Positions, Methodologies and Aesthetics in the Published Discourse about Brian Ferneyhough: A Critical Study

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Since Brian Ferneyhough achieved a degree of public recognition following the premiere of his *Transit* (1972-75) in March 1975 at the Royan Festival, a range of writings on and reviews of his work have appeared on a relatively regular basis. The nature, scope, style, and associated methodologies of these have expanded or changed quite considerably over the course of Ferneyhough's career—in part in line with changes in the music and its realization in performance—but nonetheless one can discern common features and wider boundaries. In this article, I will present a critical analysis of the large body of scholarly or extended journalistic reception of Ferneyhough's work, identifying key thematic concerns in such writing, and contextualizing it within wider discourses concerning new music. Several key methodological issues will be considered, in particular relating to intentionality and sketch study, from which I will draw a variety of conclusions that apply not only to Ferneyhough, but to wider contemporary musical study as well.

Early Writings on Ferneyhough

The first extended piece of writing about Ferneyhough's work was an early 1973 article by Elke Schaaf[2] (who would become Ferneyhough's second wife),[3] which deals with *Epicycle* (1968), *Missa Brevis* (1969), *Cassandra's Dream Song* (1970), *Sieben Sterne* (1970), *Firecyle Beta* (1969-71), and the then not-yet-complete *Transit*. Schaaf's piece already exhibits one of the most problematic tendencies of a good deal of writing on living composers: she reiterates Ferneyhough's self-conceptions of his works as if they were independent views, demonstrated by the fact that her comments on the *Sonatas for String Quartet* (1967) (which had not yet been played at the time the article was written) are extremely similar to those cited from a letter from Ferneyhough to Harry Halbreich in

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[2] Elke Schaaf, "Das Porträt Brian Ferneyhough," in *Melos*, 40/4 (July-August 1973), pp. 214-220.

[3] The exact date of their marriage is unclear; in the 2004 *International Who's Who* (London & New York: Routledge, 2004), p. 527, he is listed as having married Schaaf in 1980. I have been informed by some who have looked through correspondence at the Paul Sacher Stiftung that Schaaf used the name Schaaf-Ferneyhough at an earlier point in the 1970s.

the latter's 1977 programme note for the Berne String Quartet's recording of the work. Schaaf writes:

> Here he [Ferneyhough] eschewed, however, fixed, fully formed elements in favour of "Ur-concepts," quasi-abstract categories such as "Pizzicato," "Glissando," "Repetition Tones," whose precise length, context and relative generative capacity themselves indicated their individual, combined and expanded potential through the gradual unfolding of the texture in its various manifestations in specific, concrete contexts.[4]

The letter cited by Halbreich says:

> The total is generated by the gradual accretion of forms (extensions, variations, metamorphoses) of the initial relatively anonymous basic elements (or rather "articulation classes"): "pizzicato," "glissando," "chord," "repeated note," etc. all present in the first section of the work in various combinations. Like paths through a forest, the development of these elements is linear, they run parallel sometimes, at other points disappear into the undergrowth, re-emerge later, wider or narrower, flow into one another and move apart again.[5]

The two passages are not identical, for sure, but the first is unlikely to have been formulated in such a manner without briefing from the composer, who wrote the second (unless Ferneyhough derived his own notes from Schaaf's piece, a remote possibility). In the passage in the essay dealing with *Cassandra*, Schaaf makes clearer when she is alluding to Ferneyhough's programme note for the work, but there is no real independent perspective or evaluation involved.[6] The article appears to have been written with the assumption that its purpose was simply to convey, or even "sell," Ferneyhough's music and his own paradigms for engaging with it, an approach that is mirrored in a good deal of later literature.

An essay from 1977 by Andrew Clements[7] reiterates similar sentiments from Ferneyhough (though again presented as if they were Clements' own) as could be found in an interview with Clements from the same year.[8] In the interview, Ferneyhough said the following:

> The major aesthetic necessity for the extreme length is thus the gradual coming into definition (out of the *material prima*) of these fundamental elements. They must define themselves; they are in no sense demonstrated, given, at the outset. All the fundamental elements were selected with a view to their endless permutational capacity—things like "pizzicato," "repeated tone," "glissando," and so forth. Some simple combinations of

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[4] "Hier verzichtete er [Ferneyhough] jedoch auf fixierte, gänzlich geformte Elemente zugunsten von „Urbegriffen“, quasi abstrakten kategorien wie „Pizzicato“, „Glissando“, „Repetitionstöne“, deren exakte Länge, Zusammenhang und relative Fruchtbarkeit sich erst zeigen mit der allmählichen Entfaltung der Textur in ihren verschiedenen Darstellungen in spezifischen, konkreten Zusammenhängen, ihrem individuellen, vereinigten und erweiterten Potential," Schaaf, "Das Porträt Brian Ferneyhough," p. 216. All translations by Ian Pace unless otherwise indicated.

[5] Harry Halbreich, "Brian Ferneyhough: Sonatas for String Quartet" (1977), liner notes to accompany RCA Red Label RL 70610 (LP).

[6] Schaaf, "Das Porträt Brian Ferneyhough," pp. 217-218; Brian Ferneyhough, "Remarks," in *Cassandra's Dream Song* (London, Frankfurt & New York: Edition Peters, 1975), n.p.

[7] Andrew Clements, "Brian Ferneyhough," *Music and Musicians*, 26/3 (November 1977), pp. 36-39.

[8] Brian Ferneyhough, "Interview with Andrew Clements" (1977), in Ferneyhough, *Collected Writings*, edited James Boros and Richard Toop (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1995), pp. 204-216.

> these items are heard very clearly in the first Sonata, and, again, rather basically, at the end, too.[9]

In Clements' own article, he writes that "The basic thematic elements of the work—pizzicato, glissando, repeated notes, etc.—are modes of articulation capable of almost infinite transformation" though went on to say that "These elements are never all present in any one movement, although combinations of them are heard in the first and last sections."[10]

All these early sources on the *Sonatas* mention the link made explicitly by Ferneyhough to Purcell's Fantasias for strings, whilst both the interview with and article by Clements also evoke a Webernian connection (relating to Ferneyhough's wish to demonstrate the potential for aspects of a Webernian approach to be able to be used successfully in the composition of a large-scale work). This positioning of Ferneyhough's work relative to the Second Viennese School, giving greater weight to its provenance, recurs in the work of many later writers. Clements links this to Ferneyhough's early exposure to works of Boulez and Stockhausen, influences that ultimately usurped "a more popularly 'acceptable' idiom suggested by the neo-classicism of Bartók and Hindemith," represented by the Sonata for three clarinets and bass clarinet (1963) and other withdrawn works from the same time,[11] thus situating the mature Ferneyhough absolutely within a mainstream continental European modernist tradition. Clements does not make this latter explicit, but it is strongly implied by its being preceded by a portrayal of Ferneyhough as prophet as yet unrecognized in his native land: "The Germans, French and Italians, then, not generally known for their sponsorship of British music, bother with him, and it seems reasonable that we, too, should pay him some heed."[12]

Halbreich had quite reasonably drawn attention to basic audible features of the score—the division into movements, these movements' differing lengths, the properties of some movements that might have led to their serving as axes, and the use of three cadenza sections—thus providing a starting point for listeners. Another short article by Michael Finnissy from 1977, following the British premiere of the work in April of that year, started (perhaps independently of Halbreich, though the two were in contact around this time) to examine the interrelationships between the 24 sections of the work in terms of recurrence of types (variations and cadenzas), as well as the recurrence of a group of four pitches that permeate various places in the score.[13] Halbreich had divided Ferneyhough's output into two phases: the first a "complete assimilation, then an overcoming of post-serial thinking in the sense of an extreme radicalization of the mainstream European tradition of this century," running from *Prometheus* up to *Firecycle Beta*, then a second one of unprecedented complexity, pushing instruments and voices to their limit, as well as demonstrating the influence of Renaissance thought and music; this included *Transit*, *Unity Capsule* (1975-76), and the three *Time and Motion Studies* (1973-77).[14] Finnissy gives a different bi-partite division, constructed a little more loosely: between a "classical" phase including works like the *Sonatas*, then another more recent

[9] Ibid., p. 209.
[10] Clements, "Ferneyhough," p. 37.
[11] Ibid., p. 36.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Michael Finnissy, "Ferneyhough's Sonatas," *Tempo* 121 (June 1977), pp. 34-36.
[14] Halbreich, "Ferneyhough: Sonatas for String Quartet."

one featuring "massively detailed explosions of sound . . . in which the audible struggles with, and against, instrumental and vocal techniques are essential to the product as perceived by an audience," including *Firecycle Beta*, *Missa Brevis*, *Epicycle*, *Sieben Sterne* and *Cassandra's Dream Song*, all of which had been categorized by Halbreich as belonging to the first period.[15]

Two years later, an article by Keith Potter brought a new critical sensibility to bear upon Ferneyhough's music by helpfully raising the question of how exactly one should be listening to the work, and the extent to which one might be guided by existing discourse, including the composer's own. Potter frames the questions well, implicitly acknowledging that listeners do bring expectations and preconceptions to bear upon the listening experience:

> Should one, for example, be listening for thematic material and its development and recapitulation in some way? The very title of the piece might lead us to suppose this; but before we jump to any more preconceived conclusions, we should observe that the work falls into 24 sections which Ferneyhough himself apparently regards as constituting a single movement with "no major unambiguous subdivisions" (actually Halbreich's words once again) between the individual "movements." No sonata form then, presumably. But what about the role of "material" and its unfolding on a less "traditional" canvas?[16]

With another article from around the same time by Jonathan Harvey, however, a new direction opened up in Ferneyhough criticism—the outlining of more detailed information about the compositional process based upon privileged access to information provided by the composer or, in later writings by others, sketch material. Harvey describes how Ferneyhough had originally written two movements, then chopped these up and dispersed them amongst the twenty-four sections (incidentally a technique also used by Finnissy both then and throughout his compositional career), "allowing them to affect each other, allowing the more fertile 'intuitive' music eventually to form its own laws of renewal and burgeon in a manner denied to the hermetically-sealed totally serial music,"[17] in the process articulating a dialectical serialism/expressionist opposition that would become a mainstay of future criticism, as identified by Roddy Hawkins.[18] He also re-surveys some of the features identified by Finnissy, including the four-note recurring melodic shape, and suggested that this work provided a way "out of the impasse of total serialism of the 1950s,"[19] in keeping with earlier remarks that construct Ferneyhough as the heir to this tradition, one who "apparently absorbed the discoveries of total serialism to a profounder degree than almost anyone else of his generation, without actually subscribing to its orthodoxies (such as the veto on octaves) in his music," adding to the contrapuntal achievements of earlier composers the "natural extension of the sixties—

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[15] Finnissy, "Ferneyhough's Sonatas," p. 36.
[16] Keith Potter, "Sonatas for String Quartet," *Contact 20* (Autumn 1979), p. 6.
[17] Jonathan Harvey, "Brian Ferneyhough," *The Musical Times*, 120/1639 (September 1979), p. 723. Potter points out at the end of his article on the *Sonatas* that he had obtained Harvey's article after having written the bulk of his own, and found that to some extent his own perceptions, uninfluenced by specific directives from Ferneyhough, had been vouchsafed by Harvey's analysis. See Potter, "Sonatas for String Quartet," p. 9.
[18] See Roderick Hawkins, "(Mis)understanding complexity from *Transit* to Toop: 'New Complexity' in the British Context," (PhD dissertation, University of Leeds, 2010), p. 113, n. 14.
[19] Harvey, "Ferneyhough," p. 724.

melodic-gestural enhancement."[20] The starkness of the reified categories Harvey requires in order to construct such a view of Ferneyhough's historical position is problematic; only a tiny number of works pre-dating Ferneyhough's mature output can be considered "total serial," also "melodic-gestural enhancement" can be found in parts of Boulez's *Le marteau sans maître* (1953-55) and even more in the first two *Improvisations* from *Pli selon pli*, composed in 1957, Berio's *Serenata 1* (1957) and *Tempi concertati* (1958-59), or in a different manner, Nono's *Cori di Didone* (1958), whilst Bruno Maderna never really abandoned this through the course of his work from the 1950s.

Both Finnissy and Harvey brought to Ferneyhough's work that type of fascination with particular details of musical material and structure, filtered through personal priorities, that is entirely characteristic of composers; Halbreich wrote first and foremost from the perspective of an enthusiastic listener. Potter, on the other hand, was keen to stress his distance from the composer, and at an early stage in the evolution of discourse around Ferneyhough already identified several of the problems surrounding recurrent tropes, not least the over-simplifications involved in identifying Ferneyhough as a primarily "European" composer, whilst neglecting some of the scepticism and hostility he had already received on the continent.[21] Potter's two 1979 articles are amongst the very few that even accept that the issue of discrepancies between composers' and listeners' perspectives is worth considering.[22]

In the Finnissy/Harvey mode of writing was a contribution by another composer, James Erber, in his extended program note for the recording of *Transit.*[23] Erber makes clear the work's inspiration in a nineteenth-century pseudo-Renaissance alchemical woodcut (linking this to other Renaissance influences in this work and others, in a way that could consolidate a view of Ferneyhough's aesthetic as rooted more in that era than other later periods), explaining how this is manifested in both structural and antiphonal aspects of the music, as well as giving an overview of wider structural and other formal processes, the use of verse forms, serial techniques, particular approaches to text setting, combined with a more intuitively descriptive account of the work's musical events. All of this combines to produce a workable interaction between structural/compositional and more intuitively "expressive" and dramatic dimensions that would inform a good deal of later writing on the composer. But the most substantial subsequent article in English on this work, by Malcolm Barry,[24] took a different approach, concentrating upon the most

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[20] Ibid., p. 723.

[21] To the extent of pointing out that he had never met Ferneyhough at the time of writing the article, and in no sense was simply paraphrasing his views, which might be somewhat at odds with the perspectives and priorities that Potter presents. See Keith Potter, "Introduction," *Contact 20* (Autumn 1979), pp. 4-5, and for a more thoroughgoing exploration of the issue of Ferneyhough's being "European," Hawkins, "(Mis)understanding complexity," op. cit., pp. 22-29.

[22] For example, on the subject of the *Sonatas*, Potter writes about the fact that he had had the score with him when getting to know the work, but was keenly aware of how his responses might have been different otherwise; he also reflects on the possible disjunction between certain learned sets of listening priorities (especially to do with pitch) and the specific qualities of this work. See Potter, "Sonatas for String Quartet," pp. 6-7.

[23] James Erber, program note to accompany recording of Ferneyhough, *Transit* by London Sinfonietta, conducted Elgar Howarth, Decca Headline HEAD 18 (LP) (1978). At the time when this note was written, James Erber was working for Ferneyhough's publisher, Edition Peters; later he would himself study with Ferneyhough at Freiburg.

[24] Malcolm Barry, "Transit," *Contact* 20 (Autumn 1979), pp. 12-14.

immediately apparent macroscopic aspects of the work as a route towards consideration of finer details, with a rare example (in the context of Ferneyhough) of an analysis employing pitch class sets, enabling Barry to reveal differences between the pitch content of the vocal and instrumental writing in the piece.[25]

Two years before Potter had questioned the "European" construction of Ferneyhough, it was a German writer who most convincingly outlined Ferneyhough's *distance* from a central Germanic musical tradition. This argument is found in the most strikingly distinctive and searching article from this earlier period, that by Clytus Gottwald, director of Schola Cantorum Stuttgart, who commissioned and premiered *Time and Motion Study III* (1974).[26] Noting how Ferneyhough had destroyed the sketch materials for *Firecycle Beta* (1969-71) after preparation of the work, Gottwald somewhat deflects Ferneyhough's own characterization of this act as a balance between creation and destruction, drawing attention more to how it "simultaneously cuts the umbilical cord that keeps the work bound to him, and releases it into anonymity."[27] He goes on to draw conclusions from this that contrast starkly with the direction of Ferneyhough scholarship from soon afterwards:

> The composer renounces to himself ascetically the possibility, through analysis, of re-traversing his own labyrinth; the formula with which he built it is forgotten and can no longer be seized through force and cunning. Only by such self-renunciation is the composer able to guarantee that no-one else can speculate about what is nesting within the veins of his work, leading to a childish misinterpretation of the hermeticism of the system.[28]

Whilst Gottwald sees virtue in eschewing reconstruction of compositional processes, such as might be made possible through sketches, he does not allow for any other analytical possibilities, let alone the idea that some of the properties exhibited by a Ferneyhough work might be owing to factors other than the composer's intentions. Nonetheless, his article provides a challenging conceptualization of Ferneyhough through examination of how he responded to the woodcut that inspired *Transit*: instead of finding a response to the heroic and Faustian elements implicit in the work (such as might be of more obvious interest to one with a background in Germanic thought), Ferneyhough instead reacts in a "positivistic" way to the drawing by translating the overlapping circular illustrations into specific instrumental groupings;[29] the utopian aspects of the

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[25] Ibid. Barry also writes more briefly, but importantly, on the ways in which Ferneyhough's use of durations result from superimpositions of cycles, an aspect of the composition that would become clearer through the sketch-based analytical work from the 1980s onwards. For a survey of British critics' responses to Ferneyhough following the UK premiere of *Transit* on November 11th, 1977, and especially the theme of the composer neglected in his homeland, see Hawkins, "(Mis)understanding complexity," pp. 23, 25-29, 172-173.

[26] Clytus Gottwald, "Brian F., oder Von der Metaphysik des Positivismus," *Melos* 44/4 (July-August 1977), pp. 299-308.

[27] Ibid., p. 299.

[28] Ibid.

[29] In some ways this interpretation by Gottwald, at least at this level of the compositional process, resembles the view expressed by Richard Taruskin of Roger Norrington's recording of Beethoven's Ninth: "We have been too badly burned by those who have promised Elysium and given us Gulags and gas chambers. Our suspicions may not extend to Beethoven himself, as they do to Wagner, whom so many find personally repellent [….] For that reason his work, no less than Wagner's, needs neutering. And the way in

woodcut are reserved for the complexity of the vocal processes. This need to create a framework for operation based upon an almost naïve response to the source of inspiration, within which more metaphysical conceptions can be explored, leads to Gottwald's conception of Ferneyhough's compositional process as a "metaphysics of positivism," which he holds up as a distinction from a monadic conception of composition such as has characterized a "great Western tradition."[30] With all this in mind, Gottwald is able to relate aspects of *Time and Motion Study III* to a somewhat offbeat tradition—works of Berio, Holliger, Globokar, Kagel, Schnebel, and others that were also commissioned and/or first performed by the Schola Cantorum.[31] This lineage has only rarely been investigated further by subsequent writers.

With the paring-down of Ferneyhough's musical language from the opulent, kaleidoscopic, and slightly opaque textures of *Transit, Time and Motion Study III,* or *La terre est un homme* (1976-79) towards the concentrated tight gestural language of the Second String Quartet (1980) and subsequent works, writers began to find it more plausible to engage fully with the details of Ferneyhough's compositional fabric. Following the world premiere of *Carceri d'Invenzione I* (1982), Malcolm Hayes wrote a brief reflection concentrating clearly and succinctly upon its most audibly new features.[32]

More substantial, and to this day little-known even by Ferneyhough scholars, was Peter Reynolds' MA thesis surveying all of Ferneyhough's work up to that point, which remains in many ways a model of independent and critical analysis, more sophisticated and subtle than some doctoral or published writings by others.[33] Whilst essentially a general survey, with more detailed attention to the then two string quartets, and containing a fair amount of basic explanatory material valuable primarily to the non-expert listener or reader, other content and perspectives are nonetheless original and not otherwise available. Reynolds goes much further in terms of independent analysis (i.e., not simply reiterating that supplied by the composer) than any earlier writer except for Barry, and further than in a good deal of later published material. He identifies the fundamental twelve-note rows for a range of early works such as the *Four Miniatures* (1965), *Epigrams* (1965-66), *Coloratura* (1966) and Three Pieces for Piano (1966-67) (also noting some interrelationships between rows for different pieces), then other central pitch cells underlying *Epicycle*, *Sieben Sterne*, *Cassandra's Dream Song*, *Time and*

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which the twentieth century has until recently been neutering the Ninth has been to say to it, paraphrasing Alice's triumphant rejoinder to the Queen of Hearts, "Why, you're nothing but a pack of notes!" Formalist analysis, beginning with Schenker's huge tome of 1912, has been our dodge—and our scalpel. For those who cannot reject it outright, deflecting attention from "meaning" to "structure" has been the primary means of resisting the Ninth." (Richard Taruskin, "Resisting the Ninth," in *Text and Act: Essays on Music and Performance* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 249-250). This concurs with the view expressed elsewhere by Taruskin of "the resolute trivialization of some notable monuments of Germanic profundity, like the B minor Mass and the Choral Symphony. […] Do we need a fence around our good taste, not to say our moral purity? Then no German is above suspicion, not even Bach or Beethoven." ("The Modern Sound of Early Music," ibid., p. 168), or his setting down of ideals of lightness and literalism from Toscanini, Stravinsky and Satie as all sharing "an anti-Teutonic bias" (ibid., p. 167). This sort of Manichean dualism would become characteristic of Taruskin's later writings, but by then his emphasis had shifted so as to become quite damning of many things Germanic.

[30] Gottwald, "Brian F., oder Von der Metaphysik des Positivismus," pp. 300-301.

[31] Ibid., pp. 305-307.

[32] Malcolm Hayes, "Ferneyhough's *Carceri d'Invenzione I*," *Tempo* 144 (March 1983), pp. 30-33.

[33] Peter J. Reynolds, *The Music of Brian Ferneyhough* (MA dissertation, University of Wales, 1983).

Motion Study 1 (1971-77) and *Lemma-Icon-Epigram* (1981), as well as finding some correspondences between pitch sets in the Second String Quartet supposedly chosen intuitively. In several of these works Reynolds observes keenly the workings of serial technique whilst remaining alert to the varying degrees to which this affects the audible result, as well as the use of rhythmic motives, articulation groups and in some cases tonal centres. His analyses are slightly less formalized than those of Barry, more like classical serial excavations than full-on pitch class set studies. In his analysis of the *Sonatas*, whilst laying out the model provided by Ferneyhough, in terms of articulation classes and the chopping-up and dissemination of fragments, Reynolds presents a range of astute aural observations in terms of the impact of particular manifestations of the material at key structural moments, providing a full table laying out the most salient features; he is also prepared to identify climactic moments in terms other than those laid down by the composer.[34] Later in the thesis he relates aspects of the structure of *Epicycle* and *Cassandra's Dream Song* to this pivotal work. Reynolds begins his analysis of the Second String Quartet with a summary of Ferneyhough's own analysis of the work, but notes the composer's omissions, not least in terms of audible gestural elements and the overall structure, which he then sets out to trace.[35] In his observations about the secondary importance of pitch manipulation (which he nonetheless is able to analyze), Reynolds anticipates later writers, including Richard Toop, in defending the freedoms of Ferneyhough's approach against those who portray him as an ultra-systematic composer.

Reynolds early on describes Ferneyhough's work as "music whose complexity and conceptualism take works such as Boulez *Pli Selon Pli* or Stockhausen's *Gruppen* as a starting point, and follow the aesthetics of 1950's integral serialism to the last degree,"[36] but later on he himself undermines this picture (as well as other stereotypes of ultra-systematic composition and lack of concern about sound or listeners) in order to draw a picture of a composer who, at least from the *Sonatas* onwards, is intensely preoccupied by polarities between intuition and serial rigour, form and content (and is not adverse to the use of aleatoric elements). To situate Ferneyhough's early output, Reynolds draws upon an earlier historical model, "[t]he compositional schism between neo-classicism and post-Webernian serialism," which Reynolds says "Ferneyhough experienced during the early 1960s," but is not evident in the works from 1965 to 1967, "in which 'Darmstadt' has now become completely stylistically dominant,"[37] revealing a limited conception of what music was both written, performed, and heard at Darmstadt.[38] This is, however, a

[34] Ibid., pp. 23-34.
[35] Ibid., pp. 64-74.
[36] Ibid., p. 4. Reynolds describes this as "untypical of the last fifteen years or so which have been generally conservative in climate with neo-romanticism coming to dominate the German music scene and minimalism sweeping through America, making the term 'avant-garde' almost obsolete." (ibid.)
[37] Ibid., p. 10. Reynolds earlier writes of Ferneyhough's music's "cerebral nature and recondite procedures" frequently seeming "to recall the excesses of the Darmstadt School of Composers in the 1950's, while the seemingly excessive reliance on conceptual kinds of listening is often cancelled out by a use of procedures which remain hidden to all except the most experienced analysts." (ibid., p. 1).
[38] Only briefly for a couple of years in the mid-1950s did dodecaphonic/serial music come to occupy around fifty percent of the programmes, and then that was largely as a result of ample numbers of performances of Second Viennese School works. This subject is discussed in my own paper "The Cold War in Germany as Ideological Weapon for Anti-Modernists," first given at Radical Music History Conference, Sibelius Academy, Helsinki, Dec. 12, 2011. The programs for the Darmstädter Ferienkurse from 1946 to 1966 have long been easily available in Gianmorio Borio and Hermann Danuser (eds), *Im Zenit der*

small point, as Reynolds draws other interesting comparisons: between Ferneyhough's early piano works and Peter Maxwell Davies' Five Pieces for Piano, op 2 (1956) (with whose works Reynolds makes a range of further comparisons) and Cornelius Cardew's *February Pieces* (1959-61), between the texture and florid lines of *Epicycle* and the *Eton Choirbook*, between the verse-refrain structures of *Sieben Sterne* and works of Birtwistle, in terms of the differences between Ferneyhough's approach to virtuosity in solo works, and those of Berio (in the *Sequenzas*, nine of which had been completed at the time of writing) at one extreme, or Kagel (in *Tactil* [1970]) at the other, and in contrasting the idealistic use of the orchestra in *La terre* with the more pragmatic approaches of the Manchester School.[39]

Reynolds does not make explicit a strong delineation of Ferneyhough's output into periods, though it is implied by the structure of his survey: first early compositions (1963-67) from the Sonatina to *Prometheus* (the latter, together with the Sonata for Two Pianos (1966), presented as key transitional works through the introduction of more intricate cellular manipulation and the use of grids to what was previously quite straightforward serial composition), then the *Sonatas* as a breakthrough work, followed by another period of transition (1968-75) from *Epicycle* (noting the common use of antiphonal effects in this work, *Firecycle Beta,* and the *Missa Brevis*) to *Transit*, another nodal point, then a quasi-interlude looking at solo instrumental and/or virtuosic works including the *Time and Motion Studies* (in which he notes the new central importance of rhythm in *Unity Capsule*), another period encompassing *La terre est un homme*, the two *Funérailles* (1969-80) and *Lemma-Icon-Epigram*, then finally treating the Second Quartet as a point of culmination. He is skeptical about some dominant interpretive paradigms such as that of the electric chair for *Time and Motion Study 2* (1973-76), preferring to see a parody of nineteenth-century virtuosity, elements of which he also believes allowed Ferneyhough a way out from "the Boulez-Stockhausen cul-de-sac of the earlier pieces" in *Lemma-Icon-Epigram*.[40] The thesis as a whole demonstrates a strong sense of Ferneyhough's output to that point as a coherent but diverse whole, with commonalities between works made clear, whilst still amply demonstrating how much more potential remained at that stage in the composer's career.

The first book-length volume dedicated to Ferneyhough was published in Italian in 1984, a special issue of *I Quaderni della Civica Scuola di Musica.*[41] This mostly featured the majority of Ferneyhough's writings on his own works and wider compositional/aesthetics as existed at the time of publishing, together with an Italian translation of the interview with Andrew Clements mentioned earlier, and an essay on Ferneyhough's "labyrinths" (a term used by the composer himself),[42] focusing upon the Second String Quartet, *Lemma-Icon-Epigram* (1981), *Superscriptio* (1981), and *Carceri*

Moderne. Die Internationalen Ferienkurse für Neue Musik Darmstadt 1946-1966, Band 3: Dokumentation (Freiburg im Briesgau: Rombach, 1997), pp. 513-638 and online at www.internationales-musikinstitut.de/images/stories/PDF/Darmstaedter_Ferienkurse_1946-1966.pdf (accessed July 28, 2015).

[39] Reynolds, *The Music of Brian Ferneyhough,* pp. 12-13, 17, 21, 37, 39, 40, 43-45, 59.

[40] Ibid. pp. 53-54, 61.

[41] *I Quaderni della Civica Scuola di Musica. Numerou speziale dedicato a Brian Ferneyhough*, ed. Alessandro Melchiorre (Milan, 1984).

[42] Brian Ferneyhough, "Second String Quartet" (1982), in *Collected Writings*, p. 117.

d'Invenzione I, by Alessandro Melchiorre,[43] who also edited the volume; this was the first major article by one of Ferneyhough's students (Melchiorre had studied with both Ferneyhough and Klaus Huber in Freiburg).[44] This essay was also the first to look extensively at Ferneyhough's sketch material, a small amount of which was included in the volume.[45] Whilst heavily indebted to the conception of the quartet set out by Ferneyhough himself (in an essay that combines an essentially descriptive overview of the gestural working of the earlier sections with some detail on more abstract conceptions underlying the fourth section and some of the processes for deriving the pitch content—in a manner not unlike that of Erber, if somewhat more detailed),[46] Melchiorre is able to pay greater attention to detailed compositional processes, reproducing a small two bar section (not used in this form in the final work), containing most of the basic gestural archetypes, from which much of the material was derived. He also outlines numerical procedures for determining bar lengths (using Fibonacci sequences), explaining Ferneyhough's use of filters (alluded to but not really explained fully by the composer), suggesting fundamental categories of figures, and also giving some detail of the use and manipulation of series and rhythmic cells.[47] All of this dutifully follows what could be discerned from sketches, but nonetheless at the time it constituted a first step towards the uncovering of Ferneyhough's compositional process, such as could then be studied and learned from by other composers. Melchiorre also incorporates a wider exploration of the metaphor of the labyrinth, drawing in particular upon the work of Karl Kerényi,[48] relating the metaphor to a favoured quote by Ferneyhough from Artaud: "La Grille est un moment terrible pour la sensibilité, la matière"[49] ("The grid is a terrible moment for sensitivity and substance"), which Ferneyhough cited on at least four occasions in the late 1970s and early 1980s,[50] and looks beyond to the work of Derrida, Merleau-Ponty, and others.[51]

Two further full or near-full volumes dedicated to Ferneyhough appeared in French: issues of *Entretemps* from 1987 and *Contrechamps* from 1988,[52] both of a similar

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[43] Alessandro Melchiorre, "I Labirinti di Ferneyhough: la forza e la forma, la figura e il gesto nell'opera del compositore Inglese," ibid., pp. 4-41, reprinted in abridged version in French, translated Gerard Pésson, as "Les labyrinths de Ferneyhough: a propos du *Deuxième Quatuor* et de *Lemma-Icon-Epigram*," *Entretemps* 3 (Paris, 1987), pp. 69-88. The French version of the article only includes the sections on the Second Quartet and *Lemma-Icon-Epigram*, omitting the material on the other pieces.

