psychological jargons of our own day (jargons that are themselves a heritage from German Romanticism)—but let us hope that the links have not yet been welded tight.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Her explicit description of "the great formal types of musical organization" as perceptual categories" (p. 64) becomes a frank example of this sort of parochialism (p. 68).

[2] We can now, with hindsight, find precursors or progenitors of absolute music earlier than the 18th century, but composers had to cleanse their minds and their music of the ideas and emotions specifically linked with the modes (six or twelve) and with the affects (whether as intarsia or as mystique) before "absolute music" could become a conscious aim and program. Incidentally, one looks through history nearly in vain for a creative artist (as distinguished from critic or philosopher) who clearly displays a belief or an interest in the "universal".

[3] Many of Aristotle's phrases have acquired the quality almost of incantation. A good example of this is the frequent use, by both Miss Carpenter and Professor Crocker, of the Aristotelian phrase "beginning, middle, and end". For Greek tragedy, based on familiar legends, the "beginning" of a play was the point in the story selected by the dramatist as making clear the part of the story he was going to use; the magic of Aristotle's phrase is not easily transferred to another context. For music (with the exception of John Cage), "beginning" means flatly a change from the inaudible to the audible.

[4] An instance which strikes me as combining the perennial philosophy with a bit of Aristotle and some special pleading occurs in glossing *harmonia* as "the perfect attunement between microcosm and macrocosm". True enough, and Miss Carpenter also calls this "one of the oldest images of music". But I hope that no one will start building systems on the fact that, as metaphors, "democracy" or "snowflake" may also serve to symbolize a perfect attunement between macro- and microcosm.

[5] Perhaps this subjective-objective business is only another instance of a trait shown by schools of psychology during the past century, the trait of borrowing fundamental concepts from the physical sciences—and, rather regularly, not fully exploiting the physical concept until the physical scientist has discarded it and moved on to something quite different. On subjective-objective, see, for an instance already old, Alfred North Whitehead, *Science and the modern world* (New American Library), p. 50 and *passim*.

[6] Theodor Lipps, who, in an imposing number of works of major size in aesthetics, reduced all music to a departure from and a struggle back to the tonic chord, should have provided, for ever, a salutary lesson for builders of universal aesthetic systems.

David Burrows, *On Patricia Carpenter's "The musical object"*

"The musical object" is neither short nor long enough. I hope Miss Carpenter will take up her big and convincing idea at book length, for, although she argues it most convincingly here, it deserves to be traced in detail through the literature of the period she deals with. One byway that could receive attention in a fuller treatment of the theme is the history of notation

as it related to the history of the piece. More important are the implications of her theme for general cultural history. Not only does the period of "the musical object" correspond roughly to that in which painting was "conceived as a piece of three-dimensional visual space", as Miss Carpenter points out herself, but it also corresponds roughly to the period of the objectivization of discourse in printed books, as Marshall McLuhan has been reminding us. Unfortunately, she does not deal with one question in the history of ideas that is raised by her use of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis: did we *not* spatialize and objectify time in our ways of talking about it before process became product in our music? Going into linguistic relativism should mean going into it historically, since "the musical object" is historically relative.

If I have any real disagreement with Miss Carpenter, it is not with her idea, but with the extent to which she gives in to it. I feel that the momentum of the argument she produces to defend the proposition that a piece of music from about 1420 to about 1910 was "stylized toward objectivity", that it represented "a musical illusion of the kind of wholeness we associate with a thing visually perceived" carries her too far when she maintains that we grasp such a piece "not only as a successive, but also as a simultaneous whole".

To begin with, Miss Carpenter's notion of the word "object" (and her notion of the word "simultaneous" as well) is so broad as to be almost unsporting, including as it does objects material, immaterial, real, and unreal, along with thoughts, events, and states of mind. At the same time, although she gives "three minimal requirements for objectness", these do not include two requirements essential to our common sense understanding of objectness. For one, an object (as opposed, say, to an entity) is commonly assumed to be a material presence, something accessible to touch and sight. More importantly, an object is commonly assumed to be something lifeless and static.

Miss Carpenter naturally has the right to define "object" in any way she wishes, but the word lacks bite without these restrictions, for it permits too much. Is a gesture usefully described as an object? It can have beginning, middle, and end, take place out there, be stylized and repeatable. What about a roller coaster ride? Yet even though Miss Carpenter plays down our common understanding of "object" as something material and static, it silently accompanies her discussion throughout, giving it an air of paradox that is actually one of its strengths. This feature could be further strengthened, I think, by openly acknowledging that "object" here is a metaphor, rather than a description for a piece of music. One great advantage it has as a metaphor is its very ordinariness. If this is to be exploited fully, then its ordinary usage must be acknowledged.

