WHAT'S THAT NOISE?: MUSICAL BOUNDARIES AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF LISTENING AND MEANING

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ABSTRACT

Taking as its starting point Jacques Derrida's argument that the picture frame is both intrinsic and extrinsic, this thesis is concerned with issues of framing within music and the impact of framing on the meaning and perception of musical works. Derrida's writings on the frame are therefore reconsidered within a musical context and used as the basis for the analysis of a number of musical works. It is argued that the theory of allegory supports a position which sees apparently autonomous works as the products of metonymy and thus as the products of the conflation of the intrinsic and extrinsic. This conflation is discussed in relationship to issues of noise and how listeners make decisions about what is and what isn't to be listened to. It is argued that noise is so deemed because of a listener's inability to effectively negotiate and participate in the cultural system within which that sound appears, rather than because of qualities of the sound itself. This is supported by the analyses of several musical works. It is shown that a constituent of this cultural noise is the extra-musical material which appears alongside the work, with individual works being created and perceived against a background of other disparate texts. Theoretical approaches to apprehending the forms and functions of these trans-texts are discussed. In particular, titles and the author figure are shown to be essential parts of an artwork which structure both how it is produced and how it is perceived. These theoretical frameworks inform the analyses of several musical works in which it is demonstrated that such trans-texts are not mere attachments but also constitutive. In conclusion, it is argued that boundaries of musical works are the sites of structural and cultural tensions which have far-reaching effects on how and what music means.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements ii

Abstract iv

Table of contents v

List of figures viii

List of tables viii

1 INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 A bit of everything 1

1.2 Musical categories 4

1.2.1 Private categories 4

1.2.2 Genre 9

1.2.3 Genre as social text 11

1.2.4 The fetishism of categories and the secret thereof 15

1.3 Previous writings on genre 18

1.4 Aims of the thesis 20

1.4.1 Figure and ground 20

1.4.2 Research questions 21

1.4.3 Structure of the thesis 22

1.4.4 Musical examples 26

2 FRAMES AND FRAMING 27

2.1 Introduction 27

2.1.1 You don't know what you're talking about! 28

2.1.2 What are you talking about? 29

2.2 A self-contained work? 36

2.2.1 Allegory and Ryoji Ikeda's 'Matrix [For Rooms]' 37

2.2.2 Fragmentation and Naked City's 'Speedfreaks' 46

2.3 Summary 53

2.3.1 Hearing and listening 53

2.3.2 The glow of grime 56

3 CULTURAL CODES AND CULTURAL FRAMES 62

3.1 Introduction 62

3.1.1 Commercial categories 63

3.1.2 Genre as musical frame 71

3.1.3 Summary 74

3.2 That's not music! That's just a noise! 75

3.2.1 Musical codes 76

3.2.2 Cultural parallax 88

3.2.3 Tuning in 91

3.3 The illusion of the naked eye 93

3.3.1 The structure of the field 99

3.3.2 Legitimising participation 103

3.4 Summary 113

4 MUSICAL TRANSTEXTUALITY 116

4.1 Introduction 116

4.1.1 Frame semantics 116

4.1.2 Left Hand Path 123

4.1.3 Summary 127

4.2 Transtextuality ... 128
4.2.1 Intertextuality ... 129
4.2.2 Metatextuality ... 132
4.2.3 Architextuality ... 132
4.2.4 Hypertextuality and hypotextuality ... 134
4.2.5 Paratextuality ... 136
4.3 What's in a name? ... 150
4.3.1 The differences between names and titles ... 151
4.3.2 The author's name ... 166
4.3.3 What is an author? ... 168
4.3.4 What is a work? ... 170
4.4 Summary ... 172
5 DISCUSSION ... 174
5.1 Introduction ... 174
5.2 Summary and general conclusions ... 177
5.2.1 Frames and framing ... 177
5.2.2 Cultural codes and cultural frames ... 180
5.2.3 Musical transtextuality ... 186
5.2.4 General conclusions ... 192
5.3 Implications ... 194
5.4 Future directions ... 200
5.5 Conclusion ... 202
BIBLIOGRAPHY ... 203

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1. *Matrix* section titles 41

Figure 3.1. Artwork for *Top Gear Anthems.* 64

Figure 3.2. Artwork for Alabama 3's *Woke Up This Morning* 66

Figure 3.3. Artwork for Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young's *Déjà Vu.* 66

Figure 3.4. Artwork for *Top Gear: The Ultimate Driving Experience.* 69

Figure 3.5. Parallax of an object against a distant background 89

Figure 4.1. *H.R. (Bad Brains) at Hard Art Gallery 1-80* 141

Figure 4.2. Flyer for an early Bad Brains performance 141

Figure 4.3. *Gary Dr. Know and H.R. Bad Brains CBGBs December 1981* 142

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1. *Top Gear Anthems* tracklisting 65

Table 3.2. *Top Gear: The Ultimate Driving Experience* tracklisting 68

I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

—Revelation 3:15-16

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 A BIT OF EVERYTHING

A conversation I often overhear goes something likes this:

PERSON 1: So, what sort of music are you into?
PERSON 2: Oh, a bit of everything really.

Despite the fact that I've heard it many times before, the answer still infuriates me. Perhaps it's because, somehow, between entering via my ears and being re-translated by my brain, those words come to mean "I have a very limited taste in music," or worse still, "I have very poor taste in music": hence my response, "thou art lukewarm". 'A bit of everything' identifies a small part of each of all the available types. Thus, the implications of those words are that a person has such a breadth of musical knowledge that not only are they able to assign every piece of music to a particular "sort," but they also understand and enjoy at least one piece of music from each of the sorts of music they have identified: this is rarely, if ever, the case. Use of the phrase 'a bit of everything' tends to reflect a much

less critical and expansive engagement with musical practice than what the actual words suggest. It's a phrase whose use is likely borne out of the increasingly fragmented and specialised nature of musical experience and the social stigma attached to narrow-mindedness, and which functions by reducing the concept of "everything" to accommodate a limited number of "bits". Thus, it is much easier to like a bit of everything if one is unaware of, or chooses to ignore, the additional possibilities outside of what one might consider to be "everything": one simply reduces the number of things that fall into the category of "everything".

Of course, I'm definitely taking this issue a little too seriously, too literally. When someone uses the phrase 'everything in moderation', I know they don't mean *everything* in moderation. I know they don't mean that burglary, or dismemberment, is acceptable everyday behaviour as long as it's in moderation, even if those are the implications of such a phrase. Yet, when someone says they like 'a bit of everything' I can't help thinking: "I bet you don't." However, when I myself am asked that same question it becomes quite difficult for me to not answer in that very manner which I find frustrating in others. This difficulty stems, in part, from the problematic nature of musical categorisation itself, but also from an unwillingness to condemn a vast selection of musical works based on the fact that I am unfamiliar with either them or the category I'm told they're supposed to belong to. Thus it follows that I end up portraying my own musical awareness and taste as having exactly the kind of (lack of) depth and scope that the phrase "a bit of everything" implies.

An extension of this initial line of questioning highlights the difficulties of categorising musical works:

> PERSON 1: So, what category does this music come under?
> PERSON 2: It doesn't.

So begins the exchange I have with my mother-in-law every once in a while. My reluctance to answer in the way the question demands—presupposing, as it does, that music can always be categorised—doesn't stem from the fact that the music I am listening to at the time is somehow "genre-defying"—as Derrida suggests, no text is without a genre, and indeed many participate in one or several genres.[1] My reluctance instead appears because I don't want to categorise it, because for me one aspect of the process of listening to music is discovering the many ways in which it can be listened to, and part of this process involves attempting to reconcile the tensions between competing generic features within a single work. Refusing to fix a work in a single taxonomical location allows for multiple readings that might otherwise be hidden. Much of the time the act of trying to assign categorical membership to musical works is like trying to fit a more-or-less-square peg into a precisely square hole—with a bit of force it will fit, but not without shaving off a few bits here and there—or trying to force a round peg into that same square hole—it fits eventually, but there are big gaps in each of the corners.

As for the phrase "genre-defying," that is itself problematic, as those works which supposedly defy genre do so through the manipulation of generic

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[1] Jacques Derrida, "The Law of Genre," Critical Enquiry 7 (1980): 25. Derrida's conception of genre is one which is very much category-oriented, dealing with types of works that have one or more features which link them. Whilst I argue later in this thesis that the categorical conception of genre is fundamentally flawed, and that genre is more usefully described as an organising system, Derrida's suggestion that the relationship between artworks and genres is never singular remains pertinent.

strategies. The work of the Mike Patton-led band Mr. Bungle, for example, serves as a critique of musical genre by shifting repeatedly between musical styles within a single song, the result being genre can be seen as another type of musical material to be worked with in the same way as pitch, tempo, and duration. This genre-as-material approach also serves to highlight the way Mr. Bungle's work offers a critique of the way genre and meaning are intertwined, with part of the work's meaning being a result of genre being rendered meaningless by the structure of the work.[2] It is what Craig Owens characterises as 'the unavoidable necessity of participating in the very activity that is being denounced precisely in order to denounce it.'[3] The "genre-defying" work is always already implicated in what it sets out to reveal, torn between exposing terms and conditions and accepting them in order to do so.

1.2 Musical categories

1.2.1 Private categories

Alongside genre taxonomies, listeners may organise music in numerous other ways. Music may be categorised according to the mood it conveys to the listener, or the mood of the listener at the time, such as in "Sad Songs" or "Funny Songs". It may be categorised according to its usage, such as in "Driving Music" or "Campfire Songs". Music's geographical origin can be used. It can be categorised chronologically and historically. It can be categorised according to instrumentation, either explicitly such as in "Piano Music" or "String Quartets", or implicitly such as in "Rock Music". Listeners may refer to music based on its

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[2] See Mr Bungle. Mr Bungle. Warner, 1991, Mr Bungle. Disco Volante. London, 1995.

[3] Craig Owens, "The Allegorical Impulse: Towards a Theory of Postmodernism," Beyond Recognition: Representation, Power, and Culture, eds. Scott Bryson, Barbara Kruger, Lynne Tillman and Jane Weinstock (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992) 85.

predominant tempo, or spectral content, or volume. Music may be categorised according to lyrical content, such as "Love Songs" or "Protest Songs". The intended audience may be used as a category marker, as may the ethnicity of either the performer or audience (the "Music of Black Origin" or MOBO awards). Music may be categorised on religious grounds, such as "Buddhist Chants" or even simply as "Religious Music". It can be categorised according to gender or sexuality. It can be located in categories which cut across several others, such as "Jewish Funeral Music", "Communist Drinking Songs", and so on.

Chapter Six of Nick Hornby's novel "High Fidelity" contains the following line, written from the point of view of the main character, Rob:

> When I get home (twenty quid, Putney to Crouch End, and no tip) I make myself a cup of tea, plug in the headphones, and plough through every angry song about women by Bob Dylan and Elvis Costello I own...[4]

The words "every angry song about women by Bob Dylan and Elvis Costello I own" are worth noting, because they reveal something about the way listeners select music, and also about the complexity of both the decisions they use to make those selections and the categories used to organise them. "Every angry song about women by Bob Dylan and Elvis Costello I own" can be seen as a musical category in its own right, but it may also be one which is the result of a number of prior categorisation decisions: songs by Bob Dylan and Elvis Costello; angry songs; angry songs by Bob Dylan and Elvis Costello; songs about women; songs about women by Bob Dylan and Elvis Costello; angry songs about women; songs I own. The route taken in the decision-making process can begin from any of these categories. It would be equally possible to begin with "angry songs" or

[4] Nick Hornby, High Fidelity (London: Penguin, 2000) 66.

"songs about women" or "songs by Bob Dylan and Elvis Costello". For the purposes of this discussion where the process started and where it ended are not important. It is this which is important: the category "every angry song about women by Bob Dylan and Elvis Costello I own" is not a fixed category—it can be reached via many routes; neither is it a "neutral", objective category—and as such it is already marked by the thought processes used to construct it.

With this is mind, consider a second passage from Hornby's novel:

> Tuesday night I reorganize my record collection [...] When Laura was here I had the records arranged alphabetically; before that I had them filed in chronological order, beginning with Robert Johnson, and ending with, I don't know, Wham!, or somebody African, or whatever else I was listening to when Laura and I met. Tonight, though, I fancy something different, so I try to remember the order I bought them in: that way I hope to write my own autobiography, without having to do anything like pick up a pen.[5]

It may appear that few individuals—even those with extensive record collections like Rob's, which run into the thousands—resort to such personalised organisation. Some might say Rob has firmly crossed the line between practicality and obsession. We may alphabetise our collections to aid easy location and retrieval, or even utilise loose genre- or date-based categories (alphabetised or not), but that's as far as most of us go. At least that's the way it appears on the surface. Further consideration reveals that each of us also embeds in our music collection our own personal needs, preferences, daily routines, memories and opinions. In short, we mark our music collections with our own lives: like the record enthusiast who collects recordings by a particular artist or on certain labels, or organises their music by format—compact discs (separated into jewel-cased discs, "digipaks", and other types of packaging),

[5] Ibid. 44.

vinyl (separated into 12", 10", and 7" records), cassettes (separated into original copies and dubbed copies), electronic formats such as .mp3, and box-sets containing multiple discs; or the collector who separates records according to whether or not they have been played, or if they are even allowed to be played instead of hidden away somewhere to preserve their mint status; or the couple that separates their music because they have different tastes, or mixes them up because they have the same tastes, or who don't care either way; or the pile of old albums next to the hi-fi, waiting to be put away; or the pile of new albums next to the hi-fi, yet to be listened to because there are too many old albums attracting attention; or the collection of albums sat gathering dust because they aren't even liked anymore, or were never liked at all, or have simply been forgotten about; or the hundreds or thousands of records scattered around the house in no order whatsoever, wherever there is a space that will accommodate them; or the music collection so significant to its owner and so expansive that it begins to take over the entire house like a giant, musical fungus, covering entire walls and devouring furniture:

> People come to my house and it's like, where's the furniture? I don't have any furniture. If you want to sit, you sit on the floor. It's a small place, covered wall-to-wall with books, CDs, records, movies, everywhere, and that's it. They freak out—what's going on here? I can't figure this out. There's no kitchen, there's no place to welcome a visitor. I say, "This is where I live."[6]

How we organise music extends far beyond simple physical storage. Indeed, physical categorisation is itself already informed by prior categorisation decisions. The pile of old albums next to the hi-fi, for example, is in the last instance separated from the rest of the music collection in physical terms, but

[6] Michael Goldberg, "Interview with John Zorn," Bomb 80 (2002).

their final physical separation occurs as the result of numerous preceding mental separations which are themselves historically specific. Each album in that pile was removed from its storage location for a particular reason, or indeed many reasons, at a particular time, by a particular person. Thus, the physical category "the pile of old albums next to the hi-fi, waiting to be put away," is already highly differentiated.

Moving away from the physical collection of albums, of records, compact discs, cassettes, mini discs, and so on, towards the electronic storage of musical works on a computer's hard drive, or on an iPod or similar, how such collections are organised becomes marked not just by the owner of that particular collection, but also by other listeners, by hardware and software manufactures, and corporate interests. Music acquired electronically, for example, through peer-to-peer networks, music "blogs", or commercial download sites bears the marks of its source in numerous ways; it is marked in how each file is named, in the folder structure in which it is stored, in the additional "metadata" used by playback and library management software, in the format in which it is encoded and the quality of that encoding.

How we categorise music may have wide-ranging consequences—from determining the types of music which are produced and consumed and the types of persons involved, to influencing the direction of academic research and how music is taught. This can be related to wider discourses surrounding music distribution (for example, genre-based automation is a current issue in electronic music distribution research), access and education, and also of cultural identity.

1.2.2 Genre

The analysis of the make-up of different musical fields is often structured around something called "genre". The discussion of genre is a feature of discourse in a wide range of areas, including musicology, art history, linguistic anthropology, rhetoric, literary theory, the sociology of language, folklore studies, and applied linguistics.[7] However, there appears to be no single unified position on what the term "genre" actually refers to. Brian Paltridge notes that approaches to describing and defining genres both vary between fields and also overlap. This, he suggests, is the result of the different goals and different theoretical positions and concerns which underlie the various approaches.[8] As suggested by its French and Latin roots, the word is usually used in a classificatory context to refer to types of texts. The problem with such a definition lies not only in the suggestion of a scientific basis for such categories—genus and species—but also in the way it focuses solely on the descriptive use of genre at the expense of its prescriptive function.

Formulations which set up the issue along pseudo-scientific lines, where a text is seen to belong to a sub-genre of a larger genre, ignore the fact that unlike in botany, there is no single systematic route to genre assignment, and what might appear as a sub-genre in one context may appear as a genre in another, and what may be defined as simply a technical or stylistic flourish in one field may form the basis of a genre in another. In addition, it does not account for the possibility that both the content and potential taxonomical position may alter over time, the end result being that what was once

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[7] For an overview see Brian Paltridge, Genre, Frames and Writing in Research Settings (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1997) 5-46.

[8] Ibid. 5.

considered Genre A now bears little resemblance to what is now considered Genre A (consider the differences between the R 'n' B of the 1960s and the R 'n' B of the 2000s), and what was once considered a sub-genre of Genre B may now be seen as Genre C. As more and more works are admitted into a particular genre, the more general that genre becomes, eventually becoming so broad and all-encompassing that it could refer to almost anything. Walk into any mainstream record store and the bulk of the stock will most probably be located in the "Rock and Pop" section, despite the only feature that consistently appears in all of those recordings being the fact that they are found in the "Rock and Pop" section. Beyond that the category is so broad that almost every item in the store could be seen as belonging to it.

The criteria that might be used to define the genre "Love Songs" are not the same criteria used to define the genre "Jazz Fusion", but may be similar in parts to the criteria which outline what might be called "National Socialist Black Metal" but not in others. The genre "Love Songs" might be based on certain types of lyrical content, whilst "Jazz Fusion" might be based on certain structural features. "National Socialist Black Metal", on the other hand, might be formulated in part based on lyrical content and ideological leanings, and in part on certain structural features. However, there is no consistent position on which features are significant and which are not, when they are significant and when they are not, or indeed no real consistency of features among texts. Finally, a typological formulation of genre focuses on the content of such categories at the expense of an analysis of their structure and the way they function. It characterises a text as "belonging" to a particular category rather than participating in it.

A loose but still useful definition of genre might be something like 'a set of procedures which are socially shared and structured,' or 'a socially constructed communicative model for the purpose of solving recurring communicative problems.' There are, of course, many sets of socially shared and structured procedures which are not genres, but such attempts at a definition at least loosely define what a genre is without defining how and why it operates in the way it does, because it is these aspects of genre for which there is no single position.[9]

1.2.3 GENRE AS SOCIAL TEXT

Every text is the product of preceding texts, producers, and beholders, and also the product of an anticipated, expected, or predicted future. A text is erected upon a base of what has already been said and forms the foundations of what will be said next. As such, the "now" of a text is always in part the result of that which came before and that which (may) come after. In addition, the source, or "speaker" of a text is inconsistent over time—the Mozart of *Andante in C for*

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[9] An examination of the concept of genre as it relates to popular music appears in Franco Fabbri, "A Theory of Musical Genres: Two Applications," Popular Music Perspectives, eds. Philip Tagg and David Horn (Exeter: International Association for the Study of Popular Music, 1981). Fabbri defines genre as "a set of musical events [which are any type of activity performed around any type of event involving sound] ... whose course is governed by a definite set of socially accepted rules". These rules are identified by Fabbri as formal and technical rules, semiotic rules, behaviour rules, social and ideological rules, and economic and juridical rules. As such, what one might term "style" or "form" appears as a sub-feature of genre. However, Moore argues that rather than "genre" and "style" being interchangeable terms which refer to the same thing, or style being a sub-feature of genre, they refer to distinct and separate aspects of musical practice: genre refers to "what" an artwork is set out to do, and style refers to how it is actualised. See Allan F. Moore, "Categorical Conventions in Music Discourse: Style and Genre," Music and Letters 82.3 (2001): 441. In some sense, this can be seen as a distinction between the context and articulation of a work, but this distinction is not particularly clear-cut, as Moore's essay clearly demonstrates. Indeed, it might be argued that how a work is actualised (its style) is governed by the context in which it appears (its genre).

Keyboard (K. 1a) is not the Mozart of *The Magic Flute (K. 620)*.

Genres provide a means to respond to recurring communicative problems and to transmit socially relevant knowledge and experience to individuals within a society, by guiding expectations about what is to be said or done. They routinise not only how something can be said, but also what is socially relevant to say, or what should be said. Genres are therefore not simply containers for, or carriers of, particular social and cultural knowledge, but are part of the processes which create that knowledge, not only responding to particular social contexts, but also shaping them. According to Threadgold, genres are 'the socially-ratified text-types available within a community', which are 'permitted by and reproductive of the socially-ratified and identifiable situation-types of the culture.'[10] The function of genres, he suggests, is therefore that of both reality-maintenance and reality-change, providing the possible formats for the construction, combination and transmission or transformation of the discourses, together with stories that are the "other" non-generic intertextual resources, such as models and patterns located in other texts, for the production of new texts. Genres are seen as not just *products* of a culture, but also as dynamic *processes* within it. Genre is not only a *system* by which new texts can be constructed, but, once this construction commences, it becomes a *performance* which inevitably changes the model with which it began. Genre, Threadgold argues, is not therefore something that pre-exists texts but something that is constantly and continually reconstituted *by* texts.[11] Genres, then, are determined by, and determinant of, social contexts; producers,

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[10] Terry Threadgold, "Talking About Genre: Ideologies and Incompatible Discourses," Cultural Studies 3.1 (1989): 108-09.

[11] Ibid.: 115.

reproducers, and products of history.

For example, the genre label "Jazz" can be seen to function in at least two ways: firstly, it is descriptive—summarising content, and secondly, it is prescriptive—setting out the "rules" for content formation, and the two are not mutually exclusive. The function of the descriptive aspect of a generic label is, in part, to prescribe the code by which the music is to be encoded and decoded. Both are forms of expectation management, setting out what to expect in the case of the descriptive function, and setting out what is expected in the case of the prescriptive function. The label is thus not merely something which is applied after the fact, but something which forms an active component within the process of meaning generation. Genre can therefore be seen as a structure around which the creation, comprehension, and discussion of music is organised, enabling those responsible for creating works and those who behold them to make sense of, and to some extent second-guess, each other's actions.

Derrida suggests that structures and systems are all based around a *centre* which orients, balances and organises all other elements within the system (an unorganised structure being an oxymoron), and which, as the organising principle of the structure, is intended to limit movement within that structure, to provide it with stability, to limit what he terms *play*.[12] The centre appears as irreplaceable, transcendental: 'the point at which the substitution of contents, elements, or terms is no longer possible.'[13] We might draw parallels here with Yamauchi's work on labels (see Chapter 3), where the labelling of an insect was seen to determine which features were deemed to be missing, even if

[12] Jacques Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences," trans. Alan Bass, Writing and Difference, ed. Alan Bass (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978) 278.

[13] Ibid. 279.

the label was inconsistent with the other elements within the "bugs".

The issue of the structural centre can be seen, in a way, as part of the same larger problematic that Derrida outlines in his discussion of frames and framing. Of the centre, Derrida suggests that it constitutes 'that very thing within a structure which while governing a structure escapes structurality.'[14] As such, the centre thus appears as both within the structure and outside it, as the centre at the centre of the totality, but also that which is not part of the totality, and thus has its centre elsewhere.

Derrida suggests that there are two possible ways to deal with the realisation that a centred structure is no longer valid: *replace the structure* with a different one (which leads to the same end result - play), or *accept the flawed system* and continue to use it, modifying it where necessary and acknowledging there may be no truth value in it. He cites Levi-Strauss' use of the nature/culture opposition as an example of the latter—Levi-Strauss continues to use it as a tool even after he has "encultured" nature, i.e. he maintains an opposition that he himself criticises. The centred structure provides a reassuring certitude, Derrida suggests, or a means of mastering the anxiety that results from being implicated in the game, or being caught by the game, or being at stake in the game from the outset, on the basis of the fundamental immobility of a centre which is beyond the reach of play. The history of the concept of structure is thus seen as a series of substitutions of one centre for another as it becomes apparent that the centre itself is also a construct.

Derrida argues that whilst totalising systems appear to explain everything, this is impossible; not because the field is too large, but because the

[14] Ibid.

very nature of the field excludes totalisation—there is too much *play*. Thus, it matters not the size of the field, as the very nature of the structure (defined around a controlling centre) means that it is always subject to play.[15]

1.2.4 The Fetishism of Categories and the Secret Thereof

Pachet's work with Aucouturier and with Cazaly provides a useful introduction to the main formulations of musical genre and the limitations of such approaches.[16] Interestingly, it occurs within the context of research into automated music categorisation systems, research which declares the inadequacy of genre as a means of classification before attempting to reformulate genre for that very purpose and utilising the very notion of intrinsic features it initially opposes.

They identify three main approaches: a manual approach to genre aims to represent human expert knowledge about musical works; a prescriptive approach aims to model *existing* classifications as they are found, based on the identification of a combination of low-level features of the "signal", such as a certain timbre, tempo, and rhythm; and an emergent approach aims to build *new* taxonomies based on objective similarities between musical works.

Through an examination of the generic categories used in record company catalogues, record shops, music charts, music websites and online stores, specialised press and books, and specialised web radio, Aucouturier and Pachet identify a number of problems with the use of genre as a taxonomical system. Firstly, most taxonomies in use are album-oriented, rather than based

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[15] Ibid. 289.

[16] See François Pachet and Daniel Cazaly, A Taxonomy of Musical Genres, 2000, Available: http://www.csl.sony.fr/downloads/papers/2000/pachet-riao2000.pdf, 30 January 2005, Jean-Julien Aucouturier and François Pachet, "Representing Musical Genre: A State of the Art," Journal of New Musical Research 32.1 (2003).

around individual works. This is problematic on two levels: albums may contain tracks of many different genres, and many tracks (some might argue *all*) are comprised of instances of multiple genres. Secondly, there appears to be no consensus among the users of these categories as to what these names mean (thus they don't even refer to the same sets of works), no consistency in the names that are used, and the position of nodes within a hierarchy is inconsistent. Thirdly, semantic consistency within taxonomies is poor, such that the basis of different classes may oscillate between period (e.g. Sixties"), topic (e.g. "Protest song"), country (e.g. "Irish music"), language (again, "Irish music"), dance type (e.g. "Tango"), artist type (e.g. "Singer-Songwriter"), and so on. The genre "Early Swedish Death Metal", for example, shifts between period ("Early"), country ("Swedish"), and musical style ("Death Metal"), and may also be considered a sub-genre of "Early Death Metal," "Swedish Death Metal", "Swedish Early Death Metal" (but not "Early Swedish"—the "early" relates to the chronology of Death Metal rather than the chronology of Swedish music in general, although this is implicit in the name rather than explicit).

Aucouturier and Pachet's third issue relates to the names of genres themselves: information is implicitly contained in genre labels. "French love songs" may contain both love songs by French artists and love songs by non-French artists using the French language, with no necessary musical or cultural similarity: French songwriter Serge Gainsbourg's *Je t'aime...moi non plus* and Swiss band The Young Gods' *L'Amourir* could both be labelled as "French love songs".

The conclusion reached, one which forms the basis of Aucouturier and Pachet's attempts to reformulate genre taxonomies currently in use, is that

music genres are founded on cultural extrinsic habits rather than intrinsic properties of the music. For example, to a Pakistani music enthusiast the work of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan might be classified as "Qawwali," whereas in HMV in London it is found in the "World" section under the sub-category "Pakistan." Paltridge suggests therefore that structural divisions in texts should be seen in cognitive terms, as matters of convention, appropriacy and content rather than as linguistically defined boundaries.[17] Such an approach would see genre as an as operative entity giving structure to a text. However, the structure is not a property of the text to which it is applied, suggests Hauptmeier. Rather, it is a property of the cognitive system that performs the structuring of the text. In attempting to locate "genre", Hauptmeier therefore suggests that if genres are associated with institutions, then it is on the level of the structure and function of the institution in which they are embodied, and it is in turn the individuals that constitute the institution in the first place on which it depends.[18]

The use of genre as a taxonomical system suggests a relationship between the producers, beholders and objects of musical practice analogous to that proposed in Marx's analysis of commodities. Marx notes that the nature of things as commodities is not determined by the fact that people produce them—people produce many things but not all of them are commodities—nor does the nature of commodities arise from their usefulness (what Marx terms use-value). The nature of commodities arises from their ability to be exchanged for other useful things, or their exchange-value. As commodities are the product of labour invested in them by the worker labour itself becomes valued not for its

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[17] Brian Paltridge, "Genre Analysis and the Identification of Textual Boundaries," Applied Linguistics 15.3 (1994): 287.

[18] Helmet Hauptmeier, "Sketches of Theories of Genre," Poetics 16.5 (1987): 424.

usefulness, but its ability to be exchanged for other things and itself becomes a commodity. This results in social relationships between humans falsely appearing as objective relationships between objects. This, Marx argues, is a form of fetishism, the anthropological term used to describe the belief that particular man-made objects have supernatural powers, especially power over people. In commodities this fetishism occurs through the conflation of the social relations necessary to produce the object and its material form, such that the commodities' value appears as inherent and naturalised.

The mystification, fetishism and reification (Lukács' term for a particular form of fetishism) of categories occurs under the same circumstances: social relations between the creators and beholders of musical works appear as relations between the works themselves. Thus, 'its basis is that a relation between people takes on the character of a thing and thus acquires a "phantom objectivity," and autonomy that seems so strictly rational and all-embracing as to conceal every trace of its fundamental nature: the relation between people.'[19]

1.3 Previous Writings on Genre

Previous research tackling the issues surrounding musical categorisation and musical genres has tended to focus on the area of musical taste, in particular the relationship between taste and particular social groups. Such taste-oriented research has looked at the relationship between musical preferences and social factors such as socio-economic background, youth culture, gender, ethnicity, and subcultures, examining whether there is a significant relationship between

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[19] Georg Lukács, History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics, trans. Rodney Livingstone (London: Merlin Press, 1971) 83.

different social factors and musical tastes.[20] A more expansive investigation of the relationship between taste and social relations, which extends outside of music into such areas as film, food, and pastimes, appears in Bourdieu's seminal *Distinction*.[21] Bourdieu aside, much of this work has paid little attention to the function, structure, and origins of genres as descriptive and prescriptive outlines, instead focusing on textual features of individual genres and the social relations between individual "fans" of different musical types. Despite the inadequacies of the taxonomic approach to genre, there are, however, some useful ideas to be gained from the cognitive science literature, particularly in the areas of prototypes, the role of similarity judgments in categorisation decisions, category learning, and in the use of schemata.[22]

What is currently underrepresented in the literature is the circumstances

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[20] On culture and youth see Dick Hebdige, Subculture: The Meaning of Style (London: Methuen, 1979), Simon Frith, Sound Effects: Youth, Leisure, and the Politics of Rock (London: Constable, 1983), Andy Bennett, "Subcultures or Neo-Tribes? Rethinking the Relationship between Youth, Style and Musical Taste," Sociology 33.3 (1999). On rock music see Robert L. Gross, "Heavy Metal Music: A New Subculture in American Society," The Journal of Popular Culture 24.1 (1990), Allan F. Moore, Rock, the Primary Text: Developing a Musicology of Rock, Popular Music in Britain (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1993), Robert Walser, Running with the Devil: Power, Gender, and Madness in Heavy Metal Music (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1993). On taste see George H. Lewis, "Who Do You Love? The Dimensions of Musical Taste.," Popular Music and Communication, ed. James Lull (London: Sage, 1992), Bethany Bryson, "'Anything but Heavy Metal': Symbolic Exclusion and Musical Dislikes," American Sociological Review 61 (1996). On genre in an educational context see Susan Thompson, "Frameworks and Contexts: A Genre-Based Approach to Analysing Lecture Introductions," English for Specific Purposes 13.2 (1994), Richard C. Anderson, Rand J. Spiro and William E. Montague, Schooling and the Acquisition of Knowledge (Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc, 1977). On genre and literature see Paltridge, Genre, Frames and Writing in Research Settings, Brian Paltridge, "Working with Genre: A Pragmatic Perspective," Journal of Pragmatics 24.4 (1995), Paltridge, "Genre Analysis and the Identification of Textual Boundaries."

[21] Pierre Bourdieu, Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste, trans. Richard Nice (London: Routledge, 1984).

[22] See Eleanor Rosch and Barbara B. Lloyd, Cognition and Categorization (Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc., 1978), George Lakoff, Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal About the Mind (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

in which musical genres are formed—the social roots of musical classifications—and also the effects assigning a piece of music to a particular genre might have on the way in which it is received. Studies which use musical genre as a variable often do so on the basis of a number of assumptions: that such genre classifications are "accurate," that all listeners classify music according to the same criteria, and that music's location within genres is singular and consistent. Such research is also predicated upon a conception of genre that is primarily taxonomic rather than genre as a form of shorthand for dealing with recurring musical features across multiple works.

In light of the above, perhaps the most pressing questions to be asked of musical genres relate to their sources and their destinations. Barthes' assertion that signification is dependent on the prior existence of a stock of codes points towards questions around the origin of these codes and their modes of production, dissemination, storage, maintenance, and reproduction, and the social origins of the values which inform this process—the production, maintenance and reproduction of musical genres, the mechanisms that support them, and the interests they serve (financial, technical, logistical, legal, ideological, and so on). The broader issue of musical boundaries and their role in the creation of musical works and how those works mean is of particular pertinence.

1.4 AIMS OF THE THESIS

1.4.1 FIGURE AND GROUND

To borrow an analogy from the field of painting, previous research on musical genre has tended to focus on the "figure" in the case of formal musical analyses, or the "ground" in the case of work which tackles the socio-cultural aspects of

musical categories. Such an approach is predicated on a number of assumptions. Firstly, it assumes that the figure and ground are both easily identifiable, and secondly it assumes they can be easily separated. In addition, genre labels tend to be used as descriptive indicators of content, without questioning whether they might function in other ways, or whether such a descriptive function is reliable, consistent, or motivated by external factors. In the case of musical genres, such a focus is predicated not only on the possibility of separating the figure and ground, but also on the assumption that the relationship between figure and ground has no effect on the figure and ground themselves. It assumes that the ground isn't the way it is, precisely because of the way the figure is, and vice versa. It assumes either that work *X* contains feature *Y* because it belongs to genre *y*, or work *X* belongs to genre *y* because it contains feature *Y*, at the expense of the possibility that work *X* contains feature *Y* because it belongs to genre *y*, but it belongs to genre *y* because it contains feature *Y*. If belonging to a particular genre is determined by the presence of a particular feature, and the presence of a particular feature is determined by belonging to a particular genre, then this oscillation between descriptive and prescriptive modes suggests the notion of genre as mere category is decidedly shaky.

The thesis therefore aims to demonstrate that the figure/ground distinction is difficult to maintain, and that the movement between the two spheres not only structures a work, but also contributes to how and what it means.

1.4.2 Research Questions

The thesis will tackle three principal questions, and each is comprised of a number of sub-questions. The foundations of the thesis are constructed around

Jacques Derrida's analysis of the picture frame, and thus the issue of framing is a central theme that is carried through the text.

The first set of questions stems from the need to identify the object of discussion when comprehending musical works. The question "What are you talking about?" identifies a desire to distinguish between the intrinsic and extrinsic. As an examination of the tension that exists between the contingent and the necessary, how can Derrida's writings on the picture frame contribute to an understanding of the intrinsic and extrinsic in music? To what extent do apparently extrinsic features contribute to the structure and meaning of a musical work? How does the frame function in music? What are the implications of framing, particularly regarding how and what a musical work means?

The second set of questions relate to the construction of musical frames both in the wider socio-historical context in which the work appears, and also alongside the work. What makes a musical work comprehensible, and thus able to mean? How are these phenomena produced, transmitted, maintained and reproduced? Is genre the site of struggles over meaning as Vološinov's work suggests? How do artistic producers create themselves as legitimate participants in such struggles?

The third set of questions relate to the extra-musical material which appears alongside and frames musical works. In particular, how do the relationships between a musical work and other works and texts structure that work and how and what it means? What constitutes a musical work and sets it apart from non-works? Can the notion of a self-contained work be maintained?

1.4.3 Structure of the Thesis

Following on from the introduction contained in this **Chapter 1**, the thesis will

begin by addressing the problem of defining "what" one is talking about when one talks about artworks and the difficulty of distinguishing between the intrinsic and the extrinsic. Drawing on Immanuel Kant's notion of the parergon, and Jacques Derrida's work on "framing," **Chapter 2** will argue that the work and the context in which it appears merge into each other, and it is the frame which enables this to occur. The thesis will also argue that as such the frame is constitutive of the artwork, and functions not only as a marker of boundaries, but as an indicator of value and a device for ideological positioning.