[44] "Alessandro Melchiorre," at http://www.ricordi.com/catalogue/composers/alessandro-melchiorre/ (accessed April 13, 2014). As mentioned earlier, when James Erber published his essay on *Transit*, he had not yet studied with Ferneyhough.

[45] See Ferneyhough, "Frammenti diversi," in *Collected Writings*, pp. 116-117.

[46] Ferneyhough, "Second String Quartet," in *Collected Writings,* pp. 117-30.

[47] Melchiorre, "I labirinti," pp. 7-17; "Les labyrinths," pp. 70-79. Melchiorre demonstrates parallel aspects, especially through supplying a structured list of Ferneyhough's different transformational procedures, for *Lemma-Icon-Epigram* ("I labirinti," pp. 17-25; "Les labyrinths," pp. 78-88).

[48] Karl Kerényi, *Labyrinth-Studien. Labyrinthos als Linienreflex einer mythologischen Idee* (Zürich: Rhein-Verlag, 1950); Melchiorre cites the Italian version, *Nel labirinto* (Turin: Boringhieri, 1983).

[49] From Artaud's *Le Pèse-nerfs* (1925), in Évelyne Grossman, ed., *Artaud: Oeuvres* (Paris: Quarto Gallimard, 2004), p. 169.

[50] 1) As a quote at the top of a series of programme notes on "Epicycle, Missa Brevis, Time and Motion Study III" (1976), in *Collected Writings*, p 86; 2) in the "Interview with Andrew Clements" (1977) in *Collected Writings*, p. 214; 3) in a fragment from 1981 in Ferneyhough, "Frammenti diversi," in *I Quaderni*, p. 120; and 4) in the "Interview with Joël Bons" (1982), in *Collected Writings*, p. 228.

[51] Melchiorre, "I Labirinti," pp. 4-7. This section is omitted from the French version of the essay.

[52] *Entretemps* 3 (Paris, 1987) and *Contrechamps* 8 (Lausanne, February 1988).

nature to the Italian book. The *Contrechamps* volume included two further essays from Ferneyhough students: one small piece from Klaus K. Hübler (who had studied with Ferneyhough in Freiburg in the 1970s),[53] which had been part of a mini-feature on Ferneyhough in an issue of *MusikTexte* from the previous year,[54] and a much larger essay by Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf (who had studied with Ferneyhough from 1984 in Freiburg),[55] situating Ferneyhough's work in a critical relationship to earlier serial composition and Adorno's critiques of it.[56]

Within these volumes, the Hübler essay was the most striking, and again reflects the very personal preoccupations of another composer; he fixates upon the Baudelaire motto appearing at the beginning of the score of *Lemma-Icon-Epigram*, "Tout est hiéroglyphique," drawing this into a consideration of the importance of the fragmentary, the incomplete, that which is in a state of becoming (with a nod in the direction of Deleuze), and how the encounter between the fragment and system produces an entire oeuvre that Hübler characterizes as "hieroglyph in the structure of time,"[57] a description which would be apt for some of Hübler's own earlier work.

These last volumes enhanced but did not significantly modify a series of categories into which the whole body of writing on Ferneyhough discussed so far can be divided: (a) promotional/hagiographic (Schaaf, Clements); (b) journalistic (Halbreich, Hayes); (c) compositional/creative (Finnissy, Harvey, Erber, Melchiorre, Hübler); (d) critical (Potter, Gottwald, Mahnkopf); (e) analytical (Barry, Reynolds). From the mid-1980s onwards, a series of pre-occupations would assume a level of prominence, and several new writers would have a quite profound effect on the direction of Ferneyhough scholarship as a whole.

Figure

Melchiorre was the first writer to dwell at some length on the concept of the *figure*, a term that Ferneyhough first used in his own specific way in a 1982 essay, "Form—Figure—Style":

A gesture whose component defining features—timbre, pitch contour, dynamic level etc.—display a tendency towards escaping from that specific context in order to become independently signifying radicals, free to recombine, to "solidify" into further gestural forms may, for want of other nomenclature, be termed a *figure*. The deliberate enhancement of the separatist potential of specific parametric aspects of the figure

[53] Biography of Klaus K. Hübler at http://www.klaushuebler.de/bin/index.html (accessed April 12, 2014).
[54] Klaus K. Hübler, "Denk-Bilder, bewegt. Eine Annäherung an Brian Ferneyhough," *MusikTexte* 18 (February 1987), pp. 26-27; reprinted in French as "Images de la pensée, en movement. Une approche de Brian Ferneyhough," *Contrechamps* 8, pp. 41-44. The *MusikTexte* volume also included Thomas Meyer, "Ein Geflecht einander widerstrebender Kraftlinien. Der Komponist Brian Ferneyhough," pp. 32-35, and Ferneyhough's own essay "*Mnemosyne* (1980) für Baßflöte solo und Zuspielband," pp. 27-31, as well as a worklist. This appears to have been the first dedicated set of articles on Ferneyhough to have appeared in German.
[55]Biography of Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf at http://www.claussteffenmahnkopf.de/main.php? Param_Lang=E (accessed April 12, 2014).
[56] Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf, "Vers une musique figurelle?," translated from German to French by Carlo Russi, *Contrechamps* 8, pp. 45-63. The issue also included an extended translation of Erber's essay on *Transit* ("Transit: 'Carrefour culturel,'" *Contrechamps* 8, pp. 79-85), but this had been written before Erber studied with Ferneyhough and therefore cannot be counted as the work of one of Ferneyhough's students.
[57] Hübler, "Denk-Bilder," p. 27.

produces a unit at one and the same time material presence, semantic sign and temporary focus of the lines of organizational force until the moment of their often violent release.[58]

In a 1983 interview with Richard Toop, a long interchange following a question by Toop about the relationship of gesture and figure, Ferneyhough identified "figurality" as a subcategory of gesture, and came a little closer to a definition, but which was scarcely less esoteric:

> The thing which distinguishes the figural way of constructing or observing a gesture from the "gestural" part of the gesture is that one is attempting to realize the totality of the gesture in terms of its possible deconstruction into parametric tendencies. That is, no longer does one attempt to create a gesture via the automatic coming together of abstract parametric units of quantities, nor does one try to build a gesture as an affective quality, and place these totalities against one another.
> […] [the figural content of a gesture is] the thing which is justified, first of all, by its particular contextualization, its particular anchoring in a gestural context.[59]

In 1984, Ferneyhough expanded upon the concept in a further essay for which it played a central role. While noting how many nuanced employments the term had received over several centuries, he argued here that this rendered "its useful present-day definition an all but impossible task," though there was no harm in adding another definition.[60] Ferneyhough expressed his interest in how:

> the extent to which some form of clear distinction between (1) The global delineation of a musical shape and (2) its internal potential for assisting in the creation of musical states with which it is not co-extant is a prerequisite for achieving a more precise insight into the present problematic condition of compositional/formal thinking.[61]

In order to capture "a semanticity largely dependent on information resistant to concretization in a 'super-contextual' manner," Ferneyhough wrote that:

> It is on the basis of this consideration that the *figure* is proposed as an element of musical signification composed entirely of details defined by their contextual disposition rather than their innate, stylistically defined referential capability.[62]

Later in the essay he went on to say:

> The idea of the figure is locked, for me, precisely at the intersection of the defined, concretely apperceptible gesture and the estimation of its "critical mass," its energic volatility. […] The figure delivers momentary perceptual frames—stage sets—capable of projecting particular hypothetical evaluational categories into the still-to-be perceived future of the discourse.[63]

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[58] Brian Ferneyhough, "Form—Figure—Style: An Intermediate Assessment" (1982), in *Collected Writings*, p. 26.
[59] Ferneyhough, interview with Richard Toop, in *Collected Writings*, p. 285.
[60] Brian Ferneyhough, "Il Tempo della Figura" (1984), in *Collected Writings*, p. 33.
[61] Ibid., p. 33.
[62] Ibid., p. 34.
[63] Ibid., p. 37.

Ferneyhough did not dwell on the concept much more until a 1990 interview with James Boros, where he identified texture, gesture, and figure as three fundamental areas of activities,[64] also claiming that "The specifically figural aspect of an event is thus the degree to which these parametric quanta render themselves obviously amenable to such separation, extension, and re-combination in later constellations."[65]

In the context of the Second Quartet, Melchiorre distinguishes the supposedly static nature of gesture with the dynamic one of figure, which can be deconstructed or decomposed, so that a gesture is a particular instance of a figure[66] (making reference to Blaise Pascal's reflection of the figurative as something that combines presence *and* absence),[67] a clear definition that as far as I can establish is not at odds with those of Ferneyhough. From this definition, he is able to proceed to identify a series of figures argued to lie behind the opening violin solo in the quartet, noting how different gestures (for example those in the first and third measures) can be seen as different realisations of a series of basic elements,[68] thus demonstrating deeper unities in the work.

The concept was picked up a few years later by François Nicolas, who compared the figure to the Leibnizian monad, whilst also sounding a little note of scepticism about the concept owing to its elusiveness.[69] Nonetheless, it was taken up enthusiastically by Mahnkopf, who, in an essay re-working an Adornian formulation, looks at "Form-Figure-Style" (in part a critique of the employment of reified musical gestures and forms by neo-romantic composers), and "Il Tempo della Figura."[70] Mahnkopf draws attention to the extent to which the figure was presented by Ferneyhough as something resistant to ideologies of expressive "transparency"[71] and defined according to contextual rather than referential factors.[72] He also emphasises the primary importance of the category of "complexity" (amongst others), and the ways in which Mahnkopf believed the "constructivism" of Ferneyhough always serves the "expressivity" of the music.[73] In general, whilst drawing heavily upon Ferneyhough's own categories and self-perception, Mahnkopf undoubtedly maintains his own perspective through the particularity of his portrayal of the Ferneyhough's relationship not only to the Second Viennese School and to post-1945 serial music and Adorno's critiques of it, but also to wider conceptions of music history and traditions (to which Ferneyhough was one of the very few true heirs, in Mahnkopf's formulations), which would become more pronounced in Mahnkopf's later writings. Just two years later, he would outline for the first time a very particular (and

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[64] "Shattering the Vessels of Received Wisdom," Ferneyhough interview with James Boros, in *Collected Writings*, p. 384. Ferneyhough repeated this tripartite division in a further interview the following year with Jean-Baptiste Barrière, ibid., p. 414.
[65] Ibid., p. 387.
[66] Melchiorre, "I labirinti," p. 8; "Les labyrinthes," pp. 70-71.
[67] "Les Pensées de Blaise Pascal. Fragment *Loi figurative* no. 20/31," at http://www.penseesdepascal.fr/Loi/Loi20-moderne.php (accessed Feb. 2, 2015).
[68] Melchiorre, "I labirinti," pp. 8-12; "Les labyrinthes," pp. 71-73.
[69] François Nicolas, "Éloge de la complexité," *Entretemps* 3 (1987), pp. 55-68, also available online at http://www.entretemps.asso.fr/Nicolas/TextesNic/Ferneyhough.html (accessed Feb. 1, 2015).
[70] Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf, "Vers une musique figurelle?"
[71] See Ferneyhough, "Form-Figure-Style," pp. 22-5; "Interview with Richard Toop," in *Collected Writings*, pp. 282-4; and Mahnkopf, "Vers une musique figurelle?," pp. 50-51.
[72] Ferneyhough, "Il Tempo della Figura," in *Collected Writings*, p. 34.
[73] Mahnkopf, "Vers une musique figurelle?," pp. 54-55.

thoroughly uncompromising) "tradition" in which he saw the provenance for "complex" music, which will be detailed later in the section on "Complexity."[74]

It was Richard Toop (see below) who would later draw attention to the key importance of the quotation from Gilles Deleuze on the paintings of Francis Bacon, which heads "Form-Figure-Style": "En art, et en peinture comme dans la musique, il ne s'agit pas de reproduire ou d'inventer des formes, mais de capter des forces."[75] The Figure is an important concept in this work of Deleuze; he draws a distinction between the "Figure" in a Bacon painting, in the sense of a isolatable object, though often only formed as such relative to the context, and the "figurative," in the sense of the relationship of such an image to an external object, or of one image to others within a whole in which each is representational.[76] Deleuze asserts the importance of extracting the former from the latter[77] and also provides an objectivizing and anti-subjective model for the Figure by presenting it as a body that does not even have a face.[78] This is entirely apt for the type of Figure, "not only isolated, stuck, and contracted, but also abandoned, escaping, evanescent, and confused" that Deleuze's identifies in Bacon's 1952 *Study for Crouching Nude,*[79] as an abstraction from figuration.[80] But in music the use of figuration, in the above painterly sense, is only a part of tradition, and not one that accounts for the majority, and one that even at its peak (in nineteenth-century programmatic or otherwise directly evocative music) is always very considerably more ambiguous than in painting. Abstraction from musical gesture does not parallel Deleuze's concept as applied to Bacon (and Bacon's disinclination to ever embrace total abstraction is of crucial importance in this context) because of the lack of an external object associated with that gesture; a relationship to a historical gestural inheritance is by no means a similar thing in many ways, as it is unclear how the mediation that produces a Ferneyhough gesture is fundamentally different in nature that the mediation that extracts a figure from a gesture or gestures, so Deleuze's insistence on fundamental separation of Figure and figuration is not really tenable here.

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[74] In his essay "Kundgabe. Komplexismus und der Paradigmenwechsel in der Musik," *MusikTexte* 35 (1990), pp. 20-32. Mahnkopf's tradition runs from *ars subtilior* through Gesualdo, C.P.E. Bach, and Reger's chromatic polyphony, and so forth, towards the "high phase" of serialism in works such as Stockhausen's *Gruppen* or Boulez's *Polyphonie X* (p. 23).

[75] Richard Toop, "*Prima le Parole…*": On the Sketches for Ferneyhough's Carceri d'Invenzione I-III," *Perspectives of New Music* 32/1 (1994), p. 156. The original quote comes from Deleuze's *Francis Bacon, Logique de la Sensation* (Paris: Editions de la Difference, 1981), p. 39; English translation "In art, and in painting as in music, it is not a matter of reproducing or inventing forms, but of capturing forces" (Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, translated Daniel W. Smith (London & New York: Continuum, 2003), p. 56).

[76] Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, pp. 1-3.

[77] Ibid., pp. 8-11. Deleuze cites Bacon, himself alluding to Malraux, on how many aspects of figurative painting are no longer necessary with the advent of photography and the decline of religious painting; but Deleuze argues that the latter made it harder rather than easier to escape figuration.

[78] Ibid., p. 20.

[79] Ibid., p. 30.

[80] Deleuze identifies the possibility of a future period in the history of the Figure in painting in which "the Figure no longer had only elements of dissipation, and that it was no longer even content to privilege or return to this element" (ibid); thus the abstraction would be quite complete; the anti-metaphysical quality of this abstraction is emphasized by the idea of reducing the Figure to sand, grass, dust or water, in which process the Figure would destroy itself (ibid., p. 31).

In her doctoral dissertation, Lois Fitch would come to use the concept amply, as would Francis Courtot in his monograph on the composer. But as I will argue below, I remain unconvinced that the term, and its employment by successive writers including those above (most of who essentially reiterate rather than substantiate or critically assess Ferneyhough's definitions), does not in some ways entail a mystification.

Richard Toop and Ross Feller

The majority of substantial essays on Ferneyhough up until the late 1980s had been by written by either composers (Finnissy, Harvey, Erber, Reynolds, Melchiorre, Hübler, Mahnkopf) or performers who had worked closely with Ferneyhough; exceptions being the generally quite brief work of Clements, Potter, Barry, and Hayes. This latter group were now to be joined by one of the most important of all writers on Ferneyhough, who would create a very substantial and influential body of work. This was the British-born musicologist Richard Toop, who had worked briefly as Stockhausen's teaching assistant before moving to Sydney in 1975. In a series of important articles published in the late 1980s and early 1990s, Toop outlined a coherent and consistent position on Ferneyhough's music, maintaining that the works from *Funérailles II* (1977-80), the Second Quartet, and *Lemma-Icon-Epigram* onwards had "acquired a new expressive richness that even at first hearing is able to burst through its hermetic surface," drawing comparisons with late Beethoven and early Stockhausen.[81] He proceeded with sketch-based studies of compositional technique in *Superscriptio*, *Lemma-Icon-Epigram*, then other parts of the *Carceri* cycle (for which the available sketch material is most complete);[82] it was primarily as a result of his work that a whole sub-discipline of Ferneyhough sketch study was established, a significant addition to the categories described earlier.

That Toop is a musicologist rather than a composer is apparent through a degree of explicit methodological self-reflection, as well as a shift away from the sometimes poetic language of Melchiorre towards a more focused and dispassionately analytic style, amply demonstrated by comparing both writers' essays on *Lemma-Icon-Epigram*. It is evident that both had access to the same sketch material, some of which is repeated in near-identical form, though Toop goes very considerably further in terms of examining the minutia of the compositional processes (though with nowhere near the level of detail found in Cordula Pätzold's later work on the *Carceri* cycle). To a limited degree, he touches upon the relationship of these to audible categories of perception (for example in terms of recurrent pitches in sequences of chords, or a predominance of octatonic scalic patterns as a result of the nature of the opening pitch sequence). Furthermore, Toop draws

[81] Richard Toop, "Ferneyhough's Dungeons of Invention," *The Musical Times* 128/1737 (November 1987), pp. 624-628 (quote from p. 624).

[82] Richard Toop, "A propos de *Superscriptio*" and "*Superscriptio* pour flute piccolo solo" in *Entretemps* 3, pp. 89-106, reprinted in English as part of "On Superscriptio: An Interview with Brian Ferneyhough, and an Analysis," *Contemporary Music Review* 13 (1995), pp. 3-17; "Lemme-Icône-Epigramme," *Contrechamps* 8 (1988), pp. 86-127, reprinted in English as "Brian Ferneyhough's *Lemma-Icon-Epigram*," *Perspectives of New Music* 28/2 (1990), pp. 52-100; "Brian Ferneyhough's *Etudes Transcendentales*: A Composer's Diary (Part 1)," *EONTA Arts Quarterly* 1/1 (1991), pp. 55-89; "*Prima le Parole*...—on the sketches for Ferneyhough's Carceri d'Invenzione I-III," *Perspectives of New Music* 32/1 (1994), pp. 154-175.

attention to the ways in which Ferneyhough employs general verbal instructions to himself about general material types to characterize passages (rather than these being an inevitable consequence of the development of the material); the precise compositional techniques are then better understood as tools employed on an ad hoc basis towards the achievement of a result determined by other means than as part of some comprehensive system.[83]

For the analysis of *Lemma-Icon-Epigram*, Toop cites the provision of the sketches (along with excitement with the work, and finding that excitement shared by others) as one of three principal reasons for analyzing the work, maintaining that the reason for analysis was to show not just the *how* but the *why*, and in the case of Ferneyhough, this would be impossible without sketches.[84]

Toop's studies took Ferneyhough scholarship onto a new level, through the elegance and clarity of his deciphering and presentation of the composer's intricate compositional devices, though this approach is far from unproblematic. Above all, the vast bulk of Toop's articles are focused simply on how Ferneyhough put the works together, with little more than cursory consideration of how these techniques might relate to the manifestation of the music in sound, which latter it appears Toop does not deem worthy of sustained analytical treatment.

For example, Toop portrays Ferneyhough as attempting to match a "pseudo-development" in the first section of *Lemma-Icon-Epigram* with a "real" development in the final section, but finding this impossible.[85] There is no doubt that the two sections are quite significantly different in nature (not least in terms of density), and that Ferneyhough's two compositional strategies probably serve to produce this result, but Toop does not try and describe how and why this might have been the case (making the whole question of the meaning of "pseudo-" or "real" developments seem obscure). Elsewhere, it is not always clear what of Toop's exegesis constitutes his own observation, what is directly taken from the sketches or other comments from the composer, as for example in the delineation of *Superscriptio* into five sections.[86] Some of these sections seem reasonably self-evident from the distribution of material types throughout the course of the piece, but an argument could be made convincingly for other divisions.[87] Such blatant factors as the relief provided with the entrance of the flute in the fourth song

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[83] This is of course to frame such a dichotomy in rather crude terms; Toop's work makes clear the extent to which Ferneyhough works with a dialectical interaction between general (and perhaps more intuitively derived) plans and aims on one hand, and the results of compositional techniques and processes on the other.

[84] Toop, "Ferneyhough's *Lemma-Icon-Epigram*," pp. 52-53.

[85] Ibid., pp. 95-96; Ferneyhough, "Interview with Richard Toop," in *Collected Writings*, pp. 264-267. It is important to note that the specific terms of pseudo- and real development are Toop's rather than Ferneyhough's; Ferneyhough speaks instead of attempting to bring about a synthesis between the techniques employed in the "Lemma" and "Icon" sections.

[86] Toop, "On Superscriptio," p. 8. However, Cordula Pätzold's account of the same piece makes clear that this is indeed grounded upon the sketches. See Pätzold, "*Carceri d'Invenzione* von Brian Ferneyhough. Kompositionstechnische und höranalytische Aspekte" (PhD dissertation, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität zu Freiburg im Breisgau, 2002), pp. 28-32.

[87] For example, one might consider page 2, first line, fourth bar, as betokening a new section because of the distinctiveness and dynamic profile of the descending gestures, or consider whether the third section might begin at a later point on page 5—for example on the fourth line, fourth bar. All of these possibilities could also have a bearing upon performance.

of the *Etudes Transcendantales* (1982-85), with delicate, flowing, and relatively periodic arabesque-like figures, in stark contrast to the gnarled, terse, or rhetorical writing for the other instruments in the three preceding movements, also receive no comment in Toop's analysis.[88]

Another prominent writer on Ferneyhough's work, the first since Hayes and Reynolds to really develop an analytic strain of writing, is the American composer and theorist Ross Feller, whose work began with a 1994 doctoral dissertation.[89] In this work he above all builds further upon the metaphor of the labyrinth, for which Feller provides a historical and literary overview, drawing special attention to the "multicursal" labyrinth with multiple paths, some connected, some dead-ends.[90] This was of course earlier theorized by Melchiorre, but Feller draws upon a wider range of thinkers and artists whose work relates to the subject, including Kafka, Joyce, Borges, and Eco, and a host of other historians, linguists, and writers on Greek mythology. The dissertation has a special focus upon *Terrain* (1992), the long chapter on which[91] constitutes one of the stronger writings on a Ferneyhough work to date, and does not employ sketches, which Feller describes as having traditionally being granted "overinflated status" in theorists' analyses.[92] Feller considers the work primarily in terms of two concepts derived from Ferneyhough's reading of artist and writer Robert Smithson (as communicated by Ferneyhough to Feller), "strata" and "slippage,"[93] as applied to time. Nonetheless, he

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[88] On the other hand, Toop spends a good deal of space on describing the techniques whereby Ferneyhough's rhythms go through multiple stages to arrive at their final form; certainly an interesting technique that some other composers might adopt or adapt, though it is little clear how this would be relevant to anyone else. He also demonstrates some techniques by which Ferneyhough modifies some pitch sequences, and saves the earlier version of the modified pitches to use elsewhere. It is equally unclear how this relates to anything audible. See Toop, "Brian Ferneyhough's *Etudes Transcendantales*," pp. 63-74.

[89] Ross Feller, "Multicursal labyrinths in the work of Brian Ferneyhough" (DMA Dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1994).

[90] Ibid., pp. 10-35. Where Melchiorre had drawn upon the work of Kerényi, Feller grounds his consideration of the labyrinth in from a detailed reading of a remarkable range of texts, including W.H.D. Rouse, "The Double Axe and The Labyrinth," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* XXI (1901); W.H. Matthews, *Mazes and Labyrinths* (London: Longmans, Green and Co, 1922; reprinted New York: Dover, 1970); S.H. Hooke, *The Labyrinth* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1935); Gaetano Cipolla, "Labyrinthine Imagery in Petrarch," *Italica* (1974), pp. 268-269; Paolo Santarcangeli, *Le livre des labyrinths* (Paris: Gallimard, 1975); Janet Bord, *Mazes and Labyrinths of the World* (London: Latimer New Directions, 1976); Ronald J. Onorato, "The Modern Maze," *Art International*, XX/3-4 (March-April 1976), pp. 21-22; Donald Gutierrez, *The Maze in the Mind and the World: Labyrinths in Modern Literature* (New York: The Whitson Publishing Co., 1985); Gaetano Cipolla, *Labyrinth: Studies on an Archetype* (New York and Toronto: Legas, 1987); Manfredo Tafuri, *The Sphere and the Labyrinth: Avant-Gardes and Architecture from Piranesi to the 1970s*, trans. Pellegrino d'Acierno and Robert Connolly (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1987); Wendy Faris, *Labyrinths of Language* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988); Hugh Kenner, *Mazes* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1989); Allen S. Weiss, *The Aesthetics of Excess* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1989); Penelope Reed Doob, *The Idea of the Labyrinth from Classical Antiquity through the Middle Ages* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990); Rodney Castleden, *The Knossos Labyrinth* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990); and Ellen Dooling Deaper, "Focus," *Parabola*, XVII/2 (May 1992), pp. 2-3.

[91] Feller, "Multicursal Labyrinths," pp. 73-168. A modified version of this chapter was later published as Ross A. Feller, "Slippage and Strata in Brian Ferneyhough's *Terrain*," *Ex tempore* 9/2 (1999), pp. 77-122.

[92] Feller, "Multicursal Labyrinths," p. 91.

[93] The volume upon which Ferneyhough drew was Nancy Holt, ed., *The Writings of Robert Smithson: Essays with Illustrations*, with introduction by Philip Leider (New York: New York University Press, 1979).

asserts that these two types of time dominate each half of the piece purely on the grounds that this was what Ferneyhough said in a letter, rather than treating this characterization as a subject for critical investigation (which would not rule out the ultimate possibility of an affirmation of Ferneyhough's own view).[94] Feller indulges in close reading of the opening solo to an almost obsessive degree, but divines relationships between materials on the basis of what can be perceived in the final score, rather than simply articulating aspects of the compositional process. Furthermore, he is able to discern recurrent impulse patterns, pitch centers, and other wider factors concerning pitch class commonalities and displacement tactics mirroring those in earlier works, to provide convincing rationales for his particular division of the work into sections, and to use diagrams to demonstrate clearly various macroscopic aspects of the work. His general strategy of isolating parameters (pitch, rhythm, tempo, dynamics, instrumentation, etc.) for separate consideration can limit his ability to consider their interactions, though he does some of this when examining the work on more microscopic levels. Feller's preoccupation with the "labyrinth" remains a central concern; he also examines how this concept informed the work of Smithson. In subsequent writings Feller would focus in particular upon Ferneyhough's use of computer-assisted compositional techniques (in particular the Random Funnel and PatchWork programs) and how this has changed the nature of his work,[95] as well as providing a spirited argument for the central importance of "difficulty" for Ferneyhough as a strategy for resisting habits of composition, performance, and listening[96] (in a way that demonstrates Feller's parallel interest in the work of Helmut Lachenmann).

Postmodern Ferneyhough?

If Clements and Harvey had situated (early) Ferneyhough as part of an extension of European serial music of the 1950s, a model that is continued in the work of Toop,[97]

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[94] Feller draws upon other concepts, some outlined earlier in other contexts by Toop (e.g., "figural enhancement") as tools for this analysis.

[95] See Ross A. Feller, "Random Funnels in Brian Ferneyhough's *Trittico per Gertrude Stein*," *Mitteilungen der Paul Sacher Stiftung* 10 (Basel, 1997), pp. 32-38, and Feller, "E-sketches: Brian Ferneyhough's use of computer-assisted compositional tools," in Patricia Hall and Friedemann Sallis eds., *A Handbook to Twentieth-Century Musical Sketches* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 176-188. Feller is careful to point out that some of the techniques employed in Ferneyhough's computer-assisted compositions (which began in 1980 whilst working at IRCAM; the first work to use the "Random Funnel" system was *La Chute d'Icare* (1988); the first for which he used Finale notational software was *Bone Alphabet* [1991]) can also be found in earlier works. Another investigation of Ferneyhough's computer-assisted techniques, focusing again on PatchWork and with a detailed consideration of its use in the String Trio (the first of his works composed entirely using computer-assisted techniques), can be found in Mikhaïl Malt, "Brian Ferneyhough et l'aide informatique à l'écriture," in *Brian Ferneyhough: textes réunis par Peter Szendy* (Paris & Montreal: L'Harmattan, 1999) (hereafter simply "Szendy, *Ferneyhough*'), pp. 61-106.

[96] Ross A. Feller, "Strategic Defamiliarization: the process of difficulty in Brian Ferneyhough's music," *The open space magazine* 2 (2000), pp. 197-202. In the course of this essay Feller argues for a clear distinction between Ferneyhough's work and the systematic processual work associated with "total serialism" (presented as something of a caricature).