During the period Miss Carpenter is concerned with, music-making detached itself more and more from its traditional background of ritual and social occasions. In a sense the whole activity of music confirmed the drift toward objectivity that she describes at the level of the piece. But during the 17th century and beyond—and this is one feature of the underlying paradox of Miss Carpenter's thesis—there was a drift away from concreteness of

reference, away from cantatas and toward sonatas. It is hard not to think of this as a retreat from objectivity in an important sense of the word.

Miss Carpenter demonstrates beautifully how tautly self-entailing a structure a fugue is. There is much in a good one for memory and for recognition. In claiming then from this that a fugue is perceived "as a simultaneous whole", she obviously is not using "simultaneous" in the sense of "occurring at the same time" (and so fusing in the instant)—this would entail a fatal confusion of our perception of chords with our perception of motives—but instead in the static, visual sense of "present together, contiguous". But this sense of "simultaneous" does not seem justified here, for memory cannot confront past and present in the way that vision confronts contiguous features of a visual field. The point may be crudely obvious, but, Husserl to the contrary, the first note of a melody *is* over when the next, let alone the last, has begun, let alone ceased to sound. Husserl's observation is true only in the sense that the first note is not forgotten, but it is definitely gone.

In fact, truly to comprehend a piece as a simultaneous whole would be an act of annihilation. The most absolutely structured piece depends absolutely on succession for, to name one essential feature, its appeal to kinesthesia. It may be that the composer begins with a static *Grundgestalt* and that composition is the process of its animation, but we as listeners or performers cannot retrace that path. At any given moment in a piece we are oriented by the memory, more or less distinct, more or less relevant, of what we have heard up until then, and by some notion of what we might hear in what is to follow, but we have no real access to the whole until it is all over—and then the residual imprint of the whole is a feeble thing. Such as it is, does not this residual imprint depend heavily on the *conceptual* identity of the piece, and on that weak analog of the piece, its notated score?

In this connection, the distinction between Willaert and Bach is surely one of degree, not of kind. (Intriguingly, Miss Carpenter tells us which structurally defined Bach fugue to consider as an example, but not which structurally diffuse Willaert ricercar.) I find that I can as successfully, or rather, no more unsuccessfully, hold in my imagination a (diffuse) image of a Willaert ricercar (I took the one in the *Historical anthology of music*) as I can a (defined) image of the Bach fugue.

Again I think she goes too far in asserting the claims of the whole when she writes: "Just as I cannot see a chair, a man, the letter A, without some sort of schema into which it fits, so also I cannot hear a piece of music that is not part of my world." It is true that "the importance of the great formal types of musical organization developed in our tradition cannot be discounted, for they serve as perceptual categories", though it is also true that there is some endemic academic inclination to give them more than their due as serving the convenience of academic discourse. But when I have no global schema that applies to a new experience, I apply whatever I have at hand that works over smaller ranges, often with highly satisfactory results. Surely we can all remember being caught up in sonatas as children without benefit

of the schema "sonata", and surely we are all capable of being caught up as adults in contemporary or exotic music whose premises are strange to us. Listening is at its most vital when it is an act of enlargement, not simply one of confirmation, and the range of Miss Carpenter's examples persuades me that she would agree.

What schema should I bring, for example, to an "occasion for experience" by John Cage? Miss Carpenter's point is that, unlike the Varèse *Ionization*, the Cage *Variations* is no object; but I do not think she wants to imply that I cannot hear it for that reason. Actually, "occasions for experience" fits Varèse as well as Cage, Bach as well as Willaert, musical "objects" as well as non-objects. An experience is no less an experience for being structured. Both extremes are itineraries for auditory experience, for trips through different sorts of auditory landscape. And I can no more comprehend as a whole, as a single object, a trip through a formal garden than one through an open field.

On one other matter, Miss Carpenter does not make a distinction that seems important, the distinction between distance from the aesthetic object and distance from the world. The user of a work of art may play the role of participant or that of observer, but in either case he suspends his participation in practical affairs and acts within a special aesthetic enclave. This is as true of tribal music as it is of drawing room music, and something like the same kind of stepping within a magic circle is an aspect of ritual and games as well as of the arts. So that I think when Miss Carpenter writes of stepping back from the musical object, she is noting a polarization of the aesthetic enclave.

To sum up: Miss Carpenter leaves me convinced that for a time European music of privilege, by means of the gestural enclosure of spans of time, went about as far as may be toward creating a musical illusion of objectivity. But it did remain an illusion. There are dangers as well as benefits in talking as though being of a time is the same as being of a piece, and at some points in her paper Miss Carpenter seems to me to come dangerously close to confusing metaphor and reality. Maybe this is just the good Standard Average European in her, but in this case that is something to resist.

Finally, I should like to congratulate Miss Carpenter on having had a new idea—we need all of those we can get—and to thank her for acting on it as persuasively as she has. Her idea is not only new, but big as well, for it confronts our best understanding of the perception of music with our best understanding of its history. Few readers will put down "The musical object" with their views of that history unaffected.