience of the music, as we connect the musical imitation with the extra-musical analogue referred to or implied by the program. That is, the imitation indicates the presence of the object that is its source, which we supply in our musical experience to fill out our representational understanding of the work. It would seem to follow from this that the more accurate the imitation, the more easily the music will convey its subject to us. But despite their high degree of precision, Messiaen's works are arguably less successful at making us aware of the birds they depict than Beethoven is in the *Pastoral* Symphony.

In order to represent the birdsongs as accurately as he does, Messiaen abandons traditional tonality and rhythmic modes, since they do not exist in nature.[35] Consequently, his works are more difficult for us to understand *musically* than Beethoven's *Pastoral* is because they do not adhere to the norms of symphonic form and counterpoint with which we are familiar. And although Messiaen's works thrive on repetition, stemming from the fact that they copy actual birdsongs, their overall structures feel arbitrary to ears attuned to traditional classical music. It is very difficult to parse melodies, phrases, and other higher-order individuals in Messiaen's works, and so our expectations of what will happen from moment to moment are almost entirely defeated (as we are not familiar with norms of continuation for works of this

sort). As a result, Messiaen's bird works convey their subjects to us less readily than Beethoven's birdsongs do. We infer the birds from Beethoven's less accurately rendered birdsongs more easily than from Messiaen's exceedingly more precise renderings.

It is important to recognize that Beethoven could not have rendered highly accurate imitations of the nightingale, quail, and cuckoo calls. As Cummins notes, "it is the fact that different representational schemes often differ in what structures they can represent that makes them differentially useful and, to some extent, incommensurable in content."[36] Beethoven's representational scheme utilizes the conventions of classical music, which possess a set of quasi-rules that (mainly) pertain to the production and organization of melodies, harmonies, and rhythms. It was these "rules" that Messiaen had to break in order for his birdsongs to have the high degree of accuracy that Beethoven, bound by them, cannot match. But what Beethoven's work lacks in accuracy it more than makes up for in greater effectiveness, since the *Pastoral* succeeds both representationally and musically, while Messiaen's works struggle on both counts. It is more difficult to grasp the representational content of Messiaen's works because it is more difficult to understand them musically, while it is because the *Pastoral* is easier to understand musically that we can more readily recover its representational content. And while we enjoy the *Pastoral* Symphony as a work of profound genius, Messiaen's works are enjoyed mainly as musical curiosities.

Beethoven's birdsongs also possess a much greater economy than Messiaen's do, both musically and in terms of composition practices. Where Messiaen's method consumed vast amounts of time and mental energy, resulting in a set of complex and challenging musical works, Beethoven is able to communicate his birds to us with merely a few slight gestures. This relates to the second half of Cummins' statement, regarding the differential usefulness of competing

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representational schemes. Messiaen developed his scheme, an extension of his style, precisely to render highly accurate approximations of natural phenomena: to mirror natural structures in musical ones. Messiaen's scheme was useful to him only insofar as it was able to do this. But achieving a high degree of representational accuracy was not Beethoven's concern. To speak loosely, while Messiaen was a "musical ornithologist" (in addition to being an actual one), Beethoven was a "tone-painter" or "tone-poet," and an impressionist at that. Beethoven wished to give us impressions of the scenes his work represents. The scenes were meant to depict the experiences of some unnamed subject (most likely the composer himself), using the music to present aural, visual, poetical, and emotional responses to certain natural and social scenes. The structural resemblances here are much weaker than those found in, e.g., *Till Eulenspiegel*, but they are enough for the emotions expressed by the music to function representationally. Since expression was of primary importance, the conventions of classical music were exceedingly useful for Beethoven's representational concerns, as he had simply to employ and refine already existing 'rules' rather than create new ones.

Regarding these "rules," I agree with Scruton that they are not "prescriptions but generalizations from the history of style."[37] That is, they are general guidelines for composing music that "sounds correct," "feels right," or "makes sense" to listeners entrenched within or familiar with that history. These "rules" possess a good amount of leeway, without which, e.g., Strauss would have had difficulty effectively representing Till's misadventures. But at a certain imprecise point, the threshold is reached where classical music is no longer produced, and that of some new style is. This is borne out by the history of Western music. Composers have progressively built upon the achievements of their predecessors, which eventually led to the

clean break from the classical tradition in the early twentieth-century referred to earlier.[38] The styles subsequently produced can only be understood as a response to this tradition.

Messiaen was a successor to this break. His primary interests were color and symmetry, as opposed to the classical tradition's concern with unity, tension and release, and so on, and in order to produce them he had to create his own techniques of melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic organization. Because of his style's newness, which is governed by standards of correctness different from those of classical music, the representational scheme Messiaen utilizes to represent the birdsongs is one with which most of us lack familiarity: the basic elements are the same—notes, chords, motifs, etc.—but their organization and relationships are completely different. As a result, we consider Messiaen's works to be less successful than (most of) those in the classical tradition, both musically and representationally. But they will likely become more successful for us as we become more familiar with his style.

