

essay

## Better the Puppet?\*

By James Robert Currie

*It is dangerous to unmask images, since  
they dissimulate the fact that there is  
nothing behind them.*

(Baudrillard 1983:9)

Herod: *Dance, Salomé, dance for me.*

(Wilde 1981:421)

### I.

In the fourth of Rainer Maria Rilke's *Duino Elegies*, written in November of 1915, we are asked rhetorically if we have not all sat afraid before our heart, as if it were a stage whose curtain then rises. What do we find there? In the elegy it is a dancer, and this provokes the following reaction:

Not *him*. Enough! However lightly he moves,  
he's costumed, made up—an ordinary man  
who hurries home and walks in through the kitchen.

I won't endure these half-filled human masks;  
better the puppet. It at least is full.  
I'll put up with the stuffed skin, the wire, the face  
that is nothing but appearance. Here, I'm waiting.  
Even if the lights go out; even if someone  
tells me "That's all"; even if emptiness  
floats toward me in a gray draft from the stage. (Rilke 1982:169)<sup>1</sup>

The passage is dense and charts a tortured chain of logic. We look within out of an existential fear because, as it is written earlier in the poem, "we never know the actual, vital contour of our own emotions—only what forms them from outside" (*ibid.*).<sup>2</sup> We are strangers unto ourselves. The spaces within then open themselves up to us and they reveal a human presence, a man, "an ordinary man," one whom we can locate specifically,

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hurrying home and walking in through the kitchen door. He is real; he is familiar. What could be more comforting than to find such a figure within ourselves in times of need? Approachable and artistic, for he is a dancer, and dance of course is the universal solvent. For the elegy's persona, however, this figure is but a hired performer of the soul. The mixing of artifice with the distracting realities of the flesh is disgusting, the ingredients curdled.

Something has failed to materialize itself here, something we might refer to as a real presence. This does not imply any kind of crass realism: "the fruit in that painting was so real I could have eaten it." That would amount to kitsch. Rather, the phrase has its roots in the religious experience of consubstantiation. Consubstantiation is a magical paradox, referring to the moment within the celebration of the Eucharist when the bread actually becomes the body of Christ whilst simultaneously remaining merely as bread, the wine being both Christ's blood and at the same time just wine. It is a form of magic that seems to be particularly resonant with aesthetic experience, if not the marker by which the aesthetic is validated, as George Steiner (1989) has passionately argued. However, in the elegy, when the dancer performs, his materiality—the raw stuff of his body and its movements and the makeup on his face—remains opaque, mere stuff. What should have happened is that the dancer becomes like a stained glass window: that which is transformed by the light passing through it, and that which, by its color, transforms the light itself. The window and the light should form a mutually redeeming interdependence. But this is not to be, for either the dancer is not made of glass, or there is in fact no light behind him. Instead we are left with a parody of the aesthetic experience: "half-filled human masks."

Bathos—it is something that many of us fear we might find ourselves having to experience in the face of art. Who has not gone to art in need of something, requiring to be healed in some way, yet nervous that magic might not make an appearance that evening—anxious that one might have to leave at the end laden down with the depressing thought that one had never managed to transcend the literal fact that, for example, one had been sitting in a theater watching a play? When we return outside, do we not want that slightly far-away look in our eyes, that secret smile that says that whilst we were in the theater we were not just in the theater? Do we not desire to be able to feel that we "lost ourselves" and yet, at the same time, were able to find the person we had lost in the first place, the person whose disappearance instigated our being drawn toward art: in other words, ourselves?

Bertolt Brecht would not have been the first person in history to be disgusted by my series of assumptions and rhetorical questions. There is a

long chain of those who have been keen to draw our attention to the idea that the forgetting offered by art may well be suspicious: from Plato, through St. Augustine, eighteenth-century French neoclassicists and nineteenth-century Realists, Marxists, and others. Art is an addictive illusion, an opiate, something that incarcerates us in a cycle of hope and despair, making us incapable of curing ourselves of believing in an unreliable form of magic that keeps us from engaging with what is truly important, with that which might actually redeem us.

Tacitly, such a position is, of course, also common among the more politically-oriented criticism in the academy today. We are encouraged to rally ourselves to a particular battle cry: rouse yourselves from the slumber of your feelings of security, rub your dream-drenched eyes, and turn a cool, bright light back upon your experience of art. We are asked to disenchant art—that is, to perceive it purely as an artifact whose set of effects are the products of its own social and cultural materiality. A disenchanted work of art is a machine without a ghost, a cultural product that we should not perceive as having agency, autonomy, or any kind of aesthetic real presence. And perhaps it is this that the persona of Rilke's elegy calls for when, having dismissed the dancer as an aesthetic failure, it rather petulantly asserts: "better the puppet. It at least is full." It is argued that we should admit that art is mere artifice, "nothing but appearance"; if you confuse the distinction between what is artifice and what is real you create something grotesque and unsavory, tattoo-like, "like a painting which is on living skin and should be on a canvas," to appropriate the words of the eighteenth-century French Neoclassicist Charles Batteux (Lippman 1986:264). Our art should be solid and tangible, "full"; it should be "stuffed skin" and "wire," containing no secret empty chambers which we might fancy a magical metaphysical cloud inhabiting. Anyway, such a cloud is mere "emptiness," floating towards us "in a gray draft from the stage." There is no redeeming symbolist paradox here; this is an absence—a blank space, a silence—something that possess no ability to convince us that it is the *sine qua non* of a real metaphysical presence. How could it? *It isn't.*

The tone of this kind of argument can sometimes seem too severe, verging as it does on an existentially devastating vision of a world that cannot be anything other than what it simply is: nauseating, to describe it as Jean-Paul Satre does. Yet only the most pretentious of critics who wish to disenchant art would do so merely out of a penchant for posturing as steel-cold and unblinking in the face of such unbearable meaninglessness. To disenchant may well be to deny the reality of our metaphysical horizons, to flatten out depth. But what we lose when we admit that magic is, in a pejorative sense, illusion we gain in a fuller and richer sense of our power as human beings, and of the power of the products that, as human beings,

we make—or so the argument goes. When we disenchant art we energize ourselves in the face of a world without God; at its best the act of disenchantment thus has something Nietzschean about it. “Better the puppet. It at least is full.” And if we should perceive such fullness as somehow more than just a puppet, more than an artifice, then celebrate that perception as being of our own human making, as opposed to being something that comes from beyond. Make a puppet, make it with your human hands, out of the sense that puppets are more than puppets made by human hands. Disenchantment is, thus, to be correlated with liberation and freedom; there is a distinctly Enlightenment and secularizing ring to it. This is appropriate, since the term first appears prominently in the work of the sociologist Max Weber where it is used to express the fact that with the emergence of a scientific view of the universe and nature starting in the seventeenth century, nature “is no longer the visible expression of some ‘world soul’ in which humans also participate. Rather nature is sheer, impersonal objective ‘stuff’, which is governed, causally explicable, but completely cut adrift from human intentions” (Critchley 2001:8). Separated from nature in this way, Enlightenment man felt himself able to exert control, both intellectual and physical, over his natural environment, rather than being controlled by it. The ability to stand above, as it were, and see nature disenchanting, as mere “stuff,” gave man the ability to conceive of his own potential autonomy—and this gesture of disenchanting by looking from above, rather than trying to look out from within, is echoed throughout the age of Enlightenment whenever liberation, freedom, and autonomy are at stake. Nature, religion, political institutions—all of these things were to be scrutinized, their claims stripped of their aura of mythological irrefutability and disenchanting through the process of being shown to be mere constructs, puppets trying to pass themselves off as living truths. Thus, today when we attempt to disenchant art we are acting in part as children of the Enlightenment, asserting, against all the odds stacked up against us by postmodernism and poststructuralism, that there is a perspective from which things will be revealed as they truly are and, therefore, by corollary, that we can be autonomous in some way that is not illusory. “Better the puppet,” for then we are free.

Likewise, this essay had started out life as an attempt to put into effect such a liberating act of disenchantment. Specifically, my concern had been to show that Mozart’s late opera seria, *La clemenza di Tito*, tries to pass off, by means of the character Vitellia, an ideologically-constructed pejorative view of women as if it were nature, or even myth—at any rate, true. By contextualizing the work historically—a key strategy in most acts of disenchantment—I had, in effect, hoped to liberate us from two different roles that we perform, as both the perceiver and the perceived. I had wanted to

free us as audience from our entrapment within the opera's real presence, that fake magic which distracts us from perceiving that we are being taken in by a construct. In this sense, I had wanted to free us from being unconsciously complicit with a misrepresentation. But by making us aware of how our gaze might work to keep a character confined within an ideological construction, there was the implication that we might be made aware of how other gazes may be constructing us. The political corollary here seems pretty clear: if we unmask the illusions of art it will help us to unmask the illusions we live by; if we can see the ideological constructedness of characters in operas we will see how ideologically constructed we are ourselves. And from this realization freedom is born. Here is how my initial attempt to create freedom had looked.