How framing might take place in a musical context is considered via a detailed reading of Ryoji Ikeda's *Matrix [For Rooms]*. In particular, the thesis will argue that metaphorical readings of the work, which present the work as autonomous, are countered by the conflation of intrinsic and extrinsic within the work itself. The work is thus shown to function not on a metaphoric level, but via metonymy and allegory. Allegorical strategies are identified and it is argued that such strategies work to defer meaning. Further instances of the use of boundaries and their role in metonymic structure are demonstrated in an analysis of Naked City's *Speedfreaks*.

The chapter concludes by examining how listeners make decisions about what is to be listened to, and how to distinguish between what is essential (music) and what is accessory (noise). What constitutes noise is considered, and it is argued that the removal or denial of noise from musical recordings serves to disguise the fact that the work is a construction, as the labour involved in the production of commodities is revealed through imperfections. Finally it is argued that listening and hearing are different processes with different results.

The social nature and function of genres is discussed in **Chapter 3**.

Through an examination of two compilations of "Driving Music" and a consideration of what might constitute such a music, it is argued that such categories are of commercial origin and are designed to sell musical recordings rather than provide any useful descriptive or prescriptive function.

A return to the issue of noise is made in order to examine how the decoding of an artwork is dependent on access to the correct code. It is argued that a different reading of a work can occur through changes in both physical and cultural position. The work of Pierre Bourdieu is introduced. It is argued that the readability of a work is dependent on the divergence of code complexity and code mastery, and the thesis examines what occurs when this isn't the case.

The process by which artistic classification systems are created by socio-cultural agents is discussed. It is argued that such systems should be seen as cognitive systems which give structure to texts. Genre is thus seen as an instructive mechanism which guides expectations and actions. How such systems are learned, how category membership is assigned, and how category usage and the complexity of category decisions changes as expertise increases is discussed. Bourdieu's notion of artistic competence is introduced.

The role of categorisation in a cultural field's belief about what constitutes an artwork, and how this affects a work's social and aesthetic value, is examined. The problematic nature of an autonomous view of music is discussed, with particular reference to the difficulty in decoding the relationship between a composer and their work. It is argued that it is more effective to emphasise the structural relationship between social positions rather than individuals and interactions between individuals. The boundary of the field is seen as a site of struggle as agents attempt to "make their mark". How agents

attempt to create themselves as legitimate producers within the field is discussed, with reference to the work of John Zorn and Naked City.

The naturalisation of the social conditions which render possible culture is discussed in light of Bourdieu's notion of "habitus". It is argued that genres function as mechanisms of both reality-maintenance and reality-change. Artworks are therefore to be understood as manifestations of the field as a whole.

Chapter 4 begins by returning to the concept of frames through a discussion of Charles Fillmore's theory of *frame semantics*. Frame semantics is a means of describing the social function of utterances, the social natures of production and comprehension, and relationship between utterances and the contexts in which they are uttered. The chapter notes how frames function as an outline enabling individuals to perform basic acts of perception, action and comprehension, and providing a framework for organising and making sense of new experiences. It is noted how frames can act as triggers for other frames, and thus how one text may be marked by another. The idea of intertextuality is therefore introduced, noting how artworks are produced against a background of other works. Genette's notion of *transtextuality* underpins a discussion of the constitutive role of extra-musical phenomena, in particular those "paratexts" which appear alongside the work. Particular attention is paid to the function of titles and the name of the artist as "author". It is argued that such paratexts serve to further blur and obscure the boundaries between work and non-work.

Chapter 5 will bring together the key points of the preceding chapters and discuss their impact on both the main research questions and the research problem as a whole. The theoretical and practical implications of the findings

will be discussed. Finally, the limitations of the thesis will be noted and directions further research might take will be suggested.

1.4.4 *Musical examples*

Throughout the thesis various musical works will be drawn upon in order to exemplify and clarify arguments made within the text. Several key works are subjected to thorough analyses in order to explore significant issues more fully. Some readers may find my choice of examples 'extreme' in some cases, and may thus argue that my arguments may not be relevant to more mainstream, less challenging, music. However, such exemplars have been chosen according to their ability to illustrate effectively the particular point being made, rather than according to particular stylistic criteria or musical typology. In many of these instances, it is through the use of ostentatious 'extremity' and overstatement that these works expose the strategies that, to some extent, underlie all musical works but which are otherwise more subtle or limited in their use.

> And I saw Sisyphus at his endless task raising his prodigious stone with both his hands. With hands and feet he tried to roll it up to the top of the hill, but always, just before he could roll it over on to the other side, its weight would be too much for him, and the pitiless stone would come thundering down again on to the plain. Then he would begin trying to push it up hill again, and the sweat ran off him and the steam rose after him.
>
> —Homer's *Odyssey*, Book XI

2 FRAMES AND FRAMING

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I argue that discourse about artworks must begin from a standpoint of knowing what is, and what isn't, to be discussed. Through an examination of the notion of "framing" I put forward the proposition that the work and the context in which it appears merge into each other, and suggest that this uncertainty is constitutive of the work. I consider how framing takes place within music via detailed readings of two key works, and note that this conflation of intrinsic and extrinsic has significant implications for the meaning of musical works. I conclude by examining how the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic manifests itself in the act of listening.

2.1.1 *YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT!*

The short interlude entitled "I'm Scared", on Ice Cube's *The Predator* album, is made up of extracts from an unidentified (and possibly fictional) television talk show which appears to be about the subject of rap music, and in particular the subjects of racism and violence in rap music.[23] At one point, a woman says, "What scares us is I think we hear violence," with the word 'violence' being heavily emphasised: vi-o-lence. This is immediately followed by a countering clip in which a second woman appears to respond "I think you don't know what the fuck it is you [are] talking about!"

In arguments and debates, particularly those which tend towards heatedness, the phrase "you don't know what you're talking about" often makes an appearance. One of the implications of this utterance is that the person it is directed towards doesn't possess the requisite knowledge or understanding of the subject under discussion in order to make a meaningful and informed contribution to the debate. It thus serves as a means to undermine the premise of an opponent's argument. In such a context, knowing what one is talking about implies knowledge of a *particular* subject, be it the work of Bob Dylan, the correct way to reassemble the engine of a Ford Focus, or in the case of "I'm Scared" the subject of rap music. The emphasis is on *knowing*: "you don't *know* what you're talking about". In this reading of the phrase it is the *knowing* which is under scrutiny. The certainty of *what* is being discussed, what is to be *known*, is critical, as without a specific subject the accuser is unable to attempt to devalue and discredit the accused's knowledge of that subject—one can't criticise another person's knowledge and understanding of a subject which itself

[23] Ice Cube. "I'm Scared (Skit)." The Predator. Priority Records, 1992.

isn't known. In the context of this particular statement, then, *what* is being discussed is not being questioned, but the degree to which a particular individual is qualified to speak about it.

However, if the emphasis is shifted from *know* to *what*—"you don't know *what* you're talking about"—then the implication changes. In this reading of the phrase what is not certain is *what* is being talked about, and if it is not clear what is being talked about then one will have some difficulty in talking about it in the first place, never mind constructing a convincing argument, because one doesn't know what *it* is. Thus, knowing *what* one is talking about is a precondition of *knowing* what one is talking about.

It is important that the particular emphasis is made clear, as emphasising the requisite knowledge of the subject is contingent upon that subject having already been defined. Without this clarification the emphasis falls on both the *know* and *what* parts of the phrase, effectively rendering it a meaningless truism along the lines of: "You don't possess the requisite knowledge and understanding of an inadequately defined subject in order to make a meaningful and informed contribution to the debate about the aforementioned inadequately defined subject," which obviously doesn't carry quite the same argumentative weight.

2.1.2 What are you talking about?

The logical response to the problem outlined above would therefore be to know what one is talking about before one begins to talk about it—one has to know *what* one is talking about before one can *know* what one is talking about. Indeed, Derrida suggests that the whole analytic of aesthetic judgment is based on such an assumption, the assumption 'that one can distinguish rigorously between the

intrinsic and the extrinsic,' or what is internal and what is external to what is being talked about.[24] This, for Derrida, is highly problematic: how does one know what it is that is to be talked about? The critical point for Derrida is how one knows what is to be included in the discussion and what is to be excluded. In the context of discussing artworks, and particularly musical works, the question relates to how one distinguishes between 'work' and 'non-work', or music and non-music.

Derrida's line of questioning originates in Kant's third Critique, *Critique of Aesthetic Judgment*, in which the concept of 'beauty' and the 'pure' judgment thereof forms a central thread running through it. For Kant, it is important to make a distinction between work and non-work because it relates to matters of value, and in particular to matters of beauty. Whilst we need not dwell too much on what Kant means by 'beauty', it is worth briefly tackling Kant's writings on its judgment in order to grasp why Kant sees the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic as vital.

Kant argues that aesthetic judgments can be separated into those which are material aesthetic judgments, which he terms 'empirical judgments', and those which are judgments of taste, which he terms 'pure judgments'. An empirical judgment is a subjective judgment of the senses, such as "this apple is tasty", "this bed is too hard" or "this music is too loud." They are judgments based on inclination alone—someone else may prefer a different variety of apple, sleep better on a hard mattress, or like loud music—and it is accepted that they may do so.

Kant sets out two conditions for a judgment to be considered a pure

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[24] Jacques Derrida, The Truth in Painting, trans. Geoffrey Bennington and Ian McLeod (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987) 63.

judgment, or a judgment of taste: *subjectivity* and *universality,* and a pure judgment is one that is what Kant terms 'subjectively universal'. For example, when one thinks "this apple is tasty" it is highly unlikely that one would also take the view that others should also think the apple tasty, as it is accepted that people have differing tastes in apples. Such a judgment is subjective but not universal. A subjectively universal judgment, however, is made in the belief that other people *should* share the same view, even though it is accepted that some people will not. Thus, when one thinks that a work of art is beautiful, Kant argues, one assumes a certain universality about that judgment. The thrust of Kant's argument is that because a judgment of beauty is something that we tend to be sure about—we don't think that something *might* be beautiful—we tend to view that judgment as being *correct,* and consequently we view the contrary judgments of others as *incorrect.* We don't say 'this piece of music is beautiful, *to me,*' and leave it at that. We may accept that others will disagree with such a judgment, but will usually add that such people 'have no taste.' Kant thus concludes that 'a pure judgment of taste has, then, for its determining ground neither charm nor emotion, in a word, no sensation as matter of the aesthetic judgment.'[25] It is thus within the sphere of pure judgments as they relate to beauty that the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic is vital for Kant, for pure judgments should remain untainted by the empirical.

It is worth noting that Kant's views on music were rather peculiar. In §51 of *The Critique of Judgment* Kant sets out what he calls 'the division of the fine arts', a hierarchy of the arts based on their capacity to express beauty. Accordingly, Kant declares that there are only three kinds of fine art: the arts of

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[25] Immanuel Kant, The Critique of Judgment, trans. James C. Meredith (Glenside: Forgotten Books, 2008) 49.

speech (rhetoric and poetry), the formative [visual] arts, and the art of the beautiful play of sensations (the art of colour, and music). In §53 Kant argues that music is both inferior and opposed to the arts of speech and the visual arts, because music 'advances from sensations to indefinite ideas.'[26] The visual arts, however, advance from definite ideas to sensations. Therefore music, being an art of the senses alone, is incapable of expressing pure beauty, that is beauty which is independent of a purpose or concept.

In his attempt to expose the cracks in Kant's argument the main focus of Derrida's critique is what Kant calls the 'parergon', or 'parerga' (hence the title of Derrida's essay, "Parergon"). Although the term appears only once in the entire *Critique*, Derrida characteristically manages to locate the fractures and fault-lines in Kant's thought at this single (parenthesised) point. Kant writes:

> Even what is called ornamentation (*parerga*), i.e., what is only an adjunct and not an intrinsic constituent in the complete representation of the object, in augmenting the delight of taste does so only by means of its form. Thus it is with the frames of pictures or the drapery on statues, or the colonnades of palaces. But if the ornamentation does not itself enter into the composition of the beautiful form—if it is introduced like a gold frame merely to win approval for the picture by means of its charm—it is then called *finery* and takes away from the genuine beauty.[27]

So, what Kant terms parerga are those aspects of ornamentation which somehow contribute to the 'delight of taste' without actually drawing attention away from the artwork itself. Therefore, according to Kant's argument, the picture frame does not contribute to beauty because it is in itself agreeable and thus adds to the pleasure yielded by the work; with respect to the delight it

[26] Ibid. 148.

[27] Ibid. 51.

elicits, the frame is not on a par with the work. On the contrary, Kant argues, the frame's contribution to the beauty of the work lies in it stimulating, exciting and sustaining the attention directed to the object itself by the means of its form. The "good" frame should play no part in the aesthetic consideration of the painting, but it should augment it, add to the pleasure. Therefore, following Kant's line of thinking, a "good" frame would be one that does not call attention to itself, nor the object it surrounds, even though it is physically attached to it. A "bad" frame, on the other hand, would, through ostentatious ornamentation, draw attention away from the painting and attempt to 'win approval for the picture by means of its charm.'

It is critical, if a pure judgment of taste is to be made, that the distinction between essential and accessory—'what intrinsically concerns the value "beauty" and what remains external to your immanent sense of beauty'[28]—can be made. Thus, it is not a matter of distinguishing between the painting and the frame, but a matter of distinguishing between what is to be regarded as work (ergon) and what is to be regarded as non-work. If one is to maintain the distinction between work and non-work, between the inside and outside as it were, then the picture frame should remain as an ornament, an addition, a supplement. It is on this basis that Kant terms the picture frame, the drapery on statues, and the colonnades of palaces, *parerga*, from the Greek *πάρεργον, para-ergon*—alongside-work.

Derrida's dismantling of Kant's argument begins not so much from the idea that a picture frame could or could not augment "the picture itself", or that Kant identifies the picture frame as the point at which separation between

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[28] Derrida, The Truth in Painting 45.

intrinsic and extrinsic occurs, but from Kant's *a priori* assertion that such a distinction is possible at all. Derrida's analysis points out that Kant's claim—that the separation of "work" and "non-work" is critical for successful analysis—is contingent upon what he sees as a faulty premise: the presupposition that "work" and "non-work" can be both identified and separated. For Derrida, it is a significant assumption to make, revealed in his declaration that being able to distinguish between the internal and the external is in fact a fundamental element of the foundations of the philosophy of art.[29]

Derrida is quick to point out the over-simplification in this inside/outside opposition, suggesting that the frame can be seen to merge into either the figure or the ground, depending on the perspective it is viewed from. Derrida's argument suggests attempting to distinguish between figure and ground is a Sisyphean task, the outcome of which is always in perpetual oscillation. The frame therefore stands not as figure or ground, but both between and as part of the two. Derrida writes:

> With respect to the work which can serve as a ground for it, it merges into the wall, and then, gradually, into the general text. With respect to the background which the general text is, it merges into the work which stands out against the general background.[30]

Thus, the frame is not simply ornamental, something which resides simply on the inside or outside of the work, able to be set aside. It is something against, beside and in addition to the work, and which cooperates within the work from outside.

The frame—the parergon—is a supplement outside the work, an extra,

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[29] Ibid. 14.

[30] Ibid. 61.

exterior, but one which intervenes in the inside only to the extent that there exists a lack in the inside, a lack in the work which cannot stand up, nor be erected, by itself, but is pushed forward. (Duro remarks, 'the frame serves to create a space for the artwork that the work in itself is incapable of furnishing.')[31] Thus the frame is a parergon not because it is an attachment to the picture, but because the lack in the work would appear at the very moment the frame is detached, and it is this lack which is constitutive of the unity of the work because without it the work would have no need for parerga. The frame is like a bridge, in that it brings together that which it holds apart and holds apart that which it brings together. It is the line of stitches that joins the inside and outside but leaves the trace of their separation, like a sutured wound that would otherwise spill forth its contents. Thus, Derrida argues, 'framing always supports and contains that which, by itself, collapses forthwith.'[32]

If the frame's function is to demarcate work and non-work and to account for the lack the work itself cannot fill, then a musical frame ought to distinguish between music and non-music and thereby mark a limit. Hence, when David Tudor walked onto the stage on August 29th 1952, sat down at the piano and then closed the lid over the keyboard he marked a limit, albeit one contrary to what we are accustomed to—closing as a beginning. When the lid was opened again 30 seconds later, and then closed again another set of limits was marked, this time opening as an ending and closing as both a beginning and a continuation. Tudor marked out the limits of the piece twice more, before removing himself from the piano and signalling not only the end of the piece but

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[31] Paul Duro, "Introduction," The Rhetoric of the Frame: Essays on the Boundaries of the Artwork, ed. Paul Duro (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 1.

[32] Derrida, The Truth in Painting 78-79.

his performance of it. This delimiting set out not only the piece's temporal and structural limits, together with its where and when, but more fundamentally, what constituted the work in the first place, figure on ground, inside and outside.

Tudor's performance of Cage's piece highlights the tension that exists between the intrinsic and extrinsic by inverting both conventional musical structure and conventional piano performance. Here the silence that usually forms a barrier between the work and its context is seen to not only participate in the work, but formally constitute it. The exposure of the frame as a necessary structural component of the work is accompanied by allowing the context of the work, the otherwise-excluded sounds of the environment, to play an active role in how and what the work means. Furthermore, music's reliance on convention is brought to the fore by Tudor's deliberate flouting of the supposed correct rules of performance. *4'33"* thus does exactly what Craig Owens says is unavoidable: 'participating in the very activity that is being denounced precisely in order to denounce it.'[33]

2.2 A SELF-CONTAINED WORK?

The idea of a self-contained work lies at the centre of Kant's thinking on works of art, and modernist theories of art. In particular, theories of the symbol attempt to avoid the problematic that, as Benjamin puts it, 'one and the same object can just as easily signify a virtue as a vice, and therefore more or less anything,' by denying the gap that exists between ideas and phenomena, and

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[33] Owens, "The Allegorical Impulse," 85.

between appearance and reality.[34] Rather than attempting to bridge that gap (as unbridgeable as it is), symbolist theory holds that an artwork is not simply a representation of an Idea, but a condensation. The symbol is something that doesn't stand for the Idea, but *is* the Idea. It is the very embodiment of the Idea, a universal language which is a unity of form and content. According to modernist art theory, this is how modernist art works—not by signifying, by saying something other than what it is, but by being what it speaks, suspending the referent and supplanting it with the art object itself. Indeed, Owens suggests that to exclude from the work 'everything which challenges its determination as the unity of "form" and "content"' is the permanent strategy of Western art theory.[35] The problem for symbolic art arises in the conflict between the wish to guarantee its transcendental status and the need for profane comprehensibility, and the symbol is thus forced to descend to the level of the profane in order to assert itself as sacred.

2.2.1 Allegory and Ryoji Ikeda's 'Matrix [For Rooms]'

Usually treated as the binary opposite of the symbol, the rhetorical mode of allegory is the product of substitution(s). The word 'allegory' has its origins in Greek—a combination of *allos* (other) and *agoreuei* (to speak). In the simplest terms, allegory is what occurs when one text is doubled by another text: hence *other-speaking.* Aesop's fable of *The Farmer and the Stork*, for example, tells the story of a farmer who encounters a stork ensnared in the traps he has set out to capture cranes that have been stealing seeds from his newly-sown fields. The stork pleads for the farmer to release him, on the grounds that he isn't a crane

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[34] Walter Benjamin, The Origin of German Tragic Drama, trans. John Osborne (London: Verso Editions, 1998) 174.

[35] Owens, "The Allegorical Impulse," 63.

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but a stork, a bird of excellent character, and indeed has already injured his leg in the trap. The farmer declines, saying that as the stork was found in the company of cranes, and as he knows cranes have been stealing his seeds, the stork must die alongside them. In common with all of Aesop's fables, *The Farmer and the Stork* is a combination of two stories, one layered on top of another: the surface story that is the farmer's encounter with the stork, and a deeper story pertaining to the perils of keeping bad company. Thus, allegory occurs in the speaking of one text through, or in terms of, another (and takes the form of a translatable jargon or a privileged code.

How might one text speak (through) an-other, and what might that *other* be? An obvious *other* to consider would appear to reside in the ironic—the contradictory, the opposite, the antonymous. In irony words do not mean what they say, or say what they mean; they say the opposite of what they mean, mean the opposite of what they say. In the ironic work several oppositional meanings are collapsed into a single ambivalent image. However, this is not to suggest that allegory simply means the opposite of what it says, and it would be an error to characterise it as doing so. Whilst there may be ironic elements within an allegorical work allegory cannot be reduced to mere irony.

Fletcher simplifies the definition further: 'allegory says one thing and means another,' and again whilst this is correct it would be an over-simplification to assume that allegory simply refers to a disjunction between what is said and what is meant.[36] Just as, so Derrida argues, deconstruction is not something that is done to a text, allegory and the other to which *allos* refers

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[36] Angus Fletcher, Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode (London: Cornell University Press, 1964) 2. Alongside Maureen Quilligan's The Language of Allegory: Defining the Genre (London: Cornell University Press, 1979), Fletcher's work is considered one of the canonical treatments of allegory.

are already present within the text itself. The Italian word "ciao" and the simple hand gesture that parallels it (the wave), for example, can mean either "hello" or "goodbye", but they can't mean both at the same time, leading Laurie Anderson to note that 'in our country, good-bye looks just like hello.'[37] What Fletcher is thus getting at is the idea that allegory occurs not because of something which occurs within the act of decoding, but because of a polysemy inherent in the words on a page, and allegorical texts are thus those which call attention to themselves as texts by problematising the process of meaning within a text. Allegory then, is a literary trope, a rhetorical device, which occurs as the result of an interference of meanings within a polysemic text. Such a redefinition is a small leap to make, but it is one which marks a significant shift in emphasis, moving from highlighting the discrepancy between what is meant and what is said to problems of signification and multiple meanings.

The coexistence of two concepts within one figure is seen in metaphor, the figure of speech or trope whereby one conceptual domain is understood in terms of another. Metaphor occurs when a perceived similarity between the literal subject and the subject substituted for it is invited; for example the opening two lines of the Lutheran hymn *A Mighty Fortress is our God*: 'A mighty fortress is our God, A trusty shield and weapon.' Metaphor here works as an attempt to bridge the gap between two distinct meanings, that of 'God' and that of 'fortress'. The implication is that the reader should become aware of some likeness between these two things, and that the meaning of the word 'fortress' can be extended to include some aspect of the meaning of the word 'God'. The line isn't saying God is *literally* a mighty fortress, but that something about what

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[37] Laurie Anderson, "From Americans on the Move," October 8 (1979): 55.

constitutes 'fortressness' can be seen in God, thus enabling the reader to make the leap between the two meanings and still maintain their distinctiveness.

Descriptions of music often rely on the use of metaphor, particularly where those descriptions pertain to emotion, and those metaphors often rely upon further metaphorical understanding. A work may be described as "insistent", or "angry" (perhaps based on it being perceived as "jagged"), or "sad" (because the listener feels sad when they hear it). According to Gaver and Mandler 'music is like mathematics: A microcosm which sometimes resembles the world, and which sometimes can give insight into the world or draw power from it, but which in the end has an existence and meaning apart from the non-musical world.'[38] Gaver and Mandler's comments characterise music as working through metaphor, inviting listeners to draw similarities between the work and the world, but in the end keeping them separate.

The extent to which music can be seen to not be working through metaphor is clearly demonstrated by the first part of Ryoji Ikeda's two-part, two-disc work *Matrix [For Rooms]*.[39] The piece is comprised of ten sections, with each section drawing its title from a corresponding line in a 10x10 identity matrix, a mathematical table of entries used in linear algebra, beginning with '0000000001' and ending with '1000000000', the binary digit '1' shifting one place to the left for each section (see Figure 2.1).

The first section begins with two sine waves. The waves fade in slowly, and their stereo placement is distinct: one wave emanates from the left speaker, the other from the right. Their frequencies are highly similar, but not exactly so,

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[38] William W. Gaver and George Mandler, "Play It Again, Sam: On Liking Music," Cognition and Emotion 1.3 (1987): 261.

[39] Ryoji Ikeda. 2000. Matrix. Touch, 2003.

and they are slightly out of phase with each other. Each subsequent section contains waves of a different frequency to the previous section. The volume of each section doesn't appear to differ noticeably. The transition between sections is accomplished via cross-fading, which begins shortly after the beginning of each track as indicated on the compact disc player display. As a result section one continues some way into section two, section two into section three, and so on. On the surface that's pretty much it.

0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Figure 2.1. *Matrix* section titles as derived from a 10x10 identity matrix

A 'literal' reading of the work might therefore speak of its apparent purity and austerity, its instantaneous and transitory nature, invoking the trope of the symbol and the sine wave as that symbol. One might draw links with aspects (or stereotypes) of Zen Buddhism based on the artist's name, the sparse white packaging, and the reduction of titles to binary digits and sound to its essential form as sine waves. Such a reading would see *Matrix* as sound-in-itself, sound-speaking-(of) sound, and suggests that *Matrix* functions metaphorically, because of a similarity between the work and the world.

Fred Orton remarks that 'explainers of art write meanings for paintings

or bits of paintings without giving much thought to how metaphors mean.'[40] Orton suggests that what is often meant when an artwork is described as a metaphor is that it has a meaning in addition to the literal meaning, and metaphor is the trope which provides the line of least resistance in describing that to 'meaning fixers who are thoughtless about the subtleties of figuration.' It would appear to me that *Matrix* functions in a way that is very much *not* metaphoric, but metonymic.

Where metaphor works by the similarity between two concepts, metonymy works by the *contiguity* between them. Users of metaphors wish to transfer some of the qualities of one thing to another—'fortressness' to God in the previous example—but users of metonyms don't. When the Royal Family is referred to as "The Palace" it is not because there is any similarity between the two, implied or otherwise, but there is a degree of association between the two because some members of the Royal Family reside at Buckingham Palace. Metonymy is thus what Fred Orton calls 'the record of a lacuna, of a move from cause to effect, container to contained, thing seen to where it was seen, goal to auxiliary tool.'[41] Related to metonymy is synecdoche, where a part is used to refer to the whole and vice versa, such as 'wheels' for 'car', 'head' for 'brain', or 'Hoover' for 'vacuum cleaner.'

The first hint at the error in the reading of *Matrix* as metaphor is contained in the work's subtitle, *[For Rooms]*. The plurality is important because it points to the non-specificity of listening spaces. The title serves to set the work apart from other works by Ikeda which bear similar titles, but which are

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[40] Fred Orton, "On ~~Being~~ Bent 'Blue' (Second State): An Introduction to Jacques Derrida / a Footnote on Jasper Johns," Oxford Art Journal 12.1 (1989): 42.

[41] Ibid.: 43.

not only very much specific in the way a "correct" location is identified, but as installation works are also time-specific: *Matrix [For Acoustic Dislocation]*, Millennium Dome, London (2000); *Matrix [For Anechoic Room]*, ICC, Tokyo (2000), and Voormalig Gerechtsgebouw, Utrecht (2003); *Matrix [For Container]*, Centraal Museum, Utrecht (2001); *Matrix [For Theater]*, Pompidou Centre, Paris (2004), Contemporary Arts Centre, Vilnius (2005), and Salle Olivier Messiaen, Radio France, Paris (2006). In contrast, this manifestation of Ikeda's *Matrix* series (their relation implied in both their titles and their structure) is decidedly non-specific in the way the title declares where the work should be experienced: it only requires a room, any room (unless the subtitle is not so much an instruction as a dedication). Furthermore, the work's title points towards an external, extra-musical feature necessary for the piece to function as *work*. Whilst simply labelling the work as 'For Rooms' may not necessarily mean the work requires a room to function, to realise its potential, the necessity and the constitutive function of the room(s) become apparent as one investigates the workings of the piece in space more closely.

Probably the most obvious way people listen to music in their home is sat down in a chair, perhaps situated in front of and between the two speakers of the stereo system. Assuming the listener is engaged in a more deliberate listening attempt, rather than more casual 'background' listening where they may get up and down from the chair, leave and re-enter the room and so on, then their position within the room remains fairly constant. If *Matrix* is listened to in this manner it appears as fairly simple, with oscillating sine waves appearing to "fill up" the room, and as the phase of each wave catches up with or lags behind another the speed of oscillation appears to change. However, should

the listener turn their head slightly to the left or right, or look up or down, then something else happens: the speed of oscillation changes—sometimes faster, sometimes slower—depending on the exact change in position of the listener's head. Perhaps the listener stands up and decides to move to a different location in the room. The sound now appears to be louder, or quieter. Another shift in location and the sounds that are audible change once more, frequencies which were previously hidden suddenly appear, sounds appear to move within the space, and sounds disappear. Listen to the piece in a different room and everything changes again. Listen to *Matrix* on headphones and none of these features are audible, only the insistent and unwavering drone of sine waves. *Matrix* thus appears as a shifting, discontinuous mass of sound—a network to be navigated, negotiated, and controlled by audition. It is not a work about sound itself, but a work about interaction, sound as sensation, and the fundamentally mediated nature of perception.

Derrida writes: 'the force of the reading may depend, as with a piece of architecture, on the point of view and on a certain relation to the ideal limit—which acts as a frame. There are only ever points of view: but the solidity, the existence, the structure of the edifice does not depend on them.'[42] Although it may appear to the listener that they are, in some way, controlling the structure of *Matrix*, what Derrida's argument suggests is that listeners are really only controlling the point of view from which they read it. The moment the listener initiates a shift in position they also initiate a shift in their point of view, and what is readable therefore becomes subject to shifting. It becomes impossible to develop a complete reading of the work, as it can only be experienced as a series

[42] Derrida, The Truth in Painting 50.

of fragments, fragments which disappear in and out of audibility as focus is shifted from one to another. In addition, *Matrix* also raises the issue of discipline, highlighting the tension that exists between behaving "properly"—sitting still—and "improperly"—moving around throughout the duration of the work.

Matrix can therefore be seen not as a merely polysemous text, where several readings are possible at once, but one which is decidedly allegorical, where one reading interferes with, hides, or contradicts another. *Matrix* also questions the relationship between the work and the beholder, in particular drawing attention to the problematic issue of distinguishing between them. The listener is the final piece of the puzzle, the part of the work's structure that enables it to mean what it does and how that meaning comes to be.

Thus, if Ikeda's *Matrix* can be heard as sound-speaking at all, then it is its own contingency and lack of fixity of which it speaks, and in its constant deferral of meaning it therefore appears incomplete and fragmented. Paradoxically, it speaks of its own imperfection through the use of supposedly perfect sonic structures—another allegorical strategy. Not only, then, does *Matrix* expose the act of audition as subjective, but it also exposes the apparent purity of the sine wave as being contaminated by both the structure within which it is located and the ways in which it is read. In addition, the uniformity of each sine wave's own internal structure is undermined by the structure of the work as a whole. *Matrix* is composed of, and structured around, bits of sounds. Each sine wave enters and leaves the audible space by a process of fading, a form of cropping whereby the unwanted—the remainder of an unheard larger whole—is not simply hidden, but removed. The sounds which constitute *Matrix* thus leave their

beginnings and ends undisclosed. The sounds of *Matrix* are fragments, incomplete, and therefore reveal the possibility of an existence outside the work and outside themselves. It is thus *metonymy* and not metaphor which appears as the trope privileged by *Matrix.*

2.2.2 Fragmentation and Naked City's 'Speedfreaks'

Chapter 1 contained a short passage from Nick Hornby's *High Fidelity*, in which the central character, Rob, is rearranging his record collection—'I try to remember the order I bought them in: that way I hope to write my own autobiography, without having to do anything like pick up a pen.'[43] One of the products of Rob's actions is allegory, the story of the development of his music collection retold in terms of life events, and the sum of his life's events codified in terms of records he owns.

One of the common features of allegorical works is the assembling of a mass of fragments into a coded message, or the creation of signs from things. This transformation is not just something that allegory does, but also what it is about. Why this fragmentation occurs, argues Owens, is because incomplete images simultaneously proffer and defer a promise of meaning, both soliciting and frustrating our desire that the image be directly transparent to its signification.[44]

Owens is not alone is noting allegory's attraction to the fragmentary, as it is a recurrent feature in the literature in allegory. However, I want to be careful not to theorise this attraction as an affinity. Works by the ensemble Naked City, led by saxophonist John Zorn, illustrate how the appearance of fragments and

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[43] Hornby, High Fidelity 44.

[44] Owens, "The Allegorical Impulse," 55.

fragmentation within a text can form an essential part of its structure. Consider, for example, the track 'Speedfreaks' which appears Naked City's *Torture Garden* album.[45] The song is comprised of a number of very short generic blocks of music, short fragments (synecdoches—parts which represent the whole) of music in a variety of disparate styles—"Lounge Jazz", "Grindcore", "Calypso", "70s Rock" (these are only rough approximations), amongst others—which change every half to two seconds.[46] The differences between each style are distinct and obvious, even if the actual style itself might not be immediately recognisable. The important thing appears to be that each block is recognisable as distinctive and stylistically unrelated to those either side of it. The same instrumentation is used for each block—guitar, bass, drums, saxophone, keyboards, and vocals—and there is no differentiation in production values, which are in accordance with the Jazz background of the performers rather than the Punk and Grindcore background of the record label that released the album. Each block does not use the same time signature, but each starts and ends in a decidedly rhythmic manner. Indeed, loading the piece into audio editing software such as *Cubase*, setting the metronome to 124 bpm, and then playing it back reveals that the "cuts" between blocks are always made on a tick of the metronome, thus creating a complex micro-level relationship between irregular metre and regular tempo.

Approximately fourteen seconds into the track there appears a block of dense, noisy "Grindcore" which lasts less than a second. This is the only block which starts but doesn't end on a metronome tick, meaning that the track

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[45] Naked City. "Speedfreaks." Torture Garden. Shimmy Disc, 1989.

[46] The subject of synecdoche will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4's examination of the relationships between different texts.

"skips" half a beat (half a metronome tick), and then continues as before only now always a half beat off the tick of the metronome. If the metronome is left uninterrupted after this point it becomes conspicuous through it always being a half-tick out of step. If the metronome is restarted at the point where the skipping occurs—at the end of this block—then the cuts between blocks continue to occur on a metronome tick. Through the manipulation of listeners' expectations about the work on a macro-level—the "mistake" is metronomically inconsistent with the rest of the piece and frustrates the temporal progression implied by adherence to the metronome—this moment works to suggest a moment of doubt. That skipping of a half beat, that "crossing out", implies Zorn and his cohorts decided "Forget that: let's start again." Alternatively we can view that particular moment as an aporia, a moment where the band pretends not to know what to do. In the latter case the out-of-sync cut between blocks is not so much a re-starting as a carrying-on. However, like a document subjected to the rigours of redaction, the phrase "forget that", whether it is meant or not, instantly draws attention to that which is to be forgotten (and may even be used intentionally as a means to highlight a particular point). The mid-point "mistake" serves to highlight the overriding metronomic structure of the work.

The block of music supposedly being scrapped is also only partially erased—it is stopped mid-bar but the notes already played, or indeed the preceding musical blocks, are not rescinded: the act of erasure is left fully exposed rather than being excised pre- or post-recording. Such an interpretation relies on an assumption that the bar is cut in half, informed by the exacting placement of the boundaries of every other block of music within the piece which suggests a particular rhythmic strategy: to start and end a block

only on a metronome tick. However, the very nature of the block structure works to isolate each section from the next—it is an episodic work where the only relationship between episodes is that one ends where another begins, although they are thematically unrelated. The metronomic long-term structure of the piece implies a sense of progression and drive towards an ultimate goal, but the episodic and desultory nature of the piece serves to frustrate that progress and ultimately leaves such a goal unachieved. Such a structure also serves to highlight the tension that exists between the overall structure of the work and the parts of which it is comprised, using the consistency of the metronome to determine the limits of the work's disparate component blocks. In addition, the only narrative the piece appears to offer is one which is akin to the constant turning of a radio dial (a theme made more explicit in Naked City's later work *Radio*).[47]

When John Zorn piles up fragment upon fragment, genre upon genre, cliché after cliché, synecdoche after synecdoche, it may well be due to an attraction to the fragment and to its accumulation (another allegorical strategy identified by Owens), but if allegory is seen to be a structural possibility inherent in any work, if it has to be there, then it is not simply a matter of attraction: there is no other manner in which it can work. As such, "attraction" appears both inappropriate and also underpowered. Substituting for it the concept of "compulsion"—following Angus Fletcher's likening of allegory to obsessional neurosis and *High Fidelity*'s Rob's retelling of his life story in terms of the records he owns—may prove a more suitable alternative.[48] Just as film *cannot exist* except as a sequence of fragments in the form of stills, the same can

[47] Naked City. 1993. Radio. Tzadik, 2005.

