Answering the Question: How Can Music (and Some of the Arts) Be Sad?

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Abstract: This paper seeks to explain how music can be sad and how music is different from poetry and from painting in terms of one's experience of sadness in an artwork. Expression theorists like John Dewey believe that music is expressive of emotions because it stems from the spontaneous overflow of the artist's inner turmoil. That is, music, *per se*, has the power to make the listener, say, sad. On the other hand, projection theorists like Stephen Davies maintain that the listener experiences a piece of music as sad because s/he projects his/her sadness onto it or recognises the property of sadness in it. Although nowadays widely considered more valid than the expression theory, the projection theory has been refined by several critics. Jerrod Levinson, for instance, maintains that, in order to recognise or experience the emotions in music, the listener needs to be "appropriately backgrounded" and to listen to music in its (socio-historical and/or intellectual) context. Convincing as it seems, Levinson's notion of an "appropriately backgrounded" audience, I shall argue, applies to poetry better than to music in general, in that poetry, owing to being verbally mediated, must greatly involve the reader's cognitive mediation for him/her to infer the emotions in it.

Keywords: comparative arts, emotion, expression, projection, Levinson

> For most of us, there is only the unattended
> Moment, the moment in and out of time,
> The distraction fit, lost in a shaft of sunlight,
> The wild thyme unseen, or the winter lightning
> Or the waterfall, or music heard so deeply
> That it is not heard at all, but you are the music
> While the music lasts.
>
> —T. S. Eliot, "The Dry Salvages" (*Four Quartets* 198-99)

Triste was watching a movie, in which the heroine, who sits on a loveseat looking out the window, is recalling her late fiancé, who died in a car accident the day before their wedding. Her face is sombre, and her eyes are full of tears. Her act of recalling is accompanied by low, slow background music. Triste was moved to tears by this scene, as it reminded her of a similar personal misfortune; she told herself: "Oh, the heroine is so sad, and the music is sad, too." After watching the movie, Triste walked home alone and thought about the scene. The words she said to herself early on whilst watching the scene popped up in her head, and this time she was rather baffled by her own words. "The heroine is sad"; "The music is sad"; "I'm sad, too." "So," she said to herself, "does it mean that my sadness is identical to the music's, as well as to the heroine's? But. . . ." She could not figure out how she, the heroine, and the music all shared the quality of sadness. It was not a question that she and the heroine were sad, insofar as they both can express emotion; but how could the music be sad? If music can be sad, then it means that music expresses sadness, or rather, that music, like human beings, has emotion. "How can music be sad? Does music have emotion?" she murmured.

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I

Expression theorists like John Dewey hold that music possesses emotion—or rather, emotion is proper to music. Espousing Wordsworth's 1800 statement that poetry is "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" and burgeons from the poet's "emotion recollected in tranquillity" (292),[1] Dewey regards a work of art as an expression of emotion, or really, a product of the inner state of the artist: "There is no expression without [inner] excitement, without [inner] turmoil" (61). More precisely, an art work happens when the expression of emotion as a spontaneous activity "is transformed because it is undertaken as a means to a consciously entertained consequence" (62), namely, when the unintended and the cultivated blend in one. It is fair to say that in Dewey, as Alan Tormey explains, the expressive qualities of an artwork cannot be separated from certain inner states of its author (104). A sad piece of music, so to speak, reflects its composer's sadness.

Opposing Dewey's theory of expression, Tormey argues that the existence of expressive properties in a work of art does not entail a prior act of expression: "The presence of an expressive quality in a work of art is never sufficient to guarantee the presence of an analogous feeling state in the artist. What the music 'expresses' is logically independent of what, if anything, the composer expresses" (121). For if a work of art, as Dewey implies, is an outer behaviour ("expression" means "the action of pressing out") of the artist's inner state, then someone's outer behaviour, say, an angry look, does not guarantee the presence of anger in his/her mind because s/he can just pretend to be angry. To put it another way, a sad piece of music may be simply a product of the composer's pretended/fictitious/intended sadness; or the composer, whilst sinking into woe, may present his/her music as elated, or vice versa. Moreover, it is impossible, Tormey stresses, to observe or know someone's inner states directly, inasmuch as "their presence can only be *inferred* from their external expressions" (50), let alone external expressions can be pretended. That is, there is no ascertaining the inner state of the composer from the very outset, even if s/he claims to intend his/her music as an expression of sadness.

