Music as Aesthetic Paradigm: Frederic Leighton, Albert Moore, and James McNeill Whistler

Two Volumes

Volume I

Marte E. Stinis

PhD

University of York

History of Art

June 2021

ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the communal approach towards absolute instrumental music as an aesthetic paradigm in the works of three Victorian artists: Frederic Leighton (1830-1896), Albert Moore (1841-1893), and James McNeill Whistler (1834-1903). It argues that their interest in music, as painters associated with Aestheticism and art for art's sake, formed an integral and influential part of their artistic oeuvres and that they formed a subset within Victorian Aestheticism because of this communal interest in music as an aesthetic ideal. Central to this argument are ideas of artistic autonomy, abstraction, form, temporality, and aesthetic contemplation. Using a contextual, interdisciplinary, and theoretical approach to situate their interest in music within wider nineteenth-century musical developments involving critical reading of music and aesthetic theory, this dissertation shows that Leighton, Moore, and Whistler attempted to find a confluence between art for art's sake and the theoretical ideal or condition of music. By analysing their works against contemporary music theory and aesthetics of music, this study proposes that this paradigm offered the exploration of non-narrativity, abstraction, and pictorial autonomy through the lens of musical metaphor. Artistic correspondence, colour theory, musical terminology, and the aesthetics of reception are deemed important within this context.

This involves close readings of a wide range of primary and secondary sources, framing an approach that is interdisciplinary and methodical. This dissertation provides an analytical Section I, focusing on music theory, music developments, and their confluence with art for art's sake. This leads into Section II, containing Leighton, Moore, and Whistler as case studies, to synthetically test out how this proposed model of absolute instrumental music as paradigm works itself out in their art.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VOLUME TWO

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 12: Whistler, *Symphony in Grey and Green: The Ocean,* 1866-1872, oil on canvas, 80.6 x 101.9 cm, The Frick Collection, New York.

Figure 13: Whistler, *Harmony in Red: Lamplight,* 1884-1886, oil on canvas, 190.5 x 89.7 cm, The Hunterian, University of Glasgow.

Figure 14: Whistler, *Nocturne: Blue and Silver – Bognor,* 1874/1876, oil on canvas, 50.3 x 86.2 cm, Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Figure 15: Leighton, *A Girl Feeding Peacocks,* 1863, oil on canvas, 188 x 160 cm, private collection.

Figure 16: Rossetti, *The Blue Bower,* 1865, oil on canvas, 84 x 70.9 cm, The Barber Institute of Fine Arts.

Figure 17: Leighton, *The Fisherman and the Syren: From a Ballad by Goethe,* c. 1858-1859, oil on canvas, 66.3 x 48.7 cm, Bristol Museums and Art Gallery.

Figure 18: Leighton, *Elijah in the Wilderness,* c. 1877/1878, oil on canvas, 235 x 210.1 cm, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.

Figure 19: Leighton, *Cimabue's Celebrated Madonna Carried in Procession through the Streets of Florence,* 1853-1855, oil on canvas, 231.8 x 521.4 cm, Royal Collection Trust, on loan to the National Gallery of London.

Figure 20: Leighton, colour sketch for *The Triumph of Music,* c. 1855-1856, oil on canvas, 31 x 42 cm, Leighton House Museum.

Figure 21: Ary Scheffer, *Orpheus Mourning the Death of Eurydice,* 1814, oil on canvas, dimensions and location unknown.

Figure 22: David Wilkie Wynfield, *Frederic, Lord Leighton,* c. 1860s, carbon print on mount with textured paper surface layer, 190 x 157 mm, Royal Academy of Arts, London.

Figure 23: Leighton, *Lachrymae,* 1894-1895, oil on canvas, 157.5 x 62.9 cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Figure 24: Whistler, *At the Piano,* 1858-1859, oil on canvas, 67 x 90.5 cm, Taft Museum, Cincinnati.

Figure 25: Leighton, *Painter's Honeymoon,* c. 1863-1864, oil on canvas, 83.5 x 76.8 cm, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Figure 26: Leighton, *The Music Lesson,* 1877, oil on canvas, 92.8 x 95.3 cm, Guildhall Art Gallery, London.

Figure 27: Leighton, *After Vespers,* 1871, oil on canvas, 111.5 x 71.5 cm, Princeton University Museum.

Figure 28: Leighton, *Garden of the Hesperides,* c. 1892, oil on canvas, 169.5 cm (circular), Lady Lever Art Gallery, Liverpool.

Figure 29: Leighton, *Idyll,* c. 1880-1881, oil on canvas, 104.1 x 212.1 cm, private collection.

Figure 30: Leighton, *Cymon and Iphigenia,* 1884, oil on canvas, 162.5 x 327.6 cm, The Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney.

Figure 31: Henri Fantin-Latour, *Hommage à Delacroix,* 1864, oil on canvas, 160 x 250 cm, Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

Figure 32: Fantin-Latour, *Autour du Piano,* 1885, oil on canvas, 160 x 222 cm, Musée d'Orsay.

Figure 33: Leighton, *Summer Moon,* c. 1872, oil on canvas, 100.3 x 128.3 cm, private collection.

Figure 34: Leighton, *The Daphnephoria*, 1876, oil on canvas, 2.31 x 5.25 m, Lady Lever Art Gallery.

Figure 35: Leighton, *Hercules Wrestling with Death for the Body of Alcestis,* 1869-1871, oil on canvas, 153 x 269 cm, Wadsworth Museum, Hartford.

Figure 36: Michelangelo Buonarroti, *Night,* marble, 155 x 150 cm, 194 cm diagonally, Sagrestia Nuova in the Basilica di San Lorenzo, Florence.

Figure 37: Leighton, *Clytie,* 1895-1896, oil on canvas, 156 x 137 cm, Leighton House Museum.

Figure 38: Moore, *The Shulamite,* 1864-1866, oil on canvas, 97 x 214 cm, Walker Art Gallery.

Figure 39: Moore, *Birds,* 1878, oil on canvas, 155.4 x 65.3 cm, Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery.

Figure 40: Moore, *The End of the Story,* 1877, oil on canvas, 87.5 x 33 cm, private collection.

Figure 41: Moore, *Lilies,* 1866, oil on canvas, 29.7 x 47.9 cm, Clark Art Institute, Williamstown.

Figure 42: Moore, *Dreamers,* 1879-1882, oil on canvas, 68.5 x 119.2 cm, Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery.

Figure 43: Moore, *Red Berries,* 1884, oil on canvas, 47.6 x 116.7 cm, private collection.

Figure 44: Moore, *Idyll,* 1892-1893, oil on canvas, 86.3 x 79.9 cm, Manchester City Art Gallery.

Figure 45: Moore, *A Reverie,* 1892, oil on canvas, 116.7 x 74.8 cm, private collection.

Figure 46: Moore, *Midsummer,* 1887, oil on canvas, 158.6 x 152.2 cm, Russell-Cotes Art Gallery, Bournemouth.

Figure 47: Moore, *Jasmine,* 1880, oil on canvas, 66.6 x 50.1 cm, Watts Gallery, Compton.

Figure 48: Moore, *Reading Aloud,* 1884, oil on canvas, 107.2 x 205.5 cm, Glasgow Art Gallery and Museum.

Figure 49: Moore, *Apples,* 1875, oil on canvas, 29.2 x 50.7 cm, private collection.

Figure 50: Moore, *Beads,* 1875, oil on canvas, 28.9 x 50.1 cm, National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh.

Figure 51: Moore, *A Sofa,* 1875, oil on canvas, 28.9 x 50.1 cm, private collection.

Figure 52: Edward Burne-Jones, *The Golden Stairs,* 1876-1880, oil on canvas, 269.2 x 116.8 cm, Tate Britain.

Figure 53: Moore, *Summer Night,* 1884-1890, oil on canvas, 132 x 228.5 cm, Walker Art Gallery.

Figure 54: Moore, *An Embroidery,* 1881, oil on canvas, 33.6 x 13 cm, private collection.

Figure 55: Moore, *Study for Figure in 'The Dreamers',* reproduced in Frederick Dolman, "The Story of a Picture: 2. Albert Moore's 'The Dreamers'", *The English Illustrated Magazine* 15 (June 1904): 225.

Figure 56: Moore, *Acacias,* c. 1880, oil on canvas, 58.4 x 38.1 cm, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh.

Figure 57: Wassily Kandinsky, *Composition VIII,* 1923, oil on canvas, 55.1 x 79.1 cm, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York.

Figure 58: Paul Klee, *Harmony of Rectangles with Red, Yellow, Blue, White and Black,* 1923, oil on primed cardboard, 69.7 x 50.6 cm, Zentrum Paul Klee, Bern.

Figure 59: Moore, *A Yellow Room,* 1885, pencil, watercolour and bodycolour on paper, 38.1 x 15.2 cm, private collection.

Figure 60: Moore, *Cartoon for 'White Hydrangea' with the Background of 'A Yellow Room',* c. 1885, charcoal on grey paper, 88.2 x 38.9 cm, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Figure 61: Whistler, *Variations in Flesh Colour and Green: The Balcony,* 1864-1872, oil on wood, 61.4 x 48.8 cm, Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Figure 62: Whistler, *Variations in Blue and Green,* c. 1868, oil on millboard mounted on wood, 46.9 x 61.8 cm, Freer Gallery of Art.

Figure 63: Whistler, *Symphony in White and Red,* c. 1868, oil on millboard mounted on wood, 46.8 x 61.9 cm, Freer Gallery of Art.

Figure 64: Whistler, *Symphony in Blue and Pink,* c. 1868, oil on millboard mounted on wood, 46.7 x 61.9 cm, Freer Gallery of Art.

Figure 65: Whistler, *Symphony in Green and Violet,* c. 1868, oil on millboard mounted on wood, 61.9 x 45.8 cm, Freer Gallery of Art.

Figure 66: Whistler, *The White Symphony: Three Girls,* 1867/1869, oil on millboard mounted on wood, 46.4 x 61.6 cm, Freer Gallery of Art.