[48] See Fletcher, Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode 279-303.

be argued for music—a musical work is always a sequence, an accumulation, of sound fragments and cultural debris (an issue which will be examined in Chapter 4). The works of Ryoji Ikeda and Naked City suggest that the breaking up and breaking down of illusions of wholeness is more than just a frivolity: the frame is a limit which must be transgressed. Toop suggests that when artists focus on microscopic details that would otherwise be seen as part of a much larger whole, it is an attempt to deal with a wider sense of fragmentation, or what he terms 'too many signals making too much noise.'[49] Allegory is thus more than an outward form of expression, it is the inner experience of a world that is fragmentary and enigmatic, a world which, according to Cowan, 'ceases to be purely physical and becomes an aggregation of signs.'[50]

According to Joel Fineman, allegory can also be seen to operate in the gap between the present and an otherwise irretrievable disappearing past.[51] Fineman's point is that allegory arises out of the recognition of the world as historical, temporal, transient, or from what Cowan sees as 'an apprehension of the world as no longer permanent, as passing out of being: a sense of its transitoriness, an intimation of mortality.'[52] It is this transitoriness that Walter Benjamin sees embodied in the ruin, where historical events—human actions and the products of those actions—become irreversibly absorbed in their settings through the processes of decay and dissolution.[53] Benjamin's emblematic ruin thus stands for a thoroughly and always already historical

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[49] David Toop, Haunted Weather: Music, Silence, and Memory (London: Serpent's Tail, 2005) 3.

[50] Bairnard Cowan, "Walter Benjamin's Theory of Allegory," New German Critique 22 (1981): 110.

[51] Joel Fineman, "The Structure of Allegorical Desire," October 12 (1980): 48.

[52] Cowan, "Walter Benjamin's Theory of Allegory," 110.

[53] Benjamin, The Origin of German Tragic Drama 179.

Nature: the setting for history, inscribed by history's progression, bearing history's imprint.

Time, then, appears critical for allegory. It figures not only in the origins of allegory, but also in its structure. Allegory appears goal-less, or at least its goals remain unattained. It is inconclusive but always dynamic and progressive, deferring meaning. (Benjamin notes that the climax of dramatic action is not usually associated with allegory, and it often serves as a kind of extended interlude.)[54] Time also figures in the reading of allegory. Unlike the "instantaneous" reading of the symbol (the symbol being supposedly complete and self-contained), the reading of allegory proceeds temporally, syntagmatically—piece-by-piece, word-by-word, note-by-note, bar-by-bar, and in the case of much of Naked City's work, block-by-block.

In his expansive discussion of Walter Benjamin's theory of allegory, Bairnard Cowan writes: 'By resorting to a fictional mode literally of "other-discourse" (*allegoria*), a mode that conceals its relation to true objects, allegory shows a conviction that the truth resides elsewhere and is not detachable in relations between sign and signified.'[55] Allegory, then, arises firstly from the affirmation of the existence of truth, and secondly from the recognition of its absence. It is therefore the activity, the process of representation, and not its end product, that is the only "place" where truth can be truly present. The esoteric style of allegory is thus essential, not because the subject matter of allegory is difficult, but because the experience of truth is itself difficult and mysterious. The rhetoricity of allegory is not a mere surface affectation beneath which lies the true object, but something which forms the inner structure of the

[54] Ibid. 192.

[56] Fineman, "The Structure of Allegorical Desire," 51.

work: 'allegory begins with structure, thinks itself through it,' argues Fineman.[56] Allegory's foregrounding of surface features, and the 'unconvincingness, the mechanicalness, and finally the deadness'—Cowan's words—of allegory's devices is not merely a by-product of its many structural traits (fragmentation, disruption of narrative, contradictory meanings and so on), but is in explicit recognition that allegory can only afford knowledge that is illusory.[57] The frustration of the desire to know and explain is a deliberate act on allegory's part, and its outwardly mechanical, strange, obscure form occurs precisely because of the need to accurately express the unavailability of truth.

Somewhat paradoxically, it is the deadness to which Cowan refers, the moment where the work's constructed-ness slides fully and blatantly into view, that finally draws attention to the life and history that made it. Hence, Benjamin notes:

> The writer must not conceal the fact that his activity is one of arranging, since it was not so much the mere whole as its obviously constructed quality that was the principal impression that was aimed at. Hence the display of craftsmanship, which ... shows through like the masonry in a building whose rendering has broken away.[58]

Signed Curtain, by Robert Wyatt's early band Matching Mole, for example, is full of such moments, openly declaring its constructed nature and exposing its reliance on conventions, some of which are decidedly ambiguous: 'This is the first verse ... And this is the chorus, or perhaps it's a bridge, or just another part of the song that I'm singing ... And this is the second verse, or it could be the last verse ... And this is the chorus, or perhaps it's just a bridge, or just another key

[56] Fineman, "The Structure of Allegorical Desire," 51.

[57] Cowan, "Walter Benjamin's Theory of Allegory," 118.

[58] Benjamin, The Origin of German Tragic Drama 170.

change.'[59]

Difficulty in reading a text therefore 'witnesses to the fact that there is no continuous passage from phenomena to the transcendent realm of ideas, that an unbridgeable gulf separates them.'[60] As noted earlier in the Chapter, the theory of the symbol holds that the symbol is not a representation of an Idea, but a condensation of an Idea; the symbol does not *stand for* the Idea, does not stand in the Idea's place, but *is* the Idea. Difficulty experienced in listening to a piece of music points towards that gap between ideas and phenomena, thus exposing the artifice of its construction, and revealing it to be a complex weave of disparate signifiers in which several texts "speak" through another. How listeners perceive and interpret a piece of music is therefore dependent not only the information acquired from the work itself during the course of listening, but from the concordance of the coding mechanisms involved in its production and reception, and from the way the work relates to other musical sources. Indeed, Barthes argues that a text can be read in a multitude of ways not because it is ambiguous, but because precisely because it is 'woven entirely with citations, references, echoes, cultural languages (what language is not?), antecedent or contemporary, which cut across it through and through in a vast stereophony.'[61]

2.3 Summary

2.3.1 Hearing and listening

When we listen to music we don't just hear it. Jonathan Sterne remarks:

> Perhaps the biggest error of the audiovisual litany lies in its equation of hearing

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[59] Matching Mole. "Signed Curtain." Matching Mole. 1972. Sony Japan, 2004.

[60] Cowan, "Walter Benjamin's Theory of Allegory," 115.

[61] Roland Barthes, "From Work to Text," trans. Stephen Heath, Image, Music, Text (London: Fontana, 1977) 160.

> and listening. Listening is a directed, learned activity: it is a definite cultural practice. Listening requires hearing but is not simply reducible to hearing.[62]

Thus, when we listen to music we also process, translate and interpret it according to our own context. Indeed, Terrell Carver suggests that *all* interpretation is a matter of translation. 'A mere download of data is not a "reading", even in apparently paradigmatic and allegedly trivial usage: STOP signs are read and interpreted, indeed translated to the reader's own context, from which the appropriateness of various courses of action is judged: screeching to a halt, gliding through, target practice for bottles and bullets etc.'[63] Cowan extends the argument a little further, suggesting that *all* experience 'is always already given in signs, insofar as any experience is significant.' As a result, 'the very concept of experience—designating as it does "the relationship with a presence"—becomes "unwieldy" and must be replaced by a term which gives notice that the mind in encountering reality is already writing, even at the zero-point of this encounter.'[64] Reading is thus *always* an active process in which the reader attempts to comprehend their own relationship to both the writer and the text, in order to re-write it in such a way that it *means* (something) to them. The experiencing of an artwork is therefore not simply reducible to reading, but is a constant process of reading and (re)writing.

Accordingly, hearing a sound is not the same as listening to it. Listening involves the auditor attempting to direct their attention towards particular sounds, or particular aspects of a sound. Cage's *4'33"* highlights how certain

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[62] Jonathan Sterne, The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction (Durham, NC: Durham University Press, 2003) 19.

[63] Terrell Carver, The Postmodern Marx (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998) 147.

[64] Cowan, "Walter Benjamin's Theory of Allegory," 112.

sounds are marginalised by convention, and how the listener's role in constituting musical works is often denied. How, then, do listeners make decisions as to which sounds demand concentration and focus and which sounds do not, and how might both conventions and musical works themselves direct such decisions? Which are the 'insouciant and distracting sounds' which Schafer suggests the ear demands 'be stopped in order that it may concentrate on those which truly matter'?[65] Which are the sounds that truly matter? Or, how is music *framed*? This is a critical question, not only as a route towards a greater understanding of how music means, but because it may have different answers for the creators of musical works and those who perceive them, and thus ultimately impacts on how the work itself is constituted.

The frame is a marker of limits, of boundaries, and an indicator of value and significance. The frame marks out for consideration that which it frames, and attempts to prevent contamination of the work by outside elements: the unwanted, the unimportant, the un-valuable. It should be noted that the valuable is protected because it is valuable, but the protected becomes valuable by virtue of the fact that it is protected. The frame is also a device for ideological positioning—for interpellation—calling the viewer/reader/listener forth. Framing can occur at the outset of a piece of music, such as in a silent downbeat given by a conductor before the orchestra begins to play, or in the limitations imposed on a work by virtue of its format, like when a blank canvas is stretched onto a frame. Framing may occur at the end of a work, when David Tudor opens the lid of the piano for the final time and leaves the stage, or when the audience erupts in applause or a chorus of boos. Frames can occur within a work, within a

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[65] R. Murray Schafer, The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World (Rochester, VT.: Destiny Books, 1994) 12.

frame, such as at the mastering stage of an album's production, where the final attempts to make the album a coherent whole, by sequencing the tracks and adding finishing touches to the album's sound, occur. The frame functions as both a binding and a bounding, a bringing-together and a keeping-apart. The frame is like the note inside parentheses, or in a footnote, (neither inside nor outside the text.) The frame is not a mere thing (a frame-work), but a process (of frame-ing).

2.3.2 *THE GLOW OF GRIME*

Jun'ichirō Tanizaki's brief treatise on Japanese aesthetics, *In Praise of Shadows*, contains a short passage where he writes on the Japanese preference for griminess over the ultra-clarity and cleanliness favoured by Westerners. He remarks that whereas Westerners will polish their silver, steel and nickel tableware to the point of gleaming brilliance, the Japanese object to such a practice and instead leave such things as silver teapots unpolished. Tanizaki suggests that for the Japanese full appreciation of such things is attained 'only when the luster [sic] has worn off, when it has begun to take on a dark, smoky patina. Almost every householder has had to scold an insensitive maid who has polished away the tarnish so patiently waited for.'[66] Extending the talk to crystals he comments on the excessive brightness and clarity of imported Chilean crystals, adding that the Japanese much prefer their own, where the clarity is moderated by a degree of cloudiness and 'opaque veins crossing their depths.' Of Chinese jade he comments: 'It lacks the brightness of a ruby or an emerald, or the glitter of a diamond. But this much we can say: when we see that

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[66] Jun'ichirō Tanizaki, In Praise of Shadows, trans. Thomas J. Harper and Edward G. Seidensticker (London: Vintage, 2001) 18.

shadowy surface, we think how Chinese it is, we seem to find in its cloudiness the accumulation of a long Chinese past, we think how appropriate it is that the Chinese should admire that surface and that shadow.'[67] Thus, when Tanizaki speaks of the 'glow of grime', it is not simply through a fondness for antiquity, but a wish to see an object bear the marks of its use, and the past that made it.

Marx suggests in the first volume of *Capital* that, in the capitalist mode of production, products—commodities—do not disclose their history, the past that made them, and the consumer rarely seeks it out. The social relations that caused the product to come into being appear in the commodity as relationships between things rather than as relationships amongst people. When a product's past—the labour required to produce it—is finally revealed, it does so in the form of imperfections:

> It is generally by their imperfections as products, that the means of production in any process assert themselves in their character of products. A blunt knife or weak thread forcibly remind us of Mr A, the cutler, or Mr B, the spinner. In the finished product the labour by means of which it has acquired its useful qualities is not palpable, has apparently vanished.[68]

In music, imperfection is often thought of in terms of *noise*, and in particular noise which falls outside of the terms of a particular system. Noise thus makes for a useful example in understanding how the processes involved in the production and reception of musical works become naturalised. Jacques Attali writes:

> All music can be defined as noise given form according to a code (in other words, according to rules of arrangement and laws of succession, in a limited

[67] Ibid. 19.

[68] Karl Marx, Marx's Capital: A Student Edition, ed. Christopher J. Arthur (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1992) 111.

> space, a space of sounds) that is theoretically knowable by the listener. Listening to music is to receive a message. Nevertheless, music cannot be equated with a language. Quite unlike the words of a language—which refer to a signified—music, though it has a precise operationality, never has a stable reference to a code of the linguistic type.[69]

Attempts to define noise can be summarised along two lines: sounds which are *undesirable* and sounds which are *undifferentiated.* Undifferentiated sounds would be those sounds which appear as lacking a recognisable structure, those sounds which appear "random", those sounds which are unpitched. If music is taken to be periodic, then noise would be non-periodic. However, there are distinct problems with such a formulation. Firstly, very short sounds are heard by the human ear as unpitched clicks, irrespective of whether or not they are pitched. Secondly, the means by which listeners distinguish between different instruments playing the same pitch, timbre, is based on recognising discontinuous, aperiodic, random features of the sound occurring over time.

Undesirable sounds might be the sound of coughing during a concert performance of Mahler's Fifth, or the crackles and pops of a dusty and scratched record, or the sound of a car alarm at 3am. Noise in this sense is interference in a signalling system—like snow on a TV screen—, something that "gets in the way" of the transmission of a message, or something from the "outside" that has managed to seep "inside". 'To make noise is to interrupt a transmission, to disconnect, to kill.'[70]

Undesirable sounds may also be defined more quantitatively, such as by (high) volume. Such a definition is context dependent and therefore cannot be

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[69] Jacques Attali, Noise: The Political Economy of Music, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1985) 25.

[70] Ibid. 26.

reduced to a simple decibel limit, as what appears loud in one situation may be acceptable, or even inaudible, in another. The car alarm that wakes you at 3am is not undesirable if it is your car that is being stolen. Similarly, a man shouting and singing at the top of his voice is almost inaudible, and certainly not undesirable, if he is at a football match. Yet the technically quiet hiss that backgrounds a compact cassette recording may very well be deemed "too loud", particularly if it begins to encroach on the musical foreground and smear the edges between work and non-work. Thus, such a definition of noise is highly problematic.

Following John Cage's example we may suggest noise is unintended sound—but how is such intention gauged? There are inadvertent sounds which appear intentional, intentional sounds which appear accidental, and sounds which appear to be both accidental and intentional. Is the sound of a guitarist's fingers moving across the fretboard, or the sound of a trumpeter's sharp intakes of breath between lengthy exhalations, during the course of playing their instruments, intended or not? Are these sounds essential or accessory?

An answer to the above questions can be glimpsed in Kant's characterisation of the frame, which is shown by Derrida to be a resort to trickery:

> There is always a form on a ground, but the parergon is a form which has as its traditional determination not that it stands out but that it disappears, buries itself, effaces itself, melts away at the moment it deploys its greatest energy. The frame is in no case a background in the way that the milieu or the work can be, but neither is its thickness as a margin a figure. Or at least it is a figure which comes away of its own accord.[71]

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[71] Derrida, The Truth in Painting 61.

That moment where the parergon 'deploys its greatest energy', where the parergon 'disappears, buries itself, effaces itself, melts away,' is a critical moment. It is a moment we can, via Stuart Hall, identify as the most ideological moment. Hall says that 'I think there are ideologies which function like that [as a kind of conscious commitment to a particular philosophy], in more systematic, more coherent, more sustained and developed ways. But I am particularly interested in the practical understandings, the practical frameworks which people use and which are largely unconscious. When people say to you, "Of course that's so, isn't it?" that "of course" is the most ideological moment, because that's the moment at which you're least aware that you are using a particular framework, and that if you used another framework the things that you are talking about would have a different meaning.'[72] What both Derrida's and Hall's arguments point towards is that the boundary that joins/separates the essential and the accessory is as much ideological as it is physical, and its ideological form remains just as hidden as its physical counterpart.

The erasure of noise can therefore be seen as arising from a desire to filter out 'interference' in a system, because noise reveals the system, the code, as an active process, and not a thing. Noise reveals a code's claim to be 'objective' and self-contained as an illusion, exposing the code not as a mere thing, but as a process and as part of a process

When a product enters into the labour process, as a means of production, it does so as a mere factor in the process and thus loses its character as a product. Mr B, the spinner, treats spindles and flax as mere elements of the production process, as tools and materials. That these products are the result of

[72] Stuart Hall, "The Narrative Construction of Reality: An Interview with Stuart Hall," Southern Review 17.1 (1984): 8.

previous labour is of no consequence to him, just as, according to Marx, 'in the digestive process, it is of no importance whatever that bread is the produce of the previous labour of the farmer, the miller, and the baker.'[73] As Attali notes, 'in mass production the mold has almost no importance or value in itself.'[74]

Returning to the frame, two final comments from Derrida should indicate the direction in which the discussion will now move. Firstly: 'There is no natural frame.'[75] That is, the frame is always a *construction*. Secondly, Derrida asks: 'Now where does this frame come from? Who supplies it? Who constructs it? Where is it imported from?'[76]

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[73] Marx, Marx's Capital: A Student Edition 111.

[74] Attali, Noise: The Political Economy of Music 89.

[75] Derrida, The Truth in Painting 81.

[76] Ibid. 68.

> There are different frames of reference, but frames they are.
>
> —Wolfgang Ernst[77]

> Who can legitimately be called a writer?
>
> —Randall Johnson[78]

3 *CULTURAL CODES AND CULTURAL FRAMES*

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I consider how the framing of music might occur within a socio-historical context. I note how the readability of musical works is affected by the ways in which they are encoded and decoded, and suggest that the use of codes constitutes a form of framing. I continue by discussing how these coding mechanisms are formed, maintained and challenged by individuals and groups acting within particular social and cultural circumstances. The social nature of coding is then expanded through a discussion of how musical works and their

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[77] Wolfgang Ernst, "Framing the Fragment: Archaeology, Art, Museum," The Rhetoric of the Frame: Essays on the Boundaries of the Artwork, ed. Paul Duro (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 129.

[78] Randal Johnson, "Editor's Introduction: Pierre Bourdieu on Art, Literature and Culture," The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature, ed. Randal Johnson (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993) 12.

producers are legitimised by the circumstances in which they appear. Finally, I consider how the socio-historical origins of these coding systems are naturalised.

3.1.1 COMMERCIAL CATEGORIES

Each year, often around Father's Day, there appear numerous television advertisements for collections of "Driving Music", music supposedly ideal for listening to whilst driving a car. Invariably they are comprised of variations on the same theme, a selection of "Classic Rock" tracks—Queen, Boston, Meat Loaf, Bruce Springsteen, and so on. Several of these compilations utilise the name "Top Gear" in their titles, after the BBC television series on motor vehicles and motor sport. The artwork for *Top Gear Anthems* (see Figure 3.1), released in 2005, features a helmeted figure, clad in white racing overalls (referred to in the show as "The Stig"), stood with folded arms on a long, straight road that stretches into the distance.[79] The photo has been taken at night, and the surrounding landscape and sky are dark. A small, bright patch is visible in a distant break in the thick clouds, suggesting that it is post-sunset. The figure and the lane markings that run down the centre of the road are lighter than their surroundings, suggesting a car parked out of shot illuminating the scene with its headlights. At the top centre of the image is the BBC logo, and underneath sit the words 'Top Gear' in the style of the television show's title sequence. The word, or title 'ANTHEMS' is situated underneath, followed by a sub-title which proclaims 'THE GREATEST EVER DRIVING SONGS', which is then followed by a listing of several of the artists featured on the compact disc. Queen is listed first,

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[79] Various Artists. Top Gear Anthems. Virgin TV, 2007. "The Stig" is the show's resident "tamed racing driver", and is responsible for testing the speed of vehicles around the Top Gear track.

followed by The Killers—classic followed by current. Thus, without even listening to the music itself, its intended function or use and therefore its target market is apparent.

Figure 3.1. Artwork for *Top Gear Anthems.*

Table 3.1 shows the track listing for *Top Gear Anthems.* Disc 1 contains many of the same artists and tracks as many other collections of Driving Music—Queen, Steppenwolf, Meatloaf, Boston, Ram Jam, Free, Deep Purple, Lynyrd Skynrd, Whitesnake—artists and tracks which also feature (perhaps not coincidentally) on similarly marketed and advertised collections of "Classic Rock" and "Dad Rock".[80] Given the collection's subtitle of 'The greatest driving songs ever' this duplication is not surprising—if every other collection of Driving Music contains Steppenwolf's *Born To Be Wild* then any collection that claims to contain the greatest driving songs should also feature it.

[80] See, for example, Various Artists. Driving Rock Ballads. Virgin TV, 2005, Various Artists. Dad Rocks! EMI TV, 2008, Various Artists. Rock Monsters. U.M.T.V, 2004.

Disc: 1	Disc: 2
1. Queen "Don't Stop Me Now"	1. Blur "Song 2"
2. Meatloaf "Bat Out Of Hell"	2. Cardigans "My Favourite Game"
3. Steppenwolf "Born To Be Wild"	3. Bodyrockers "I Like The Way"
4. Radar Love "Golden Earring"	4. Stereophonics "Dakota"
5. Lynyrd Skynyrd "Sweet Home Alabama"	5. Feeder "Buck Rogers"
6. Boston "More Than A Feeling"	6. The Killers "Somebody Told Me"
7. Allman Brothers "Jessica"	7. Franz Ferdinand "Take Me Out"
8. Genesis "Turn It On Again"	8. Primal Scream "Rocks"
9. Doobie Brothers "Long Train Runnin'"	9. Maximo Park "Our Velocity"
10. Blue Oyster Cult "Don't Fear The Reaper"	10. The Vines "Ride"
11. Ram Jam "Black Betty"	11. Coldplay "Clocks"
12. Free "All Right Now"	12. Razorlight "America"
13. Deep Purple "Highway Star"	13. David Bowie "Song For Bob Dylan"
14. Black Sabbath "Paranoid"	14. Buffalo Springfield "For What It's Worth"
15. Hawkwind "Silver Machine"	15. Alabama 3 "Woke Up This Morning"
16. Whitesnake "Here I Go Again"	16. ELO "Mr Blue Sky"
17. ZZ Top "Gimme All Your Lovin'"	17. Sniff 'n' The Tears "Driver's Seat"
18. Motorhead "Ace Of Spades"	18. Yello "The Race"
	19. Placebo "Slave To The Wage"
	20. Oasis "Champagne Supernova"

Table 3.1. *Top Gear Anthems* tracklisting

Many of the tracks have titles which suggest speed or a loss of control—*Don't Stop Me Now, Bat Out Of Hell, Long Train Runnin', Here I Go Again, Paranoid,* the aforementioned *Born To Be Wild*—or titles which refer to driving itself—*Highway Star, Silver Machine.* Again, without even listening to the music it is possible to make a reasonable judgment of its intended purpose and who it is targeted at. Once the first disc is listened to it becomes apparent that there is a 1970s/1980s guitar-heavy rock theme further defining and consolidating the category of "Driving Songs" referred to in the artwork, titles and lyrical content.

Disc 2, however, with the exception of Maximo Park's *Our Velocity,* The Vines' *Ride,* Sniff 'n' The Tears' *Driver's Seat* and Yello's *The Race,* contains almost none of the same references to being out of control, speed or driving. The "Classic Rock" theme which informed the first disc is also missing, save the somewhat conspicuous tracks by ELO, Buffalo Springfield and David Bowie. The

inclusion of Alabama 3's *Woke Up This Morning* appears to be based on the artwork for that song's single release paying apparent homage to the Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young album *Déjà Vu* (see Figure 3.2 and Figure 3.3), an album which also features recordings of two songs by Buffalo Springfield.[81]

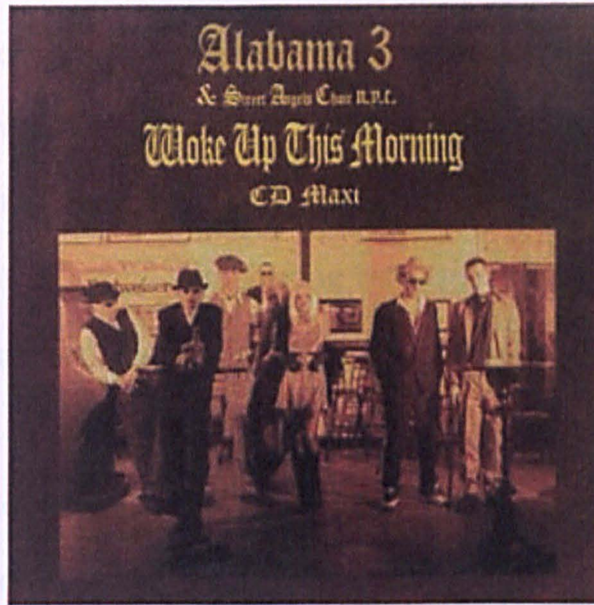

Figure 3.2. Artwork for Alabama 3's *Woke Up This Morning*.

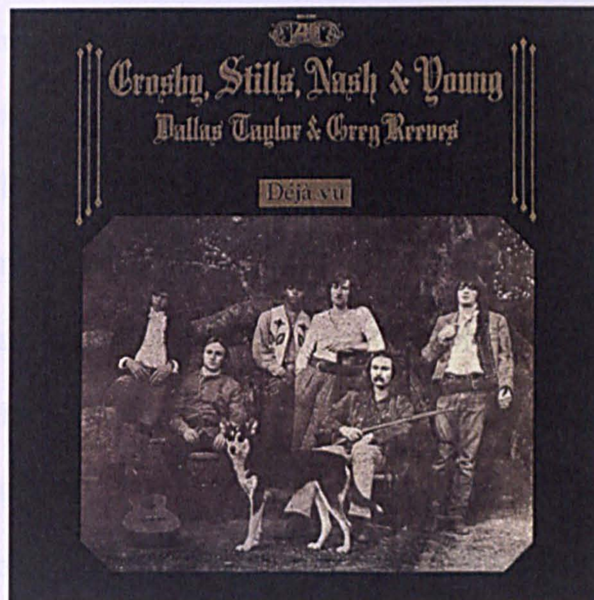

Figure 3.3. Artwork for Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young's *Déjà Vu*.

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[81] Alabama 3. Woke up This Morning. One Little Indian, 1997, Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young. Déjà Vu. Atlantic, 1970.

The inclusion of the tracks *Dakota* and *America*, by Sterophonics and Razorlight respectively, is perhaps an oblique reference to the type of open-road driving featured in the promotional video which accompanies the Cardigans song *My Favourite Game* (also featured), and the same type of landscape referenced in the disc's accompanying artwork. There is no common theme linking the remainder of tracks, and little musically which would link them to those on the first disc apart from the particularly loose association in that they are all predominantly guitar-based. Links between the second and first discs tend to be intertextual, with the second disc making reference to the first, rather than tackling similar subject matters in a similar musical style. The issue of intertextuality and relationships between texts is discussed further in Chapter 4.

In 2007 another collection of driving music was released bearing the "Top Gear" brand, this time under the sub-title 'The Ultimate Driving Experience.' This time there are no references to driving, speed, control, or any of the other themes prominent in the previous collection. Gone too is the almost-entirely guitar-based music, being replaced with mostly contemporary "Dance" artists utilising electronic instruments and synthesisers. Those artists present who do create guitar-based rock are predominantly the same artists featured on the second disc of *Top Gear Anthems*—Oasis, Primal Scream, Razorlight, The Killers, Cardigans—or artists from the same cultural milieu who appeal to similar audiences.

Whilst the tracks featured on the first disc of *Top Gear Anthems*, together with the numerous other collections featuring very similar tracklistings, would suggest some degree of stylistic and thematic consistency within the category of Driving Music, to the point that it becomes almost synonymous with the

category "Classic Rock", the second *Top Gear* release suggests that simple references to driving-related terms in song titles, or images of driving in promotional videos, or vague notions of "Americana", or just being peers of the bands who utilise such imagery, is sufficient to warrant inclusion in the category of Driving Music (see Table 3.2).

Disc: 1	Disc: 2
1. Bodyrockers "I Like The Way"	1. Oasis "Little By Little"
2. Razorlight "Somewhere Elsewhere"	2. Rob D "Clubbed To Death"
3. Keane "Somewhere Only We Know"	3. 4Hero "Les Fleur"
4. The Coral "In The Morning"	4. Lemon Jelly "Go"
5. The Hives "Hate To Say I Told You So"	5. Lamb "Angelica"
6. The Killers "Somebody Told Me"	6. Groove Armada "Edge Hill"
7. Cream v Hoxtons "Sunshine Of Your Love"	7. UNKLE "Panic Attack"
8. Cardigans "My Favourite Game"	8. Primal Scream "Echo Dek (Vanishing Dub)"
9. The Stone Roses "Love Spreads"	9. Underworld "Oh"
10. The Charlatans "You're So Pretty"	10. Nightmares On Wax "Les Nuits"
11. The Rasmus "In The Shadows"	11. J Walk "Soul Vibration"
12. New Radicals "Get What You Give"	12. Sebastian Tellier "La Ritournelle"
13. Mylo "Drop The Pressure"	13. Kinobe "Grass Roots Horizon"
14. Les Rhythmes Digitales "Jacques Your Body"	14. The Charlatans "And If I Fall"
15. DJ Shadow "You Can't Go Home Again"	15. The Killers "Believe Me Natalie"
16. David Holmes "Gritty Shaker"	16. Dusted "If You Go Down To The Woods"
17. Snow Patrol "Run"	17. Bonobo "Kota"
18. Travis "Side"	18. Thomas Newman "Any Other Name"
19. Deadly Avenger "We Took Pelham"	19. Hybrid "Finished Symphony"
	20. Samuel Barber "Adagio For Strings"

Table 3.2. *Top Gear: The Ultimate Driving Experience* tracklisting

Top Gear: The Ultimate Driving Experience extends the feature of peer-relationship, to the point that the songs it contains bear no stylistic or thematic relation to those contained on the prior *Top Gear Anthems*, other than the fact that some of the artists appear on both, and some of them feature guitars. This reduction of the criteria used to assign membership to the category of Driving Music is further reflected in the album's artwork, which sees the atmospheric,

open-road implications of the first release replaced with a more banal implementation of *Top Gear* branding in the form of the logos of the programme and its broadcaster and The Stig (reduced to almost-silhouette form) against a yellow gridded background (see Figure 3.4).

Figure 3.4. Artwork for *Top Gear: The Ultimate Driving Experience*.

What *Top Gear Anthems* and other like it—those comprised of "Classic Rock" songs about driving, speed, loss of control, Americana, etc.—do not take into account are the various and distinctive circumstances in which people drive: why they are driving, vehicle type, driving speed, time of day, time of year, destination, weather conditions, passengers, and so on, not forgetting the diverse musical tastes and preferences of drivers themselves. The implication of such collections is that the music they contain is appropriate for all types of drivers and driving situations. However, whilst a long-distance driver may prefer loud rock music—perhaps to help them stay awake—a commuter in a busy city may prefer something more sedate to help relieve the stress of being stuck in heavy traffic. The category of Driving Music as promoted by these types of collections is based on a very specific *stereotype* of long-distance driving (a

stereotype which is somewhat alien to the UK): long journeys from dawn to dusk, through barren deserts, dusty badlands, and imposing mountain ranges, or "life on the open road" in the western United States. The category boundaries suggested and informed by the later *Top Gear: The Ultimate Driving Experience*, however, are stretched so wide and are so inclusive and vague that they become almost meaningless, like the "Rock and Pop" section of a large music retail chain. Thus, the specific category of "music that is ideal for listening to whilst driving long distances on empty roads across barren landscapes, because it shares stylistic similarities and is informed by lyrical themes around driving", is extended to "music that you can listen to in your car", which in the end isn't much different from "music you can listen to sitting down", which isn't really a musical category at all.

The Driving Music exemplified by these two collections is therefore not so much a musical category as a commercial category, of the type John Zorn suggests is used to commodify artists, writers and musicians to not only make their work easier to market but also to make it easier for the audience to "buy it" and for critics to respond with pre-packaged opinions.[82] Zorn argues that such commercial categories, including genres themselves, deprive the audience of the pleasure to be experienced in creating its own interpretation, and allow critics to no longer think about what is really happening, the real aesthetic criteria that make any artist's work possible, or go any deeper than the monochromatic surface of the label itself. Naked City's refusal to integrate such categories, and instead to expose them through both juxtaposition and the appearance of arbitrariness, can therefore be understood as a refusal to take part in the

[82] John Zorn, "Preface," Arcana: Musicians on Music, ed. John Zorn (New York: Granary Books/Hips Road, 2000) v.

practice derided by Zorn as ultimately reducing musical works to their exchange value alone.

3.1.2 *GENRE AS MUSICAL FRAME*

In Chapter 1 it was argued that genres are part of the processes which create social and cultural knowledge, not only responding to particular social contexts, but also shaping them. A link between genre and frames is thus usefully highlighted by Paltridge, who characterises frames as partially filled in outlines which guide comprehension.[83] If genre can be seen to act as a musical frame, then Derrida's remark that 'there is no natural frame' is of particular pertinence. A frame does not simply appear of its own accord: framing is something that is done, something that happens. If a piece of music paradoxically demarcates itself through interacting with and reconstructing that which defines its limits, then this suggests genre is not merely descriptive, but instructive. Derrida's speculative 'suppose for a moment that it were impossible not to mix genres' further suggests that the notion of musical authenticity is a myth, with musical spheres being characterised by hybridity and cross-fertilisation.[84] In this sense, the "authentic" is always already contaminated. For the listener, genres therefore act not only as milestones or waymarkers telling them where they are (supposed to be) going—what they are listening to—but also acting as a kind of listening map which advises them of the best route to their destination, or how to listen and what to listen to and for. As such, genre labels appear as more than simply another feature of a musical "object".

Research in cognitive psychology supports the idea of genre being more

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[83] Paltridge, Genre, Frames and Writing in Research Settings 49.

[84] Derrida, "The Law of Genre," 57.

than just another musical feature. A 2000 study by Yamauchi and Markman suggests that the presence of category labels guides individuals towards a particular response.[85] Yamauchi and Markman presented participants with a series of stimuli each containing an image of a novel "bug", together with an image of a prototypical bug for each of two categories. When asked to predict a missing feature, given four other features and the category label, participants' predictions tended towards that of the labelled category, even when similarity information contradicted the category label. Work by Lippa and Goldstone also suggests that responses to stimuli can be automatically triggered, even when those responses are inappropriate.[86]

Yamauchi and Markman have also conducted useful research on category learning. Participants were asked to learn categories in which individual features of novel "bugs" were shown with several different instances.[87] Participants were assigned to one of three conditions: *classification*, where they were asked to indicate which of two categories a stimulus belonged to; *inference*, where they were asked to choose between one of two missing features (for example, two different heads) given the four remaining features and the category label; and *mixed*, where participants completed a mixture of randomly-ordered classification and inference tasks. Participants in the classification-learning condition had difficulty in learning these categories, whilst participants in the inference-learning and mixed-learning conditions

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[85] Takashi Yamauchi and Arthur B. Markman, "Inference Using Categories," Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, & Cognition 36.3 (2000).

[86] Yvonne Lippa and Robert L. Goldstone, "The Acquisition of Automatic Response Biases through Categorization," Memory & Cognition 29.7 (2001).

[87] See Takashi Yamauchi and Arthur B. Markman, "Learning Categories Composed of Varying Instances: The Effect of Classification, Inference, and Structural Alignment," Memory & Cognition 28.1 (2000).

were both able to acquire the same categories. Yamauchi and Markman point towards the mechanism of *structural alignment* to help explain their findings. Structural alignment refers to the mechanism by which a structured representation of a target concept is aligned with a structured concept of a base concept according to the relational match between them. They suggest that category labels provide a handle by which probe items can be more easily aligned with the stored category representation. The authors' earlier research suggested that the nature of how categories are formed can be modified by the approach used to learn those categories. In particular, classification learning leads to an approach focused on the learning of distinguishing features, whereas inference learning leads to an approach focused on learning the commonalities between exemplars.[88]

There is also research which suggests that category learning consists of both learning to classify and learning to use the category.[89] Ross conducted a series of experiments in which participants classified sets of three symptoms into one of two disease categories. Participants were then asked to continue classifying symptom sets, and also to decide which drug treatment would be most appropriate. Finally, participants were presented with single-symptom then double-symptom tests and were asked to decide on both which disease the patient was most likely to have and also the most appropriate drug treatment. Their results indicated that the knowledge gained from the treatment judgments affected later disease classifications, as participants made more accurate diagnoses once they had learned the appropriate treatments. What this

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[88] Takashi Yamauchi and Arthur B. Markman, "Category Learning by Inference and Classification," Journal of Memory and Language 39.1 (1998): 144.