Tormey regards it a mistake in fact to consider the expression of intentional emotions as external indices of inner occurrences. Tormey thus aligns himself with Nelson Goodman's concept of artistic expression: "[W]hat is expressed is possessed, and what a face or picture expresses need not (but may) be emotions or ideas the actor or artist has, or those he wants to convey, or thoughts or feelings of the viewer or of a person depicted. . . . The cheering face of the hypocrite expresses solitude; and the stolid painter's picture of boulders may express agitation" (85-86). In Goodman, as in Tormey, Dewey's theory appears to be rather naïve, in that emotion-wise, external expressions can and should be independent of internal states. Markedly, though, whilst arguing against Dewey, Tormey (as well as Goodman) at least agrees with him that a work of art itself (metaphorically) possesses emotion: "If there is a residue of truth in [Dewey], it is that works of art often have expressive qualities [such as sadness, cheerfulness, etc.]" (124), as writes Tormey.

Unlike Tormey, Stephen Davies, in countering the Deweyan expression theory, goes so far as to say that a work of art is unable to express emotion *per se*:

> Emotions are felt and necessarily involve thoughts … but music is nonsentient, it feels and thinks nothing. Emotions are often expressed in behavior, but music is not an agent, and, hence, is incapable of action. Even if music has dynamic character resembling that of human action, at best music can present movement, not behavior. Music just does not seem the sort of thing that could possess emotional properties. (201-02)[2]

Therefore, to say a piece of music is sad, he continues, is not to say that the music possesses a kind of sadness, but that the listener perceives a resemblance between the dynamic character of the music and the movements, such as gait or bearing, of people who are sad: Just as sad people usually move slowly, so does sad music.[3] This is what Davies calls "emotion characteristics in appearances" (222): we are disposed to find in music—or really, in almost everything we sense—emotion characteristics that correspond to human appearances, actions, or behaviours. Listening to music, so to speak,

somehow personifies music. Davies's argument finds an echo in Malcolm Budd, who has stated, "[T]he sense in which you hear the emotion *in* the music—the sense in which it is an audible property of the music—is that you perceive a likeness between the music and the experience of the emotion" (136–37). That is to say, music is not expressive of emotions in and of itself; a piece of music is sad just because we liken it to our experience of sadness.

Davies anchors the rationale for his argument to the fact that to attribute some kind of emotion, or broadly, adjective, to objects is the way human beings experience the world. Indeed, there is no question of human beings experiencing the world without projecting. "A person," to quote Hans-Georg Gadamer in a different context, "who is trying to understand a text is always projecting" (267). It would be proper to say that the world is a text, and we are accustomed to projecting our fore-conception onto whatever we sense in the world/text: weeping willows, hungry clouds, a joyful painting, a sorrowful poem, and so forth. That is exactly why Budd states: "Music that does not sound like how any emotion feels is not emotionally expressive: you do not hear music as being emotionally expressive *at all* if it does not sound to you like the feeling of emotion; you do not hear it as being expressive *of emotion E* if it does not sound to you like how E feels" (138). In other words, whether or not music is expressive of, say, sorrow depends on the listener's personal experience of sorrow. Whilst one piece of music sounds to Léon like anxiety, it might sound to Marie like frivolousness or perhaps nothing.