Familiarity, at least with music, breeds greater understanding rather than contempt. With sophisticated works of program music, familiarity leads to recognition of higher degrees of accuracy (of the finer details) and to greater success, which gives way to a greater representational understanding. The more comfortable we are with a given style or genre, the more easily program works within that style or genre should convey their subjects to us. And as we become better acquainted with a particular work—through rehearing it, analyzing its score, reading other analyses and interpretations, or conversing with other listeners—we discover the increasingly fine-grained structures that come to comprise its representational content. As a result, we open ourselves to a more rewarding aesthetic experience, a more richly rendered representation, and a more vivid impression of the subject from the music.

CHAPTER 5

FURTHER REFLECTIONS AND FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

In the preceding chapters I presented a theory of musical representation that, unlike many theories of representation since the 1960s, is not modeled on conventional linguistic communication. Linguistic or language-like communication has a role in musical representation, but only as a result of how it functions within overarching resemblances between (parts of) the work of program music, *w*, and (parts of) its subject, *s*. On my theory, a large-scale correspondence (or resemblance) between the compositional structure of *w* and the narrative structure of *s*, which is provided (implicitly or explicitly) by the accompanying programmatic aids, is filled in as a result of more local, finer-grained musical phenomena within *w* targeting— by either resembling or referring to—the objects, events, or states of affairs comprising *s*, as *w* unfolds in real time. Perceiving and understanding such dynamic, hierarchical systems of resemblances and references is no simple task. As such, sophisticated works of program music are quite demanding of their listeners, and all bear repeated auditions. In the previous chapter, I discussed the importance of rehearing program works (often dozens of times) to our recognizing integral features of both the maximally large-scale correspondence scheme between *w* and *s* and the smaller-scale aspects of *s* that *w* targets.

1. Further Reflections

In Chapter 4, I also noted the interplay in our experience of *w* (as a representation of *s*) between the music and the program, and how, while the program usually prompts our initial recognition of the relationship between *w* and *s*, it is the music that does most of the

representational work. I used Strauss' *Till Eulenspiegel* to illustrate how aspects of the music that, viewed purely from the formal musicological perspective, comprise units of individual musical significance (themes, modulations, recapitulations, etc.) were mirrored directly in those aspects of the music that comprise units of individual representational significance (characters, events, etc.). In other words, in our experience of the tone poem there is not a mismatch between our formal and representational understandings—i.e., in perceiving and understanding the unfolding narrative by following along with the unfolding musical fabric, we focused our attention upon the very same aspects upon which one listening to the piece as a purely formal structural would focus their attention. This was how I responded to the *assimilation bias argument*, which was introduced in Chapter 2 as the skeptics' strongest argument against the very possibility of musical representation. It stated, recall, that the accompanying programmatic aids, rather than the music, does most of the work for w to represent s. While the programmatic aids prompt and guide our perception and understanding of w as a representation of s as w unfolds in real time, it is the music that does the representing and it does so by making use of the six techniques that were the focus of Chapter 3.

The other main argument advanced by the skeptics against the possibility of musical representation was the *confirmation bias argument*. This argument claimed that any work of music could be provided with any program and we could construct a number of sufficiently reasonable correspondence schemes between the music and the suggested narrative to perceive and understand the music as a representation of its ostensible subject because there will be numerous antecedent resemblances of various sorts from which we could selectively produce these schemes. I responded to this problem, recall, by arguing that only programmatic aids provided by composers are relevant to the discussion. That Beethoven's publisher gave many of

his works evocative titles should have little bearing on how we perceive understand his works, musically or representationally. Only programmatic aids provided by Beethoven himself, such as the section titles of his Sixth Symphony, should be used (initially) to prime our expectations as to how the music will represent the various scenes referred to therein, which will be based largely upon norms and conventions that we have internalized as tacit listening dispositions from our previous experiences with other works of program music within the Western "classical" repertory, and (subsequently) to guide and shape our experience of the music as it unfolds in real time. To make use of any other extra-musical aids is to fail to listen to Beethoven's music as he intended it to be experienced.

This prescriptive legislation upon our listening practices is consistent with one of the central underlying motivations for my theory: my desire to defend composers of program music (firstly) from those who believe their intentions should not figure whatsoever into to how we understand their works, e.g., nominalists (such as Goodman) and most post-modern theorists, and (secondly) from those who claim that composers' intentions to represent things with their works can never be met by music, i.e., the skeptics. The skeptical position implies, though few skeptics ever come right out and say it, that Beethoven, Bach, Haydn, Liszt, Wagner, and their musical peers, did not understand what they were doing when they wrote either works of instrumental program music or works of music with programmatic elements (e.g., oratorios, operas, etc.), such as Bach's *Matthäus-Passion* or Haydn's *Die Schöpfung*. The skeptics usually try to soften this implication by suggesting that the reason composers associate their works with programs is to draw their listeners' attention to the expressive elements of their works, offering the fact that the main goal of most Western classical music is the expression of emotions in support of this suggestion. The number and variety of techniques that have been developed and

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refined by composers since the sixteenth century, which were introduced in Chapter 2 and analyzed in Chapter 3, among which only one utilizes music's expressive abilities, count strongly against this misinterpretation of composer intentions.