Figure 67: Whistler, *Venus,* c. 1868, oil on millboard mounted on wood, 61.9 x 45.6 cm, Freer Gallery of Art.

Figure 68: Whistler, *Nocturne: Blue and Silver – Cremorne Lights,* 1872, oil on canvas, 50.2 x 74.9 cm, Tate Britain, London.

Figure 69: Whistler, *Nocturne in Blue and Silver,* 1871/1872, oil on canvas, 44.4 x 60.3 cm, Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University.

Figure 70: Whistler, *Nocturne,* 1875/1878, oil on canvas, 39.4 x 62.9 cm, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston.

Figure 71: Whistler, *Symphony in White, No. 1: The White Girl,* 1861-1863, oil on canvas, 2.14 x 1.08 m, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Figure 72: Whistler, *Symphony in White, No. 2: The Little White Girl,* 1864, oil on canvas, 76 x 51 cm, Tate Britain.

Figure 73: Kazimir Malevich, *White on White,* 1918, oil on canvas, 79 x 79 cm, The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Figure 74: Robert Rauschenberg, *White Painting (Three Panel),* 1951, latex paint on canvas, 1.83 x 2.74 m, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

Figure 75: Whistler, *Nocturne: Blue and Silver – Chelsea,* 1871, oil on wood, 50.2 x 60.8 cm, Tate Britain. Previously known as *Harmony in Blue-Green: Moonlight* when originally exhibited.

Figure 76: Whistler, *Variations in Violet and Green,* 1871, oil on canvas, 61 x 35.5 cm, Musée d'Orsay.

Figure 77: Whistler, *Crepuscule in Opal: Trouville,* 1865, oil on canvas, 34 x 45.7 cm, Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio.

Figure 78: Whistler, *Sea and Rain,* 1865, oil on canvas, 50.8 x 72.7 cm, Museum of Art, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Figure 79: Whistler, *Harmony in Blue and Silver: Trouville,* 1865, oil on canvas, 49.5 x 75.5 cm, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum.

Figure 80: Whistler, *Blue and Silver: Trouville,* 1865, oil on millboard, 59.1 x 72.4 cm, Freer Gallery of Art.

Figure 81: Whistler, *Nocturne in Blue and Gold: Valparaiso Bay,* 1866-1874, oil on canvas, 75.6 x 75.9 cm, Tate Britain.

Figure 82: Whistler, *Crepuscule in Flesh Colour and Green: Valparaiso,* 1866, oil on canvas, 58.6 x 75.9 cm, Tate Britain.

Figure 83: Whistler, *Nocturne: Blue and Gold – Southampton Water,* 1872, oil on canvas, 50 x 76 cm, Art Institute of Chicago.

Figure 84: James Tissot, *On the Thames (How Happy I Could Be With Either?),* c. 1876, oil on canvas, 74.8 x 118 cm, The Hepworth Wakefield.

Figure 85: Whistler, *Nocturne in Grey and Gold – Westminster Bridge,* 1872/1874, oil on canvas, 47 x 62.3 cm, Burrell Collection, Glasgow Museums.

Figure 86: Whistler, *Nocturne in Blue and Silver,* 1875/1878, oil on canvas, 44.4 x 61 cm, Yale Centre for British Art.

Figure 87: Whistler, *Nocturne: Silver and Opal – Chelsea,* 1884, oil on wood, 20.3 x 25.7 cm, Freer Gallery of Art.

Figure 88: Whistler, *Nocturne: Blue and Gold – Old Battersea Bridge,* 1872-1875, oil on canvas, 68 x 51 cm, Tate Britain.

Figure 89: Whistler, *Nocturne – Trafalgar Square, Snow,* 1875/1876, oil on canvas, 47.2 x 62.5 cm, Fogg Art Museum.

Figure 90: Whistler, *Nocturne: Grey and Gold – Chelsea Snow,* 1876, oil on canvas, 47.2 x 62.5 cm, Fogg Art Museum.

Figure 91: Whistler, *Nocturne: Blue and Gold – St Mark's, Venice,* 1879-1880, oil on canvas, 44.5 x 59.7 cm, National Museum of Wales, Cardiff.

Figure 92: Whistler, *Nocturne: Blue and Silver – Battersea Reach,* 1875/1878, oil on canvas, 39.4 x 62.9 cm, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum.

Figure 93: Whistler, *Nocturne: Grey and Silver,* 1875/1878, oil on canvas, 31.1 x 51.8 cm, Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Figure 94: Whistler, *Nocturne: Black and Gold – The Fire Wheel,* 1875/1877, oil on canvas, 54.3 x 76.2 cm, Tate Britain.

Figure 95: Whistler, *Nocturne in Black and Gold – The Falling Rocket,* 1875, oil on panel, 60.3 x 46.6 cm, Detroit Institute of Arts.

Figure 96: Whistler, *Sunset; Red and Gold – The Gondolier,* 1880, chalk and pastel on brown wove paper, 19.2 x 28.5 cm, Fogg Art Museum.

Figure 97: Whistler, *The Bridge; Flesh Colour and Brown,* 1879/1880, chalk and pastel on brown wove paper, 29.3 x 19.7 cm, Burrell Collection, Glasgow Museums.

Figure 98: Whistler, *Note in Pink and Brown,* 1880, charcoal and pastel on brown wove paper, 29.8 x 18.4 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Figure 99: Whistler, *Arrangement in Black: La Dame au brodequin jaune – Portrait of Lady Archibald Campbell,* 1882-1885, oil on canvas, 218.4 x 110.5 cm, Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Figure 100: Whistler, *Harmony in Blue and Gold: The Peacock Room,* 1876-1877, oil paint and gold leaf on leather and wood, 4121.6 x 613.4 x 1026.2 cm, Freer Gallery of Art.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I want to extend my gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Elizabeth Prettejohn. Her enormous expertise of the visual arts of the nineteenth century and Victorian Aestheticism are the reason I wanted to work with her in the first place, and her kindness, guidance, and encouragement, both academically and mentally, have made my PhD possible. Her unfailing hard work and dedication to her profession have always and continue to inspire me. It was a privilege working with her, and I will always treasure how welcome she made me feel, both in the History of Art department in York and, together with Charles Martindale, in her own home. Thank you.

Along the way, my research has been shaped by that of my colleagues and peers, including Professor Anthony Geraghty who has read parts of this thesis as member of my supervisory panel. I have benefited immensely from his keen insight, astute observations, and his wit. I have also benefited from the vibrant and collegial atmosphere at the University of York, particularly my colleagues in the History of Art department and the fostering of interdisciplinary connections through the Humanities Research Centre. I have been privileged to have had the support and encouragement of numerous friends and colleagues at the University of York, including Declan Hartness, Chan Du, Phil Bradford, Mariam Hale, and Susie Beckham.

I want to recognise the immense support I have received at the hands of my friends and colleagues, without whom I would not have been able to finish this journey. Dr Miguel Angel Gaete Caceres and Paty Lagos, who welcomed me into their life and home; they have taught me to enjoy what life can offer. Dr Kazuki Inoue, who always inspired me with his immense knowledge and creativity. Louise Yu-Jui Yang, for always showing me courage, kindness, and the beauty in everything. Caroline Vogel, for singlehandedly getting me through the lockdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic and whose boundless creativity, intellect, and kindness I value and admire. Joe Allen, for being my friend and never failing to make me laugh. Sara van Leersum, for always being my friend and lifting my spirits. My love goes out to those at de Jutters who helped me discover myself back in 2013 and encouraged me to do something I love.

Whenever I was feeling overwhelmed, my sister Eva would know exactly what to say and for her emotional support I am incredibly thankful. And thank you, too, to my brother Hugo, for his continued encouragement and support. Finally, I want to thank my parents, Hans and Heleen, for their constant support, love, and generosity. Time and time again, they have encouraged me to follow my interests and work hard, build my skills, and do what I love. For this, I am eternally grateful.

DECLARATION

I, Marte Stinis, declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not been previously presented for an award at this, or any other, University. All sources are acknowledged as references.

INTRODUCTION

In 1867, James McNeill Whistler (1834-1903) exhibited *Symphony in White, No. 3* (fig. 1) at the Royal Academy Exhibition in London, the first of his well-known musically titled paintings. In response, critics adopted musical terminology to praise the painting's harmonies in colour while some perceived the title as an attempt to provoke a musical effect in the viewer:

> [Whistler] has the subtlest apprehensions of the softer and tenderer harmonies of colour in nature and art, and conceives that the function of art is to express these harmonies, not to tell a story, or to reproduce an expression, or to embody incidents. He would have painting do the work of music, embody moods and suggest emotions vaguely, but profoundly, through appeals to mysterious associations of feelings with colour, and of colour with feelings. […] So interpreted, regarded under a low light and from a due distance, the picture *does*, it seems to us, attain this effect, and justifies its title by producing on the mind an effect akin to that of music.[1]

Nearby hung *The Musicians* (fig. 2) by Whistler's close friend Albert Moore (1841-1893) while their colleague Frederic Leighton (1830-1896) exhibited *Spanish Dancing Girl: Cadiz in the Olden Times* (fig. 3).[2] All three works either represented or referred to music in significant ways. Simultaneously, all three artists opted for strikingly similar compositional features based on musical analogy: a strong horizontal delineation of space, either a bench or a sofa, against which were juxtaposed more fluid and rhythmic vertical elements in simulation of a musical score. In *The Musicians*, three figures are reclining on a bench, resplendent in waving and colourful drapery, similarly to the relaxing audience in *Spanish Dancing Girl* and the languorous attitudes of the two girls in *Symphony*. In all three, the shallow foreground space pushes the figures towards the viewer. Those lost in immersion or

[1] "The Exhibition of the Royal Academy: Second Notice", *The Manchester Guardian* (May 21, 1867): 5 [italics in original]. There were similar responses: "By borrowing a musical phrase, [Whistler] doubtless casts reflected light upon former studies or 'symphonies' of the same kind […] he produces pictures for the sake of ineffable Art itself, not as mere illustrations of 'subjects', or the previous conceptions of other minds. We cannot define the hues or Mr. Whistler's 'symphony', and we must limit our notice here to thanks of their beauty, wealth, and melodious combining […] these thoughts of beauty in chromatics", "Royal Academy", *The Athenaeum* no. 2064 (May 18, 1867): 667. "This symphony has little difficulty in keeping to the key note [sic]; it preserves all but an unvaried monotone", "The Royal Academy", *Art Journal* (June 1867): 137-146, 143. "It is not precisely a symphony in white […] it is pure brush-work", [P.G. Hamerton], "Pictures of the Year", *Saturday Review* 23, no. 605 (June 1, 1867): 691.