Hence, one is tempted to say that a projection theory like Davies's is very much listener-orientated: music itself cannot be sad or does not have the property of sadness unless the listener projects his/her sadness onto it. In this sense, the projection theory seems to be antithetical to the expression or arousal theory,[4] which is artist- or artwork-orientated. To say that music is sad, for an expression or arousal theorist, would be to say that, as a product of its composer's sadness, it has the power to make its listener sad—namely, when one listens to music, s/he feels sad. Today the projection theory seems to be widely held as more plausible than the expression or arousal theory, basically because our experience of the sadness of an artwork tends to be a matter of recognising sadness in the artwork rather than a matter of feeling sadness in it. Nonetheless, a number of critics have proffered their revised versions of the projection theory. Bruce Vermazen, for instance, promotes a more circumspect version of the projection theory: "an object expresses a mental property if and only if (subject to certain constraints) attributing that property to an utterer of the object would explain the object's having the features it has, and the property is not one of those presupposed in the attempt to interpret" (207). The "utterer of the object" is that which he calls "the persona"—viz. "the mind whose properties determine the expressive character of a work" (215). For Vermazen, the mind of the persona of a work is that which we are interested in—or rather, to which we attribute our mental properties—when interpreting the work.[5] It should be noted that the persona of a work does not refer to its historical or real author, in that the persona can be plural when the author is not, or in that the author may wind up not having in mind or not recognising the mental properties of the persona(s) of his/her work.[6] In this sense, to say music is sad is to say that the persona(s) of the music—onto whom the listener projects his/her emotions—is sad.

Also, Aaron Ridley's theory of sympathetic (or rather, empathetic?) response seeks to suture together the projection and arousal theories. Taking sides with projection theorists, Ridley admits that our experience of music is to find analogies—that which he terms "melismatic resemblances" (49)—between musical movements and human expressive behaviour. Nevertheless, "melisma itself," he maintains, "isn't expressive—it [is] only *resembling* something expressive. Thus, whilst malisma may well be *responsible* for our experience of music as expressive, it cannot by itself explain what it *is* to experience music as expressive" (50). In other words, mere recognition of human expressive posture that musical movements resemble is not a sufficient *raison d'être* for our experience of music as expressive. Without sympathetic engagement in musical melisma, our recognition of it would be robotic: A robot would be good at recognising expressive signs in, say, a person, whilst lacking the capacity to feel them. And, noticeably, our sympathetic engagement is activated by the object we

sense rather than ourselves: "[I come] to appreciate the melancholy of a weeping willow only as the willow saddens me: I could, of course, merely identify the expressive posture which the willow's posture resembles; but instead I apprehend its melancholy through a kind of mirroring response. I respond to it *sympathetically*" (52). Here Ridley seems to accede to the fact that objects or works of art have the power to arouse or stimulate our emotions. It is important to note, though, that in Ridley, our recognition of musical melisma and our sympathetic engagement in it are actually two sides of the same coin; they both go together to provide "a bridge from mere *resemblance*, which is what melisma is a form of, to *expressiveness* proper. Melisma is expressive if it's moving" (54). In terms of Ridley's theory of sympathetic response, then, to say that music is sad is to say that we at once recognise sadness in music and are saddened by music.

Admittedly, Ridley's theory of sympathetic response more or less derives from that which Levinson has said of negative emotional response to music:

> Responding emotionally to music is clearly consistent with perceiving emotional qualities in it. . . . We are saddened in part by perception of a quality in a passage that we construe as sadness, but we in part denominate that quality "sadness," or confirm such denomination of it, in virtue of being saddened by the music or sensing its capacity to sadden us under somewhat different conditions. Recognizing emotion in music and experiencing emotion from music may not be as separable in principle as one might have liked. ("Music and Negative Emotion," 226)[7]

Nevertheless, Ridley suggests that the listener is always saddened by music whilst judging it to be sad,[8] whereas Levinson does not. In his 1996 postscript to "Music and Negative Emotion," Levinson, in order to detach himself from the arousal theory, argues against the claim that "listeners are *always*, or even usually, saddened by sad music" (240). Also, in Levinson, what the listener feels empathetic with is the imagined or perceived persona of (sad) music rather than what Ridley calls "musical melisma." In this sense, Levinson's theory of musical expressiveness is redolent of Vermazen's; however, the former is apparently more complicated than the latter.