## II.

*La clemenza di Tito* was first performed in Prague on September 6, 1791, as part of the celebrations for the coronation of the Austro-German Emperor Leopold II as King of Bohemia. The libretto, originally written in 1734 by the great Pietro Metastasio, was of a decidedly venerable quality, and there had been over sixty settings of it during the course of the eighteenth century before Mozart and Caterino Mazzolà, the court poet at Dresden, collaborated to create their two-act version for the festivities. The story was also perfectly molded symbolically to fulfill the political propaganda requirements engendered by the then present state of the Hapsburg Empire and also the role of Leopold as its new commander in chief. Such concerns were indeed very real in Europe after 1789, since with increasing frequency the crowned heads of Europe were being accused of incompetence and immorality.<sup>3</sup>

The action of *La Clemenza* can be understood as motivated by a tension between Vitellia and the Roman Emperor Titus, whose father had murdered and dethroned Vitellius, Vitellia's father. At the beginning of the opera, Titus is at the point of marrying Berenice, daughter of the king of Judea, and Vitellia, livid with jealousy at the thought that her claims to the throne have been spurned, has coerced Sextus, who is in love with her, to set fire to the capitol and murder Titus. During the course of the first act, Titus recants on his decision to marry Berenice, sends her packing back to Judea, and refocuses his marital plans on Sextus's sister, the modest and honest Servilia, whose hand in marriage Sextus has promised to his friend Annius. Servilia, tormented by the decision, confesses to the Emperor where her true feelings lie, and the ever-clement Titus, touched by her honesty, releases her from the law of his plans and blesses her union with Annius. Servilia's joy is misinterpreted by Vitellia as a sign that Servilia will indeed marry Titus, and as a result Vitellia rekindles the flames of her

treacherous idea in Sextus's mind. Sextus goes off to execute the plan, yet scarcely has this happened when Vitellia learns, too late to stop Sextus, that Titus has finally decided to marry her. The first act ends with the capitol in flames and the onlookers shocked at the apparent death of their benign emperor—who, we later learn, has fortuitously escaped harm. The second act is taken up with the unveiling of Sextus's crime, Titus's exoneration of him, and Vitellia's final decision, occurring on the cusp of the opera's conclusion, to confess her seminal role in the whole proceedings. In the final scene, the meaning of the opera's title prevails, and with no surprises Vitellia is forgiven.

Considering the event for which it was commissioned, the opera invites allegorical interpretation, with Titus as a thinly-veiled representation of Leopold II, and Vitellia's plotted rebellion echoing the fraught political situation in Europe.<sup>4</sup> In particular "[t]he burning of the Capitol at the end of the first act may well have been understood in 1791 as a frightening symbol of the violence with which the Bastille had been attacked just two years before" (Rice 1995a:290). This being the case, if we follow the logic of the allegory through further, the implication is that Leopold II is personally touched by the French Revolution, which in a very real way he was because of the obviously dire situation in which it placed his sister Marie Antoinette (Blanning 1999:354). On a general level, though, the opera tries to symbolically assert that Enlightened absolutism's continuation and feasibility are insured by the person of Leopold himself, for seemingly by means only of the magnetic emanations from Titus's magnanimous aura, the deviant and potentially politically disruptive and disastrous behavior of the characters are drawn back into moral and civic alignment. Thus, not only might the opera have appealed to those drawn to Enlightened political behavior, but also those worried by the potential threat to the existing social order that such ideas posed.<sup>5</sup> And indeed, both parties had their concerns when Leopold came to the throne. Leopold, like Titus, is to be seen as humane; yet his humanitarianism will not lead him to embrace extreme radicalism—which in this case would have been represented by Leopold's brother, Joseph II, whose Enlightened policies Leopold was keen to distance himself from as soon as Joseph had died in February of 1790.

Attractive as this picture of Enlightened authority might be, it nevertheless is made possible by a decidedly unenlightened sexual politics—which, ironically, was prevalent among Enlightened thinkers.<sup>6</sup> Practically speaking, the rather far-fetched demands the opera makes in terms of its status as a credible reflection of a realizable political reality—particularly to an audience mired in the political turmoil of the late eighteenth century—might have engendered some skeptical scrutiny. That is, if we were not distracted by the spectacle of an unruly and politically dangerous

woman, dangled in front us in the form of Vitellia.

This spectacle is a product of the slippery Enlightenment discourse concerning equality, human rights, and natural law, at the foundation of which lay the idea that reason and rationality were possessed, or at least could come to be possessed, by all humans.<sup>7</sup> Unless, of course, as Mary Wollstonecraft was to point out in 1792 in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, one happened to be a woman. If reason were to be in the same degree of possession by women as men, then the autonomous workings of reason itself would necessitate Enlightened thought being led to the inevitable conclusion: that women must have equal access to political debate and also political action and influence as men. As Wollstonecraft wrote, "Consider . . . whether, when men contend for their freedom, and to be allowed to judge for themselves respecting their own happiness, it be not inconsistent and unjust to subjugate women . . . ? Who made man the exclusive judge, if woman partake with him of the gift of reason?" (1992:87). An age of Enlightenment it may have been, but this did not stop many both from feeling threatened by this line of thinking and from trying to find a means by which it could be negated without seeming to negate what it meant to be Enlightened. The answer was to be found in science, one of the very foundation stones on which the Enlightenment had been built. In particular, Enlightened thinkers threatened by the potential ascendancy of women made recourse to the increasingly prevalent notion within medical treatises that the sexes were fundamentally different from each other.<sup>8</sup> As Thomas Laqueur has written: "By around 1800, writers of all sorts were determined to base what they insisted were fundamental differences between the male and female sexes, thus between man and woman, on discoverable biological distinctions, and to express these in a radically different rhetoric" (1990:5). This was a relatively new turn of events in the discourses of gender science, for before the eighteenth century the sexual organs of men and women primarily had been understood as in an inversional relationship to each other, rather than as completely different and noncomparable systems.<sup>9</sup> If it could be proven that women were, in a sense, a different species to men, then it could be argued that women did not have the same access to reason and therefore should neither have the same rights, nor inhabit the same spheres, nor be responsible for the same kinds of decisions. Women should remain in the domestic sphere, suckling children, as Rousseau in *Emile, ou de l'éducation* of 1762 never tired of repeating.<sup>10</sup> Otherwise, they threaten the transparency of the natural behavior that should exist between human beings with a cloying and destructive artifice—hence, why Rousseau railed so much against the salons, presided over, as they were, by powerful women who readily involved themselves in the intellectual debates taking place. Even those Enlightened think-

ers who believed that women did have genuine rights could still assert at the same time that women should be barred from taking part in politics because of a lack of independence and reason (Landes 1988).

Few today would fail to whiff the dangerous ideological clap-trap here. However, it is disturbing how little stretch of the imagination is needed to entertain that Vitellia, as presented in Mozart and Mazzolà's *La Clemenza di Tito*, would have been available to being interpreted as "proof" that such a view of women is in fact true. To appropriate Rousseau, Vitellia's "natural" feminine tendency toward feeling and emotion, untethered from its "natural" outlet in the domestic sphere, and accompanied by her equally "natural" feminine lack of reasoning, act to incarcerate her in a miasma of self-involvement. As Rousseau states in *Emile*, "The male is male only at certain moments," whereas "[t]he female is female her whole life" and "everything constantly recalls her sex to her" ([1762] 1964: Book V, 450). It was a widely held opinion in the eighteenth century, and was to appear again thirteen years later in the important *Système physique et moral de la femme*, by the French philosophical physician Pierre Roussel: "Woman is not woman only in one place but in every aspect under which she can be envisaged" ([1775] 1993:387). Blinded by her feminine jealousy, Vitellia loses sight of her duty toward the political whole; constantly recalled to her own sex, she is driven to igniting the flames of political rebellion.

As stated already, the patchy verisimilitude in the naively idealistic portrait of Titus and his powers of control and restraint probably would not have been lost on the informed in the politically unstable years in Europe following the storming of the Bastille. By comparison, though, there was really no convincing point of reference in recent history for the kind of overtly dangerous, even melodramatic, political activity by noble women as embodied in the representation of Vitellia. Women in the eighteenth century tended to suffer from a predicament which Arlette Farge has described as "'mixity' without parity" (quoted in Godineau 1997:394). Thus, although the rapidly changing structure of society and the public sphere meant that women were increasingly visible and/or active, many of their newfound roles were in a sense never properly legitimated by law or by themselves. Even the French Revolution failed to grant women the full political rights of citizenship. This is not to deny women's participation in politics. For example, Dominique Godineau has pointed out that women of the lower classes continued in their traditional roles as making up the first ranks of all public disturbances, such as food riots, religious upheavals, and anti-fiscal and political uprisings:

Protectresses of the community, they rose to defend its rights.  
Thanks to their mobility, their constant presence in the streets,

their familiarity with public spaces, and their role in the neighborhood, they soon learned of any violation of the tacit rules governing the balance between public power and its subjecters. They were quick to rise to protest any situation they judged intolerable, dragging their men along with them. (Godineau 1997:416)<sup>11</sup>

Women of the upper classes, particularly those who organized salons, were often involved in brokering important political relationships. And let us not forget the fact that this was the century of three powerful female monarchs: Anne of England, Catherine II (the Great) of Russia, and Marie-Theresa of Austria. However, in all these areas women came under intense criticism: rioting invited the age-old claim that women were shrews; we have already touched on Rousseau's disgust of salons, a disgust that was matched by none other than Mary Wollstonecraft; and Marie-Theresa's succession to the throne gave birth to eight years of war. Further, many women, while desiring to "take part" in some way, were not necessarily so keen to take the point much further. For example, evidence suggests that after rioting was over people seemed to be relatively accepting of going back to their business and performing their usual social roles (Farge 1993:502-5). Many women were also prepared to justify the kinds of limited roles offered to them. Thus, in 1793, Laetitia Hawkins wrote in her *Letters on the Female Mind*—a direct response to Wollstonecraft's *Vindication*—that "[i]t cannot, I think, be truly asserted, that the intellectual powers know no difference of sex. Nature certainly intended a distinction . . . In general, and almost universally, the feminine intellect has less strength and more acuteness. Consequently in our exercise of it we show less perseverance and more vivacity" (Outram 1995:85).