[2] Both *The Musicians* and *Spanish Dancing Girl* are currently known as *A Musician* and *Greek Girl Dancing,* respectively. For purposes of authenticity, I have decided to retain the titles with which these works were originally exhibited.

introspection are all placed to the right of the performer or dancer and, perhaps most importantly of all, all three paintings display pictorial musical features like rhythm, tempo, harmony, and melody. By 1867, Whistler, Leighton, and Moore had been working in the same artistic circles for several years. Moore and Whistler had met in 1865, following the former's successful exhibition of *The Marble Seat* (fig. 4) at the Academy, after which they became both friends and colleagues, sharing similar artistic intentions and ideas. Whistler and Leighton had met during their simultaneous stay in Paris between 1855 and 1859, and it is likely Moore became aware of Leighton either through Whistler, other mutual connections, or through their contributions to exhibition spaces like the Royal Academy and, later, the Grosvenor Gallery. Their concurrent exhibition of musical paintings at the Academy in 1867 was not a coincidence but signified a development in their respective artistic projects in relation to their interest in music and music theory. As all three paintings capitalised on the interaction between musical figures and listeners, extending to the evocation of music from the physical artwork to its real-life spectator, each constructed a pictorial scene independent of narrative yet enriched through its association with music.

It was in response to this exhibition that Sidney Colvin (1845-1927), a literary and art critic, grouped Leighton, Moore, and Whistler together among contemporary avant-garde artists as working towards "beauty without realism".[3] In the 1860s they became interested in non-narrative painting: the creation of pictorial beauty as independent and separate from narrative, literary, historical, or moral strictures. One way to do this was through music, something which has been acknowledged but never fully explored in previous scholarship; some sources acknowledge with more nuance and care the theoretical associations of music, such as Tim Barringer and Karen Yuen, while these issues are often skimmed over.[4] In this study I argue that the association with music went much further than the rather one-dimensional parallel between the freedom of instrumental music from narrative and painting aspiring towards the same. In this dissertation, then, I propose that Leighton, Moore, and Whistler set the artistic agenda for musical-artistic analogies in the 1860s through their communal approach to 'beauty without realism'. This functioned conjointly alongside their interest in the doctrine of art for art's sake and its respective elevation of non-narrative

[3] Sidney Colvin, "English Painters and Painting in 1867", *Fortnightly Review* 2, no. 10 (October 1867): 473.
[4] Tim Barringer, "Burne-Jones's *Le Chant d'amour* and the Condition of Music", chap. 13 in *Rival Sisters: Art and Music at the Birth of Modernism, 1815-1915,* ed. James H. Rubin and Olivia Mattis (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 249-271; Karen Yuen, "Music's Metamorphosis in the Life and Creative Works of Dante Gabriel Rossetti" (PhD diss., Royal Holloway, University of London, 2008), esp. chap. 1, "Music as Aesthetic Ideal", 25-65.

painting in favour of pictorial beauty. All three, I argue, elevated instrumental music to the position of aesthetic paradigm, conceptualising their own painting in response to this ideal.

The art of instrumental music stood at the heart of a major cultural shift in the reception, status, and experience of art in Western Europe during the nineteenth century. During this period, instrumental music transformed from an enjoyable pastime, a social accompaniment, and an art in service of the narrative it supported, to an art form reliant only on its own internal formal structures for meaning. Under the aegis of Enlightenment theory, instrumental music was often valued as lower or less than programmatic musical pieces which provided an extra-musical narrative; the latter were considered linguistically far more expressive and meaningful. Consequently, instrumental music was dismissed as meaning*less*, even empty since it relied on its internal formal structures that were difficult to capture verbally. From this rather humble and supporting status in relation to the other arts in the eighteenth century, instrumental music gained popularity through a number of developments, including new and popular instrumental genres like the sonata, symphony, and concerto; new instruments like the pianoforte allowing a wider range of emotional expression; and, perhaps most significantly, a philosophical framework put in place by German Romanticism and Idealism from the 1790s onwards. Writers and theorists such as Ludwig Tieck (1773-1853), E.T.A. Hoffmann (1776-1822), Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder (1773-1798), F.W.J. von Schelling (1775-1854), and Friedrich Schlegel (1772-1829) articulated instrumental music as an aesthetic art form which they celebrated by virtue of its emptiness and consequent potential for autonomy, self-sufficiency, and abstraction. Their new aesthetic model brought instrumental music to wider critical attention, leading to the art form becoming a crucial cog in the construction of Romanticism. Considering instrumental music's inherent formal features like rhythm, tempo, and musical notes, these above-mentioned thinkers proposed music as an ideal for the other arts on the grounds of its capacity for emotional effect. As Wolfgang Dömling and Karl Schawelka have argued, the quality of *das Musikalische* as an aesthetic effect became significant for both composers and painters by the second half of the nineteenth century.[5]

Over the last 20 years, studies into the interconnections between music and visual culture in the nineteenth century have increased, revealing both the immensity of the topic as

[5] Wolfgang Dömling, "Reuniting the Arts: Notes on the History of an Idea", *19th-Century Music* 18, no. 1 (Summer 1994): 3-9; Karl Schawelka, *Quasi una Musica: Untersuchungen zum Ideal des 'Musikalischen' der Malerei ab 1800* (München: Mäander, 1993).

well as its many complexities. Peter Schmunk and Marsha Morton have edited a volume of essays entitled *The Arts Entwined* (2000) covering artists ranging from J.M.W. Turner, Camille Corot and Claude Monet to Henri Fantin-Latour, Vincent van Gogh, and Edvard Munch through the lens of the visual-musical *paragone*.[6] James Rubin and Olivia Mattis edited the volume *Rival Sisters* (2014) to consider the categories of the origins of ideal music, dialogues, music and Realism, musicality in paint, grand schemes like paradigms and conditions, and *fin-de-siècle* developments.[7] What their studies show is not only how pervasive musical analogies were at the time, but how many different forms it could take. Many existing studies of art and music, however, tend to focus on the traditional modernist view of music as a facilitator of pictorial abstraction. Within this view, Whistler is often taken out of his intellectual context and placed in a linear chronology of artists acting as precursors to twentieth-century modernist abstraction by virtue of their interest in music.[8] While true, I consider this too restricted of a view. Similarly, the now-famous dictum that "all art constantly aspires towards the condition of music", coined by Walter Pater (1839-1894) in 1877, is often taken as a blanket statement for an interest in music in the later nineteenth century and, simultaneously, repeatedly taken out of its Victorian context to serve as a ringing endorsement of a supposed pervasive interest in music.[9] Instead of following this same narrative, this doctoral thesis proposes to contest these views and consequently call attention to a new area of international cultural exchange in the form of a transference of artistic and cultural knowledge from Austro-German areas and France to Victorian Britain.

What this doctoral thesis intends to do, is to isolate the theme of music as an aesthetic paradigm from within this complex constellation of ideas and focus on three specific case studies within Victorian visual culture: Frederic Leighton, Albert Moore, and James McNeill Whistler. The possibility of a communal approach towards music in their oeuvres has only

[6] Marsha L. Morton and Peter L. Schmunk, eds., *The Arts Entwined: Music and Painting in the Nineteenth Century* (New York and London: Routledge, 2000).
[7] Rubin and Mattis, eds., *Rival Sisters*.
[8] Simon Shaw-Miller, *Eye hEar: The Visual in Music* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 110; Edward Lockspeiser, *Music and Painting: A Study in Comparative Ideas from Turner to Schoenberg* (London: Cassell, 1973); Peter Dayan, *Art as Music, Music as Poetry, Poetry as Art, from Whistler to Stravinsky and Beyond* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011); Peter Vergo, *The Music of Painting: Music, Modernism and the Visual Arts from the Romantics to John Cage* (London: Phaidon Press, 2010), 72-81.
[9] Pater first used this phrase in "The School of Giorgione", an essay which was added to the existing *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (1873) in 1877. Pater, *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry, the 1893 Text,* ed. Donald L. Hill (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1980 [1877]), 106.

been briefly remarked upon in the existing literature, and this study intends to rectify this by addressing the issue of instrumental music as an ideal for these three Victorian painters.[10] I present a more detailed literature review below and throughout this introduction, but it is worth mentioning there has been a significant increase in the interest in music and Aestheticism or the Aesthetic Movement, a movement Leighton, Moore, and Whistler grew to be a part of. D.G. Rossetti (1828-1882) is particularly popular, as numerous shorter articles by Elizabeth Helsinger, Alan Davison, Karen Yuen, Henry Johnson, and Dianne Sachko Macleod document his engagement with music through both poetry and the visual arts.[11] A number of exhibition catalogues have attempted to provide a more telescopic view, though often too superficially so, associating all Aesthetic artists, including Rossetti, Edward Burne-Jones (1833-1898), G.F. Watts (1817-1904), Leighton, Whistler, and Moore, among others, together without proper distinction.[12] Burne-Jones, in particular, has been extensively discussed by scholars over the last 20 years. Yuen and Suzanne Cooper have analysed, in several shorter essays, Burne-Jones's use of musical instruments, while Barringer, on numerous occasions, has provided a more detailed and informative investigation of Burne-Jones and theoretical ideals of instrumental music.[13]

It is clear, then, that Leighton, Whistler, and Moore did not operate in a vacuum. On the contrary, many their fellow Aesthetes were interested in music though, crucially, not all in the same way. The discourse of music aesthetics in the nineteenth century was immensely complex, a discourse in which Leighton, Moore, and Whistler played a very particular role. All three conceptualised their use of form and colour through the lens of the paradigm of instrumental music, appealing to this theoretical condition to enrich the level of abstraction,

---

[10] Elizabeth Prettejohn, *Art for Art's Sake: Aestheticism in Victorian Painting* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 112; Mark Evan Bonds, *Absolute Music: The History of an Idea* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 274.