[89] Brian H. Ross, "The Effects of Category Use on Learned Categories," Memory & Cognition 28.1 (2000): 60.

study reveals is that the original classification of a concept can be affected by subsequent learning about its use.

Perhaps the most interesting and relevant outcome of Ross' work is that it suggests that people may classify objects at a more specific level as they become more experienced within those domains. In the musical sphere, this can be seen in the differences between how large chains, such as HMV, and small, independent music retailers organise their stock—macro-generic categories like "Dance" or "Rock and Pop" versus micro-generic categories like "Tech House" or "Suicidal Black Metal". This is perhaps a function of not only staff and customer expertise, but also of variables like stock levels (the higher the level of stock, the more difficult it becomes to organise other than in over-arching, highly general categories), purchase patterns and purchase frequency (staff in a busy shop will have less time to spend on stock organisation—this is also perhaps a moot point where large retailers are concerned, where product location is often decided by supplier and management policies rather than by individual staff members), and target demographic.

3.1.3 Summary

Examination of the artists and songs which are included in the category of Driving Music represented by albums in the *Top Gear* series reveals that criteria for entry into the category are somewhat arbitrary and are inconsistently applied, and inclusion in the category relies more on cultural and intertextual relationships between artists and works than on particular structural and lyrical features. In this context genre appears not as a taxonomical system, but as a means to relate one work to another as part of an overall commercial sales strategy.

Paltridge's link between genre and frames provides an entry point into a broader discussion about the boundaries of music and the processes which create, maintain, and modify those boundaries. It also points towards questions about the relationships between musical boundaries, musical works, and those individuals and groups who create, distribute, and listen to music. This chapter will therefore examine those relationships, firstly discussing the use of codes and conventions in musical works and their impact on both what the work means and how it is perceived, and secondly considering the social structures which bring these codes into being and maintain them, and how producers and works might challenge and modify those codes.

3.2 THAT'S NOT MUSIC! THAT'S JUST A NOISE!

In 1989 the BBC broadcast *Thrashed to Death,* a short documentary on the Thrash Metal scene which was at that time starting to attract more mainstream attention.[90] Hosted by low-budget horror film actress Elvira, *Thrashed to Death* featured interview and live concert footage of one of the most popular thrash metal acts of the time, Slayer, together with further interview and live footage of the then comparatively underground Grindcore band Napalm Death. The documentary was based around an oppositional structure: mainstream versus underground, veterans versus newcomers, fast versus fastest (thus rendering fast as slow). My father's response to seeing Napalm Death perform their sub-two second *You Suffer*—featuring the admittedly incomprehensible lyrics 'You suffer - but why?'—was a confident "That's not music! That's just a noise. Anyone could do that." I, being a Napalm Death fan, of course disagreed. To me

[90] Thrashed to Death, dir. Helen Gallacher, perf. Slayer and Napalm Death, BBC Television, 1989.

the song *You Suffer* was just a condensation of the various features of their particular aesthetic, an attempt to see how far they could push the boundaries of what constituted "Napalm Death". A two second song appeared to me as something that held a slight novelty status (although for reasons of perceived extremity rather than humour or surprise), but within the oeuvre of a band who had multiple songs under 30 seconds long, including the five seconds that comprise *Dead,* it wasn't particularly discordant or conspicuous. Being neither a noise nor reducible to noise (although it was noisy), it didn't sound like "just a noise" to me.

3.2.1 *MUSICAL CODES*

As was noted in Chapter 2, Attali's view suggests all music is noise given form according to a code. Similarly, Barthes notes that 'signification is only possible to the extent that there is a stock of signs, the beginnings of a code.'[91] It can thus be argued that the problem my father had with *You Suffer* may have arisen because he did not have access to the means to de-code it, whilst I did, and his assertion that 'anyone could do that' failed to account for the fact that in order to "do that" one needs to know what "that" is, which he clearly didn't, because to him it was just a noise. The perception of works of art can therefore be seen as an act of deciphering, whether conscious or unconscious, and what Pierre Bourdieu calls 'cultural blindness' is a reminder that this perception is a mediated process.[92]

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[91] Roland Barthes, "The Photographic Message," trans. Stephen Heath, Image, Music, Text (London: Fontana, 1977) 21.

[92] Readers may question the lack of discussion of the work of Raymond Monelle and Eero Tarasti here, given their considerable output tackling the subject of how music means. The decision to leave such discussion aside has its basis in the social aspects of musical meaning, and the relationship between reception and meaning, which are largely absent in their work. Whilst Monelle makes some attempt to account for the

Any deciphering operation demands both a code and a mastery of that code. Therefore, when the deciphering capabilities of the beholder are exceeded by the information presented by the work, the work is perceived as lacking structuration and organisation, because the beholder cannot decode it. As a result it appears to be devoid of signification. This apparent absence of signification sometimes results in a listener dismissing a piece of music created using a code with which they are unfamiliar as "just a noise", or in reactions of laughter or disgust. Art perception is thus reduced to primary significations, or the "expressive" qualities of a work (what Bourdieu terms a 'mutilated perception'). Such a mode of perception lacks the support, control and correction supplied by the knowledge of the appropriate styles, types and other cultural indicators possessed by less naïve listeners. As the product of an inadequate and non-specific code—a general "music" code, or in naïve readings of Napalm Death a general "Heavy Metal" code—it offers only an inferior form of the aesthetic experience.

According to Bourdieu, where the act of deciphering is unrecognised as such, immediate and adequate comprehension is only possible and effective when the cultural code which makes it possible for the work to be deciphered is immediately and completely mastered by the observer, and where this code

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appearance of particular musical features via the occasional mention of historical events, Monelle's links between works and their social contexts are largely evocative rather than specific. Tarasti's much denser account of the process of musical semiosis is largely devoid of anything which might situate the music it discusses within a broader socio-cultural context, instead concentrating on the development of a complex discourse describing meaning as the product of the internal relationships between a work's musical parts. See Raymond Monelle, The Sense of Music: Semiotic Essays (Princeton, N.J.; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000), Eero Tarasti, A Theory of Musical Semiotics (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994).

merges with the cultural code which renders the perceived work possible.[93] The implication of Bourdieu's argument is that the work's "objective" meaning (the supposed "correct" meaning, which is not to be confused with the creator's intended meaning) is only completely, adequately, and immediately recaptured where the artistic competence the creator puts into the work is identical with that which the beholder brings to the deciphering of the work. As these conditions can never be met, given the inherently manifold nature of artistic practice and artistic meaning, then there is an inevitable misunderstanding. What Bourdieu suggests is that this misunderstanding occurs as the result of the absence of the perception that the work is coded, and that it is coded in another code. There thus appears the illusion of immediate comprehension based on the application of a mistaken code—the code which is good for everyday perception and the deciphering of familiar objects—to works in a foreign tradition. A listener without the specific categories of perception required to comprehend a particular musical work is therefore unable to apply any code other than that which enables them to apprehend the meaningful objects of their everyday environment, objects which may not be limited to other musical works.

The readability of a particular work of art for a particular individual is dependent on, and varies according to, the divergence between what Bourdieu terms the *level of emission*—the degree of intrinsic complexity and subtlety of the code required for the work—and the *level of reception*—the degree to which the individual has mastered the social code, which may be more or less

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[93] Pierre Bourdieu, "Outline of a Sociological Theory of Art Perception," The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature, ed. Randal Johnson (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993) 215-17.

adequate to the code required for the work.[94] An individual's capacity for apprehending the information suggested by the work is dependent on their knowledge of the generic code for the type of message concerned. Where there is a divergence between the complexity and subtlety of the code of the work and that of the code of the beholder, such that the code of the work exceeds the code of the beholder, the work appears as without a code at all, as a seemingly random and unstructured set of sounds, colours, or objects.[95] Thus, in order to raise the level of reception, it is necessary to lower the level of emission by providing together with the work a discourse, the code of which is already mastered or which continually delivers the code for deciphering. This use of what Genette calls 'paratexts' is explored in Chapter 4.

Any action which tends to lower the level of emission will also have the effect of raising the level of reception. This concept-driven approach to comprehension corresponds with what cognitive psychology terms *top-down processing;* that is, pattern recognition processes which are in part driven by beliefs and expectations, and are focused on looking for evidence which is consistent with that pattern and attenuating the features that are not. A data-driven approach to comprehension corresponds with *bottom-up processing,* where individual components in a system are linked together, forming larger components, which are then also linked together, and so on until the complete system is formed. A corresponding summary is offered by Derrida:

When the generality is given first, the operation of judgment subsumes and

[94] Ibid. 224.

[95] Susan Thompson notes that non-native speaker students in higher education often face difficulties in understanding lectures, not only because of basic language difficulties, but because of a lack of understanding of the format in which the lecture is presented. See Thompson, "Frameworks and Contexts: A Genre-Based Approach to Analysing Lecture Introductions."

> *determines* the particular. It is determinant, it specifies, narrows down, comprehends, tightens. In the contrary hypothesis, the *reflective* judgment has only the particular at its disposal and must climb back up to, return toward generality: the example (this is what matters to us here) is here given prior to the law and, in its very uniqueness as example, allows one to discover that law.[96]

However, according to Gjerdingen, listeners categorise music via a combination of both top-down and bottom-up processing. When a feature is presented, listeners attempt to locate it within a larger schema. As more features are identified, rival schemata can be eliminated until the most likely schema can be selected and utilised. At some point in this process there occurs a switch in strategy: once distinctive features of a schema have been identified listeners actively seek out the remaining features. Where top-down processing manages to locate all but one or two of the expected features the remaining blanks may be filled in by basic cognitive processes should the overall context seem appropriate.[97]

Bourdieu's work is also echoed in that of Irene Deliège and her research into how individuals manage everyday perceptual inputs. Deliège suggests that when faced with their everyday environment, individuals classify what they perceive according to the collection of categories that they have already acquired, stored and developed in memory. When it comes to listening to music, this comparison and classification does not come at the end of the listening process: listening proceeds linearly, and mental schema begin to be built up at the very beginning of the piece and progress and evolve over the duration of the

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[96] Derrida, The Truth in Painting 51.

[97] Robert O. Gjerdingen, A Classic Turn of Phrase: Music and the Psychology of Convention (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988) 7.

work.[98] Indeed, as noted at the beginning of this chapter and as is explored more fully in Chapter 4, information about musical works begins to be acquired well before it is heard. Listening thus attempts to make sense of, to extract meaning from, an episodic text which is a montage of accumulated and appropriated "writings", an assemblage of quotations, of disjunct fragments—Naked City's *Torture Garden* being a conspicuous example of the fragmented nature of musical works and how they mean—and as such it is appropriate to argue that all listening proceeds *allegorically.*

Research on how these components are linked is varied. Lamont and Dibben found that listeners' judgments of similarity amongst musical works tended to be context-specific, relying on 'surface' features such as texture, contour, dynamics and articulation rather than on 'deeper' features such as motivic or harmonic relationships (the spatial metaphor is Lamont and Dibben's, and is distinct from that which relates to surface and deeper musical meaning of the type suggested by Gaver and Mandler, for example). They suggest that four factors play a role in the perception of similarity relations in music—'listeners' experience, familiarity of the material, complexity of the material, and task complexity—all of which point to the importance of *context.*'[99] Rips and Collins argue that the role of similarity judgments in the categorisation process is overstated, suggesting that there are occasions where judged similarity and judged category likelihood diverge, and that the notion of

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[98] Irene Deliège, "Introduction: Similarity Perception - Categorization - Cue Abstraction," Music Perception 18.3 (2001): 236-37. See also Irene Deliege, "Cue Abstraction as a Component of Categorisation Processes in Music Listening," Psychology of Music 24.2 (1996).

[99] Alexandra Lamont and Nicola Dibben, "Motivic Structure and the Perception of Similarity," Music Perception 18.3 (2001): 250.

similarity or resemblance may itself be highly problematic.[100] They suggest that if resemblance is judged based on arbitrary properties, then any one thing can resemble any other thing in an infinite number of ways. For example, the elephants Jumbo and Dumbo are both similar in that they weigh more than 1lb—an arbitrary feature but one which they both share, but then so are Jumbo and Rambo. However, if resemblance is to explain category learning, if Jumbo and Dumbo are to be classified as elephants based on their similarity, then that similarity had better not presuppose that very category: 'Resemblance will not account for why we classify Jumbo and Dumbo as elephants if their resemblance is itself based on sharing the property of elephanthood.'[101] As was discussed in Chapter 1, Aucouturier and Pachet's work suggests that genre membership is more effectively based on cultural intrinsic habits rather than the identification of largely arbitrary features appearing inconsistently across categories. It is therefore not particularly revealing to suggest the music of Slayer and Metallica is Thrash Metal because Slayer and Metallica both share the feature of being Thrash Metal bands.

DiMaggio suggests that the processes by which genre distinctions are created, ritualised and eroded, and the processes by which tastes are produced as part of sense-making and boundary-defining activities of social groups come together in what he terms 'artistic classification systems'. Such systems vary along four dimensions, he suggests: firstly in the extent to which art is differentiated into genres, the boundaries of which are institutionally defined; secondly, in the extent to which these genres are ranked hierarchically

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[100] Lance J. Rips and Allan Collins, "Categories and Resemblance," Journal of Experimental Psychology: General 122.4 (1993).

[101] Ibid.: 468.

according to degrees of prestige; thirdly, in the extent to which these classifications are universal; and finally, the extent to which genre boundaries are ritualised.[102] Artistic classification systems do not operate in isolation, and each of these dimensions are affected by the structure of the field, including how educational systems are organised and the internal relations between different social agents acting within the field.

Derrida remarks that common to all the various classes of classes—genres of types, genres of modes, genres of forms, types of genres, types of modes, types of forms, modes of genres, modes of types, modes of forms, forms of genres, forms of modes, forms of types—is the trait of having a common trait by which one can recognise membership in a class. There should be, Derrida suggests, a trait which could be relied upon in order to decide that a given work corresponds to a given class, and a code which enables one to decide questions of class membership on the basis of that trait.[103]

Musical works, as cultural products, do not exist by themselves, but are part of a network of relations which link them with other works, composers, record labels, artists and designers, other cultural products. In particular, Paltridge identifies three key factors in assigning genre membership: 1) *prototypicality*: the extent to which an instance of a particular genre is typical of the particular genre; 2) *inheritance*: the extent to which particular qualities or properties are inherited from other examples of the particular genre; and 3) *intertextuality*: the extent to which an instance of a particular genre recalls other previously encountered instances of the particular genre.[104] What Paltridge

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[102] Paul DiMaggio, "Classification in Art," American Sociological Review 52 (1987): 441.

[103] Derrida, "The Law of Genre," 63.

[104] Paltridge, Genre, Frames and Writing in Research Settings 47.

here identifies is that the identification of a common trait is as much about references to other works as it is to the work itself, not only problematising the notion of genres as distinct categories, but also highlighting the fact that works are not produced or perceived in a cultural vacuum.

According to prototype theory, people categorise objects based on a prototypical image they build in their mind of what it is that characterises the object in question. This prototype is not strictly defined and people tend to categorise in relation to prototypes which have a common core at the centre and fade off at the edges. That is, the edges of categories are blurred, or what Paltridge terms *fuzzy*. The further away an instance of a particular genre is from the central prototypical image, the greater the amount of fuzziness, and the less distinctive an instance of the particular genre the representation will be.[105] To demonstrate this point, consider the category of Irish Music as applied to Boyzone. Whilst Boyzone may be Irish they do not represent the prototypical example of Irish Music. Now consider the same category applied to The Pogues, a part-Irish band formed in London playing Irish Folk music influenced by The Clash and early UK Punk. What Paltridge's approach allows is for such borderline instances to be included within a single category, 'by basing deviations from the central prototypical core on how the world sees particular instances of a genre', rather than the less flexible approach of classical categorisation theories, where there are clear-cut boundaries between categories, and items are seen as either belonging or not.[106] However, Paltridge suggests that it would be more accurate to say that it is by *stereotype* rather than *prototype* that category membership is actually established. Individuals

[105] Ibid. 53.

[106] Ibid. 54.

classify phenomena by reference to a mental representation which contains characteristics, or properties, which may occur in many, but not necessarily every, actual instance of the prototype. It is thus by examination and reference to family resemblances of the particular instance of the object that it is classified.

The notion of family resemblances is also dealt with by Fishelov in the field of literary theory. Drawing on the work of Wittgenstein, and making use of a number of biological metaphors, Fishelov suggests that it is possible to establish a 'geneological' line of literary genres.[107] As readers, he suggests, we are expected to possess some knowledge of, and to take account of, the generic background against which a writer operates; or we are expected to identify 'the series of writers who have participated in shaping, reshaping and transmitting the textual heritage established by the "founding father" of the genre, including the dialectical relationship of "parents" and "children" in genre history.'[108] Fishelov argues that by working within a generic framework (and this is somewhat unavoidable—whether the writer does so actively or reluctantly), every writer is participating in the continuation of a process of textual heritage begun by the 'founding father' (James Brown as The Godfather of Soul) or the 'parental' figures and is thus participating in its 'genetic pool'.[109] This is echoed by Threadgold's intertextual formulation which suggests that a work bearing the characteristic marks of one generic type inevitably carries with it other less easily recognised but still recurring marks—quotations and citations from other

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[107] See §67 Ludwig Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1967) 26-27.

[108] David Fishelov, "Genre Theory and Family Resemblances - Revisited," Poetics 20.2 (1991): 135.

[109] Ibid.

contexts, other discourses, other genres—which already exceed the "original" genre.[110] It is thus in this sense that he argues we cannot not mix genres. Generic categories may therefore serve as a form of information management system, reducing the amount of material to be cross-referenced, and, as Bourdieu suggests, lowering the level of emission and thus raising the level of reception.

In agreement with the theory of allegory discussed in Chapter 2, Bourdieu argues that signification may be disclosed by a work of art at many different "levels" according to the deciphering "grid" applied to it, some of which may exclude or modify others.[111] If genre can be seen as a deciphering grid then it is here that Derrida's assertion that there can be no genre-less text, that every text participates in one or several genres, begins to make sense, and his opening line in *The Law of Genre*, 'genres are not to be mixed', cuts to the heart of the matter.[112] The notion of genre draws a limit, and with that limit come norms and interdictions, norms which must be respected: it is a line that must not be crossed if the notion of genre is to be preserved. Thus, Derrida argues, 'genres should not intermix. And if it should happen that they do intermix, then this should confirm, after all, we are speaking of "mixing", the essential purity of their identity.'[113]

The degree to which an agent has mastered the interpretation schemes which are the prerequisite for appropriating and deciphering works of art in a given society is termed by Bourdieu as *artistic competence*. Bourdieu

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[110] Threadgold, "Talking About Genre: Ideologies and Incompatible Discourses," 114.

[111] Bourdieu, "Outline of a Sociological Theory of Art Perception," 218.

[112] Derrida, "The Law of Genre," 55.

[113] Ibid.: 57.

provisionally defines artistic competence as 'the preliminary knowledge of the possible divisions into complementary classes of a universe of representations.'[114] That is, prior knowledge of the numerous principles of division which enable a cultural artefact to be located, via the recognition and classification of the various stylistic traits and indicators the artefact contains, within the universe of cultural artefacts, and not in the universe of everyday objects or the universe of signs, which would be treating the cultural artefact as a mere monument or means of communication. The degree of artistic competence is dependent on two factors: firstly, on the degree of mastery of the available classification system, and secondly on the degree of complexity or subtlety of the classification system. Artistic competence is therefore measured by an agent's ability to manage a somewhat large number of divisions and thus to discriminate between distinct but fine classes, such as in the ability to differentiate between late Thrash Metal and early Death Metal. The adequacy of a particular mode of perception differs from another only in the specificity, richness and subtlety of the categories it employs.

Bourdieu contends that the recognition (or *attribution*) of a class proceeds by the successive elimination of negative possibilities, noting that 'the grasping of resemblances presupposes implicit or explicit references to the differences, and vice versa.'[115] An artistic code is thus defined by Bourdieu as 'a system of possible principles of division into complementary classes of the universe of representations offered to a particular society at a given time'. This system, which is a set of instruments of perception that allow a particular society to appropriate cultural goods, being historically constituted and founded

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[114] See Bourdieu, "Outline of a Sociological Theory of Art Perception," 221-23.
[115] Ibid. 223.

on social reality, is not dependent on the wills and consciousness of individuals. It forces itself upon individuals, not always with their knowledge, setting the criteria and limits of the distinctions they can and cannot make. Bourdieu notes how listeners to Western classical music may not necessarily have an awareness or knowledge of the laws obeyed by that particular art-form, but, having in some way abandoned themselves to the work, they manage to internalise the rules of its construction—the particular musical code—without it ever being brought to their attention as such. Thus, through this almost-subliminal auditive education, having heard a dominant chord they immediately begin to anticipate its "natural" resolution in the tonic.

3.2.2 Cultural parallax

In astronomy and optics the phenomenon of parallax occurs when an object is apparently displaced when viewed along two different lines of sight (see Figure 3.5). For example, if you hold your forefinger in front of your face and close your left eye, and then simultaneously open your left eye and close your right, you'll notice that the finger "moves". If you then open your right eye and close your left eye again the finger "moves" once more, back to its original position.

Ryoji Ikeda's *Matrix* demonstrates how a change in the physical position of the beholder can change the reading of a work of art. With *Matrix* the listener's position in space is constitutive of what is received. As such any change in reading is not simply due to a parallaxical shift of figure against ground due to a change in the listener's position: a change in the listener's position initiates a change in the work itself. Matrix can thus be seen not as just sound in space, but also the sound of space.

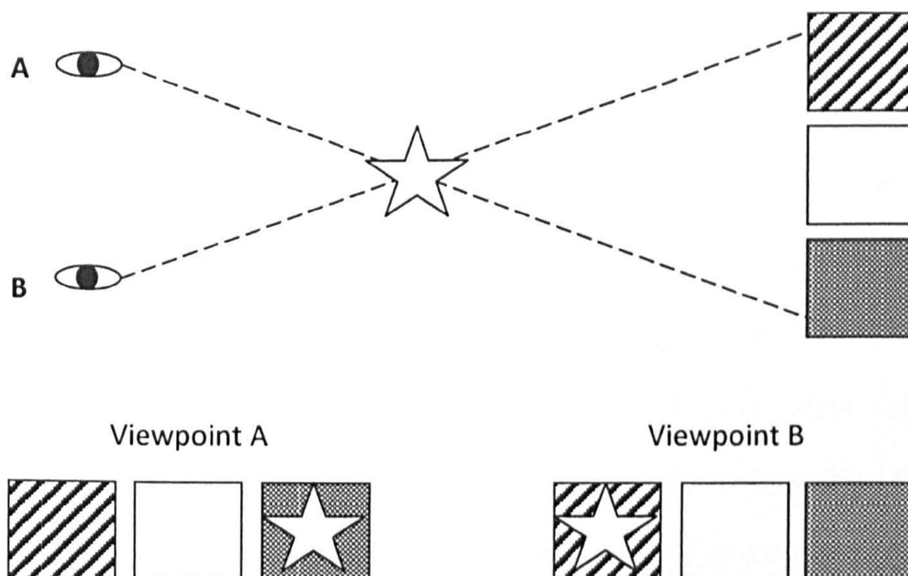

Figure 3.5. Parallax of an object against a distant background due to a shift in perspective

Bourdieu remarks on how a discrepancy between the cultural positions of the beholder and the work can modify how a work is interpreted, even if the work itself appears unchanged.[116] For example, where a work corresponding to one extremity of the field is presented before an audience corresponding to the other extremity, such as if a work by Luigi Nono or Iannis Xenakis were to be performed at the last night of the BBC's Proms concert season, the effect of parody appears.

Such examples highlight how a mode of thought or expression can be rendered incongruous or absurd, not by explicit denunciation, but by the repetition and reproduction of that expression in a socially non-congruent context. The works of Naked City, for example, function in part through a series of juxtapositions between particular characteristics and conventions of Jazz and Grindcore, whereby one is foregrounded through its presentation in terms of

[116] Pierre Bourdieu, "The Field of Cultural Production, Or: The Economic World Reversed," The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature, ed. Randal Johnson (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993) 31.

the other. The short duration of Grindcore songs appears on *Torture Garden* via a series of Jazz miniatures drawn from the prior recordings *Naked City* and *Grande Guignol,* re-collated as a new collection and released on the Earache label.[117] The genres are also positioned against each other in the ways the record is recorded and mixed. The stark density of Grindcore production is rendered as spacious and clear sounding, a sound more appropriate and akin to Jazz recordings. The tendency for Grindcore musicians to tune their instruments well below concert pitch has been reversed, there is no heavy distortion, and the recording standard is well above the kind of low-budget, DIY sound that more commonly appears in Grindcore music (Grindcore's recording quality is in part due to the financial constraints imposed by most recordings appearing on very small, independent record labels or being self-financed and self-released, but is also part of an overall aesthetic that tends towards notions of extremity). This use of clarity removes the tendency for instruments to bleed into one another—guitars into bass, bass into drums—and for the boundaries between parts of the song to blur under a sea of fuzz and rumbling. The punk-rooted DIY attitude of Grindcore towards musicianship is rendered as virtuoso performance. The tensions between the two genres are further highlighted by the tendency of the band's works to cover a multitude of additional musical styles over the course of a single song.

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[117] Formally created in 1987 Nottingham-based Earache Records was one of the earliest promoters of the Grindcore style, releasing early recordings by the bands Napalm Death, Bolt Thrower, Carcass and Terroriser. On the origin of the term "Grindcore" Napalm Death's former drummer Mick Harris says: 'Grindcore came from "grind", which was the only word I could use to describe Swans after buying their first record in '84. Then with this new hardcore movement that started to really blossom in '85, I thought "grind" really fit [sic] because of the speed so I started to call it grindcore.' Albert Mudrian, Choosing Death: The Improbable History of Death Metal and Grindcore (Los Angeles: Feral House, 2004) 35.

3.2.3 *Tuning in*

For communication of a musical utterance to be successful, the composer/musician must meet several requirements; that is assuming a musical work is intended to communicate anything at all—the analyses of Ryoji Ikeda's *Matrix* and Naked City's *Speedfreaks* in Chapter 2 demonstrate that music can also deliberately frustrate attempts to locate and extract meaningful content, and so treating musical works as simply another form of communication is somewhat misleading. Firstly, the producer of the work must possess language ability—an ability to express the language or code in which the exchange takes place. Secondly, they must demonstrate functional awareness—an awareness of the communicative function of the utterance. Finally, they must possess pragmatic knowledge—an understanding of the particular contexts in which a particular utterance can be used for a particular purpose. Any musical utterance is not so much an expression as an orientation of thoughts towards (and also away from) the forms and conventions of the social grouping of which the composer, performer and listener are a part. For example, there are certain responses to music—the expectation created by Western tonality and the delayed gratification in the inevitable return to the tonic, or the key change before the final chorus in many contemporary "power ballads" (Celine Dion's *My Heart Will Go On*, for example)—that are contingent on shared knowledge and experience of the appropriate conventions. The composer and musician Tony Conrad suggests that one of music's actions is to 'tune the hearer in', to draw the listener into a group—sometimes small, sometimes an entire nation or age group—and to expand and redraw language

boundaries.[118] According to Conrad, the "speaker" in such a group must utilise an awareness of: (a) what is to be said; (b) how it is to be said; and (c) the appropriate context(s) in which to say it, all of which point towards both musical "speech" and listening as fundamentally social processes.

There are, however, fundamental difficulties in attempting to extrapolate these features onto readings of works of art: is the work of art saying what the speaker intended, in the way the speaker intended, in the context it was intended for? Both LaCapra and Bourdieu highlight the difficulties in answering these questions. Conrad also points towards the notion of language groups and musical dialects, echoing Vološinov's writings on 'accent'. Vološinov suggests that any time a word is used in speech it possesses not only a theme and meaning in the referential sense, but also value judgment. At the base of this suggestion is an argument that all referential content in speech is produced in conjunction with a specific 'evaluative accent', and as a result all words are also partly formed by this evaluative accent.'[119]

A distinction should be made here between music *communities* and music *scenes*. John Shepherd defines a musical community as a particular section of the population whose composition is relatively stable, and where musical activities take the form of an ongoing exploration of a particular musical idiom which is said to be rooted in that community. A scene, meanwhile, is defined as a cultural space within which a range of musical practices exist and interact, with wide-ranging processes of differentiation and trajectories of

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[118] Tony Conrad, "Minor Premise," Early Minimalism Volume One (Atlanta: Table of the Elements, 1997) 38.

[119] See Valentin Vološinov, Marxism and the Philosophy of Language (New York; London: Seminar Press, 1973) 103.

change and cross-fertilisation.[120]

3.3 THE ILLUSION OF THE NAKED EYE

Randall Johnson argues that the economy of a particular cultural field is based on a particular belief about what constitutes, and the aesthetic or social value of, a cultural work. Johnson suggests this belief takes its most traditional and canonical form in ideas about the autonomy of the work from external determinants and essentialist notions of the absolute value of the work in itself, such beliefs being institutionalised in the many universities around the world.[121] The move against "expression" exemplified in Kant's assumption that one can distinguish between the intrinsic and the extrinsic presupposes that music is the physical embodiment of a musical thought, rather than the arrangement of sound components according to the socially and historically constituted codes of those who made the work, which may or may not correspond with the codes available to the beholder. Claims of the autonomy of music, such as those made by Gaver and Mandler which are highlighted in Chapter 2, suggest that the relationship between music and the world is based on resemblance rather than reciprocation, and the two spheres are ultimately kept distinct and separate. However, Gaver and Mandler also see music existing as 'an interaction between structured sound and a comprehending mind', which must have 'an objective structure that corresponds to social consensus about appropriate musical structures.'[122] Such a formulation is highly problematic, even contradictory, putting forward the idea of music having an existence and

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[120] John Shepherd, Music as Social Text (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991) 74.
[121] See Johnson, "Editor's Introduction: Pierre Bourdieu on Art, Literature and Culture."
[122] Gaver and Mandler, "Play It Again, Sam: On Liking Music," 261-62.

meaning outside of the non-musical world, while at the same time speaking of structure, comprehension and social consensus. The effect is that a supposedly autonomous music gains meaning 'in the context of the system of rules and convention that describe music in general', and is thus predicated upon the existence of both socially-prescribed musical structures and socially-prescribed listening techniques. As Bourdieu remarks: 'it can be said that the illusion of the "fresh eye" as a "naked eye" is an attribute of those who wear the spectacles of culture and who do not see that which enables them to see, any more than they see what they would not see if they were deprived of what enables them to see.'[123] In addition, Gaver and Mandler's account, as well as any account which reduces music to mere audible recitation of consensus opinion about what makes a work, fails to account for those musical works which mean what they do precisely because they challenge (or indeed, misunderstand) those socially agreed-upon ideas about how music should be made and how it should be listened to. My father's difficulty in comprehending the work of Napalm Death didn't just stem from the fact that he didn't have access to an appropriate decoding mechanism, but also because at that point in time Napalm Death's work constituted an active confrontation with currently accepted musical practices, emphasised in *Thrashed to Death* by the drums and vocals being mixed so high by the show's production team that the bass and guitar are reduced to an underlying fuzz of static and distortion, and reflected in a tight crop which leaves the bassist jammed against the left hand side of the screen and the guitarist out of sight entirely. Footage of Slayer, on the other hand, prioritises the guitars both visually and aurally, and drummer Dave Lombardo

[123] Bourdieu, "Outline of a Sociological Theory of Art Perception," 217.

is partially or completely obscured from view for the duration of the piece, apart from during the six brief tom hits that introduce *Raining Blood*. Napalm Death's work thus meant what it did precisely because it ran counter to what was expected of it—Grindcore was yet to exist as a genre and thus no adequate code had yet been formed—and means something different again now that Grindcore has been accepted as a legitimate musical practice (the naming of the practice as a mark of that acceptance).

At the root of Gaver and Mandler's thought is the assertion that 'musicians create similarities between their music and the non-musical world in order to express an emotion.'[124] If music is seen to be expressive, and expression is seen to be outside of convention, then the conclusion drawn by Gaver and Mandler is that therefore music is not conventional. That music might function through the inventive use of convention or, in the case of Napalm Death, through the active challenging of convention (for example, in their retuning of their instruments to various steps below concert pitch and the concurrent downward shift in vocal pitch, thus countering the rise in standard pitch over the course of the 20th century), is excluded by their formulation.[125]

The idea that music is expressive rather than conventional further rests on an assumption that a composer means what they say, and that their work says what they mean. This contentious relationship between artworks and the producers of artworks is highlighted by the work of Dominick LaCapra. LaCapra

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[124] Gaver and Mandler, "Play It Again, Sam: On Liking Music," 280.

[125] According to their former drummer, Mick Harris, Napalm Death's *Scum* album uses concert pitch tuning on side A whilst side B is tuned down to B. The band's tuning has moved up and down over the course of subsequent releases, but has always remained at least one step below E standard. Unlike many bands of their ilk the band have always used standard tunings rather than their dropped variants. See "Napalm Death," Disposable Underground 15, 08 January 2009 <http://www.disposableunderground.com/pdfs/Disposable_Underground_38.pdf>.

argues that assuming a proprietary relation between an artist and their work as well as a unitary meaning for an utterance, and presenting a work as the embodiment or realisation of the artist's intentions, prevents the formulation as an explicit problem the question of the relationship between intentions—assuming they can be reconstructed—and what the work may be argued to do.[126] LaCapra's point is clear—such a relationship may involve numerous tensions, including self-contestation, and is as a result inherently problematic: the composer's intentions may not be known, perhaps even by the composer themselves; their intentions may have changed (or may have only become apparent) during the compositional process; the work may fail to document or may even contradict their intentions; or, and perhaps most problematically, the composer may have reformulated their intentions retrospectively in response to an interpretation with which they do not agree. On the latter LaCapra argues that it is therefore more manifestly a reading or interpretation, rather than a transcription, of what the composer meant to say at the "original" time of writing.[127]

Similarly, a psycho-biographical perspective which seeks out the motivation of the composer (reflected in the numerous books on "the life and music" of Beethoven or Bach, Shostakovich's memoirs, or Mozart's letters) is also a problematic route, as the composer's motivation may be only partly known to him, not known at all, or may change throughout the composition process. In addition, attempting to find correlations between a composer's life and his or her music involves identifying, locating and comprehending two

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[126] See Dominick LaCapra, Rethinking Intellectual History: Texts, Contexts, Language (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 1983) 36.

[127] Ibid. 37.

separate meanings—the musical meaning, and the biographical meaning—which may be unrelated or conflicting. One must also be able to distinguish between a causal relationship and one which is merely correlational. Thus, LaCapra argues that investigating the possible relationship between life and texts does more to complicate the problem of interpretation than to simplify it, such an approach adding to the already difficult task of interpreting a demanding text, the additional difficulty of trying to relate it to existential processes.[128]

Likewise, attempting to understand a piece of music by understanding the social group from which and for which a composer creates his or her work—such group acting as both patron and addressee, creating the work with and through the composer—is equally awkward. What was already a complex task—deciphering a musical text—is made significantly more complex through attempting to also decipher the "texts" of the social group(s) from and for which the composer creates his or her work and the text of the composer, and then having to sort out the whole intertextual mess. For Bourdieu, this raises questions of whether the appropriate social group can even be identified, and he notes that it may or may not coincide with the social group from which the composer's audience is drawn, or the group which is the main or favoured addressee (or even addressees) of the work.[129].

For a listener attempting to decipher social texts alongside the work itself, it becomes especially problematic where the listener is attempting to do so from a position of naïveté outside a certain group, particularly when musical

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[128] Ibid. 40.

[129] Bourdieu, "The Field of Cultural Production, Or: The Economic World Reversed," 56.

works emerge from "underground" musical cultures—the Punk, Hardcore and Thrash Metal scenes and their corresponding networks of "tape traders" from which Napalm Death emerged, for example—where nuanced differences between similar or related groups may not be readily apparent to all but those experts fully immersed within that sector of the cultural field.[130] To the non-expert the musical and extra-musical details which separate the proponents, participants and products of closely-related musical cultures and scenes may be all but invisible, and thus different groups may be identified as one based on those features which appear in all of them, or their works perceived according to expected features the works don't even possess. However, if the social texts that surround a work are seen to be constitutive—the circumstances of a work also being a frame—then a reading of a work which ignores such texts can be argued to be incomplete.