[97] As when calling the Second String Quartet "arguably the only postwar quartet (or the only substantial one) to sit comfortably in the "great tradition" that leads from Beethoven via (perhaps) Brahms to the Second Viennese School, in the sense that it finds new perspectives for the quartet as a discursive medium,

whilst Gottwald had suggested that Ferneyhough's work should be seen as a parallel strain somewhat on the fringes of Central European modernism, on account of its positivistic outlook, and Mahnkopf had painted Ferneyhough as standing towards the end of his own idiosyncratic and hard-line "tradition," Feller offered a quite different historical and aesthetic view. In a response to qualities of "pluralism and multiplicity" found in Ferneyhough's labyrinthine music, Feller at the end of his dissertation drew upon the work of Hal Foster[98] to characterize Ferneyhough's compositional praxis as entailing "a postmodernism of resistance" (supposedly deconstructing modernism and the status quo), then more broadly as occupying "a middle-ground between a postmodernism of reaction and modernism."[99] This resonates somewhat with Paul Griffiths description the following year of Ferneyhough as a "post-modern modernist" on account of a certain distance from the musical language he employed,[100] though Griffiths was unlikely to have read Feller's dissertation at this point. This trope remained dormant until taken up again in an essay published in 1999 by Marc Texier, in which he considered Ferneyhough's self-declared role as the "Last of the Moderns" (the composer's own term).[101] Texier suggested as an alternative the possibility that Ferneyhough's explicit allusions to a tradition from the Renaissance to Schoenberg means that he might be considered postmodern by virtue of such self-conscious historicism (as with Texier's particular obsessions of B.A. Zimmermann and Klaus Huber).[102] Three years later, in 2002, Feller returned to the subject, interpreting the postmodern aspect of Ferneyhough as manifested in the dialogue between highly detailed formal scores and more spontaneous approaches in performance made necessary through the extremities of the notation, creating a type of excess that goes beyond anything available in modernism.[103]

Whilst others (not least Mahnkopf) viewed Ferneyhough's work in diametric opposition to ideas of postmodernism, in an article published in 2009, Lois Fitch picked up on Griffiths' term,[104] in an essay mostly laying Ferneyhough's express positions on

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as opposed to a primarily coloristic one" (citing James Dillon on this subject) or that *Lemma-Icon-Epigram* is "one of the very few piano works of recent years that one can set confidently alongside the sonatas of Boulez and the best of Stockhausen's *Klavierstücke*." See Toop, "Ferneyhough's Dungeons of Invention," p. 625.

[98] Hal Foster, "Postmodernism: A Preface," in Foster, ed., *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture* (Port Townsend, WA: Bay Press, 1983), pp. ix-xvi.

[99] Feller, "Multicursal Labyrinths," p. 171.

[100] Paul Griffiths, *Modern Music and After*, second edition (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 264. This formulation had been used in Wolfgang Welsch's *Unsere postmoderne Moderne* (Weinheim: Acta Humaniora, 1987), but it is difficult to establish whether Griffiths was aware of this work or not.

[101] Marc Texier, "Le dernier des modernes," in Szendy, *Ferneyhough*, pp. 9-26.

[102] Ibid., pp. 20-1.

[103] Ross Feller, "Resistant Strains of Postmodernism: The Music of Helmut Lachenmann and Brian Ferneyhough," in Judy Lochhead and Joseph Auner, eds., *Postmodern Music/Postmodern Thought* (New York & London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 249-262.

[104] Lois Fitch, "Brian Ferneyhough, "Postmodern Modernist'," in Björn Heile, ed., *The Modernist Legacy: Essays on New Music* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 159-175. This essay is also quite heavily indebted to the reading of Adorno by Fitch's doctoral supervisor Max Paddison, in his book *Adorno's Aesthetics of Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). Fitch's argument that Ferneyhough's music does not really entail "development" relies almost entirely on Ferneyhough's own account of his compositional processes. She does not take under consideration what it means for "development" to be manifest in an audible sense, which I maintain is essential to the conception of development as a necessary condition of

Deleuze (presented as "postmodern") and Adorno (presented as "modern") alongside quotations from both writers, with little reference to the detail of actual musical works. Whilst not engaging with any existing musical literature on postmodernism (and never really defining the terms of the modern/postmodern opposition properly), Fitch nonetheless reiterates a common opposition contained therein when holding up Ferneyhough's work in opposition to both a "post-degree zero abstraction for abstraction's sake" and "works that employ clichéd rhetorical language in an attempt to imbue material with expression rather than validate that expression by means of stylistic consistency from within the individual work itself."[105] Ferneyhough is thus presented (using some of his own ideas) as a shining example of a composer not to be categorized in terms of stereotypical ideas of *either* modernism *or* postmodernism. This would have been fine if proper evidence had been marshalled that would demonstrate that sufficient composers belong in either of these reified categories to make such a contrast meaningful.

In general, this sub-genre of Ferneyhough writing from Griffiths, Feller, Texier, and Fitch reads like an attempt to appropriate, or perhaps even rescue, Ferneyhough in the name of the prevailing anti-modernist fashion of the 1990s and early 2000s; few of the arguments have much consequence unless one accepts the straw-man characterization of modernism that they are forced to reiterate.

Interlude: A Short History of Critical Perspectives and Methodological Debates on Sketch Study

I now wish to give an overview of the principal methodological and aesthetic issues surrounding the wider realm of musical sketch study, so as to highlight not only the relatively limited approaches taken to date by writers on Ferneyhough's music, but also how such study might be undertaken from different perspectives. The study of composers' sketches has been dated back to 1799, with the preparation of a list of surviving fragments and drafts by Mozart with detailed commentary by Maximilian Stadler, at the time of the sale of the Mozart Nachlass,[106] but is usually thought to have taken on a more rigorous form with Gustav Nottebohm's Beethoven studies from 1865

"expression," a term used by Paddison in a problematic fashion; see Paddison, *Adorno's Aesthetics of Music*, p. 249. The need posited by Fitch for development to proceed "in an organic sense by means of a self-consistent logic" (Fitch, "Ferneyhough, "Postmodern Modernist'," p. 166) is itself another caricature against which it is too easy to contrast a wide range of practice past and present.

[105] Ibid., p. 159. The exact quote from Ferneyhough himself, to which Fitch refers in her footnote accompanying this comment, supposedly amounting to her characterization, is: "If the Dialectic of Enlightenment was primarily defined by the exhaustion and exposure of latency in artistic expression (thus inevitably instigating its own disappearance at the hand of that very aesthetic of autonomy to which it had given rise) so the concept of "personal style" can now be re-interpreted in terms of the unresolved tensions manifested in the individual work seen as a temporary and volatile confrontation of materials validated by linear consistency (from work to work) *from within*, and the dissonantial energies residing in the dynamic interpenetration of the linguistically contingent and the 'subjective history' of the composing intelligence" (Ferneyhough, "Parallel Universes," in *Collected Writings*, pp. 76-77). Fitch's presentation of consistency within a single work is quite different to Ferneyhough's view of this as linking distinct works, whilst the disappearance of "latency in artistic expression" at the hand of an "aesthetic of autonomy" is an Adornian formulation, by which autonomy is a hard-won goal, quite different to "abstraction for abstraction's sake."

[106] See Thomas More Whelan, "Towards a history and theory of sketch studies" (PhD dissertation, Brandeis University, 1990), pp. 9-19.

onwards, Beethoven having been one of the first composers to keep his sketch materials.[107] This type of study frequently overlaps with the study of early versions of works, manuscripts and other such primary source documents, and techniques derived from philology.[108]

By the 1960s there emerged some critical methodological reflection within the field, naturally focusing upon Beethoven. In 1966-67, Joseph Kerman (who would go on to produce an important edition of Beethoven sketches including facsimiles)[109] argued (rightly, in my opinion) that "an understanding of the compositional process is not equivalent to insight into the work of art as such," whilst conceding that this was "a closer route to such insight than is provided by most of our other scholarly activities."[110] Lewis Lockwood insisted upon a sharp distinction between autographs and sketches, on the grounds that the former were intended to be read by eyes other than the composer's, unlike the latter,[111] and thus urged realization of the fragmentary, often incomplete, unfocused, and undecipherable nature of sketches.[112]

But an important 1974 article by Philip Gossett,[113] which surveyed sketch study of Beethoven from Nottebohm onwards, served as the catalyst for a wider debate. Gossett invoked W.K. Wimsatt and M.C. Beardsley's now quite infamous 1946 essay on the "intentional fallacy," but argued that this was not really applicable to music.[114] He also argued that it is dangerous to conflate biography and critical analysis; musical sketches reveal "intention" that can "vary in significance, depending on the extent to which the intention is realized in the finished work, that too a matter of opinion."[115] Nonetheless, Gossett maintained that there was value in discerning as many different forms of knowledge as possible about a work, and concluded that whilst "No sketch, no 'compositional intention,' however convincing, can be considered definitive for an

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[107] Gustav Nottebohm, *Ein Skizzenbuch von Beethoven* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1865); *Ein Skizzenbuch von Beethoven aus dem Jahre 1803* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1880). See also Friedemann Sallis, *Music Sketches* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 15-17, 21-23 on aspects of sketch study in the nineteenth century before Nottebohm. Earlier surviving sketch materials are surveyed in Robert Lewis Marshall, *The Compositional Process of J.S. Bach: A Study of the Autograph Scores of the Vocal Works*, two volumes (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972) and Jessie Ann Owens, *Composers at Work: The Craft of Musical Composition, 1450-1600* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

[108] See Sallis, *Music Sketches,* pp. 8-9.

[109] *Ludwig van Beethoven Autograph Miscellany from circa 1768 to 1799: British Museum Additional Manuscript 29801 (The "Kafka Sketchbook")*, two volumes, edited Joseph Kerman (London: British Museum, 1970).

[110] Joseph Kerman, "Beethoven Sketchbooks in the British Museum," *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*, 93rd Sess. (1966-67), p. 93.

[111] Lewis Lockwood, "On Beethoven's Sketches and Autographs: Some Problems of Definition and Interpretation," *Acta Musicologica*, 42/1-2, Special Issue. Preliminary Papers of the Colloque at Saint-Germain-en-Laye (September 1970) (Jan-June 1970), p. 36. Lockwood nonetheless somewhat backtracked by going on to argue that "what is in the "autograph" is, in effect, a series of "sketches" (ibid., p. 40).

[112] Ibid., p. 41.

[113] Philip Gossett's "Beethoven's Sixth Symphony: Sketches for the First Movement," *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 27/2 (Summer 1974), pp. 248-284.

[114] The original essay was published in *Sewanee Review* 54 (1946), pp. 468-488, and is probably best known in the context of William Wimsatt, *The Verbal Icon: Studies in the Meaning of Poetry* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1954), pp. 3-18.

[115] Gossett, "Beethoven's Sixth Symphony," pp. 261. See pp. 261-268 for different categories of information that Gossett believes can be discerned from sketch material.

analysis"; nonetheless, those who ignore the evidence available in sketchbooks are "no less parochial than the worst offender against the 'intentional fallacy.'"[116]

Douglas Johnson, in a more detailed consideration of historical Beethoven sketch study, argued that the Wimsatt/Beardsley-style position—whereby sketches belong to the realms of biography rather than analysis—was already implicit in Nottebohm,[117] and denied that there was "any single important analytical insight derived from sketches" that had become common knowledge.[118] In particular, Johnson suggested that Gossett's "conceptual" notion of sketches providing "evidence for compositional intent behind relationships that seem remote in the piece"[119] was to "reverse the compositional process and substitute the sketches for the work—in short, to contradict his [Beethoven's] intentions."[120] Johnson's rather caustic view provoked defenses of sketch study from Sieghard Brandenburg and William Drabkin, the former arguing that Johnson's conclusions emerged from his own subjective priorities, suggesting that these involved a formalist bias and conception of "absolute music" that ruthlessly separated biography and analysis, and allowed for little consideration of extra-musical factors (which can exceed the boundaries of formal analysis) such as might be illuminated through the sketches,[121] whilst the latter suggested that too few proper analysts had spent time with Beethoven's sketches, and that sketch study was valuable when looking at works not merely in isolation, but also in the context of other works comparable in terms of period, style, or genre. However, Drabkin also argued that where an analytical idea was suggested by the sketches, then one should credit the latter "with the insight they afford,"[122] thus granting a priori weight to that which can be shown to be intentional on the part of the composer.[123] In an article soon afterwards, Drabkin argued further that sketches enabled some type of

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[116] Ibid., p. 280.

[117] Douglas Johnson, "Beethoven Scholars and Beethoven's Sketches," *19th-Century Music* 2/1 (1978), pp. 4-5. Johnson quotes Nottebohm's formulation that "The sketches do not reveal the law by which Beethoven was governed while creating. They can provide no conception of the idea that emerges only in the work of art itself; they reveal to us not the entire creative process, but only single isolated incidents from it. What we term the organic development of a work of art is far removed from the sketches" (Gustav Nottebohm, *Zweite Beethoveniana* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1887), pp. viii-ix, as cited and translated in Johnson, "Scholars/Sketches," p. 5). Johnson is quite deeply hostile towards Gossett, quoting four paragraphs from his article, followed by a comment saying "One hopes the tedium is not the message" (Johnson, "Scholars/Sketches," p. 17).

[118] Johnson, "Scholars/Sketches," p. 13.

[119] Gossett, "Beethoven's Sixth Symphony," p. 268.

[120] Johnson, "Scholars/Sketches," p. 16. Johnson would return to this issue, from a similar viewpoint, in a much later article, "Deconstructing Beethoven's Sketchbooks," in Sieghard Brandenburg, ed., *Haydn, Mozart & Beethoven: Studies in the Music of the Classical Period. Essays in Honour of Alan Tyson* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), pp. 225-235, in which he observed that whilst Nottebohm warned about the difficulties of reconstructing the compositional process from sources that had been modified, the real question needing to be asked was why the compositional process should be reconstructed at all.

[121] Sieghard Brandenburg, William Drabkin and Douglas Johnson, "On Beethoven Scholars and Beethoven's Sketches," *19th-Century Music*, 2/3 (March 1979), pp. 270-273. Johnson had no problem maintaining that he prefers "to approach works from within" (ibid., p. 278).

[122] Ibid., pp. 274-275.

[123] Johnson himself responded to say that his tale "has wagged a dogma of some sort" and that "the musical significance of the sketches—has never been spelled out in very precise language," and made a strong alternative case for the work-immanent (but sketch-free) approach of Charles Rosen that Drabkin had paradoxically used to back up an observation derived from the sketches (ibid., pp. 275-276).

fusion of purely biographical and purely analytical approaches.[124] A few years later, Joseph Kerman rounded off this phase of the debate with a vigorous defense of sketch study—and other issues such as text-setting, references, social and cultural context, and in particular *intention*—against Johnson and others involved with "the currently overrated discipline of analysis,"[125] in line with Kerman's wider project, articulated in his book published three years later,[126] of dethroning various aspects of established musicology. Nonetheless, some notes of caution were sounded by various subsequent scholars of the "creative process" regarding the limitations of what sketches can reveal.[127]

Kerman had reduced the issue of the value or otherwise of sketch studies to a combat between contextual and purely work-immanent musicology (the latter mirroring the tradition of Anglo-American literary "New Criticism" from which Wimsatt and Beardsley came). But the sketches debate in the context of twentieth-century music took both a more muted and modest form. From the earliest days of dodecaphonic composition, a mode of writing conflating exegesis of compositional processes with musical analysis had emerged;[128] important early texts would include Erwin Stein's 1924 article on Schoenberg's dodecaphony and Felix Greissle's study of Schoenberg's Wind Quintet from the following year.[129] Schoenberg's comment to Rudolf Kolisch in 1932 on how he wrote "twelve-note *compositions*" not "*twelve-note* compositions'[130] (later echoed by Hans Heinz Stuckenschmidt)[131] does not seem to have stemmed the flow of analyses founded most fundamentally upon compositional process; in the post-1945 era[132] this was found in the work of René Leibowitz,[133] Josef Rufer,[134] Luigi Rognoni,[135] and the journal

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[124] William Drabkin, "Beethoven's Sketches and the Thematic Process," *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association* 105 (1978-79), p. 25.

[125] Joseph Kerman, "Sketch Studies," *19th-Century Music*, 6/2 (Autumn 1982), pp. 174-80.

[126] Joseph Kerman, *Contemplating Music: Challenges to Musicology* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985).

[127] See for example Barry Cooper, *Beethoven and the Creative Process* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), pp. 9-14.

[128] Giselher Schubert and Friedemann Sallis argue that this attitude is to be found in the work of Heinrich Schenker, August Halm and Ernst Kurth (thus around a similar time, though not in connection with dodecaphonic music). See Schubert and Sallis, "Sketches and sketching," in Hall and Sallis, *A Handbook to Twentieth-Century Musical Sketches*, p. 6.

[129] Erwin Stein, "Neue Formenprinzipien," in special issue of *Musikblätter des Anbruch*, 6/special issue (August/September 1924), *Arnold Schönberg zum fünfzigsten Geburtstag*, pp. 286-303; English translation, "New Formal Principles," in Stein, *Orpheus in New Guises*, translated Hans Keller (London: Rockliff, 1953), pp. 57-77. Felix Greissle, "Die formale Grundlagen des Bläserquintette von Arnold Schönberg," *Musikblätter des Anbruch*, 7/2 (February 1925), pp. 63-68.

[130] Schoenberg to Kolisch, July 27, 1932, in Arnold Schoenberg, *Letters*, edited Erwin Stein, translated Eithne Wilkins and Ernst Kaiser (London: Faber & Faber, 1964), pp. 164-165.

[131] Hans Heinz Stuckenschmidt, *Arnold Schoenberg: His Life, World and Work*, translated Humphrey Searle (London: John Calder, 1977), pp. 348-349.

[132] This tendency was observed in Edward T. Cone, "Beyond Analysis," *Perspectives of New Music*, Vol. 6/1 (Autumn-Winter, 1967), pp. 33-35.

[133] René Leibowitz, *Schönberg et son école: l'étape contemporaine du langage musical* (Paris: J.B. Janin, 1949)/*Schoenberg and his School: The Contemporary Stage in the Language of Music*, translated Dika Newlin (New York: Philosophical Library, 1949), especially pp. 102-114, 120-124, 158-160, 168-182, 233-251; *Qu'est-ce que la musique de douze sons? Le Concerto pour neuf instruments, op. 24, d'Anton Webern* (Liège: Editions Dynamo, 1948); *Introduction à la musique de douze sons: Les variations pour orchestre op. 31, d'Arnold Schoenberg* (Paris: L'Arche, 1949).

Die Reihe.[136] A body of American work in this tradition was inaugurated by Milton Babbitt with a series of articles in the early 1960s,[137] which then extended or developed in varying ways in some of the work of David Lewin, George Perle, Peter Westergaard and others; here one started to encounter a more independent critical method, even when purporting to explain the compositional process. In this work, it becomes clearer how a purely *technical* analysis by no means necessarily implied a deference to compositional *intention* (some technical matters discerned in the working of the music might not have been consciously designed by the composer, or reflect their working processes). In this context, it is not difficult to understand the associated debate about the value of compositional intention that was waged in the late 1970s between high formalist Allen Forte and Richard Taruskin, scourge of dodecaphony/serialism, with the latter appealing to external corroboration (including intentional matters) as a way beyond Forte's purportedly self-confirming readings of Stravinsky's *Le sacre du printemps*, that nonetheless made extensive reference to Stravinsky's then recently-published sketchbooks.[138] Forte was certainly interested in the creative process and in historicizing it by relating Stravinsky's harmonic language to that of other radical composers of the time. However, he did not provide a wider framework of evidence in order to contextualize the sketches. To Taruskin, Forte's approach to sketch study was just as formalist as any approach to completed scores.

With the gradual availability of composers' materials to writers, the approach to analysis founded upon compositional technique took on new dimensions; in 1936 Willi Reich based his theory that the whole of Berg's *Lulu* was derived from a single twelve-tone row from manuscript materials provided to him by the composer,[139] and in a later monograph on the composer proudly announced that he had "only used texts that were

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[134] Josef Rufer, *Die Komposition mit Zwölf Töne* (Berlin & Wunsiedel: Max Hesses Verlag, 1952)/*Composition with Twelve Tones related only to one another*, translated Humphrey Searle (New York: Macmillan, 1954).

[135] Luigi Rognoni, *La scuola musicale di Vienna. Espressionismo e dodecafonia* (Turin: Einaudi, 1966)/*The Second Vienna School: Expressionism and Dodecaphony*, translated R.W. Mann (London: John Calder, 1977).

[136] Especially *Die Reihe II: Anton Webern* (Vienna: Universal Edition, 1955).

[137] Milton Babbitt, "Twelve-Tone Invariants as Compositional Determinants," *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol, 46, No. 2 (April 1960), pp. 246-59; and "Set Structure as a Compositional Determinant," *Journal of Music Theory*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Spring 1961), pp. 72-94; both reprinted in Stephen Peles, Stephen Dembski, Andrew Mead, and Joseph N. Straus, eds., *The Collected Essays of Milton Babbitt* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), pp. 55-69 and 86-108. See also Dave Headlam, "Sketch Study and Analysis: Berg's Twelve-Tone Music," *College Music Symposium*, Vol. 33/34 (1993/1994), pp. 157-158.

[138] Taruskin's review of Forte's *The Harmonic Organization of the Rite of Spring* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1978), which initiated this debate, appeared in *Current Musicology* 28 (1979), pp. 114-29. It later continued with an exchange between the two in Forte, "Pitch-Class Set Analysis Today," *Music Analysis* 4 (1985), pp. 36-37; Taruskin, "Letter to the editor, " *Music Analysis* 5 (1986), pp. 313-320, and Forte "Letter to the Editor in Reply to Richard Taruskin from Allen Forte," ibid., pp. 321-337. See Ethan Haimo, "Atonality, Analysis, and the Intentional Fallacy," *Music Theory Spectrum*, 18/2 (Autumn 1996), pp. 167-168, 176-180, on this debate and associated issues, and also Sallis, *Music Sketches*, pp. 164-173 for more detail, in a summary heavily weighted towards Taruskin and against Forte.

[139] Willi Reich, "Alban Berg's *Lulu*," translated M.D. Herter Norton, *The Musical Quarterly*, 22/4 (October 1936), pp. 383-401.

written by the composer himself" so as to be able to claim "complete authenticity."[140] As George Perle and later Patricia Hall have amply demonstrated, Reich's claims were deeply flawed, as Berg had only provided him with a very partial account of his processes, which Reich was happy to take at face value.[141] This amounted to a criticism of excessive reliance on a limited amount of material, rather than of the practice of using sketch material and composers' testimony per se.

Douglas Jarman argued in 1979, at around the time of the Gosset/Johnson/etc. debate, that such matters as row derivations are irrelevant if not directly projected on the musical surface.[142] This type of question re-surfaced in 1989, when Matthew Brown and Douglas J. Dempster took up again aspects of the earlier Forte/Taruskin interchange. Brown and Dempster agreed with the need of corroboration in order to externally confirm the validity of particular analytical methods, but did not believe sketches (or information on style or historical background) could provide this, not least owing to the intentional fallacy.[143] Taruskin's response insisted that he had not mentioned sketches, and that he found them of value only to test empirical statements, not theoretical ones.[144]

Dave Headlam took up the date in the context of Berg's music in the early 1990s, outlining a series of *pro* and *contra* arguments for sketch study on the basis of earlier debates.[145] Headlam accounted for an increased prominence of sketch study in the analysis of twelve-tone music on the grounds that it enabled clearer identification of rows, order positions, and so on, citing work of Martha Hyde on Schoenberg[146] as an example of compositional analysis based upon the composer's own indications derived from sketches; Headlam located this work in the tradition coming from Babbitt (in terms of the centrality of precompositional row arrangements).[147] Examining some of the character rows in *Lulu* (using such techniques as extractions of every third or seventh note from a basic row), Headlam concluded that sketches could help to explain some invariances uncovered by analysis, or at least could inform theories about relationships between materials,[148] and so argued for a limited acceptance of some of Gosset's model,

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[140] Willi Reich, *The Life and Work of Alban Berg*, translated Cornelius Cardew (London, 1965), pp. 7-8; also cited in Patricia Hall, *A View of Berg's Lulu through the Autograph Sources* (Berkeley, Los Angeles & London;: University of California Press, 1996), p. 2.

[141] See George Perle, "The Music of *Lulu*: A New Analysis," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 12 (Summer-Autumn 1959), pp. 185-200; and Hall, *A View of Berg's Lulu*, pp. 2-3.

[142] Douglas Jarman, *The Music of Alban Berg* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), p. 125, cited in Headlam, "Sketch Study and Analysis," p. 160.

[143] Matthew Brown and Douglas J. Dempster, "The Scientific Image of Music Theory," *Journal of Music Theory*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (Spring 1989), pp. 84-7.

[144] Richard Taruskin, "Reply to Brown and Dempster," *Journal of Music Theory*, 33/1 (Spring 1989), p. 156.

[145] Headlam, "Sketch Study and Analysis," pp. 155-157.

[146] Martha Hyde, "Schoenberg's Concept of Multi-dimensional Twelve-Tone Music: A Theoretical Study of the Music and Compositional Sketches" (PhD dissertation, Yale University, 1977).

[147] Headlam cites the Babbitt essays mentioned above. See Headlam, "Sketch Study and Analysis," pp. 157-158.

[148] Headlam, "Sketch Study and Analysis," pp. 160-163. Furthermore, Headlam deftly cites the Berg Violin Concerto as a piece that—because of its tonal and atonal elements (as can be found in the sketches), and relationships between the two—resists conventional approaches to analytical interpretation (ibid., pp. 163-171).

diminishing the relevance of the "conceptual" use of sketches,[149] as had Johnson. Patricia Hall, writing a few years later, took a different view, which I believe shares many assumptions with those undertaking sketch study of more recent music including Ferneyhough: looking at sketches for works of Beethoven and Hugo Wolf, Hall found these could help to explain how the composers arrived at things that are ambiguous in terms of their function in the final works.[150] Applying this to Berg, she wrote:

> In Berg's serial music (and undoubtedly in much twentieth-century music) we come to realize, ironically, that while everything *is* in the printed score, we often fail to perceive or understand its organization. Lost in the complexity of Berg's writing, with its multiple layers, innate dramatic symbolism, and extended twelve-tone techniques, we find in the sketches a mundane but essential road map. Thus, the problem is often one of perception: properties of Berg's music that may be difficult to recognize in the finished score suddenly become obvious when laid out in a sketch.[151]

But this view (like various of those that preceded it) takes analysis further away from sounding result and more in the direction of compositional process (the "properties" she describes belong exclusively in the latter category). Above all, it remains blind to the possibility that the properties of the final work might be relatively independent of the sketches, and there might be more (maybe much more) to "recognize" about this work (let alone the possibilities for perception for those who are not expert Berg scholars) than simply how it was created and willed by Berg.

In a 1996 article, Ethan Haimo provided the most detailed consideration of the "intentional fallacy" to date, first through a brief summary of the earlier debates,[152] then by arguing that literature written in response to Wimsatt and Beardsley demonstrated no consensus that this was indeed a fallacy, and that it was indeed still intensely contested.[153] Haimo clearly distinguished between statements about how a work is put together (compositional process) and relationships that can be perceived (which I would argue constitutes analysis), the former requiring documentary or stylistic support (though this can be ambiguous), the latter making no claims in terms of conscious design on the part of the composer and deducible solely from the score;[154] he would conclude that Forte's work did not satisfy either of these categories.[155] Haimo concluded that an analytical method that draws upon what is known about a composer's compositional thought, but

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[149] Ibid., p. 171. Headlam's conclusion was that "Sketches may prove useful for analysts when used in controlled situations after thorough analysis, but the conceptual and musical distance that separates the sketch from the finished piece should not be underestimated."

[150] Hall, *A View of Berg's Lulu*, pp. 2-12, citing Carl Schachter, "Beethoven's Sketches for the First Movement of Op. 14 No. 1: A Study in Design," *Journal of Music Theory*, 26/1 (Spring 1982), pp. 1-21; Hans Eppstein, "Zu Hugo Wolfs Liedskizze," *Österreichische Musikzeitschrift*, 39/12 (1984), pp. 645-646; and Susan Youens, "The Song Sketches of Hugo Wolf," *Current Musicology* 44 (1990), pp. 5-37. Hall alludes briefly to the points made earlier by Johnson.

[151] Hall, *A View of Berg's Lulu*, p. 12.

[152] Haimo, "Atonality, Analysis, and the Intentional Fallacy," pp. 167-168.

[153] Ibid., p. 177. Amongst the literature Haimo cites is E.D. Hirsch, Jr., *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1967), and the collection of writings edited by David Newton-de Molina, *On Literary Intention* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1976).

[154] Haimo, "Atonality, Analysis, and the Intentional Fallacy," pp. 177-180.

[155] Ibid., pp. 180-191.

then proceeds by examination of the finished result, would be most desirable.[156] But at the same time as Haimo published his findings, it was still perfectly possible for László Somfai to ignore most of such critical methodology in his monograph on Bartók,[157] which was heavily dominated by the more familiar approach to sketch study and other aspects of the compositional process (except for a section on Bartók's own recordings).

Despite his earlier resort to compositional intention in opposition to Forte, one person who took an extremely different view not only from Hall, but also Jarman, Brown, Dempster, and Headlam, was Richard Taruskin, in a now somewhat notorious 2004 review-essay on a book by Allen Shawm on Schoenberg.[158] Taruskin moved from "intentional" to "poietic" fallacy, in order to criticize a mode of analysis more concerned with how a work was made than how it might appear to listeners, and an associated discourse that values the elucidation of technical innovation above other critical approaches.[159] This echoed many earlier comments by Eric Sams, who when reviewing a sketch-oriented dissertation on Schumann's *Dichterliebe* by Rufus Hallmark[160] had argued acerbically that "If art is essentially expression or communication, then commentary had better concentrate on what comes out, not what went in."[161] Some benefits of such an approach have reasonably been pointed out by Friedemann Sallis (who argues that aesthetics and compositional process are often more interdependent than sometimes imagined, especially in the nineteenth-century),[162] but not to my mind in such a way as to wholly dampen criticism of study where this approach is utterly dominant.

An important collection of essays on sketch study also published in 2004[163] focused, in those places dealing with methodology, overwhelmingly upon pragmatic questions, the "how" rather than the "why," whilst the editors (one of whom was Patricia Hall again) described Johnson's argument contemptuously as "tinged with that naivety we often attribute to ideas from another age," citing a comment from Gianmario Borio on

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[156] Ibid., pp. 198-199.

[157] László Somfai, *Béla Bartók: Composition, Concepts, and Autograph Sources* (Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press, 1996).

[158] Richard Taruskin, "The Poietic Fallacy" (review of Allan Shawm, *Arnold Schoenberg's Musical Journey*), *The Musical Times*, 145/1886 (Spring 2004), pp. 7-34. Reprinted in Taruskin, *The Danger of Music and Other Anti-Utopian Essays* (Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press, 2009), pp. 301-29.

[159] Taruskin, "The Poietic Fallacy," pp. 10-12. One response to Taruskin from Michael Graubart rightly pointed out that some muddled phrases masked the fact that Shawm was imploring listeners to get away from worrying too much about serial manipulations when listening to the music. See Michael Graubart, "Fallacies and Confusions," *The Musical Times*, 145/1888 (Autumn 2004), pp. 19-24. Taruskin cited this dismissively, without addressing its arguments, in his afterword in *The Danger of Music*, p. 329.