[11] Elizabeth K. Helsinger, "Listening: Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Persistence of Song", *Victorian Studies* 51, no. 3 Papers and Responses from the Sixth Annual Conference of the North American Victorian Studies Association (Spring 2009): 409-421; Alan Davison, "Woven Songs and Musical Mirrors: Dante Gabriel Rossetti's 'Symbolic Physiognomy' of Music", *British Art Journal* (Winter 2012-2013): 89-94; Karen Yuen, "Bound by Sound: Music, Victorian Masculinity and Dante Gabriel Rossetti", *Critical Survey* 20, no. 3 Victorian Masculinities (2008): 79-96; Henry Johnson, "Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Japan: The Musical Instrument Depicted in *The Blue Bower* and *A Sea Spell"*, *Music in Art* 30, no. ½ (Spring-Autumn 2005): 145-153; Dianne Sachko Macleod, "Rossetti's Two Ligeias: Their Relationship to Visual Art, Music, and Poetry", *Victorian Poetry* 20, nos. 3-4 (1982): 89-102.

[12] Andrew Wilton and Robert Upstone, eds., *The Age of Rossetti, Burne-Jones and Watts: Symbolism in Britain, 1860-1910,* exh. cat. (London: Tate Gallery, 1997), 186-219; Stephen Calloway, Lynn Federle Orr, and Esmé Whittaker, eds. *The Cult of Beauty: The Victorian Avant-Garde 1860-1900*, exh. cat. (London: V&A Publishing, 2011); *Victorian High Renaissance,* exh. cat. (Minneapolis: Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 1978).

[13] Karen Yuen, "Fashioning Elite Identities: Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Edward Burne-Jones, and Musical Instruments as Symbolic Goods", *Music in Art* 39, nos. 1-2 (Spring-Autumn 2014): 145-158; Suzanne Fagence Cooper, "Representations of Music in the Art of Burne-Jones", *Apollo* (May 1998): 9-14; Tim Barringer, "Burne-Jones's *Le Chant d'amour*", chap. 13 in *Rival Sisters,* eds. Rubin and Mattis, 249-274.

autonomy, expression, and temporality in their art. Given the intricacy of the discourse, then, the famous phrase by Pater that 'all art constantly aspires towards the condition of music' is too often used as a convenient generalisation by scholars without distinguishing its particularities or Victorian context.[14] Previous scholars have looked at this phrase, pointing at its Austro-German origins and elaborate relations with the paradigm of instrumental music pushed by German Romanticism; I intend to show how it also works in the visual arts.[15] I will argue that Leighton, Moore, and Whistler became a particular subset within Victorian Aestheticism. They were not merely interested in music as performance or the representation of music in art; they were fully invested in advocating for music as an aesthetic paradigm, not unlike Pater's 'condition of music'. What this dissertation then aims to demonstrate is that, despite Pater's claim of 1877, explorations into the condition of music were fully underway in the 1860s in the work of Whistler, Moore, and Leighton. When I say the 'condition of music', I apply it specifically as the notion of an abstract and aesthetic ideal as mentioned above. It is an idea of instrumental music as more expressive, more autonomous, and more abstract than any other art and, hence, with the ability to function as example or model for the visual artist. When artists aspire after this condition they are not attempting, as Jo Sager, Robin Spencer, and Robyn Asleson have argued, to make a synaesthetic artwork where the senses blend neurologically. Nor, as Katharine Lochnan and Arabella Teniswood-Harvey have argued, is it an attempt to visualise specific musical movements as an act of translation, such as a pictorialized fugue or concerto.[16] Music as an aesthetic ideal or paradigm can take

[14] Shaw-Miller, *Eye hEar,* chap. 2, "Pan and Panoptes: Music Aspires to the Condition of Art", 29-48; Shaw-Miller, *Visible Deeds of Music: Art and Music from Wagner to Cage* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), chap. 1, "Ut Pictura Musica: Interdisciplinarity, Art, and Music", 1-35; Suzanne Fagence Cooper, "The Musical Ideal in Aesthetic Art", in *The Cult of Beauty: The Aesthetic Movement 1860-1900,* eds. Calloway, Carr, Whittaker, 84-87; Cooper, "Aspiring to the Condition of Music: Painting in Britain 1860-1900", chap. in *Nineteenth-Century British Music Studies,* eds. Bennett Zon and Jeremy Dibble, vol. 2 (Aldershot: Ashgate Press, 2002), 251-277; Colleen Denney, *At the Temple of Art: The Grosvenor Gallery, 1877-1890* (London: Associated University Presses, 2000), 111; Diane V. Silverthorne, "Introduction: A Work in Two Parts – Continuities and Discontinuities from Romanticism to Postmodernism", chap. 1 in *Music, Art, and Performance from Liszt to Riot Grrrl: The Musicalization of Art,* ed. Diane V. Silverthorne (New York and London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2019), 2.

[15] Lydia Goehr, "'All Art Constantly Aspires to the Condition of Music' – Except the Art of Music: Reviewing the Contest of the Sister Arts", chap. 6 in *The Insistence of Art: Philosophy and Aesthetics after Early Modernity,* ed. Paul A. Kottman (New York: Fordham University, 2017), 140-169; Andrew Eastham, "Walter Pater's Acoustic Space: 'The School of Giorgione', Dionysian 'Anders-streben', and the Politics of Soundscape", *The Yearbook of English Studies* 40, no. ½ The Arts in Victorian Literature (2010): 196-216; Patricia Herzog, "The Condition to Which All Art Aspires: Reflections on Pater on Music", *British Journal of Aesthetics* 36, no. 2 (April 1996): 122-134; Billie Andrew Inman, *Walter Pater and his Reading 1874-1877: With a Bibliography of his Library Borrowings, 1878-1894* (New York: Garland, 1990), 386, 390.

[16] Jo Sager, "Whistler's Application of Musical Terminology to his Paintings: The Search for a Synaesthetic Response", PhD diss. (Ohio University, 2004); Robin Spencer, *James McNeill Whistler* (London: Tate Gallery, 2004), 16-17; Robyn Asleson, *Albert Moore* (London and New York: Phaidon Press, 2000), 95, 97. See chap. 2

many forms, but as a condition it presents desirable features and characteristics that artists like Leighton, Moore, and Whistler desired to map onto their own art.

How my research differentiates itself is by focusing specifically on Leighton, Moore, and Whistler as this subset within Aestheticism and as artists striving after a specific condition of instrumental music. In order to fully illustrate this, this dissertation is split into two sections. Section I concerns itself with the theory of instrumental music and how this was formulated, while Section II contains a detailed case study of each painter. Chapter One, entitled "The Rise of Absolute Instrumental Music", is drawn up from my extensive research into the origins of instrumental music as an aesthetic paradigm in Western Europe. The scholarship of the last 50 years has uncovered many of the far-reaching connections within its immensely variegated history, most prominently by musicologists like Carl Dahlhaus, Andrew Bowie, John Neubauer, and Mark Evan Bonds.[17] For the purposes of this thesis, I isolate three major themes that I see as significant in relation to my three case studies: form and autonomy; temporality; and aesthetic contemplation. These three themes are woven through this thesis like consistent and continuous themes. Analysing them in relation to instrumental music as an aesthetic paradigm provides fresh insight into the exact musicological and metaphorical relations between music and painting as it was conceived of at the turn of the nineteenth century.

By the 1840s and 1850s, following the political instability in Europe, more radical thinkers like Richard Wagner (1813-1883) and Eduard Hanslick (1825-1904) formulated their ideas on instrumental music and its position in society and developed this paradigm further by expanding it into more acutely differentiated branches of aesthetics. Wagner coined the term 'absolute music' in 1846 as a theoretical ideal of instrumental music, only to argue against it, considering it a blight on society as an art that was purely formalist and hence unproductive for social causes.[18] Drawing on the writings of the German Romantic thinkers mentioned above as well as Immanuel Kant's (1724-1804) influential *Kritik der*

---

in this thesis for a more detailed analysis of synaesthesia, 78-80. Katharine Lochnan, ed., *Turner Whistler Monet*, exh. cat. (London: Tate Publishing, in association with the Art Gallery of Ontario, 2004), 233, n87.

[17] Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music,* trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989); Andrew Bowie, *Music, Philosophy, and Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Bowie, "Music and the Rise of Aesthetics", chap. 2 in *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music,* ed. Jim Samson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 29-54; John Neubauer, *The Emancipation of Music from Language: Departure from Mimesis in Eighteenth-Century Aesthetics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986); Mark Evan Bonds, "Idealism and the Aesthetics of Instrumental Music at the Turn of the Nineteenth Century", *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 50, nos. 2/3 (Summer-Autumn 1997): 387-420.

[18] Richard Wagner, "Programm zur 9. Symphonie von Beethoven", repr. in *Gesammelte Schriften und Dichtungen in Zehn Bänden,* ed. Wolfgang Golther (Berlin: Bong, 1913), vol. 2, 61.

Urteilskraft (1790), Hanslick adapted Wagner's term *absolute Musik* into *reine Tonkunst* or 'pure tonal art' to revise the reputation of instrumental music aesthetics. He proposed in *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen* (1854) that an instrumental musical piece is meaningful *purely because* of its abstraction, autonomy, and formalism. He wrote, "the forms created by sound are not empty", as music "is actually a picture, but one whose subject we cannot grasp and subsume under concepts".[19]

As recently expanded upon by a number of musicologists, the history of absolute music and its consequent impact on the other arts is complex.[20] What my study aims to demonstrate is how close the parallels are between the musical paradigm Leighton, Moore, and Whistler adopt with their interests in art for art's sake and the ideal of absolute music. Through critical analysis of music theory my first section aims to demonstrate that the paradigm of absolute music as an idealised version of instrumental music is much more intertwined with ideas of art for art's sake and abstraction than has been previously believed. Additionally, by using the lens of absolute music I aim to uncover a multitude of connections with Pater's eventual proposition of the *condition* of music rather than the art or practice of music. Indeed, as will become evident in the case studies, it is worthwhile to question whether Leighton, Moore, and Whistler intended to represent music or whether they were interested in more fundamental questions of musicality in art as drawn from the aesthetic discourse. I argue for the latter which took shape through a desire to appropriate for painting those qualities absolute music possessed inherently: abstraction through formalism, autonomy through non-narrativity, enriched expression and subjectivity leading to aesthetic contemplation and immersion, and the ability to unfold over time.