The ultimate aim of such biographical endeavours is to attempt to locate the "true" speaker and from this derive the "true" meaning. If music can be seen as dialogical, and thus music is one person saying something to another, with an ultimate aim rather than just an exchange of words, then the construction of meaning is contingent upon certain assumptions about who is speaking, who is being spoken to, and why. Who we see as the "owner" of the voice depends on who we see as the "person", and who we see as the person may thus affect how we interpret what is being said. This approach is characterised by Bourdieu as 'a

[130] Throughout the 1980s and into the early 1990s there was a worldwide network of music collectors, particularly in the Punk, Hardcore, and Heavy Metal scenes where there was a degree of musical and cultural overlap, who would conduct exchanges of music (especially band-released demos and rehearsals) by mail. In these pre-internet days, tape-trading constituted the primary means by which new or unsigned bands within such "underground" music scenes could have their music heard by a wider audience (wider in this case relating to quantity rather than diversity). See Mudrian, Choosing Death: The Improbable History of Death Metal and Grindcore, Daniel Ekeroth, Swedish Death Metal (Johanneshov: Tamara Press, 2006).

sort of trap laid for those who, seeking to escape the internal reading of the work or the internal history of artistic life, condemn themselves to the *short circuit* of directly interrelating the period and the work.'[131] In addition, such an approach locates the meaning of an artwork within the relationship between producer and product at the expense of the perceiver and any meanings realised by the perceiver, especially those which may run counter to those of the producer. However, as is explored in Chapter 4, the idea of the producer of an artwork as an author, distinct from the person bearing that name, also provides a means to reconcile such difficulties (and those highlighted by LaCapra) by seeing the creation of an author as a means to limit extraneous readings of a work.

3.3.1 THE STRUCTURE OF THE FIELD

In his seminal article "The conditions of artistic creation," T.J. Clark raises a number of pertinent questions regarding the processes by which artworks are produced and how these processes are to be reflected in art historical discourse. At the outset Clark speculates on what is meant by the terms "artist's resources" and "artist's materials": technical resources, artistic tradition, or a repertory of ideas and the means to give them form? Clark continues to question the terms, asking whether a hierarchy exists between an artist's available technical, traditional and repertorial material, and whether that hierarchy is dynamic or fixed.[132] What Clark's line of questioning points towards is a consideration of the relationship between structure (the way a work is compositionally ordered,

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[131] Bourdieu, "The Field of Cultural Production, Or: The Economic World Reversed," 56. [Italics in original]

[132] T.J. Clark. "The Conditions of Artistic Creation," The Times Literary Supplement 24 May 1974: 561-62.

the conventions it is subject to, and the conditions in which it is produced, disseminated, received and interpreted) and agency (all the factors involved in the making of the artwork, including other artists, critics, dealers, and consumers), thus situating them as parts of a socio-historical process.

A similar approach can be seen in Bourdieu's work, which suggests that when attempting to construct an object such as a musical field it is necessary to move away from what he terms the 'substantialist' mode of thought, which tends to emphasise individuals, or the visible interactions between individuals, at the expense of the structural relationship between different social positions.[133] Such positions may be occupied and manipulated by social "agents" in the form of individuals, groups or institutions, and relations between them may be invisible, or visible only through their effects. The existence of each of these positions, including the dominant position, and the determinations each position imposes upon those who occupy it—individuals, groups, institutions—is dependent on the other positions which constitute the field.

The structure of the field, what Bourdieu terms the 'space of positions', is determined by the distribution of capital—economic, cultural and symbolic, those specific properties which govern success in the field—and the winning of the profits—again, both economic and cultural—which are at stake. Thus, Bourdieu sees the artistic field as not just a field of *forces*, but also a field of *struggles* to transform or conserve the field of forces. Whenever there is a change in the options available for consumers and producers to choose from, then a 'position-taking' changes, even when the position remains unchanged. Likewise, a change in the position of social agents acting within a field

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[133] See Bourdieu, "The Field of Cultural Production, Or: The Economic World Reversed," 29-31.

necessarily entails a change in the structure of the field itself. With each change in the field within which a cultural artefact is located there is a simultaneous change in the meaning of that artwork. Bourdieu thus argues that artists' attempts to control the reception of their own work are always in some part destined to fail, 'because the very effect of their work may transform the conditions of its reception and because they would not have had to write many things they did write and write them as they did—e.g. resorting to rhetorical strategies intended to "twist the stick in the other direction"—if they had been granted from the outset what they are granted retrospectively.'[134]

Additionally, Bourdieu asserts that any transformation of the instruments of art perception is necessarily preceded by the transformation of the instruments of art production. Because a change in the modes of perception is a matter of uprooting a type of art competence and substituting another for it, it occurs slowly. The inertia inherent in art competences therefore means that, in periods of rupture, works produced by the new instruments of art production are inevitably perceived, for a certain time, by precisely those against which they have been created—the old instruments of art perception.[135]

The rupture and subsequent perceptual difficulties of which Bourdieu speaks exist in Naked City's abrasion and repositioning of the voice as denuded of meaning within a culture where the voice holds position as the primary communicator (and thus marks it out as a site of attack and subsequent struggle). If all systems are built around binary oppositions in which one term is privileged over the other, as the work of Derrida suggests, then it is the boundary of the field which is the site of such struggles. At stake is the authority

[134] Ibid. 31.

[135] Bourdieu, "Outline of a Sociological Theory of Art Perception," 225-26.

to determine the legitimate definition of the field, and thus by extension, the authority to define those works which are deemed most representative of the field and therefore the dominant codes by which works can be created and comprehended. For Vološinov, the stock of signs that begin to make up the codes used by a cultural group are not simply reflections of existence, but *refractions* induced by the intersection of differently oriented social interests within one and the same sign community.[136] As such, they become the site of a struggle over meaning.

The particular rejection of the social order initiated by 1970s Punk and continued by Punk and Hardcore bands during the 1980s appears in Naked City's appropriation of Napalm Death's attack on that which shapes and controls the social order—on language—and thus appears as an attack on the voice. The denudation of the voice—vowels and consonants blurred by their compression into a tighter temporal space as a function of increased velocity, and later reaching their logical conclusion in the work of Obituary and the removal of words entirely—leads to what Nicholas Bullen calls 'the pariah voice', a consequence of the breakdown in communication which positions the voice as a marker of both the failure of language to provide meaning and the horror of losing control.[137] The wordless voice of Napalm Death is echoed in the yelped, screamed and screeched vocalisations of Naked City's Yamatsuka Eye, and in the use of John Zorn's saxophone to parallel and counter Eye's vocals (Zorn's instrument playing the role of second voice in a move which parallels Napalm Death's use of both high and low-pitched vocals). Here the voice is highlighted

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[136] Vološinov, Marxism and the Philosophy of Language 23.

[137] Nicholas Bullen, Resisting Language (the Silenced Voice), 2008, Dexter Sinister, Available: http://www.sinisterdexter.org/MEDIA/PDF/WBPR08.pdf, 27 March 2008. Nicholas Bullen was the vocalist and bassist for Napalm Death between 1981 and 1986.

by obliterating its content (this obliteration being further highlighted in *Thrashed to Death* by the particular way the audio is mixed), and the uncontrolled voice highlights the ultra-controlled structure that underpins it. If the rejection of language seen in Eye's and Zorn's wordless voice can be seen as a refusal to take part in the game—a silent protest, or what Bullen calls a simultaneous alienation from expression and an expression of alienation—then this disengagement is countered by the language- and code-ridden musical underpinning which makes concrete the Derridean ideas that participation in language and genre are both necessary and unavoidable. The unavoidable necessity of participation thus reached its ultimate expression in Grindcore's absorption into the taxonomy of legitimate modes of musical expression, in spite of the protestations of its proponents and its form.

3.3.2 Legitimising participation

Changes within the cultural field—how they occur, the form they take, and the direction in which they move—are argued by Bourdieu to depend not only on the possibilities for change offered by the structure of the field, but also on the struggle between individuals, groups and institution, each of whom have distinct and potentially conflicting interests, and who each deploy varying strategies in order that their particular interests are served. Bourdieu's analysis reveals the field as a system that is not the product of disparate forces seeking coherence and consensus, but is the result of a continuing conflict. Indeed, it is this struggle which serves as the unifying principle in the system, such that participation in the struggle serves to legitimatise a work's belonging to the field.

Three competing principles of legitimacy are identified by Bourdieu.

Firstly, there is legitimacy within what he calls the *field of restricted production*, or the granting of recognition by producers who produce for other producers, or art for artists. Secondly, there is legitimacy as bestowed by the dominant fractions of the dominant class, and by public, private or state institutions, which sanction the taste of the dominant. Finally, there is the legitimacy of the popular, or consecration by the choice of "ordinary" consumers.[138]

Where changes affect the structure of the field as a whole, such as where there are major reorderings of the hierarchies of genres, there is a presupposed consonance between the internal changes, which are determined by the modification of the chances of access to the field, and the external changes which supply the new producers with new consumers. Bourdieu argues, however, that internal changes are largely independent of the external changes which appear to determine them because they appear at the same time, and are a product of the struggle between antagonistic positions which structure the field—dominant/dominated, consecrated/novice, old/young, etc.[139] Each artistic field is subject to a cycle of simple reproduction, whereby the "young" recognise the "old" in the form of homage, celebration, etc. (for example, recordings of songs which influenced a band during their formative and pre-formative stages such as on Metallica's *The $5.98 EP: Garage Days Re-Revisited* or Slayer's *Undisputed Attitude*,[140] or more explicitly in the form of tribute bands) and the "old" recognise the "young" by co-opting them into their ranks, providing prefaces, etc. (Ozzfest, the outdoor Heavy Metal music festival

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[138] Bourdieu, "The Field of Cultural Production, Or: The Economic World Reversed," 50-51.

[139] Ibid. 55-56.

[140] Metallica. The $5.98 E.P.: Garage Days Re-Revisited. 12". Vertigo, 1987, Slayer. Undisputed Attitude. American Recordings, 1996.

organised by Ozzy Osborne, for example), thus reproducing the values and hierarchies of the dominant, "old", class. When a newcomer to the field is not disposed to enter into the cycle, and instead brings with them (dis)positions which clash with the prevailing norms and expectations of the field, Bourdieu argues that they cannot succeed without the help of external changes, such as a change in the power relations in the field, or a deep-seated change in the audience.[141] It is the newcomers to the field, i.e. the youngest, to whom the initiative of change falls, because it is they who are least endowed with specific capital.

The history of the field therefore arises from this struggle between the old and the new, between the established figures and the challenger, between those who have made their mark and those who cannot make their mark without pushing into the past those who have an interest in preserving and reproducing their mark or their epoch. Making one's mark thus entails winning recognition of one's difference from other producers. Where a group emerges which is capable of 'making an epoch', as Bourdieu calls it, this newly-imposed and advanced position is accompanied by a displacement of the structure of temporally hierarchised positions within the field, such that each position moves down the temporal hierarchy, the temporal hierarchy also being a social hierarchy. Thus, every composer, band, record label or work which "makes its mark" displaces a whole series of composers, bands, record labels or works which preceded them, and in asserting itself as occupying a new position, each newcomer displaces the structure of the field as a whole, leading to changes in the positions occupied by other agents in the field.

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[141] Bourdieu, "The Field of Cultural Production, Or: The Economic World Reversed," 57.

Immanent to the functioning of the field is the history of the field. Bourdieu therefore argues that in order to meet the objective demands it implies, for both producers and consumers, one has to possess the whole history of the field. Bourdieu's contention is that in order for a producer (agent) to participate in a particular cultural field they must first be accepted by the field as a legitimate participant. For an agent to enter a field—be it the artistic field, the scientific field, the philosophical field, or any other field—they must possess what Bourdieu calls the *habitus* which predisposes them to enter that particular field instead of another. Habitus is a kind of "feel for the game" or second sense. It is the system of structures, dispositions and principles which serve to generate and organise practices and perceptions, and which inclines agents to act and react to particular situations in a particular manner, which may not necessarily be calculated or the result of mere obedience to rules. In addition, agents must also be in possession of the minimum amount of expertise—knowledge, skills, "talent"—to be accepted by other agents in the field as a legitimate participant or player in the game.

This formative stages of this creation of an agent—Naked City—as a legitimate participant in the game—Grindcore—and the further development of habitus can be seen in John Zorn's arranging of Napalm Death's first United States show in 1989, after witnessing a Japanese performance of theirs earlier that year.[142] This legitimation was continued by the release of Naked City's *Torture Garden* album on the Earache record label which was home to Napalm Death alongside other Grindcore artists such as Carcass and Bolt Thrower. In

[142] Digby Pearson, "Earache - the Good Ol' Early Days (Part 2,876)," Ask Earache (2006), 3 July 2007 <http://askearache.blogspot.com/2006/05/earache-good-ol-early-days-part-2876.html>.

response to increasing commercial competition from other independent labels such as Nuclear Blast and Roadrunner, Earache was also beginning to expand its roster beyond the Grindcore, Hardcore and Death Metal it had been known for up until that point. Naked City's position as an Earache artist (although the label released no further recordings by the band) and thus as a legitimate participant in the field of Grindcore therefore serves to legitimise the synecdochal and reductionist nature of the incidences of Grindcore which appear in their work only sporadically (such instances being reduced to an absolute and monolithic bludgeoning by overwhelming speed and density). Also legitimised is the remainder (and majority) of each track on *Torture Garden* which operates in and around fields other than that of Grindcore but which utilises certain characteristics and features which are utilised in Grindcore.

Naked City's self-creation as a legitimate participant is further reflected in *Torture Garden*'s liner notes which give special thanks to:

> Ruins, Lipcream, SOB, Boredoms, UFO Or Die, Rise From the Dead, Imahori-Kun, Kaoru-Chan, Dirty Kudo, Tomoyo-San, NY Antiknock, 20,000 Volt, La Mama, Bill (Carcass), Mick and Shane (Napalm Death), Lee Dorrian, Kevin (GOD), Godflesh, Die Kreuzen, The Accüsed, Hüsker Dü, DRI, Sim Cain, Blind Idiot God, Martin and Dig, Karol Armitage, Bob Hurwitz, David Bither, Macioce, Kramer, Mike and Bob (Knit. Fac.) and CBGB.[143]

The liner notes serve to align the band with Japanese Hardcore and its later off-shoot genres and scenes, with UK Grindcore, US Hardcore, and with the cultural history of New York venues like The Knitting Factory and CBGB, thus not only creating Naked City as a legitimate producer of and participant in Grindcore, but also positioning the band as relative outsiders. This positioning begins with the

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[143] Naked City. Torture Garden. Shimmy Disc, 1989.

earlier self-titled release, which gives thanks to many of the same individuals and groups.

The use of liner notes to create a particular version of Naked City and thus to legitimatise their participation in different musical and cultural fields is apparent in other releases by the band. *Grande Guignol* (the album from which a sizeable proportion of *Torture Garden* was gleaned and reassembled alongside similar extractions from *Naked City*) situates many of those same songs as part of a tradition of dark theatre and the exploration of taboos. The liner notes begin:

> Decades before our modern tradition of Splatter films, The Grand Guignol served up torture, incest, blood lust, insanity, mutilation and death to generations of fervid spectators. But The Grand Guignol is not simply the theater of horror that shocked Paris for sixty-five years from 1897 to 1962. It is the celebration of the darker side of our existence. It has always been with us. It always will be.
>
> Throughout history, Artists have been obsessed with humanities Taboos and Phobias: Aristotle, Aeschylus, Shakespeare, Sade, Goya, Poe, Dalí, Bataille, Hitchcock, Irving Klaw, Bacon, Dan Oniroku, H.G. Lewis, Hermann Nitsch, Carcass. Our fascination with Fear, Terror and Evil, like Death itself, knows no racial, cultural or religious barriers. It resides in our collective unconscious, binding us together with ropes we try, but are ultimately unable to sever. Only through violent trauma, or the convulsive viscera of artistic vision does it rise to the surface, reminding us that it has, in truth, been there all along.
>
> This album is lovingly dedicated to Jack Smith. Legendary filmmaker, theatrical genius, exotic art collector. Father of the New York Underground, who died a victim of the AIDS virus September 18, 1989.

Situated in this context the notes then continue by first giving thanks to the owner of a medical photography collection, Dr. Stanley R. Burns, before

continuing to thank:

> Karol Armitage, Sally Silvers, Larry Ochs, Lyn Hejinian, Miwa Kaoru, Azuma Eiichi, Akashi Masonori, Ikeezumi Hideo, Andy Haas, Craig Flanagan, Mick Harris, Mike Patton, The Accüsed, Die Kreuzen, DRI, Ruins, Boredoms, SOB, Whitehouse, SPK, P16.D4, Jean-Luc Godard, Martin Scorsese, the transcriptions of Arnold Schoenberg, the Tony Bennett Organization.[144]

As on *Torture Garden* the liner notes serve to situate the album in the context of the US and Japanese Hardcore scenes (significantly Mick Harris, as the drummer and propulsive force of Napalm Death and thus as Zorn's central point of focus, is thanked alone rather than alongside his fellow band members—the reduction of a sound to a single component reflected in the reduction of a band to a single member), but more revealingly the notes are used to position the work and the band within the convention-flouting arenas of post-Nitschean[145] musical artists like Whitehouse whose works utilise imagery of sexual sadism, mass murder and bodily (dys)functions (Whitehouse's 1981 album *Dedicated to Peter Kürten Sadist and Mass Slayer* contains tracks entitled, amongst others, 'Ripper Territory', 'Rapeday' and 'Pissfun'),[146] or a director whose filmography contains a six-minute short in which a man repeatedly shaves his face to the point of bloody self-mutilation (Scorcese),[147] or another who is renowned for his wilful

[144] Naked City. 1992. Grande Guignol. Tzadik, 2005.

[145] Hermann Nitsch, alongside Günter Brus, Otto Mühl, Otmar Bauer and Rudolf Schwarzkogler, was one of the main participants in the short-lived artistic movement *Wiener Aktionismus*, or Vienna Actionists. Most active during the 1960s, Nitsch, Brus, Bauer, Mühl and Schwarzkogler are perhaps best remembered for the transgressive nature of their work during this period, using dead animals, human bodily fluids and the human body itself, alongside bouts of violence and destructiveness, in order to openly flout conventions and taboos. For an overview see Amos Vogel, Film as a Subversive Art (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1974), in particular pp. 250-254 and pp. 288-289

[146] Whitehouse. 1981. Dedicated to Peter Kürten. Susan Lawly, 1996.

[147] The Big Shave, dir. Martin Scorsese, perf. Peter Bernuth, 1967.

exposure of the conventions of his field (Godard).

The band reposition themselves yet again on other releases. *Heretic* positions the band as part of a jazz and improvisational heritage ('Special thanks to: Derek Bailey, Larry Ochs, Mike Patton, Shelley Palmer, Kazunori Sugiyama and Kim Su Theiler).[148] *Radio* makes clear that the extensive and expansive list of names cited ('Charles Mingus ... Carl Stalling ... Repulsion ... Carole King ...') is not just a thanks list, but also an acknowledgement of explicit reference and citation.[149] This acknowledgement of explicit reference and the singular alignment that follows reaches its ultimate conclusion in *Leng Tch'e*'s distillation of the thanks list into a straightforward and simple 'Patton, The Melvins,' a move which aligns the work's glacial pace and bass-heavy sound with the archetypal purveyors (the "Godfathers") of that sound.[150]

Such acts of self-presentation demonstrate how an artist must be created as a participant in a field, especially where that artist is not born into circumstances which give them all the necessary "tricks of the trade".[151] Bourdieu argues that since the art competence of 'the privileged classes' is the product of an imperceptible familiarisation and an automatic transferring of aptitudes, they are inclined to regard as a "gift of nature" what is in reality a cultural heritage that has been transmitted by a process of unconscious training. Culture, he therefore suggests, is achieved by negating itself as artificial and artificially acquired, such that it becomes a "second nature", or *habitus*: 'a

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[148] Naked City. 1992. Heretic: Jeux Des Dames Cruelles. Tzadik, 2005.

[149] Naked City. 1993. Radio. Tzadik, 2005

[150] Naked City. 1992. Leng Tch'e. Tzadik, 2005.

[151] On the relationship between credibility and performance, see Karl E. Weick, David P. Gilfillan and Thomas A. Keith, "The Effect of Composer Credibility on Orchestra Performance," Sociometry 36.4 (1973).

possession turned into being'.[152] It is this forgetting or disguising, whereby the social conditions which make cultural activity possible are parenthesised and thus naturalised, that 'the work of art is given only to those who have received the means to acquire the means to appropriate it and who could not seek to possess it if they did not already possess it, in and through the possession of means of possession as an actual possibility of effecting the taking of possession,' which makes it possible for a social privilege to be legitimatised as a gift, and thus as deserved.[153] This denial of the link between culture and education is a necessary and sufficient condition in order that the primary ideological function of culture—class co-optation and the legitimisation of this mode of selection, according to Bourdieu—be fulfilled. By making art and culture appear sacred, available only to those who have received the "gift" of understanding, it thus fulfils a vital function in the consecration of the social order: 'to enable educated people to believe in barbarism and to persuade the barbarians within the gates of their own barbarity'.[154]

However, it would be misleading to suggest that collective meanings and their accompanying practices are established and maintained democratically. As Vološinov notes:

> No utterance can be put together without value judgment. Every utterance is above all an *evaluative orientation*. Therefore, each element in a living utterance not only has a meaning but also has a value.[155]

Individuals and groups with significantly different resources are engaged in the

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[152] Bourdieu, "Outline of a Sociological Theory of Art Perception," 234.

[153] Ibid.

[154] Ibid. 236.

[155] Vološinov, Marxism and the Philosophy of Language 105.

active pursuit of both private and public interests. Established positions may be maintained and resistant to challenge simply because they are established, and represent the "traditional"—the musical canon and notions of repertoire are particular points of interest here. In particular, economic interests carry significant weight, with record companies, artists' managers, venue owners, concert promoters, music publishers, and indeed academia all seeking to control the musical climate to protect and further their own particular interests and value systems. Artistic competence is taken to be a universally distributed natural "talent" available to all, and is not recognised as the result of specific processes of inculcation which are in fact not available to all. Cultural capital is therefore seen as participating in the perpetuation of social differences and the process of domination by legitimising certain practices as "naturally" superior, to the point that even those who do not participate in these practices are convinced of their superiority. Non-participants are thus led to see their own practices as inferior and exclude themselves from legitimate practices.

Attempts to control access to the requisite tools for comprehension of works of art stem in part from the desire to avoid what Bourdieu terms *discredit,* which increases as the audience grows and the collective artistic competence of agents acting in the field declines. Fear of discredit informs negative reactions to newcomers to a musical scene, notions of "selling out", and perceived chronological declines in the quality of an artist's musical output ("I only like the first album/demo/EP"). A further argument on access restriction is made by Susan McClary in her afterword to Attali's *Noise.* McClary remarks that whilst it is clear to most listeners that they respond deeply to music in a variety of ways, they do so in spite of being told that they cannot know anything about

music without having first absorbed the whole theoretical apparatus which they are told is necessary for musical specialisation. McClary then goes on to note that upon learning this apparatus one thus discovers that the musical phenomenon is to be understood mechanistically, mathematically, and thus one learns to renounce one's responses. The end result, McClary argues, is the curious situation where non-trained listeners, lacking as they are in the vocabulary to refer to music's parts, are prevented from talking about the social and expressive dimensions of music, and so are trained musicians, who in having learned the proper vocabulary have been taught that music is strictly-self contained structure.[156] Such a discourse around an artistic field serves in part to legitimise the field as a whole by essentially declaring the inadequacy of discourse.

3.4 Summary

The following note on the human sensory system appears in Marx's *Economical and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*:

> The *forming* of the five senses is a labour of the entire history of the world down to the present.'[157] [Italics in original.]

Marx points towards an important premise in understanding the process of listening to music: the historical formation of the sense of hearing, or, more accurately, the socio-historical construction of the act of listening. Music exists as part of a social network, with a point of emission, a carrier, and a point of reception. The modes in which individuals confront musical objects—how they

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[156] Attali, Noise: The Political Economy of Music 150.

[157] Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844, trans. Martin Milligan, 4th ed. (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1974) 96.

acquire and manage new information about those objects, and how they comprehend new experiences via stored knowledge of past experiences, as composer, performer, or listener—are organised in historically and culturally specific ways, and are situated in particular social and historical contexts, in order that individuals may communicate and understand each other and to make 'sense' of music. Understanding artistic practices, and not least artistic products, demands understanding that they are the result of a meeting of the history of the positions occupied by, and the history of the dispositions of, the producers of works of art. Although position helps to shape dispositions, dispositions, being the product of independent conditions, have an existence and efficacy of their own and can help shape positions.

That sounds, or noises, exist as music is only possible to the extent that they are known and acknowledged as music by those who participate in the field within which they appear and participate. Bourdieu remarks that one of the conditions of the production of a work of art is the production of discourse about the work of art, suggesting that it would not be unreasonable to suppose, for example, that the constitution of the aesthetic gaze as a "pure" gaze which is capable of considering the work of art *per se* is linked to the creation of private and public galleries and museums, or the *institution* of the work of art as an object of contemplation.[158] If works of art are to exist as symbolic objects, then they must be known and recognised as such, by the social institutions that legitimatise them and by the spectators who receive them. Thus, when considering the sociology of musical artworks one has to consider not only the material production of the work, but also the symbolic production of the work,

[158] Bourdieu, "The Field of Cultural Production, Or: The Economic World Reversed," 36.

i.e. that which produces the value of the work or the belief in the value of the work, such as critics, publishers, concert promoters, and in particular teachers, and all the other agents whose efforts serve to produce a listener capable of knowing and recognising the music as such.

Understanding works of art, therefore, is a matter of understanding them as 'a *manifestation* of the field as a whole, in which all the powers of the field, and all the determinisms inherent in its structure and functioning, are concentrated.'[159] [Italics in original.] If music is produced in particular socio-historical situations and according to particular institutional frameworks, by agents acting individually and in groups, using numerous disparate strategies, then the reception and perception of those works, regardless of the level of reception and the available instruments of perception, also takes place in a socio-historical context.

The cultural products of every period are therefore arranged according to an institutional system of classification particular to that period, which brings together works previously separated by other periods and distinguishes between works other periods placed together. The degree to which a contemporary work is readable varies according to the degree to which the creator of that work maintains a relationship with the code of the previous period. The history of the work is thus, in part, a history of the instruments for the production of the work and a history of the instruments for the perception of the work. In this sense, every work can thus be seen to be made twice, by the originator and the beholder.

[159] Ibid. 37.

There can be no writing from scratch.

—Douglas Kahn[160]

4 *MUSICAL TRANSTEXTUALITY*

4.1 Introduction

This chapter returns to the concept of frames through a discussion of frame semantics as a means of describing the social function of utterances, the social natures of production and comprehension, and the relationships between utterances and the contexts in which they are uttered. I note how frames can act as triggers for other frames, and thus how one text may be marked by another, thereby introducing the notion of *transtextuality*, which attempts to provide an organising framework for describing the relationships between texts. The chapter thenceforth takes the form of a detailed discussion of the constitutive role of those texts which appear alongside the work.

4.1.1 Frame semantics

The concept of *frame semantics* developed by Charles Fillmore provides a model of language incorporating a description of both cognitive and interactional frames according to which language users interpret their environment, understand the messages of other language users, and accumulate or create an

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[160] Douglas Kahn, "Track Organology," October 55 (1990): 75.

internal model of their "world".[161] In other words, frame semantics attempts to incorporate an awareness of the social function of utterances and the social nature of their production and comprehension, and an interest in the relationship between utterances and the contexts in which they are uttered. If artworks are seen as utterances which are socially produced and socially comprehended, then an understanding of frame semantics may prove useful in understanding the relationships between artworks, the people who produce and comprehend them, and the contexts in which those artworks are produced.

According to frame semantics, an individual acquires in memory a repertoire of prototypical frames for particular concepts—colours, for example, situations—attending a wedding, for example, semantic relations—"cause and effect", for example, or they may be symbolic representations such as forms of speech or writing. Frames therefore function as a kind of outline which enable individuals to perform basic acts of perception, action and comprehension, guiding comprehension and providing a framework for making sense of and organising new experiences. Mutual expectations and interactions are organised according to these units of knowledge, relating concepts which, through convention and experience, somehow belong together. Users of a language are able to create new frames, or modify existing frames, and transmit them, and through this inventory of frames are able to structure, classify and interpret experiences, as well as creating and structuring new utterances of their own. Frames are thus seen as providing a means of representing both specific exemplars and general information across exemplars.

The constituent factors of any utterance, or message, can be summarised

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[161] See Charles J. Fillmore, "Frame Semantics and the Nature of Language," Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences 280.1 (1976).

as sender, receiver, form (i.e. the particular type of language used), channel (for example, speech), code (i.e. the dialect of the particular language), topic, and setting. An interactional frame is a frame which describes and organises these factors in relation to a particular communicative event, for example in a greeting. Cognitive frames, on the other hand, relate to the semantics of particular communicative events, containing certain scenarios and related roles—e.g. "buyer" and "seller" in a "buying and selling" frame—together with institutional understandings of what takes place in, and key words associated with, particular communicative events. These key words thus act as a kind of trigger for a particular frame or a place-marker to enable a frame's recall, and have the capacity to activate a much broader frame in response to a particular context. Within frame semantics, context is defined as pragmatic, linguistic, and perceptual—the "real world" situation in which the language is produced, the discourse which surrounds the language, and the experiences which form the base of a language user's understanding of a particular frame. Thus, according to Fillmore, 'the process of interpreting an utterance may depend, more than we are used to thinking, on our perception of the context in which the utterance is produced and our memories of the contexts for earlier experiences with the utterance or its constituent parts.'[162]

In the same way that a text may refer to, cite, or allude to other texts, frames may contain "triggers" for other frames and what Fillmore terms *scenes*—scenarios, interpersonal interactions, institutional structures, and so on—and the effective utilisation of one frame may thus depend on prior knowledge of one or more other frames. Scenes may then activate a frame,

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[162] Ibid.: 24.

which may then activate another frame, or another scene, and so on. The formation and interpretation of an utterance therefore takes place against, and in relation to, a background of other texts. Here we might usefully refer to Lévi-Strauss's concept of *bricolage*, whereby an individual's "universe of instruments" and the rules of his game are comprised of whatever is at hand. Unlike an engineer, who selects materials and tools according to the task at hand, and who procures those not immediately available, the "bricoleur" will utilise whatever materials and tools are available to him, regardless of their fit to the current project. The bricoleur's universe of instruments is thus contingent upon the opportunity to maintain, renew or enrich the available stock via the remnants of previous constructions or destructions.[163]

Fillmore extends the intertextual features of the model to include not just whole texts, but also smaller components, or fragments, of those texts, suggesting that a single word may sometimes have more than one frame and thus any sentence containing one of these words may have the effect of introducing another frame. Peter Griffith thus comments on how one text may be "marked" by another:

> If someone says "The word 'fanbelt' makes me think of strawberries", that can be perhaps written off as a quirk or aberration. ... However, if I use the word 'fanbelt' a couple of pages from now, there is some slight possibility that you will think of strawberries as a result of reading that passage. ... In this fairly trivial example, then, we can see a very simple instance of the way in which one text can leave a trace on another.[164]

Douglas Kahn provides another perspective, remarking on how the design of the

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[163] Claude Lévi-Strauss, The Savage Mind (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966) 17.

[164] Peter Griffith, Literary Theory and English Teaching (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1987) 42.

digital sampler has been marked by a musical framework. Kahn notes that, unlike digital recording workstations which came into being outside of a purely musical environment (as a development of video editing technology), digital sampling 'has been generated almost entirely within a framework of music.'[165] The result, Kahn suggests, is that this musical framework has been burned into the design of the sampler.

A further example of the way a text can not only be marked by another but its very parameters defined by it can be seen in the joint development of the compact disc by Sony and Philips. Prior to the advent of the compact disc most stereo albums were under 45 minutes long, because of the storage capacity of vinyl discs. The longer an album is, the finer the grooves that are required in order to fit the recording onto the disc. The downside of using finer grooves is a degradation in audio quality, as the finer the groove the less information it is able to hold. The sound quality of recordings stored on vinyl thus decreases as the total running time increases, to the point where the music contained can no longer be foregrounded against the background noise of the carrier. Recordings longer than the limit imposed by the capacity of a single side of a disc must therefore be split into at least two sections—Side A/1 and Side B/2—and sometimes require multiple discs.

There are several alternative versions of the events surrounding decisions about the storage capacity of the compact disc. The official Philips version of events suggests the running time was the result of three main decisions. Firstly, the disc had to be capable of storing those recordings which had already been issued on vinyl. Secondly, the disc had to be compact, ideally

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[165] Kahn, "Track Organology," 77.

around the same size as the compact cassette, which was 11.5cm when measured diagonally. Finally, the disc had to be capable of holding the longest known recording of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9—a 1951 mono recording conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler—at the request of Sony vice president Norio Ohga. Thus, the original recording time of 60 minutes (dictated by the 11.5cm diameter imposed by the size of the compact cassette) was expanded to 74 minutes to accommodate Ohga's request. Immink, however, suggests that the Beethoven story is really an attempt at putting a romantic spin on an otherwise embarrassing situation. According to Immink, a Philips engineer involved in the development of the compact disc, the switch from an 11.5cm disc to a 12cm disc (the size required to house Furtwängler's recording of Beethoven's *Ninth*) was in fact a commercial decision motivated by a need within Sony to prevent Philips gaining a competitive edge in the marketplace. Philips' subsidiary Polygram had at that time already set up a facility to manufacture 11.5cm discs. Lacking such a facility, Sony's acceptance of the 11.5cm standard would have put them at a considerable commercial disadvantage. The imposition of the 74 minute limit by Ohga was thus a tactical decision in order to force Philips into accepting the 12cm disc standard, for which Philips did not have the facilities in place to manufacture ahead of Sony.[166] From that point onwards recorded music was marked by the numerous technical, commercial and aesthetic decisions made about not only the storage capacity of the compact disc, but also

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[166] See Kees A. Schouhamer Immink, "Shannon, Beethoven, and the Compact Disc," IEEE Information Theory Society Newsletter (2007). and Kees A. Schouhamer Immink, "The CD Story," Journal of the Audio Engineering Society 46.5 (1998). Immink notes that Furtwängler's *Ninth* did not actually fit onto a single disc until 1988, as until 1988 the recording time of the compact disc was in practice limited by the recording capacity of the U-Matic video recorder used as part of the transfer process. It was not until alternative digital transport media became available that the full capacity of the disc could be utilised. Immink, "Shannon, Beethoven, and the Compact Disc," 45.

the technical limitations of the format.

Just as the limitations of the vinyl record imposed restrictions upon the music they contained, so the compact disc imposed a different set of limits and possibilities, including the possibility of having single songs lasting over an hour in length which could be listened to uninterrupted by the necessity to turn over or change the disc (the minimalist guitar-drone of Sleep's *Dopesmoker*,[167] or the pummelling dirges of Swans,[168] for example), a greater frequency range, a greater dynamic range, and more extreme stereo placement of sounds, but also less tolerance for sounds driven "into the red" by excessive application of gain or poor equalisation, and the revealing of sounds otherwise masked by the sonic inadequacies of vinyl and cassette. As a comment on digital culture constructed around the sounds of damaged compact discs the early work of Oval, for example, could not have existed without first the invention of the compact disc with all its requisite faults, in particular its tendency to apparently stutter and skip erratically when its surface is scratched or marked in some other way.[169] Likewise, Francisco López's *Untitled #92* could not have existed before the invention of the vinyl record.[170] Both works work in the way that they do precisely because of the qualities of the medium on which they are distributed. If compact discs were not prone to skipping when their surface is damaged or if vinyl records were not prone to producing additional crackles, pops, clicks and rumbles not only would Oval and López not have any source material, but the

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[167] Sleep. Dopesmoker. Tee Pee, 2003.

[168] Swans. Cop/Young God · Greed/Holy Money. Young God Records, 1999.

[169] What sounds like skipping and stuttering is actually the result of disturbance in the decoding mechanism, or an alternative reading effected by damage to the message's carrier.