[160] Rufus Hallmark, "The Genesis of *Dichterliebe*: A Source Study" (PhD dissertation, Princeton University, 1975).

[161] Eric Sams, review of Rufus Hallmark, *The Genesis of Schumann's Dichterliebe* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1979), *The Musical Times*, 122/1660 (June 1981), p. 382; also cited in Kerman, "Sketch Studies," p. 177. Kerman also quotes Leonard B. Meyer denying that tracing the genesis of a musical idea or work is not a substitute for serious analytic criticism (ibid., pp. 177-178, citing Meyer, *Explaining Music* (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1973), pp. 78-79).

[162] Sallis, *Music Sketches,* pp. 4-5. Sallis is particularly keen to point out the extent to which life and work were intimately intertwined in the case of composers such as Berlioz and Schumann, but this really amounts to a token nod in the direction of critical scholarship on musical biography, which needs better fleshing out.

[163] Hall and Sallis, *A Handbook to Twentieth-Century Musical Sketches*. Ross Feller's essay in this collection has already been mentioned.

sketches supposedly providing the only criteria for making an analytic hypothesis plausible.[164] Statements of unquestioning faith in the value of sketches and manuscript materials in order to discern "the essence of a musical work's contents', as found in the work of Heinrich Schenker, August Halm and Ernst Kurth, were provided by Giselher Schubert and Friedemann Sallis,[165] whilst in one especially starry-eyed piece of writing, Tomi Mäkelä held up the study of the creative process and the use of sketches for Stravinsky's works as part of a "*poietic* perspective" that he viewed much more favourably than Taruskin.[166] Similarly, Joseph Auner responded to Taruskin by attempting to dramatize the creative process (also alluding to Somfai), concluding that there was a "poietic imperative" involved in engagement with Schoenberg.[167]

By this stage, few writers dealing with composers' sketches seemed particularly concerned about the problematic nature of intention, and the compositional process remained central to a range of studies relating to new music. William Kinderman only makes a token mention of the earlier debate at the beginning of his wide-ranging study of the creative process, which extends to György Kurtág's *Kafka Fragments* and *Hommage à R. Sch*;[168] though elsewhere he does take a balanced view in calling for the integration of sketch study and musical analysis so that each can inform the other.[169] Thomas

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[164] Friedemann Sallis and Patricia Hall, "Introduction," ibid., p. 4. The authors write that Borio "has noted that Johnson's fallacious argument is based on a belief in the thaumaturgical power of musical analysis to read the structure of a given work as though it were transparent in the published score" (Gianmario Borio, "Sull'interzaione fra lo studio degli schizzi e l'analisi dell'opera," in Borio, Giovanni Morelli, and Veniero Rizzardi, eds., *La nuova ricerca sull'opera di Luigi Nono* (Venice: Leo S. Olschki, 1999), p. 3, cited ibid., p. 221 n. 8; see also Sallis, "Segmenting the labyrinth: sketch studies and the *Scala Enigmatica* in the Finale of Luigi Nono's *Quando stanno morendo. Diario Polacco n. 2* (1982)," *Ex tempore*, 13/1 (Spring-Summer 2006), p. 1 for a further iteration of Borio's claim). Other essays in this collection deal with "Preliminaries before visiting an archive," "Archival etiquette," "Coming to terms with the composer's working manuscripts," "Digital preservation of archival material," "Transcribing sketches," and so on; all important questions for those engaged in sketch study, for sure, but all resting upon the assumption that sketch study itself is the most valuable approach to take.

[165] Giselher Schubert and Friedemann Sallis, "Sketches and sketching," in Hall and Sallis, *A Handbook to Twentieth-Century Musical Sketches*, p. 6. They also argue for the importance of the work of Paul Mies on Beethoven in leading to "a better understanding of the composer's style" (ibid).

[166] See Tomi Mäkelä, "Defining compositional process: idea and instrumentation in Igor Stravinsky's *Ragtime* (1918) and *Pribaoutki* (1915)," in Hall and Sallis, *A Handbook to Twentieth-Century Musical Sketches*, pp. 131-133. Mäkelä argues that such a perspective "may well lead to a demythologised vision of art and to a decentring of the completed work as the authoritative object of study. The lessening of respectful interest in the works of the great masters will, however, be counterbalanced by increased respect for creative activity *per se*. The 'great works of music history' will be understood less as museum pieces and more as artefactual experiments with sound, undertaken as solutions which were being sought to specific compositional problems or subjectively inspired on the whim of a moment" (p. 133). In opposing this approach to a straw man caricature of a "museum piece" mode of work-immanent analysis (which stands oddly alongside his talk on the same page of "master individualists like Stravinsky"), he omits to consider how a fetish of compositional process can result in little or no consideration of the works as sound.

[167] Joseph Auner, "Composing on Stage: Schoenberg and the Creative Process," *19th-Century Music*, 29/1 (Summer 2005), pp. 64-93.

[168] William Kinderman, *The Creative Process in Music from Mozart to Kurtág* (Urbana, Chicago and Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2012).

[169] William Kinderman, "Introduction," in Kinderman and Joseph E. Jones, eds., *Genetic Criticism and the Creative Process: Essays from Music, Literature, and Theater* (Rochester and Suffolk: University of Rochester Press and Boydell and Brewster, 2009), p. 7, as cited in Sallis, *Music Sketches*, p. 11.

Schuttenheim's study of Tippett's orchestral music is similarly tokenistic,[170] whilst the idea that sketch study forms a central part of understanding of a work underlies the publication of a range of sketch facsimiles, many of them drawing upon materials in the Paul Sacher Stiftung, relating to music of Stravinsky, Boulez, and others.[171] A recent book on musical sketches states baldly, with reference to a study of Bruno Maderna's *Quartetto per archi in due tempi* (1955), that "Without knowledge of both sides of the creative process, a thorough analysis of the completed work would be impossible"[172] (which implies that such an analysis would be impossible where sketch material or other evidence of the creative process does not exist or has not survived).

There are however a few writers sympathetic to sketch study who have maintained some healthy scepticism towards such attitudes. Even Sieghard Brandenburg had conceded there was value in Johnson's "dispelling the naïve hope that a mass of associated sketches, transcribed and described, could be taken as an analysis,"[173] and more recently Rachel Beckles Willson has asserted (in a rather sweeping fashion) that "much of the compositional process cannot be traced in the manuscript sources, and even what is available can only rarely tell us much about a finished piece."[174]

If these sorts of considerations were mostly absent from much of the work on sketches of twentieth-century music mentioned above, even less has filtered through to Ferneyhough scholarship. In an interview with James Boros, conducted in 1992, Boros commented that he had "yet to read an analysis of one of your works which is based only on what one hears, or what one sees in the score, without resort to sketch materials" (Boros had clearly not at that stage read the work of Reynolds, Barry, or Feller), to which Ferneyhough replied:

> There is a problem common to most ventures of that sort, which, in the analysis course I have lately been teaching, I term "appropriateness." How does one ascertain with a reasonable degree of assurance what is a relevant way of approaching an unfamiliar work? Sometimes general stylistic attributes suffice to locate a piece and its concerns, at other times we can refer to the place the work occupies in the creative career of the composer, thus inferring something with respect to concerns and aesthetic priorities; on

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[170] Thomas Schuttenheim, *The Orchestral Music of Michael Tippett: Creative Development and the Compositional Process* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

[171] Such as Hermann Danuser, Felix Meyer, and Ulrich Mosch, eds., *Igor Strawinsky. Trois pieces pour quatuor à cordes. Sketches, versions, documents, essays* (Basel: Paul Sacher Stiftung, 1994); Maureen Carr, ed., *Stravinsky's Histoire du soldat: A Facsimile of the Sketches* (Middleton, WI: A-R Editions, 2005) and *Stravinsky's Pulcinella: A Facsimile of the Sources and Sketches* (Middleton, WI: A-R Editions, 2010); Felix Meyer, ed., *Béla Bartók. Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta. Facsimile of the autograph score and sketches* (Basel: Paul Sacher Stiftung, 2000); Pascal Decroupet, ed., *Pierre Boulez. Le Marteau sans maître. Facsimile of the draft score and the first fair copy of the full score* (Mainz: Schott & Sons, 2005); Robert Piencikowski, ed., *Pierre Boulez. Tombeau. Facsimiles of the draft score and the first fair copy of the full score* (Vienna, London and New York: Universal Edition, 2010)

[172] Sallis, *Music Sketches*, p. 161, referencing Christoph Neidhöfer, "Vers un principe commun: integration de la hauteur et du rythme dans le *Quartetto per archi in due tempi* (1955)," translated Delphine Iacono, in Geneviève Mathon, Laurent Feneyrou, and Giordano Ferrari, eds., *À Bruno Maderna* (Paris; Basalte, 2009), Vol. 2, pp. 323-58. Sallis does rather contradict himself in the next sentence when he says "The study of a composer's working documents is not necessary for every analysis of music and of course sketch studies should not be seen as a pancea" (Sallis, *Music Sketches*, p. 161).

[173] Brandenburg et al, "On Beethoven Scholars and Beethoven's Sketches," p. 271.

[174] Rachel Beckles Willson, "Music theory and analysis," in J.P.E. Harper-Scott and Jim Samson, eds., *An Introduction to Music Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 28.

> still other occasions the nature of the processes visibly/audibly at work permit a certain amount of legitimate extrapolative speculation.
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> […]A "free" analytical discourse on and around a piece needs, in my view, to take account of the entire available work-process, by which I don't (necessarily) mean privileged access to the composer's workshop, but the chain from score image through various stages of the interpretational process right up until the act of reception itself. Anything less than that is not likely to be much more substantial than the averagely ephemeral newspaper review.[175]

Nonetheless, very few writings on Ferneyhough take much account of the "various stages of the interpretational process" (including such things as Paul Archbold's video on the Arditti Quartet learning the Sixth String Quartet (2010),[176] which merely documents very basic pragmatic factors with little thought towards stylistic or interpretational issues, let alone any critical thinking about the relationship between composer and performer), whilst only Hawkins (of all writings I have encountered) considers the reception. Instead, compositional process is generally utterly dominant, certainly in the analytical work of Melchiorre, Toop, Cordula Pätzold, Lois Fitch and to some extent Klaus Lippe (see below on the latter three of these), in a manner oblivious to any consideration of intentional or poietic fallacies.

It should not be surprising when composers declare that any other set of priorities about their music other than their own, or any analysis proceeding from such premises, are "ephemeral" (it is not difficult to imagine an explosive reaction from Ferneyhough were some of his work to be analyzed in terms of historically gendered gestural tropes, and conclusions drawn about the gender ideologies that might be contained therein), but that does not mean that independently minded writers need restrict their discourse to that ordained by the composer. One of the few who does not, and one of the only writers to sound a note of caution about reliance upon sketches for analysis in the context of Ferneyhough, is Ross Feller, who writes in his dissertation of how "many have mistakenly equated the score with 'the music.'"

> First, theorists have traditionally granted pre-compositional sketches an overinflated status in their analyses. Usually this is done because the composers which they study are unavailable for comment, i.e. they're dead. Also many theorists mistakenly believe that they are merely "reconstructing" the piece, facilitated by access to the composer's pre-compositional sketches. Rather than write about the larger concerns which surround the composition, some of which may be highly speculative in nature, their analyses generally proceed in a safe, descriptive manner only. Thus the sketches are used as proof that a certain G was actually intended to be a part of the composition. My contention is that pre-compositional sketches are valuable for certain kinds of analysis but not necessarily so for other types. Pre-compositional sketches are not the primary documents which they are presumed to be. They are not sites and scores are not nonsites. Both are nonsites

[175] Ferneyhough, interview with James Boros (1992), in *Collected Writings*, pp. 434-435.

[176] "Climbing a Mountain: Arditti Quartet rehearse Brian Ferneyhough's 'String Quartet no. 6'," at http://www.sas.ac.uk/videos-and-podcasts/music/climbing-mountain-arditti-quartet-rehearse-brian-ferneyhough-string-quartet (accessed Aug. 2, 2015). For a written version of this and overview of the project, see Paul Archbold, "Performing Complexity: a pedagogical resource tracing the Arditti Quartet's preparations for the première of Brian Ferneyhough *Sixth String Quartet*," at http://events.sas.ac.uk/uploads/media/Arditti_Ferneyhough_project_documentation.pdf (accessed Aug. 3, 2015).

> because the site of a musical work is ephemeral, it can only be discerned through nonsite materials. Second, my analysis is concerned with phenomenological relationships which can be inferred from the published score. […] Ferneyhough's relationship to his own pre-compositional sketches clearly demonstrates that after they produce a given musical structure they are important to him only as pedagogical devices […] I am fully aware that Ferneyhough has questioned the validity of analysing compositions without consulting their pre-compositional sketches. He has stated that there are problems common to studies of this sort, asking "how does one ascertain with a reasonable degree of assurance what is a relevant way of approaching an unfamiliar work?" (Boros forthcoming). Some possible answers to his question have already been posited in this paragraph. Additionally, I would add that an analyst can determine relevant ways of approaching unfamiliar works by consulting other works by the composer or pieces within the same stylistic framework. Another way of doing this is to utilize a conceptual framework (e.g. semiotics) which systematically pokes at the unfamiliar work. The word "relevant" in Ferneyhough's question is a Minotaur, contained within a labyrinth of relationships which may, or may not, include pre-compositional sketches.[177]

Jan Hemming (see below), in a notable dissertation on the Third String Quartet[178] written a year after that of Feller, also took a more nuanced view when briefly incorporating into his work some consideration of the role played by that portion of sketch material presented in Ferneyhough's own article on the Second Quartet.[179] He notes how this commentary of Ferneyhough differs from many others' analyses in starting with an investigation of the gestural surface and only later on evoking the sketches, in order to enable some type of a synthesis.[180] Guided by Ferneyhough's explicit identification of three "axial tones" (G, E, C and G#) during a particular passage, Hemming painstakingly creates a table of pitch classes identified according to a 24-tone Allen Fortean system (which does not illuminate anything that simple naming of the pitches would not accomplish more effectively) that reveals a predominance of Gs and Cs in the cello part of one bar (111) of the work.[181] One might thus deduce some degree of tonal centring in that one bar, but this would really need to be offset by what is going on in the other three instruments at the same time, especially as the tessitura of the parts overlaps. Hemming, however, simply concludes that Ferneyhough's own design principles are not applied in a rigid manner, which at least illuminates the dangers in placing too much store in the sketches rather than the realization.

One other writer who takes a more imaginative approach to sketch study is Jean-Pascal Chaigne,[182] who bases a whole article on one page of sketch material for *Kurze Schatten II* (1983-89), wittily dramatizing a process with which many a sketch scholar is familiar, of looking here and there to try and match up a page of sketch with some known piece and section therein. Chaigne also, however, manages to find some conceptual relationship with the earlier *Lemma-Icon-Epigram* from the nature of the sketch page,

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[177] Feller, "Multicursal Labyrinths," pp. 91-93.
[178] Jan Hemming, "Das dritte Streichquartett von Brian Ferneyhough: Voraussetzungslosigkeit oder Geschichtsbezug?" (Magisterarbeit: Technische Universität Berlin, 1995).
[179] Brian Ferneyhough, "Second String Quartet (1982)," in *Collected Writings*, pp. 117-130.
[180] Hemming, "Das dritte Streichquartett von Brian Ferneyhough," p. 42.
[181] Ibid., pp. 69-72.
[182] Jean-Pascal Chaigne, "Une esquisse de Brian Ferneyhough," in *Musicorum numéro de 2003* (Tours: Presses Universitaires, François Rabelais, 2004), pp. 133-152.

and goes on to give a most vivid account of what appear to have been Ferneyhough's numerous choices in the course of writing the work.

Feller, Hemming, and Chaigne are exceptional; there is nothing like the debate around the ideas of Gossett and Johnson, Jarman, Headlam, and Hall, or Taruskin, Mäkelä, and Auner, in terms of Ferneyhough analysis. It is as if the majority of scholars have hardly considered any analytical alternative to simply documenting the composer's intentions and the compositional process; thus instead of attempting an interplay between analysis and sketch study, a narrow approach to the latter comes to stand entirely for the former, with the aural result fully bracketed out, or reduced to little more than a few ideal adjectives. Nowhere is this limitation more evident than in the work of Lois Fitch, as I will discuss more later.

Complexity

Naturally, Ferneyhough has featured widely in the ongoing literature and debate on "new complexity," which can be dated back to the early 1980s or possibly the late 1970s. Sources differ on when and by whom the term was coined; Hawkins cites a 1982 review by Keith Potter of an opera by Oliver Knussen;[183] Richard Toop suggests around 1980 by the composer Nigel Osborne;[184] Finnissy gives an earlier date of 1978 and attributes the term to Harry Halbreich.[185] Hawkins also notes that the term "complex" was used by various critics and writers in the 1970s to describe Ferneyhough's work in particular.[186] From this point onwards, the term gradually gained currency until the appearance of a key article by Richard Toop in 1988, which consolidated the notion of a "school" of composers (Ferneyhough, Michael Finnissy, James Dillon, Chris Dench and the younger Richard Barrett) to which this label might be applied.[187] However, Toop did not write about Ferneyhough in this article (having done so amply elsewhere), and the other composers discussed could at this point in time be said to relate more to a tradition coming from Finnissy (and Xenakis, and some others). The result was at first somewhat to marginalize from this debate figures who had studied with or whose work more

[183] Specifically a preview by Potter of the London premiere of Oliver Knussen's opera *Where the Wild things Are* (1982), in which he says that in some respects "Knussen has things in common with a very different group of English composers, who represent what might crudely be called the New Complexity: Brian Ferneyhough, Michael Finnissy, James Dillon and Chris Dench" (Keith Potter, "Wild Romantic Things," *Classical Music*, March 13, 1982, p. 17, cited in Hawkins, "(Mis)understanding Complexity," *op. cit.,* pp. 8-9).

[184] When introducing a concert of works of Dillon and Dench. See Richard Toop, "Against a Theory of Musical (New) Complexity," in Max Paddison and Iréne Deliège, eds., *Contemporary Music: Theoretical and Philosophical Perspective* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), p. 89.

[185] Michael Finnissy, "Biting the Hand that Feeds You," *Contemporary Music Review*, 21/1 (2002), p. 75.

[186] Hawkins, "(Mis)understanding Complexity," *op. cit.*, pp. 169-172. As Ulrich Mosch (in "Musikalische Komplexität," *Darmstädter Beiträge zur Neuen Musik* 20 [Mainz: Schott, 1994], pp. 122-123) points out, the differing meanings of the terms "complex" (*complexe*) and "complicated" (*compliqué*) had already been explored in the 1950s by Boris de Schloezer and Marina Scriabine (in their book *Problèmes de la musique moderne* [Paris: Minuit, 1959]), but this should be considered a distinct if not unrelated debate to that around "new complexity."

[187] Richard Toop, "Four Facets of the 'New Complexity,'" *Contact* 32 (1988), pp. 4-50. Strictly speaking, François Nicolas's article "Éloge de la complexité," *Entretemps* 3 (1987), pp. 55-68, appeared before Toop, but Nicolas does not mention the term "nouvelle complexité" and mentions no other composers as part of such a stylistic faction (even arguing that Ferneyhough had no disciples).

obviously related to that of Ferneyhough—such as Hübler, Melchiorre, Mahnkopf, Erber and Roger Redgate[188]—and to lend the term something of a British focus or bias. A series of subsequent publications in English mostly did little to shift this focus,[189] though one article by Mahnkopf in a 1990 mini-symposium in German[190] exhibited a far stronger bias towards varieties of "complexity" (or "complexism" [*Komplexismus*], to use Mahnkopf's preferred term)[191] that were identified with Ferneyhough, and themselves located by him in a particular historical tradition (specifically the *ars subtilior*, fifteenth- and sixteenth-century English vocal polyphony, Gesualdo, C.P.E. Bach, and the late contrapuntal work of his father, Beethoven's *Große Fuge*, various work of Wagner, Reger's through-composed polyphony, Ives's Fourth Symphony, much of Berg, the music of Conlon Nancarrow, and the "high moment" of serialism through works such as Stockhausen's *Gruppen* and Boulez's *Polyphonie X*).[192] An alternative (and somewhat less didactic) historicization, again much less focused upon Finnissy and after, was presented by Ulrich Mosch in 1994 (with Mosch considering how Bach's *Wohltempierten Klavier*, Cage's *Music of Changes,* and Stockhausen's *Gruppen* might all be considered to have equal [if very different claims] upon the term "complexity," then specifically identifying J.S. Bach's "Contrapunctus XII" from *Die Kunst der Fuge*, Liszt's Sonata in B minor, and B.A. Zimmermann's *Die Soldaten* as works to which the term can undoubtedly be applied, later also considering Ives's *Three Places in New England* and Nancarrow's *Study for Player Piano No. 41c*).[193]

The appearance of the volume *Uncommon Ground: The Music of Michael Finnissy* in 1998,[194] by far the most extended monograph at the time on a "complex" composer, might, however, have consolidated the central importance of a "Finnissy

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[188] Let alone where this would leave other students of Ferneyhough—such as Kaija Saariaho, Rodney Sharman, Chaya Czernowin, or Mark Applebaum—whose work is much harder to categorize as "new complexity" (though arguably Sharman's work is tangentially related to some of that of Finnissy).

[189] In particular the publication edited by Jöel Bons, *Complexity in Music? An Inquiry of its Nature, Motivation and Performability* (Amsterdam: Job, 1990), based on the eponymous symposium; the two issues of *Perspectives of New Music* centering upon "complexity," guest-edited by James Boros (31/1 [1993] and 32/1 [1994]); and the issue of *Contemporary Music Review* edited by Tom Morgan, entitled *Aspects of Complexity in Recent British Music* (13/1 [1995]). Whilst featuring a wide range of international contributors, the Bons and Boros volumes consisted in large measure of (sometimes rather vague) attempts to define what "complexity" might mean in musical terms, though the *Perspectives* issues did feature a series of articles by and interviews with Ferneyhough. Erik Ulman, writing in the second *Perspectives* issue, listed Ferneyhough, Finnissy, Dench, and Barrett as representatives of the school (Ulman, "Some Thoughts on the New Complexity," *Perspectives of New Music*, 32/1 [1994], pp. 202-206).

[190] Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf, "Kundgabe. Komplexismus und der Paradigmenwechsel in der Musik," *MusikTexte* 35 (1990), pp. 20-32. For the wider symposium, see ibid., pp. 3-40. A good deal of this issue consisted of re-prints in German of material in the Bons volume; Mahnkopf's own contribution was a significantly expanded version of his own "Complexism as a New Step in Musical Evolution," in Bons, *Complexity in Music?*, pp. 28-29.

[191] Mahnkopf here set down ten key attributes of complexism, to do with density and rapidity of events, rhythmic and pitch complexity, abundance of morphology, a high degree of dissociation in discursivity, and so on. See Mahnkopf, "Kundgabe," pp. 20-21. In 2002 he would expand this list to twelve.

[192] Mahnkopf, "Kundgabe," p. 23.

[193] Mosch, "Musikalische Komplexität," pp. 120-129.

[194] Henrietta Brougham, Christopher Fox, and Ian Pace, eds., *Uncommon Ground: The Music of Michael Finnissy* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998). My own contributions to this volume I would today characterize as rather hagiographic.

school,"[195] but the debate on "complexity" (a term with which neither Finnissy nor many of the others were particularly happy)[196] was pursued with greater enthusiasm from another aesthetic camp, in a series of further publications driven above all by Mahnkopf, from the 1998 publication of his *Kritik der neuen Musik* onwards. It may come as a surprise to English-speaking readers to hear Mahnkopf declaring here that "Brian Ferneyhough, probably the most important composer in the world, is unfailingly set aside in Germany, whilst the rest of the world has long recognised his outstanding genius."[197] But from this defensive position within German musical culture, Mahnkopf placed Ferneyhough at the end of a line from Schoenberg through Webern to Boulez,[198] and identified practically every Ferneyhough work as a "masterpiece."[199] Back at Darmstadt in 1988, there had been much talk of the notion of the "complex" composers representing the natural successors to the serialist composers of the 1950s;[200] by 1998 at the latest, Mahnkopf had set down in print the term "Second Darmstadt School" (*Zweite Darmstädter-Schule*) in this manner.[201] In 2002 he lay down an expanded definition of "complexism" (identified as one of the first most prominent musical directions at the time of writing) derived from that he had outlined in 1990, and also a canon of composers much wider than that of Toop.[202] In the same volume, Toop himself sounded rather

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[195] Especially as by this time new waves of Finnissy students, including Andrew Toovey, Morgan Hayes, Luke Stoneham, Alwynne Pritchard, Paul Steenhuisen, Thomas Désy, Matthew Shlomowitz, and later many others (particularly following Finnissy's appointment as Chair of Composition at the University of Southampton around this time) were also starting to gain some prominence; it should be noted that none of the older figures—Dillon, Dench, Barrett, or James Clarke and Richard Emsley—had actually studied with Finnissy, though some of them had had an involvement with his playing and music not least through the work of the ensembles Suoraan and Exposé. See Hawkins, "(Mis)understanding complexity," pp. 116-23, 178-90, for more on this.

[196] See Hawkins, "(Mis)understanding Complexity," pp. 112-133 for a selection of the various composers' detailed thoughts on the issue.

[197] Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf, *Kritik der neuen Musik. Entwurf einer Musik des 21. Jahrhunderts. Eine Streitschrift* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1998), p. 25.

[198] Ibid., p. 97. Here Mahnkopf also argued that despite Ferneyhough's relative indifference towards a good deal of nineteenth-century music, he was nonetheless deeply indebted to the thought of this era.

[199] Ibid., p. 98. See pp. 98-103 for Mahnkopf's overview of Ferneyhough's music and thought here.

[200] See Keith Potter, "Darmstadt 1988," *Contact* 34 (1989), p. 28. Potter singled out Ferneyhough, Dillon, Dench, and Barrett (and also some of Redgate, Erber, Emsley, and Clarke), though not Finnissy, as having been viewed by various figures present at the Darmstadt courses as "the 1980s equivalents of the 1950s serialists in their quest for a synthesis of intellectual rigour and musical forms consistent with acoustic realities."

[201] See Mahnkopf, *Kritik der neuen Musik*, p. 21, as well as Mahnkopf, "Adornos Kritik der Neuern Musik," in Richard Klein and Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf, eds., *Mit den Ohren denken. Adornos Philosophie der Musik* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1998), pp. 251-280 (quote on p. 269); and "Neue Musik am Beginn der Zweiten Moderne," *Merkur* 594/595 (1998), pp. 864-875 (quote on p. 873). In none of these articles is the term properly defined (it is used as if referring to a familiar concept from the 1980s) and Mahnkopf does not mention any other "complex" composer than Ferneyhough (whose role in such a school Mahnkopf compares to that of Boulez in the 1950s in *Kritik der neuen Musik*). However, in "Neue Musik am Beginn der Zweiten Moderne," Mahnkopf does specify that the "Zweite Darmstädter Schule" lasted from 1982 until 1994. I personally recall hearing the term referred to in conversation (with several "complex" composers and their advocates) a few years prior to the publication of these articles of Mahnkopf.

[202] See Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf, "Complex Music: An Attempt at a Definition," trans. Frank Cox, in Mahnkopf, Frank Cox, and Wolfram Schurig, eds., *Polyphony & Complexity* (Hofheim: Wolke Verlag, 2002), pp. 54-64. Mahnkopf lists the 1980s complex composers as Dench, Finnissy, Barrett, Redgate, Erber, Dillon, the earlier Ole Lützlow-Holm, René Wohlhauser, Hübler, Frank Cox, and Mahnkopf

daunted by the debate that he had unleashed and, like many others at the time, attempted to broaden the concept to encompass a long period of polyphonic music.[203]

In general, for around ten years from the late 1990s onwards the remaining discourse around complexity shifted towards two streams: one dominated by the group of composers and writers associated with Mahnkopf, in the journal *Musik & Ästhetik* and the book series *New Music and Aesthetics in the 21st Century*; the other, in French, deriving from the work of François Nicolas (dating back to the late 1980s), then taken up first by the French writer Nicolas Darbon, who published the first single-authored monograph on the subject, entitled *Brian Ferneyhough et la Nouvelle Complexité.*[204]

Whilst not really adding a great deal new to earlier scholarship, Darbon's book is notable for his ability to synthesize (not uncritically) and present clearly a very wide range of work in terms of clearly delineated and meaningful categories, in the process incorporating passages on diverse and sometimes otherwise neglected composers whose work may be related to that of Ferneyhough (including Roger Redgate, René Wohlhauser, Marc André, Brice Pauset, James Clarke, and especially François Nicolas). He makes a good deal of the relationship between the "new complexity" and the term "new simplicity" that had been coined earlier, especially as this opposition, with the former concept acting almost as a conscious negation of the latter, is played out implicitly in Ferneyhough's essay "Form—Figure—Style."[205] Among other things, he also attempts to specify the precise nature of Ferneyhough's relationship to serialism, taking account of the critical discourse that has placed him in this camp,[206] and criticizes manneristic aspects of complexity.[207] A dedicated section on Ferneyhough[208] constitutes the shortest of the three main chapters, but also represents the greatest amount of attention given to any single composer in the book. Darbon also introduces a series of

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himself, followed in the 1990s by Wolfram Schurig, Brice Pauset, Aaron Cassidy, Wieland Hoban, Simieon Pironkoff, Claude Lenners, Franck Christoph Yeznikian, Ian Willcock, and Mark André, whilst identifying as engaged with similar issues the following composers: Steven Kazuo Takasugi, Chaya Czernowin, Amrio Garuti, Gerald Eckert, Liza Lim, Walter Feldmann, Klaus Ospald, James Clarke, and Erik Ulman. Lützlow-Holm and Dillon are seen as having distanced themselves from complexism (oddly, Mahnkopf does not mention Finnissy in this respect; p. 55, fn. 3). As well as complexism, Mahnkopf identifies statistical/stochastic music, spectralism, *musique concrète instrumentale*, and live electronic music including that of the late Nono as the other four most prominent movements (p. 55).

[203] Richard Toop, "'New Complexity' and After: a Personal Note," in Mahnkopf et al, *Polyphony and Complexity*, pp. 133-135; also Toop, "Against a Theory of Musical (New) Complexity," pp. 89-97 (this article was originally published in French in 2001). Chris Dench takes a similar line in his essay "Complexity and Polyphony," ibid., pp. 180-187.