Relinquished by absence of example from the responsibility of finding a reflection for Vitellia's character and actions in the so-called real world, audience members would have been free to use their imaginations in order to project traditional prejudices into the virtual allegorical world of the opera, where they could grow into realities and enable confidence to be felt in the conviction that "yes, of course that's how a women would act in such a situation." Moreover, the widely-held perception at this time that there were strong ties between radical thinking, such as proto-feminist debate, and the French Revolution would have only worked to aid the creation of an atmosphere conducive to the public acceptance of such an interpretation.<sup>12</sup> Thus, we might consider that, for many, Vitellia may well have functioned as the locus where the opera's claims to representational truth grounded in reality were legitimated.<sup>13</sup> Finally, if Vitellia is to be considered real, then by the fortuity of analogy, that which threatens the

Example 1: "S'altro che lacrime," mm. 1-16.

Tempo di Minuetto

Flauto

Oboe

Fagotto

Corno I, II in Re / D

Violino I

Violino II

Viola

SERVILLA

Violoncello e Basso

*p* *cresc.* *f*

*p* *cresc.* *f*

*p* *cresc.* *fp*

S'al - tro che la - cri - me per lui non ten - ti, tut - to il tuo - pian - ge re

Example 1 (cont.)

Musical score for Example 1 (cont.), featuring vocal lines and piano accompaniment. The score is written in G major and 4/4 time. It includes dynamic markings such as *p* (piano) and *cresc.* (crescendo). The vocal line includes the lyrics: non gio - ve - ra, tutto il tuo pian - ge-re non gio - ve - ra, non gio - ve - ra.

political stability of Enlightened absolutism is gendered feminine, and therefore must be assumed, at least within the public discourse, to be controllable. The French Revolution is but a crazy woman—a comforting thought, perhaps.

### III.

I might have kept fleshing out the relations here between Vitellia, *La clemenza* as allegory, and political and philosophical ideas; I might have kept forcing myself to see Vitellia as a cultural puppet with stuffed skin, wire, and a face that is “nothing but appearance,” to return to Rilke’s words; I might have kept attempting to rip away the veil of illusion that, it is assumed, the “bad” work constructs; and, as I suggested in the introduction, I might have felt that in doing so I was involved in something important politically. This might have been the case, if it were not for the fact that in places in the opera attention is already being directed towards the possibility that Vitellia is constructed in some way. This is particularly the case with her famous rondò “Non più di Fiori” (no. 23).<sup>14</sup> Here Vitellia’s convincing illusion seems to crumble as a result of the framing of her rondò between two particularly expressively fused pillars: no. 21, “S’altro che lacrime,” Servilia’s entreaty that Vitellia plea to Titus for Sextus’s life,<sup>15</sup> and the opening chorus in honor of Titus, no. 24, “Che del ciel,” which starts the final scene.<sup>16</sup>

Servilia’s aria (ex. 1) creates the sensation that the path of communications, leading from her sentiments, through the medium of her musical language, and eventually to Vitellia and us, is without obstacles. As result, when she sings one is moved beyond the situation where character is presented as representation into a realm where character as such disappears and a real presence starts to take over. Artifice dissolves in the context of an artifice. It is a magical contradiction, and in this instance I argue that the spell works because of a delicate and almost imperceptible blending that takes place between musical worlds presented as if they were nature and the body—appearing before our aural gaze seemingly unmediated by cultural discourses—and the culturally-produced artifices of musical technique and style, which are in fact what allow for this transportation to take place.

Nature appears to us as a subtly etched, continuous background of lightly pulsating eighth notes, which delicately flows into the view of our aural gaze in the two measures of orchestral introduction, and then in a gentle sinuous fashion threads its way through the landscape of the musical fabric, every now and again calmly gurgling to the melodic surface of the composition, particularly at the breaks between the vocal phrases and in the brief orchestral coda (examples 2a and 2b show the subtle creation

**Example 2a:** “S’altro che lacrime,” mm. 5–7.

**Example 2b:** “S’altro che lacrime,” mm. 13–16.

of passages of continuous eighth-note intertwining between the vocal part and the instruments at two places: mm. 5–7, and mm. 13–16). This is a musical landscape that rests calmly in the cool shadowy half-light between images of soft breezes and quietly rippling brooks. Floating within and seemingly organically interlaced with this environment are Servilia’s sighs, emanating from their source in her body out into her melodic line, and then echoed delicately by means of gentle *fortepianos* and *sforzandos* within the “natural landscape” of the instrumental accompaniment, creating a kind of pathetic fallacy. For example, the sigh motive in Servilia’s line in m. 4, ripples into the orchestral accompaniment as a *fortepiano* in m. 5, which is then repeated in m. 7 (ex. 1).

These subtle pictorial intimations are both framed by and also constitute the more obviously culturally-defined artifices of the composition. The undulating and regular rhythmic background helps to measure out the basic underlying rhythmic gesture of the aria, which is in the tempo of a minuet, a dance form that, though somewhat outdated in the ballrooms

**Example 3:** "S'altro che lacrime," mm. 3–6: Motivic relations.

Example 3 shows two staves of music in G major, 3/4 time. The top staff is labeled "m. 3" and "vocal". It contains four measures of music. Brackets labeled "a" are placed under the second and fourth measures. The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment. Brackets labeled "b", "a", "b (inversion)", and "a" are placed under the first, second, third, and fourth measures respectively, indicating motivic relationships between the piano and vocal lines.

**Example 4:** "S'altro che lacrime," mm. 3–10: Motivic relations.

Example 4 shows two staves of music in G major, 3/4 time. The top staff is labeled "m. 3" and contains ten measures of music. Brackets labeled "a" are placed over the second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth measures. The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment. Brackets labeled "n + o" are placed under the second and fourth measures, indicating a specific melodic contour.

by the end of the eighteenth century, continued to be associated with a sort of noble simplicity, to invoke Johann Winckelmann.<sup>17</sup> At the same time, though, this background is ordered into a kind of musical perspective by means of the minuet style's consistent cycle of three-beat measures. Likewise, Servilia's sighs are coopted into articulating the phrase structure and also play an active role in producing subtleties within the structure that help to detract from the artifice of its potential four-squareness. Thus, in the opening four measures of her melody descending sighing gestures (a) occur in the second and fourth measures. These help to articulate the divide between the two two-measure units, yet at the same time they quietly make us aware of the motivic relations that link the two units (ex. 3). Finally, in mm. 7–10, we are presented with a descending sequence of these sighs, which grows out of the melodic pitch contour (n + o) of mm. 5–6, and creates a four-measure unit that is more continuous and fused in comparison with the more literal two-measure unit orientation characterizing her opening four measures (ex. 4). The overall impression is of a sensitively flexible, seamless entity, one that appears to define a boundary for itself, and then accept as natural the sense and good taste of not transgressing it.

In Servilia's aria we might say that unity and variety balance each other

out in a dance between nature and culture: a minuet that seems to embody everything the eighteenth century thought to be beautiful. Similar kinds of syntheses, which likewise accumulate into an authentically fused expressive presence, also occur on the other side of Vitellia's aria, in the grandly sublime, Handelian-style chorus "Che del ciel."<sup>18</sup> Here, however, the synthesizing tendency leads to an image of autonomous, free-thinking individuals, drawn magnetically together as if by natural instinct into a benign social contract, which, rather than compromising their separate identities, becomes the environment that allows the sublimity of the general will to become manifest. The orchestral introduction to this chorus is in the decidedly elevated style of the French overture, which had its origin as processional entrance music in the court of Louis XIV. But even though this music exudes an aura of authority, the almost ecstatic exuberance of the choral music that it builds up to suggests that the Roman citizens are encouraged and energized by it rather than intimidated. Further, the potentially restrictive formalities that might seem to be obligatory in the presence of the French overture style appear to have been transformed into more spontaneous behavior—spontaneity that, nevertheless, does not threaten to become disrespectful or contradictory. The voices give us the impression that without premeditation they suddenly coalesce into a rhythmically unified choral pronouncement; entering on the second beat, as if the spectacle they are witnessing and taking part in keeps them momentary stunned with an awe that then busts into life with their first exclamation, they are magically inspired to sing the same unscripted music at once.<sup>19</sup>

Amongst other things, both "S'altro che lacrime" and "Che del ciel" can strike one as authentically present because of their shared tendency toward a seemingly unoppressive synthesis, consistency, and homogeneity of musical expression. In sharp contrast, Vitellia's music, sandwiched in between as it is, is all juxtaposition and superimposition, fracture, edge, and seam. Through recourse to the work of Michel Foucault, Susan McClary has famously asserted that the vocal excess and potentially destabilizing presence of female characters in certain operas is often made a spectacle of, and also controlled by means of, a framing device which, as it were, hinders the spread of female contagion (McClary 1991:80–111). This line of interpretation could be successfully applied here, the frame being achieved not only through differences in aesthetic presence, but also by the historical associations of the musical styles and forms employed. Both the minuet style of Servilia's aria and the Handelian grandeur of the chorus invoke the past as a locus of stable, benign authority. By comparison, the rondò form employed for Vitellia was a form that was particularly in vogue at the time of *La clemenza*'s first performance. One might therefore argue that the unstable contemporary political situation, as embodied al-

legorically in Vitellia, is aligned with the contemporaneity of the rondò form and also of the recently invented basset horn, which is given an obbligato part here. This contemporaneity is then put in an unflattering proximity to the certainties of the past. This interpretation resonates with Rice's view that *La clemenza* partakes of, or was coopted into aiding, Leopold's attempt to recreate the political and cultural atmosphere of the 1760s, a period which, apparently, many Viennese looked back on as a golden age before the troubles created by the events of 1789 (Rice 1995a). But of course, it hardly holds water to propose as a universal for the understanding of operatic representation that as consistency equals presence so disunity equals artifice. In fact, in this instance we could get a lot of critical mileage from assuming that the expressive disjuncture of Vitellia's music is a direct communication of the emotional disjunction of her mind as she tries to convince herself of the act of self-sacrifice she is about to perform. Thus, perhaps Vitellia *is* for completely opposite musical reasons than Servilla or the chorus of Roman citizens *are*.