[170] Francisco López. Untitled #92. LP. Mego, 1999.

very nature of their work, as one which remarks on the constitutive function of the recording media and thus serves as a critique of recording-as-preservation, would not be possible.[171] In this respect Adorno's argument that 'there has never been any gramophone-specific music,' is subsequently proven wholly incorrect.[172]

4.1.2 Left Hand Path

Fillmore's theory suggests that readings of a text are, in some instances, dependent on other texts. In order to examine how this might take place within music, consider the album *Left Hand Path* by the Swedish Death Metal band Entombed.[173] Firstly, it is necessary to consider the obvious connotations of the band's name—to be buried in a tomb, thus requiring either death or premature burial—and the album's title—referring to the Satanically-aligned Left Hand Path belief system which seeks the advancement of the self over proximity to divinity, and reflected in the first verse of the album's opening track, also entitled *Left Hand Path:*

> I am my own God, master, slave
> And I will be beyond the grave
> No one will take my soul away
> I carry my own will and make my day[174]

The album's artwork is no less subtle, featuring a path running along its left hand side, surrounded by ghostly figures, skeletal forms and gnarled trees

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[171] See Oval. Systemisch. Mille Plateaux, 1994, Oval. 94 Diskont. Mille Plateaux, 1995, López. Untitled #92.

[172] Theodor Adorno, "The Form of the Phonograph Record," Essays on Music, ed. Richard Leppert (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002) 277.

[173] Entombed. Left Hand Path. LP. Earache Records, 1990.

[174] Ibid.

which merge into each other, past a headstone bearing the phrase 'Rest in festering slime.'

Contained inside the album sleeve is a 12"x12" double-sided insert featuring white text on a black background, one side of which also features a white hand-print on the left hand side of the insert ("Side A") and one side of which features individual photographs of the four band members arranged horizontally across the middle ("Side B"). The text on Side A is arranged in four paragraphs which are justified to the right of the page. The first paragraph begins by listing the members of the bands and their respective instruments:

Lars-Göran Petrov : vocals
Uffe Cederlund: guitars / bass
Alex Hellid: guitars
Nicke Andersson: drums / bass

The first thing that is apparent is that the band member's names are of Scandinavian origin. The listener can therefore begin to form an idea of what the band might sound like based on the number of band members and the type of instrumentation. Given that the band contains two guitarists it would be reasonable to assume that the band plays music that emphasises guitars, and as there is a vocalist listed it would also be reasonable to assume that there is a vocal element to their music. The two guitars plus bass and drums arrangement suggests some form of Rock band rather than a Skiffle group. It is also apparent that the band does not feature a dedicated bassist, this role instead being shared between the drummer and one of the guitarists, which is unusual for a Rock band and thus indicates either some degree of instability within the band's lineup or an error in the initial assessment of their musical output (perhaps they have two bass players?).

Underneath, as a new paragraph, are the writing credits:

All lyrics by Nicke and Alex
All music by Nicke, Uffe and Leffe
Arrangements by Entombed / Nihilist
Logo by Nicke

From this the listener can begin to piece together an approximation of the compositional processes involved in the creation of the album, alongside an idea of the internal dynamics of the group. The music was written by the drummer, one of the guitarists and someone called Leffe who hasn't been mentioned before, rather than by the band on collaboration with a third party, or by a third party alone.[175] The lyrics are written by the drummer and the second guitarist. The final arrangements of the songs are then apparently decided upon by the band as a whole. A second band by the name of Nihilist is mentioned here, who share the arrangement credits. It is not apparent from the insert alone what the relationship between the two bands is. However, a sticker on the front cover of the album declares Entombed as 'ex-Nihilist,' alongside the words 'crushing guitars, mass death,' so the listener can therefore ascertain that at least one member of Entombed was formerly a member of Nihilist, at least part of one of the songs featured on the album was originally written by Nihilist, and that the band's music contains guitars so crushing (crushing being an extension of the metaphorical descriptor "heavy") that they are likely to cause, or at least evoke,

[175] According to the liner notes for the 2005 compilation of Nihilist's demo recordings, 'Leffe' refers to Leif Cuzner, Nihilist's bassist and then second guitarist, who left the band in 1989 to be replaced by Uffe Cederlund. Nihilist ceased to exist in 1989, when the majority of the band members decided to break up the band and reform as Entombed, rather than force out bassist Johnny Hedlund, with whom they had increasing difficulties. This explains the lack of dedicated bassist on the recording. Nihilist. Nihilist (1987-1989). Threeman Recordings, 2005.

the deaths of a large number of people.

The next paragraph contains a contact address for the band:

CONTACT ADDRESS
(INCLUDE 2 IRC's for reply please)

ENTOMBED
Uffe Cederlund
Mastarb 36
126 57 HÄAGERSTEN
SWEDEN

The address identifies the band firstly as one which handles their own correspondence, and secondly as part of a particular local scene.

The final paragraph appears as a short, four-line verse:

What Man Has Created
Man Can Destroy
Bring To Light
That Day Of Joy!

Unlike the preceding paragraphs the text is italicised, thus setting it apart and suggesting that the verse may be a quotation. The source, however, is not acknowledged or disclosed.

The second side of the insert begins with the greeting 'Thanks and Hi there!' before continuing with the customary list of individuals, musical peers, music writers and their respective "fanzines" (a contraction of fan magazines). At the foot of the page, as the final paragraph, the band's musical influences are openly acknowledged and thanked: 'REPULSION, SLAYER, R.A.V.A.G.E., DEATHSTRIKE, AUTOPSY, CHRISTOPHER YOUNG AND VOMIT (Norway)'.

What *Left Hand Path*'s artwork and appendages demonstrate is how

readings of a work can be informed, in part, by devices that are used to construct a particular representation of a work's producer. The extent to which a listener's perception of the producer of a work impacts upon how they receive it is discussed in detail later in this Chapter. For now it is enough to say that LaCapra's argument, that attempting to locate the true source of a work inevitably complicates rather than clarifies a work's reading, fails to reveal the full extent to which the location of the producer's responsibility interacts with the work.

4.1.3 Summary

From the example of *Left Hand Path*, from Derrida's formulation of genre as founded on a principle of contamination which relies on the idea of purity in order to function, and from the theory of frame semantics put forward by Fillmore, it begins to become apparent how every utterance might be produced, transmitted and received against a background of other utterances: a network of utterances on the same theme, contradictory opinions and opposing points of view, and disparate value judgments. It is this background against which we "make sense" of an utterance. In this context, the acts of composing, performing and listening to music can be seen as a layering of code upon code upon code—some of which may distract or otherwise interfere—or as an accumulation and arrangement of multiple codes and already-loaded cultural material. Bakhtin termed this necessary relation of one utterance to another *dialogism*, an idea expanded upon by Julia Kristeva, who argues that a text can never be a self-contained, hermetic whole, and as such does not function as a closed system. For Kristeva every text is a mosaic-like construction built upon the absorption

and transformation of other texts.[176] She thus argues that 'every text is from the outset under the jurisdiction of other discourses which impose a universe on it.'[177] It is this network of disparate texts that form the background against which music is perceived, and the relationship between a musical work and other texts, which is the subject of this chapter. In particular, the chapter will focus on those texts which appear alongside, around, and inside the work itself, such that they appear indistinguishable from it.

4.2 TRANSTEXTUALITY

Gérard Genette's notion of *transtextuality* provides an organising framework for examining the relationships between texts, and is worth examining further as it provides a useful way of thinking through how one text might be marked or even constituted by another.[178] Genette's is a more inclusive formulation than Kristeva's 'intertextuality', referring to everything that puts one text in relation to another. Transtextuality is Genette's umbrella term for five variations of between-texts relationships: intertextuality, metatextuality, architextuality, hyper/hypotextuality and paratextuality.[179]

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[176] Julia Kristeva, "Word, Dialogue and Novel," The Kristeva Reader, ed. Toril Moi (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986) 37.

[177] Julia Kristeva, "The Speaking Subject," On Signs, ed. Marshall Blonsky (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985) 217.

[178] Gérard Genette, Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree, trans. Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1997) 1-7.

[179] A modification of Genette's framework, specifically aimed at popular music, can be found in Serge Lacasse, "Intertextuality and Hypertextuality in Recorded Popular Music," The Musical Work: Reality or Invention?, ed. Michael Talbot (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000) 35-58. Lacasse usefully details many of the ways in which popular music recordings refer to each other, and even goes so far as to develop an extensive nomenclature to describe them. However, to incorporate Lacasse's terminology alongside Genette's would do little to enhance the discussion here, and much to confuse it. Furthermore, whilst Genette's formulation accounts for multiple individual occurrences of different types of intertextuality within a single musical text, some of Lacasse's categories appear more generic in nature and appropriate only in describing types of musical texts as a whole rather than individual musical events.

4.2.1 INTERTEXTUALITY

Genette uses the term *intertextuality* in a more specific manner than Kristeva. Genette's formulation, which he defines as the co-presence of two texts, refers to quotation and plagiarism—the insertion of parts of pre-existing texts with or without acknowledgement of their sources—and allusion—the evocation of another text. This may take the form of using samples of another work (the sample being the musical fragment *par excellence*), such as Public Enemy's use of a brief guitar line from Buffalo Springfield's *For What It's Worth* as base material for *He Got Game*,[180] or the line of dialogue from the film *Die Hard*, "See if there's a black and white that can do a drive-by," which opens *Who Got The Camera?* by Ice Cube.[181] Napalm Death's use of the opening bars of Repulsion's *The Stench of Burning Death* as the opening bars of their own *Deceiver*,[182] and Metallica's (re)use of the bridge from Exodus' *Die By His Hand* (written by Metallica guitarist Kirk Hammett while he was still a member of Exodus) as the bridge in their own *Creeping Death*, with the original title appearing in a slightly modified form as the refrain "Die...by my hand...",[183] can also be seen as intertextual in the sense that Genette describes.

4.2.1.1 INTERTEXTUAL SUB-TYPES

Film theorists Stam, Burgyone and Flitterman-Lewis provide an expansion of Genette's definitions, breaking down the term 'transtextuality' into five additional sub-types which can be usefully applied to the analysis of musical

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[180] See Buffalo Springfield. "For What It's Worth." Buffalo Springfield. 1967. Atco, 1993, Public Enemy. "He Got Game." He Got Game. Def Jam, 1998.

[181] Ice Cube. "Who Got the Camera?" The Predator. Priority Records, 1992.

[182] See Napalm Death. "Deceiver." Scum. 1987. Earache, 1988, Repulsion. "The Stench of Burning Death." Horrified. 1986. Relapse, 1992.

[183] Metallica. "Creeping Death." Ride The Lightning. 1984. Elektra, 1990.

works.[184]

Celebrity intertextuality refers to instances where the presence of a celebrity—a film, television, music, theatre, literature "star"—evokes a certain genre or cultural milieu. For example, Jello Biafra's appearance on Napalm Death's *The Great and the Good* points towards the Dead Kennedys and thus towards late 1970s and early 1980s American punk.[185] Related to celebrity intertextuality is *genetic intertextuality*, where the presence of the son or daughter of a famous individual evokes the memory of that famous parent (Kelly Osbourne as a link to Ozzy Osbourne, and therefore to Black Sabbath, for example). It may also be possible to consider bands containing ex-members of earlier bands in this context, with the earlier band functioning as the famous parent (for example, Nirvana as the parent of The Foo Fighters, Southern Death Cult as the parent of The Cult, or Fantômas as the mutant offspring of Slayer, The Melvins and Faith No More).

The process by which works refer to themselves, or *mise en abyme*, such as the dream-within-a-dream plot device in film and television, is termed *intratextuality*. In musical terms we might characterise intratextuality as those moments where the work admits and draws attention to its own constructed nature (such as the moment of "breakdown" during Naked City's *Speedfreaks* discussed in Chapter 2) and thus confronts its existence as a continually-deferring network of references to other works. Whilst intratextuality may initially appear opposed to intertextuality—internal versus external—they

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[184] See Robert Stam, Robert Burgoyne and Sandy Flitterman-Lewis, New Vocabularies in Film Semiotics: Structuralism, Post-Structuralism and Beyond (London: Routledge, 1992) 206-10.

[185] Napalm Death. "The Great and the Good." The Code Is Red...Long Live the Code. Century Media, 2005.

function in the same manner. Intra- and intertextuality differ only in the degree to which they are willing to admit "other" texts as constitutive. Such an endeavour is decidedly problematic in light of Derrida's writings on the frame. To what extent a text can be deemed external, and thus the extent to which any reference to intertextual relationships can be made, is contingent on being able to distinguish between the internal and external in the first place, a premise argued by Derrida to be faulty. Consequently, just as the idea of genre-mixing is contingent upon the purity and separation of genres, the notion of transtextuality itself paradoxically rests upon the idea that texts are self-contained.

Related to intratextuality is *auto-citation*, where the creator references their own work. This can be identified in Slayer's reuse of the introduction to *Chemical Warfare* (from their 1984 EP *Haunting the Chapel)* as the introduction to *Ghosts of War* (on their 1988 album *South of Heaven*), where citation is used to relate both works and creative eras.[186] Auto-citation locates a work as part of an artist's larger oeuvre and also situates it in a broader historical context.

Finally, *mendacious intertextuality* refers to the invention of pseudo-intertextual references, such as the courtroom-style dialogue which introduces Gravediggaz's *Diary of a Madman* or the mock Early Warning System broadcast which opens Gunshot's *World War 3.*[187] They may also take the form of musical phrases which use a combination of allusion and stereotype in order to suggest a relationship with an external text which is in the final instance non-existent (Naked City's use of genre synecdoches could be located within such a practice).

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[186] See Slayer. "Chemical Warfare." Haunting The Chapel. 1984. Metal Blade, 1994, Slayer. "Ghosts of War." South of Heaven. Def Jam, 1988.

[187] Gravediggaz. "Diary of a Madman." Niggamortis. Gee Street, 1994, Gunshot. "World War 3." Patriot Games. Vinyl Solution, 1993.

Such relationships are not always immediately identifiable as false (such as the "I'm Scared" interlude discussed in the opening section of Chapter 2). The problematic blending of staged and actual violence in Ruggero Deodato's film *Cannibal Holocaust*, and the anonymous verse featured in *Left Hand Path*'s insert discussed at the beginning of this Chapter, demonstrate how works may rely on this uncertainty in order to legitimise other elements which might otherwise be called into question.[188]

4.2.2 Metatextuality

Metatextuality is the critical relation between one text and another, whether text that is commented on is explicitly cited or silently referred to. In this sense metatextuality is a close relation to hyper- and hypo-textuality in that it relates to the rewriting of one text in terms of another as described by the theory of allegory, the difference being a metatextual relationship exists as a commentary whereas a hypertextual relationship is transformational (notwithstanding that transformation is itself an act of commentary). As was alluded to in Chapter 2's discussion of the distinctions between the acts of hearing and listening (see 2.3.1), a listener's response to a piece of music is always metatextual, listening being a response to hearing: first they hear the music, then they comprehend and comment on it, rewriting it in their own terms in order that they may make sense of it.

4.2.3 Architextuality

A primary text will sometimes be connected to other texts through genre (such as in Naked City's use of genre synecdoches, and in Nihilist's quotation of the fill

[188] On the blending of staged and actual events in film see David Kerekes and David Slater, Killing for Culture: An Illustrated History of Death Film from Mondo to Snuff, 2nd ed. (London: Creation Books, 1995).

from Metallica's *Seek and Destroy* as a scrambling grasp at maintaining coherence within a genre yet to be fully formed), a linkage between text which Genette terms as *architextual.*[189] Architextual relationships may occur through using titles to suggest or refuse particular generic taxonomies, signifying a text's willingness or reluctance to characterise itself directly or indirectly in its title as belonging to a particular genre. Hyper- and hypotextual practices may also induce the listener into misattributing a particular generic status to a work, and thus confusing the work's textual characteristics.

A text may be connected to another by aligning it with an antecedent. Such architextual relationships appear in the title of Municipal Waste's *Waste 'Em All,* which uses a modified version of Metallica's *Kill 'Em All* in order to confirm its generic status and also to align the work with early 1980s Thrash Metal. The same architextual strategy used to connect the song *Thrashin's My Business...and Business is Good* with Megadeth's 1984 album *Killing is My Business...and Business is Good.*[190] Impaled Northern Moonforest's *Summoning The Unholy Frozen Winterdemons To The Grimmest And Most Frostbitten Inverted Forest Of Abazagorath* uses parody to align the work with a certain historical form of Black Metal (commonly known as the "Second Wave"), and in particular with the work of the Norwegian band Immortal, whose *Battles in the North* album contains songs with titles such as *Cursed Realms of the Winterdemons* and *Grim and Frostbitten Kingdoms.*[191]

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[189] See Nihilist. "Carnal Leftovers." Nihilist (1987-1989). Threeman Recordings, 2005, Metallica. "Seek and Destroy." Kill 'em All. Vertigo, 1989.

[190] Municipal Waste. Waste 'Em All. Six Weeks, 2003, Municipal Waste. "Thrashing's My Business...And Business Is Good!" The Art of Partying. Earache, 2008. See also Municipal Waste. "The Thrashin' of the Christ." Hazardous Mutation. Earache, 2005.

[191] Impaled Northern Moonforest. "Summoning the Unholy Frozen Winterdemons to the Grimmest and Most Frostbitten Inverted Forest of Abazagorath." Impaled Northern

Some works may utilise practices from other genres and fields in order to evoke that genre or field. Earth's use of an additional subtitle in the title of their *Hex (Or Printing In The Infernal Method)*, for example, serves to evoke certain literary practices, and the sparse references to the soundtracks of 1960s and 1970s Western movies in the music are reflected in song titles suggestive of empty and barren badlands: *Mirage, Land of Some Other Order, The Dire and Ever Circling Wolves, Left in the Desert, Lens of Unrectified Night, An Inquest Concerning Teeth, Raiford (The Felon Wind), The Dry Lake, Tethered to the Polstar.*[192]

References to genre may also appear via recording methods, such as in Bruce Springsteen's *Born to Run* album which invokes 1960s girl groups through an over-the-top reinterpretation of Phil Spector's "Wall of Noise" aesthetic,[193] or by the use of a certain producer or recording studio because of their tendency to produce a sound which is deemed archetypal (Hardcore band Refused's use of producer Tomas Skogsberg and Sunlight Studios to align *Pump the Brakes* with early Swedish Death Metal,[194] or Napalm Death's use of Scott Burns and Morrisound Studios to align *Harmony Corruption* with early Floridian Death Metal, for example).[195]

4.2.4 Hypertextuality and hypotextuality

The terms *hypertextuality* and *hypotextuality* refer to the relationship between a

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Moonforest. 1997. Menace to Sobriety, 2000, Immortal. Battles in the North. Osmose Productions, 1995.

[192] Earth. Hex: Or Printing in the Infernal Method. Southern Lord, 2005.

[193] Bruce Springsteen. 1975. Born to Run. Columbia, 2005.

[194] Refused. "Pump the Brakes." This Just Might Be ... The Truth. 1993. Burning Heart, 1997.

[195] Napalm Death. Harmony Corruption. Earache, 1990.

hypertext and a *hypotext* which it transforms, modifies, elaborates, and extends. Moving beyond simple quotation (although quotation forms part of the strategy) it is an allegorical relationship, where a new text is "written over" an old one, or an old text is rewritten in new terms. To some extent all vocal music exhibits hyper- and hypotextual traits, both in the transformation of real or fictional narratives into lyrical forms, and in the transformation of those words via singing.

Such a relationship can be identified in Barry Manilow's reworking of Chopin's Prelude in C Minor as *Could it be Magic*,[196] The Shangri-Las' use of Beethoven's Piano Sonata No. 14 in C-sharp minor, *Quasi una fantasia*, as the basis for their *Past, Present and Future* (and Glasvegas' recent transformation of the Shangri-Las song as *Stabbed*, unrequited teenage love rewritten as actualised teenage violence, and thus rendering *Past, Present and Future* as both hypertext and hypotext),[197] and in Phil Collins' *In the Air Tonight* recast as an apocryphal tale about Collins witnessing a drowning.[198]

A more complex manifestation of hyper- and hypo-textuality can be identified in the relationship between the Metallica song *The Four Horseman* and the Megadeth song *Mechanix*. In 1982 the song *The Mechanix* was written by Dave Mustaine, then a guitarist in the band Metallica. The song first appeared on Metallica's self-titled demo tape,[199] then again as a track on their *No Life 'til*

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[196] Barry Manilow. "Could It Be Magic." Greatest Hits. 1978, 1978.

[197] The Shangri-Las. "Past, Present and Future." Greatest Hits. DJ Specialist, 1996, Glasvegas. "Stabbed." Glasvegas. Columbia, 2008.

[198] Phil Collins. "In the Air Tonight." Face Value. 1981. Virgin, 1983.

[199] Metallica. Metallica. Audio Cassette. Self-released, 1982. The recording is often mistakenly referred to as the *Power Metal* demo, the name used on a number of "bootleg" reissues derived from a caption on a business card the band were using at the time of the demo's release.

Leather demo tape,[200] before finally appearing on a further demo tape (recorded live) entitled *Metal Up Your Ass.*[201] Shortly afterwards Dave Mustaine exited the band, forming Megadeth in the summer of 1983. Metallica then recorded the song once more for their *Kill 'Em All* album, reducing the tempo, writing entirely new lyrics and a new bridge, and re-titling the song *The Four Horseman.*[202] In early 1984 Megadeth recorded a three track demo featuring a faster version of the song in its original form, re-titled as simply *Mechanix.*[203] The song would then reappear on Megadeth's debut album *Killing is My Business...and Business is Good!* in 1985,[204] before appearing again in a re-mastered form on the 2002 re-release of that album, a version which also contained the original demo recording from 1984.[205] This network of hyper- and hypotextual relationships is particularly intriguing because it takes the form of relationships between different versions of the same song and relationships between different bands and thus raises questions about which work is being cited and which is doing the citing—there are two "final" works which are both the result of modifying an initial work: is the *Mechanix* demo an unfinished version of *The Four Horseman*, or is *The Four Horseman* the finished version of *The Mechanix*, or are *The Mechanix*, *The Four Horseman* and *Mechanix* to be considered three distinct works? Moreover, it draws attention to issues of authorship and the extent to which a song can be modified and still be called "the same".

4.2.5 Paratextuality

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[200] Metallica. No Life 'Til Leather. Audio Cassette. Self-released, 1982.

[201] Metallica. Metal up Your Ass. Audio Cassette. Self-released, 1982.

[202] Metallica. 1983. Kill 'Em All. Vertigo, 1989.

[203] Megadeth. Last Rites. Audio Cassette. Self-released, 1984.

[204] Megadeth. Killing Is My Business...And Business Is Good! Combat, 1985.

[205] Megadeth. 1985. Killing Is My Business...And Business Is Good! Loud, 2002.

Paratextuality refers to the relation between the work proper and its paratext(s)—that is all those other texts which surround the work and appear indistinguishable from it. Such paratexts are rarely musical objects themselves. Genette argues that the zone occupied by paratexts is without any hard and fast boundary on either the inward side (turned toward the text) or the outward side (turned toward the world's discourse about the text).'[206] In this sense paratexts can be seen as a network of frames which serve to both delimit and constitute the work, albeit frames which differ from the picture frame in that the artist and their associates are deemed responsible for them, even if in some cases they are not and their appearance is due to a third party. Different paratexts may have a different intended audience, or even a different "sender". Some paratexts are intended for the listener, some for a general public, some for critics or retailers (a barcode which resides as part of an album's artwork is "sent" by the record label to the music retail sector, for example).

Paratexts take the form of *epitexts* and *peritexts*. Epitexts are things such as interviews with the artist, recommendations by word of mouth, record reviews, pre-release advertisements, and so on—texts that are not characterised by authorial intention or responsibility: an epi-text is an outside text. Peritexts, on the other hand, occur within the text and are usually the product of either the artist or the record label: artwork (including logos and photographs), liner notes, packaging, distribution format. A single musical recording may contain multiple epitexts and multiple peritexts.

Paratexts may appear at the same time as the work, or they may appear later, for example as part of a reissue which features new liner notes including a

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[206] Gérard Genette, Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 2.

retrospective commentary on the work or the artist, unreleased demo recordings of songs from the album or songs from that era which didn't make the final track-listing, alternative versions of songs, remixes of individual songs or the entire album, video footage—both archival or recent, additional photographs from that era, more elaborate packaging, new or restored artwork, and so on. An album may be re-released as part of a collection of albums by the same artist. Selected tracks from an artist's back catalogue may be recompiled into a "Best Of..." album, or may form part of a number of different compilations featuring recordings by numerous other artists who may or may not share any common features or characteristics.

Just as a paratext may appear at any time, it may also disappear at any time, thus rendering any reading of a work as potentially in flux. At any time a reading of a work is subject to change, as new paratexts appear and existing ones disappear (although for someone already aware of such paratexts, they may continue to be significant even in their absence). For example, the original artwork for Autopsy's *Severed Survival* album, featuring a painting of a person being torn apart by hooks, was withdrawn and replaced with alternative artwork in 1990 after distributors refused to carry the album.[207] The revised artwork also featured a different band logo, which was subsequently used on all later Autopsy releases. *Symphonies of Sickness* by Carcass similarly had its original front cover artwork (featuring a collage of graphic photographs gleaned from medical textbooks and journals) firstly relocated to the inner "pages" of the sleeve for the gatefold LP version, then replaced altogether when it was reissued in 1994, then relocated to the accompanying album booklet (complete

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[207] Autopsy. Severed Survival. Peaceville, 1989.

with the statement 'Original album artwork inside' on the front cover) before finally being reinstated for the most recent issue.[208] Such a series of events appears to signify a shift in a paratext's importance and significance, from a position of paramountcy as one of the first paratexts encountered by the listener, to one of apparent insignificance, to a paradoxical position of being deemed important enough that the front cover's only purpose is to inform the listener that what appears as the front cover is not really the front cover and the "proper" front cover is actually contained inside, to finally being re-acknowledged as a constitutive part of the work as a whole. Paratexts sometimes do not disappear entirely, but are instead modified, such as when albums are repressed onto different colour vinyl, or with different colour sleeves but with essentially the same artwork.

Whilst it may be argued the theories of inter- and trans-textuality outlined by Kristeva and Gennete indicate that there are no texts without paratexts, there are indeed paratexts without texts; for example, "lost" works of which only the title is known, works which remain unfinished but were abandoned before any physical record was made, songs written and played "by ear" but never notated or recorded.

Although a paratext is not *the* text, it is still *a* text. It may be *some* text (titles, dedications, lyrics, the artist's name), it may be factual (those paratexts without an explicit message, the presence of which comments on and influences the reception of the text), it may be material (for example, the elaborateness of the album sleeve's construction, the thickness of the vinyl, or the quality of printing), or it may be iconic (illustrations, photographs, logos).

[208] Carcass. Symphonies of Sickness. Earache, 1989.

4.2.5.1 Factual paratexts

The first factual paratext a listener is confronted with is usually the name of the artist. The extent to which that name forms part of the structure and meaning of a work is discussed in section 4.3. For now it is sufficient to remark that the artist's name identifies the person or group who takes responsibility for the work—the sender or "author" of the message, if music can be considered a message. The sender may or may not be the actual producer of the work.

Photographs of the artist and the factual paratexts such as the age, gender, race, sexual orientation, or social background also provide a different point of departure for any reading of a work (compare readings of Marx's work where the paratext of "Karl Marx" is Marx the Young Hegelian—the "Young Marx"—and readings of Marx's work where "Karl Marx" is the stuffy Victorian gentleman—the "Mature Marx", for example). A photograph of the Bad Brains which shows vocalist H.R. wearing a torn black suit jacket adorned with badges, studs, chains and safety pins (see Figure 4.1) suggests a different "Bad Brains" to a photo of the same band dressed in significantly sharper suit-and-tie attire (see Figure 4.2); the former suggests a band whose members' race stands out within the scene of which they appear to be a part (late 1970s and early 1980s American Punk) whilst the latter suggests a band whose members' race is entirely consistent with musical scene suggested by their attire (1960s Jamaican Ska). Knowing that the Bad Brains are black thus informs the way they are listened to in a different way to not knowing they are black (and thus assuming they are white, given the overwhelming predominance of white males in the punk and hardcore scene at the time at which the Bad Brains were at their most prominent).

Figure 4.1. Lucian Perkins, *H.R. (Bad Brains) at Hard Art Gallery 1-80*

Figure 4.2. Flyer for an early Bad Brains performance

Figure 4.3. Glen E. Friedman, *Gary Dr. Know and H.R. Bad Brains CBGBs December 1981*

Furthermore, someone who knows the Bad Brains are black having only seen photos of them during their dreadlocked Rastafarian era (see Figure 4.3) is equipped with a different set of comprehension tools to the person who is also aware they are black but has only seen them in their suit-and-tie "rude boy" era, and someone who is aware of both is liable to read the paratext "Bad Brains" differently again (the latter paratext involving some form of "progression" narrative). All of these images constitute the paratext that is the artist "Bad Brains", and each image is itself a paratext.

The artist's name may also contain additional factual paratexts which may limit certain kinds of readings of the work. For example, even if it isn't known that Krzystof Penderecki is Polish one can still make certain plausible assumptions about his nationality and cultural heritage based on the regional naming conventions present in his name—it's quite obvious that he probably

isn't Japanese, for example, because his name doesn't follow the appropriate conventions associated with Japanese names. Thus, when one listens to *Threnody to the Victims of Hiroshima* and makes an assumption that he is neither Japanese or American, how that work is comprehended will probably be different than if one knows (or at least thinks) he is Japanese or American. An American Penderecki is positioned as a citizen of the country which created the victims referred to in the title, whereas a Japanese Penderecki is a citizen of the country against which those events were perpetrated. If the fact of his Polishness becomes apparent, then Penderecki is placed in the position of sympathetic outsider. The same title can thus mean different things because of who composed the work. Whether or not the composer meant the same thing, interpretations of the work would be informed by the differing roles of those three nations during World War II.[209]

The name of the record label, and the way that name is presented functions in a similar manner to the name of the artist themselves. The name of the record label operates on two levels: firstly through the connotations of the name, and secondly through what is already known about the label itself, such as other artists it has released recordings by, whether it is part of a major corporation or operates independently, whether or not it has a history of releasing recordings in a particular style or whether it has a reputation for releasing recording of a particular standard. The label may also choose to

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[209] In this particular instance, what was "meant" by Penderecki, and what the title suggests he meant, did not converge until after the fact, with the work being retitled some time after the work had been finished. The work's original title was simply *8'37"*, and it was not until the composer had actually heard the work performed that the current titled was given. See Mieczyslaw Tomaszewsk's liner notes to Krzysztof Penderecki. Orchestral Works Vol. 1: Symphony No. 3, Threnody. HNH International, Ltd., 1998.

represent itself via a stylised logo, which may again carry particular genre indications or make particular cultural references.

Also of significance is the address of the artist (including whether it is or isn't given), the address of the record label, and the address of the artist's management (and also whether or not they have any management). An address in London carries different connotations to an address in Dewsbury, and an address in New York carries different connotations to one in London. An address may identify a band as part of a particular local scene, or as being of a particular nationality which is deemed a more credible participant in a particular field. For example, a Black Metal band from rural Norway may be a deemed more a legitimate participant in the field than a Black Metal band from urban New York City, due to the significance that Norway holds in Black Metal circles—whilst not being the originating country of the genre, Norway is home to many of the most famous and influential proponents of the genre and the site of the infamous church burnings of the late 1990s—and also because of the genre's iconographic use of forests, mountains, snow and fog in both images and lyrics—and thus a Norwegian band may not have to work as hard to create itself as a legitimate producer.

The name of the producer, recording engineer, mastering engineer, and the recording studio also serve as paratexts. Artists may record at particular studios (for example, Abbey Road), or with particular producers (for example, Rick Rubin) in order to associate themselves with a particular artist, musical scene or heritage. Some producers, recording engineers, and mastering engineers have reputations for producing certain types of work or for making artists sound a particular way, or have particular recording methods that are

deemed distinctive by the field in which they operate. Working with such a person serves as a means of gaining legitimacy within the particular musical field they operate in, or within a new field the artist is attempting to enter, and also aligns an artist's work with other artists with an already existing credibility and reputation. Some recording studios may be utilised for similar reasons. For example, Napalm Death's decision to record *Harmony Corruption* at Morrisound Studios with producer Scott Burns realigns the band's work with the late 1980s and early 1990s Floridian death metal scene through the numerous previous albums and artists recorded by Burns at Morrisound (a decision also reflected in the way their music was constructed at that point), and numerous Swedish death metal bands worked with Tomas Skogsberg at Sunlight Studios in the late 1980s and early 1990s to situate themselves as part of that musical scene.[210] Such alignments take place not only via the architextual evocation of genre that a particular sound supplies, but also via the names of the producers and studios themselves.

The date of the work is therefore also significant. A knowledge of the historical period in which a work appears is not immaterial, and also there is a certain "authenticity" associated with certain types of music produced in a particular era. For example, thrash metal produced in the early to late 1980s may be deemed more authentic than thrash metal produced in 2008, certain types of music being considered "of the time" and thus later appearances of that music being considered inferior imitations.

Contained within an album's appendages may be a number of paragraphs devoted to acknowledging the contributions of other artists and

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[210] Alongside Entombed's Left Hand Path see, for example, Dismember. Like an Ever Flowing Stream. Nuclear Blast, 1991, Grave. Into the Grave. Century Media, 1991.

peers, members of the press, management personnel, family members, friends, influences (both musical and non-musical), concert promoters, and other persons or groups that the artists wishes to thank or acknowledge. As it was argued in Chapter 3, in addition to offering genuine gratitude to peers and colleagues, such texts also serve to identify the artist as belonging to particular musical scenes and social groupings, or at least attempt to align the artist and their work along those lines, in order to create the artist as a legitimate participant in the field in which their work appears.

This legitimation may be furthered by additional "liner notes" which, alongside possibly offering a critical appraisal of the work, may situate it within a particular socio-historical context, and thus attempt to guide listening in a particular direction or at least direct listening away from the "wrong" interpretation.

Albums sleeves may also feature additional sales stickers, containing additional information about the artist or the contents of the album ('Contains the hit singles ...,' 'As featured on the TV show ...'). For example, the original release of Entombed's *Left Hand Path* bore a circular black sticker in the top right hand corner of the sleeve, containing the words 'Ex-Nihilist, crushing guitars, mass death' in bold white text, indicating both the band's lineage and sonic footprint.

The sleeve or accompanying material may provide details of the artist's website, including that of their profile on "social networking" websites such as Myspace or Facebook. Such websites often contain information about an artist's proclaimed musical influences, what the artist's music sounds like (via references to other artists, or descriptive means), sample songs and videos,

news about the artist's current activities, links to press reviews of their work, an artist biography, discography details, an idea of the artist's target demographic via the profiles of individuals who have registered as "friends" of the artist, musical peers, the genre or genres within which the artist self-identifies, and so on. Similar information may be available on the website of the record label. It is thus possible to build up a sufficiently complex picture of an artist and their work from such profiles alone, without having ever heard the work itself.

Other paratexts might include the edition number (some recordings are released in limited quantities, which is sometimes detailed on the artwork—"231/500"—indicating a degree of exclusiveness in owning a copy of the work), the catalogue number (for example, Earache Records' catalogue numbers take the form of the letters 'MOSH' followed by a number which relates to the chronological order of release, the word 'mosh' referring to the form of aggressive dancing which occurs at Punk, Hardcore, and some Heavy Metal concerts), catalogues and advertising material for other releases on the record label, the typesetting used to lay out the album sleeve and its appendages, even the presence or non-presence of a barcode (the artwork for Pearl Jam's album *No Code* being minus the standard bar code used by retailers to track sales).[211] The album might be identified as belonging to a series of works by the same or different artists (for example, the "Sub Pop Singles Series" or the "Pearl Jam Ten Club Singles Series"). Sometimes the running time of each track will also be disclosed. Where the recording is by a group of individuals, a band or group, the sleeve or its appendages may also detail the names of group members, which may be their real names or pseudonyms (for example, the stylised pseudonyms

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[211] Pearl Jam. No Code. Epic, 1996.

adopted by the members of certain black metal bands, 'Euronymous,' 'Gaal,' 'Samoth').

4.2.5.2 Material Paratexts

The format of the recording itself—vinyl, compact disc, cassette, DVD, analogue or digital—is usually the first peritext encountered by a listener. Secondly, the type of album sleeve is also a peritext; for example the standard square sleeve open at one end, gatefold sleeve, j-card, Digipak, or jewel case. The more elaborate the packaging is, the more significant it appears to be, and the more attention it demands. It appears important because it has been deemed important.

