

<sup>4</sup> James S. Ackerman, "‘Ars sine scientia nihil est,’ Gothic theory of architecture at the Cathedral of Milan," *Art Bulletin*, 31:85-111 (1949).

<sup>5</sup> Erwin Panofsky, *Gothic architecture and scholasticism* (Latrobe, 1951). Otto von Simson, *The Gothic cathedral* (London, 1956).

The use of these terms derives from Panofsky's introductory essay in *Studies in iconology: humanistic themes in the art of the Renaissance* (New York, 1939), later published as "Iconography and iconology: an introduction to the study of Renaissance art," in *Meaning in the visual arts* (Garden City, 1955). Panofsky distinguishes routine identification of the meaning of conventional motifs in art (iconography) from the "synthetic" analysis of the fundamental symbolic values of works of art in broad cultural contexts (iconology). His pursuit of this distinction between sign-language and nonconventional symbols may have originated in his contact with Ernst Cassirer at the Warburg Institute in Hamburg where Cassirer worked on the second volume, "Mythical thought," of his *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen* (Berlin, 1925). The earlier volume (1923) was a study of language.

It could be wished that studies in iconology would develop into a psychoanalysis of form in art which could carry our understanding of "meaning" far beyond, for example, the study of *Leitmotive* in music, the identifying attributes of gods or saints in art, or the typology of buildings in architecture. Unfortunately, in art history proper, no really new analytic methods, corresponding to the suggestions in Cassirer's work, have been evolved. The tendency today is to announce any study which delves into cultural contexts, in the tradition of the Warburg Institute, as "iconology." Summaries of the field are provided by Jan Bialostocki, "Iconography and iconology," *Encyclopedia of world art* and by William S. Heckscher, "The genesis of iconology," *Stil und Überlieferung in der Kunst des Abendlandes, Bd. III Theorien und Probleme, Akten des 21. Internationalen Kongress für Kunstgeschichte in Bonn 1964* (Berlin, 1967), pp. 239-61.

<sup>6</sup> Rudolf Wittkower, *Architectural principles in the age of humanism* (London, 1949, Third rev. ed. 1962).

<sup>7</sup> Erwin Panofsky, "Die Perspektive als 'symbolische Form'," *Vorträge der Bibliothek Warburg* (1924-25), pp. 258-330.

<sup>8</sup> William Jordy, "The symbolic essence of modern European architecture and its continuing influence," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 22: 177-87 (1963).

## Arnold Berleant, *Music as sound and idea*

Despite the serious obstacles that stand in the way of discussing such questions as what constitutes a piece of music, the papers by Miss Carpenter and Professor Crocker deal sensitively with the issue and make useful and important observations. My comments are intended to assist in clarifying and furthering these discussions. Let me proceed by identifying and then applying two demands that this sort of question calls forth, the first conceptual and the second substantive. There is opportunity here to develop only some conceptual suggestions, and I shall merely be able to indicate the direction in which a substantive contribution might proceed.

When one faces the task of talking about music, as about any art, one encounters a double dilemma. Either you remain silent and safe, or you make use of words which, as a foreign medium that is used here primarily for a non-aesthetic end, must necessarily differ in kind from the art one is speaking of. If you do elect to communicate, you run headlong into a different problem,

for the language available for talking about art is remarkably unsatisfactory. Such language is almost always an unsuitable medium, composed generally of metaphor and evocation, and grounded usually on false analogies with linguistic functions (such as communication), with psychological explanations (such as catharsis, sublimation, and expression), or with intellectualistic attributes (such as symbolism, meaning, and truth). Furthermore, if one wishes to avoid these pitfalls of conventional terminology, one is faced with the awesome task of devising new, more directly descriptive concepts.

The problem is especially difficult in the case of music. Unlike literature and the fine arts, music employs materials not commonly associated with language and the conceptual process, and it suffers most from being talked about. Often the most that is done is to apply to music the alien speech of another, more easily verbalized art.

Yet this difficulty, which music shares with the literary arts, actually helps us avoid a confusion to which the theory of literature is especially prone. Because it is directly and immediately perceptual, music raises the insistent demand to be taken on its own terms as experience. Moreover, music sharpens for us the differences between the ways in which art is experienced and the ways in which those experiences are understood and conceptualized. By noting and applying this basic distinction between the full perceptual experience of music and the concepts and linguistic medium through which that experience is codified and explained, we may thus hope to avoid the first dilemma, that which results from the need to talk about an art that is basically non-linguistic.

In applying this distinction to the notion of a "piece of music," then, we must make clear the differences that exist between the musical object as a perceptual whole and the musical object as a conceptual whole. For music comes first and foremost as experience. Indeed, in certain respects it epitomizes the perceptual qualities of all art, for in comparison with other artistic media the musical experience is less fraught with resemblances, relationships, and associations which distract and mislead us. This problem, unfortunately, occurs in the visual arts and is particularly grave in the literary ones.