Nevertheless, at four points during her rondò the expressive authenticity of Vitellia's confusion is threatened by a fracture line resulting from the slightly warped character of a musical idea first introduced in the obbligato basset horn part and immediately repeated by Vitellia. In and of itself, this theme is suspicious because of the seemingly paper-thin sincerity and sentimental pathos of its sinuous and rather over-seasoned expression; it is saccharine and mildly crass in its insinuating way, a kind of Mime music *avant la lettre*. Its effect, I argue, never manages to transcend the materials from which it is made and, thus, its effectiveness never properly emerges; there is a kind of grotesque literalness to its motivic, phrase, and harmonic structures, which stands in sharp distinction to the effortless, and modestly inconspicuous subtleties of Servilia's melodic material. It opens itself up to pejorative judgements particularly when, as happens twice in the piece (mm. 56–60, and mm. 109–13), this melody is slapped on top of a clodhopping, oom-paah-paah-paah march accompaniment, like a slightly curdled frosting on top of an inappropriately bland cake (see example 5, mm. 56–60, for the first occurrence of this theme). One might argue that the contrast here between chromatically saturated melodic expression and simple four-square accompaniment creates the impression of a sort of stunned tragic shock. And indeed, this kind of melody and melodic presentation was soon to become a staple means by which such emotions were to be indicated in the serious operas of Italian composers such as Bellini and Donizetti in the first half of the nineteenth century. The melody, therefore, might be thought of as evidence of the stylistically advanced nature of *La clemenza*, as some commentators have urged us to consider.<sup>20</sup> But such an effect is not successfully pulled off

Example 5: "Non più di Fiori," mm. 51-82.

Flauto *si*  
Oboe  
Bassett Horn  
Fagotto  
Corno I, II  
Violino I  
Violino II  
Viola  
SERVILIA  
Violoncello e Basso

Flauto: *f*, *f*, *p*  
Oboe: *f*, *f*, *p*  
Fagotto: *f*, *f*, *p*  
Corno I, II: *f*, *p*  
Violino I: *p*, *f*, *f*, *p*  
Violino II: *p*, *f*, *f*, *p*  
Viola: *p*, *f*, *f*, *p*  
Violoncello e Basso: *p*, *f*, *f*, *p*

Soprano (SERVILIA):  
Ah — di — me che si di — rà, che si di — rà? Chi — ve — des — se il mio — do —

Example 5 (cont.)

*Basset Horn*

The musical score consists of five staves. The top staff is for the Basset Horn, the second and third staves are for the Piano (right and left hands), and the fourth and fifth staves are for the Voice. The music is in a minor key and 3/4 time. The voice part includes the following lyrics: lo - re, pur a - vria di me - pie - tà. Chi - ve - des - se il mio do - lo - re, pur a - vria di me - pie - tà.

Example 5 (cont.)

The musical score consists of five staves. The top staff is for the Basset Horn, starting with a triplet of eighth notes. The second staff is for the Fagotto. The third and fourth staves are for a vocal line, with lyrics in Italian. The bottom staff is a bass line. Dynamics include *p*, *mf*, and *mfz*. The lyrics are: "pur - a - vris - di - me - pie - tà. Non più di fio - ri - va - ghe ca - te - ne".

here. There are a number of reasons for this, the primary one being that each time the melody appears it is preceded by a grand accumulative musical sweep worthy of comparison with the high tragic style Mozart employs for other heroines, for example in Donna Anna's magnificent aria "Or sai chi l'onore" in *Don Giovanni*. Thus, each time we are led to expect something more elevated than what we get (example 6 shows how the third occurrence of the idea is contextualized).

The immediate effect is one of bathos, one which might create the kind of empathetic relationship between us and Vitellia that the words with which this theme comes to be associated would imply: "Chi vedesse il mio dolore/ Pur avria di me pietà" ("yet he who could see my distress would have pity on me"). However, there is something expressively ungrounded about this theme that makes it just as easy to hear its effect as a little grotesque, or even quite comic.<sup>21</sup> It is almost as if Vitellia suddenly splutters and stalls, and in order to be mended the back of this rondò has to be turned toward us revealing the mechanisms behind the chimera. Vitellia has to be kick-started back into action, she (or maybe we should say it) has to be reprogrammed to be, and this is done by the inserting of that creepy musical idea into her machinery, winding the whole thing up, and then letting it run until all the parts click back together again and the machine is able to give us the impression that Vitellia autonomously creates her own music, that she has, in a sense, become again. On a literal level, this impression is created by the presence of the basset horn, which instigates Vitellia's utterances, coaxing her to sing her own music and then celebrates with virtuosic figuration when it appears that the lesson has been learned. The transition from broken to functioning, machine to being, or even puppet to person, is also articulated by Vitellia's reclaiming of her elevated, declamatory musical rhetoric with the return of the opening words, "non più di fiori" (ex. 5, mm. 79ff.).

#### IV.

This essay is moving toward the following kind of conclusion: the work of art that we are able to perceive as already in the process of unmasking its own illusions puts the disenchanting critic, striding confidently forward to unmask it, in an awkward predicament. If we can already start to see what lies underneath, then the disenchanter starts looking a little like a hired magician at a tired children's party: "See! Ideology!" (One cannot but help noticing here a delicious irony—that self-disenchanting works turn disenchanting critics into their very object of criticism, into questionable magic makers.) The nasty little barrel-organ theme is not just the sound of a broken operatic music—a music, as it were, without horizon, one that has lost the ability to convince us that it is not just music, and that we are not

**Example 6: "Non più di Fiori," mm. 122–130.**

122

Flauto *p* cresc. *f* *p*

Oboe *p* cresc. *f*

Basset Horn *p*

Fagotto cresc. *f*

Corno I, II *crescendo*

Violino I *crescendo* *f* *p*

Violino II *crescendo* *f* *p*

Viola *crescendo* *f*

SERVILLA  
 In - - - fe - li - - - ce! qui or - ro - rel Chi - ve - des - se il mio - do - lo - re, pur - a - vria - di - me - pie - tà.

Violoncello e Basso *simile* *crescendo* *f* *p*

just trapped in the fact of just being people just watching an opera. It is also the sound of the music that one creates when one plays at disenchanting. Like the mirror that never lies, this music reflects back the rather unpleasant sound of that which we desire: a music without illusion. Then, as if to add salt to raw wounds, the music immediately tries to swallow us up again into its magical illusion, that which we have been trying to destroy. Vitellia's *rondò* goes straight on into the chorus, "Che del ciel," that was discussed earlier. No time is offered for the distracting artifice of applause, and, thus, no room is made available to contemplate whether what we have just heard may, in fact, have been an artifice. Like Brünhilde to her immolation pyre, Vitellia runs out of our critical embrace (if in fact she was ever there anyway) and into the sublime forgetting of the final spectacle. Suddenly reimbued with agency, she chooses the magic reality of operatic illusion.

A shameless part of me craves to conclude with this image of the aesthetic triumphant and us humans, by comparison, belittled to the level of puppets who do not even know that we are such. However, the attempt to unmask those who unmask can only exist arbitrarily as a termination point of this discussion. The conclusions I have been trying to reach can themselves be unmasked; the music that I have been trying to make dance without strings can easily be made to crash to the floor again under the sheer weight of disenchanting historical argument. To return to a remark from earlier in this essay: a puppet can be made with our human hands out of the sense that puppets have become more than puppets made by human hands.

The shifting perspective in Vitellia's music, backwards and forwards from puppet to being, can be correlated with the anxious relationship between materialist/mechanistic and transcendental groundings of the subject in the late eighteenth century. Earlier in the century, materialists such as D'Alembert and Diderot were able to present an unanxious, even celebratory, view of human beings as machine-like. At that time, science and reason had yet to take on the negative connotations that they were to accrue during the industrial growth of the nineteenth century—in other words, as the means by which man becomes dominated, rather than that which he uses to dominate nature. Adorno and Horkheimer's depressingly negative view of the dialectic of Enlightenment was not yet a consideration. The idea that a man might be a mechanism was a sign that he was congruent with the universe in which he found himself, a universe which, since the dissemination of Newton's and Descartes's theories, was likewise considered to be understandable in mechanistic terms. Mechanistic man was, we might say, the proof that man was natural, free from alienation. And this way of thinking goes some way towards explaining the popularity

of musical automata during the eighteenth century: the ability of man to be able to recreate mechanically the intricacies of a musical performance is a reflection of his ability to know himself and to be able to shine the light of reason even into the most mysterious corridors of the human condition. Musical automata are a celebration of the fact that man is soon to become Enlightened.