Chapter Two, entitled "Music Theory and Art for Art's Sake in Victorian Britain", takes this premise further and uncovers the metaphorical relationships between music and painting through an investigation of the parallels between the doctrine of art for art's sake and absolute music. It is well-known in the existing field how many Victorian critics, especially those interested in avant-garde art in the second half of the nineteenth century, incorporated a range of musical terminology into their descriptions of paintings, most notably in response to Whistler's art. This type of musical nomenclature, as I identify in this thesis, became more

[19] Eduard Hanslick, *On the Musically Beautiful: A Contribution Towards the Revision of the Aesthetics of Music,* trans. Geoffrey Payzant (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1986 [1854]), 30.
[20] Thomas S. Grey, "Absolute Music", chap. 3 in *Aesthetics of Music: Musicological Perspectives,* ed. Stephen Downes (New York and London: Routledge, 2017), 42-61; Bonds, *Absolute Music*; Daniel K.L. Chua, *Absolute Music and the Construction of Meaning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Carl Dahlhaus, *The Idea of Absolute Music,* trans. Roger Lustig (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989); Max Paddison, "Music as Ideal: The Aesthetics of Autonomy", chap. 12 in *Nineteenth-Century Music,* ed. Samson, 318-342.

widespread in the 1860s partially because of Leighton, Whistler, and Moore, and partially because of the ever-increasing popularity of music and music analysis such as identified by Leanne Langley and Meirion Hughes.[21] Musical terminology offered a particularly effective metaphorical tool to analyse the *effect* of paintings rather than any representational content they offered. This became particularly noticeable around 1867 and 1868, following the 1867 Academy exhibition and the writings of Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837-1909) in response to the Academy exhibition of 1868, writing of strings and chords of colour, keynotes, "high-toned harmonies", a "melody of colour" and "symphony of form".[22] These quasi-musical descriptions of art rested on the relationship of colour with music and the musical effect a painting could generate regardless of content. This thesis draws attention to this enriched subjectivity, drawing again on the notion of aesthetic contemplation. Additionally, Swinburne, alongside the critic Tom Taylor and Pater, formulated the doctrine of art for art's sake in 1868, a widely discussed phenomenon in the existing scholarship.[23] The establishment of art for art's sake and its consequent popularisation in exhibition spaces, artistic circles, the periodicals, and Victorian visual culture, and its connections to the pervasive notion of absolute music as an aesthetic paradigm, are investigated in Chapter Two, in order to be effectively applied and used as background for Section II.

My research in this dissertation contributes to the existing field of analysis into music and visual culture, such as work done by Cooper on musical imagery in Victorian art; research on music in Whistler's work through the lenses of poetry, musical modelling, and synaesthesia in the work of Suzanne Singletary, Teniswood-Harvey, and Sager, respectively; an analysis of Leighton's musical connections and an interpretation of his work through the composer Johannes Brahms by Michael Musgrave; and shorter essays into the connections by Barringer, Ron Johnson, Cristina Santarelli, Cooper, and John Siewert.[24] There is a noticeable

[21] Leanne Langley, "The Musical Press in Nineteenth-Century England", *Notes: Quarterly Journal of the Music Library Association* 46, no. 3 (1990): 583-592; Langley, "Music and Victorian England: A Tale of Two Myths", talk given at the IMS Study Session 'Nineteenth-Century Musical Life, the Contemporary Press, and Musical History', 15th Congress of the International Musicological Society, Madrid, April 1992, digitised at https://www.leannelangley.com/site/assets/files/1063/taleoftwomyths.pdf; Meirion Hughes, *The English Musical Renaissance and the Press 1850-1914: Watchmen of Music* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002).
[22] Swinburne, in W.M. Rossetti and A.C. Swinburne, *Notes on the Royal Academy Exhibition, 1868* (London: John Camden Hotten, 1868), 43, 32.
[23] A.C. Swinburne, *William Blake: A Critical Essay* (London: John Camden Hotten, 1868), 91-92; [Tom Taylor], "Among the Pictures", *The Gentleman's Magazine* 1 (July 1868): 151; [Walter Pater], "Art. II. – Poems by William Morris", *Westminster Review* 34, no. 2 (October 1868): 312.
[24] Suzanne Fagence Cooper, "Picturing Music in Victorian England", PhD diss. (Brunel University, 2005); Suzanne M. Singletary, *James McNeill Whistler and France: A Dialogue in Paint, Poetry, and Music* (London and New York: Routledge, 2017); Arabella Teniswood-Harvey, "Colour-Music: Musical Modelling in James

trend to isolate artists into singular case studies, whereas I perceive a strong connection between Whistler, Leighton, and Moore based on their communal interest in absolute music as a paradigm for their art. The importance of music and its associated aesthetics should not be underestimated, nor should it be taken at face value; there is a rich and sophisticated history behind the use of musical terminology by these artists and about their work, the way they appealed to the condition of music, and how this transformed our experience of their art. Ultimately, what the existing literature does is draw connections between individual artists and musical performance, instruments, and movements. What my thesis does, on the other hand, is provide an extensive theoretical background that I can use to show how the discourse of absolute music aesthetics works itself out in the art of Leighton, Moore, and Whistler. Using newly found data as well as offering new interpretations on existing data, this thesis, hence, makes a claim for the value of considering these three artists as a subset within Aestheticism. The type of material I use to analyse them is an extensive range of periodicals, both musical and artistic. This range of detailed criticism has allowed me to construct an accurate view of the contemporary critical stance towards the intersection of music and art. Moreover, the use of digital databases has allowed me to consult and apply a much wider range of sources than previously possible.

As I mentioned above, I also apply a wide range of musicological and aesthetic writings in my first section in order to offer an as accurate as possible theoretical background. In the case studies I equally incorporate nineteenth-century musicological writings, such as by Francis Hueffer (1845-1889) and Rev. H.R. Haweis (1838-1901). Critical writings by notable authors such as F.G. Stephens (1827-1907), W.M. Rossetti (1829-1919), P.G. Hamerton (1834-1894), Frederick Wedmore (1844-1921), W.B. Richmond (1842-1921), Cosmo Monkhouse (1840-1901), A.L. Baldry (1858-1939), and many others have, moreover, helped shape my approach to the contemporary understanding and appreciation of musical

---

McNeill Whistler's Art" PhD diss. (University of Tasmania, 2006)*;* Sager, "Whistler's Application of Musical Terminology"*;* Michael Musgrave, "Leighton and Music", chap. in *Frederic Leighton: Antiquity, Renaissance, Modernity,* eds. Tim Barringer and Elizabeth Prettejohn (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 295-314; Tim Barringer, "Art, Music, and the Emotions in the Aesthetic Movement", *Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century* no. 23 The Arts and Feeling (2016): 1-32; Ron Johnson, "Whistler's Musical Modes: Numinous Nocturnes", *Arts Magazine* 55, no. 8 (1981): 169-176; Johnson, "Whistler's Musical Modes: Symbolist Symphonies", *Arts Magazine* 55, no. 8 (1981): 164-168; Cristina Santarelli, "From A Musician to A Quartet: Albert Moore between Classicism and the Aesthetic Movement", *Music in Art* 40, nos. 1-2 Neoclassical Reverberations of Discovering Antiquity (Spring-Autumn 2015): 245-254; Suzanne Fagence Cooper, "Liquefaction of Desire: Music, Water, and Femininity in Victorian Aestheticism", *Women: A Cultural Review* 20, no. 2 (2009): 186-201; John Siewert, "Art, Music, and an Aesthetics of Place in Whistler's Paintings", chap. in *Turner Whistler Monet,* ed. Lochnan, 141-147.

intersections in the work of Leighton, Moore, and Whistler.[25] New data that I have unearthed from my analysis of critical writings, as well as new interpretations of known data in multiple disciplines, means my thesis makes a contribution to a range of different areas, including aesthetics, musicology, music, Victorian studies, and the visual arts.

Frederic Leighton's admiration of and engagement with music is strikingly clear from his own writings, correspondence, his paintings, and the wide circle of musicians and composers he mingled with. The latter included such prominent individuals like Joseph Joachim (1831-1907), Charles Hallé (1819-1895), Adelaide Sartoris (née Kemble, 1815-1879), Alfredo Piatti (1822-1901), Pauline Viardot (née García, 1821-1910), and Wilma Norman-Neruda (1838-1911). The close engagement Leighton had with music warrants further investigation. Musgrave, for the edited collection on Leighton of 1999 by Tim Barringer and Elizabeth Prettejohn, contributed an elaborate overview of many of his musical connections.[26] There are several primary sources that uncover these same connections, such as Mrs Russell Barrington's biography of Leighton (1906), the archived correspondence in the Leighton House Archive, and anecdotes recorded by colleagues like Hallé, Watts, Whistler, Valentine Prinsep, and others. These are important sources, as are the three major works on Leighton of the late twentieth century, Leonée and Richard Ormond's monograph of 1975, the exhibition catalogue *Frederic, Lord Leighton: Eminent Victorian Artist* (1996), and Barringer and Prettejohn's *Frederic Leighton: Antiquity, Renaissance, Modernity* (1999).[27] There remains, however, a lack of research on Leighton's engagement with the paradigm of absolute instrumental music. Chapter Three, entitled "Frederic Leighton: Music, the Aesthetic Listener, and Immersion", the first in Section II, answers some important questions in relation to his interest in music. To what extent can we ascertain that it became a noticeable influence in his artistic decision-making? Additionally, given that this became a pervasive and lifelong interest, how did Leighton give music pictorial form? Considering his German education and friendship with prominent instrumental composers, to what extent did

[25] Indeed, a number of these critics collaborated to alter the aesthetic criteria in place in mid-century Victorian England. See Beavington J. Atkinson, Sidney Colvin, P.G. Hamerton, W.M. Rossetti, and Tom Taylor, *English Painters of the Present Day: Essays by J. Beavington Atkinson, Sidney Colvin, P.G. Hamerton, W.M. Rossetti, and Tom Taylor* (London: Seeley, Jackson, and Halliday, 1871).
[26] Musgrave, "Leighton and Music", 295-314.
[27] Leonée Ormond and Richard Ormond, *Lord Leighton* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, in association with the Paul Mellon Centre for British Art, 1975); *Frederic Leighton 1830-1896,* eds. Stephen Jones, Christopher Newall, Leonée Ormond, Richard Ormond, Benedict Read, exh. cat. (London: Royal Academy of Arts with Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1996); Barringer and Prettejohn, *Frederic Leighton.*

Leighton subscribe to the model of absolute music? And finally, how did his interest in music take shape on a theoretical and aesthetic level considering his pursuance of art for art's sake?