In the directness of our experience, music appears as a phenomenal object. Here it is a perceptually congruent grouping of sounds, silences, and secondary visual, kinesthetic, and other active-passive sensory events. In this form, music is grasped in its intuitive experiential immediacy. When we proceed to describe and understand musical experience, we can employ broad *perceptual categories* such as sound and motion, or more specific ones such as pitch, timbre, dynamics, tonal succession, and juxtaposition. These categories are the musical concepts with which the composer works. However, music may also be described in *conceptual categories* like sonata-allegro form, harmonic rhythm, thematic relationships, style, and so forth. These are the concepts that the musicologist and theorist use in analyzing a musical work. It is certainly true that the perceptual and conceptual categories can and do overlap; yet the difference between them lies in the primary *reference* either to

immediate auditory-experiential qualities or to the activities of analysis and organization. These categories resemble one another, however, in that they comprise referential symbols that are conceived apart from the actual perception of music and that depend on language rather than on sound. The composer occupies an ambiguous position: as a worker in musical materials he operates in the phenomenal medium of musical perception; yet when he pauses to reflect on or to explain what he is doing, he shifts to perceptual (and occasionally to conceptual) categories. Still, there is a striking consistency in the testimony of creative artists about their reliance on purely perceptual qualities for making creative decisions. They simply "like it that way" because "it sounds better."

There is, I believe, a good deal of evidence that favors the adoption of this distinction in the musical object between the experiential and the categorial. The history of music abounds with examples of ingenious technical bravado incorporated into a musical work which simply does not succeed in performance. And we all recognize how the aural integrity of a musical piece need not necessarily correspond with a unity that can be discovered by analyzing the work. If we wish, then, to be clear about what a musical piece is, we must decide whether we mean the object as heard or the object as analyzed.

Professor Crocker's paper offers several illustrations of the difficulties that result from the failure to notice and observe this fundamental distinction. His discussion is knowledgeable and illuminating through the range of illustrations he brings forward to test various proposals for locating the musical piece. Yet it shifts between the piece as an experienced unity, which he describes by referring to time span (five minutes plus or minus), and the piece as a structural entity (multi-movement works, sonata form, motet, aria). Similarly, he moves from the formal units through which we are exposed aurally to a composer's extended composition (the acts of operas, the movements of symphonies) to our knowledge of who he was and the intentions he had (as in our unwillingness to part from our conviction that a piece should have only one composer) for purposes of questioning whether the multi-movement trope and introit can be considered a single piece. The same ambiguity pursues Professor Crocker's discussion of Chopin's Preludes Op. 28 and Webern's Op. 5, for while we often hear the individual pieces which comprise each opus played straight through (perhaps changing the order in the case of the Chopin), neither of these works was intended as a multi-movement composition. The same perceptual-conceptual distinction is overlooked when we are led directly from considering the beginning, middle, and end of a piece as *they sound*, to the search for a *canon* of form, perhaps unknown, but nonetheless there. Our pursuit of the musical piece might be aided somewhat if we knew what it is we were seeking—sound or idea. I would opt for locating the primary sense of the notion of "musical object" or "piece" in the perceptual experience, and assigning the significance of formal, stylistic, intentional and other features to their effects on the musical experience. In

any event, some such decision must be made, for the distinction can hardly be overlooked.

Miss Carpenter's broadly developed paper contains a wealth of suggestion, and I could not presume that a brief commentary such as this can do justice to its many observations and insights. Her paper is an attempt to deal with the problem of the musical object in essentially traditional terms, and my comments may contribute most by noting how a careful avoidance of the second difficulty that was mentioned above—speaking of music in language originally designed for other, quite different purposes—might serve to carry the discussion forward in a somewhat less misleading fashion.

Miss Carpenter approaches the problem of determining what a piece of music is by contrasting music as process with music as object. She associates a piece of music with music taken as an object, since only when it is an object does music have a clearly articulated structure, with its form as its objective aspect. She illustrates music as process with John Cage's *Variations for orchestra and dance*, a work which demands the participation of the perceiver in a flow of organized sound, and music as object with Edgard Varèse's *Ionization*, whose closely knit formal organization enables the listener to remove himself from what is going on by stepping back and interposing "distance" between himself and the piece. It is this ability to disengage oneself and distance the piece that she finds cultivated during the period when the independent musical work began to emerge. What in general seems to characterize the musical object is our awareness of form that carries one beyond the constant motion of the musical process to the perception from a distance of an object as a whole—the product of perceptual form.

Now I think we can all recognize a vast range in degrees of formal coherence. What is at issue, however, is the extent to which formal integrity is necessary for music to become an object, and, even more basic and important, what the nature of such form is and how it can best be described. The first question, I suggest, is largely empirical. The kind of coherence relevant to a discussion of music is primarily auditory, and it is in the light of the experiential (and not analytical) orderliness of music that this must be appraised. It is indeed possible that the Cage *Variations* possesses minimal aural coherence sufficient to be fairly regarded as a musical piece. That tight organization is not essential for this is shown by our willingness to take certain through-composed songs of, say, Schubert and Debussy as pieces. Moreover, the use of chance techniques may itself provide a measure of unity, an order in disorder, to give a work aural coherence. As long as it is the *perception* of form that we are concerned with, then, our answers lie in the region of the psychology of musical perception.