Levinson's formulation of musical expressiveness is: "a passage of music P is expressive of an emotion or other psychic condition E *iff* P, in context, is readily and aptly heard by an appropriately backgrounded listener as the expression of E, in a sui generis, 'musical,' manner by an indefinite agent, the music's persona" (*The Pleasure of Aesthetics*, 107). That is to say, 1) music is expressive because the listener "readily and aptly" hears it as the expression of an (indefinite) musical persona; and 2) the listener needs to be properly backgrounded and needs to listen to music in its (socio-historical and/or intellectual) context. It is tempting to say that Levinson's formulation is more applicable to music expressive of the so-called "higher emotions" such as shame, jealousy, or hope, than to music expressive of general emotions like sadness, joy, or anguish. For usually one need not be "appropriately backgrounded,"[9] nor need contextualise a passage of music, in order to (readily and aptly) hear the music as sad or joyful. The more easily music can express sadness, the less backgrounded the listener needs to be. Thus, it is very likely that a piece of music is heard as an expression of sadness by both a layman in music and a professor of musicology—their difference may be just in degree rather than in kind. (But this would not be the case with music that is heard as expressive of higher emotions.) In a nutshell, to say that music is sad is not, in Levinson's view, to say that music is possessive of sadness, but to say that the listener recognises the sadness of the indefinite, imagined persona(s) of music, and at the same time (sometimes) feels the same as s/he or them.

II

Levinson's view of an "appropriately backgrounded" audience—if it stands—would apply to poetry better than to music in general, in that, unlike music, poetry, in which emotions are perceived, has a semantic dimension from which emotions are inferred. Hence, in order to infer emotions in poetry, understanding the semantic content of a poem is indispensable; on the other hand, under-

standing a piece of music need not be required in order to perceive emotions in the music. That is why Robinson suggests that "music can *directly* affect our feelings ... without much, if any[,] cognitive mediation" (18).[10] By contrast, poetry cannot affect our feelings, unless we are "appropriately backgrounded" enough to understand its semantic content. Certainly, we are very likely to perceive and be affected by sadness or grief in, say, the *Marcia funebre* of Beethoven's *Eroica* symphony, without necessarily understanding it. That would not be the case, however, with, say, Emily Dickinson's Poem 88:

> As by the dead we love to sit,
> Become so wondrous dear—
> As for the lost we grapple
> Tho' all the rest are here—
>
> In broken mathematics
> We estimate our prize
> Vast—in its fading ratio
> To our penurious eyes! (44–45)

We can infer that this poem—or really the speaker—expresses a great regret for the death or loss of a beloved one, only if we understand what this poem means. We love to sit by the dead because they are gone forever; sitting by the dead is then the only way we can *get in touch with* them. Hence, their eternal absences make them "so wondrous dear" as to outshine "all the rest here" in our lives. Mathematics is "broken" (disabled), inasmuch as the deaths of those who are precious to us are too costly to be estimated by mathematics. Their being alive was our prize, which was nevertheless too vast to be perceived by "our penurious eyes"; ironically, not until their lives are "fading" away do our narrow eyes open enough to see just how vast is our prize, how "wondrous dear" they are to us. But by then it is too late for us to grasp for those lost. Death thus becomes a paradox: Death, albeit a heart-rending event, awakens us to the value of life; i.e., without death, life would not be worthy of being cherished.