[204] Nicolas Darbon, *Brian Ferneyhough et la Nouvelle Complexité* (Notre-Dame de Bliquetuit: Millenaire III Editions, 2008). This grew in part out of an earlier essay by Darbon considering the way a complex "school" was constructed in Célestin Deliège's wider history *Cinquante ans de modernité musicale: De Darmstadt à l'IRCAM: contribution historiographique à une musicology critique* (Sprimont: Mardaga, 2003). See Darbon, "Le concept de complexité dans *Cinquante ans de modernité musicale*," *Circuit: musiques contemporaines*, 16/1 (2005), pp. 45-58. Darbon's book is one of two that he collectively entitles *La capture des forces*; the other being *Wolfgang Rihm et la nouvelle simplicité* (Notre-Dame de Bliquetuit: Millenaire III Editions, 2008).

[205] See Darbon, *Ferneyhough et la Nouvelle Complexité*, pp. 27-29, 55-66, 78-81. Darbon goes on to consider how "new complexity" was itself placed by Toop and others in opposition to "new capitulationism" (ibid., pp. 66-68).

[206] Ibid., pp. 69-72.

[207] Ibid., pp. 82-91.

[208] Ibid., pp. 125-66.

meta-categories to do with "instrumentalism," "scripturalism," and "formalism," neatly contrasting with fundamental elements as identified by Nicolas, Melchiorre, Gottwald and Toop, and considers the issues of "Ferneyhough and the world" (briefly and unconvincingly) and "Ferneyhough and hermeticism" (more substantially). In the latter, he investigates Ferneyhough's relationship to Renaissance ideas, as well as discussing some of Ferneyhough's own poetry and how literary work such as that of Gertrude Stein has informed his compositional practice.

Finally, 2010 saw quite strikingly new perspectives on "complex" music in writings by Stuart Paul Duncan and Roddy Hawkins.[209] Neither writer draws upon any non-English language sources, which is undoubtedly a significant limitation, but both approach the area from new angles, in particular critically interrogating some key terms and assumptions, and tracing their provenance. In one article Duncan questions some prevailing views of unity of notation in Ferneyhough,[210] as well as tracing constructions of "new complexity" on one hand as a rejuvenation of 1950s and 1960s integral serialism, on the other as a reaction against the *Neue Einfachheit.*[211] In another, Duncan follows Potter, Gottwald, and Feller (though not really Griffiths, Texier, or Fitch) in stressing the distance of "complex" music from earlier high modernism, but this view mostly relates to the role of notation, on the basis of a handful of pronouncements by composers and performers.[212] The contrasts Duncan posits of a pluralism in the Darmstadt of Ferneyhough's era to the narrowness of 1950s and 1960s Darmstadt, or in the music of either period, are unconvincing. Like Lois Fitch before and after him (see below), Duncan's approach is limited by a lack of consideration of other types of composition that preceded Ferneyhough (including the work of Cage, B.A. Zimmermann, Helms, Kagel, Schnebel, Ligeti, Holliger, Bussotti, and others), which are scarcely adequately encompassed by an all-purpose label of "integral serialism."[213]

So much writing on new music in English is so deeply consumed by a need to affirm or refute a simple modern/postmodern or serial purity/post-serial plurality dichotomy that the multi-dimensional nature of music from the first two to three decades after the war is often obliterated in the process. But appreciating this multi-dimensionality of earlier modernism is vital in the process of obtaining a more nuanced view of the provenance of Ferneyhough's work. Nonetheless, Duncan adroitly criticizes Taruskin's attempts to force Ferneyhough into a continuously expanding maximalist aesthetic by demonstrating the relatively straightforward decrease in level of detail in Ferneyhough's works from the 1980s onwards, compared to those which had preceded

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[209] Stuart Paul Duncan, "Re-Complexifying the Function(s) of Notation in the Music of Brian Ferneyhough and the 'New Complexity,'" *Perspectives of New Music*, 48/1 (Winter 2010), pp. 136-172; and "To Infinity and Beyond: A Reflection on Notation, 1980s Darmstadt, and Interpretational Approaches to the Music of New Complexity," *Search: Journal for New Music and Culture 7* (2010), at http://www.searchnewmusic.org/duncan.pdf (accessed May 14, 2014); Hawkins, "(Mis)understanding complexity," *op. cit*.

[210] Duncan, "Re-Complexifying the Function(s) of Notation," pp. 137-138.

[211] Ibid., pp. 140-141.

[212] Duncan, "To Infinity and Beyond," pp. 3-12.

[213] One early writer who did appreciate how much more there was to the post-war modernist tradition (perhaps as a result of being closer to it, temporally) was the *Observer* critic Peter Heyworth when reviewing *Transit* in 1977. See Peter Heyworth, "Vivid Voice," *The Observer*, November 20, 1977, cited in Hawkins, "(Mis)understanding complexity," p. 172.

them,[214] as well as (as should be unremarkable to point out) the extremely varying approaches to notation amongst different "complex" composers.

Hawkins' doctoral dissertation moves much further away from almost all earlier scholarship on the subject, and is striking in this respect. Structured in three sections (on the public narrative of "new complexity," the emergence of the movement in Britain and associated micro-narratives, then from these two sections an attempt to "understand complexity"), the work is a meta-critical study informed by some of the work of Pierre Bourdieu. In it, Hawkins provides an intense exploration of the development of the concept of "new complexity," its changing meanings in critical reception, how it was employed both by composers themselves and in their promotional literature (and that of publishers) whilst working a good deal of interview material with the composers in question (often focusing on biographical questions) into critical sociological paradigms in order to explain how the movement achieved a degree of prominence. Hawkins' study however lacks any real engagement with the sounding music (there is no reason to assume a lack of familiarity, but this cannot be tested), nor does his work engage comparatively with aesthetics; instead it is a form of historical sub-cultural study of a movement in the 1970s and 1980s, but which mostly avoids the touristic connotations that so often weaken other such work. It opens up many new possibilities for such study (not least a future study that would attempt to balance such approaches against aesthetic and work-immanent analysis); whilst much of the thesis analyses the uses to which the term "complexity" has been put,[215] Hawkins makes extensive use of what he calls the "two complexities" thesis (implicit in the thoughts and pronouncements of others), referring to distinct spheres of influence *in the UK* relating to the work of Ferneyhough and Finnissy respectively (which emerged gradually from the early 1980s onwards).[216] The study is also noteworthy for the extent to which it focuses upon the role of performers (not least the ensembles Suoraan and Exposé), as well as "cultural intermediaries" such as Keith Potter, Richard Steinitz, Graham Hayter, and Roger Wright, in building and consolidating the reputations of various composers, and in the process helping to raise the profile of the movement.

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[214] Duncan, "Re-Complexifying the Function(s) of Notation," pp. 143-147. Duncan is easily able to do this by contrasting *Time and Motion Study II* with the Second String Quartet, the latter cited by Taruskin as a supposed *ne plus ultra* of complexity.

[215] This sharply distinguishes his study from the very problematic article by Hettie Malcolmson, "Composing Individuals: Ethnographic Reflections on Success and Prestige in the British New Music Network," *twentieth-century music*, 10/1 (March 2013), pp. 115-136, in which the term "new complexity" is happily appropriated so as to form one pole of an anthropologist's triangle, but with no indication whatsoever of any knowledge of what the term might mean either to any of the subjects questioned, or in any wider context, let alone recognition that the term and associated composers and musical aesthetics might have applications outside of Britain. Unfortunately this article exemplifies a great many of the limitations of a narrow ethnographic methodology, especially when undertaken by one with little background knowledge or understanding of the cultural field surveyed.

[216] Hawkins, "(Mis)understanding complexity," pp. 110-111. I emphasize the British dimension of this thesis as the groups of non-UK composers taught or influenced by these two key figures become arguably too diverse to support such a thesis; nor does Hawkins attempt to account for the wider movements. It is, however, arguable that this opposition breaks down already when one considers the generations of composers including Toovey, Hayes, Stoneham, Pritchard and others coming after Dillon, Dench, Barrett, and Emsley, all of whom could be said at some point in their careers to owe something to Finnissy's example, but amongst all of whom it would be difficult to perceive much unity. Nonetheless, the former group came to prominence at a time beyond the period surveyed in Hawkins' study.

"Complexity" appears much less of a vivid issue in the 2010s than I remember in the 1980s and 1990s; that what little unity there might have been between various composers grouped together under this umbrella term has dissipated is reasonably widely accepted, whilst the idea of a "Ferneyhough school" never really gained momentum beyond the circle around Mahnkopf. Duncan and Hawkins, the latter endeavouring upon "meta-complexity" scholarship, have certainly demonstrated some ways in which it can still be fruitful to pursue this line of inquiry; I believe over and above this that if one is willing to relax the "strong" groupings of contemporary composers in rigid "schools," there is still much to be learned from tracing lines of development passed between composers as well as parallelisms or other concurrences among them. It hardly needs asserting any longer that Ferneyhough, the composer of *Time and Motion Study II*, the *Etudes Transcendantales*, *Kurze Schatten II*, *Incipits* (1996), and *Plötzlichkeit* (2005-6), is a very different type of musical figure to Finnissy, the composer of *Romeo and Juliet and Drowning* (1967-73), *Pathways of Sun and Stars* (1976), the *Gershwin Arrangements* (1975-88), *Recent Britain* (1997-8), *Descriptive Jottings of London* (2003), and a new completion of the Mozart Requiem (2011). Yet the two were close when younger, shared a good deal of common preoccupations, and emerged in the context of a particular state of development of British musical modernism (alongside others such as Bill Hopkins, Robert Sherlaw Johnson, and Roger Smalley).[217] Ferneyhough's *Transit* and Finnissy's *World* (1968-74), for similar forces, would definitely make for interesting comparison,[218] as would *Carceri I* and *alongside* (1979), not to mention others.

No one since Toop, including Hawkins, has considered closely *musical* points of contact between the work of Finnissy, Dillon, Dench, Barrett, and Emsley and Clarke (neither of whom were considered by Toop) and some others at the time of their work of the late 1970s and early 1980s; works such as Dillon's *Once Upon a Time* (1980), Emsley's *The Juniper Tree* (1981), Dench's *Énonce* (1983-4), Clarke's *Downstream* (1984), and Barrett's *Coïgitum* (1983-5) are certainly due for re-consideration in these terms, whilst the impact of Finnissy's *alongside* upon these and other composers has never been properly examined. I for one would be interested to read about similarities and differences between the techniques, aesthetics, and more of Ferneyhough and Redgate, Melchiorre, Erber, Hübler, Mahnkopf, Cox, and others, written by a scholar with some detachment rather than a partisan. It would also be disingenuous to discount the influence of "complexity," and all the cultural meanings the term and associated music had and has come to assume, upon fascinating younger composers (perhaps "third generation complexists"?) such as Aaron Cassidy (b. 1976), Wieland Hoban (b. 1978), Evan Johnson (b. 1980), or Maxim Kolomiiets (b. 1981).

Notation and Performance

Ferneyhough's detailed notation attracted attention from an early stage in his career, with several early reviews of scores maintaining that the level of detail was impossible to

[217] One attempt to conceptualize this group of modernist British composers, younger than Birtwistle, Maxwell Davies, and Goehr, can be found in John Caldwell, *The Oxford History of English Music Volume 2: c. 1715 to the Present Day* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 446-448.
[218] At the time of writing, Hawkins is working on a project comparing these two works.

articulate perceptibly in performance.[219] In 1978, in one of his earliest essays on his own work,[220] Ferneyhough attempted to set down in some detail a model for the role of notation and its relationship to performance, stressing the importance of notation offering what he called a "sound-picture" of the events implied, and sufficient information for a valid reproduction, whilst recognizing that notation is not merely transparent or unambiguous, even when very detailed. A discourse concerning the implications for performance of the complexities of Ferneyhough's notation was continued by several early interpreters of the composer's work, whose sympathetic view is unsurprising considering how much time and energy they had personally vested in making the learning and performing process successful.

The flautist Kathryn Lukas, in an interesting article from 1979,[221] posits on the part of the reader some familiarity with the hyper-virtuosity of the work of Heinz Holliger, Vinko Globokar, and others (a body of work arguably less prominent now than then in contemporary music circles, but which remains utterly relevant to a historical consideration of Ferneyhough's solo works from that time). Alluding to Ferneyhough's own notes indicating some degree of unpredictability resulting from the writing, Lukas thus presents Ferneyhough's work as crossing a line not attempted by the earlier composers, whose work had remained within the boundaries of playability. Nonetheless she defends the notation, saying it "works as a road map to his music, not as a barrier,"[222] and praises the work immensely, interestingly suggesting that the level of detail in *Unity Capsule* served perhaps as a response to the issues initially explored in *Cassandra's Dream Song*.

Like Lukas, Pierre-Yves Artaud, writing solely about *Unity Capsule*[223] (of which he had given the premiere in 1976), considers the work relative to a lineage of solo flute repertoire, and traces the learning process upon receiving the score in sections during its composition, drawing attention to the particular challenges the music posed compared to more traditional approaches, using the metaphor of an equatorial forest in which the performer must find his or her way.[224] Artaud argues that one hundred percent realization of every detail is impossible, giving examples of extreme rapidity or micro-differentiation of vibrato, whilst also suggesting ways in which certain approaches become habituated after multiple performances, and how the difficulties can vary when one has not played the work for a while.[225] He also touches upon a subject rarely broached in the literature; what it means to put down a permanent rendition in the form of a recording of a piece that resists absolute stability or exactitude in performance.[226]

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[219] Roger Smalley, "New Scores," *The Musical Times*, 112/1536 (February 1971), p. 167; and "Avant-garde piano," *The Musical Times*, 113/1558 (December 1972), p. 1222.
[220] Ferneyhough, "Aspects of Notational and Compositional Practice" (1978), *Collected Writings*, pp. 2-13.
[221] Kathryn Lukas, "Cassandra's Dream Song & Unity Capsule," *Contact* 20 (Autumn 1979), pp. 9-11.
[222] Ibid., p. 10.
[223] Pierre-Yves Artaud, "*Unity Capsule*—une explosion de quinze minutes," *Entretemps* 3 (1987), pp. 107-114.
[224] Ibid., p. 109.
[225] Ibid., pp. 109-110.
[226] Ibid., p. 112.

Magnus Andersson, writing in 1988 about *Kurze Schatten II* very soon after giving the premiere,[227] describes his strategies of concentrating upon clear phrase profiles to avoid their being buried within a more general surface, how he chose not to compromise on issues such as tempo, in order to maintain what he described as a "fragile equilibrium, on the edge of catastrophe" of the music, and how to navigate the silences in the work.[228] Furthermore, Andersson describes an initial internalization of the sensory content of the work by reference to resonances with earlier musical and cultural associations—Dowland, Monteverdi, Charpentier, Shakespeare, or Lorca—followed by an adaptation of the results through a more precise approach to the metrical and rhythmic specifics of the work. Like Artaud, Andersson allows that the end result could take a multiplicity of forms at the moment of performance.[229]

But a different and much less sceptical perspective was presented again from an early stage, first in 1979 by clarinettist Kevin Corner who, after an examination of *Time and Motion Study 1* (1971-7), who concludes that "too much of the score is confusing or simply redundant" and that the work might be better realized electronically.[230] In a wider article on performance of new music from eight years later,[231] Roger Heaton defends the resistance some performers have towards the complexities of Ferneyhough's notation (distinguishing this work from that of Globokar or Iannis Xenakis, alluded to more sympathetically). Lukas had argued that the demands of music like Ferneyhough's necessitated an extra degree of time and effort from the performer (and that remuneration for this was necessary);[232] Heaton on the other hand suggests that performers at the time of writing have mostly just "faked" the scores by marking in beats and interpreting them spatially, though does not provide a convincing argument as to why indeed this should be considered "faking."[233]

In a more empirically substantiated article from 1994,[234] Roger Marsh argues first that Ferneyhough's music is not significantly different from that of many other composers from the early 1950s onwards other than in terms of the rhythmic detail employed. Marsh goes on to analyze and transcribe recordings (using detailed measurements) of the Second String Quartet and *Intermedio alla ciaccona* (1986) by the Arditti Quartet and Irvine Arditti alone, in order to argue that the sounding result often stood at a significant distance from that implied by the notated durational values, in such a way as to imply much simpler rhythms. Marsh does not deny the possibility of flexibility, but argues urgently that the actual resulting degree of rubato was considerably *less* than one might expect in a lot of music notated in a more conventional manner.[235] In a related manner,

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[227] Magnus Andersson, "Brian Ferneyhough: Kurze Schatten II—considerations d'un interprète," *Contrechamps* 8 (1988), pp. 128-138.
[228] Ibid., pp. 129-131.
[229] Ibid., pp. 131-132.
[230] Kevin Corner, "Time and Motion Study 1," *Contact 20* (Autumn 1979), pp. 10-12.
[231] Roger Heaton, "The Performer's Point of View," *Contact* 30 (Spring 1987), pp. 30-33.
[232] Lukas, "Cassandra's Dream Song & Unity Capsule," p. 11. It is noteworthy that various British performers, working in a new music world significantly less well-funded than some of their continental European counterparts, and thus relying on undertaking a greater degree of freelance work, are generally more keenly attentive to what is seen as pragmatic with far from unlimited practice or rehearsal time.
[233] Heaton, "The Performer's Point of View," p. 32.
[234] Roger Marsh, "Heroic Motives: Roger Marsh Considers the Relation between Sign and Sound in 'Complex' Music," *The Musical Times* 135/1812 (February 1994), pp. 83-86.
[235] Ibid., pp. 84-85.

Christoph Keller looks again at *Intermedio* and notated "pragmatic version" of two passages using no subdivisions more complex than triplets, suggesting these provided a better idea of what was possible for a performer or audible to a listener,[236] whilst in a very recent essay, Klaus Lippe produces multiple MIDI versions of the first two bars of the opening piano solo of *On Stellar Magnitudes* (1994), then transcribes the results of playing them back at a keyboard that would convert the sounds into notated form, finding these results to be somewhat more complex than those produced by Marsh or Keller, but still simpler than the score.[237]

Marsh's argument and evidence are powerful, and constitute to date the most cogent critique of a whole species of notational practice, though some of the limitations of this critique have been amply pointed out by Stuart Paul Duncan.[238] Another coherent response to the objections of March (and Heaton) comes from Feller, who alludes to some research suggesting the limitations of time-space alternatives and the like, and argues strongly for a material (and indeed multicursal) rather than transparent view of notation,[239] though this does not go the full way towards answering Marsh's points (which was never intended nor should be expected, as Feller's dissertation and Marsh's article appeared at a similar time).

At that time when Marsh's article was published, the range of performances of Ferneyhough's music, let alone recordings, was considerably smaller than is the case twenty years later, and as such there was much less opportunity to undertake comparative performance analysis. Ferneyhough himself had argued in a 1988 interview with Philippe Albèra that he felt that performers of his work come

> …to accept that a great deal of personal creative freedom of approach and realization is implied that could not have been suggested in any other way. A notation which specifically and programmatically deconstructs the sound into its subcomponents sensibilizes the mind towards aspects of the work which a seemingly more straightforward image would not be in a position to do. The performer recreates the work in his own image, not according to some arbitrary process of homogenization via the academy.[240]

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[236] Christoph Keller, "Die Ferneyhough-Familie," *Dissonanz* 51 (1997), pp. 34-36.

[237] Klaus Lippe, "Komplexität als Programm für ein Beobachten zweiter Ordnung. Zur (Un)Spielbarkeit der Werke Brian Ferneyhoughs- mit Anmerkungen zu *On Stellar Magnitudes*," in Jörn Peter Hiekel, ed., *Ans Licht gebracht. Zur Interpretation Neuer Musik* (Mainz et al: Schott, 2013), pp. 115-117. Lippe made two MIDI versions of this passage with differing degrees of rhythmic refinement.

[238] Duncan asks the fair question with respect to Marsh of "Consider, too, how the performance would have sounded had the Arditti quartet performed Marsh's transcription rather than Ferneyhough's score" as well as pointing out how Marsh's argument requires an over-selective use of particular passages from the recording in question, as well as a rather too-great reliance upon his own rather intuitive responses as a listener (Duncan, "Recomplexifying the Function(s) of Notation," pp. 160-163).

[239] Feller, "Multicursal Labyrinths," pp. 36-72. Feller also gives a strong critique of the arguments in such writings as Barton McLena, "Symbolic Extension and its Corruption of Music," *Perspectives of New Music*, 20/1-2 (Autumn 1981–Summer 1982), pp. 331-356; Trevor Wishart, "Beyond Notation," *British Journal of Music Education*, 2/3 (November 1985), pp. 311-326; and others, which equate notational detail simply with restrictions upon the performer.

[240] Ferneyhough, interview with Philippe Albèra (1988), in *Collected Writings*, p. 319. A few years later, Ferneyhough wrote that "any and all performances which represent a conscious attempt to realize that score are valid interpretations. […] The criteria for aesthetically adequate performances lie in the extent to which the performer is technically and spiritually able to recognize and embody the demands of fidelity (NOT 'exactitude'!)." See Ferneyhough, "Response to a Questionnaire on 'Complexity'," *Collected Writings*, p. 71.

This is a view that I would personally endorse as a performer of Ferneyhough's music, and which informed a wider model of notation I have presented, by which its importance relates primarily to the extent that it *negates* more habituated patterns, and as such encourages more creative approaches on the part of the performer.[241] What remains a question to my mind unanswered (if indeed it could be) is whether on the other hand performance strategies that channel the scores *towards* more familiar rhythmic and other patterns (not to mention towards more unmediated historical gestural rhetoric, or so as otherwise to create a more "traditional" sense of the music) might be those that meet with most favor from critics, audiences, and perhaps even composers. If this were the case (and I am by no means necessarily supposing it is), then Marsh's arguments would be even more applicable. A more moderate viewpoint can be found from Jonathan Cross, who argues that whilst it is "undoubtedly true" that Ferneyhough's scores are "impossible to realise," nonetheless "it is the very struggle with the notation that produces a musical performance of intensity that could not be achieved in the same way with, say, space-time notation."[242]

Most subsequent articles retreated from these charged debates in order to concentrate primarily upon pragmatic concerns, with varying degrees of engagement with wider aesthetic issues entailed in performance.[243] Most notable of these was the essay by Steven Schick, who describes the process of molding gestural and temporal approaches in a similar manner, albeit with more specific detail, to Andersson.[244] Most notable in this essay is Schick's detailed description of the "least common multiple" approach to approaching polyrhythms, and also the ways in which some reliance on the ear might be seen to constitute "guesswork."[245]

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[241] See Ian Pace, "Notation, Time and the Performer's Relationship to the Score in Contemporary Music," in *Unfolding Time: Studies in Temporality in Twentieth-Century Music*, edited Darla Crispin (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2009), pp. 151-192. In this article, influenced by some of Ferneyhough's thoughts on the matter, I attempt to move away from the idea that notation "represents" a singular sonic entity; there is also a brief discussion of how one might interpret the opening bar of *Opus Contra Naturam* from this perspective (pp. 189-192).

[242] Jonathan Cross, "A necessary violence," review of scores of *On Stellar Magnitudes* and *Bone Alphabet*, *The Musical Times*, 137/1841 (July 1996), p. 21.

[243] An archetypal example of this type of approach can be found in Christopher Redgate, "A Discussion of Practices Used in Learning Complex Music with Specific Reference to Roger Redgate's *Ausgangspunkte*," *Contemporary Music Review*, 26/2 (April 2007), pp. 141-149. Redgate focuses on his brother Roger's solo oboe piece, but the approach taken in the essay would have been equally valid for a work of Ferneyhough. Whilst Redgate gives excellent advice for anyone wishing to navigate the work at all, his comments on interpretive matters are brief and bland, such as "one should consider the phrasing, choice of colour, tempo, dynamic range and so on. Many of the complex composers give a great deal of instruction at every level of direction; however, there is still a great deal to be done by the interpreter" (ibid., p. 147), without giving detail what this "great deal" might consist of.

[244] Steven Schick, "Developing an Interpretative Context: Learning Brian Ferneyhough's Bone Alphabet," *Perspectives of New Music*, 32/1 (1994), pp. 132-153. See also Schick, "A Percussionist's Search for Models," *Contemporary Music Review*, 21/1 (2002), pp. 5-12.

[245] Schick, "Developing an Interpretative Context," pp. 138-141. Note how this relates to Roger Heaton's comments, though Schick in no sense argues that this is an undesirable approach.

By far the most intellectually rigorous consideration of this issue published to date is that by Frank Cox,[246] not specific to Ferneyhough (in fact only making occasional reference to his work) but clearly deeply relevant in this context. Following a nuanced critique of both "high modernist" literalist approaches, and much more intuitive strategies (both framed as Weberian "ideal types"), Cox argues for a type of modification of the former, nuancing its various simplifications and impossibilities (especially in terms of clearly quantifiable manifestations of pitch and rhythm), whilst allowing oneself to learn from listening to computer-generation renditions, as a means for avoiding the performance slipping into reified categories. Cox's arguments are powerful, though the essay lacks much in the way of engagement with other documented performance aesthetics and strategies, nor with recorded documentation (I believe that in particular that Cox's "high modernist" ideal type stands at a very considerable distance from the approaches adopted by many performers of new music in the 1950s and 1960s, but to demonstrate that convincingly is beyond the scope of this article); nonetheless his arguments have certainly not been successfully countered in print to date.[247]

There are various other intelligent writings on notation and performance in Ferneyhough, which do not however add significantly to the ideas developed in those discussed above.[248] I have only encountered one article that breaks with a key assumption underlying all the other literature on Ferneyhough performance, which is that by Ellen Waterman on *Cassandra's Dream Song*.[249] Waterman argues that all works "which seem to be embedded in a paternalist tradition" should not be played "while ignoring their sexist implications,"[250] and goes on to describe an approach to performing *Cassandra* in some ways at odds with the composer's conception (especially relating to particular gendered views of different material provided by Ferneyhough to Waterman), whilst strictly speaking staying within the boundaries circumscribed by the notation. Whilst some of Waterman's assumptions and leading questions (e.g. "How might a woman's

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[246] Frank Cox, "Notes Toward a Performance Practice for Complex Music," in Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf, Frank Cox, and Wolfram Schurig, eds., *Polyphony & Complexity* (Hofheim: Wolke Verlag, 2002), pp. 70-132. Some of the same issues are addressed in Mieko Kanno, "Prescriptive notation: Limits and challenges," *Contemporary Music Review*, 26/2 (April 2007), pp. 231-254 (an article that does not deal specifically with Ferneyhough's music), though I find the conceptual basis of Kanno's arguments considerably cruder. My own critique of this article of Kanno's can be found in my "Performance as Analysis, Analysis as Performance," expanded version of paper given at Orpheus Institute, Ghent, May 27, 2009, accessible at http://openaccess.city.ac.uk/6481/ (accessed May 26, 2015).

[247] Nicholas Cook does present both Cox's attitude towards notation, and my own, as part of a "performance equivalent of Frankfurt-School critical theory" (Cook, *Beyond the Score: Music as Performance* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 281). This does not refute Cox's model, only assigns it a particular ideological twist (one with which, in my own case, I am quite happy!)

[248] For example Klaus Lippe, "Notation und Aufführung bei Brian Ferneyhough," *Musik und Ästhetik* 4 (1997), pp. 93-7 (an extended CD review); Benedict Weisser, "Notational Practice in Contemporary Music: A Critique of Three Compositional Models (Luciano Berio, John Cage, and Brian Ferneyhough," (PhD dissertation, City University of New York, 1998); or Nicolas Darbon, "Virtuosité et complexité. L'injouable selon Brian Ferneyhough," *Analyse Musicale* 52, numéro special (Paris: December 2005), pp. 96-111. The latter article is nonetheless noteworthy for other reasons, in particular the elegant manner in which Darbon compares different aspects of extreme performance difficulty and "unplayability" in the work of Barrett, Dench, Dillon, and Finnissy alongside a little more extended section on Ferneyhough.

[249] Ellen Waterman, "*Cassandra's Dream Song*; A Literary Feminist Perspective," *Perspectives of New Music* 32/2 (Summer 1994), pp. 154-172.

[250] Ibid., p. 155.

interpretation of *Cassandra's Dream Song* differ from a man's?,"[251] which already assumes some degree of unity amongst interpretations grouped by each gender that is palpably at odds with those of the other) are at the very least questionable, and her use of data hardly satisfies any scholarly criteria (she draws conclusions about half of the human race on the basis of just two performances by male flautists), no other article by a performer has dared to suggest that there might be other priorities for interpretation than those supplied by Ferneyhough. This possibility could inform a good deal more future scholarship on the subject.

Later writings on Ferneyhough

The period since the publication of Ferneyhough's *Collected Writings* in English in 1995 has seen further continuations and new directions in Ferneyhough research, including several strong new analyses of Ferneyhough works by Fabián Panisello, Jan Hemming, Mahnkopf, and Klaus Lippe.[252] Roger Redgate and Jeffrey Stadelman have also provided useful if relatively basic articles on Ferneyhough's teaching;[253] a comparative study of the nature of Ferneyhough's teaching as manifested in the work of his students would be a welcome addition to the literature.

The articles by Hemming, and especially Panisello, of the Third String Quartet (1986-7) are the most remarkable of those listed above. Ferneyhough's own essay on the composition of the first movement of the work, written eight years after the quartet's completion, had been explicit in saying how in his presentation of background procedures, "I am in no way foreclosing analytical options but merely documenting the preparation of a structured environment within which the work might be adequately nurtured,"[254] in the process giving a type of green light to alternative analytical strategies

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[251] Ibid., p. 156.

[252] Fabián Panisello, "Zum *Dritten Streichquartett* von Brian Ferneyhough," in Wolfgang Gratzer, ed., *Nähe und Distanz. Nachgedachte Musik der Gegenwart* (Hofheim: Wolke Verlag, 1996), pp. 160-181; Hemming, "Das dritte Streichquartett von Brian Ferneyhough." Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf, "Ferneyhoughs Streichtrio," *Musik und Ästhetik* 1-2 (1997), pp. 93-104, is more descriptive in nature, but makes strong arguments that distinct aspects of this work are new in Ferneyhough's practice. Klaus Lippe essentially continues in the manner of Toop in "«Pitch Systems» im Vierten Streichquartett von Brian Ferneyhough," *Mitteilungen der Paul Sacher Stiftung* 13 (Basel, 2000), pp. 54-60, but in several other writings, he considers Ferneyhough's practice (whilst continuing to employ sketches) in terms of the systems theories of Niklas Luhmann, in both "Komplexität als Programm für ein Beobachten zweiter Ordnung" mentioned above and "Medium/Form Relations in Brian Ferneyhough's Fourth String Quartett," *Tempo*, 66/261 (July 2012), pp. 37-50. He argues for viewing the compositional process as a process of recurrent mediation of existing forms, a process that could easily have gone further than in the final result. More problematic is Martin Iddon, "On the Entropy Circuit: Brian Ferneyhough's Time and Motion Study II," *Contemporary Music Review* 25/1-2 (February-April 2006), pp. 93-105, which tends simply to render the music in terms of the most intellectually dazzling metaphors without illuminating much of consequence, as well as dealing with performance issues somewhat crudely in light of the well-developed discourse on this subject mentioned above.