One might make a case for understanding Vitellia's rondò from this positive perspective of Enlightened materialism and assert that Vitellia is, in fact, a puppet and that that is all for the best. As Carolyn Abbate points out, "Diderot tended to see theatre and opera in terms of what actors and musicians produce, not merely as abstract texts that imitate the natural world. He was, it would seem, always thinking of the toy theatre, the little marionettes and their tinkling music, when opera was discussed" (1999:476). For Diderot, we might argue, the potential split between art as artifice and life as real is not necessarily a consideration. For example, when he ironically disrupts the narrative flow with commentary from outside, as in the short story *This Is Not a Story* and the novel *Jacques the Fatalist*, is he acting like some kind of proto-postmodernist, or asserting a basic materialist principle: that art is just as much made as everything else? If we are good materialists we do not interpret the point where Vitellia's rondò breaks down at the words "Chi vedesse il mio dolore" as an interruption of aesthetic illusion that results in our alienation from the experience. In getting to see that she is made, we are drawn closer to her, for we are made, too.

Toward the end of the eighteenth century, though, this benign symbiosis—man, machine, nature, and reason—found itself riven into its component parts. And as Abbate shows, at this time puppets changed from being objects of entertainment which inspire us toward Enlightened optimism to being terrible, even uncanny, things that disturb our sense of being. She writes:

[t]he animated figure we confront, astonishingly talented at assuming human functions, suggests how we could look down to find our own chests covered by brass plates, ripped open to expose 'an elegant clockwork' within. Thus the perfected mechanical man robs us of a prize, our soul, and in so doing injures human individuality and consciousness. (Abbate 1999:476)

A possible backdrop for understanding this shift comes from considering Kant's notion that the subject is transcendent, no longer to be scripted as some kind of passive mechanism that just senses objects. In this formulation, the subject's knowledge no longer conforms to the world, but rather the world conforms, as it were, to the structure and also the limitations of

the subject's thinking. A result of this is that the modern Kantian subject has no direct access to the world as it might actually be. Rather, it represents the world to itself in the form of phenomena, and therefore remains on some level alienated from the problematic and somewhat mysterious noumenal realm of things-in-themselves. What inhibits Kant's transcendental subject from the possibility of feeling itself at home with automata, though, is that it is a fundamental part of its own self-definition to be filled with a yearning to overcome its own limitations, and to strive toward the noumenal realm. On the one hand, this act of attempted self-transcendence injects a sense of ethics into the heart of the subject's self-image, for the act is on some level an attempt to replace nature, how things are, with freedom, an impression of how things ought to be. On the other hand, the subject's attempt to leap beyond its own capabilities and into the unknowable places a mysterious glow at the center of its sense of itself. For Kant, this mystery is located in the schema that are active in the imagination and which mediate the sensory data that comes to us with the categories of perception that dictate the terms on which this data is to be represented. This mediation "is an art concealed in the depths of the human soul, whose real modes of activity nature is hardly likely ever to allow us to discover, and to have open to our gaze" (Kant 1965:183).

By placing mystery at the center of its self-definition, Kant was able to empower the subject with the sense that it is always more than what it understands about itself. The reverse side of this, however, is the opening up of possibilities for appalling doubts, a crisis of faith, when the subject feels that its self-overcoming is not being properly accessed. The Enlightened optimist in Kant worked very hard to allay such fears. But Kant's arguments opened up a metaphysical wound in the modern idea of the subject that neither Romanticism, Modernism, nor Postmodernism has been able to successfully heal. Within this framework, we might argue that the inability for the aesthetic illusion to sustain itself within Vitellia's music speaks of an anxiety as to the transcendental grounding of the modern subject. When her music falls apart we are no longer able to celebrate wholeheartedly with her in the glory of our shared mechanistic natures. We are now distracted and disturbed by the huge metaphysical horizons whispering maybes to us from a beyond that we should, but do not, believe possible to curl back up into ourselves.

The more subtle interpreter might argue that the disorienting slips from aesthetic illusion sustained to aesthetic illusion unmasked speak of a conflict between views that are symptomatic of the difficulties of the late eighteenth century. This being the case, we should accept Vitellia as a ghost from the mechanistic past, come back to haunt, superimposed onto Vitellia as a modern subject striving to define its autonomy in terms of the

transcendent. And such a double exposure affects our understanding of the opera's sexual politics. If the fractures in Vitellia's music are normalized as part of an optimistically mechanistic view of the world, then there is little in her music, or at least in "Non più di fiori," that can work dissonantly against my earlier reading of Vitellia as a politically reprehensible representation of woman that needs to be unmasked and disenchanting. Without the possibility of these changes in expressive mode being experienced as salient and problematic, the music is unable to give us the impression that it is turning its gaze back critically on the ideological context that is coercing it into speaking in a certain fashion. Thus, tautologically, if we are all puppets, in a mechanistic sense, then mechanistic thinking is being used to distract us from the fact that Vitellia is a puppet whose gestures are attached to ideological strings. By contrast, if we equate the sustaining of aesthetic illusion with a concept of the subject as more than just what can be rationally understood about it, then Vitellia's musical slips can no longer be so easily accommodated. On the one hand, one could argue that even such a small disruption is enough to set the sexual politics of the opera on the road to redemption, for it briefly unmasks the fact that Vitellia might be a construct. And this might lead us toward celebrating *La clemenza di Tito* as a work that deliberately fails aesthetically in order to triumph politically, as a performative deconstruction of the representation of women in opera seria. But on the other hand, we can just as confidently assert that the aesthetic failure of "Non più di fiori" is merely the means by which Vitellia's madness is represented. The inability of her music to hold itself together parallels her mentally unhinged state. She becomes a mechanism in a pejorative sense: that which is revealed when the transcendental groundings of the modern subject fail to assert themselves at our command. She strikes us as unsavory and Other in the same way that the devastating, spluttering, and broken inarticulateness of the bereaved sometimes can. Ergo women are made crazy and unnatural when they attempt to function within the political sphere.

## V.

In the opening section of this essay, I proposed that disenchantment, true to its Enlightenment roots, nearly always implies that there is a perspective from which things can be revealed in a secular light as they truly are, free from illusory metaphysical obfuscations. In what followed, Vitellia in Mozart's *La clemenza di Tito* was repeatedly drawn back within the terrain covered by such a disenchanting gaze; attempts to imbue her with autonomy and agency were curtailed by contextualizing her historically. As a result, her movements were shown to have no magic to them, her existence was revealed as a passive reflection of culture and ideology, mutely mimetic.

However, this strategy has led to a conclusion that actually sits rather uneasily with the seemingly liberating clarity that disenchantment needs to offer if it is to work politically to our advantage. For having gone through the motions of unmasking the aesthetic illusions that supposedly hide her machinery, we do not now have just one Vitellia before us, denuded and in the ideological raw, but three: a Vitellia whose mechanistic orientation indirectly enforces pejorative Enlightenment constructions of women; a Vitellia whose failure to access the transcendent similarly acts as a negative political indictment on *La clemenza di Tito*, for it works to convince us of the notion that women by nature are driven mad by entry into the political sphere; and a Vitellia whose failure to sustain the transcendental grounding of her subjectivity is to be lauded as a politically liberating act of deconstruction. Instead of the dangerous power of an aesthetic real presence having been defused, one object with the possibility of being in possession of Being has been replaced by three identically constructed objects, a trio of puppets all moving according to different cultural mechanisms. Enlightened disenchanting has led us to confusions of a Gothic nature—E. T. A. Hoffman and Edgar Allen Poe loom. Admittedly, we have managed to turn artistic effects into material, into tangible and identifiable ideological “stuff.” However, the liberating conceptual control that we as disenchanters were to gain from that transformation is threatened by the accompanying act of multiplication. Obviously there are many more disenchanting Vitellia puppets that can be credibly produced from further historical investigations, so what we have really created here is a scenario rather like the sorcerer’s apprentice. (And as we know, that nightmare of multiplication is only brought to conclusion when the sorcerer returns and performs a terminating act of magic. Thus, perhaps disenchantment has led us into a crisis that can only be concluded by the use of the very thing that disenchantment was employed to eradicate in the first place.) Since at any one time one can hold only a certain number of readings regarding one cultural object under the controlling power of one’s conceptual grasp, the object, as it continues to generate further readings, will eventually start to escape that grasp. As we become increasingly unable to fulfill the Enlightened goal of being able to stand above our material and completely contain it within our gaze, we begin to lose the sense of freedom and liberation that such a perspective offers. Our autonomy in the face of the object starts to wither as the object, by acquiring the ability to elude us, appears to become autonomous itself. Maybe, as Adorno writes, “we do not understand music—it understands us” (Adorno 1998:xi). If it can escape us for a moment, it is actually standing behind us and watching our growing sense of frustration and anxiety. Maybe the autonomous work is conceptualizing us.