4.2.5.3 Iconic Paratexts

Once the album or single's format has been confronted and the artist's name ascertained the most immediately apparent peritext is the artwork which makes up the front of the sleeve, being both the largest in size and also necessary to physically engage with if the album is to be played. This can take numerous different forms: a photo of the artist (untouched or altered), a painting, digitally-created graphics, or a combination of any of the three. The image may extend around onto the back of the sleeve, or a different image or selection of images may be used on the back. Whatever the form, it is visual, not audible. The title of the artwork and the name of the person responsible for it may also be declared and possibly incorporated into the artwork in some way (such as on the sleeve for Black Sabbath's *Mob Rules* album where both the band's name and the album's title are displayed as bloody graffiti on the wall behind the hooded

figures that stalk the foreground).[212]

The name of the artist and the way that name is presented—either as type or as a stylised logo—forms another pair of peritexts. In addition to the connotations of the name itself (which may be a proper name, or a pseudonym), genre indications tend to be found in both the names of artists and the manner in which that name is displayed on artwork. Jazz fusion groups will tend to have names which follow a different pattern to death metal groups, death metal logos tend to be distinctive and different from black metal logos, and different black metal logos tend to contain similar features, such as a prominent use of symmetry and specific iconographic devices such as inverted crosses or pentagrams, or features which resemble horns or cobwebs. As well as appearing on the front cover of the album the artist and album name also appears on the spine (for filing and retrieval purposes), possibly on the disc itself (to avoid possible mix-ups between discs and sleeves or cases), and sometimes on the back cover ('for the benefit of those with deep amnesia,' jokes Genette).[213] On those occasions where the album's front cover artwork does not contain any reference to the name of the artist then an additional sticker may be affixed to the sleeve in order to identify who is responsible for the work, regardless of whether or not the name appears on the spine.

The front cover invariably includes the name of the album itself, its title. The rear of the album sleeve, but sometimes the inner sleeve, usually sets out the titles of the songs that make up the constituent tracks of the album, in the order in which they appear. The significance and function of titles will be discussed in greater detail later in the chapter. For now it will suffice to say that

[212] Black Sabbath. 1981. Mob Rules. Vertigo, 1996.

[213] Genette, Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation 25.

titles are not paratexts in the way that artwork or addresses are.

Finally, it is common for non-instrumental albums to feature inserts containing the album's lyrics, sometimes with "explanations" from the artist themselves which attempt to guide or force the listener into conducting the preferred interpretation.

4.3 What's in a name?

The most frequent form of naming in music appears as titles of works (the number of works inevitably exceeding the number of producers of works). A musical title takes the form of the words at the top of a score, the words on the front, back and spine of a record, compact disc, cassette, or DVD, some of the words uttered by an artist prior to a performance, the words on a lyric sheet that appear at the top of each set of lyrics. A title may appear in all, some or none of these locations, but it is always a word or a number or a number of words, and never a colour or photograph or a noise. It is the word or words that are used to denote and connote individual works, and to differentiate between works. It is usually different from the name of the artist, but it is not exclusively so. Sometimes the name of the artist will also serve as a title for the album, even though the album is technically untitled. A title is thus like a name, but is not simply reducible to a name. A title functions in a different way to a name—it is a name applied to a work in order to direct, guide, and modify how that work is comprehended and how and what that work means.

Wilsmore remarks that by giving a title to a work the artist participates in a system of conventions which announces ownership and responsibility for

the work.[214] By taking responsibility for the work, by signing his name and declaring himself as "author", the artist declares the location of that responsibility. By entitling the work the artist announces the boundaries within which this responsibility lies (sampling thus facing criticism from those who, in additional to having commercial interests, wish to maintain that responsibility). It is this which will be discussed in the following section.

4.3.1 The Differences Between Names and Titles

> 'Tis but thy name that is my enemy;
> Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.
> What's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,
> Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
> Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!
> What's in a name? that which we call a rose
> By any other name would smell as sweet;
> So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd,
> Retain that dear perfection which he owes
> Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name,
> And for that name which is no part of thee
> Take all myself.
>
> (William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, II.ii. 43–44)

The oft-quoted passage from William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* that appears above makes a concise remark on the nature of names. As is well-known, the play tells the story of two "star-cross'd lovers" and their highly problematic relationship resulting from their membership of two rival families. Juliet's point is that it is the person bearing the name "Romeo Montague" with which she is in love, not the name "Romeo Montague" itself, which she

[214] S. J. Wilsmore, "The Role of Titles in Identifying Literary Works," The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism 45.4 (1987): 406.

characterises as a meaningless attachment which has no bearing on what constitutes the person to which it refers. Remove or change the name, she argues, and Romeo would still be Romeo, even if he were no longer called it.

The names parents choose for their children often have a very specific motivation, perhaps as a way to honour or remember a family member or close family friend, to invoke the "spirit" of a renowned personality or natural phenomena, to suggest certain personality traits (Grace, Hope, Serendipity), or even to lend an appearance of fashionability and cultural awareness to the parents. Whatever the reasoning behind the choice of a particular name, the function of a name is to denote that individual.

The name "Mark" is used to refer to Mark and not Luke or Sarah. Others use this name to refer to Mark, and Mark responds when he hears this name being spoken. He does not respond to hearing the name "Gareth" other than perhaps to look round to see who Gareth is. However, Mark may decide at some point in the future that he would prefer to be known as Steve. Provided he makes others aware of this fact (and takes the appropriate legal steps) then the name "Steve" will from that moment onwards refer to him. There may be an overlap period where other people still call him "Mark", and during that time he will still respond even though it is no longer his name. His birth certificate will still give his name as "Mark", even though his name is Steve. He still has the same parents and siblings, he still has the same job, the same interests, the same looks, the same voice, and so on. The only difference is the name "Steve" is now used to refer to the person that was once referred to by the name "Mark". In short, Mark's decision to change his name to Steve does not change the person it refers to (even though there are numerous other people with the name

"Steve")—the name designates him, but it does not form him.

An important distinction between names given to people and names given to artworks is proposed by Levinson, who remarks that while a rose by any other name may indeed smell as sweet, a painting of a rose may very well "smell"—aesthetically speaking—very different were it to be given a name other than the one it already has.[215] The thrust of Levinson's argument is that, unlike natural objects (and thus people), artworks are interpreted. That is, they are understood within a particular cultural and conventional framework—artworks *mean*. When a music critic writes about *Threnody to the Victims of Hiroshima* they are writing about the work that the title designates, coloured by that title, but they are not writing about the title alone. That the work and its title are a unity is presupposed, and it is the act of entitling that supplies this principle.

The title of an artwork is therefore not simply a decorative addition of no real importance, nor a mere label the purpose of which is to allow us to refer to the work and to distinguish it from other works. The central thrust of Levinson's essay is that unlike names which only denote the thing they are attached to, titles both denote and connote that which they refer to, to the point that changing the title changes the work itself. The title, Levinson argues, is a significant part of the work—significant in that it is important, and significant in that it signifies—and one which helps determine its character. Levinson puts forward four hypotheses in order to clarify his point:

> (i) Titles of artworks are often *integral parts* of them, constitutive of what such works are.

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[215] Jerrold Levinson, "Titles," The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism 44.1 (1985): 29.

(ii) Titles of artworks are plausibly *essential* properties of them, in many cases.
(iii) The *title slot* for a work of art is never devoid of aesthetic potential; *how* it is filled, or that it is *not* filled is always aesthetically relevant. (A work differently titled will invariably be aesthetically different.)
(iv) There is a significant disanalogy between titles of artworks and *names of persons*, particularly in regard to their roles in the understanding and interpretation of the objects they denote.[216]

In order to more fully understand his position, and thus more fully understand the role of titles, it is useful to consider Levinson's four hypotheses in turn.

Levinson's first hypothesis is that titles of artworks are both integral parts and constitutive. In order to demonstrate this point imagine for a second two distinct composers each creating a work which is structurally identical to that created by the other composer, at the same time, in the same socio-musico-historical context, such that it would be difficult to comprehend there being any more than one musical work. Suppose that both composers gave their work the same title. Whilst it may be logically possible, it would be difficult to believe that composer A meant one thing by that particular title, and composer B meant another, if nothing further is known about either composer or their previous works. However, this does not mean that the work composed by composer A and the work composed by composer B mean the same thing. In this sense the works do not have the same title, merely the same "wording" of the title. Moreover, if the titles are only worded the same, but do not mean the same, then it is conceivable that the two works are also not the same, but are merely written the same.

That "same" work given two contradictory titles may give two different readings, even if those titles are fundamentally similar. The title *Why?*

[216] Ibid. [Italics in original]

contradicts the title *Why*, the former is a question and the latter is a response to that question, yet the only thing that sets them apart is the addition of a single piece of punctuation. However, the title of the Discharge recording *Why* would still be read in the same way even if it was titled *Why?*, despite the fact that they are contradictory titles, because even though the title says "why", how that title is framed—by the recording's artwork, lyrics and the cultural context in which it occurs (early 1980s Punk)—makes it clear that the title really means "why?".[217]

Imagine again that one composer created two identical musical structures simultaneously, in the same socio-musico-historical context. Again, it would be difficult to comprehend there being more than one musical work. However, should those two instances of the same musical work be titled differently, then it would be possible to comprehend them as two separate works. This is possible because the aesthetic properties of the work result not only from the musical structure and musical and historical context, but also depend in part on how the work is titled.

Levinson's argument is that the title may firstly contribute to the aesthetic value of the work by guiding how "representational" passages are heard, such that where a passage may be heard to represent two or more real world events the title serves to clarify which one is appropriate to hear—the title functions as a guide to perception—and thus which one is represented. However, the clarifying and directing qualities of titles are not restricted to analogies between works and the outside world, and may also serve to guide a listener towards or away from particular structural features of a work.

Levinson's second hypothesis relates to titles as essential properties of

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[217] Discharge. 1981. Why. Clay Records, 1989.

works. A title first appears as a means to differentiate between different works. The song title *For Whom The Bell Tolls* enables a listener to distinguish it from *Fade To Black* where the opportunity to actually listen to the album *Ride The Lightning* is not available.[218] From this perspective titles appear much like the names attached to persons. Insofar as titles are involved in differentiating works and thus contribute to the listener's discrimination of one work from another, they appear as essential. However, the title alone is not enough to mark a work out as distinctive.

One of Levinson's key arguments concerns whether or not the structure of a work can be called essential, that is the work would not be what it is if the structure was not the way it is. If we provisionally accept the argument that it is the structure of the work that determines what the work is, and what it means, then this raises the question to what extent must that structure remain "the same" in order that the work can be considered the same? To what degree is it possible to alter that structure before it is no longer considered to be the same structure? Ehrenfels's work during the beginnings of the field of *Gestalt* psychology considered such a question, noting that a melody is still recognisable when played in different keys, even though none of the notes are the same:

> What is melody? First and most obvious answer: the sum of the individual notes which make up the melody. But opposed to this is the fact that the same melody may be made up of quite different notes, as happens when the self-same melody is transposed into different keys. If the melody were nothing else than the sum of the notes, different melodies would have to be produced, because different groups of notes are here involved.[219]

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[218] Metallica. Ride the Lightning. Elektra, 1984.

[219] Christian von Ehrenfels, "On Gestalt Qualities," Psychological Review 44.6 (1937): 521.

The central point made by Ehrenfels relates to the consistent comprehension of a melody which is ultimately mutable. This comprehension takes place through the relation of one note to another, by degrees of difference, rather than by considering individual notes in isolation.

During the thirteenth minute of Bernhard Günter's *Four Gray Paintings (For Jim O'Rourke)* a series of quiet pops and crackles appear after a long period of apparent silence.[220] These pops highlight the preceding silence and are highlighted by it. Would the structure be the same if that period of silence were five seconds shorter, or if those pops appeared 5 seconds later, or if some of them didn't appear at all? If each track on Ryoji Ikeda's *Matrix [For Rooms]* was 15 seconds shorter the way in which the work *works*, and what the work means, would not change, and yet 150 seconds of musical material would be missing. It would even be possible to remove entire tracks and not change how the work functions and means—each track effectively restates the same point from a different position. A concerto with its cadenza written or improvised by the soloist is still deemed to be the same concerto regardless of the fact that its structure varies according to the soloist, and if the cadenza is improvised then it is not structurally the same every time it is played even if the soloist is the same. Finally, consider the 1951 recording of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 conducted by Furtwängler, the recording that supposedly set the duration criteria for the compact disc. Furtwängler's version is 74 minutes long. Klemperer's 1957 recording with the Philharmonia Orchestra is just over 72 minutes long. If the structure of a work can be considered the same even though some aspects of it have been or can be altered (in this case both tempo and duration), then is it not

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[220] Bernhard Günter. "Four Gray Paintings (for Jim O'Rourke)." Détails Agrandis Selektion, 1994.

possible to argue that other features of the work—composer (I will attend to the issue of how the composer is *created* later in this chapter), context, title—could also be altered to some degree and still be considered the same, and thus that the work itself could be considered the same despite these alterations?

The conclusion thus suggested is that if titles are constitutive of artworks then they are also at least as essential as the other constituent parts such as structure, composer and context, a "part" of an artwork being defined by Levinson as 'any element fixed, determined, or generated by the artist which is to be perceived or apprehended in the process of appreciating the work in question.'[221] The critical features of a part, then, are that it is a result of intentional activity on the part of the artist and that it is directly attended to by the beholder. This formulation is problematic, however, particularly in its reference to artistic intention and the concomitant difficulties identified by LaCapra surrounding what constitutes the artist and the identification of intent. In particular, recorded music raises a number of issues regarding the roles of the recording engineer, producer, mixing engineer and mastering engineer and the question as to whether or not they can be seen as contributing to the creation of both the artist and the artwork, given the often collaborative nature of the relationship between artist and such other persons involved in the creation of musical works.

It is worth commenting briefly on Levinson's remarks on the type of titles applied to such works as symphonies or sonnets. Levinson argues that the conclusion reached above does not necessarily apply to titles which take that form, titles which designate a type of work rather than a particular work.

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[221] Levinson, "Titles," 32.

Symphony No. 1 contains nothing to differentiate it from *Symphony No. 2* apart from an assumed difference in chronological origin, although there may be an assumption based on an idea of an artist's musical progression that the later work would be better than, or at least different to, the earlier work. However, the word "symphony" does carry with it a certain set of values, connotations, frames, expectations, and markers of aesthetic content which identify the work as belonging to a particular type, and thus creating certain expectations about musical content.

This brings the discussion neatly onto Levinson's third hypothesis, that the title slot for a work of art is always aesthetically relevant. Levinson argues that the semantic potential of the title slot, however it is or is not filled, can perhaps most easily be evidenced by imagining a "neutrally" titled work (one might select *John Henry*, for example) as though it had been given another title (*Man Versus Machine* perhaps, in line with the song's hypotext which tells the story of a black railroad worker's battle to outperform his employer's newly acquired steam hammer in order to save the jobs of his fellow employees, and his subsequent death from exhaustion).[222] Levinson further argues that given a context where the act of titling is either expected or unexpected, any title, however neutral it may appear, will impact on how that work is received simply because the act of entitling or not entitling is itself significant.[223]

Levinson makes the distinction between several types of title based on their relationship to the text to which they are attached. The lines between neutral, underlining and focussing titles are somewhat blurred, but the

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[222] See, for example, Odetta. "John Henry." The Tin Angel. 1954. Original Blues Classics, 1993, John Jacob Niles. "John Henry." I Wonder As I Wander. 1958. Empirewerks, 2006, Bruce Springsteen. "John Henry." We Shall Overcome: The Seeger Sessions. Sony, 2006.

[223] Levinson, "Titles," 34.

distinction is worth making. *Neutral titles* often take the form of names of characters or places in the work or its hypotext, such as *Old Dan Tucker*,[224], *Nebraska*,[225] or the aforementioned *John Henry*. In music the most common neutral title is probably the use of an artist's name to designate a "self-titled" album. However, just as the title of some poems takes the form of a simple reiteration of the first line, the title of some songs appears to be a simple reiteration of a line in the lyrics, usually part of the chorus. Such titles also raise the question of influence: is the song titled as it is because of a particular feature of the song, or does that particular feature appear precisely because of the way the song is titled?

A title's neutrality is, however, only an apparent neutrality as neutrality will always bring with it its own baggage: *Untitled* is still a title, and not giving a work a title is still aesthetically relevant. Numbered titles are not always neutral either. *Song #5* refers back to *Song #4* and forwards to *Song #6*—there is an implied chronology and thus an implied progression of works, even if in practice such a strict order of creation is not the case.[226] In addition, certain numbers carry with them connotations which may or may not pertain to the works themselves, such as the Satanic overtones of the number 666, the number 88's association with National Socialism, or the number 7's association with luck. Such connotations or the origins of those connotations are not consistent between cultures, nations or even individuals.

Underlining or reinforcing titles lend emphasis to a certain subject or

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[224] Usually attributed to Dan Emmett, 1843.

[225] Bruce Springsteen. "Nebraska." Nebraska. Columbia, 1982.

[226] See, for example, Blur. "Song 2." Blur. Food, 1997, Fugazi. "Song #1." Repeater + 3 Songs. Dischord, 1990.

theme which forms part of the core of the work, but not in such an overwhelming manner as to become redundant. Underlining titles tend to be general rather than referring to a particular person or place (*We Shall Overcome*, for example).[227]

A *focussing title* works in a similar way to an underlining title, but differs in that it singles out from the core elements of the work one subject, theme or feature to serve as the central figure which should then play a dominant role in the interpretation and appreciation of the work (such as in Blind Alfred Reed's *How Can a Poor Man Stand Such Times and Live?).*[228]

An *undermining or opposing title* says the opposite to the work it is attached to—i.e. the title *a* is attached to a work which is about subject B, such that it is often read as ironic, and thus the title is really in line with the direction of the work . Such a title will usually emphasise a particular aspect of the work in the same manner as an underlining or focussing title, but will also colour that emphasis with a slightly different, perhaps mocking, sarcastic or bitter tone. An undermining title may also be deliberately incongruous (such as in the case of The Cure's *Lullaby*).[229]

Mystifying or disorienting titles appear completely tangential and unrelated to the subject matter they are attached to (for example, Botch's *C. Thomas Howell as the "Soul Man"* or *Mondrian was a Liar*).[230] Being conceptually dislocated, and thus having no obvious connection to the thing they are attached to, mystifying titles may therefore encourage the listener to discover or even

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[227] Rev. Charles Tindley. "We Shall Overcome." 1901.

[228] Blind Alfred Reed. "How Can a Poor Man Stand Such Times and Live?" Complete Recorded Works in Chronological Order. Document, 2000.

[229] The Cure. "Lullaby." Disintegration. Fiction, 1989.

[230] Botch. We Are the Romans. Hydra Head, 2000.

manufacture such a connection.

Disambiguating or specifying titles serve to fix or lead towards a particular reading of a work where it is conceptually or representational ambiguous. Sometimes a title is so critical to deciphering the work that it becomes incomprehensible without the guidance that the title provides.

Allusive titles are transtextual and refer directly to other works, artists, events, etc. They can also function in the same way as most of the other six forms of title, bar those which appear neutral.

Levinson's final hypothesis sets out the distinctions between the names of persons and the titles of artworks along three main lines. Firstly, the primary function of names is to facilitate reference to that person. In titles the referential function is either secondary or on a par with the other functions of the title. Secondly, titles carry semantic weight, whereas proper names do not. A person's name is not part of a system of meaning, and thus changing Mike's name to Thomas has no effect on what constitutes the person that name refers to. Finally, titles are parts of the artworks they are attached to. Names are not part of the person they refer to. A person *has* a name, but the name is not part of the person; a name is a possession. Even if titling is arbitrary, in the same way that a person's name designates him but does not "form" him, this cannot prevent that title from referring to things other than what it designates—even the title *Untitled* (oxymoronic though it appears) refers to something other than the work itself, in some way. As titles are almost always added by the artist (and even when they are not they take the appearance of having been so), a numbering system applied to all works would not be treated in the same way for precisely the reason that it is a system external to the work.

Titles provide a short and convenient means of referring to individual musical works, not just a means of identifying them but a way of talking about them. Whilst one could feasibly refer to "the Metallica song that opens with picked B minor and A chords played on a steel-stringed acoustic guitar and which appears as the third track on the album *Ride the Lightning*" it would be a cumbersome and impractical thing to do, incomprehensible to many people, and would do little to differentiate that song from another Metallica song which opened in the same manner, were it to exist. Similarly, whilst referring to "the one that goes 'Life it seems, will fade away,' you know the ballad-y one," may help to identify that song to someone who has listened to it enough to know at least that part of the lyrics, it does nothing for someone who has never heard it at all and thus doesn't know what any of the lyrics are, or even that it's 'the ballad-y one'. *Fade to Black*, however, immediately and clearly identifies the song to which it refers without any requirement for prior knowledge and without any confusion as to which song is being discussed.

Titles may be used to identify a work as part of a series of works, establishing a transtextual relationship between the work and other works in the series. The work of Francisco López provides a useful example here, where a number of clear titling strategies can be identified. López has a reasonably large number of works in his discography, so identification of any patterns in the way titles are allocated to works is somewhat easier than if there were only five works to analyse, notwithstanding that different naming strategies may require a different number of works that utilise them in order that any such patterns can be identified.

There are at least four types of title that can be observed in López's work.

(1) The "Untitled" series. Roughly two-thirds of titles in this series (19 out of 32) take the form of the word *Untitled* followed by a hash then a number, for example *Untitled #104, Untitled #209.* A further seven titles take the form of the word *Untitled* followed by a year in parentheses, for example *Untitled (2000)* or the slightly modified form of *Untitled [1981-1983].* A further four titles take the form of *Untitled Single Piece* followed by the numbers *1, 2, 4* or *5.* A work entitled *Untitled Single Piece 3* is conspicuous in its absence. The remaining two works do not share any particular titling features, other than the use of the word *Untitled*; *(Untitled)* and *Untitled Music for Geography.* (2) The "Belle Confusion" series. Although comprising only four works, a common form of title is clearly observable, taking the form of *Belle Confusion* followed by the numbers *00, 0247, 966* or *969.* No clear numbering pattern is apparent, although it would be reasonable to associate *Belle Confusion 969* more closely with *Belle Confusion 966* than *Belle Confusion 0247,* based on their numerical proximity. *Belle Confusion 966* and *Belle Confusion 969* may therefore share a stronger paratextual relationship—listening to one is more likely to recall the other—than either text might do with either *00* or *0247,* or those two might with each other. (3) The "Live" series. The format of titles here is the words *Live at* or *Live in* followed by the name of a place, which the listener would not be unreasonable to assume is the location of the performance of which the work is a recorded document of; for example, Live *at the Darling Foundry, Montreal (10/00)* and *Live in Auckland.* (4) Non-English language titles. Such titles are constructed predominately in López's native Spanish, but a small number of works have titles written in French, German or Arabic; for example, *Qal'at*

Abd'al-Salam, Addy en el país de las frutas y los chunches.[231]

Characterising a work as part of a series serves firstly to associate one work with a certain set of other works (and thus to characterise it as a particular type of work), and secondly to disassociate that work from other works which are not seen as part of the same series. A work may also identify itself as part of a series via intertextual links to other works, such as Jim O'Rourke's three albums for the Drag City label, *Bad Timing*, *Eureka*, and *Insignificance*, which take their titles from three films by Nicolas Roeg and were released in the same chronological order as Roeg's films.[232]

A title is an attachment, and as such it can be removed and replaced with another, and the work would no longer be the same. Consider Velázquez's painting entitled *Las Meninas* [The Ladies-in-Waiting]. According to John Fisher, the painting was, until 1666, known as *Her Royal Highness the Empress with Her Ladies and a Dwarf*.[233] In 1734 the title was recorded as *The Family of King Philip IV*. The current title was not recorded until 1843. In considering the various titles it becomes apparent that each change in title also effects a shift in focus: from Empress Margarita Teresa, to King Philip IV, to the ladies in waiting or maids of honour, or from royalty to servants, simply by the act of re-titling, even if the painting itself does not support such a shift. Velazquez himself appears in the painting, but is not named in any of the recorded titles. Would the painting be the same were it named *Self-portrait with the Infanta Margarita and her*

[231] For a complete discography of López's work see Francisco López, Discography, 2009, franciscolopez.net, Available: http://www.franciscolopez.net/disc.html, 28 July 2009.

[232] Jim O'Rourke. Bad Timing. Drag City, 1997, Jim O'Rourke. Eureka. Drag City, 1999, Jim O'Rourke. Insignificance. Drag City, 2001.

[233] John Fisher, "Entitling," Critical Inquiry 11.2 (1984): 293.

Ladies-in-Waiting? Do the historical facts surrounding the time at which the work was painted affect how any title might be comprehended? The work was painted in 1656, but Leopold I did not become Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire until 1658. Margarita also didn't marry Leopold I until 1666, a fact Velázquez could not have been aware of as he died six years earlier. The title *Her Royal Highness the Empress with Her Ladies and a Dwarf* is thus not only factually incorrect—Margarita was not Empress in 1656, and was only four at the time the work was painted—but it is also unattributable to Velázquez. Thus, whilst Velázquez may have announced the location of his responsibility, the extent of that responsibility was determined by a number of third parties, some or all of whom he had never been associated with. Yet, references to the work continue to take the form "Velázquez's *Las Meninas*", such is the pervasiveness of the artist's assumed responsibility.

4.3.2 THE AUTHOR'S NAME

An author's name is a proper name, and as such it has functions beyond those of mere reference and indication. The name "Stockhausen" does more than simply refer to the individual who bore that name (the reduction of that name to a surname alone is certainly indicative of this). When one responds to the question "What are you listening to at the moment?" with the simple word "Stockhausen" one isn't implying that they are literally listening to the sounds of Karlheinz Stockhausen, the person. What they really mean is they are listening to music composed by Karlheinz Stockhausen (although the phrase "I'm listening to Stockhausen" is perhaps also symptomatic of a view which sees music as a kind of speech-equivalent). In addition, the name Stockhausen doesn't just refer to the person who bore that name, or the music composed by

that person, and Foucault suggests that the links between the proper name Stockhausen and the person Stockhausen, and between the author's name Stockhausen and the music it names, do not function in the same way.

If I were to walk into HMV with the intention of purchasing a copy of *Reign In Blood* I wouldn't look for albums that are 26 minutes and 48 seconds long, or albums produced by Rick Rubin, or albums on the Def Jam label, or even albums with titles that begin with the letter R. I would look for albums by Slayer. Such is the pervasiveness of this way of thinking about how music is classified that I wouldn't think about searching for that album any other way, and the management of HMV wouldn't think to arrange their stock in a way other than one which would facilitate my search. So, firstly the author's name serves a classificatory function.[234]

Foucault argues that it is possible to modify aspects of what constitutes a particular person without modifying the link between that person and their proper name. For example, if Karlheinz Stockhausen had been born in Austria in 1930 instead of in Germany in 1928, or was a builder, or had red hair, the name Karlheinz Stockhausen would still refer to the same person; what Foucault terms 'the link of designation' has not been modified. The author's name does not function in the same way, however. If it was proved that Stockhausen did not compose *Kontakte*, and that it was in fact composed by Pierre Schaeffer, or that all of the works attributed to Stockhausen were actually composed by Pierre Schaeffer working under a pseudonym, would the name Stockhausen, as

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[234] There is, however, a trend amongst the proprietors of some small, specialist music retailers, particularly those which specialise in dance music where the DJ often usurps the composer, to arrange their stock according to record label. In this sense, the label itself becomes almost a surrogate composer, such is its reputation for consistently releasing recordings in a particular musical style, sharing the same musical philosophy, or which have to meet the same exacting standards.

composer, function in the same way? Foucault suggests not. Thus, in addition to separating the work from other works, the attribution of a work to an author also sets out part of the background against which readings of the work are constructed (a background which is approached with some difficulty where there are doubts about authorship, especially where works are left unfinished by their creators and subsequently "finished" or realised by one or more third parties—Mahler's unfinished Symphony No. 10, for example).

4.3.3 What is an Author?

Where a work's title announces the extent of the artist's responsibility, the name of the artist serves to announce the location of that responsibility. The function of the artist's name can be usefully examined via Michel Foucault's essay "What is an Author?"[235] For the sake of consistency I will retain Foucault's use of the word "author" from hereon in, rather than reverting to "composer", in the same way one might refer to a piece of music as a "text". When referring to the name of a musical author I am principally speaking about the name that would appear on the front cover of a compact disc, rather than the name or names that might appear in the small print which identifies the composer of the work (which may or may not be the same name as appears on the front cover—the author can be seen to function much like a narrator by providing an alter-ego for the real "flesh and blood" composer). It is the person (and I include bands here) *presented* as responsible for the work, and not the person *legally* responsible for the work (the copyright owner) that I am interested in.

Foucault opens his essay by characterising the apparently 'solid and

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[235] Michel Foucault, "What Is an Author?," The Foucault Reader, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984).

fundamental unit of the author and the work' as the result of a particular and privileged moment in history.[236] Against this individualisation of the history of ideas, and also of knowledge, literature, philosophy and science Foucault argues that categories such as genre or school appear secondary, weak and superimposed. The current status of the author, he remarks, is as an individual that transcends history, whose persona is valorised and whose life is recounted as though it were a hero's. One of the results of such a view is what Foucault terms "the man-and-his-work criticism". It is thus this appearance of the author as outside of and antecedent to the text, the relationship between the text and the author, and the manner in which the text points to this figure, that is Foucault's concern.

The point of departure is provided by Beckett's "'What does it matter who is speaking,' someone said, 'what does it matter who is speaking.'" Foucault characterises this indifference as a kind of immanent rule which dominates writing as a practice. Today's writing, he argues, has managed to free itself from expression without becoming restricted to the confines of its interiority—like a game which transgresses its own limits.[237] The point of writing is thus not the manifestation or exaltation of the act of writing, nor is it the use of language to "pin" a subject within it, but is a matter of making the writing subject disappear into a space which writing creates, like a metamorphosis of the tradition of the Greek epic—whereby the young hero was immortalised through a narrative which redeemed his death—into a work which has the right to "murder" its author. Any signs of the particular individuality of the writing subject, Foucault argues, are thus cancelled out by the contrivances he sets up between himself

[236] Ibid. 101.

[237] Ibid. 102.

and what he writes, reducing the writer to playing the role of 'the dead man in the game of writing'.[238]

Foucault's ultimate conclusion is that the two notions that are intended to replace the privileged position of the author—that of the "work" and that of "writing" and "language itself"— not only preserve that privilege but also suppress the meaning of the author's disappearance. Authorship, he contends, is not the dead issue that Barthes and Derrida—the unnamed but quite apparent targets of his criticism—might suggest, and the author may serve a useful function in curbing gratuitous readings of the work.

4.3.4 WHAT IS A WORK?

The key question at the centre of Foucault's critique of the notion of a "work" is that of defining what a "work" is. The thesis that the task of criticism is to analyze the work's structure, intrinsic form, and internal relationships, rather than to expose its relationship with the author or through the text to reconstruct an idea, falls at the first hurdle, he argues, by neglecting to define what *a* work, and thus *the* work, actually is. Certainly not everything ever written by anybody (to stay within Foucault's writing paradigm) is considered to be a work, and just as Naked City's creation as legitimate participants in the field of Grindcore involved more than Naked City simply creating what they felt was Grindcore, to be considered a writer involves more than simply writing.

Even where an individual's acceptance as an author is not in doubt, there still lies a problem in determining whether everything they wrote are to be called works, and if not how to differentiate between what is a work and what is not. Would *Andante in C for Keyboard (K. 1a)* be considered anything more than

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[238] Ibid. 103.

an exercise in a notebook had it been written in 1781 instead? If it was considered a work, would it be *the same* work, having been written by a 25-year old man with a considerable body of work already behind him rather than by a five-year old boy who had never written a thing before in his life? Had it appeared as a sketch in the margins of the manuscript for *Idomeneo (K. 366)* would it be considered a work? The theoretical ground laid down by Foucault's essay suggests they would (although he leaves his reasons for doing so somewhat unclear), but he remarks that difficulties arise where, for example, 'within a workbook [belonging to Nietzsche] filled with aphorisms, one finds a reference, the notation of a meeting or of an address or a laundry list.'[239] Such a discovery is problematic for those who collate and catalogue the works of artists because it raises questions of legitimacy in addition to those of chronology and taxonomy. Moreover, the distinction between work and non-work ultimately dismissed by Derrida as trickery is further clouded by works and non-works which appear similar but which are ultimately separated by the distinction that one is deemed to be a work and one is not. 'Is it a work, or not? Why not?', Foucault asks. This is the central issue at the heart of Foucault's difficulties with the argument that "the work itself" can be studied and that the author thus can be declared dead: one can't study the work itself if the separation of work and non-work is ultimately futile. 'How can you define a work amid the millions of traces left behind by someone after his death?' he queries.[240] Foucault's rhetorical question further adds to the concerns raised by Derrida's writings on the frame, suggesting that the difficulty (if not the impossibility) in identifying what is and what isn't constitutive of a particular work is contingent on being

[239] Ibid.

[240] Ibid. 104.

able to identify what is even a work in the first place.[241]

4.4 Summary

Musical works are created and comprehended against a background of other texts: the artist (the person and the name), other artists, other works by the artist or other artists, other types of producers of artworks, still and moving images, materials, formats, logos, names, conventions and practices, facts, places, dates, historical events, typefaces, words, sentences, paragraphs, texts. Such trans-texts are constitutive parts of the artwork without which the work would not mean what it means, or be what it is.

In Chapter 3 it was argued that artists' attempts to control the reception of their own work are always in some part destined to fail. The use of trans-texts can be seen to form part of such efforts, attempting to deliver the correct code for comprehension alongside the work to be comprehended.

The titles of musical works are therefore to be seen as not just indexical, providing the beholder with a means to identify and grasp this work as opposed to another, but also connotative and constitutive. A title serves as both a guide

[241] For an extensive discussion on the development of the concept of the musical 'work' see Lydia Goehr, The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992). Goehr argues that the work-concept emerged at the beginning of the Romantic period, and it is regulatory in nature. In particular, Goehr suggests that the notion of a work is historically tied to a) the emergence of the idea of autonomous art, and music's inclusion as such an art (pre circa 1800 music was considered to have only extra-musical value), and the advent of the composer-concept, b) the emancipation of music from poetry and the religious word and the subsequent rise of instrumental music, c) the relationship between Idealist, Romantic and Enlightenment thought, and d) the emergence of a new kind of marketplace for musical works (public performances), and their new place in the imaginary museum of her book's title which she correlates with physical museums of the plastic arts. The thrust of Goehr's argument is that musical works only existed after circa 1800, and thus Beethoven composed musical works but Bach did not (Bach, in Goehr's text, is seen as a craftsman rather than a composer). See also Michael Talbot, ed., The Musical Work: Reality or Invention? (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000). for further discussions on the subject, many of which take Goehr's essay as a starting point.

and boundary to the interpretation of a work, an ambassador, such that the work may not reveal many of its aesthetic qualities without it. It is thus no coincidence that we speak of a work "having a title". It is also no coincidence that we speak of a work "having an author".

Like titles, the author's name connotes and creates meaning in the work. The concept of the author serves to simultaneously complicate and limit readings of a work, marking out the boundary between the reading the author is willing to take responsibility for—the "correct" or intended reading—and the readings they are not—the "incorrect" or unintended readings (and thus marking out the site of conflict where sampling is concerned).

In the same way, transtextuality, and particularly paratextuality, attempts to mark out the boundaries of a text by limiting the opportunity to use the "wrong" code, the wrong frame, by piling up frame-upon-frame, code-upon-code, text-upon-text, in a bricoleur-like fashion.

These trans-texts, these titles, these authors, are not simply subsumed by the materiality of the artworks they are attached to. They become part of those works, completing them, yet like the drapery on statues, the columns on buildings, and the frames around paintings, they are not the work.

> The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes.
>
> —Marcel Proust[242]

> The struggle itself towards the heights is enough to fill a man's heart. One must imagine Sisyphus happy.
>
> —Albert Camus[243]

5 *DISCUSSION*

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Three main research questions were examined in this thesis. The first question was concerned with identifying the object of discussion when talking about musical works; or more explicitly, identifying the "what" referred to in the question "What are you talking about?". This question, which identifies a need to distinguish between the intrinsic and extrinsic, between the necessary and contingent, forms the foundation of the thesis. Immanuel Kant's notion of the *parergon* and Jacques Derrida's analysis and critique of Kant's position on the function of the picture frame provide the starting point for much of the

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[242] Marcel Proust, The Captive, trans. C. K. Scott Moncrieff, Terence Kilmartin and Andreas Mayor, Remembrance of Things Past, vol. 3, 3 vols. (London: Chatto & Windus, 1981) 260.