[253] Roger Redgate, "Ferneyhough as Teacher," *Contemporary Music Review*, 13/1 (1995), pp. 19-21; Jeffrey Stadelman, "Brian Ferneyhough, 1976-96," in *Von Kranichstein zur Gegenwart: 50 Jahre Darmstädter Ferienkurse* (Stuttgart: DACO, 1996), pp. 469-475. Stadelman's article is as much about Ferneyhough's wider presence at the Darmstädter Ferienkurse as his teaching.

[254] Brian Ferneyhough, "Third String Quartet" (1994-5), in Grazer, *Nähe und Distanz*, pp. 140-58 (citation p. 140). Hemming, however, appears not to have had access to this text, which was written, but not yet published, at the time of his dissertation.

to those founded upon sketch study and the creative process (as had been implicit in his interview with James Boros two years earlier). Hemming's analysis—mentioned earlier because of the angle presented on sketch study—is longer, but this is in part because it outlines many basic details about the work, mainly for the benefit of readers unfamiliar with the idiom or notational practices. He notes the symmetrical groups of time signatures that form the first movement of the work (groups that are generally separated by double barlines), then their not-quite symmetrical equivalents in the second movement, and also wider symmetries in the tempo structure (the final viola solo's tempi being a much speeded-up retrograde of those in the first movement), but nonetheless maintains that this provides for a relatively arbitrary grid that can be filled by the composer without further consideration of how it came about.[255] Then he identifies seven gestural types—and hierarchies between them—that in part constitute the piece: *glissandi* of various types; long-held single notes, intervals, and trills of various types; *gettato* bowing; rhythmic gestures (regular rapid groups, irregular groups, or groups of repeated notes); individual chords or "synchronous sounds," chord progressions, or distinctive single sounds; tremolos on several notes; and grace notes. It is then relatively straightforward to label most material in the first fourteen bars in one of these seven categories, and define particular manifestations thereof.[256] Analysis of the gestural content of the work is mostly descriptive in nature, though with a few pointers to where some events might be seen to trigger others.[257] To investigate pitch, Hemming draws upon an adaptation of Fortean pitch-class sets to encompass quarter-tones, but fails to find any obvious row-like sequences (thus concluding that the piece is not serially organized), nor meaningful intervallic relationships through the course of the work.[258] Other aspects of the music are keenly and meticulously (if somewhat obsessively, in the manner of Feller's analysis of *Terrain*) observed, not least the changing hierarchies between the different instruments. Especially notable is Hemming's focus upon the use of quasi-cadential figures at the work's conclusion, and indication of how these are anticipated through relationships between gestures in the immediately preceding passages—first for solo viola and the other three players, then for viola alone—a quite traditional type of motif-shortening.[259]

Panisello's analysis is more concise and penetrating, and is also written with admirable clarity of thought and expression. He identifies more specific figural and gestural types, without relying upon sketches, instead tracing the composition of the work "backwards from the moment of sensory perception to its origin,"[260] in a manner as sonically-founded as that of Feller but with even greater focus, and founded upon a clearly framed conception of the compositional and pre-compositional process. This is combined with a critical consideration of the form of the work, ever alert to the problems of the classic form/content dichotomy, and its relationship to existing models. Panisello evades such questions as the relationship of the compositional bar structure of the work (which he, like Hemming, sets out in some detail, in terms of the relationships between

[255] Hemming, "Das dritte Streichquartett von Brian Ferneyhough," pp. 44-49.
[256] Ibid., pp. 49-53.
[257] Ibid., pp. 53-58.
[258] Ibid., pp. 58-64.
[259] Ibid., pp. 66-68.
[260] Panisello, "Zum *Dritten Streichquartett* von Brian Ferneyhough," p. 161.

groups of time signatures, alongside the tempo structure)[261] to audible macroscopic pointers and markers, but in this he is little different to most other writers. For example, he considers bar 15 of the first movement to be the beginning of the second section, whilst I believe the marked change in texture and density in bar 14 audibly suggests a new section here, though Panisello does point out other ways in which section boundaries might be perceived in various ways.[262] For Panisello, "figures" are "texture types,"[263] a somewhat different use of the term to that in Ferneyhough's texture-gesture-figure formulation; he also situates figures within the wider category of material (some of which is created prior to the final stage of composition), which itself is "the totality of the acting subjects of discourse."[264] After further specifying that the identity of figures has primarily to do with their "immediate terseness" (*unmittelbare Prägnanz*), he identifies 23 specific short figures (16 from the first fourteen bars, 4 from bars 16-27, then 3 from bars 55-60) from the first movement, which he maintains are also used in the second, thus creating a continuity.[265] Panisello argues that by grouping several of these short figures that can be seen as variants of each other into a larger set category, one is left with just seven or eight figures—*glissandi*, long sustained pitches, rapid figurations within a narrow tessitura, and so on. But he insists that the small differences between members of the larger group of figures are crucial to establishing the identities in question, so sticks with that larger group—in the process blurring the distinction between figure and gesture, and between ideal and realization. Panisello proceeds with gusto to trace one figure (initially a jagged and rapid arpeggio in contrary motion between the two violins playing in rhythmic unison, in bar 6) in various manifestations in order to ascertain its fundamental attributes in terms of periodicity within groups of pitches, nature of the rhythmic synchronization between instruments, and contoural direction. He also sets up a taxonomy for combining figures: juxtaposition, superimposition, staggering, insertion, and assimilation, undoubtedly a sound if not exhaustive basis for a wider investigation of such processes across the breadth of Ferneyhough's output.[266]

A welcome new volume of texts both about and by Ferneyhough appeared in French in 1999, including two Ferneyhough essays published for the first time.[267] Marc Texier's essay in this volume[268] was already mentioned in the section on "Postmodern Ferneyhough"; Texier presents the first real contribution to the composer's early biography,[269] but ultimately ends up reaffirming many aspects of Ferneyhough's self-mythologization, declaring him to be a "new Schoenberg" and a "true educational missionary" who has taught all round the world.[270] Another essay in the same volume,

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[261] Ibid., pp. 176-179.
[262] Ibid., p. 179.
[263] Ibid., p. 161.
[264] Ibid., pp. 162-163.
[265] Ibid., pp. 163-167.
[266] Ibid., pp. 168-74.
[267] Szendy, *Ferneyhough*. The Ferneyhough essays included here are "Présentation du *Trio à cordes*," pp. 49-59, translated Peter Szendy, and "La «musique informelle» (à partir d'une lecture d'Adorno)," pp. 109-117, translated Szendy. The latter of these is available online in English at http://www.entretemps.asso.fr/Adorno/Informel/Ferneyhough.htm (accessed April 7, 2014).
[268] Texier, "Le dernier des modernes."
[269] Ibid., pp. 17-19. Reynolds had given a very brief overview of this, in "The Music of Brian Ferneyhough," pp. 1-3.
[270] Texier, "Le dernier des modernes," p. 24.

however, offers a refreshing change, with a highly personal reflection on author François Nicolas's favourite moment within *La Chute d'Icare* (1988).[271] A longer piece by Mikhaïl Malt considers the impact of Ferneyhough's adoption of computers on his compositional processes.[272]

The premiere and subsequent recording of Ferneyhough's opera *Shadowtime* (1999-2004) provoked another series of essays and reviews, many of them debating to what extent the work should be considered an "opera."[273] Ferneyhough's tendency from around the mid-1990s to explicitly relate his work more frequently not only to Walter Benjamin, the nominal "subject" of *Shadowtime*, but also to Adorno, not only informed the writings on the opera, but also provided opportunities for other scholars to underline and explore these figures of (arguably rather grandiose) self-declared provenance.[274] A much more critical stance was struck first in the form of a pamphlet handed out by Marxist writers Ben Watson and Esther Leslie at the London premiere of *Shadowtime* in 2005, arguing against "the systematic mystification and depoliticisation of revolutionary Marxism."[275] Watson and Leslie thoroughly deplored the way Ferneyhough and librettist Bernstein had in their view essentially voided out all the revolutionary socialist content of Benjamin, rendering him little more than an esoteric bourgeois intellectual made even more socially meaningless both through Ferneyhough's compositional techniques and Bernstein's language games. The objections of Lawrence Kramer, coming more from a mainstream American liberal position, were nonetheless not dissimilar, finding in this work the epitome of an institutionalized avant-garde, "as stylized as classical ballet" but living off "a fiction of transgression," though he had even less specific to say about the music than in Watson and Leslie's pamphlet.[276] Watson and Leslie's criticism of the opera's text is acute; in the opera (and in some commentaries thereupon), Benjamin is

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[271] François Nicolas, "Une écoute *à l'oeuvre*: d'un moment favori dans *La Chute d'Icare*," ibid., pp. 27-45.

[272] Mikhaïl Malt, "Brian Ferneyhough et l'aide informatique à l'écriture," ibid., pp. 61-105.

[273] See in particular Graham Lack, "Ferneyhough's 'Shadowtime' and other new operas at the Biennale, Munich: review," *Tempo* 58/230 (2004), pp. 51-55; Reinhard Oelschlägel, "Brian Ferneyhoughs 'Shadowtime' bei der Münchener Bienalle," *MusikTexte* 102 (Cologne, 2004), pp. 81-82; Arnold Whittall, "Brian Ferneyhough: Shadowtime," *Tempo*, 60/235 (2006), pp. 35-36; Klaus Lippe, "Who's to say, what's to say; Anmerkungen zur Rezeption von Brian Ferneyhoughs Oper 'Shadowtime' (im context der Kunsttheorie Niklas Luhmanns)," *Musik und Ästhetik*, 10/37 (2006), pp. 26-40; and Frieder Reininghaus, "Elaborierter Komplexismus. Brian Ferneyhoughs *Shadowtime*," in *Musik-Konzepte. Neue Folge 140. Brian Ferneyhough*, edited Ulrich Tadday (Munich: edition text + kritik, 2008), pp. 89-103. The latter essay is the most extensive consideration of the work, and has sharp criticisms of the opera's approach to the theatre, as well as considering Ferneyhough's work more generally in the context of musical life after 1968.

[274] Max Paddison, "Der Komponist als Kritischer Theoretiker—Brian Ferneyhoughs Ästhetik nach Adorno," *Musik und Ästhetik* 10 (1999), pp. 95-100; Peter Rosser, "Brian Ferneyhough and the 'Avant-garde experience': Benjaminian tropes in 'Funérailles,'" *Perspectives of New Music*, 48/2 (2010), pp. 114-151. For some of Ferneyhough's own thoughts on Adorno in particular, see Brian Ferneyhough, "Adorno Presentation" given at Goldsmiths College, London, February 21, 1998, available at http://www.entretemps.asso.fr/Adorno/Informel/Ferneyhough.htm (accessed May 10, 2014), and Frédérik Martin, "Entretien avec Brian Ferneyhough," *Musica Falsa* 7 (1999), pp. 10-11.

[275] From "Defend Walter Benjamin Campaign," *Communiqué #1*, 9/7/2005, reproduced at http://www.militantesthetix.co.uk/actions/antishaim/antishad.htm (accessed Dec. 27, 2013).

[276] Lawrence Kramer, "Au-delà d'une musique informelle: Nostalgia, Obsolescence, and the Avant Garde," *Muzikologija: Časopis Muzikološkog Instituta Srpske Akademije Nauka i Umetnosti* 6 (2005), pp. 43-62, reprinted in Kramer, *Critical Musicology and the Responsibility of Response: Selected Essays* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 303-316.

constructed as a depoliticized romantic mystic or aloof High German intellectual, who one would never imagine had written a book on Brecht,[277] nor celebrated the revolutionary potential of new artistic media. But they are on weaker ground when writing about the music, because they essentially rule out from the outset any possibility that an abstract musical language might still be able to generate critical meanings of its own (not least when combined with text). Whether or not one shares Watson and Leslie's view of the music as "a kind of by-the-yards Darmstadt polyfilla for all occasions" (I certainly do not), an argument that its type of language precludes radical meaning needs to be substantiated rather than merely assumed.

Two doctoral dissertations dedicated to Ferneyhough were published in the early 2000s, and another in which his work played a significant role. Cordula Pätzold's 2002 dissertation on *Carceri d'Invenzione*[278] constitutes the most extensive sketch study yet undertaken on Ferneyhough's music; the sketches for this cycle, held at the Paul Sacher Stiftung, are the most extensive available for any Ferneyhough work. Pätzold provides extremely detailed, if perhaps overly fastidious, analyses of the compositional techniques employed in each of the seven parts of the cycle, as well as brief overview of notational and structural issues. Some of this had been anticipated or undertaken more briefly in the work of Melchiorre and Toop, and also in a rather more straightforward, essentially descriptive piece on the *Etudes Transcendantales* by Roger Redgate.[279] But for the first time, Pätzold gives extensive details about the contents of sketch materials, with full charts, establishing a thoroughness and formality to this approach in line with that employed for other contemporary composers[280] but not yet common for Ferneyhough

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[277] As also commented upon by Esther Leslie in an interview on Resonance FM on the work around the time of the first performance in May 2004.

[278] Cordula Pätzold, "*Carceri d'Invenzione* von Brian Ferneyhough'; later published as Cordula Paetzold, Carceri d'Invenzione *von Brian Ferneyhough. Analyse der Kompositionstechnik* (Hofheim: Wolke Verlag, 2010). Some re-workings of sub-sections of Pätzold's dissertation can be found in her "Aspects of Temporal Organization in Brian Ferneyhough's 'Carceri d'Invenzione III,' *Search; Journal for New Music and Culture* 8 (2011), available at http://www.searchnewmusic.org/paetzold.pdf (accessed April 24, 2014) and "...die meisterliche Entfaltung von Schichtenaufbau und Perspektive …," *Musik-Konzepte* 140, pp. 70-88.

[279] Roger Redgate, "Brian Ferneyhough's *Etudes Transcendantales*," *Contemporary Music Review*, 20/1 (2001), pp. 79-100. Redgate does include some material only discernible from the sketches, such as (on p. 81) the fundamental series of eight chords that underlie the whole cycle (mentioned but not detailed in Toop, "Prima la parole…," p. 161); the provenance and development of these are discussed at length in Pätzold, "*Carceri d'Invenzione*," pp. 147-163.

[280] Such as Carr, *Stravinsky's Pulcinella*; Erika Schaller, "The classification of musical sketches exemplified in the catalogue of the Archivio Luigi Nono," in Hall and Sallis, *A Handbook to Twentieth-Century Musical Sketches*, pp. 59-73; Nicolas Donin, "Genetic Criticism and Cognitive Anthropology: A Reconstruction of Philippe Leroux's Compositional Process for *Voi(rex)*," in Kinderman and Jones, *Genetic Criticism and the Creative Process*, *op. cit.*; Friedemann Sallis, "La classification et la gestion des manuscrits musicaux de la Collection György Kurtág conservée à la Fondation Paul Sacher," in Mariá Grabócz and Jean Paul Olive, eds., *Gestes, fragments, timbres: la musique de György Kurtág* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2008), pp. 39-50; Friedmann Sallis, Nelson Ouellet et al, *The Sketchbooks of György Kurtág. A database of information extracted from 106 sketchbooks conserved in the György Kurtág Collection of the Paul Sacher Foundation* (Moncton: University of Moncton, 2004). My own extensive sketch study in Ian Pace, *Michael Finnissy's The History of Photography in Sound: A Study of Sources, Techniques and Interpretation* (Swarland: Divine Art, 2013), published online at http://www.divine-art.co.uk/CD/HOPIS.pdf (accessed May 6, 2015), does not provide any detailed inventory of sketches, though such an inventory is in the process of preparation for later cataloguing.

(though the sketches had not necessarily been properly catalogued when earlier scholars surveyed them). This above all helps to clarify what comes from Ferneyhough, what from Pätzold, though this is less clear in some of her later articles.

Pätzold details the fundamental rows employed in the work, as well as foundational sequences of chords and their transformations (which are sometimes microtonal), and traces the provenance of the work's structure by presenting a formulation of the individual parts of the cycle as "Zeitphantasien" to match Piranesi's "Raumphantasien."[281] She provides long colored tables to divide material into broader groups, and gives the most exhaustive consideration yet of different stages of the composition of every single bar of *Superscriptio*, considering the row, pitch, and cell development, bar structure, pulse density, rhythm, phrase length, use of grace notes, and the interrelations between these employed in the work's creation.[282] Nonetheless, Pätzold does not fundamentally break with the Toop model for sketch-based analysis; the section on analytical aspects derived from listening is a small fraction (at 25 pages)[283] of the length of the section primarily on compositional technique (421 pages).[284] Like Toop, Pätzold does in the latter concentrate to some extent not only on the "what" but also the "why," especially with respect to some notational matters. What is lacking from both writers, however, is any serious consideration of the possibility that the results of Ferneyhough's compositional processes might be significantly different to those he imagines.

Another dissertation also appeared in 2002 from Pietro Cavalotti, which was published in 2006.[285] This examines the *Carceri* cycle alongside Lachenmann's *Tanzsuite mit Deutschlandlied* (1979-80) and Gérard Grisey's *Talea* (1986) in the context of poststructuralist and postmodern thought of Derrida, Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari, Lyotard, and Charles Jencks. Cavalotti concentrates in particular at Lachenmann's 1990 essay "Zum Problem des Strukturalismus"[286] (entailing a somewhat too-easy conflation of Lachenmann's term with that employed in French philosophical thought, as I have elsewhere criticized in the work of Alistair Williams),[287] and Ferneyhough's essay "Parallel Universes" whose first version originated in the same year,[288] in which he made explicit reference to Deleuze and Guattari's *Mille plateaux*; Cavalotti relates this to other aspects of Ferneyhough's thought as expressed in interviews and writings. His investigation of *Carceri*, however, largely consists of an exegesis of the sketch material in the manner of Toop et al., though with a fair attempt to interpret Ferneyhough's

[281] Pätzold, "*Carceri d'Invenzione*," pp. 424-437.
[282] Ibid., pp. 23-142.
[283] Ibid., pp. 424-448.
[284] Ibid., pp. 3-423.
[285] Pietro Cavallotti, *Differenzen. Poststrukturalistische Aspekte in der Musik der 1980er Jahre am Beispiel von Helmut Lachenmann, Brian Ferneyhough und Gérard Grisey* (Schliengen: Edition Argus, 2006). For a short review of both this and Pätzold's dissertation, see Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf, "Ins Detail: zwei Dissertationen zu Brian Ferneyhough," *Musik und Ästhetik* 11/42 (2007), pp. 110-113.
[286] Helmut Lachenmann, "Zum Problem des Strukturalismus" (1990), in *Musik in existentielle Erfahrung: Schriften 1966–1995*, ed. Josef Häusler (Wiesbaden; Breitkopf & Härtel, 1996), pp. 83-92. See Cavallotti, *Differenzen*, pp. 59-63 on this.
[287] Ian Pace, review of Alistair Williams, *Music in Germany since 1968* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), in *Tempo*, 68/268 (April 2014), pp. 116-121.
[288] Ferneyhough, "Parallel Universes" (1993), in *Collected Writings*, pp. 76-83; this essay derived from a lecture of the same name given at the Darmstädter Ferienkurse in 1990.

compositional choices through the model of Deleuze and Guattari's model of rhizomatic multiplicities.[289]

Considerably more problematic was another doctoral dissertation, that of Lois Fitch, which followed in 2004.[290] Fitch's work undoubtedly constitutes a more exhaustive consideration of the concept of the figure than any other writing before that of Francis Courtot (see below), drawing in particular upon Deleuze's writings on Bacon, emphasizing how the notion of the figure is foregrounded by both Ferneyhough and Bacon,[291] as well as making ample reference to the work of Adorno. Fitch reiterates Ferneyhough's self-fashioning at its most grandiose, with some of his own statements adduced as evidence. She views him as a late modernist heir to Schoenberg on the basis of such tenuous links as the fact of both composers' emigration from Europe to America (with no consideration of the vast difference between fleeing Nazi Germany on one hand, and going to San Diego just because offered a secure, permanent position, on the other), the fact that both are also painters, the obvious (and highly self-conscious, on Ferneyhough's part) relationship between Ferneyhough's Fourth String Quartet (1987-90) and String Trio (1995) and parallel works of Schoenberg, the fact that both composers apparently combine "progressive" and "conservative" impulses (with little consideration of the different historical contexts inhabited by each), and the fact that Ferneyhough, like Schoenberg, sometimes combines pitch material vertically into chords.[292]

In this dissertation and her later monograph, Fitch is above all at pains to argue for Ferneyhough's place in tradition (and is thus happy to argue for his conservatism), holding up his work as distinct from many other musical tendencies current during his compositional career. She draws upon a quasi-organic view of history and musical development that was already beginning to become outdated a hundred years before her thesis. Like so many others, she is concerned to comment upon Ferneyhough's relationship to integral serialism and distance him from this movement (she remarks upon his project of re-opening a type of musical space "in the aftermath of total serialism"[293] and indicates that the application of Deleuze's theories to musical material offers "one possible way in which the "standstill" of total serialism can be overcome").[294] However,

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[289] Cavallotti, *Differenzen*, pp. 128-183. See also Cavallotti, "Einige Bemerkungen über die Tonhöhen Organisation in Brian Ferneyhoughs Zyklus *Carceri d'invenzione,"* in *Mitteilungen der Paul Sacher Stiftung* 13 (2000), pp. 48-53, and "Piranesis Einfluß in Brian Ferneyhoughs *Carceri d'invenzione*," in *Positionen. Beiträge zur neuen Musik* 59 (2004), pp. 33-35.

[290] Lois Fitch, "Brian Ferneyhough: The Logic of the Figure" (PhD dissertation, University of Durham, 2004).

[291] Ibid., p. 6. Fitch makes comparisons with Bacon at various points, for example comparing Bacon's different mediations of a head and face with Ferneyhough's different figurations (ibid., pp. 219-223), but relies almost entirely upon Ferneyhough's own descriptions of the piece, not daring to suggest much derived from independent listening. Some of the secondary literature she cites, such as a 1987 book by David Sylvester (*The Brutality of Fact: Interviews with Francis Bacon*, third edition [London: Thames and Hudson, 1987], cited Fitch, p. 260), also cited by Deleuze (*Francis Bacon*, pp. 29, 39) was already dated at the time of her dissertation because of new discoveries about Bacon's sketches (See Louise Jury, "Art world torn over Bacon's sketches," *The Independent*, February 14, 1999), an issue to which she specifically alludes.

[292] Fitch, "The Logic of the Figure," pp. 14-19.

[293] Ibid., p. 44.

[294] Ibid., p. 45. Here Fitch alludes to Adorno's 1954 lecture "Das Altern der Neuen Musik" (translated by Susan H. Gillespie as "The Aging of the New Music," in *Essays on Music*, edited Richard Leppert [Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2002], pp. 181-202), seemingly

these arguments require a monolithic view of musical composition from 1945 until Ferneyhough's first mature works;[295] one would think that Cage, Kagel, Zimmermann, Schnebel, Ligeti, or Bussotti had never happened (not a mistake Ferneyhough would make).

To explain the concept of the figure historically, Fitch quotes the work of Michael Spitzer on *Figurenlehre,*[296] and also draws attention to the more recent roots of Ferneyhough's concept in Jean-François Lyotard's own doctoral thesis *Discours, figure* (1971),[297] and in particular his work on Cézanne, which is compared to that of Deleuze on Bacon.[298] This is a good basis upon which to start, but the results disappoint because the appropriation of these intellectuals more resembles academic window-dressing than sustained critical comparison. Many extended sections consist essentially of reiterations of arguments of Lyotard, Deleuze, and Adorno padded out with quotations; a few other authors and the odd commentator are cited, but Fitch never succeeds in establishing an independent critical perspective; nor does this seem to be any particular priority for her.[299] Frequently such passages occupy an extremely tangential position relative to what might otherwise be an ongoing discussion of Ferneyhough, with parallels between intellectuals drawn awkwardly.[300] One example of this is a highly selective reading of

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unconcerned about the fact that what may have momentarily seemed true to Adorno (mostly on the basis of an encounter with Goeyvaerts and Stockhausen) in 1954 might be very different for him (had he survived until then) or anyone else in the 1980s, when the works in question of Ferneyhough were being composed. This is an especially unfortunate oversight in view of the fact that she criticizes Mahnkopf for an apparently similar oversight with a much smaller time lag (see below).

[295] Fitch, "The Logic of the Figure," pp. 44-45. Elsewhere, Fitch cites Ferneyhough's disapproval of how neo-romantics draw upon "a falsified model of musical history" that is "hypostatised into a massive totality" (Ferneyhough, "Form-Figure-Style," p. 22, cited in Fitch, "The Logic of the Figure," p. 85), but this is no less true of her own characterization of serialism. She criticizes Mahnkopf for ignoring the 20 year period between Adorno's "Vers une musique informelle" and Ferneyhough's essay (ibid., pp. 57-58, 72-73), but she herself demonstrates little awareness of the music written in the interim period of which Mahnkopf is undoubtedly aware.

[296] Specifically Michael Spitzer, *Metaphor and Musical Thought* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2004). Fitch's tendency to fill out arguments with unmediated quotes is already clearly in evidence as when she writes of "the German compositional tradition of *Figurenlehre* which 'originates with the mapping of rhetorical terminology onto musical material'" (citing Spitzer p. 140), then simply uses Spitzer's entire sentence "*Figurenlehre*, by attending to the specificity of musical material, helps us 'see' the musical figure as if it were a plastic image by analogy to painting" (ibid.) with no comment other than a preceding "Indeed" (Fitch, "The Logic of the Figure," pp. 31-32). This sort of approach recurs frequently through the course of the dissertation.

[297] Jean-François Lyotard, *Discours, figure* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1971). Fitch, however generally draws upon just that section of this thesis reproduced in translation in *The Lyotard Reader*, Andrew Benjamin, ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), specifically "The Dream Work Does Not Think," pp. 19-51, and upon other passages translated in Bill Readings, *Introducing Lyotard: Art and Politics* (London: Routledge, 1991).

[298] The principal writings sourced from Deleuze are his *Francis Bacon: Logique de la sensation*, two volumes (Paris: Éditions de la Différence, 1981 and revised edition, 1984), in the version as *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* alluded to earlier. On Adorno, a key text cited is "On Some Relationships Between Music and Painting," translated Susan Gillespie, *Musical Quarterly* 79/1 (Spring 1995), pp. 66-79.

[299] What might appear at first to constitute "close reading" is revealed on closer inspection to be more akin to padding through laborious reiteration of every detail of each writer's texts, studded with some references to secondary sources, which has the effect of deferring or deflecting proper comparative evaluation.

[300] As in the following especially egregious example of heavy-handed rhetoric replete with unexamined concepts and padded out with quotations: "His [Ferneyhough's] position, set out in 'Parallel Universes,' resonates strongly with Lyotard's own. Readings confirms this, pointing to 'the absence of determinate

Adorno used to bolster an attempt to draw parallels between Bacon's use of space and Ferneyhough's use of time. Fitch's style is replete with the terminology of these authors, giving a veneer of intellectualism that ultimately serves more to mystify than illuminate; this is in striking contrast to the clarity and incision of Feller's writings. An example of this would be the following sentence from Fitch: "Ferneyhough's musical language exudes a 'personal style' and an engagement with the body (much as Merleau-Ponty advocates in respect of language proper) insofar as the musical object is sensible and conveys a depth that cannot be reduced to a two-dimensional projection on a transparent screen."[301] Nowhere in the thesis does Fitch attempt to substantiate the initial claim and thus pin down the essential aspects of this "personal style," whilst the latter part of the thesis relies upon evocations of "depth," a term that without being given a specifically *musical* definition (for example, to do with the existence of multiple simultaneous parametric, thematic, timbral, or other strands) itself amounts to little more than a mystification.

Fitch's attempts to adapt Deleuze's conception of the figure to relate to Ferneyhough do not really surmount the considerable difficulties of mapping a medium with strong representational potential, such as painting, onto one in which such representation is far more ambiguous, such as music.[302] Fitch does not provide her own definition of the figure, instead essentially reiterating Ferneyhough's comments on it (albeit with an interesting short section on the concept as used by Donatoni).[303] She also cites Adorno's concept of the "thematic figure" as used in his study of Mahler,[304] but without really explaining how it amounts to anything comparable to Ferneyhough's concept. She evokes Adorno and Lyotard on the Holocaust,[305] but does not show

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criteria by which History may be constructed, once we have become incredulous concerning the discourse of History.' Again, Ferneyhough, who seeks the 'prospect of a further fruitfully recuperative role for the Modernist project' echoes Lyotard, for whom 'postmodernism is not a break with modernity but a radical rewriting, asking the question of what phrase to link to modernity, to put next.' If this results in post-Historical, historically responsible criticism then Ferneyhough grasps that art potentially offers the materials and techniques to bear out this 'End of History', to survive it, and to re-articulate human self-awareness: to discover the 'phrase to link to modernity.' His is an attempt to realise the 'potential reinsertion of a critical (rather than purely ironic) self-reflexivity into the post-Historic pure contingency of the artwork.' The 'event' is temporal in that it brings a happening from the past to sensate and non-representational (non-conceptual) presence, giving it a duration and tactility that are to be differentiated from rationally unfolding time and the notion of historical progress. That History unfolds in time is taken for granted; that time is self-evident for historical events is less certain." (Fitch, "The Logic of the Figure," p. 292).

[301] Ibid., pp. 213-214.

[302] Fitch tries to do this by comparing the "false fidelity" of uncritical figurative painting and photography to the use of relatively unmediated musical gestures with most "immediate" emotive effect, such as Ferneyhough criticizes amongst neo-romantics (ibid., pp. 82-86). This conceptual distance makes her long exegesis of Deleuze's views on Bacon's "smudged" paintings (pp. 93-98) and their relationship to Ferneyhough unconvincing. The same problem occurs during her attempts to compare Ferneyhough's concept with that used in the context of written text by Lyotard (ibid., pp. 142-174).