Following on from the major themes I set out in Section I – form and autonomy, temporality, aesthetic contemplation – I will argue in Chapter Three that Leighton not only upheld absolute instrumental music as an aesthetic paradigm, but that he appealed to it to enhance his own and his viewers' experience of his art. Hence, I want to propose a much deeper engagement with music than has previously been acknowledged. Indeed, music became a conduit for both pictorial abstraction and immersion in his work. Starting with some of his earliest musical images, *Lieder ohne Worte* (fig. 5; 1860-1861) and *Golden Hours* (fig. 6; 1864), I want to propose a specific category in Leighton's oeuvre: that of the aesthetic listener. Particularly provocative are Leighton's comments as President of the Royal Academy (1878-1896), when he wrote about art stimulating "momentary intensification of life" because "Art is based on the desire to express and the power to kindle in others emotion astir in the artist".[28] This preferred experience of art was based on Leighton's own, personal, sensuously rich and subjective experience of instrumental music. By visualising the listener as a receptable of sensuous musical sound, this could act as both focaliser and directive. Leighton, by appealing to music, desired to enrich the experience of art through analogy: "The perception of Form and Colour, which latter has in its action upon us much in common with melody, of proportion, which is to intervals of space what rhythm is to intervals of time, and of light and shade".[29] In relation to Leighton's interior spaces, I want to reference theories of immersion and the effect of immersive attitudes in the spectator. This extended into his later landscapes, where I want to link the musical theories of temporality and music as an abstract formal language in order to engender a quasi-musical experience in the viewer. My examination of Leighton through his appeal to the condition of absolute instrumental music argues that we can better understand his compositional choices and artistic intentions, particularly in relation to art for art's sake, if we take this musical dimension into account. Moreover, by interpreting his work through the lens of absolute instrumental music, I argue that his paintings can successfully fuse form and content in simulation of music and, hence, produce a quasi-musical experience for the viewer regardless of subject matter.

[28] Frederic Leighton, "December 10th, 1879", *Addresses Delivered to the Students of the Royal Academy* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1897), 14.
[29] Ibid., 14.

Of the three artists under consideration in this thesis, Albert Moore, despite his renown, remains the least researched. Moore was a particularly private and reclusive figure, preferring to work alone and letting his art speak for itself rather than say or write anything about it. Despite the dearth of personal writings, there is a wealth of information to be found in his paintings and the contemporary critical response. Moore's interest in music has never been properly documented, however, let alone in sufficient detail to examine how he adhered to the condition of absolute instrumental music, which I attempt to rectify in Chapter Four, entitled "Albert Moore and Absolute Decorative Art". Moore came, as did Whistler and Leighton, from an intensely musical family and, as did Leighton and Whistler, explored ideas of depicting musical performances in the 1860s. From 1865 onwards, when Whistler and Moore met, their mutually enriching friendship led to an intense exchange of ideas on the nature and purpose of art, on the relations between music and painting, and on the potential of art for its own sake. Indeed, it was in 1867 that Moore exhibited *The Musicians* and Whistler his first musically titled painting. Creating and developing their ideas alongside each other, Moore then painted *A Quartet: A Painter's Tribute to the Art of Music* (fig. 7) in 1868. It is likely he and Leighton met either through Whistler – the latter had met Leighton in Paris where they both lived between 1855 and 1859 – or through the exhibition venues they all exhibited at.[30] Whistler and Moore were close, as Walford Graham Robertson (1866-1948), one of Moore's pupils wrote how he "been brought up by Albert Moore in the knowledge and love of Whistler".[31] Similarly, Whistler wrote upon Moore's death in 1893 that the artist was "the greatest artist that, in the century, England might have cared for, and called her own".[32] Robyn Asleson has demonstrated that Leighton remained a fierce supporter of Moore's art throughout his life, buying his work and supporting his ideas.[33] Moore's own aesthetic theories gained hold with *The Musicians* and *A Quartet*; like Leighton, he was very interested in the figure of the aesthetic listener as the preferred template of artistic experience and, like Whistler, he was very interested in exploring a fusion of form and content prompted by references to music.

[30] They had definitely met by 1869, if not interacted, since that was the year Leighton threatened to withdraw his own pictures from the Royal Academy Exhibition if the hanging committee did not agree to display Moore's *A Venus* (1869). Edgecumbe Staley, *Lord Leighton of Stretton, P.R.A.* (London: The Walter Scott Publishing Co., 1906), 179.
[31] Walford Graham Robertson, *Time Was: The Reminiscences of W. Graham Robertson* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1931), 188.
[32] James McNeill Whistler, quoted in Robyn Asleson, *Albert Moore* (London and New York: Phaidon Press, 2000), 204.
[33] Ibid., 26, 58, 108. I am deeply indebted to Robyn Asleson for her excellent and extensive research on Moore's life and art.

He characterised himself by his elaborately detailed and delicately calculated compositions of predominantly Greek-looking women in decorative interior spaces. Behind the representational matter, and often together with, lies Moore's dedication to the art and aesthetics of music as hinted at in the title of *A Quartet*. His association with art for art's sake was, arguably, even more profound than Leighton's. Capitalising on the confluence of this doctrine and the aesthetics of absolute music, Moore sought to abstract his art from the real by avoiding narrative, focusing on formal potential, and seeking autonomous pictorial beauty. Music became an ideal model for this and, as such, Moore sought to incorporate it in three interconnected ways: the depiction of musical performance in the late 1860s to explore musical interior spaces, much like Leighton did; the use of the listener and an associated mood to avoid narrative and prioritise a specific quasi-musical response in the viewer; and the reference to music to capitalise on musical analogy and metaphor to map musical terminology onto pictorial formal features. The latter was particularly significant in allowing Moore to explore alternative methods of artistic expression, especially in relation to pictorial autonomy. Through my extensive research into contemporary periodicals and critical writing, I can demonstrate the extent to which his work was actively and consistently discussed using musical nomenclature and metaphor. Moreover, those writings by colleagues, such as Robertson, Alfred Lys Baldry, and Whistler, have been consulted where available. This interpretive lens of music provided Moore, hence, with the ability to explore new aesthetic criteria against which to measure painting and artistic expressivity as in line with his interest in art for art's sake. Ultimately, his appeal to ideas of music in his art was exactly that: appeal. However, differently from Leighton and Whistler, Moore did this to elevate his own version of abstraction in what I argue was a theoretical parallel to the condition of absolute instrumental music: his idea of absolute decorative form. His use of form and colour was deeply inflected by the metaphorical language provided through musical analogy, leading to a particular musical effect of his work regardless of content. By using the idea of the decorative, a prominent and significant evaluative criterion used by Victorian critics to categorise Moore's art, I want to argue that he appealed to the condition of music to enrich the viewer's experience of his artwork visually and experientially. The debate of the decorative versus the real had a direct parallel, as acknowledged by Moore's critics at the time, with the programmatic versus instrumental music debate.[34] Moore conceptualised of his

[34] Gleeson White, "Albert Moore", *The Bookman* 7, no. 39 (December 1894): 83.

absolute decorative form in relation to both art for art's sake and the discourse of absolute instrumental music in order to abstract his art.

James McNeill Whistler, the provocative and avant-garde artist of the famous *Nocturnes,* has been widely researched in the current field of art history. There is a tendency, however, to treat him simply as a proto-modernist abstractionist and an outsider, and, hence, to take his musically titled paintings for granted. Whistler, even more than Leighton and Moore, extended his engagement with music to his entire oeuvre. He was publicly engaged in furthering his personal musical framework from 1867 onwards, when he exhibited the first musical work, *Symphony in White, No. 3*. This framework would remain influential to the end of his career and life in 1903. What I intend to do differently from the existing scholarship in Chapter Five, entitled "James McNeill Whistler's Musical Framework", is to analyse Whistler's work strictly against the paradigm of absolute instrumental music alongside Leighton and Moore.[35] In order to do this, I want to argue that Whistler used his musical landscapes – the *Nocturnes* – and musically-titled exhibition designs as approaches towards pictorial and formalist abstraction, autonomy, and a specific type of aesthetic and temporal experience. One goal of this chapter is, then, to provide a close analysis of Whistler's exact interest in music and how this interest was at least partially based in Austro-German musical aesthetics and not just French figures like Charles Baudelaire, as has too often been claimed. My approach to Whistler's work, as with Leighton and Moore, rests on extensive formal and critical analysis. An added benefit in Whistler's case is the eagerness with which he himself spoke and wrote about his art, leaving behind a wide range of primary source material. Other writings by his colleagues, such as by Otto Bacher, Théodore Duret, Mortimer Menpes and others, have been consulted to uncover the ideas that fermented in Whistler's artistic milieu and, by extension, Leighton's and Moore's milieu. His own correspondence, digitised by Margret MacDonald, Patricia de Montfort, and Nigel Thorp has been particularly invaluable herein.[36]

I want to extend the way we currently think about Whistler and music. His controlled series of musical titles, his particular construction of the *Nocturnes* as musical landscapes, and his tightly regulated musical and immersive exhibition spaces of the 1870s, 1880s, and

[35] I am indebted to Arabella Teniswood-Harvey for her extensive doctoral research into Whistler's musical connections; see Teniswood-Harvey, "Colour-Music", esp. chap. 2, "Whistler's Musical Experiences", and Appendix One.