This leads to a simple but deeply important question that I have yet to address explicitly: Why program music? That is, why did composers from the Renaissance to the Classical periods write pieces with intentional representational content and why did this peripheral and seemingly parasitic aspect of the musical art not only continue, but actually flourish, in the age of Romanticism, during which it received its greatest challenge? This is a question of artistic motivation. Romantic skeptic Eduard Hanslick voiced a version of the opinion discussed above—that composers associate their works with particular extra-musical subjects (mainly) in order to secure desired emotional responses from their listeners.

For Hanslick, musical forms are too ambiguous to express particular emotions, let alone represent anything. Thus, composers give their works programs to disambiguate the emotions they intended to their audience to feel. By explicitly attaching his tenth symphonic poem to Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, e.g., Lizst was manipulating his audience by giving them concrete targets upon which to fix their emotions—the ambiguous emotion induced by a given moment in the work is transformed by the program into "Hamlet's melancholy," and consequently the audience knows how to respond emotionally to the music. In short, the program is meant to produce a sympathetic response from the audience.

The presence of a program indicated to Hanslick that the music must be deficient, since it was incapable of achieving the composer's goal by itself. For Hanslick, therefore, the program is merely a crutch used by second-rate composers to elicit powerful emotional experiences from their listeners. Liszt was the main target of Hanslick's ire, largely due to the fact that Liszt's

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symphonic poems were examples of pieces of music straying from the traditions that Hanslick and his conservative allies so deeply venerated. Liszt's *Hamlet*, for instance, involves the deformation of normative sonata-form characteristics,[1] as does Strauss' *Till Eulenspiegel*, which (recall) should be classified as a sonata-rondo deformation. In both examples, the deformation of traditional musical forms can be accounted for largely by their composers' representational intentions.

Scruton has something very similar in mind when he says of program works, "the composer is apt to depend on a specific literary reference [suggested by the program] in order to secure the hearer's complicity in what is better described as an imaginative endeavor than as an inevitable perception."[2] For Scruton, just as it was for Hanslick, the lack of inevitability calls into question music's status as a medium capable of representation. But it is precisely by prompting the sort of imaginings it does from listeners that musical representation operates and, moreover, acquires its aesthetic value. Works of program music demand a level of attention and musical sophistication from their audience to reveal their subjects (and the targets that comprise them) in a way that uncontroversial pictorial representations, which anyone can pass by in a gallery and pick out the intended subject with little more than a glance before quickly moving on to the next painting, do not.[3]

An implication of the skeptical position shared by Scruton and Davies (and perhaps also by Hanslick) seems to be that the amount of effort a listener has to put in to a work of program music just to make the subject manifest is too much for what little rewards they get out of it—a greater appreciation of a deficient piece of music. But I believe the analysis of *Till Eulenspiegel* in the previous chapter, as well as the briefer analyses of the other works of program music throughout the preceding chapters, indicate that this is simply false. These works delight any

listener not deafened by prior philosophical commitments in the ways they render in sound the patterns of everyday life (e.g., Beethoven's *Pastoral*, Strauss' *Symphonia Domestica*, or Villa-Lobos' *O tremzinho do caipira*), the fantastic (Berlioz' *Symphonie fantastique*, Mussorgy's *Night on Bald Mountain* and Rimsky-Korsakov's more famous orchestration of it, or Saint-Saëns *Danse macabre*), the comic (*Till Eulenspiegel*), and the tragic (Beethoven's *Ouvertüre Coriolan*).

The moments of imitation, property sharing, and expression couched within the global correspondence scheme in all of the above examples, as well as the instances of allusion to other musical works and the use of exotic instruments toward programmatic ends, make for non-arbitrary resemblances between works and subjects. They imbue the music with dramatic effect, human meaning, and other important aesthetic qualities that are well worth the listener's time and effort. Just as most uncontroversial pictorial representations deserve more than a mere passing glance, most works of program music deserve more attention—both by music-lovers and that subset of music-lovers who deny their representational import.

2. Future Considerations

All of the qualities mentioned above (imitation, allusion, etc.), which can be produced by the representational techniques analyzed in Chapter 3, can also be found in works of music that have no specific (or explicitly intentional) programmatic goals. Therefore, my work in the preceding chapters regarding how we perceive, understand, and evaluate works of program music should be largely applicable to a fuller examination of how we experience works of absolute music. In other words, representational listening of the kind I have advocated may suggest a model for understanding purely musical listening—with regard to, e.g., how we parse the boundaries of musical individuals and synthesize their hierarchical organization as a piece of

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absolute music unfolds in real time. Chapter 4 laid the groundwork for such an exploration, which I believe deserves to be taken further.