[303] Fitch cites Donatoni's essays "Processus et figure" and "On compose pour se composer," both printed in *Entretemps 2* (November 1986). See Fitch, "The Logic of the Figure," pp. 121-136. This section might have had the potential for a wider discussion of the "Italianate" qualities at least of some of Ferneyhough's earlier work, but this is not pursued.

[304] Ibid., p. 109.

[305] Ibid., pp. 274-280. See. for example, the following passage: "Further to this, and continuing to interpret Adorno, after Lyotard, Readings argues that 'art must not exchange the affect of the Holocaust [as event],

convincingly how such a calamitous event and aesthetic and philosophical responses to it can be seen to be manifest in Ferneyhough's thought and work other than by rough coincidence of a few concepts in a different historical context.

Ultimately Fitch spends a long time trying to explain the Adornian argument that Ferneyhough does draw upon a historical musical language (but does not almost every composer in some sense?) but attempts to pursue its immanent developmental potential rather than treating it as a reified set of handed-down sources of emotional immediacy. Very few of the comparisons with Deleuze and Bacon reveal much more that is meaningful in the context of specific works. There is a fruitful exploration to be had of the points of contact and departure between Bacon's unwillingness to wholly abandon artistic representation (and consequent antipathy towards such movements as Abstract Expressionism) and Ferneyhough's employment of a musical language that on the microscopic level most frequently exhibits points of contact with a historically-inherited Austro-German language of musical gesture. However, this comparison needs to be made more incisively and rigorously at all times, rather than through laborious presentations of each artist's ideas followed by the attempt to force them together with minimal consideration of specific works. If a spatial art can be mapped onto a sonic-temporal one, this needs to be demonstrated through comparisons of specific manifestations of either, not simply through a handful of similarities between the ideas behind them.

What might have been more insightful is a discussion of both Ferneyhough's and Wolfgang Rihm's appropriations of and relationship to inherited categories of musical material in a wider historical context of compositional borrowings and mediation. Such an exploration might also consider how hypostatization or deliberate archaism can be significantly affected by techniques of fragmentation, juxtaposition, or superimposition, themselves sometimes every bit as mediatory as Ferneyhough's more "organic" approaches. This was something certainly considered by Adorno in his study of Mahler, but it is rare to find anything which could be deemed comparable in Ferneyhough, save perhaps in some of his later works such as *Opus Contra Naturam* (1999-2000) or *Plötzlichkeit*. Fitch briefly cites Alistair Williams on this in the context of Rihm[306]—mostly in order, on his part, in order to ask the tired "is this modern or postmodern?" question—but fights shy of developing a comparison, instead simply stating that Ferneyhough is a quite different composer and reiterating Ferneyhough's critique of Rihm et al. Both Fitch and Williams would have done well to consider the work of Kagel in this context.

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the emotion which moves us out of representation, for a representation that claims to give a cognitive signification to the Holocaust.' In this Lyotard and Adorno are agreed—art must not exchange the figural for the figurative or discursive: as Adorno suggests, 'dealing discursively with it would be an outrage, for the new imperative gives us a bodily sensation of the moral addendum—bodily, because it is now the practical abhorrence of the unbearable physical agony to which individuals are exposed....' Readings adds to the hypothesis (that the catastrophe of the diagram is operative historically) when he argues that 'it is an ethical necessity that the Holocaust haunt us, that [as an "event"] it cannot be remembered but cannot be forgotten either.' If one takes the artwork to be a (mediated) testimony to the historical event, it is possible to extrapolate a model for history from Bacon and Ferneyhough's experience of the 'shifting' between the figurative (representational) and the diagrammatic (abstract and catastrophic), which leads to the emergence of the 'figurally sensate.'" (pp. 276-277). Evoking the Holocaust over an extended passage in order to try and sustain a particular point about Ferneyhough's abstract processes, is crass, to say the least.

[306] Ibid., pp. 58-59, citing Alistair Williams, "Adorno and the Semantics of Modernism," *Perspectives of New Music*, 37/2 (Summer 1999), pp. 29-50.

Two more book-length volumes dedicated to Ferneyhough appeared at the end of the 2000s: first a special volume of *Musik-Konzepte*,[307] including translations of two of Ferneyhough's earlier essays, articles by Fitch and Pätzold both essentially reiterating sections of their dissertations, and the piece by Frieder Reininghaus on *Shadowtime* mentioned earlier. Otherwise, two essays stand out: Ferdinand Zehentreiter's[308] reading of Ferneyhough in light of Claude Lévi-Strauss and Adorno's critiques of post-1945 modernism, contrasting these with Ferneyhough's own response in the essay "The Tactility of Time,"[309] viewed as better able to do justice to the nature of "experience" (*Erfahrung*). Unfortunately, Zehentreiter does not attempt to relate this reading to Ferneyhough's compositions.[310] Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf provides a re-examination of what at the time of publication was an almost forgotten work of Ferneyhough, the orchestral *La terre est un homme* (which has since had a welcome revival in the 2011 "Total Immersion" weekend of Ferneyhough's music in the Barbican Centre, London).[311] Mahnkopf identifies fundamental macro-structural categories in the work, which he relates to the ideas of Chilean surrealist painter Roberto Matta, the primary inspiration, as well as to various other pieces across Ferneyhough's output. Mahnkopf portrays *La terre est un homme* as a culmination point, in which Ferneyhough achieved such a level of density and intricacy that a change of direction was needed afterwards (comparisons in this respect with Finnissy's *alongside* would be illuminating).

Composer Francis Courtot's 2009 book[312] was the first single-authored monograph covering the breadth of Ferneyhough's work, and remains the most important of its type. Courtot structures his study thematically rather than chronologically, though he does provide a new division of Ferneyhough's output into "periods": first, "hermeticism" (1965-7, up to the *Sonatas*, which Courtot sees as oscillating between two axes provided by Stockhausen and Hindemith, then inflected with Webern and early Boulez); second, "take-off" (1967-71, entailing a greater degree of freedom, influences from painting, philosophy, and elsewhere, sonorous expansion in works such as *Firecycle Beta* and aspects of indeterminacy in *Cassandra's Dream Song* and *Sieben Sterne*, and according to Courtot, the influence of Klaus Huber); third, "epic struggle" (1974-9, featuring such works as the three *Time and Motion Studies* (1971-7), *Unity Capsule*, *Transit,* and *La terre est un homme*, featuring wide expansion of resources to include the orchestra, electronics, and instruments pushed to their very extremes, the emergence of the trichotomy gesture-figure-texture, and an underlying theme of death in many works); fourth, "redeployment" (1980-90, running from *Lemma-Icon-Epigram* through to the Fourth String Quartet, featuring new intellectual and artistic influences—Piranesi,

[307] *Musik-Konzepte. Neue Folge 140. Brian Ferneyhough*, edited Ulrich Tadday (Munich: edition text + kritik, 2008).

[308] Ferdinand Zehentreiter, "Jenseits des »Alterns der neuen Musik«. Ausdrucksästhetische Korrespondenzen zwischen Theodor W. Adorno, Claude Lévi-Strauss und Brian Ferneyhough," ibid., pp. 4-18.

[309] Ferneyhough, "The Tactility of Time" (1988), in *Collected Writings*, pp. 42-50.

[310] For an interesting brief consideration of how this is manifested in particular moments in Ferneyhough works, see Larson Powell, "The Experience of Complexity: The Critical Discussion Concerning Brian Ferneyhough," review of *Musik-Konzepte 140: Brian Ferneyhough*, at http://www.searchnewmusic.org/powell_review.pdf (accessed April 5, 2014), p. 2.

[311] Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf, "Brian Ferneyhough: *La terre est un homme*," *Musik-Konzepte* 140, pp. 51-69.

[312] Francis Courtot, *Brian Ferneyhough: Figures et Dialogues* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2009). Courtot's sources are exclusively in French and English, so he is unable to engage with German texts on Ferneyhough.

Bruegel, Baudelaire, Adorno, Benjamin—as well as a "purer" writing in the quartets, stronger influence of Schoenberg, and a pronounced architectural sense that is nonetheless less monumentalist than previously), followed by a much less well-defined fifth period of "divergences and convergences" (1990-?, with a multiplicity of genres, increased allusion to Schoenberg in *On Stellar Magnitudes* and the String Trio, and of course in *Shadowtime*).[313] Halbreich's first category coincides roughly with Courtot's first, and his second with Courtot's second and third; whilst Finnissy's first is synonymous with Courtot's first and second, and his second with Courtot's third.

The range of "dialogues" Courtot explores is broad:[314] with conceptions of both complexity and simplicity (and of course the "new complexity" trope), with perception and expression (in both of which cases Courtot touches upon important factors, but these need considerably more extended treatment), with interpretation (mostly re-treading the issues explored by others), with teaching (very briefly), and with other art forms (as prefigured in the delineation of Ferneyhough's output), philosophy, and ideas of omnidirectionality (in the manner of Benjamin's *flâneur*).

In terms of "figures," Courtot's 124-page treatment is more detailed and incisive than that of any previous writer, focusing on the manifestation of the concept in the *music* rather than just the writings; he is able to provide a wide range of musical examples (using both sketches and work-immanent analysis) to exemplify the relationship between the abstract and the specific, as well as giving examples of earlier repertoire (Bach, Beethoven, and Debussy; also Boulez, Stockhausen, Schaeffer, Berio, Lachenmann, and others) for which the concept may also be applicable.[315] He begins by locating Ferneyhough in terms of proximity to and distance from the serialism of Boulez and Stockhausen on one hand, arguing somewhat simplistically that Ferneyhough reverses a Boulezian approach for generating complex material from simple rows, instead deriving simple layers from a complex conception. It would be more nuanced to argue that the difference between Boulez and Ferneyhough is one of degree; both composers work on both microscopic and macroscopic levels to differing extents, though Courtot importantly evokes Ferneyhough's own words[316] on a non-relationship between these levels, which he uses to differentiate him strongly from the more organically integrated approaches of Stockhausen.[317] On the other hand, and more briefly, Courtot considers Ferneyhough in terms of the spectralism of Gérard Grisey, Philippe Hurel, and Tristan Murail on the other, in large measure through a comment by Ferneyhough[318] on the dichotomy that continues to dominate French contemporary musical discourse.

Courtot's use of sketches is in some ways sophisticated and constructive; they clearly inform his analyses, but he also extrapolates wider information from them, though rarely engages critically with their relationship to the final work. Following a detailed sketch-based investigation of Ferneyhough's processes for rhythm and meter in the Third Quartet, examining the symmetrical bar structures and derivation from a few small rhythmic cells, Courtot goes on to try and extract the skeletal framework, in terms of

[313] Ibid., pp. 19-28.
[314] Ibid., pp. 153-210.
[315] Ibid., pp. 29-152.
[316] Ferneyhough, Interview with Jean-Baptiste Barrière, in *Collected Writings*, p. 416.
[317] Courtot, *Ferneyhough*, p. 31.
[318] Ferneyhough, Interview with Antonio de Lisa, in *Collected Writings*, p. 423.

pitch and rhythm, of which the first three bars of the first of the *Etudes transcendantales* is an elaboration, through a process that generally accords primacy to the first of every group of periodic durations or other similar gesture. Successive iterations of this process extract something akin to a *cantus firmus*, though the analytical process runs the danger of being self-confirming. Furthermore, on the basis of an analysis by Ferneyhough himself of the first two bars of the fifth *Étude*, Courtot is able to trace in detail the two-layered rhythmic plan of the work (one layer of shifting periodic pulses, the other moving from a more gestural approach to rhythm towards periodicity then back again),[319] an illuminating analysis far from self-evident from the score and not found anywhere in Pätzold or Toop.

But most important is Courtot's tracing of gesture-figure-texture across different parameters of various Ferneyhough works. Identifying gestures is straightforward at the beginning of the Second Quartet because of the clear silences; in the clarinet solo at the beginning of *Carceri III*, Courtot identifies larger units separated by short rests, but also subdivides the first such gestural unit into five smaller units, then presents each of the succeeding units in terms of variants of these micro-units (though some of the connections are rather tenuous, in a manner reminiscent of high structuralist analyses of poetry, or some Réti-influenced or semiotic musical analyses, via which one could potentially relate almost anything to anything else).[320] Similarly, whilst Courtot's differentiation of "phrases" and "sequences" in *Time and Motion Study II* is clear and coherent, the relationships between passages he claims need fleshing out in more detail.[321]

Next, Courtot considers types of gestures defined by mode of playing, such as *glissandi*, use of register, legato over large intervals, extremes of tempo whilst maintaining detailed dynamics, and so on, in order to expand the definition of the category of gesture, and emphasize its specific instrumental expression, over and above its origins in parametric approaches. He uses this approach to work through a consideration of the two versions of *Funérailles*, suggesting that while in the first piece, "the gestures remain gestures," within a generally linear design, the second, with its extensive use of detours, enables the "potential figures" to be revealed from the first.[322] This is convincing; less so is his rather unfocused exploration of further ideas concerning the distinction between potential and realization in the cases of the Third Quartet and *Etudes transcendantales*.[323] A brief traversal of the Second Quartet focuses primarily on the re-incorporation of aspects of the opening gestures within what begins as a legato polyphonic texture (from bar 57 onwards), so as to argue that the very form of the work amounts to "a torque between the presence and absence of the figures."[324] Soon afterwards, he essentially re-presents Ferneyhough's 1990 conception of the interdependent gesture, figure, and texture as follows:

[319] Courtot, *Ferneyhough*, pp. 46-55.
[320] Ibid., pp. 66-9.
[321] Ibid., pp. 70-73.
[322] Ibid., p. 83.
[323] Ibid., p. 84.
[324] Ibid., pp. 87-93.

> The gesture is a concretion of potentially fertile parametric strata, which impresses as a concrete instrumental object, unstable, endowed with an expressive signifying force, but also contextual.
>
> The figure is a complex induced from parametric methods which are sufficiently specific to describe a gesture, but also sufficiently general to enable the deduction of other gestures. Its role is to induce lines of force; the lines which emerge from such a perspective demonstrate one of the form-vectors to come from the composition.
>
> Textures are the object of musical listening, the most comprehensive level of attribution of sonic identities. They are re-grouped into classes, which are used to represent the affinity of the gestures put in place by the score.[325]

This definition is used by Courtot in order to relate Ferneyhough's conception of figure to Stockhausen's conception of group, to set figure alongside parameter and carefully distinguish one from the other, and also to counter the idea that a figure could be defined morphologically. This latter, "poietic" tactic is very likely undertaken in order to validate Ferneyhough's conception of generating very similar surfaces using different and changing techniques.[326]

Notwithstanding all of this valiant effort on his part, I remain unconvinced of the value of the term "figure" itself. Fitch, in her dissertation, cites Adorno's view of Mahler's themes as "developing themes that retain their essence unchanged,"[327] which mirrors Donatoni's concept (essentially a thematic archetype that can appear in many different stages of transformation), but does not convincingly show how this formulation can really be applied to complex music such as that of Ferneyhough; to do so would at least require substantiation with more specific musical examples. Courtot does provide some of this, as do Melchiorre and Panisello,[328] but I do not ultimately see how even in their hands the concept significantly improves upon that of *archetype*, of which gesture is a particular realization. Simply using a different term is no problem in itself, but in this case the term suffers from insufficient definition on the part of most writers. One finds this problem in Ferneyhough's own statements: his 1984 assertion that a "search for a fixed definition" is "an enterprise of at best doubtful utility"[329] is much too convenient; that according to Ferneyhough "a figure does not exist, in material terms" does not obviate the need for a conceptual definition. Courtot's perspective on the Second Quartet (which could equally be employed for *Lemma-Icon-Epigram*, with its own means of allowing one material to act upon another) does not require this concept to explain simply the distribution and integration of such gestural archetypes as chords, short silences, or rhythmic *glissandi*; the term is more appropriate for the passages he cites from Bach, Beethoven, and Debussy (melodic or gestural shapes or categories), but the definition required is simpler than that provided by Ferneyhough. Ultimately, none of the writers have convinced me that the term, as used by Ferneyhough, does not amount to something of a mystification, turning what should be a reasonably clear and coherent approach to

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[325] Ibid., p. 99.
[326] Ibid., pp. 100-112.
[327] Theodor Adorno, *Mahler: A Musical Physiogonomy*, translated Edmund Jephcott (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1992), p. 72, as cited in Fitch, "The Logic of the Figure," p. 131.
[328] Panisello, "Zum *Dritten Streichquartett* von Brian Ferneyhough," pp. 163-172. See the earlier discussion on the relevant sections in Melchiorre.
[329] Ferneyhough, "Il Tempo della Figura," p. 41. It is in response to this statement that Courtot marshals arguments against a morphological definition (Courtot, *Ferneyhough*, pp. 108-112), but this is not the only type of definition.

both composition and analysis in terms of types and categories into something founded upon near-metaphysical postulations.

All writers construct their own "Ferneyhough" in one way or another, and the writings by other composers are often amongst the most creative in this respect. But most of the existing literature (with the work of Feller, Panisello, and to some extent Reynolds and Courtot, as relative exceptions) lacks clearly presented critical perspectives on the work that go beyond excessively subservient attitudes towards the composer's own writings, pronouncements, and self-conceptions. Lacking as well are perspectives that suggest how and why the music might be meaningful or of interest to anyone not already fully subscribed to Ferneyhough's particular set of preoccupations, as well as detailed and sustained engagement with the sounding music in such a way as could be done by one with both developed aural facilities and also sufficient analytical technique to be able to articulate that which is aurally available. Nor does Lois Fitch's recent monograph on Ferneyhough[330] supply any of these things; it features most of the problems considered above, and a significant number of others as well.

The Hagiography of Fitch

I have discussed Fitch's Ferneyhough book in some detail in a highly critical review-article elsewhere[331] and do not wish to reiterate the same material in detail here. I will instead summarize my findings there with the addition of some further material and perspectives.

The most positive aspects of the book are the following: it incorporates material on all of Ferneyhough's oeuvre at the time of writing, it includes a small amount of new biographical material relating to Ferneyhough's very early life[332] (though the biographical chapter rapidly deteriorates afterwards), and it draws upon a survey of the complete collection of sketches and unpublished materials[333] at the Paul Sacher Stiftung. Unfortunately, the last is done without any consideration of the methodological debates outlined above and eschews the more detailed working through compositional process

[330] Lois Fitch, *Brian Ferneyhough* (Bristol: Intellect, 2013); hereafter simply "Fitch, *Ferneyhough*."

[331] Ian Pace, "Ferneyhough Hero: Scholarship and Promotion," *Music and Letters*, 96/1 (February 2015), pp. 99-112.

[332] Based upon some private correspondence that includes a few rather purple nostalgic evocations, Fitch mentions Ferneyhough's coming across instruments in need of repair, including a soprano trombone and other obsolete instruments, learning brass instruments at his school, learning the cornet and conducting the Coventry School of Music Brass Band, and encountering some opposition from parents to his musical ambitions. This leads to a brief passage, based almost exclusively on both Ferneyhough's own comments and information provided by Texier, and unfortunately presented without adequate critical reflection, in which Fitch discusses possible relationships between the isolation of Ferneyhough's early life with a need for self-reinvention upon moving to Germany. Further comments about the visual density of Ferneyhough's notation, as well as a few citations by Ferneyhough about the British class system (Fitch, *Ferneyhough*, pp. 17-19) are potentially fruitful, but are not adequately developed.

[333] On this basis, Fitch makes a few vague allusions to "quasi-Second Viennese School free atonality," the use of multiple colors in a score in a piano piece *Metamorphoses on the Origins of Fire* (early 1960s), and a "Webernesque gestural vocabulary" with specific dynamics and articulations in the *Three Little Pieces for Orchestra* (1961) (ibid., pp. 22-23). She does not mention the *Invention* (1965) for piano; for a copy of this, I am most grateful to Michael Finnissy.

found in the work of others; instead one finds mostly copying of lists, charts, and written remarks.

From beginning to end, the book is hagiographic in nature to a high degree, in a manner that sometimes would seem more appropriate for a celebrity or lifestyle magazine. It lacks a critical attitude towards sources, methodological reflection, any use of theoretical models other than those provided by Ferneyhough, any developed aural/analytical analysis, and any significant information about the wider context of post-1945 music. Apparently eschewing her earlier adoption of the Griffiths/Feller "postmodern modernist" view of Ferneyhough, Fitch sets out the more standard view of the provenance of Ferneyhough's work early on:

> The composer readily acknowledges affinities with the kinds of techniques and principles affirmed in 1950s and 1960s Darmstadt, as well as the earlier Second Viennese School, particularly the music of Anton Webern. Yet he is critical of the arbitrary interrelationships forced upon the parameters in some examples of serialism or post-serial composition.[334] (p. 6)

Long passages are padded out by others' opinions in unmediated form, whilst Ferneyhough's own opinions, as expressed in interviews and writings, frequently serve as a convenient substitute for any individual engagement with the work. Courtot is also generous with his use of Ferneyhough quotations, but is far more ready to interrogate them, sometimes quite obsessively. The situation is very different with Fitch: for example, in discussing *Adagissimo* (1983), she writes that "The sharp contrast between the material of the two pairs of instruments is a result of complex prolational processes that are very audible, texturally speaking"[335] (p. 146). This might seem to represent an acute critical insight, at least until one reads Ferneyhough's own note in the score: "The work employs complex prolational techniques on several levels. The processual strata are also distinguished in timbre and texture. The ensemble is clearly divided into two groups, with the two violins playing rapid, florid gestures, and the viola and cello playing more melodically linear material."[336]

The mannered prose style is no improvement on that found in her dissertation, with many tortuous passages, giving a surface veneer of intellectualism, that do not ultimately serve any elucidatory or revelatory function. In many ways, the book is structured rather more in the manner of an old-style "life and works" of a "great man," akin to the types of *Master Musicians* volumes that were published some decades ago, than in the form of critical scholarship. Eight chapters appear on all of the works, occupying 265 pages of a total of 366 excluding bibliography and index. These are organized by genre, as with a nineteenth-century composer: solo works, chamber "concertos," other chamber music, string quartets, the *Time and Motion Study* cycle, *Carceri d'Invenzione* cycle, the opera *Shadowtime*, then works for orchestra and large ensemble, causing significant difficulty in tracing commonalities between pieces from the same period. These chapters are book-ended by chapters on biography and notation at the beginning, and aesthetics at the end.

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[334] Ibid., p. 6.
[335] Ibid., p. 146.
[336] Brian Ferneyhough, *Adagissimo* (London, Frankfurt, & New York: Edition Peters, undated), p. 4.

An attitude of societal detachment as presented by Ferneyhough himself and some later commentators (including Harvey) is taken as unquestionably a good thing; any who have questioned Fitch's fundamentalist faith in the unerring and unimpeachable wisdom of Ferneyhough, are simply dismissed without any proper critical assessment, or used in order to portray Ferneyhough as some type of martyr. The quality of the work, presented as an ontological given, is never justified through any sustained engagement with it as sound. Overall, the tone of writing is defensive and somewhat precious, and Ferneyhough is occasionally presented as if he were an obscure and neglected figure.

Fitch divides Ferneyhough's output into four "periods" that differ from those delineated by Halbreich, Finnissy, Reynolds, and Courtot: a long "parametric" period leading from the earliest works until the late 1970s; a more gesturally-oriented period from the early 1980s; a period featuring chamber concertos, and a "late" period from *Shadowtime* onwards in which traditional forms are abandoned, with miniature formal sections employed within large-scale designs.[337] These divisions are not unreasonable for the most part, but the separation out of the "concertos" from *La Chute d'Icare* onwards rather preclude comparison with earlier examples of the medium in the *Etudes transcendantales* (as deserving of inclusion as *On Stellar Magnitudes*) or *Carceri d'Invenzione II* (1983-5) for solo flute and chamber orchestra. Whereas in her dissertation Fitch did not substantiate the claim of a "personal style" for Ferneyhough, here she does so to a minimal degree, through the brief mention of a consistently parametric approach, and also the rather nebulously defined use of a relationship between a musical duration and the material that fills it.[338]

She also refers to Hawkins (for whose dissertation Fitch herself was for a while co-supervisor),[339] and Duncan in a rather simplified form; more worryingly, her chapter about notation seems heavily indebted to them and others without proper attribution. Some of the similarities may be attributable primarily to "recency," the process by which one may unconsciously reiterate other things one has read recently, as at the beginning of her section on "The Narrative of Intellectualism."[340] The following passage from this chapter should give some idea of the nature of the problem:

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[337] Fitch, *Ferneyhough* p. 7.

[338] Ibid., pp. 5-6.

[339] Hawkins' dissertation is directly cited just twice in 117 footnotes for this chapter, given as a secondary source for five other sources, and alluded to in a rather banal manner in one.

[340] Compare, for example, Fitch's opening sentence of this section—"Toop's decision essentially to leave Ferneyhough out of his discussion, the latter's European residency throughout his early career and up to the year prior to the publication of Toop's article, and his role as composition course co-ordinator at Darmstadt from 1984 all contribute to Ferneyhough's reputation as a 'guru' to this group of composers, the figurehead of complexity *in excelsis*." (Fitch, *Ferneyhough*, p. 32)—with Hawkins'—"Toop's decision to omit Ferneyhough results in important (although perhaps not intentional) resonances with the interpretation developed in the remainder of the current study; that is to say, that Ferneyhough's absence in Toop's article draws attention to what is referred to in Chapter 3 of this study as the 'two complexities' thesis. Briefly, this thesis points to the *possibility of* 'two spheres of influence' in terms of those composers associated with 'New Complexity' (in an attempt to undermine the group identity implied by that label and to explore the differences between different composers). One of these 'two spheres of influence' is said to exist in Germany around Ferneyhough, the other in Britain around Finnissy," (Hawkins, "(Mis)understanding Complexity," p. 2). Fitch's footnote (p. 55, n. 6) does cite a *Guardian* article by Richard Gott as cited by Hawkins, but not his main text.

> Clarinettist Roger Heaton's appraisal is indicative of the critical responses to Ferneyhough's notation invoked above:
>
> For a performer the major criticism is one of unnecessary rhythmic complexity […] which makes much of this music impossible to play accurately. Therefore we are thrown into an area of approximation and even improvisation on a text whose very nature is to notate in detail and control every aspect of performance. [30. Roger Heaton, Questionnaire response in *Complexity in Music? An Inquiry into its Nature, Motivation and Performability*, 26]
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> The view that this unreasonable—and importantly, *impossible*—demand on performers effectively forces the latter into improvising is only a step away from the question often posed by undergraduate students when introduced to Ferneyhough's music for the first time: "if you improvised on this in performance, would anyone know the difference between what you played and the piece as notated"? The music critic Alex Ross comes nearest in print to this assertion: "not even the most expert performers can execute such notation precisely [and so] it becomes a kind of planned improvisation, more akin to free-jazz […] a mosh-pit for the mind" [31. Alex Ross, *The Rest is Noise: Listening to the Twentieth Century* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007), 522]. Significant here is the "either/or" approach—the extremes, represented by impossible demands on accuracy on the one hand and free-jazz improvisation on the other, leave no third way. In this view, the performer is not only reduced to the status of a passive conduit or automaton rather than a vital alert presence, a *formative* force within the work, but is assaulted.[341]

Then consider the following passage from Duncan (including the ellipsis in the Heaton quotation):

> The works of New Complexity do not allow for the same performance techniques that Heaton values from earlier twentieth century works. The notation of such works, one can infer from Heaton, is unidiomatic and therefore not accurately performable, requiring fakery in performance:
>
> > For a performer the major criticism is one of unnecessary rhythmic complexity . . . which makes much of this music impossible to play *accurately*. Therefore we are thrown into an area of approximation and even improvisation on a text whose very nature is to notate in detail and control every aspect of performance [emphasis added]
> > (Heaton 1990, p. 26).
>
> The journalist Alex Ross, in *The Rest is Noise*, takes Heaton's position further, suggesting that it is not just the performance that becomes an improvisation, but the notation itself: "Because not even the most expert performers can execute such notation precisely, it becomes a kind of planned improvisation, more akin to a free-jazz or avant-rock freak-out than to anything in the mainstream classical tradition— mutatis mutandis, a mosh pit for the mind" (Ross 2007, p. 522).[342]

Next consider the following passage from Nicholas Cook, in particular his suspicion concerning these sorts of "either-or" dichotomies:

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[341] Fitch, *Ferneyhough*, p. 35.
[342] Duncan, "Re-Complexifying the Function(s) of Notation," p. 158.

> Procedural consistency or hearts and minds? That is like choosing between a musical notation that specifies virtually everything and one that specifies virtually nothing, or between a score by Brian Ferneyhough and so-called free improvisation ("so called" because no improvisation can be completely free, just as even Ferneyhough can't and doesn't specify everything the performers do). The vast majority of musical culture speaks (or sounds) against the necessity of such black-and-white, either/or choices: it shows how you can communicate not just broad goals but highly determinate frameworks for realizing them, without prejudicing the initiative and creativity that gives people an investment in their work.[343]

Neither Duncan nor Cook are attributed at this point (nor is the article of Cook attributed anywhere in the book).[344]

Despite giving a token reference to some of the debate on notation and performance, Fitch does not present a model of notation that would refute the arguments of those who would claim Ferneyhough's scores to be constraining upon performance freedom, nor does she draw upon some of the non-English writing on the subject (especially that of Artaud[345] and Andersson) that might present a wider perspective. Some of her observations on notation are quite banal, highlighting things that could be found in the work of many other composers, whilst her conclusions about the learning process and performance are elementary.

The same goes for other musical observations elsewhere in the book, especially where there are no sketches available or consulted[346] or existing writings to paraphrase. For example, when discussing *Allgebrah* (1996), over the course of a page-and-a-half (pp. 118-119),[347] Fitch informs that the title refers to the imaginary "music" evoked by the Swiss artist Adolf Wölffli, that the paper trumpet on Wölffli's drawings slightly resembles an oboe, that (as documented by others in several of Ferneyhough's "concertos") the instrumental writing is organized in strata, that the oboe only occasionally asserts itself against the ensemble, that its writing is "speech-like" (on account simply of the presence of instructions in the score such as *retorico*, or *inciso*), that the piece ranges from passages characterized as "gloomy," "attrition," and "hyper-expressionistic," and that the piece is somewhat unstable because of ruptures (as in *Terrain*). Then a quote from Ferneyhough's program note comes to the rescue, about the ensemble acting as an "uncontrollable echo chamber, picking up, amplifying and unpredictably prolonging minute features in the oboe's flickering discourse." She gives as one example of this "echo chamber": the passage from bar 191 onwards in which the oboe plays some staccato multiphonics and some strings respond with pizzicato; they

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[343] Nicholas Cook, "In Praise of Symbolic Poverty," in Fred Collopy and Richard J. Boland Jr., eds., *Managing as Designing* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), p. 88. The idea of the player as a "passive conduit" for Ferneyhough's music can be found in a customer review (from 1999) of Etcetera CD KTC1070 at http://www.amazon.com/Brian-Ferneyhough-Superscriptio-Intermedio-Trancendantales/dp/B0000000OB (accessed May 16, 2014), but this may just be coincidence.