[36] *The Correspondence of James McNeill Whistler, 1855-1903,* eds. Margaret MacDonald, Patricia de Montfort, Nigel Thorp, incl. *The Correspondence of Anna McNeill Whistler, 1855-1880,* ed. Georgia Toutziari, online edition, University of Glasgow, http://www.whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk/correspondence.

1890s all led to a conceptualisation of painting through its appeal to the condition of absolute instrumental music. His subject matter ceased to be important; instead, the attention was entirely shifted to form, colour, and line and their formal potential as interpreted through the lens of music. Similar to both Leighton and Moore, Whistler upheld the experience of music as an ideal type of enriched experience of art in general. Unlike the others, though, Whistler extended this beyond a single painting, even beyond the picture frame, and into physical space itself through his carefully designed solo exhibitions. While Teniswood-Harvey has demonstrated that Whistler engaged with music and performance much more than has been previously acknowledged, he refrained from consistently seeking out musical subject matter. His appeal became more strictly theoretical, and his pictures became a lot more abstract in the process. What absolute instrumental music inherently possessed in capabilities of autonomy, abstraction, and temporality, Whistler wished for his own art to achieve. He also engaged the most with musical terminology, applying colour-music titles in the shape of a musical piece, like *Nocturne, Symphony,* or *Harmony*, and a colour to almost all his works. This resulted in original and influential titles as *Nocturne in Blue and Silver* or *Symphony in White*. By foregrounding the experience of abstract form and, especially, colour, Whistler cultivated a musical response to his paintings that were otherwise devoid of any musical reference. By interpreting his landscapes as pictures of absolute music through the parallel with abstraction, we can further understand the motivations behind his musical framework. As Francis Hueffer wrote in his revision of English musical history (1889), the absence of "an extraneous subject" in painting as a parallel to "'absolute' music […] imbued with infinite varieties and depths of beauty by Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann, Mendelssohn and many others", could indeed lead to the creation of "a vague and delightful harmony of colour, as Turner and Mr. Whistler have taught us".[37]

One goal of my study, then, is to significantly enlarge the intellectual parameters used to discuss music in Aestheticism. As such, this will change the way we currently think about Leighton, Moore, and Whistler as Aesthetic artists, and accurately reconstruct their active engagement with the paradigm of absolute instrumental music. My own approach to this dissertation has been interdisciplinary in scope. By considering these three artists' engagement with instrumental music through the lens of Austro-German aesthetics and not exclusively French aesthetics, my aim is to better understand the motivations of choosing

[37] Francis Hueffer, *Half a Century of Music in England, 1837-1887: Essays Towards a History* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1889), 235-236.

music as an artistic ideal. Though particularly influential in the current scholarship, Whistler, as I will demonstrate, was not the only artist in the late nineteenth century to effectively use instrumental music to abstract and enrich his art. My aim, by aligning Whistler alongside Leighton and Moore, is to uncover the rich artistic milieu they operated in by elevating music as an aesthetic paradigm. The rich aesthetic ideas they fermented shows how their engagement with music was much vaster than has been previously acknowledged, especially when mediated through themes of formalism, autonomy, temporality, and aesthetic contemplation or absorption. While I apply formal analysis to all three artists' works, critical analysis plays a large role in understanding their contemporary public position and reputation. Moreover, I use the model of absolute instrumental music to help explain and better understand their artistic motivations. By using Section I as a weighty theoretical background, I can then use Section II to demonstrate how this theory is worked out in the art of Leighton, Moore, and Whistler. Untangling the various ways these three artists engaged with music is rewarding, exciting even. Particularly stimulating is how my approach is compatible with multiple disciplines. Recognition of Leighton, Moore, and Whistler's parallel aims may help explain why absolute instrumental music was so important to them. What I want to offer in this thesis is a revision of Leighton, Moore, and Whistler, and provoke interdisciplinary discussion in relation to the visual arts of the nineteenth century. They were all three interested in numerous projects, but music remains the most elusive yet the most intriguing; particularly so if we consider the confluence of art for art's sake and absolute instrumental music as a rich field of artistic expression. After all, Leighton, Whistler, and Moore were seeking an enhanced experience of their art. Knowing the importance of music, then, how can one ascertain how this shaped their pictorial and compositional choices? How does an interpretation of their work through this lens of a communal musical approach alter our interpretation and experience of their work? Also, knowing the importance of temporality and contemplation as desirable musical characteristics for these artists, how can we enrich our understanding of their work and lives by applying such themes? Ultimately, the ideas of the aesthetic listener and immersion as musical features mapped onto painting says a lot about how these artists viewed an ideal experience of art in general; what can this teach us about how we experience art, whether in a museum setting or otherwise? Can one art indeed enrich the other pictorially, or is it a question of appropriating specific desirable features that one art happens to inherently possess and the other not? And finally, knowing the full extent of absolute instrumental

music as an aesthetic ideal, how does this alter our understanding, as art historians and recipients of visual information, of the applicability of music to the other arts?

SECTION I

THE RISE OF ABSOLUTE INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Chapter One: Austro-German Instrumental Music as Aesthetic Paradigm

In 1859, Louis Viardot published the essay "Ut Pictura Musica" in the inaugural issue of the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, declaring that instrumental music paved the way for a freer expression in painting. Significantly, he wrote of the "natural" parallel "between melody and drawing, between harmony and colour".[38] At this point in time, *ut pictura musica* was gradually becoming an accepted alternative to *ut pictura poesis* within the hierarchy of the arts. This development had its origins in the aesthetic framework set in place at the turn of the nineteenth century by a number of German theorists, including E.T.A. Hoffmann, Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder, F.W.J. von Schelling, Friedrich Schiller, Ludwig Tieck, Novalis, and the brothers Friedrich and August Wilhelm Schlegel. To understand the level of engagement with which nineteenth-century painters such as Leighton, Moore, and Whistler approached music as a paradigm for their art, it is necessary to devote our attention in this chapter to the rise of instrumental music as an art form in its own right and in opposition to programme music. To chart the entire development is beyond the scope of this thesis. As such, I want to isolate three themes that I believe are of greatest significance to Victorian Aestheticism: form and autonomy; temporality; and aesthetic contemplation.

With the advent of German Romanticism, the interpretation of instrumental music as meaningless if not independent of "verbal determinants", to use Bellamy Hosler's phrase, was overhauled and came to be celebrated for the reasons it was previously dismissed for.[39] Its perceived emptiness was considered the ultimate vehicle of emotional expression by theorists in this movement and, since it did not rely on the restrictions of language for meaning, it had the ability to be abstract and aesthetically autonomous. For some Romantics it became a medium that offered introspection and reverie as a gateway towards transcendentalism, precisely because music could access the senses and emotions directly rather than through the intellect. How, then, did instrumental music become more clearly defined as the opposite of programme music and how did it climb to the highest place in the artistic hierarchy by the mid-nineteenth century? How did this sudden dissatisfaction with the verbal arts take place and, most importantly, how did this bring instrumental music in more artistically meaningful positions to intersect with the other arts? Even if by the mid-nineteenth century music aesthetics and the aesthetic paradigm of music became an

[38] Louis Viardot, "Ut Pictura Musica", *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 1, no. 1 (January 1859): 25 [my translation].
[39] Bellamy Hosler, *Changing Aesthetic Views in Eighteenth-Century Germany* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1981), 43.

established and widely known phenomenon, they were, as Andrew Bowie has pointed out, fully a product of the eighteenth century.[40] By using the immense changes to the aesthetics of instrumental music from 1790-1810 as a starting point, I aim to isolate the three above-mentioned themes of form and autonomy, temporality, and aesthetic contemplation as key categories of musical-artistic analogies. These categories became important for mid-century aestheticians, which will lead me into a discussion of 'absolute music', the ultimate form of independent and abstract instrumental music espoused by Eduard Hanslick in response to Richard Wagner. Wagner and Hanslick acted as figureheads for mapping the Romantic musical aesthetics onto a theoretical framework appropriate for modernism. Ultimately it was Hanslick, as I will demonstrate, who charted the course for independent and abstract instrumental music, or absolute music, fully onto contemporary ideas of art for art's sake and, consequently, increased the potential visual painters could find in absolute instrumental music.

The Formation of a New Aesthetics

This remarkable change in the status of instrumental music was generated by a number of factors, both musical and extra-musical. First of all, the composers that dominated the field were Ludwig von Beethoven (1770-1827), Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791), and Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809). These Austro-German composers worked with new instrumental genres that became immensely popular in Western Europe, the most important of which were the sonata, the string quartet, the concerto, and the symphony. These were unequivocally instrumental compositions where artistic meaning was located entirely in the sounds and tonal movements themselves, not in any supporting linguistic or semantic framework. Secondly, these new genres progressed in parallel with an increase in music publishing and writing.[41] Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, the new cultural centrality of music led to a change in behaviour. As historian James H. Johnson has pointed out, this transformation was part of a "fundamental change in listening, one whose elements included everything from the physical features of the hall to the musical qualities of the works".[42] The change from bystander to reverent listener came with an increased emphasis on subjectivity; the concomitant shift from production to reception was crucial in the German Romantic

[40] Andrew Bowie, "Music and the Rise of Aesthetics", chap. 2 in *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music,* ed. Jim Samson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 29.
[41] Leanne Langley, "The Musical Press in Nineteenth-Century England", *Notes: Quarterly Journal of the Music Library Association* 46, no. 3 (March 1990): 583-592.
[42] James H. Johnson, *Listening in Paris: A Cultural History* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1995), 1-2.

response to instrumental music. Finally, the popularity of the new instrumental genres progressed conjointly with the development of new instruments, most notably the pianoforte as an alternative to the harpsichord. No longer an action of plucking, playing the piano became an action of striking, where leather-covered hammers strike the individual strings as the keys are pressed. This enabled a gradation in sound; piano pieces were no longer confined to the single tonal structure of the harpsichord, but sound could be expressed more fully, allowing for a greater range of emotional and artistic expression.