More to the purpose of this discussion, however, is the question of the ways in which the formal features of music are described. Miss Carpenter appears eager to accept the tendency of our language to spatialize and objectify time, after noting that this is something *done to* the temporal process. The point at issue is whether this tendency is an illuminating objectification or a distorting

one for describing music. I should like to suggest that it is the latter, and doubly so, first, since it misrepresents musical perception by treating it in visual (spatial) terms, and second, since it exerts the unfortunate influence of the historical tendency to associate visual perception with cognitive apprehension.

Miss Carpenter's discussion constantly moves the musical object to the level of the physical object perceived visually, in space in order to consider it. For instance, she makes repeated use of the notion of distance in considering the perception and identification of a musical piece, as, for example, in the notion of music as product, and she frequently seems to use "distance" in a literal sense. This usage is quite foreign to the intent of Edward Bullough, who gave the term currency through his concept of "psychical distance."<sup>1</sup> Bullough took this as the characteristic feature of the appreciative attitude toward art, that is, as a trait of the perceptual experience of art, and he took pains explicitly to distinguish it from actual physical and temporal distance, both of which applications he regarded as derivative at best. Furthermore, he typically and most successfully applied the notion of psychical distance to theater and the fine arts rather than to music, and for reasons that are obvious. Yet Miss Carpenter, in defending the musical object against the musical process, interprets object, piece, form, space, and distance in visual, often physicalistic, terms.

To be sure, there are places in Part IV in which this relationship appears to be inverted, when hearing asserts its perceptual individuality and becomes the model for vision. Still, the dominant impression of the visual metaphor remains. For example, in Part VI Miss Carpenter interprets the fugue as a musical object in the light of visual perception, in which time becomes unessential and the spatial perception of form compelling. Indeed, she claims that we must apprehend the fugue from a distance by a single imaginary act. Yet if we take hearing as the paradigm in the perception of artistic form, a development Miss Carpenter notes approvingly in Part IV, we might rather then justify inverting the relationship and temporalizing all art, assimilating painting to music (that is, to the movement of perceptual experience) instead of spatializing music and assimilating it to a conceptual abstraction. It is difficult to interpret her citation of Walter Pater in any other way, for in taking music as the paradigm of all art, he is carrying to a logical conclusion his glorification of the intensely moving flux of sensory experience.

These observations bring me finally to consider briefly the substantive task that this kind of discussion requires in order for it to be carried forward on sound ground. Any clarification of what a "piece of music" is must necessarily involve reference to musical experience. Consequently it is the characteristics of such experience which must first be determined. Miss Carpenter makes some valuable observations on this subject in her discussion of the psychology of perception in Parts IV and V. This approach must be developed and extended, but with a clear concern for examining musical experience in its own perceptual terms and not through the use of a visual or any other

analogy. For our understanding of music has, I think, long been impeded by the tendency to assimilate it to the other more familiar and readily verbalized arts, just as our understanding of art in general has been sorely handicapped by our propensity to explain it in the light of concepts and objects of a wholly different and foreign sort. I have elsewhere<sup>2</sup> used the concept of "surrogate theories of art" to denote attempts of this sort, and the notion applies equally to the substitution of the conceptual object for the perceptual one, and the visual experience for the musical one. Once a path is charted around these pitfalls, we must devise concepts and categories that are taken from musical experience. Only in the light of these can we hope to acquire a clearer understanding of the musical object. It would be presumptuous to do more than suggest a direction here, but perhaps that will be sufficient to provide a positive close to this discussion of two thoughtful and provocative papers.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Edward Bullough, "'Psychical distance' as a factor in art and an aesthetic principle," *British Journal of Psychology*, 5:87-98 (1912). This well-known paper has been reprinted in a number of anthologies in aesthetics, including Melvin Rader, ed., *A modern book of esthetics*, 3rd ed., (New York, 1960), pp. 394-411; Morris Weitz, ed., *Problems in aesthetics* (New York, 1959), pp. 646-656; and Eliseo Vivas and Murray Krieger, eds., *The problems of aesthetics* (New York, 1953), pp. 396-405.

<sup>2</sup> Arnold Berleant, "Surrogate theories of art," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, forthcoming.

#### Saul Novack, *Some thoughts on the nature of the musical composition (Further considerations of Professor Crocker's Reflections)*

The questions that Professor Crocker has engaged are of overwhelming import. Within an obviously enjoyed bit of speculation, he has shown his wisdom by allowing them to remain unanswered. At this moment, limited by a response which is even briefer than Professor Crocker's exposition, I cannot offer anything beyond a few suggestions as to possible directions further inquiries might take, well aware of the lack of sufficient amplification and support of some of my observations.

The word "piece" is a curious one, and its implicit meanings were perhaps not originally intended. Distinction should be made between "piece" and "composition." The former implies any musical time-space which is either inorganic, or organic but subservient to a higher musical unit. The term composition (*componere*: to collect together a whole from several parts) involves much more than a collection of the several parts. If we limit the