[344] Similarly, the passage on *Terrain* (Fitch, *Ferneyhough*, pp. 104-107) is little more than a precis of a handful of aspects of Feller ('Slippage and Strata," itself an adaptation of "Multicursal labyrinths," pp. 73-168), though properly attributed here.

[345] Fitch mentions Artaud's essay in one footnote (Fitch, *Ferneyhough*, p. 58, n. 56) but only to say that it tallies with the view of Steve Schick that a performance involves "an 'explosion' of energy" (p. 39).

[346] In the case of *Allgebrah* sketches do exist at the Paul Sacher Stiftung, but Fitch does not engage with these in her book. My thanks to Ross Feller for pointing out the existence of these sketches to me.

[347] Ibid., pp. 118-119.

later have a series of repeated notes and chords, which Fitch describes as "analogously percussive sounds."[348] Finally, she mentions that the piece ends with a solo cadenza that features highly contrasting dynamic and expressive markings. Most of this is true but very basic, and could equally be said of many other pieces. Such writing could serve as a fair introductory guide to the music were the writing style considerably more refined; or the observations would be useful as a means of clarifying some wider contextual points about the work, but neither of these are the case.

In her discussion of *Kurze Schatten II*, Fitch appropriately identifies that between the beginning and end of the second movement there is an increase in number of impulses and complexity of tuplet groups, and that the gestural materials begin with "snap *pizzicato,* chords and *sul tasto*" and "feel fast" as a result, but that in the passage from bar 25 onwards there are more low-pitched figures at quieter dynamics. This is straightforward; Fitch does make the reasonable observation that "the whole [later] passage sounds like chords annotated with grace note figures, even though not notated this way,"[349] though I would add that this may depend upon the degree of clarity and articulation achieved by the performer, or—if a reasonable number of performers all end up unable to make the material sound other than like grace notes—a shortcoming in the composer's conception which might even imply that it could have been notated more simply. Fitch goes on to say that "the listener is able to put mental 'brackets' around the ornament-like scurrying pitches, differentiating once again between polyphonic or parametric layers of activity,"[350] a pretentious way of pointing out that Ferneyhough intersperses series of chords at a higher dynamic with more continuous lines at a lower one. But the analysis goes no deeper than this, and almost all of it could have been taken from Ferneyhough's own note on the work.[351] The same is true of her account of the third movement, duly reiterating Ferneyhough's own indication[352] of a retrograde of the pattern of meters at the middle of the movement, and how the guitarist will find it difficult to sit still during the silences that serve as resonating spaces (ibid.). She adds no individual observations on the musical detail, only pads out her reiteration of Ferneyhough's with a few extravagant metaphors relating to Deleuze and Bacon. Here and elsewhere, Fitch seems more at ease with making grand pronouncements than with doing the sort of detailed examination of a work that might give such pronouncements some foundation.

The biographical section includes little of consequence on the nature of Ferneyhough's educational experiences from when he was a student onwards, and next to nothing at all about the rest of his life (such as, for example, his multiple marriages) beyond what one might find in a promotional biography, except for mentioning for the first time in print Ferneyhough's diagnosis in 1993 of narcolepsy with cataplexy.[353] Some consideration, in a work with a biographical component, of possible links between Ferneyhough's compositional development and his changing life circumstances (even if

[348] Ibid., p. 119.
[349] Ibid., p. 88.
[350] Ibid.
[351] See Ferneyhough, "Kurze Schatten II," in *Collected Writings*, pp. 141-142. Ferneyhough himself looks at the movement in more detail than Fitch.
[352] Ibid, pp. 142-144.
[353] Fitch, *Ferneyhough*, p. 20.

ultimately to conclude that these two things are relatively autonomous from one another) would be welcome;[354] otherwise, what is the point of having a biography section at all?

Fitch's lack of wider context is apparent in her discussion of the unpublished *Opus Null* (a title from Hans Arp),[355] begun in 1968, which does apparently anticipate some notational developments later found in *Missa Brevis*, *Transit*, and *Time and Motion Study III*. This work involves some improvisation, use of a pre-recorded tape and "subsidiary chamber group." Fitch provides only a quotation of Ferneyhough's program note mentioning theatrical actions (singers ignoring the audience, walking off early, percussionist reading a newspaper, maybe lighting a cigarette or eating a sausage, etc.), then presents the rather crude observation that such theatrical behavior implies a "Dadaist" flavour, as in Arp's poem. Some knowledge of the then well-developed and highly topical tradition of musical theater of the time (Cage, Kagel, Schnebel, Ligeti, Bussotti, Globokar, not to mention Fluxus) might enable some more substantive commentary than simply pointing out that the score uses both conventional and later graphic symbols.

Other points discussed in my longer review of Fitch's book include further instances of over-dependence on others' ideas without development or critical assessment. Not least among these are those passages on the quartets or the *Carceri* cycle, the latter of which covers a reduced version of the same type of sketch-based work as found in Toop, Redgate, and Pätzold, especially in the section on the *Etudes transcendantales*. Occasionally Fitch makes a new and enlightening observation, such as of the relationship between the end of the last song in this cycle and the conclusion of Berg's *Kammerkonzert*.[356] In the chapter on *Shadowtime*, she ignores critical questions about the work's theatrical dimension or particular representation of Benjamin mentioned earlier, whilst a section on form in orchestral and large-scale ensemble works is perfunctory. *Epicycle* (1968), *Firecycle Beta*, and *Transit* are amongst my own personal favorites of Ferneyhough's works, and I would be interested to read a text that genuinely attempts to account for each piece's unique sensuous and expressive qualities. Unfortunately, this is not to be found here; instead, one finds one more reiteration of what is in the sketches. Fitch does mention a "transcendent luminosity" at points in *La terre*,

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[354] One of the only ways in which Fitch does this is by quoting the following passage from an interview without comment: "I chose [Benjamin] because he seems to me not to have been a dishonest person, whereas many intellectuals in the 20s and 30s sought their own advantage […and] seem not to have tried to change the situation. Benjamin also was responsible for the moral quagmire of the period, behaving as though nothing should apply to him. So he would go to the Bibliothèque Nationale as the Nazis marched on Paris; but he was then thrown into a camp. There are those who act out of bad faith to protect themselves, and those who, like him, were authentic enough to live out their lack of realism. There is a striking parallel with the contemporary situation…[I chose Benjamin because] he represents the archetype of the intellectual of his time. And I would hope that what I am suggesting regarding him applies to every one of us, for I am no exception. All my life, I have sought to remain outside society, whereas it is the object of my unceasing attention. I removed myself from my social class to go and live in London, then I left London to go abroad, then I left Germany to go to America, and most recently I left the University of San Diego for Stanford University. Most of these changes occurred at a time when I felt myself to have become too engaged in the social mechanism in which I found myself; so I cut loose and left. If I cannot reconcile life and art so as to make something greater, then I am guilty in my own way, like everyone else," from Ferneyhough, program note for Paris production of *Shadowtime* (2004), cited in Fitch, *Ferneyhough*, p. 24. Such a self-comparison on Ferneyhough's part definitely requires some form of comment.

[355] Ibid., pp. 21-22.

[356] Ibid., p. 254.

which entails "an eruption of loud, declamatory sound"[357] (p. 312) that is similar to the use of the trumpets in the final sections of *Transit*, but this also appears simply to be a comment found in the sketches.

Fitch's discussion of *Plötzlichkeit* is marginally better, appropriating the idea of "coloured silences" from Ferneyhough's own writings about other works (and also of the work of Finnissy).[358] This is not a new phenomenon (think, for example, of the silences or resonances in Stockhausen's *Klavierstück X*, not mentioned here), but Fitch speaks of these as being "allied to similarly subversive elements [as the silences in the Second Quartet] and initially expressed as harmonics, trills, and so on."[359] The term "subversive," with all its political connotations, seems mannered and inappropriate in this context. Certainly such silences serve to disrupt other types of possible unity, or perhaps more accurately simply provide another layer of activity that can interact with others.

The final chapter, consisting of twenty-one pages of main text, is dedicated to the aesthetics of Ferneyhough's work. Fitch from the outset presents mystifications such as "the human condition" (in *Shadowtime* and *Finis Terrae* [2012]), "timelessness," Ferneyhough's own pathos-laden evocation of "cognitive disciplines that somehow lend powers of speech to the world-view of earlier generations," "difference," and "diminished humanity,"[360] then goes on to explore four areas: "Mysticism and Alchemy," "Time as History and as Sensation," "The Gesture and Figure: Implications of the Visual," and "Language and Music." The third of these is a condensation of various aspects of Fitch's thesis mentioned earlier. The fourth contains some interesting material from Ferneyhough himself talking about his attempts to learn German, as much through classical texts as everyday speech, and how this might have affected his wider mindset. Unfortunately, thereafter it does little more than present information about some of the writers whose texts Ferneyhough has set or to whom he has alluded. The first two sections, however, consist in large measure of further vain attempts to cast Ferneyhough as the figure of Benjamin, with all that entails in terms of trivialization of the particularities of Benjamin's historical situation. As discussed in more detail in my review of the book,[361] history in Fitch's formulation becomes a type of intellectual game, utterly divorced from the actual history (and all the social, cultural, and other transformations it has entailed) of Ferneyhough's own time.

Conclusion

If I have spent a good deal of space to Fitch's book (and all the more extended material above is in addition to that contained in my review), this is because I fear that is likely to be the first point of call for many English-speakers reading about Ferneyhough's music, a role I do not believe it should occupy, nor provide any type of model for writing on new music; the book should not have been published in this form.[362] There has been other

[357] Ibid., p. 312.
[358] See Ferneyhough, "Michael Finnissy: The Piano Music," in *Collected Writings*, p. 185.
[359] Fitch, *Ferneyhough*, p. 316.
[360] Ibid., pp. 331-332.
[361] Pace, "Ferneyhough Hero," p. 110.
[362] It is not clear if Fitch's book was peer-reviewed or not; if not, it certainly should have benefited from better editing. If it was, it raises questions about the meaning of peer-reviewing at all, and especially the limited range of scholars available in a position to review a work like this, or the fact that many of them

work on major contemporary composers that I would characterize as hagiographic, such as that of Dominique Jameux on Boulez,[363] Robin Maconie on Stockhausen,[364] or Richard Steinitz on Ligeti,[365] but these books did at least succeed as non-scholarly, non-critical introductory primers that exhibited a degree of elegance of writing style and some notable new journalistic information or documentation of the composers' working methods. These latter qualities are not in evidence in Fitch's book, which stands as a monument to the most disappointing type of deferential and hierarchical attitudes witnessed all too often in the culture of new music. Fitch writes from the perspective of a "dutiful servant" who "knows her place" in the company of the great master, all of which almost precludes her from being able to undertake independent exploration of the work.

This is a particularly egregious example of a wider problem, which to some extent permeates a fair amount of writing on Ferneyhough. Björn Heile, Lauren Redhead, and myself have all separately considered the too-thin line between scholarship and promotional literature concerning new music,[366] a problem perhaps uniquely intense within the field of new music, where scholars and other writers often depend upon the good will of composers and others around them to have access to sketches and other private documentation, and where it is not generally seen as problematic for the artist to be the primary authority on who is fit to lecture on their work.

There is nothing new about artists having acolytes who play a significant part in propagating their mythologies, though it is also not unreasonable to question whether this type of writing should be deemed worthy to be described as academic scholarship. In the case of Ferneyhough, however (and also with a handful of other composers including Stockhausen, Nono, and Lachenmann in particular), it is striking to me how some degree of this type of attitude is a continuous presence, which I would suggest signifies the extent to which the "great man" model of musical compositional production retains a hold upon many engaging "from the inside" with such figures.

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might have professional connections with the composer in question. The introduction makes clear that it was mostly written in 2012-13, a very short period of time for a book of this scale, especially considering both the special requirements of the entire breadth of Ferneyhough's output and the extensive scholarship on the subject.

[363] Dominique Jameux, *Pierre Boulez* (Paris: Éditions Fayard, 1984), also translated Susan Bradshaw (London: Faber & Faber, 1991).

[364] Robin Maconie, *The Works of Karlheinz Stockhausen* (London, New York and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1976); second edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990); thoroughly revised and expanded as *Other Planets: The Music of Karlheinz Stockhausen* (Lanham, Maryland, Toronto, Oxford: The Scarecrow Press, 2005).

[365] Richard Steinitz, *György Ligeti: Music of the Imagination* (London: Faber & Faber, 2003).

[366] Björn Heile, "'Un pezzo . . . di una grandissima serieta' e con una grandissima emozione . . . e con elementi totalmente bruti': Aesthetic and Socio-political Considerations and the Failure of their Integration in Mauricio Kagel's Work post-1968," keynote paper given at conference "Faire 'de la musique absolue avec la scène': Mauricio Kagel," Nice, April 25, 2014; Ian Pace, "Musicology is not Musical PR" (August 25, 2013) at https://ianpace.wordpress.com/2013/08/25/musicology-is-not-musical-pr/ (accessed Feb. 1, 2015); Lauren Redhead, "Where/When is the Avant Garde?" (February 26, 2011), at http://weblog.laurenredhead.eu/post/3524737478/where-when-is-the-avant-garde (accessed Feb. 1, 2015). This latter was written with reference to a Ferneyhough Symposium in London in February 2011. For all the appropriate quotations, see "Musicological Observations 1: Björn Heile, Lauren Redhead and myself on the relationship between scholarship and new music" (September 18, 2014) at https://ianpace.wordpress.com/2014/09/18/musicological-observations-1-bjorn-heile-lauren-redhead-and-myself-on-the-relationship-between-scholarship-and-new-music/ (accessed Feb. 1, 2015).

Ferneyhough does of course have his full-on detractors; as well as the likes Watson/Leslie and Kramer mentioned above, other obvious examples would include Richard Taruskin and to a lesser extent Alex Ross.[367] But these writers simply reiterate some of the blandest claims found in some of the wider literature described above, in particular about the supposed impossibility of realizing Ferneyhough's notation. This process mirrors aspects of a wider critical discourse around new music and modernism in English-language scholarship, largely coming from those who identify with postmodernism or the "new musicology" (or sometimes with ethnomusicology). Many such writers portray modernist music according to a recurrent series of tropes: it occupies a position of institutional prestige, as the result of a range of ideological factors, is also linked to privilege on the basis of class, gender, and ethnicity, and stands in stark opposition to a more diverse, equal, and multicultural world. If anything it might be seen as a rearguard aristocratic movement in opposition to this latter possibility. Furthermore, some type of "total serialism" has occupied a position of unassailable power for decades (all planned from sinister headquarters in a mythical "Darmstadt," constructed so as to appear more like Tora Bora), such as to utterly marginalize all other musical possibilities. This has been especially pronounced in state-supported musical institutions and universities. A combination of postmodernist ideas, feminism, multiculturalism, and their alignment with such musical movements as minimalism, not to mention the greater infiltration of market-based/commercial values into contemporary musical life, are then said to have provided the way out from this alleged dystopia.[368] Only extremely rarely

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[367] Richard Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music. Volume Five: The Late Twentieth Century* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 475-477; Alex Ross, *The Rest is Noise: Listening to the Twentieth Century* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007), pp. 392-393.

[368] Examples I would give of this body of work would include Joseph Kerman, *Contemplating Music*, pp. 19-22, Susan McClary's article "Terminal Prestige: The Case of Avant-Garde Composition," *Cultural Critique* 12 (Spring 1988), pp. 57-81, and her *Conventional Wisdom: The Content of Musical Form* (Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press, 2000), pp. 134-52; Rose Rosengard Subotnick, "The Challenge of Contemporary Music," in *Developing Variations: Style and Ideology in Western Music* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), pp. 265-93; Robin Hartwell, "Postmodernism and art music," in Simon Miller, ed., *The Last Post: Music after Modernism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), pp. 27-51; Catherine Parsons Smith, "'A Distinguishing Virility': Feminism and Modernism in American Art Music," in Susan C. Cook and Judy S. Tsou, eds., *Cecilia Reclaimed: Feminist Perspectives on Gender and Music*, with a foreword by Susan McClary (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994), pp. 90-106; Lawrence Kramer, *Classical Music and Postmodern Knowledge* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 5-13 and *Musical Meaning: Towards a Critical History* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2002), pp. 258-287; Georgina Born, *Rationalizing Culture: IRCAM, Boulez, and the Institutionalization of the Musical Avant-Garde* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); a range of writings by Richard Taruskin, not least "How Talented Composers Become Useless," *The New York Times*, March 10th, 1996, reprinted in Taruskin, *The Danger of Music and Other Essays* (Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press, 2009), pp. 86-94; Derek B. Scott, "Introduction," in Scott, ed., *Music, Culture and Society: A Reader* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp 1-19 and Dai Griffiths "On Grammar Schoolboy Music," ibid., pp. 143-146 (originally published as "Genre: Grammar Schoolboy Music," *Critical Musicology Newsletter 3*, n.p.); Scott, "Postmodernism and Music," in Stuart Simm, ed., *The Routledge Companion to Postmodernism* (New York & London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 182-93; Sally Macarthur, *Feminist Aesthetics in Music* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), pp. 14-25; Alex Ross, "*Ghost Sonata:* What Happened to German Music?" *New Yorker*, March 24, 2003, pp. 64-71; and Malcolmson, "Composing Individuals." Important critiques of some of this body of work of the assumptions contained therein include Joseph N. Straus, "The Myth of Serial 'Tyranny' in the 1950s and

does this work engage with any substantive body of musical works belonging within the category being attacked.[369] Another wing of conservative musicology and journalism, claiming that atonal and serial music somehow contravenes the natural properties of music and sound,[370] comes at this subject from a different angle, but the conclusions are equally damning.

Very little such writing is specifically focused upon Ferneyhough (on the whole, unlike Boulez, he has remained reasonably immune from a lot of these debates); a rare example of such a thing can be found in the aforementioned Kramer article on *Shadowtime*, but this is brief and has little to say about the musical material. Most new musicological/postmodernist/old-style-conservative writers' claims to provide an incisive critique of modernism, let alone of Ferneyhough, are facile and insufficient; their target is a straw man. Yet the figure constructed of Ferneyhough in Fitch's book very nearly conforms to the worst stereotypes of anti-modernists: in terms of both work and being, one sees a portrayal of a combination of self-importance, solipsism, formalism, disregard for sound, self-fashioning in relation to hallowed thinkers in the Western tradition, a composer and a music utterly cut off from the modern world, ferociously denying the value of almost any music except that from the Central European art music tradition, a rampant individualist and high elitist. But I do know the work (I am less interested in the biography), and think it is much, much better than this.

There is a good deal of important scholarship and other writing about Ferneyhough's work, but its boundaries and limitations are evident. To return to the categories I set out at the end of the first section of this article: most of the scholarly reception of Ferneyhough can be viewed as one of the following: (a) promotional/hagiographic (Schaaf, Clements, Fitch); (b) journalistic (Halbreich, Hayes, and various others since);[371] (c) compositional/creative (Finnissy, Harvey, Erber, Melchiorre, Hübler, some Mahnkopf, Nicolas); (d) critical (Potter, Gottwald, Mahnkopf,

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1960s," *The Musical Quarterly*, 83/3 (Autumn 1999), pp. 301-343; Björn Heile, "Darmstadt as Other: British and American Responses to Musical Modernism," *twentieth-century music*, 1/2 (2004), pp. 161-178; Martin Iddon, "Darmstadt Schools: Darmstadt as a Plural Phenomenon," *Tempo*, 65/256 (April 2011), pp. 2-8 and "Spectres of Darmstadt," *Tempo*, 67/263 (January 2013), pp. 61-67; and Paul Harper-Scott, *The Quilting Points of Musical Modernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. ix-xx, 3-42.

[369] Jane Piper Clendinning presents an extremely crude caricature of modernist music (applicable to no more than a small handful of works)—characteristically, the only specific piece she mentions is Boulez's *Structures* (and her comments would only be strictly applicable to part 1a of this cycle)—in a rather clumsy attempt to map categories from architecture onto those for music, in "Postmodern Architecture/Postmodern Music," in Judy Lochhead and Joseph Auner, eds., *Postmodern Music/Postmodern Thought* (New York & London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 119-140. A recent discussion coming out of a series of articles for the *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* demonstrated all too clearly how it appears to have become acceptable to deliver sweeping pronouncements on modernist music without their being substantiated by proper engagement with any of the actual work. See "Journal of the Royal Musical Association Round Table: 'Modernism and its Others,'" at http://www.rma.ac.uk/students/?p=1585 (accessed Feb. 1, 2015).

[370] For example, Henry Pleasants, *The Agony of Modern Music* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1955); Samuel Lipman, *Music after Modernism* (New York: Basic Books, 1979); and Fred Lerdahl, *Tonal Pitch Space* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

[371] I have not looked in detail at more populist journalism on Ferneyhough's work. On the whole, I find much of the more recent work which I have encountered has become a good deal more crude and cliché-ridden than strong early writings by Halbreich, Hayes, and others. For an example of the worst of this, see Tom Service, "A guide to Brian Ferneyhough's music" (2012), at http://www.theguardian.com/music/tomserviceblog/2012/sep/10/contemporary-music-guide-brian-ferneyhough (accessed Feb. 1, 2015).

Texier, Reininghaus); (e) analytical (Barry, Reynolds, Feller, Hemming, Panisello, Cavalotti, Courtot); (f) composition-technical/sketch-based (Toop, Redgate, Lippe, Malt, Pätzold, Chaigne, Courtot). Furthermore, there are fields of broader work on musical complexity (Nicolas, Toop, Mahnkopf, Mosch, Ulman, Darbon, Duncan, Hawkins), and the field within which the most sophisticated critical discourse can be found, that relating to notation and performance (Lukas, Artaud, Andersson, Schick, Feller, Corner, Heaton, Marsh, Keller, Lippe, Cox, Pace, Duncan, Waterman).

Genuinely critical work on Ferneyhough is relatively rare, in some ways more so today than earlier on in Ferneyhough's life. Independent analytical work has grown, but there is still a huge amount of such analysis potentially to be carried out. Young academics or others looking to venture into the field of Ferneyhough scholarship could achieve much, not least by considering the *music* (not just the writings and interviews, or other such relative ephemera) in terms of wider paradigms for discerning and evaluating musical meaning as have become relatively common in other branches of musicology, or by bringing some of the most sophisticated analytical tools to bear upon Ferneyhough's work (and relating the results to possible categories of perception). There is still a very good deal to discern about some of the fundamental elements of his music viewed as a whole—whether in terms of gesture (or figure/archetype), structural processes, rhythms, approaches to timbre,[372] and so on, and the provenance of each of these (perhaps even with some relatively comprehensive taxonomies). A few writers have made a start on this, but there is plenty of potential for more. In terms of timbre, one might look more closely at the relationship between this parameter in those works before and after the early 1980s that do or do not generally use extended instrumental techniques.[373]

When new sketches appear, there will always be a place for new studies deciphering them; for now, the work of Toop and Pätzold has given a quite comprehensive picture in this respect. The debates on "complexity" seem relatively exhausted, or have become somewhat tribal in nature. However, I still believe there is much more potential for important and clear thinking on notation and performance, which could venture beyond questions of the possibility of realization and associated approaches towards the effect of different performance strategies upon the sounding result and its meanings and connotations. As in the context of new music, the question of whether performance strategies that tend towards minimizing those qualities most at odds with more conventional musical practice (as when playing microtones as small local pitch bendings, executing complex rhythms as forms of *rubato* that do not fundamentally disrupt a sense of underlying pulse, or aiming for timbre blending in an effort to avoid that which may be perceived as "harsh") serve to ease the work's incorporation into a more mainstream "classical" tradition, is all but ignored by the majority of performers and writers. This may be unsurprising—how many performers would wish to contemplate such a belligerent-sounding argument, when "generating new audiences"

[372] One might look at the very significant timbral differences in all aspects of the writing of *Etudes Transcendantales* and *On Stellar Magnitudes*, and what the wider musical and other implications might be of this.

[373] Ferneyhough commented, in the context of a discussion of *Superscriptio* with Toop, on a deliberate decision to abandon the use of surface "noise" as features in *Unity Capsule*. See Toop, "On Superscriptio," p. 5.

remains the talk of the town?—but is in my opinion absolutely central to understanding the wider meanings of approaches to performance.

There are other wider aesthetic, historical, and even political questions to ask about Ferneyhough: such as whether, in terms of conception of the artwork and indeed the relationship of the composer to the performer, not to mention the listener, Ferneyhough is possibly the most conservative of the "complex" composers? Is his particular cultivated style necessarily any more distinctive than those who have used less extravagant amounts of notational detail? Then it would also be good to learn more about how Ferneyhough's works with text might relate to a variety of experimental literary traditions (as well as that of Charles Bernstein)?[374] What led to Ferneyhough's re-engagement with tonality and musical *objets trouvés* (however much their presence may be less than obvious)? Is it mere coincidence that this occurred (a) during his "American" period, and (b) at the tail-end of a period when numerous other composers were embarking upon a similar path, and few were prepared to continue with a high degree of non-referential abstraction? Ferneyhough's paintings and poetry have never been analyzed in any detail (Darbon's consideration of the latter is quite brief); whilst it is not unreasonable (as with Schoenberg's non-musical output) to suggest that these may not be on the level of his compositions, nonetheless they warrant some proper consideration.

In Fitch's passage on *Time and Motion Study III*,[375] the limited wider musical context employed means she has to resort to such banal statements as that the work "probably qualifies similarly [as an extreme] in the realm of sheer weirdness,"[376] with a brief allusion to Ligeti's *Aventures/Nouvelles Aventures* (1962-5) and Lachenmann's *Les Consolations* (1976-8). What is lacking here, and would be good to read, is more extensive contextualization of this work of Ferneyhough (and perhaps others too, and not necessarily all for voices) within that wider tradition of new music for multiple voices pioneered by Schola Cantorum Stuttgart under Clytus Gottwald mentioned earlier (that of Henri Pousseur, Luigi Nono, Mauricio Kagel, Dieter Schnebel, Sylvano Bussotti, Hans Otte, Heinz Holliger, Vinko Globokar, Georges Aperghis, and others)—a tradition of which Ferneyhough himself was undoubtedly well aware (he mentions some of this in one interview, especially emphasizing the importance of Schnebel, and stressing the lineage of this tradition lying more in Dada than the Second Viennese School).[377] Similarly, other non-monolithic knowledge (in the sense of knowing there is more than just "total serialism") of other post-1945 traditions might help to shed some light on the sources of what I would call a relatively florid, even Italianate melodic idiom in many earlier works (here points of contact can certainly be found with the contemporary work

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[374] Ross Feller has done a certain amount of this in his "Iconic Resemblance in Brian Ferneyhough's *Trittico per Gertrude Stein*," in *Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress on Musical Signification (ICMS7), ACTA Semiotica Fennica* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2003), pp. 689-697, and also at various points in his dissertation "Multicursal Labyrinths," but there remains much potential for future research in this area.

[375] Fitch, *Ferneyhough*, pp. 212-217.

[376] Ibid., p. 212.

[377] See Ferneyhough, "Speaking with Tongues," interview with Paul Driver, in *Collected Writings*, p. 342. For one consideration of this type of contextualization of Ferneyhough, see Erin Gee, "The Notation and Use of the Voice in Non-semantic Contexts: Phonetic Organization in the Vocal Music of Dieter Schnebel, Brian Ferneyhough, and Georges Aperghis," in Christian Utz and Frederick Lau, eds., *Vocal Music and Contemporary Identities: Unlimited Voices in East Asia and the West* (New York & Oxford: Routledge, 2013), pp. 175-201.

of Finnissy, and for that matter some Maxwell Davies and other British composers who had "gone South").

Ferneyhough's music needs to be separated from his own self-mythologization and sometimes questionable claims of intellectual lineage; a writer on his work who chooses to reinforce Ferneyhough's self-fashioning might at least demonstrate some evidence of having considered critical alternatives. Ferneyhough's work and aesthetics would benefit from the point of view of someone who can see value in rival aesthetic positions as well, rather than having to see Ferneyhough as representing the primary true path. There is most definitely room for other monographs looking at the breadth of his output as well to supplement the insufficient offering from Fitch and the much stronger, but still problematic (especially in terms of Ferneyhough's later work) book from Courtot. Toop or Feller would both be amply capable of producing such a work, but it would also be good to read something of this nature coming from a writer who is less of a Ferneyhough "insider."

Abstract

In this article, I look critically at the large body of scholarly and detailed journalistic work on the music and thought of Brian Ferneyhough from the early 1970s, when the composer first started to attract national and international attention, onwards to the time of writing. I consider dominant methodological, aesthetic and ideological biases in particular areas of writing, generally drawing attention to the underlying assumptions, boundaries and limitations characterizing these bodies of work, and relate these to some broader scholarly and musicological issues. I focus in particular on ways in which different writers have expanded upon Ferneyhough's concept of the "figure" as presented in several articles and interviews, ultimately concluding that this concept amounts to something of a mystification. I also argue against the model of Ferneyhough as a "postmodern modernist" that received some currency for a short while in the 1990s, and maintain that the majority of sketch-based study of Ferneyhough's music—a large percentage of analytical work on the composer—is limited in its scope and methodology, through an extended presentation of the key issues that have been hotly debated within the wider field of musical sketch study, but ignored by the majority of Ferneyhough scholars. I also trace briefly changing conceptions of "new complexity" and complex "schools," both in the UK and Continental Europe, in the 1980s and 1990s, demonstrating how these reflected different dominant musical factions at different times. I draw together a range of perspectives on Ferneyhough's notation and its implications for performance, arguing against narrow views of the very function of notation or the role of the performer in favour of more creative and critical attitudes. Following on from an earlier review-article, I consider the dangers of uncritical hagiography and mystification as represented in the dissertation and monograph of Lois Fitch. Finally, I consider the limits of existing journalistic and scholarly writing to date, so as to illuminate scope for new possibilities.