Reading this poem by Dickinson, we need to be "appropriately backgrounded" to apprehend its figurative meanings, thereby inferring the emotion in it—to wit, the speaker's grievous reflection on death. Poems such as this one by Dickinson, then, tend to be like the kind of music (that is heard by a properly backgrounded listener as) expressive of higher emotions such as hope. Normally, the situation that both a layman in music and a professor of musicology may hear a piece of music as sad would not be true of poetry. For unlike musical scores, poetic language, or broadly literary language, is not a transparent means of communication through which one can "directly" recognise and/or identify with the emotions in poetry. Literature, notably poetry, is rich in what Paul de Man calls the "rhetorical dimension of language"—e.g., figures of speech—that undermines or destabilises a given text's goal of grammatical and logical consistency: "no grammatical decoding, however refined, could claim to reach the determining figural dimensions of a text. There are elements in all texts that are by no means ungrammatical, but whose semantic function is not grammatically definable, neither in themselves nor in context" (15–16).

Accordingly, reading a literary text can be likened to looking through a stained-glass window; the meaning of a text thus constantly flickers and slides, becomes full of blanks that "[have] to be, but cannot be" (de Man 15) filled by grammatical means. Under such circumstances, to understand poetry or literature, we need what Jonathan Culler calls "literary competence":

> [A]nyone wholly unacquainted with literature and unfamiliar with the conventions by which fictions are read, would, for example, be quite baffled if presented a poem. His knowledge of the language would enable him to understand phrases and sentences, but he would not know, quite literally, what to *make* of this strange concatenation of phrases. He would be unable to read it *as* literature—as we say with emphasis to those who would use literary works for other purposes—because he lacks the complex 'literary competence' which enables others to proceed. He has not internalized the 'grammar' of literature which would permit him to convert linguistic sequences into literary structures and meanings. (114)

That which Culler calls "the 'grammar' of literature" is that which Paul de Man calls the "rhetorical dimension of language." Knowing the "grammar" of literature is essential to infer sadness that a poetic speaker expresses, whereas knowing the "grammar" of music seems not always to be required to perceive sadness of a musical persona. To put it another way, we must be literarily competent, or "appropriately backgrounded," in order to read a poem as sad and then feel sad; on the other hand, we need not be musically competent to hear a passage of music as sad and at the same time feel sad.

This situation, as I mentioned early on, has much to do with the fact that music does not have a concrete semantic/cognitive content as does poetry. Music's lack of a concrete semantic content also makes music, as Kendall Walton argues, an abstract art, which, unlike poetry, fails to express subtle differences between similar emotions: "music can't distinguish between love, longing, and religious fervor (not without a title or a text or program notes), or between piety and eroticism, but it may express more general 'ideas' from which cognitive elements have been abstracted" (356). Nonetheless, the abstractness of music largely allows the liberty of the imagination, which boosted the use of music—in place of painting—to illustrate the essential nature of poetry in the Romantic age, when imagination, as opposed to imitation,[11] was the first and foremost principle of (poetic) creation: Poetry "is the music of language, answering to the music of the mind. . . . There is a near connection between music and deep-rooted passion. Mad people sing," said William Hazlitt in "On Poetry in General" (1818) (24). As a matter of fact, as early as 1766, G. E. Lessing, whilst privileging poetry over painting, had ascribed imagination to poetry: "This invisibility [of poetry] leaves the imagination free play to enlarge the scene at will. . . . But painting must accept a visible theatre" (78). It would be proper to conclude, then, that poetry is in the middle of the road whose two ends are music (the abstract) and painting (the concrete) respectively: actually, language, the medium of poetry, is the very composite of sound (music) and sight (painting) *per se*. In contrast to (figurative) painting, poetry and music have the wider sphere of the imagination. On the other hand, poetry and painting, different from music, can represent or express more specific images and emotions.