A related topic that deserves further exploration pertains to the relationship between representation and expression in Western art music. Since expressiveness is what connects program music so deeply to absolute music, I believe the analysis of our experience of works of absolute music just mentioned, the one to be modeled on my account of representational listening, will mainly concentrate on the expression of emotions. This is because in programmatic works for which expression is central to representational success, it is often difficult to separate expressive content from representational content. Such a strong connection between representation and expression does not seem to be as present in other artistic media, including painting. For instance, in El Greco's *Repentance of Peter*, we first see a man standing in a particular pose—his hands are clasped and his eyes are cast upward. The expression of grief, however, is quite ambiguous and our ability to perceive it seems largely due to the work's title. But in Bach's musical rendering of the same scene in his "*Erbarme Dich*" aria from the *Matthäus-Passion*, Peter *is* his grief. That is, Bach uses the deep grief and melancholy expressed by the music to represent Peter.

This is purely speculative, but the above may indicate that music is (perhaps) more able to capture the phenomenology of perceiving another human described (correctly, in my opinion) by Sartre in *Being and Nothingness*. According to Sartre, e.g., we see the anger before we see the wild eyes, flushed cheeks, flared nostrils, and trembling fists of the angry person.[4] Likewise, in "*Erbarme Dich*," we perceive the grief before we recognize the particular musical forms of the solo violin and accompanying lower strings that underpin its successful expression and through which a finer-grained representation of Peter's actions is achieved. For instance, an

appoggiatura at one moment audibly imitates a sigh. More fundamentally, though, Peter's grief

involves the vacillation from his sorrow at a lost object, his beloved Christ, and his striving for a

new relationship with God, which is reflected in the violin solo's conflict of impulses in inflected

gestures of rising and falling thirds.[5] This is dissimilar from El Greco's painting, wherein we see

the position of Peter's (or, rather, an older man's) body and the look on his face, and then, with

the help of extra-pictorial aids, perceive his grief. If this brief analysis is correct, music, contrary

to the skeptics, may actually be able to represent human subjects to us better than painting can by

more readily approximating our actual experience of human life.

The final topic deserving further exploration is unrelated to the previous two. It pertains

to the relationships between various versions of the same piece of program music—e.g.,

Mussorgsky's original versions of *Pictures at an Exhibition* and *Night on Bald Mountain* for

piano and the orchestrations subsequently arranged by Ravel and Rimsky-Korsakov,

respectively. Among the orchestrators' main motives was a desire to enhance the programmatic

aspects of these two piano works to make their representational content more easily perceivable

and understood by listeners. As such, it would be worthwhile to examine in depth the

representational techniques utilized by the orchestrators to achieve their goal. Timbral

similarities to the sources of the imitated sounds targeted by the music, which would be

impossible for a piano to reproduce, is readily apparent in the orchestral versions, including, e.g.,

the use of church bells in "The Great Gate of Kiev," the last scene in *Pictures at an Exhibition*.

But what other techniques did Ravel and Rimsky-Korsakov employ? Does a full orchestra more

effectively express the emotions Mussorgsky intended the piano to express? Does a wider range

of instruments allow for allusions to other pieces of music, parts of which expanded upon the

piano versions' representational content?

Moreover, it would be worthwhile to look at multiple arrangements of the same program work to see what programmatic and other aspects they highlight. For instance, there are dozens of different arrangements of *Pictures at an Exhibition*, both for full orchestra as well as for other instrumental groups, including a progressive rock version by Emerson, Lake & Palmer. It would certainly be worth comparing Leopold Stokowski's darker and more restrained orchestration, which he felt to be a more authentically Russian arrangement of the original, with Ravel's livelier and more dynamic version, which Stokowski dismissed as "too French."[6]

NOTES

CHAPTER 1

[1] See Hanslick 1885.

[2] Lewis 2002, 118.

[3] For an account of something similar to this idea of "pre-structured perception," see Merleau-Ponty's critique of empiricism (2002, 27-28).

[4] See, e.g., Hanslick 1885; Scruton 1976 and 1999; Davies 1993 and 1994.

[5] Kivy 1990, 15.

[6] Goodman 1976, 3-5.

[7] Cummins 1989 and 1994; Cummins and Poirier 2004; Cummins, et al. 2006; Hofstadter 1999 and 2007.

[8] (Respectively:) Wittgenstein 2001 (see also Sterrett 2006); (and) van Fraasen 1980 and 2008; Waskan 2006.

[9] Hofstadter 1999.

[10] Budd (1993) defines pictorial representation in terms of "partial isomorphism."

[11] Hofstadter 1999.