[243] Albert Camus, The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays (New York: Vintage Books, 1955) 91.

discussions surrounding the intrinsic and extrinsic. However, such discussions have largely taken place outside of musical discourse. I intended to address this shortcoming by examining how framing occurs within musical works, and how framing might contribute to the structure and meaning of those works, approaching the issues from two angles. Firstly I reconsidered Derrida's reading of Kant writings on the parergonal frame, and examined musical frames and musical framing. Derrida argues that the frame is not a mere supplement, but cooperates within the work itself, thus illustrating the difficulty in maintaining the intrinsic/extrinsic opposition. Secondly, I discussed how the literary theory of allegory provides additional support for Derrida's position by explaining how apparently autonomous, and thus symbolic, works are in fact the product of metonymy and the conflation of the intrinsic and extrinsic within the work itself. This argument was illustrated by detailed analyses of two musical examples: Ryoji Ikeda's *Matrix [For Rooms]* and Naked City's *Speedfreaks*.

The second research question concerned the construction of musical frames in a socio-historical context. One way in which listeners attempt to distinguish between what is to be listened to and what is not—what matters and what doesn't—is by disregarding what is apparently "noise". Jacques Attali describes noise as interference in a system, and music as noise given form according to a code. I intended to demonstrate that often what is deemed to be noise is so deemed not because of a quality inherent in the sound itself, but because of a listener's inability to effectively negotiate and participate in the cultural system within which that sound appears. The work of Pierre Bourdieu, particularly that surrounding the notions of artistic competence and cultural blindness, and the workings of the field of cultural production, was examined to

support this position.

The third research question was concerned with how musical works are framed by apparently extra-musical material which appears alongside the work. Intertextual theory, particularly Genette's theory of *transtextuality*, suggests that every work is created and perceived against a background of other disparate texts. Wilsmore's work on titling suggests titles are not the mere attachments they appear to be, but essential parts of an artwork which structure both the creation and perception of a work. The theory of the "author function" put forward by Foucault states that the name of the author serves not only to assign responsibility for a work's content, but also to limit the proliferation of gratuitous meanings. By examining the theoretical frameworks suggested by Genette, Wilsmore and Foucault, and relating them to specific musical examples, I intended to demonstrate that texts which appear alongside a work—*trans-texts*—are not simply extra-musical, but constitutive of both what the work means and the way in which it means it.

This chapter is divided into three main sections. I first summarise the discussions on the theory of frames and their relevance to understanding how structural framing occurs within musical works, how frames also occur within a socio-cultural context, and how transtextual frames contribute to the structuring and comprehension of musical works. In the second section I consider the implications of the arguments expressed in this thesis for advancing our understanding of the relationships between musical works and the contexts in which they appear, and what the implications are for musical practice. In the final section I suggest possible directions for future work in this area.

5.2 SUMMARY AND GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Chapter 2 discussed Derrida's theory of the frame and considered how framing occurs within musical works. Chapter 3 examined how musical works are framed by the codes and meaning systems which are used by participants in the cultural field within which those works are created and comprehended. Finally, in Chapter 4 I discussed how musical works are framed by other texts, examining how the relationships between musical works and other texts informs and structures those works, and contributes to what they mean and how they mean it.

5.2.1 FRAMES AND FRAMING

In Chapter 2 I discussed how creating, comprehending, and talking about a musical work is contingent on being able to distinguish between what is work and what is non-work—"knowing *what* you are talking about." Without any certainty as to the object of discussion—what "it" is—how can one discuss it? What thus arises is the problem of distinguishing between what is intrinsic, internal, proper and relevant, and what is extrinsic, external, improper and irrelevant, or the problem of distinguishing between the sense of the artwork and its circumstance.

Derrida's *Parergon* essay suggests that the ability to make such an apparently critical distinction rests on a faulty assumption, one which presupposes a limit between the inside and outside of an art object, a limit which doesn't exist in the clear-cut manner demanded by such an assumption. The parergonal picture frame as described by Kant, which sits alongside the work but never participates in it, is shown by Derrida to merge into either the work or the background depending on from which perspective it is viewed. Like

an interlude which both bridges and keeps apart, the frame does not simply serve as a barrier between the painting and the wall—as an accessory or a piece of complementary ornamentation as Kant argues—but cooperates with the work from an apparent outside. A reliance on the opposition between inside and outside therefore over-simplifies the relationship between a figure and its ground by failing to account for the fact that the frame appears simultaneously as part of the work (text) and part of the background (context). The frame is a supplement which intervenes in the work in order to push forward, support and make up for a lack in the work, a lack that would otherwise lead to the work's collapse.

The frame participates in the work by functioning as a marker of limits, as a boundary or series of boundaries. It indicates what is of significance and thus of value, and what is not, calling the beholder forth. Framing thus functions as a form of protection, serving to prevent contamination of the work by the unwanted, the invaluable and the unnecessary. For artworks, including pieces of music, the unwanted can often be identified in extraneous, contradictory or confusing readings of the work and the strategies employed to contain, counter or provoke such readings.

Ryoji Ikeda's *Matrix [For Rooms]* and *Speedfreaks* by John Zorn's group Naked City are two such pieces of music, working through allegorical strategies and the tropes of metonymy and synecdoche to ultimately demonstrate that the notion of a self-contained work is a resort to the same kind of trickery that Derrida attributes to the picture frame. If the musical work cannot exist except as an accumulation of sound fragments and cultural debris, then both Ikeda's and Zorn's pieces serve to acknowledge this, whilst also recognising the

fragmented and transient nature of the World and our experience of it. This apparently broken, inconclusive, and continually deferring approach to meaning occurs not as an accidental consequence of the way the works are constructed, but because there is no other way for the works to say what they do. They are works which are about structure, think themselves through structure, and by doing so they seek to express a conviction that truth resides elsewhere, that the passage from phenomena to ideas is discontinuous and unbridgeable. Moreover, by exposing the artifice of their construction, by drawing attention to their own deadness and mechanicalness, their own fragmented nature, *Matrix* and *Speedfreaks* reveal the possibility of a world outside themselves and the impossibility of the purity and instantaneity of symbolic artworks.

As a consequence, Ikeda's and Zorn's works lend support to the idea that beholding a piece of music—listening to it, and not simply hearing it—is an active process which requires the listener to examine his or her own relationship with the work and to attempt to comprehend it in such a way that it means something to them. As such a listener's experience of a work is the result of an ongoing process of reading, rewriting, and re-reading. This process is highlighted in Aaron Copland's assertion that hearing music in terms of the separate moments at which it exists is ultimately insufficient, and a listener must instead relate what they are hearing at a particular moment to what they have just heard before and what they are about to hear.[244] Such an approach draws attention to listening as a learned and directed cultural practice, one which directs a listener towards particular sounds, and particular aspects and qualities of particular sounds.

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[244] Aaron Copland, What to Listen for in Music (New York: Signet Classic, 2002) 5.

This drawing of a distinction between sounds, arrangements of sounds and qualities of sounds that are significant, and sounds, arrangements of sounds and qualities of sounds that are insignificant—sounds that matter and sounds that don't according to Schafer—forms another mode of musical framing. This frame—the "noise" frame—can be seen to operate along two lines: that of undesirability, which seeks to exclude that which might interfere in the transmission of the message, and that of undifferentiatedness, which seeks to exclude that which appears to lack (appropriate) structure.

The implications of such exclusions can be seen in Marx's assertion that the history of commodities—invested labour—is revealed only in the form of imperfections. From this perspective, the desire to weed out the extrinsic can be seen as an attempt to disguise a work's origins and contingencies, because this "noise" reveals the system as a construction itself and thus contradicts a work's claims to self-sufficiency. Both Ikeda's and Zorn's works draw attention to their own constructedness, and in doing so reveal their own history, whilst also remarking on the historical production of musical works and the ways in which they are comprehended.

5.2.2 Cultural Codes and Cultural Frames

In Chapter 3 I expanded the discussion on the problematic nature of distinguishing between the intrinsic and extrinsic ("knowing what you're talking about"), turning the discussion towards an examination of how artworks are coded and decoded, and how similar difficulties surrounding the intrinsic/extrinsic opposition arise here. I discussed how the code systems used to create and comprehend artworks are created, maintained, and transmitted through social groups, and how aspects of these codes serve as musical frames. I

discussed how comprehension of a musical work is determined by the tools available to the listener, how these tools are acquired, and how their origins are often hidden, disguised or ignored.

The musical category of "Driving Music", as exemplified by the albums *Top Gear Anthems* and *Top Gear: The Ultimate Driving Experience*, is a barely defined and largely commercially-oriented category used to package together a multitude of largely-unrelated artists and works under the vague umbrella of somehow being related to driving, whether by specific or suggestive lyrical content and imagery, loose musical similarities to other member artists, or mere peer-relationship. Whilst the function of such categories appears to be largely commercial and the criteria for membership somewhat arbitrary, the role of boundaries and limits—frames—in how social groups make, and make sense of, musical work should not be underestimated.

Attali's suggestion that all music is noise given form according to a code is therefore of particular significance. If Barthes is correct, and signification is afforded only by the presence of a code, then this code and its origins are worth examining if the process of comprehending musical works is to be understood. Paltridge's work on frames as social texts, the function of which is to guide comprehension suggests that taxonomical formulations of genre are both inadequate and inaccurate, and that genre exists as a form of coding mechanism. Paltridge's work also highlights the boundaries of artworks as the location where struggles over these codes take place.

Making sense of a piece of music involves deciphering it, consciously or unconsciously. The outcome of that deciphering process is dependent on the degree of convergence between the code(s) used to create the work and the

codes available to the listener, between the complexity of the code used to encode the work and the listener's mastery of the code necessary to decipher it. Given that complete convergence is rare, if not impossible, and therefore that a listener lacks an appreciation of the more complex and nuanced features which otherwise support, correct and control how a work is comprehended, there is inevitable scope for misunderstanding, extraneous interpretations, and accusations that a musical work is "just a noise". Works whose structures exceed the listener's toolbox of codes appear as incorrectly structured, or lacking structure entirely.

The readability of a work of art depends on, and varies according to, the degree to which the level of emission and level of reception diverge: the more complex and subtle the artistic code used by the work, the greater the degree of mastery of the social code required of the beholder. Thus, my father's inability to make sense of Napalm Death's *You Suffer* (or indeed to make sense of their entire oeuvre) was a consequence of the lack of such a divergence, a result of the fact that because Napalm Death's code exceeded his own "toolbox" of available codes Napalm Death appeared not to have a code at all—it was just a noise, random and unstructured noise.

Conscious deciphering occurs in the knowledge that the work has been coded, and that deciphering the work involves the knowledge and utilisation of that code, or the utilisation of another code in the knowledge that it is not the code in which the work was encoded. Where there is a lack of convergence between the codes available to the producer and the listener, and the listener therefore lacks the perception that the work is coded and thus "makes do" with a general rather than specific code, perception is reduced to primary

significations and interpretation appears as comprehension. Such interpretation occurs in the absence of the knowledge of what is being interpreted, or even that it is being interpreted at all; a case of not knowing what one is talking about, but talking about it anyway, in the belief that one really knows what one is talking about.

This type of awareness and the extent to which this awareness contributes to the comprehension of works, involves a lesser or greater degree of mastery of the available schemes for interpreting works of art within particular cultural fields. Bourdieu's assertion is that it is the degree to which individuals are able to identify the possible divisions and classes which facilitate the location of a cultural artefact which forms the basis of this mastery: the greater the ability to discriminate between fine classes the greater the degree of mastery.

Creators of musical works must therefore possess the appropriate language ability, functional awareness and pragmatic knowledge in order that communication of their musical utterances be successful, whether what is being communicated is a distinct set of ideas or a deliberate effort to frustrate such communication. From this perspective music can be seen as a speech act even if some of its products are constructed in such a way as to deny any coherent or comprehensible message, because the creators of musical works and the people who listen to them engage in a fundamentally social process with particular conventions which dictate what can be said, how it can be said, and where/when it can be said.

The system of principles of division which make up an artistic code may or may not be consciously adopted by participants in the cultural field, but it is

adopted nevertheless: it is a system which is forced upon individuals through a kind of subliminal education—internalisation through repeated exposure rather than by understanding—which sets the limits and criteria for distinction-making. The application of this system of distinctions as a means to decipher a work, being as it is a system with boundaries that are soft rather than hard, flexible rather than fixed, thus results in multiple levels of signification. These multiple meanings appear not because the work is polysemic, but because the code, the system, used to decipher it is ultimately and unavoidably inadequate.

Just as Ryoji Ikeda's *Matrix [For Rooms]* demonstrates how readings of the work are dependent on the physical position of the listener, Bourdieu's remarks on readability demonstrate how readings of a work are also dependent on the cultural position of the beholder. Where there are discrepancies between the cultural position of the beholder and those of the work, then how that work is (and can be) interpreted is modified, even in the absence of any actual physical changes to the work. In addition, the greater the divergence between the cultural position of the work and that of the beholder, the more problematic comprehension becomes.

Naked City's work functions in part via the way that it relates different cultural positions, operating through the juxtaposition of seemingly unrelated musical synecdoches. In particular, *Torture Garden*'s presentation of a large variety of musical styles via a continual process of reading Jazz in terms of Grindcore and vice versa demonstrates how musical works can attempt to obscure, confuse, restate or even fake their own cultural position by utilising otherwise foreign codes and traditions. In *Torture Garden* this appears as part of an overarching strategy which attempts to deliberately frustrate the listener's

attempts to locate and extract meaningful content, as a form of protest against the nullifying effects of taxonomical systems and the commercial music industry.

Torture Garden also challenges the notion of an autonomous musical work—the relationship between music and the world being based on a resemblance effected in order to express emotion—by openly disclosing itself as the product of the creative use of convention, proudly displaying its spectacles of culture, and thus identifying itself as part of a social process, with all the historical implications that identification brings with it. In this respect, *Torture Garden* problematises music as a form of expression by using those conventions in order to dispute both the notion of a unitary meaning for a work and the notion of the work as the embodiment of the composer's intentions. The effect is that the passage from work to phenomena is made more, and not less, difficult.

Furthermore, the power of structure is inferred by the way *Torture Garden* is constructed wholly in deference to structure. Much like in rhyme, the selection of individual musical blocks—genre synecdoches—is governed not so much by a desire to effect meaning as a desire to highlight sensual properties of sound through a process of juxtaposition and deliberate generic devaluing, such that, as Fineman argues, 'poetic sense is exchanged for poetic sensuousness when the palpability and texture of the *signans* takes precedence over and even, as in doggerel, occludes the *signatum* altogether.'[245] In doing so, not only do the sounds of *Torture Garden* point to themselves but they also point beyond themselves to a structure of musical language itself.

Listening to music can therefore be seen as a process which is socially

[245] Fineman, "The Structure of Allegorical Desire," 52.

and historically formed and organised. The history of that process is therefore a history of the instruments necessary for the production of particular works and a history of the instruments necessary for their perception. In attempting to understand musical works and practices it is therefore necessary to consider them against the background of the history and culture in which they are created and comprehended. In particular, it is important to recognise that musical works only exist to the extent that they are acknowledged as such by the cultural field in which they appear and participate, and that the extent of this recognition (and thus the recognition of the boundaries of the field) is the result of an ongoing struggle between differently-interested participants within that field.

5.2.3 Musical transtextuality

Chapter 4 examined relationships between musical works, and relationships between musical works and other texts, and how such relationships structure how works are created and comprehended. I discussed how these relationships between texts, and in particular two forms of naming—titling and the creation of an author—serve to direct and limit readings of a work.

Fillmore's theory of frame semantics provides a means of describing the social function of utterances, the social natures of their production and comprehension, and the relationships between utterances and where they appear. In addition, frame semantics provides a clear theoretical account of how one text may not only be marked by another, but also may depend on one or more other texts in order to function itself.

The theory of frame semantics holds that individuals hold in memory a repertoire of prototypical frames for particular concepts which serve as a kind

of outline enabling basic acts of perception, action and comprehension, and provide an organising framework for making sense of new experiences by supplying a means to relate utterances to the pragmatic, linguistic and perceptual contexts in which they appear. Frames are created, modified and transmitted by language users, and through these frames users are able to both make sense of new experiences and create new utterances of their own.

As part of this framework individual frames may contain triggers for other frames—for example, the "Gangster Rap" frame contains triggers for additional frames related to crime (itself containing triggers for frames relating to law, justice, and moral judgements about right and wrong) and social injustice—such that the effective utilisation of one frame may depend on prior knowledge of the additional frames it triggers (the "shopping" frame cannot be utilised without knowledge of "ownership", "selling" and "buying" frames, for example). From this perspective, individual texts can be seen to operate against and in relation to a background of other texts, and are thus marked by those other texts.

I expanded on how such relationships between texts occur within musical works through a discussion of Genette's notion of *transtextuality*, which separates these between-text relationships along fives lines: *intertextuality*, referring to the co-presence of two or more texts through quotation, allusion, and plagiarism; *paratextuality*, referring to the relationship between a work and those other texts which appear alongside it such that they appear indistinguishable from it; *metatextuality*, referring to instances where one text is commented on by another, whether explicitly or implicitly; *architextuality*, referring to the linking of texts through genre and generic practices;

hypertextuality and *hypotextuality*, referring to the allegorical relationship between one text which is transformed and extended by another. These transtextual relationships function in much the same manner as the frames suggested by Fillmore, enabling producers and beholders of works to utilise fragments of texts in order to recall the whole and providing a means to situate works within a broader cultural context.

Two prominent paratexts (texts appearing alongside the work such that they appear as part of it) take the form of names—the names of musical works, otherwise referred to as titles, and the names of those who produce musical works and who claim responsibility for them, referred to by Foucault as authors. However, even though they take the form of names, they do not function in the same way that names function. That re-naming Romeo Montague as Steve Jones would have no bearing on who he is as a person is the thrust of Juliet's argument—the name is a meaningless attachment from the outside which does not participate in the inside. Titles, and authors' names, however, are neither lacking in meaning nor lacking in an intent to mean. The acts of titling and of declaring authorship serve to announce the boundaries within which readings of the work should take place and within which the author's responsibility lies. They are deliberate attempts to fix, or at least limit, a work's meaning by directing and modifying how a work is comprehended and structuring how a work means what it does. This is an important point, especially in the face of those who would deny external influence altogether and declare the work as self-contained, and yet who still act to protect their works from contamination by giving them titles and signing their names across the bottom, whether physically or metaphorically.

Interpretation is what sets titles apart from names: artworks are interpreted, and the title forms a part of that interpretation. Unlike the "meaningless attachment" that is a person's name, a title is a part of the work—convention dictates that all works have titles, even when the artist chooses not to give them one—a part which not only designates and distinguishes but connotes that which it refers to: work and title are a unity. The title of an artwork appears as simultaneously as part of the "inside" and part of the "outside", as both part of the work and part of the context. It is an attachment which impacts on how and what the work means and impacts again when it is removed or modified—as Levinson argues, the title *slot* is always aesthetically relevant, whether or not it is filled. Therefore, titles are not simply attachments that can be added, removed or modified with no implications for how and what the work means. They are frames, and the act of entitling is an act of framing—an attempt to delimit the work. Titles are essential properties of musical works in the same way that the structure of musical works is also essential despite the potential for modification.

A second act of framing appears in the use of the author's name to locate where responsibility for the work lies. The example used in Chapter 4, "Karlheinz Stockhausen", functions on two levels. Firstly, it functions as a means of denoting the individual to which it refers—the person who, if you had called his name, would have responded to that call. The name "Karlheinz Stockhausen" merely says that this person is known by this name, and this name refers to this person. Should Mr Stockhausen have chosen to change his name by legal means, perhaps to just "Karl Smith", he would have responded to calls of that name, his bank account could have been in that name, and yet the person to which that

name refers has remained unchanged. Similarly, should Mr Stockhausen (or Mr Smith) have decided upon a change of career and had become a landscape gardener, or a zoologist, the name Karlheinz Stockhausen would still refer to him. So, the relationship between a person and their name is unaffected by changes to either the name or the person. The second use of "Karlheinz Stockhausen" appears not as a reference to the person that bears that name, but as a reference to that person's work as an artist, both concrete and abstract—as works and as thoughts and writings about works. The name also makes references to Stockhausen's contemporaries and to their work, to a particular musical culture, to a form of music that sounds a particular way. One doesn't listen to the person Stockhausen, but to the work of Stockhausen as marked by that name. In short, the author's name Karlheinz Stockhausen—the "Karlheinz Stockhausen" frame—serves as a form of synecdochal shorthand whereby a selection of parts refer to a selection of wholes. It is the kind of abbreviated outline that Fillmore's theory frame semantics suggests contains triggers for multiple additional frames in order to guide and organise perception and comprehension.

If the author's name serves as an additional frame within the network of frames used for comprehension of artworks, what then is an author? From Foucault's viewpoint the question has something of a circular answer: an author is someone who creates "works", yet such an answer only raises the additional question "What is a work?", which is apparently something created by an author, but not everything created by an author can be a work. Foucault's formulations of author and work raise an important question here: what are the criteria which need to be met in order for something to be considered a work?

Foucault gives the first answer, that it has to be created by an author, but this raises the spectre of what constitutes an author, the answer to which returns back to the question of what a work is. The solution to this endless cycle may be found in Bourdieu's assertion that artists must take steps to create themselves as legitimate participants in a particular field. They must possess the predisposition to enter that field instead of another, a predisposition which is a kind of feel for the game, a feel for the system of structures and principles which generate and organise particular cultural practices. They must also meet the "minimum expectations" of that particular field by possessing the knowledge and skills to be accepted as a legitimate participant by other participants in the field. Using Bourdieu's criteria, the answer to the question "what is an author?" appears to be someone who is deemed to be a legitimate creator of the type or types or works in which that particular cultural field specialises by virtue of their possession of the requisite knowledge and skills required to participate in that field. Thus Mozart's *Andante in C for Keyboard (K. 1a)* is considered a work because it meets the criteria for works within the field in which it appears, and Mozart is considered an author because he creates things that meet the field's criteria for works, and because he possesses the requisite skills, knowledge and background to be considered a legitimate creator of such works.

Following Bourdieu's remarks on readability examined in Chapter 3, and in response to Chapter 4's discussion of the paratexts which appear alongside Entombed's *Left Hand Path*, it can be argued that such trans-texts form part of the apparatus which attempt to limit divergence between a work's level of emission and its level of reception, by providing additional discourses alongside the work in order to supply a code which has already been mastered or to

continually deliver the most appropriate code for deciphering the work. These attempts to lower the level of emission (and thus raise the level of reception) can be seen to form part of a larger strategy which aims to limit the extraneous readings of a work afforded by a lack in the work itself and a less than complete convergence between the codes used to create the work and the codes available to the listener for deciphering the work. In addition, such texts can also be seen to deliberately problematise this process by delivering codes which are inappropriate, contrary, oppositional or ambiguous.

5.2.4 General conclusions

According to Gaver and Mandler, music expresses a composer's thoughts and emotions, and as such music is about something. The question "what is this music about?" therefore suggests two things: firstly that this particular music is *about* something, and secondly that this "something" is the same all of the time. What does "about" mean in the context of this question? First of all, it means music is concerned with something, but more importantly it would appear to mean that something is framed, delimited, or even constrained, on all sides, by the music which is concerned with it. The question thus sets up music as something which frames another thing—an idea, a concept, an emotion or assemblage of emotions, a message, and so on. Music is about (around) something, the question suggests, rather than something which is itself framed (the question in the latter instance being "what is about music?"). However, Gaver and Mandler also say that music is ultimately separate from the things to which it refers, thus identifying music as autonomous in the final instance.

The need to distinguish between the intrinsic and extrinsic forms the basis of an artistic strategy which seeks to avoid a work's contamination by that

which either interferes with the transmission of the message or which compromises a work's structure through undifferentiatedness. Furthermore, such exclusions can be seen to form part of an additional strategy which seeks to affirm a work's autonomous status by disguising the origins and contingencies which would otherwise reveal the work as part of a system which is socially and historically formed.

By openly declaring themselves as within and products of that system the works of Ryoji Ikeda and Naked City discussed in this thesis therefore serve as conspicuous reminders that music is not only a product but a practice. In particular, Naked City's work can be seen to operate through the foregrounding of structure in order to position genre synecdoches as emptied of meaning. This serves to locate genre within a system of *connections* and functions as a protest against the use of genre in systems of classification which mask the social and historical circumstances of a work's production.

In addition, by openly disclosing its mode of expression as one formed around the manipulation of conventions, and by using those conventions to frustrate rather than elicit the extraction of meaning, the work of Naked City thus questions the ideas of a work's unitary meaning and its status as the embodiment of a composer's thoughts and intentions. By emptying those conventions of their content and subjecting them to the rule of structure musical sounds become valued for their sensual properties rather than for what they mean. Fineman argues that 'if allegorical themes are in a sense emptied of their content by the structure that governs them, if the particular signifiers of allegory become vehicles of a larger structural story which they carry but in which they play no part, they are at the same time ostentatiously foregrounded

by the very structurality that becomes immanent in them.'[246] Therefore, by their being emptied of content, the sounds of *Torture Garden* point beyond themselves towards the structure of musical language itself, and thus highlighting the act of listening as a socially and historically formed practice. The background against which music is both created and practiced can therefore be seen as the history of those instruments necessary for music's production and perception, and the frameworks which govern its entry into the cultural field as a legitimate product and practice.

As part of this framework, the texts which surround and infiltrate music as a consequence of relationships between musical works and other texts—other musical works and producers, other art forms, practices, conventions, turns of phrase, names, places, images, materials—can be seen as part of an attempt to limit the proliferation of gratuitous meaning on one hand, whilst on the other serving to deliberately frustrate that process by delivering alongside the work multiple other texts which may or may not be in accordance with the meaning otherwise delivered by the work's structure.

5.3 Implications

In Chapter 1 I noted how the classification systems used by listeners to organise their music collections are marked by the processes used to construct those systems. The character Rob in Nick Hornby's *High Fidelity* takes this process of personalisation to its logical and conspicuous extreme by rearranging his music collection according to the order in which he acquired them, thus imprinting upon his collection a narrative about the course of his life so far. One of the consequences of Rob's reordering (aside from any subsequent difficulties in

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[246] Ibid.

locating a particular record due to his inability to remember when he acquired it) is that each record therefore serves as a kind of archaeological artifact, a cultural object tied to a particular time and place. Thus, in addition to positioning each record as part of a broader historical scheme, Rob's actions also serve to in some way reclaim his responses to those records from the grasp of a commodity industry which appears otherwise indifferent or hostile to the history of those and all other musical works.

Each of the albums in Rob's collection is comprised of a number of smaller fragments (at least two, due to the inherent limitations of the vinyl format), otherwise known as tracks, or songs. The playing of a vinyl album usually commences with the first track, facilitated by the long, music-less groove that runs along the outside edge of the disc. Once the end of track one is reached the needle of the record player continues into the grooves containing track two, and then onwards into tracks three, and so on until the end of side one is reached. The process begins again for the duration of side two. Earlier in this chapter I recalled a remark from Aaron Copland which asserted that each moment during the process of listening to a piece of music appears in relation to the moments that came before it and the moments that will follow it. When listening to an album this process takes the form of relating individual moments as Copland alludes to, as well as the relating of each track on the album to those which it precedes and to those from which it proceeds. These relationships—transtextual relationships—which increase in potency after repeated listens, serve to create the album as a work in itself rather than as a random assortment of unrelated fragments.

Transtextual links between tracks are further strengthened by the post-

recording mastering process, the purpose of which is to make a collection of tracks into an album.[247] Mastering may involve the ordering of individual tracks (including deciding on the duration of the gaps between tracks) so that the album "flows", with the micro-level dynamics of individual tracks being used to determine the macro-level dynamics of the album as a whole. This sequence is further compounded by the album's artwork, which lists the tracks in the order in which they should be listened to, and by the medium itself which attempts to enforce that order through the use of track markers. The mastering engineer may also edit minor faults such as clicks or electrical hum, perform frequency equalisation, adjust volumes, and compress the audio signal in order to reduce a track's dynamic range, as a means of further homogenisation.

The fixity of this relationship between tracks, and thus of the integrity of the album itself, received its first major challenge with the advent of the compact disc. Not only does the compact disc enable listeners to shift between tracks much more easily than vinyl or cassette (and thus to skip songs they don't like, or repeat tracks they do), but the inclusion of a random or "shuffle play" feature on hardware also allows listeners to bypass both the album's original track sequence and their own particular version of it. Links between tracks—links which create the album—are thus broken and reassembled anew on each listen. As a consequence of this continual (re)fragmentation, the album is thus reduced to its constituent parts—individual tracks—a move which reaffirms their commodity status by masking the historical and structural

[247] Paul Hegarty suggests that the rejection of the single, and the concentration on the album, by certain artists during the 1960s and 70s, constituted an active rejection of the commodity status of music exemplified by the single, a rejection that ultimately backfired as the album format became an even more effective means of continuing this commodification. Paul Hegarty, Noise / Music: A History (New York; London: Continuum Books, 2008) 73.

processes which create them as parts of the work as a whole.

In the current era this restatement of music as a commodity can be identified in the effects of the gradual move towards electronic distribution methods which began in the early 2000s and which has yet to reach its peak.[248] This particular mode of commodity fetishism can be seen in the numerous digital music "stores" which retail music via the internet, especially the current market leader iTunes. One of the key features of such digital music retailers is that they sell songs rather than albums, and purchasing an album thus involves purchasing each song individually. One of the consequences of this move from whole to parts is that it is now possible for those listeners who might have previously skipped a track or two to simply not purchase the songs in question, thus performing such erasures at the level of the work rather than during listening.

The effects of this practice of excision can be seen on several levels. Firstly, this shift in focus—macro to micro—signifies a redrawing of the boundaries between individual musical works, moving from intratextual links between tracks within a single album towards links between tracks across several albums, and consequently as links between albums and links between producers. As listeners move towards not only randomising individual albums, but their entire music collection, through digital media hardware and software, these links are thus subjected to an ongoing process of writing, erasure and rewriting. As Naked City's *Torture Garden* demonstrates, one of the outcomes of

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[248] On the growth of electronic music distribution see Charles Arthur. "Record Sales Can't Get Music Companies Off the Hook," The Guardian 8 January 2009. 26 January 2009. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2009/jan/08/music-online-industry-sales-pirate>, Salamander Davoudi. "Music Industry Must Learn to Play to New Tune," Financial Times January 10 2009. 26 January 2009. <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/d9483b4a-deb8-11dd-9464-000077b07658.html>.

this fragmentation of structure and the act of listening itself is the impeding of a listener's attempts to extract meaning from a work.

The second effect of the move from albums to songs appears in the ways in which music is organised. I noted in Chapter 1 that most taxonomies in use are album-oriented, rather than based around individual songs. One of the consequences of orientation is that albums containing songs which may be located within several categories (and Derrida would argue that all songs may be located in more than one category) are subjected to a single unifying principle—genre—which locates every song on an album within the same category. Within electronic distribution methods there exists a means to lessen the homogenising impact of genre through the use of additional electronic metadata which is contained within the digital files themselves. Alongside naming information which identifies the artist, album, individual track title, and the composer (where it differs from the performer), and additional information about the album's release date and individual track numbers, these metadata also contains a "tag" which permits a single track to be assigned to a particular genre. Whilst this fails to deal with the multiple genre problem identified by Derrida, this particular metadatum does allow for an album to be identified as containing tracks which fall within a multitude of genres, meaning that a twelve track album can theoretically be identified as containing music from twelve different genres.

However, although digital music stores sell songs rather than albums, these songs are still arranged according to the albums they appear on, rather than individually or by genre. As a result, the genre metadata tag becomes somewhat redundant as a means to classify individual tracks at the point of sale.

Tracks are therefore subsumed within the same taxonomical position allocated to the album as a whole. From this perspective, the criteria used to define the boundaries of this position, and thus the criteria used to assign membership, can therefore be seen as part of a commercial cross-selling strategy, the inner workings of which lie beyond the direct reach of the listener.

One of the key issues raised in this thesis relates to the act of listening. I argued that listening to music is a learned cultural practice, the product of inculcation throughout history. Part of this inculcation occurs in the use of genre as a means to respond to recurring communicative problems, thereby organising how utterances are produced and perceived and thus guiding expectations about what is to be said or done. From this perspective, the practice of listening can be seen as not only a product of history, but also a producer of history; listening practices shift in response to the utterances they are confronted with, and utterances shift in response to changes in listening practices (such changes being initiated from both inside and outside the musical sphere). As such, the practice of listening is subject to continual change, at the level of the individual and at the level of societies and cultures. In this sense, listening can be seen not only as a product of culture, but a dynamic process within it, a process which is both determined by, and determinant of the social context in which it appears.

Everyone who engages with music in some way does so through the practice (or praxis) of listening. Only a fraction also engage with music through either composition or performance, and yet composition and performance are still the dominant paradigms by which music education is defined (the commodification of music reflected in listening's status as a mode of

consumption rather than production). This has implications for the long-term retention of music graduates, as well as for wider engagement with musical practice. In addition, by presenting music in this manner, what is, in reality, a large-scale cultural activity appears as a fringe specialism accessible only to those who have the "gift of talent".

Cage's *4'33"* revealed that the most significant act in the creation of a musical work is that of listening. Not only can all sounds be musical sounds, but, in the final instance, all music is made of sounds which must be listened to if they are to become music: a compact disc or score alone do not make music. If this is the case, then what are the implications for the issues raised at the beginning of this section? Bourdieu suggests that the feel for the game he calls *habitus* occurs as a result of the forgetting or disguising of the social conditions which make cultural activity possible. One of the consequences of this forgetting is that the means by which agents within a cultural field make distinctions (categories) and send and receive messages (codes) take on the appearance of natural entities. The means by which listening—as a practice—is created, maintained, and modified thus appear not as social processes, but as biological functions.

5.4 Future Directions

One of the issues raised by this thesis is that, despite being inconsistently formed and applied, the use of genre as a system of classification is still ubiquitous. In Chapter 3 I remarked on work in the field of cognitive psychology which suggests that individuals treat labels differently from other features of an object, whilst I argued in Chapter 4 that titles differ from names because titles are interpreted, and changing the title changes the interpretation. One possible

direction for research would therefore be to investigate the relationship between how a work is interpreted and the genre label applied to it. In particular, research which looks at whether particular labels consistently direct a listener's response to a work would improve our understanding of the use of genre as a commercial tool.

In Chapter 3 I suggested that access to the means to create and respond to works of art, including music, is not ubiquitous and is informed by the interests of those parties wielding significant power. Therefore, one further issue warranting attention is the role of institutions in the formation, maintenance, transformation and decline of genres, both as typological systems and as coding mechanisms.

It may also be useful to consider whether the presence of different paratexts affects listeners' identification of works as belonging to a particular genre, and whether the presence of inconsistent paratexts leads to inconsistent genre classifications.

In Chapter 4 I argued that the presence of paratexts serves to deliver additional codes together with the work in order to prevent the proliferation of gratuitous meanings. In this respect it may therefore be prudent to consider examining how the presence or absence of particular paratexts affects both how a work is interpreted by listeners and the meaning as indicated by the work alone.

I also argued in Chapter 4 that the figure of the author is a paratext which is distinct from the person bearing the same name. Given that the boundaries between performer, producer and engineer are increasingly blurred, it may therefore be useful to consider the implications of the producer/engineer as a

co-author of a work and what this means for locating the site of responsibility. It may also be worth considering where this responsibility might lie in cases where a work is composed by one person and performed by another, particularly where that work is subsequently performed by numerous other artists (the work of Hal David and Burt Bacharach springs to mind here).

5.5 Conclusion

In this thesis I discussed the relationships between musical boundaries, how musical works are listened to, and how and what they mean. My arguments demonstrate that these boundaries, referred to as frames, appear as simultaneously intrinsic and extrinsic to musical works. As such they become the site of struggles over meaning, both within works themselves and in the wider social and cultural context in which they appear. This struggle takes the form of an ongoing process of redefining what is a legitimate mode of artistic production, who is a legitimate producer, and who is a legitimate perceiver. One of the consequences of this struggle is a loss of meaning for listeners that are inadequately equipped to negotiate and decipher this dynamic network of rules, codes and conventions, or a work's relationships with other texts. Musical works can themselves also impede and direct the process of meaning through a manipulation of these same conventions. This manipulation can be seen to resituate a work within a system of socio-historical relations and thus assert its position as a product of human labour. The issues raised in this thesis have particular implications for listening as a musical practice in its own right as well as for music access and education. Furthermore, the arguments made in this thesis highlight the importance of examining musical works as both products and producers of musical practice.

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