III

Nonetheless, in some sense, painting tends to be more like music than poetry. Because of its immediate concreteness, painting, as Robinson has said of music, "can *directly* affect our feelings . . . without much, if any[,] cognitive mediation." That is, like emotions in music, emotions in painting—representational or figurative—are not so much inferred as (straightforwardly) perceived. Leonardo da Vinci wrote of the immediately affecting power of pictorial images on the viewer:

> And when a picture is unveiled, a great multitude assembles there and the people *immediately* throw themselves upon the ground adoring and praying to Him who the painting depicts and praying for the turn of health and for eternal salvation, just as though the living divinity were actually present. . . *[I]t is the painted image that causes them, something which all the writings about the subject could not do* (italics mine). (10)

Suffice it to look at Picasso's *Old Jew and a Boy* of 1903, one of his "Blue Period" paintings. Just as the listener would *directly* recognise sadness in music and (presumably) at the same time feel sad, the viewer—who need not be appropriately backgrounded—would *directly* or vividly recognise and identify with sadness in this painting: the cold, melancholy colour, the shabby, blind old man with a gaunt face and emaciated feet, the dull-looking eyes of the boy, and so forth.

Some distinctions still exit, however, between painting and music. In terms of the relation of the appreciator to works of art, for instance, viewers, as Walton remarks, "imagine themselves seeing and identifying some one individual person, even if the picture indicates very little about how he or she differs from other people." By contrast, the imagined persona(s), or emotions, of music that listeners identify with are indeterminate, in that music may portray the notion of, say, sadness, but not particular instances of someone's being sad (Walton 359). Also, "[t]here might easily be," as

Walton notes,

> a painting representing a cold scene, which I recognise as such, even if it has no tendency at all to make me feel cold. . . . But if a passage of music has no tendency at all to elicit in me anything like a feeling of tension, if I don't hear it as something that might, under favorable circumstances, make me feel tense, I would not, I think, be inclined to call it tense. ("Projectivism, Empathy, and Music Tension," 415–16)

In other words, music, because of its abstract nature, is less expressive than painting—at least from the perspective of the appreciator.

Even though music, poetry, and painting, as we have seen, somehow differ from each other in expressing sadness or emotions, their differences are in degree rather than in kind. They all belong in the pigeonhole of "expression."[12] Since they are considered as expressive of emotions, they provide, to quote Scruton, "us with a means not merely to project our emotions outwards, but also to encounter ourselves *in* them," a "realization" of our emotion that recalls what Hegel terms the *Entäußerung* (Scruton 348). This may be what William Blake had in mind when describing his vision of the Last Judgment: "Poetry, Painting & Music, [are] the three Powers in Man of conversing with Paradise, which the flood did not Sweep away" (412). In addition to the question "How can arts be sad?" the "realization" of our emotions would be another issue worthy of being spelt out.

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Notes

[1] M. H. Abrams summarises the very spirit of the expressive theory based on Wordsworth's concept of poetry: "A work of art is essentially the internal made external, resulting from a creative process operating under the impulse of feeling, and embodying the combined product of the poet's perceptions, thoughts, and feelings. The primary source and subject matter of a poem, therefore, are the attributes and actions of the poet's own mind" (22).

[2] Here Davies's statements are reminiscent of Richard Wollheim's 1993 remarks: "Must nature have features that encourage and sustain the projection [of the person's psychology]? Or is this unnecessary? What seems certain is that, unless there is some such substrate, there can be no justification for saying that what the person experiences in the aftermath of projection is a *property* of nature" (152).

[3] One of Davies's precursors is O. K. Bouwsma, who says in "The Expression Theory of Art": "Sad music has some of the characteristics of people who are sad. It will be slow, not tripping; it will be low, not tinkling. People who are sad move more slowly, and when they speak, they speak slowly and low" (266). As a matter of fact, the connection between (musical) emotion and (human) motion is already present in the components of the word "emotion" itself. It has both psychological and physical quality: in addition to its psychological sense, "emotion," according to the *OED*, also signifies "A moving, stirring, agitation, perturbation (in physical sense)."

[4] The arousal theory can be traced far back, at least to Plato, who, for instance, writes of poetry in the *Republic*: "Now we can see how right we'd be to refuse him [the poet] admission into any community which is going to respect convention, because now we know which part of the mind he wakes up. He destroys the rational part by feeding and fattening up this other part, and this is equivalent to some destroying the more civilized members of a community by presenting ruffians with political power." This "other part," as opposed to the rational part, refers to the irrational or emotional part of the mind, "an aspect of ourselves which we forcibly restrain when tragedy strikes our own lives—an aspect which hungers after tears and the satisfaction of having cried until one can cry no more, since that is what it is in its nature to want to do" (602c–608b, 354–62). Aristotle's celebrated poetics of *katharsis* can be seen as a de-stigmatisation of poetic tragedy's power to awaken the emotional part of the mind.