[12] Schopenhauer 2007. C. S. Peirce (1955) and Susanne K. Langer (1953 and 1957) also recognize strong analogies between music and conscious human experience.

[13] This does seem to be, to a large extent, Roger Scruton's goal, though without the appeal to isomorphism. See Scruton 1999.

[14] See, e.g., Cummins and Poirier 2004.

[15] Scholar Douglass M. Green made the discovery in 1976. Green found an annotated copy of the published score that Berg had prepared for his mistress, Hanna Fuchs-Robettin. See Perle 2001, 29 ff.

[16] This consequence remains unwelcome even if we do not take the composer's intentions as a going concern. It also anticipates (and overlaps with) the *assimilation bias argument* against musical representation presented in Chapter 2.

[17] Goodman 1976; Wimsatt and Beardsley 1954; and any poststructuralist thinker influenced by Roland Barthes' pronouncement of "the death of the author" (Barthes 1977).

[18] See Black 1962; Davidson 1978; Goodman 1976 (ch. 2) and 1979; Lakoff and Johnson 1980.

[19] Goodman 1976, 72.

[20] Only a representational analysis could decide this. But the title of this movement would likely be sufficient to prompt such an analysis even if it fails to uncover a particular subject or any representational content.

[21] Kivy 1984, 1990, and 2002; Goodman 1976 and 1981; Walton 1988, 1990, 1991a, and 1994.

[22] "World" here is defined very broadly to capture anything external to the music. It captures the real world and any version of it, fictional or otherwise, and includes other musical works. See Goodman 1978.

[23] Kivy 1993.

[24] For general criticisms of and objections to Goodman's theory of representation see, e.g., Ackerman 1981; Arrell 1987; Bach 1970; Beardsley 1978; Blinder 1983 and 1986; Blocker 1974; Carney 1981; Carrier 1974; Danto 1982; Davies 1994 (ch. 2); Harris 1973; Manns 1971; Margolis 1981; Neander 1987; Novitz 1975 and 1976; O'Neil 1971; Peacocke 1987; Robinson 1987. For criticisms of and objections to Walton's theory see, e.g., Budd 1992; Carroll 1991;

Currie 1993; Maynard 1991; Wilson 1991; Wollheim 1991 and 1998; Wolterstorff 1991. For

Walton's reply to some of his critics, see Walton 1991b.

[25] Urmson 1973.

[26] Kivy 1984, 214.

[27] Ibid. 213-215.

[28] Cummins and Poirier 2004, 14.

[29] Kivy 1984, 214.

[30] See Grice 1959, 1968, and 1969.

[31] Kivy 1984, 61-62.

[32] Ibid. 58-59.

[33] On the importance of titles to works of art in general, see Adams 1987 and Fisher 1984, and to

works of music in particular, see Kivy 1989 (ch. 10), 2002 (ch. 10), and 2007 (ch. 13), and

Levinson 1980 and 1985.

[34] The idea of the aesthetic experience of musical representation as a collaboration between a

composer and his audience is implicitly suggested by Kivy 1990, 200-201.

[35] Kivy 1984, 25-27.

[36] Kivy seems to soften his position somewhat in a more recent work, saying, "[O]nce the

composer gives his work a title […] it licenses us to search the work for representational

aspects," (2002, 193). But later in the same discussion, he continues to maintain his belief that

program works contain "defects" that absolute works do not and which can only be understood

(or explained away) by appealing to their composers' attempts to represent the subjects supplied

or implied by the accompanying programmatic aids (ibid. 197). So Kivy still believes that

representational interpretations only (perhaps now softened to *mainly*) serve to make up for deficiencies in our formal interpretive efforts.

[37] Kivy 1984, 215.

[38] Ibid. 206.

[39] Ibid. 207.

[40] For a taste of Kivy's formalism, see Kivy 1989 (ch. 16); 1990; 1993 (ch. 18); 1997 (especially ch. 4); 2002 (chs. 5, 6, and 8); and (most especially) 2009.

[41] In this passage, Kivy is implicitly invoking Langer, who states of works of program music, "[N]othing can prevent our falling back on mental pictures, fantasies, or having a *Sphärenerlebnis* of some sort, when we cannot directly make subjective sense out of music in playing or hearing it" (1957, 242). For Langer, similar to Kivy, programs are epistemic "crutches" that aid our formal interpretations of program works. Unlike Kivy, Langer takes this to imply that program music is inferior to absolute music (ibid. 243).

[42] Kivy 1984 209.

[43] Ibid. 213-214, in which Kivy explicitly references Wimsatt and Beardsley 1954.

[44] Note that subject's can be real or fiction and specific or generic. For instance, Vaughan Williams is certainly not depicting an actual, particular lark in *The Larking Ascending*, but Tchaikovsky is depicting specific historical events in his *1812 Overture*.

[45] See Howard 1972 and 1975.

[46] Goodman 1981.

[47] Goodman 1976, 129-130.

[48] Ibid. 181-183.