Within this scenario, there is one trump card left to those who disenchant, and that is to see the production of multiple readings in a work as a historically locatable phenomenon, and thus utterly disenchanted. Regarding the eighteenth century, consideration of, for example, the implications of Jürgen Habermas's notion of the bourgeois public sphere might be helpful. Crudely put, in an age when art had been more an integral component of the ritual life of the church and the aristocracy, there could be no room, at least theoretically, for the notion that the meaning of a piece of music or a painting was open to debate. In order for the ritual to present itself as universally valid, the meaning of the cultural products it employed had to be imbued with irrefutability, and as a result the cultural products were surrounded with a kind of religious aura. However, as Habermas writes, with the emergence of the bourgeois public sphere, "[t]he private people for whom the cultural product became available as a commodity profaned it inasmuch as they had to determine its meaning on their own (by way of rational communication with one another), verbalize it, and thus state explicitly what precisely in its implicitness for so long could assert its authority" (1991:37). Like the coffeehouse or the salon, the work of art during the eighteenth century became a kind of meeting ground, a site where the bourgeoisie could define their autonomy by debating meaning through the public use of reason, rather than having to defer interpretation to the authority of aristocratic and religious ritual. The ability of a work of art from this period to be open enough to produce multiple readings is therefore not necessarily an invitation for us to start celebrating art's autonomy from the vice-like grip of disenchanting historical interpretation—even though the emergence of a critical bourgeois environment for art during the course of the eighteenth century is, interestingly, intimately bound up with the emergence of ideas of artistic autonomy. To do so would be to suffer from a confusion about the origins of this tendency toward the production of multiple readings. The music is not producing them of its own volition in order to confuse us; they are, rather, a reflection of bourgeois values. The fact that there may be so many readings that we are not able to hold them all within our gaze, therefore, should not worry us. Although some of the readings may sometimes be outside of our line of vision, we are the ones who know the limits of the compound: the bourgeois public sphere. Thus, we are the ones with the ability to police them back into view.

## VI.

That attempts to assert real presence as an important "reality" of the experience of art can be disenchanted so relentlessly suggests, perhaps, that we should just relinquish ourselves to the fact that history and her various

handmaidens (cultural studies and the like) hold the irrefutable ethical high ground within any act of interpretation. Maybe those who still wish to engage with the seemingly irrational aesthetic “reality” of art are only left with one kind of option, that which the early Wittgenstein of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* found himself with when faced with the realm of the metaphysical: “Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, darüber muß man schweigen” (Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent) (1961:150). Silence does indeed generally surround the belief that there is a surplus within aesthetic experience that can never be fully accommodated by a cultural context. It is not necessarily the silence of which Wittgenstein speaks, though—that which aims to preserve the integrity of something—but rather the silence of censorship. If this seems too extreme an assertion, one need only but think of the kind of morally righteous fireworks that immediately and without fail erupt should one mention anything suggesting aesthetic autonomy—for example, the phrase “the music itself.” Should that which is silent try to speak, it will be silenced by the sheer force of the speech of others. The fact that this reaction and its validating arguments are now automatic to the point of appearing as naturalized instincts should make us deeply suspicious of any claims that the changes in musicology that have occurred in the past fifteen or so years have marked a progression towards increased intellectual freedom. Ideology has a tendency to be most pernicious when it makes its claims felt to us as something glowing behind the words we speak, investing them with a confidence that we construe as something of our own making, instead of drawing our attention to the fact that something is being spoken through rather than by us. As Kant wrote back in 1784: “A revolution may well put an end to autocratic despotism and to rapacious or power-seeking oppression, but it will never produce a true reform in ways of thinking. Instead, new prejudices, like the ones they replaced, will serve as a leash to control” (1991:55). Are we really more enlightened now about how to study music, or is it the case that we have simply swapped one form of dictates about what we are allowed to know for another—that we still have police but now they are wearing brightly colored yellow uniforms that put to sartorial shame the drab, institutional black of last year’s fashion? Is it not the case that whereas before music was not allowed to mean anything other than itself, now it can only mean that which is not itself?

If the conclusion of this essay came down to an either/or between aesthetic autonomy in its various forms and the notion that art is completely historically determined, then this would indeed be a disposable piece of work, unproductively partisan and dogmatic. Even worse would be an attempt to alleviate tensions by opting for the luke-warm liberal comforts of asserting that both points of view can happily coexist. Faced with

the kind of dilemma presented by this essay, such benignly smiling open-mindedness can only be a mask for an authoritarian delimiting of critique's movements—a grim insistence on optimism, which denies dialectic and expunges the possibility of change. When Wittgenstein placed an insurmountable wall between the logical investigations of the first part of the *Tractatus* and the metaphysical speculations of that work's concluding pages he was asserting, in a sense, that the two realms could not talk to each other, for the terms by which one side justified its claims could not be employed to justify the existence of the other. And in this essay, the flipping backwards and forwards between history and aesthetics, between art disenchanted and art enchanted, has been an attempt to give an impression of a similar divide that cannot be transgressed. However, this would seem to imply that action was no longer possible, which is an unacceptable conclusion, for it is merely an inversion of the covert authoritarian optimism that I have just dismissed. Terms within this kind of binary opposition have a tendency of being mutually reliant on the pretense of canceling each other out in order for each term to exist.

When negotiating the rift between history and aesthetics, most of us attempt to establish a methodological position that is static and a priori; we want something that we can bring fully formed to our object of investigation, something which we assume will remain invariant during the course of the interpretive act and appear almost indifferent afterwards, as if nothing had happened. It might be argued that this is done out of a very real need for consistency, something by which the success or failure of an interpretation is usually judged, for without methodological consistency it becomes difficult if not impossible to validate the route by which conclusions have been reached. One might say that it would be like reading directions for a journey which suddenly shift, without explanation, from one point on one road to a point on a completely different road. However, the problem with the authority vested in consistency is that it brings the act of interpretation into what I consider to be considerable ethical complications. This is the case whether the methodology aims at either a disenchanted or enchanted view of art, but since my focus of concern here is disenchantment, that is where I shall begin.

The goal of disenchanting art is to act as a catalyst for the liberation of human beings from illusion. Disenchantment aims at freedom, yet the processes by which this is to happen have, as I have intimated, a tendency to verge towards an authoritarian policing of the object of scrutiny. Every time the work of art threatens to become autonomous, the disenchanter extends the range of surveillance further into the world of that object. This might be written off as intellectual thoroughness, something which, in turn, could be argued to be an act of love, the scholar's commitment to

take the object completely on board. And I certainly would not wish to imply that we should discontinue investigating as far as we possibly can. This argument is not about the positing of some kind of sacred ground in which the interpreter's presence is a profanity. However, I do suggest that extending the boundaries of investigation may be instigated less by a quest for knowledge and more by a desire to eradicate the possibility that the work of art might have a private life that we cannot access. Disenchantment may, in fact, be involved in a process of dehumanization.

For the disenchanter, this latter proposition is a ludicrous one: since the work of art is not human, it cannot be dehumanized. However, the likelihood that the foundations beneath the disenchanter's confidence are more unstable than such breezy common-sense retorts communicate is suggested to us if we try to imagine how one might listen to a piece of music solely from a disenchanted perspective. There is, admittedly, something slightly cheap about making recourse to an empirical gambit in order to clinch an argument at this late stage in the proceedings. Nevertheless, I propose that it takes a huge amount of effort to even begin to sustain a cultural reading consistently throughout a listening. I place myself solidly in front of the music so that I can keep it in view. Repeatedly, though, I find that I have forgotten that I am the subject and the music is my object; I keep finding myself already surrounded by the music's effect, the real presence of which I no longer even consider to question. I try to fix my aural gaze like a spotlight, yet it keeps blinking. (From this I do not suggest that we will always fall back by force of gravity to music's potentially transcendental status, as if it were a magnet of truth situated at the heart of all musical experience. The attempt to remain transfigured throughout a piece of music can just as easily be embarrassed by the intrusion of the music's historicity into our consciousness.)

The more draconian of disenchanters might argue that it is our political duty to continue endeavoring to overcome our tendency to blink; blinking is merely a bad habit from the past that we have failed to properly unyoke ourselves of. Ethically, I think this is exceedingly problematic, as hopefully the remainder of this essay will help to elucidate. Nevertheless, it admits of the presence of a problem, and that is to be lauded on some level, for most acts of disenchantment quietly fail to mention blinking—and this is something that leads them into murky political waters. If the aim of disenchanting is to show us what works of music really are when they are denuded of their illusory aesthetic aura, then these slippages absolutely must be admitted, for they remain with us even after the process of disenchantment has been concluded. Disenchantment can only be considered ethical if its criteria of truth are sustained rigorously at all levels of the investigation. If these aspects of the music are suppressed, then those

who disenchant are using concealed censorship to pass off illusions as truths in order to convince us that art is illusion. This implies that there is an agenda behind unmasking art as illusion that is not founded on empirical historical research that then forms the basis of political action. It suggests that disenchantment is driven to suppress the possibility of art's real presence out of fear of what its presence within debate might necessitate. This should make us very concerned as to what kind of freedom is being offered to us by disenchantment, and not just because of the problems involved when those who offer us freedom have to lie in order to do so.

What is at stake here is not whether the transcendent actually exists, or whether we can assert that an aesthetic real presence is or is not. Such questions are nonsensical since they imply that empirical methods can be employed to account for things which, by definition, empiricism cannot account. Rather, it is to ask what is made possible when we accept that there will always be something that eludes our conceptualization, whatever it is we decide to call it: the transcendent, the beyond, the metaphysical, real presence, or even, in Lacanian terms, the real. I suggest that the presence of this surplus within our experience that escapes full understanding creates a kind of productive despair. We sense a gap between our attempts to grasp something and the elusive thing-in-itself, and as a result we strive harder to understand. It is this lack that helps us to expand our knowledge and to increase the sophistication of our thinking—this is perhaps one of our most important inheritances from the Enlightenment. However, our quest for knowledge of our object will always be interrupted by that which is elusive about the object. This undermines the methodologies we have been using, cancels out the possibility of interpretive closure, and eventually leads to feelings of futility. Such, for example, is the narrative underlying Romantic irony.