[5] Jerrold Levinson, in *The Pleasure of Aesthetics*, takes Vermazen's notion of persona a step further by saying that the persona is the one who is imagined to utter the *content* of the work rather than *the work.* See note 34, chap. 6.

[6] Roland Barthes has said of the dissociation of the author from the utterer in his/her work: "[T]he whole of the enunciation is an empty process, functioning perfectly without there being any need for it to be filled with the person of the interlocutors. Linguistically, the author is never more than the instance writing, just as *I* is nothing other than the instance saying *I*: language knows a 'subject', not a 'person'" (145). Here Barthes's observations prefigure Michel Foucault's notion of the "plurality of egos" that characterises various kinds of discourse: "In a mathematical treatise, the ego who indicates the circumstances of composition in the preface is not identical, either in forms of his position or his function, to the 'I' who concludes a demonstration within the body of the text. The former implies a unique individual who, at a given time and place, succeeded in completing a project, whereas the latter indicates an instance and plan of demonstration that anyone could perform provided the same set of axioms, preliminary operations, and an identical set of symbols were used. It is also possible to locate a third ego: one who speaks of the goals of his investigation, the obstacles encountered, its results, and the problems yet to be solved and this 'I' would function in a field of existing of future mathematical discourses" (1631).

[7] Levinson writes of the mechanism of the listener's responding to music elsewhere: "Which is prior—how the music makes you feel, or what the music sounds like to you? The answer is probably neither. Instead, there is shifting between the two, resulting in some sort of cognitive equilibrium being reached between them. Certainly one pattern is that, often, the music makes one feel a certain way, e, and then one starts to find, as a consequence, that the music sounds like E—that is, like someone expressing E, where e is related to E by similarity, association, or partial identity. On the other hand, just as often the music first strikes one as sounding like E, and then subsequently an E-related feeling, e, develops in its wake" (*The Pleasure of Aesthetics*, 114). In other words, in Levinson, the listening process is dialectical.

[8] Ridley writes in "Musical Sympathies": "If I judge someone's behavior to be expressive of, say, melancholy, then I am saying at the same time that I know something of what his melancholy is like, what it would be like to be in the state which his gestures reflect: my judgment is partly felt. Which means that in order properly—and in the fullest sense—to attribute expressive predicates to a person, my judgment must *always* involve an element of feeling or of affective response" (53).

[9] Here I have to echo Roger Scruton's view that Levinson's notion of "an appropriately backgrounded listener" is sceptical: "how is this class defined and by whom?" (353). By the same token, Robert Stecker has a similar doubt about Levinson's view. See section III in his "Expressiveness and Expression in Music and Poetry," in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 59:1 (2001).

[10] Robinson continues: "[T]he perception of certain rhythms may be enough—without any further cognitive mediation—to evoke tension or relaxation, excitement or calm. If the melodic and harmonic elements in a piece of music affect our emotions, this would seem to require familiarity with the stylistic norms of the piece, but no further cognitions need be required in order for us to feel soothed, unsettled, surprised, or excited by developments in the music. Certainly we need not notice that we are listening to canon at the fifth in order for that canon to sooth us" (18-19).

[11] Interestingly enough, "imagination" etymologically derives from "image," whose Latin origin *imâgo* ("copy," "semblance," "picture," etc.), according to the *OED*, contains the same root as *im-itârî* ("to imitate").

[12] Postmodern art is held as shorn of expression, but, I would suggest, the lack of expression itself is some kind of expression. For the absence of expression in postmodern art, see Fredric Jameson's *Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke UP, 1991), chapter 1.

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