[49] Ibid. 5.

[50] Ibid. 226-227.

[51] Ibid. 229-230.

[52] Ibid. 230-231.

[53] Ibid. 170 ff.

[54] Ibid. 186-187.

[55] Walton 1990, 70.

[56] Walton 1988, 50. For an extended meditation on musical tension, see Walton 1999.

[57] See Walton 1990, 39-40.

[58] See especially Walton 1994.

[59] Scruton 1997 and 1999 (chs. 2 and 3). In doing so, he is simply following Richard

Wollheim's "seeing-in" theory of representation. See Wollheim 1980, 206 ff.; 1987, 45-46;

1993, 160 ff; and 1998. There are several significant ways, however, in which Scruton diverges

from Wollheim. Some are discussed in Chapter 2.

[60] Walton 1990, 37 ff.

[61] Scruton 1999, 88. See also Frege 1956.

[62] Scruton 1976 and 1999 (ch. 5).

[63] Davies 1994, 107.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Kivy agrees with this. Of musical structure, he says, "it is there waiting to be used, by

composers like Berlioz and Richard Strauss, to illustrate and represent. If it didn't have the

structures it did, it couldn't be so used. But it does have them; and it has them when they are

fashioned into works of absolute music. And that is why it is so easy to put fictional stories to

absolute music. All you need to do is fit *your* fictions to that music," (Kivy 2002, 1999). This is

what, e.g., Britten does by quoting Mahler's Second Symphony in "Storm," exploiting its proto-representational features by giving them a specific subject.

These features will overlap to a large degree with *proto-expressive features*, i.e., those musical properties, structures, and relations that could be exploited by any composer to express certain emotions. How they are utilized and arranged will determine whether they are (a) merely expressive; (b) expressive of emotions similar to those expressed by a work's subject, and thus expressive for the sake of representation; (c) non-expressive but similar to a work's subject, thereby comprising part of a program work's representational content; or (d) non-expressive and nonrepresentational. Of such features, Langer writes,

> The tonal structures we call 'music' bear a close logical similarity to the forms of human feeling—forms of growth and attenuation, flowing and stowing, conflict and resolution, speed, arrest, terrific excitement, calm, or subtle activation and dreamy lapses—not joy and sorrow perhaps, but the poignancy of either and both—the greatness and brevity and eternal passing of everything vitally felt. Such is the pattern, or logical form of sentience; and the pattern of music is that same form worked out in pure measured sound and silence. Music is a tonal analogue of emotive life. (1953, 27)

Langer believes that such properties, structures, and relations can be exploited by composers to achieve specific representational ends, but that they are used to their fullest potential in the purely musical expressions of works of absolute music, since, like so many philosophers of music (Kivy included), she believes that program music (*qua* music) is inferior.

[66] For an excellent survey and synthesis of this evidence, see Huron 2006.

[67] Scruton 1999, 78 ff.

[68] One might claim that this signifies Walton's failed attempt to force music into his theory of pictorial representation, and thus take it as offering a reductio of his entire theory. I make no such claims here, though I recognize their force.

[69] Using Hofstadter's terminology, which he borrowed from computer science, we take a *chunked* view of the work's representational content (1999, 285-288).

CHAPTER 2

[1] Eggar 1929, 46.

[2] Carter 2007.

[3] See Campbell 2000, 57.

[4] See Kivy 1984 (ch. 4).

[5] Davies (1994, 93) compares this to a famous actor making a cameo appearance in a film as himself, thereby representing himself.

[6] Walker 1989, 309.

[7] Ibid. 358.

[8] Ibid.

[9] See Grey 2000.

[10] It is important to recognize that this debate occurred during a time in which ranking the arts in order of importance was not only considered an intellectually worthwhile pursuit, but one of utmost aesthetic and philosophical importance. In the third *Critique*, Kant ranks music as lowest among the fine arts (Ak. 329). But within a few short decades, music ascended meteorically to the top of the ranking, thanks mainly to the intellectual class taking Schopenhauer's ideas seriously.

[11] Walker 1989, 338.

[12] Hanslick 1885, 44

[13] Ibid. 80.

[14] Scruton 1999 (ch. 5), which is an updated version of Scruton 1976.

[15] Davies 1993 and 1994.

[16] Note that the Gricean model of non-natural meaning that Scruton adopts does not entail a commitment to the linguistic bias, since, for Grice, linguistic meaning is a special case of "signaling," e.g., flashing one's headlights to indicate to an on-coming driver that she has left her brights on, a mode of communication that is not necessarily linguistic. However, as I think is made clear in the subsequent section, Scruton models the meanings of representations on the meanings of sentential utterances. Thus, while Grice does not necessarily maintain the linguistic bias in semantics, Scruton does.

[17] Scruton 1976, 273-274.

[18] Wollheim 1980 (essay 5).

[19] Scruton 1976, 274.

[20] Grice 1957, 383-384.