There are two routes out of this situation. The first is to seek revenge on that which eludes, and it strikes me that this is one means of understanding disenchantment and the problems and contradictions with which it finds itself faced. Disenchantment attempts to banish despair by banishing the surplus, thereby asserting that interpretive closure is indeed possible. As I have pointed out, in order to be politically effective, disenchantment confidently asserts that what something actually "is" is something that can be established; any illusions that are held about an object can then be dismissed by a simple act of comparing them with "reality." However, this means that disenchantment takes revenge on the seeming irrefutability or transcendence of the surplus by the creation of a methodology that then lays claims to irrefutability—something it can do only because the surplus that would invalidate such claims has been silenced. Disenchantment usurps the transcendent through the act of hubris of attempt-

ing to become transcendent itself; its posited irrefutability of fact is founded on the very terms of its implied object of criticism.

The problem is that disenchantment's attempt to create a transcendent critical method does not result from critical engagement with the notion of the surplus, but from the rhetorical force of mere assertion—i.e., that the surplus is politically detrimental, since it lures us into a constant yearning for something beyond the political realities of here and now—and from covert censorship, by simply pushing any evidence of the surplus under the carpet. There is something a little scandalous about this, but there is a deeper sadness at stake as well. For disenchantment strides into the world shining with what are indeed beautiful intentions: to relinquish us from despair and to make us free by showing us the world as it truly is. What it has to settle for, though, is a kind of Spartan set of exercises in which anything that threatens the possibility of interpretive closure has to be ignored out of existence. As a result, all knowledge becomes a means to the system's ends rather than there being the possibility of knowledge as an end in itself. For those who choose to disenchant, this is hardly a form of liberation. At its most extreme it is a demand that they relinquish the full gamut of their perceptions to a system that repays by only serving itself, unable, as it is, to fulfill its promises. This is why in the academy we should be exceedingly suspicious of any kind of confidently self-righteous behavior that is expressed on a group level and in an automatic fashion, as if its claims were self-evident. With regard to disenchantment, such fervor is quite possibly a covert form of mourning: a sense of pleasure taken in the feeling gained from being in the moral right that attempts to compensate for, and therefore obfuscate, the delimitations on thinking and freedom that have been demanded of the participants as the price for entry into the system in the first place.

The presence of the surplus is always ethically problematic, siren-like. Since it exists in a realm beyond what can be said about it, there is a sense that it is not really able to communicate with us properly. As a result, it never tells us how we are meant to relate to it, and this can lead to the feeling that we are perhaps being led into dangerous waters. Perhaps one way of interpreting the situation is to say that disenchantment cannot interpret the undermining of interpretive acts that occurs when the surplus interrupts as anything other than disenchantment's own failure to be in the place where the surplus is. Tormented by the possibility of synthesis, disenchantment cannot rid itself of the thought that such transcendence might be possible. But this leads disenchantment into attempting to define itself by a paradox, something that it cannot do since the methodological foundation on which disenchantment defines itself in the first place is empirical. Finding its desires to be in conflict with its identity,

disenchantment experiences failure, the masking of which results in it having to reject the surplus. In a sense, then, disenchantment dismisses the surplus not because it conceives it to be an illusion that acts for the production of other illusions that are detrimental to the possibilities of political action. Rather, disenchantment dismisses the surplus because it actually does believe it to be real. Disenchantment is fatally wounded by its own inability to see an alternative to absolute synthesis, and as a result confuses itself by trying to use empirical methods to understand that whose being is not empirically founded.

But there is another route available, which is that when the surplus interrupts and undermines, the possibility of a self-regulating form of critique becomes conceivable, a critique that in being involved in understanding the world is simultaneously involved in trying to understand itself when it is forced to acknowledge its own limitations. The perception of the presence of the transcendent in the world acts as a catalyst for the development of our abilities to think, abilities that are allowed to continue developing indefinitely, since the presence of the transcendent inhibits the possibility of closure. However, the gap that will always exist between the limits to where we have thought something through and the place where the surplus seems to begin not only creates the desire within us to bridge that gap; leading us forward, it works at the same time to push us backwards. When thinking is forced to navigate this sea between the Scylla of despair and the Charybdis of hope, the temptation to wish oneself elsewhere is strong. Like Odysseus, we long to stand on our stable home ground, rather than being tossed about from place to place. However, as the preceding has hopefully shown, if we admit to the presence of the surplus, then the only way to bring that wish to fulfillment is to relinquish oneself to ideology. One must willingly submit to an intellectual terrain policed by a politics of exclusion. This cannot be condoned, for it is a willful delimitation of our already unacceptably limited freedoms, a kind of self-annihilation whose only reward is a rather fragile sense of comfort.

If we do decide to keep navigating these waters, then the only way to do so is to assert the following regulative principle: that the existence of a place where thought is not ideology is a possibility, but that our arrival there will only be made known to us at the very moment at which it happens. We must not confidently map out projects to bring us home to the shore of redemption. As a result, thinking in the world in which we live becomes part of a messianic experience of exile. The beauty of the world's face can smile at us at the same moment that the serpent bites; its appearance can be devastated and simultaneously shot through with epiphanies of the Good. Things are and are also full of the expectation of their potential transformation into something else, they are on the verge of flight to

salvation, yet vertiginous with fear, thin ice over the freezing black waters of the unredeemable.

## VII.

In the name of consistency, and for fear of becoming ideology, this essay must now collapse, since the poetic flights of the last paragraph seem to suggest that the coast of home is now in sight. A number of questions must be placed between this essay's conclusion and the safety of harbor. Who are these disenchanters? And would it not have been best just to take an article and criticize the logic of its argument, to have shown by means of specific proof? Is this not just speculation?

I may well have pointed the finger more directly, but what would that have achieved? At best, it would have made those readers sympathetic to my concerns comfortable in their sense of outrage: "look, there's one of them, those disenchanters." And such a "best" outcome, considering what I have been suggesting, would then have been the absolute worst of outcomes—for it would run the risk of replicating the problem I have been critiquing. If disenchantment does happen anywhere and in any of the ways that I have suggested, one of its most harmful actions is its pretense, covert or casual, at being able to stand outside of the influence of its object of criticism and to assert what that object actually is in contrast to what it might be pretending to be, or what others might be pretending it is. As I have urged, this is harmful to the freedom both of the object itself and of the person who perceives the object in such a fashion. If we productively acknowledge the presence of the surplus in the world we come to realize that disenchantment's definitions are not about knowledge, for they deliberately silence the possibility that the object can become something else. Acknowledgement of the surplus is therefore an act that makes categorization ethically loaded. Within the academy, if we think we can just point at someone and say in a pejorative fashion, "there is a dischanter," we immediately tend to contradict ourselves by disenchanting that person. They become dehumanized for they now no longer have any surplus available to them, that from which they might become something else.

But there is another contradiction involved here, for if we point pejoratively at the dischanter we are inadvertently somehow defining ourselves as beyond infection by disenchantment. And if this is the case then we are in fact eradicating the possibility that we come up against a surplus within ourselves. Like one of Rilke's angels, the surplus is "terrifying," for there is no guarantee what our object of contemplation will become when we try to extend our understanding beyond its limits and towards the ambiguous promise that the surplus offers. By saying "this is a dischanter" we imply that we could not become one ourselves. But if we fully acknowl-

edge the critical role of the surplus we cannot possibly comfort ourselves so easily.

Nevertheless, if the naming of disenchanters involves us in the possibility of becoming disenchanters ourselves, how are those we perceive as misdirected to be made accountable for their actions? Surely this argument against pointing the finger is really just a means of saying that we should just all be nice. And that is completely unacceptable. The implied argument of those who openly critique seems to be that the public exercise of critical interrogation is more important than the niceties of intersubjective address. And if forced to I would agree. But that such public critique in the academy often spectacularly fails to be self-reflexive enough to critique without objectifying and ignoring the emotional reality of its addressee is likewise completely unacceptable. Any system that brazenly sacrifices moment-to-moment practical ethics to a higher critical goal must make us very wary of the critical goal that is being offered. So who are these disenchanters? In varying degrees it is us in our professional roles confronting each other in the public sphere of debate. We have a predilection for “gazing” each other too easily into puppets.

To point to a particular instance of disenchantment would be to distract from disenchantment’s prevalence throughout the discipline. Disenchantment is a mode or tendency that our thoughts can unwittingly fall into in the process of our investigations; it has reared its head a number of times during the course of the essay you have just been reading. I have opted to construct a picture of it primarily through speculation, since it is consistent with my belief in the productive value of the surplus. To think beyond an empirical investigation of disenchantment suggests the possibilities of what kinds of things disenchantment might become. These possibilities might not stand for what disenchantment is now, but they can work politically as warnings that we can use as our criticism strives towards a condition where it is no longer ideology.

And Vitellia? She encapsulates the whole debate, for the interpretive problems she poses do not model, but are ethical problems concerning whether the other we address speaks autonomously or whether language merely speaks through it. So better the puppet? The answer is impossible for the question itself is subject to various becomings. Is art ideological stuff—its context, the history by which it has been formed—or is it like, as later on in Rilke’s elegy, a puppet transfigured by an angel?

am I not right  
to feel as if I must stay seated, must  
wait before the puppet stage, or rather,  
gaze so intensely that at last,

to balance my gaze, an angel has to come and  
 make the stuffed skins startle into life.  
 Angel and puppet: a real play, finally.  
 Then what we separate by our very presence  
 can come together. (Rilke 1982:170)<sup>22</sup>

It is not our business to answer these questions; it is our duty to live them.