[21] See Grice 1968, 150-151. See also Grice 1969.

[22] Scruton 1976, 274-275.

[23] Davies 1994, 88.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Scruton 1999, 124.

[26] Scruton 1976, 276.

[27] Kivy 1984, 157-158.

[28] Davies 1994, 88.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid. 88-89. Here, Davies directly appeals to Davidson 1978. That Davies nevertheless maintains that pictures do "describe" the things they represent, despite challenging Scruton's account of the meanings of representations, further demonstrates just how deeply the linguistic bias is entrenched within the philosophy of art—in addition to being very naïve. Just because we can describe a pictorial representation of a man in innumerable ways, by saying, e.g., "The man is tall," in no way implies that the picture tells us, "The man is tall," etc., or even that the artist intended that we should view the picture in these ways.

[31] Davies 1994, 89.

[32] Scruton 1999, 3; Strawson 1959 (ch. 2).

[33] Scruton recognizes that sounds are not the perceptible qualities of concrete objects in the way that colors are because objects emit them (1999, 2). Instead, sounds are the phenomenal qualities of physical air vibrations. Because they exist independently of the concrete objects that emit them, sounds are themselves objects of our perception. While spatial location is an essential feature of the air vibrations on which sounds supervene, this is not true of sounds as phenomenal objects. Their only essential features are frequency, amplitude, and quality.

[34] Strawson 1959, 67.

[35] Scruton 1999, 15.

[36] Ibid. 79.

[37] Geach 1967, 628.

[38] Ibid. 627.

[39] Scruton 1999, 116.

[40] Ibid. 72.

[41] Ibid. 109-110.

[42] N.B. This is just an adaptation of the multiple-realizability argument against reductionism in the philosophy of mind.

[43] Ibid. 79.

[44] Ibid. 2-3.

[45] Sound, of course, could exist independent of any specific instrument without existing independent of *every* instrument. This obvious objection to Scruton's position is not one that he even considers, rendering his position significantly less tenable.

[46] Ibid. 79.

[47] Ibid. 80.

[48] Ibid. 92.

[49] Note that we have little reason to accept Scruton's assertion that metaphors can be eliminated from our scientific descriptions of nature. Over the last thirty or so years, philosophers of science seem to have reached a broad consensus that, while metaphors are certainly eliminated from the mathematical formulae used to describe or model the natural world, many are ineliminable from how scientists talk about the natural world. For a helpful discussion, see Rothbart 1984.

[50] Ibid. 93.

[51] See Wollhiem 1980, 212-213, and 1987, 46.

[52] Davies 1994, 89.

[53] Ibid. 53-58.

[54] In contrast, Wollhiem, the originator of the seeing-in theory of artistic representation, considers the artist's intention to represent as a sufficient, rather than a necessary, condition of representation (1993,165).

[55] Scruton 1976, 274. Of course, Scruton includes conditions (4) and (5), which are no longer under consideration.

[56] Davies 1994, 277.

[57] Scruton 1999, 120.

[58] Ibid. 125.

[59] Ibid. 126.

[60] Davies 1994, 94.

[61] Kivy 2002, 187.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Davies 1994, 94-95.

[64] Scruton 1999, 132.

[65] Davies 1994, 96.

[66] See Frege 1956.

[67] Scruton 1999, 88-89.

[68] Ibid. 91.

[69] A much fuller analysis of this piece will be provided in Chapter 4.

[70] Scruton 1976, 277.

[71] Kivy 1984, 28.

[72] Scruton 1976, 279.

[73] Scruton 1999, 131.

[74] Scruton 1976, 280.

[75] Davies 1993, 20.

[76] Ibid. 20-21.

[77] Goodman 1978 (ch. 2).

[78] I have taken this point from Richard Taruskin 1985, 356.

[79] Davies 1993, 20.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Ibid.

[82] However, it seems to be perfectly acceptable on Walton's make-believe theory (see especially 1988, 51).

[83] Davies 1994, 85.

CHAPTER 3

[1] For work on the subject of "downward causation," see, e.g., Campbell 1974, who coined the term; Bitbol (forthcoming); Kim 1999 and 2006; and O'Connor 1994.

[2] Leonard B. Meyer's entire account of music, some of which will be featured in Chapter 4, depends on both downward and upward causation. On Meyer's account, see Narmour 1991.

[3] Scruton 1998, 106.

[4] Ibid. 106-108.

[5] The second example is Gombrich's. Of the importance of perceptual constancy, he writes, "Without this faculty of man and beast alike to recognize identities across the variations and difference, to make allowance for changed conditions, and to preserve the framework of a stable world, art could not exist" (2000, 52).

[6] Gombrich 2000, 50-52.

[7] Scruton (1998, 74-75) makes use of this example. Surrealist René Magritte's 1933 and 1935 works, *La condition humaine,* employ the paintings within paintings convention to arguably more philosophical ends.

[8] Kivy 1984, 76.

[9] Ibid. 68.

[10] See Collier and Hubbard (2004).

[11] Cummins (1996, 96-97) rightly urges that we resist theories of this sort.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid. 70.

[14] Hayward 1985, 406.

[15] Kivy (1984, 133) grants this fact.

[16] Ibid. 138.

[17] Ibid. 139.

[18] See Grey 2000.

[19] Cumming 1997, 21

[20] Ibid. 17.

[21] Ibid. 36.

[22] Ibid. 18.

[23] Ibid. 21.

[24] Ibid. 37.

[25] Cumming describes the violin's distinctive expressive content as follows.

> The aspect of striving enters the phrase with its opening notes. A rising minor sixth moving from an anacrusis into each of the first two bars creates the unmistakable impetus of gesture […]. This leap has been predicted, with its compensatory fall, in the contours of Peter's denial and the evangelist's

response. 'Imploring' and 'melancholy' qualities are accorded by Kirnberger to the rising minor sixth (1773/1979, p. 373), and are reflected here in an active striving that leaps beyond the point of tonal rest (in moving to the third degree) and so contains the impetus for a return that suggests some 'disappointment'. The opening leap is not, however, unelaborated, and in the two-note figuration of its grace notes lies the beginning of a figure that will return in each of the following three bars […]. This figure of rising and falling thirds is a basic gestural unit, embodying a moment of striving toward a goal and of receding from it, almost too soon. The differing placement of this gesture in relation to the voice-leading and rhythm of each bar yields a shifting of affective content between them. (Cumming 1997, 24)

[26] These famously include his *Catalogue d'oiseaux* and *La Fauvette des jardins*.

[27] Inoue 1996.

[28] Serotsky.

[29] Kivy 1984, 52.

[30] Ibid.

[31] My interpretation was aided by Comer 2001.

[32] Sullivan 1998.

[33] The association has been exploited more recently in the Charlie Daniel's Band's 1979 crossover pop hit, "The Devil Went Down to Georgia."

CHAPTER 4

[1] See Levinson 1997; Cook 1987 and 1990; Scruton 1999.

[2] Levinson 1997, 15-16.

[3] Ibid. 100-101.

[4] Cook 1990, 174.

[5] Levinson 1997, 18, 29.

[6] See Davies 1983 and 1994; Kivy 1986, 1990, and 2001; Meyer 1956 and 1967.

[7] Cook 1990, 152-160; Levinson 1997, 72-73; Scruton 1999, 214.

[8] See Davies 1994, 341. The appeal to Strawson to explain the architectonicists' position is mine; no practicing architectonicist, to my knowledge, does so.

[9] Ferguson, 1954, 566.

[10] See Scruton 1999, 376.

[11] Cook 1990, 154-158; Levinson 1997, x; Scruton 1999, 212.

[12] Davies 1994, 338-339; Kivy 1984 and 1990, 105-108.

[13] Hepokoski 2006. Schmid (2003, 126) notes that the work also combines elements of variations form.

[14] See Meyer 1967,

[15] Hepokoski 2006, 19.

[16] Ibid. 19.

[17] Ibid. 24.

[18] See Mason 1916, 183.

[19] Hepokoski 2006, 25.

[20] Mason 1919, 176.

[21] This is sheer speculation, but with this episode Strauss, an adherent of the rabidly progressive Wagner, may be suggesting that Schumann's League of David (his name for the Leipzig conservatives) in the last piece of his *Carnaval*, here represented by the stuffy, set-in-their-ways professors, are really the Philistines. Till, on this reading, stands in for Strauss himself.

[22] Hepokoski 2006, 28.

[23] See McNaught 1937, 790.

[24] Hepokoski 2006, 37.

[25] Meyer 1967, 46.

[26] Ibid. 48.

[27] Ibid. 9-11.

[28] Goodman 1976, 229-230.

[29] Scruton 1999, 137-138.

[30] See Norris 2000.

[31] Cummins 1996, 27.

[32] See Cummins 1996, 18.

[33] This is related to a common technique in improvisation. When the performer hits a wrong note, one that the audience perceives as 'sour', she should simply repeat the line. By doing so, the audience comes to perceive or understand the note not as a mistake, but as simply a sensible continuation of what precedes it.

[34] Nichols 1994, 9.

[35] Ibid. 8.

[36] Cummins 1996, 109.

[37] Scruton 1999, 334.

[38] Ibid. 234.

CHAPTER 5

[1] See Moortele 2006.

[2] Scruton 1976, 277.

[3] Note that by this comment I do not mean to degrade uncontroversial pictorial representations, but merely the view the amount effort needed to perceive a work's subject necessarily counts as a negative against that work's status as a representation and aesthetic merit.

[4] Sartre 1984, 454-455.

[5] These and other underlying musical forms are explained quite thoroughly in Cumming 1997, 22 ff.

[6] See Russ 1992, 84.

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