#### Notes

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1. "Nicht der. Genug! Und wenn er auch so leicht tut,/ er ist verkleidet und er wird ein Bürger/ und geht durch seine Küche in die Wohnung./ Ich will nicht diese halbgefüllten Masken,/ lieber die Puppe. Die ist voll. Ich will/ den Balg aushalten und den Draht und ihr/ Gesicht aus Aussehn. Hier. Ich bin davor./ Wenn auch die Lampen ausgehn, wenn mir auch/ gesagt wird: Nichts mehr-, wenn auch von der Bühne/ das Leere herkommt mit dem grauen Luftzug." This whole passage is influenced by Heinrich von Kleist's short essay-dialogue "On the Marionette Theatre" (1810), a complete translation of which can be found in the *Times Literary Supplement*, October 20, 1978.

2. "Wir kennen den Kontur/ des Fühlens nicht: nur, was ihn formt von außen."

3. For a more extended examination of this theme, see Rice (1995a).

4. The following discussion draws on the following studies: Landon (1988:99–100); Angermüller (1988:261–75); Rice (1991); Till (1992:258–69).

5. In particular here, see Till (1992:258–69).

6. In fact, in certain respects the seemingly progressive and Enlightened eighteenth century witnessed something of decrease in the power available to women. For example, as Miriam Brody writes in the informative introduction to her edition of Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, "while the eighteenth century would be notable in calling for reform of female manners, the seventeenth-century woman, in spite of vilification by seventeenth-century puritanism and cavalier poets, was an active, productive member of the economic life of the community. The range of her activities was limited, but she had far more of the economic independence which Mary Wollstonecraft tried to reclaim for her sex a century later" (Wollstonecraft 1992:27). The best general introduction to the topic of Enlightenment thinking about gender that I have come across is Outram (1995:80–95).

7. The clearest explanation of how these features fit together is to be found in Cassirer (1951:234–74).

8. For example, see Goldberg (1984).

9. For example, see Schiebinger (1989:191–200; 1986:42–82).

10. For further discussion of the importance placed on woman's role as mother during the Enlightenment, see Fauchéry (1972) and Miller (1980).

11. See also Arlette Farge (1993), which includes a list of the studies of this phenomenon.

12. To take an analogous situation, Miriam Brody writes that although "a small receptive circle of liberal reformers . . . would welcome the *Vindication* with enthusiasm . . . once concern grew over the association of English radicalism with the ideas of the French Revolution, Wollstonecraft's assault on established authority . . . was greeted with predictable alarm and outrage" (Wollstonecraft 1992:41–42).

13. Underlying this paper is a huge scholarly topic, one that can only be scantily mentioned here, but which is centered around a cluster of questions concerning when and how eighteenth-century audiences started to perceive on a regular basis that works of art were to be understood as believably real—if, in fact, an understanding of "realistic" in any sense that we might normatively use that term today is even applicable to the period. Jürgen Habermas, for example, talks about this phenomenon in relation to the novel and contemporary drama, and therefore to the important eighteenth-century idea of sentimentality: "The reality as illusion that the [novel] created received its proper name in English, 'fiction': it shed the character of the merely fictitious. The psychological novel fashioned for the first time the kind of realism that allowed anyone to enter into the literary action as a substitute for his own, to use the relationships between the figures, between the author, the characters, and the reader as substitute relationships for reality. The contemporary drama too became fiction no differently than the novel through the introduction of the 'fourth wall'" (Habermas 1991:50). Michael Fried (1980) has discussed the issue with regard to eighteenth-century French painting, and obviously these considerations are an important part of any understanding of late eighteenth-century sentimental operas such as Paisiello's *Nina* of 1786 (for example, see Castelvechi 1996). The problem with regard to *La clemenza di Tito*, though, is that in the eighteenth century the forms that absorbed audiences' attention and led to the perception of aesthetic illusion as real were often associated with art that reflected an image of bourgeois life back to emergent bourgeois audiences, not with the more ritualistic, authoritarian, and aristocratic subject matter of opera seria—a genre not necessarily reliant on such sustained suspension of disbelief (Feldman 1995:29–30). Admittedly, Mozart's remarks about *Idomeneo* show that he was as concerned with questions of verisimilitude pertaining to opera seria as to opera buffa. For example, as he states about the voice of the Oracle in the often-cited letter of November 29, 1780: "Imagine the theatre before your eyes, the voice must be terrifying, it must penetrate; people must believe it is real" (quoted in Hertz 1990b:29, n. 23). The relationship between *La clemenza* and more "realistic," bourgeois trends, though, warrants much further consideration. As a starting point, one might consider Daniel Hertz's observations on the possible influence of Paisiello's *Nina* on *La clemenza*, particularly the relationships between Nina's famous first aria, "Il mio ben," and Vitellia's "Non piu di fiori" (Hertz 1990a:311–17).

14. Numbers used refer to the *Mozart Neue Ausgabe sämtliche Werke* II/5/20. The following discussion is based around an hermeneutic interpretation of how

the sounding forms of this last section of the opera create a sense of the constructedness of the character Vitellia. Nevertheless, there exists an interesting resonance between my observations and what we know of the history of the composition of "Non più di fiori." Alan Tyson's examination of the paper types suggests that this rondò was composed in two stages: the opening larghetto was written shortly before the first performance, but the concluding allegro preexisted Mozart commencing work on *La clemenza di Tito* (Tyson 1987:48–60). In a certain sense, "Non più di fiori" is something of a compositional mishmash and, therefore, already runs the risk of being unable to transcend the materials from which it is made, of being unable to prove that, as the venerable dictum goes, *ars est celare artem* (art is to conceal art). Of course, this point might be of minimal value, for there is no necessary reason why this aspect of this rondò's compositional process should have been perceptible to a late eighteenth-century audience. To assume that it would have been would be to impose an anachronistic aesthetic of the unified work onto a genre, opera seria, where, although such things were beginning to emerge, aria substitution and the primacy of performance over work had been, and continued for some time to be, the norm (see, for example, Poriss 2001; Brown 1992; Freeman 1992; Hunter 1989; Rosselli 1984; Strohm 1980). However, as John A. Rice has pointed out, the compositional history of the music means that Mozart composed the allegro section of this rondò with no knowledge of the singer who would eventually perform the role of Vitellia at the first performance, Maria Marchetti Fantozzi. Rice's analysis of the kinds of musics associated with her voice thus suggests that certain passages in *La clemenza* would have been very awkward for her to sing, and this may in turn have drawn attention to the sense of constructedness that I talk about (Rice 1995b).

15. The text of Servilia's aria is as follows: S'altro che lacrime/ Per lui non tenti,/ Tutto il tuo piangere/ Non gioverà/ A questa inutile/ Pietà che senti,/ Oh quanto è simile/ La crudeltà./ S'altro che lacrime, etc. (parte) [If you do nothing for him but shed tears, all your weeping will be of no avail. Oh, how like to cruelty is this useless pity that you feel. If you do nothing for him, etc. (exit)].

16. The text of this chorus is as follows: Che del ciel, che degli Dei/ Tu il pensier, l'amour tu sei,/ Grand'Eroe, nel giro angusto/ Si mostrò di questo dì/ Ma, cagion di meraviglia/ Non è già, felice Augusto,/ Che gli Dei chi lor somiglia, Custodiscano/ così [That you are the care, the darling of heaven and of the gods, great hero, has been shown in the brief course of this day. But there is no cause for wonder, fortunate Augustus, that the gods thus watch over one so like them].

17. The famous statement is found in Winkelmann's *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhauerkunst* (Reflections on the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks). For information on the dance types employed in the opera, see Schwartz (1991), and for a brief discussion of the use of the minuet topic, pp. 757–58. For further information about the use and meaning of the minuet in late eighteenth-century music, see Ratner (1980:9–11) and Allanbrook (1984).

18. The association of Handel with the eighteenth-century discourse regarding the sublime was already in position during Handel's lifetime (Schapiro 1993; Johnson 1985–86), and continued on into the late eighteenth century and beyond (Wolff 1984; Finscher 1990; Weber 1981–82).

19. My interpretation of the opening entry of the chorus as an awe-inspired exclamation is given some weight by the fact that the start of the chorus's second phrase—beginning in m. 21 with the words “ma, cagion di meraviglia” and set to essentially the same musical gesture as the opening of the first phrase—begins solidly at the beginning of the measure. More accustomed to their environment, the chorus is no longer so stunned; to repeat the gesture would merely be to unmask their initial reaction as unauthentic and unpleasantly performative.

20. See, for example, Hartz (1990a) and Rice (1995a).

21. At the first presentation of the theme (mm. 56ff.) there is, in fact, an ambiguity as to what the theme refers, since it is played on the basset horn first and only then expressively “grounded” by being sung to the words “Chi vedesse il mio dolore.” Initially, the theme might be thought of as an answer to the question posed in the preceding line of the text: “Ah, di me che si dirà?” (“Ah, what will be said of me?”). What people will say about Vitellia will be crudely unsympathetic; she will be turned into a comical object of derision. This would seem to be what the melody “means.” Thus, in this sense the melody is the sonic analogy of the caricature that others might make of her.

22. “wenn mir zumut ist,/ zu warten vor der Puppenbühne, nein,/ so völlig hinzuschauen, daß, um mein Schauen/ am Ende aufzuwiegen, dort als Spieler/ ein Engel hinmuß, der die Bälge hochreißt./ Engel und Puppe: dann ist endlich Schauspiel./ Dann kommt zusammen, was wir immerfort/ entzwein, indem wir da sind.”

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