These profound changes in the reception of instrumental music have been widely documented in the field of musicology by John Neubauer, Carl Dahlhaus, Andrew Bowie, Hosler, John Daverio, and Lydia Goehr.[43] Music's emancipation from mimesis was particularly troubling for many critics at the time, as arts like painting, poetry, and sculpture managed to fulfil this mimetic standard whereas instrumental music, where form and content were the same, simply did not imitate well. Contemporary critics, as Mary Sue Morrow has pointed out in her work on German music criticism, "not infrequently dismissed instrumental music from serious philosophical consideration by asserting that it meant nothing at all, that it could never rise above the level of empty sound".[44] Yet this was exactly what appealed to the Romantics: a high degree of ambiguity and autonomy. Clearly, it was no longer possible to evaluate instrumental music against this standard of mimesis; instead, a new aesthetic framework had to be found.

The strength and popularity of Austro-German musical pieces was perpetuated not only by the influential figures of Beethoven, Mozart, and Haydn, but also by the composers who took the traditions into the nineteenth century, such as Johannes Brahms, Felix Mendelssohn, Robert Schumann, Franz Liszt, and Wagner, to name a few.[45] Writers and theorists played an

[43] John Neubauer, *The Emancipation of Music from Language: Departure of Mimesis in Eighteenth-Century Aesthetics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986); Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1989); Bowie, "Music and Aesthetics"; Hosler, *Changing Aesthetics Views*; John Daverio, *Nineteenth-Century Music and the German Romantic Ideology* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1993); Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).
[44] Mary Sue Morrow, *German Music Criticism in the Late Eighteenth Century: Aesthetic Issues in Instrumental Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 5.
[45] For more on the composers' influence, see Peter Mercer-Taylor, "Mendelssohn and the Institution(s) of German Art Music", chap. 1 in *The Cambridge Companion to Mendelssohn,* ed. Peter Mercer-Taylor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 9-25; Reinhard Kapp, "Schumann in his Time and Since", chap. 11 in *The Cambridge Companion to Schumann,* ed. Beate Perrey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 221-251; Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, esp. sections "Tradition and Restoration", 26-34, and "The Music Culture of the Bourgeoisie", 41-50, both in chap. 1, "Introduction"; Michael Musgrave, "Years of Transition: Brahms and Vienna 1862-1875", chap. 2 in *The Cambridge Companion to Brahms,* ed. Michael Musgrave (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 31-50; Alfred Einstein, *Music in the Romantic Era*

equally important role, though. One of the most influential texts written on the power of instrumental music was by Hoffmann, one of the main instigators of a new type of music criticism. The *Kreisleriana,* a collection of writings on music, covered both the concept of absolute instrumental music as well as an interest in a synthesis of the arts. One of the most widely quoted essays in this collection is "Beethoven's Instrumental Music", published in the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* in Leipzig in 1810 and 1813.[46] In this essay, Hoffmann establishes instrumental music as paradigmatic for *all* the other arts:

> When music is spoken of as an independent art, does not the term properly apply only to instrumental music, which scorns all aid, all admixture of other arts (poetry), and gives pure expression to its own peculiar artistic nature? It is the most romantic of all arts, one might almost say the only one that is genuinely romantic, since its only subject-matter is infinity. Orpheus's lyre opened the gates of Orcus. Music reveals to man an unknown realm, a world quite separate from the outer sensual world surrounding him, a world in which he leaves behind all precise feelings in order to embrace an inexpressible longing. […] Such is the power of music's spell that it grows ever stronger and can only burst the fetters of any other art.[47]

Hoffmann extends his advocacy for the power of instrumental music's transcendentalism into the idea of a pervasive ideal, a paradigm. However, as Simon Shaw-Miller has pointed out, Hoffmann creates a paradoxical situation where on "the one hand music becomes dematerialised" whereas on the other he simultaneously attempts to posit "a specific, earth-bound work, Beethoven's Fifth Symphony" as able to "capture and make visible the infinite within the finite bounds of symphonic form".[48] As such, Hoffmann attempted to argue for *both* the possibility of instrumental music as abstract, autonomous, and able to 'burst the fetters of any other art', as well as music's synthesis and fusion within and throughout

---

(New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Ltd., 1947), chap. 2, "The Individual and Society" and the sub-section "Social Function of the Composer", 10-11; and Anna G. Piotrowska, "Modernist Composers and the Concept of Genius", *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 38, no. 2 (December 2007): 229-242.

[46] The first essay was a review of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, which had been performed in 1808, and the second essay was a revision to include a review of two of the composer's piano trios, Op. 70.

[47] E.T.A. Hoffmann, "Beethoven's Instrumental Music", repr. in Hoffmann, *Hoffmann's Musical Writings: Kreisleriana, The Poet and the Composer, Music Criticism,* ed. David Charlton, trans. Martyn Clarke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 96-97.

[48] Simon Shaw-Miller, *Eye hEar: The Visual in Music* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 32.

multiple media.[49] He wrote, foreshadowing Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867) who based some of his own thoughts on Hoffmann,

> Not only in dreams, but also in that state of delirium which precedes sleep, especially when I have been listening to much music, I discover a congruity of colours, sounds, and fragrances. It seems as though they are all produced by beams of light in the same mysterious manner, and have then to be combined into an extraordinary concert. The fragrance of deep-red carnations exercises a strangely magical power over me; unawares I sink into a dream-like state in which I hear, as though from far away, the dark, alternately swelling and subsiding tones of the basset-horn.[50]

A humorous and oft-quoted passage from the *Kreisleriana* is when Hoffmann wrote about his alter ego, Johannes Kreisler, having bought a coat "in C sharp minor", for which he had a collar made "in the colour of E major" for chromatic balance.[51] These types of statements, where the senses blur, blend, and correspond with each other, are often categorised under the broad umbrella of 'synaesthesia'.[52] I will discuss this concept in relation to painting and my case studies in more detail in Chapter Two, as first I want to focus on Hoffmann's formation of pure instrumental music as a paradigm for the other arts in its capacity for autonomy, expression, and abstraction. Hoffmann doubtlessly set the tone for nineteenth-century investigations and analyses of instrumental music. He was interested in the Absolute as well as the ways in which music could become a medium that could make verbal and emotional sense of something ungraspable, transcendental, something ineffable. This dichotomy intensified around the mid-nineteenth century, branching off into the aesthetics of form and the aesthetics of expression, articulated by Hanslick and Wagner, respectively.[53] This binary balance persisted well into the late nineteenth century, mapping onto a similar dichotomy in the visual arts. In the musical world this became the distinction between programme and

---

[49] For more on Hoffmann's influence and importance, see ibid., esp. chap. 2, "Pan and Panoptes: Music Aspires to the Condition of Art", 31-34; Carl Dahlhaus, "E.T.A. Hoffmanns Beethoven-Kritik und die Ästhetik des Erhabenen", *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 38, no. 2 (1981): 79-92; Stephen Rumph, "A Kingdom Not of This World: The Political Context of E.T.A. Hoffmann's Beethoven Criticism" *19th-Century Music* 19 (1995): 50-67; and Mark Evan Bonds, "Idealism and the Aesthetics of Instrumental Music at the Turn of the Nineteenth Century", *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 50, no. 2/3 (Summer-Autumn 1997), 411-413.
[50] Hoffmann, "Extremely Random Thoughts", repr. in *Hoffmann's Musical Writings,* 105.
[51] Hoffmann, "Letter from Kapellmeister Kreisler to Baron Wallborn", repr. in ibid., 130.
[52] Shaw-Miller describes Hoffmann's *Kreisleriana* as employing "distinctive synaesthetic methodology" where "music and image are linked"; Shaw-Miller, *Eye hEar,* 32.
[53] Bonds, "Idealism and Aesthetics", 323-324; Andy Hamilton, *Aesthetics and Music,* esp. chap. 3, "The Aesthetics of Form, the Aesthetics of Expression and 'Absolute Music': Aesthetics of Music in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries" (London: Continuum, 2007), 66-94.

instrumental music: music set to words as opposed to music independent of verbal interpretation.[54] Téodor de Wyzewa, reflecting on the poet Stéphane Mallarmé's relationship with Whistler, wrote in 1895 how some artists "employ their lines and colours in a purely symphonic form of organisation, without regard for the direct depiction of a visual object", resulting in "two very different kinds of art":

> the one purely sensory and descriptive […] the other emotional and musical in character, neglecting all concern with the objects represented by their lines and colours and treating the latter simply as signs for our emotions, combining them together in such a way as to produce in us […] a total impression comparable to that of a symphony.[55]

This manner of labelling a visual work of art with a musical label had its roots in this Romantic concession that instrumental genres generated a new and different aesthetic experience. It was after all, as Mark Evan Bonds has pointed out, the Romantics who were responsible for articulating "the relatively sudden shift of instrumental music from the lowest to the highest of all musical forms, and indeed of all the arts in general" as its ambiguity, vagueness, and abstraction were now seen as assets rather than liabilities.[56] Some of the roots for this shift lay in the writings of Immanuel Kant, particularly the *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (1790) and his provocations towards reflections on subjectivity, subject-object relationships, aesthetic judgements, and formalism. It was Kant who wrote in §16 on the differentiation between free beauties and independent beauties with the aim of discussing judgements of taste. In a key passage, he argued that the idea of a self-subsisting or autonomous beauty came to fruition in a number of elements with instrumental music being the culminating example:

> Flowers are free beauties of nature. […] Many birds (the parrot, the humming-bird [sic], the bird of paradise), and a number of marine crustacea, are self-subsisting beauties which have nothing to do with any object defined with respect to its end, but please freely and on their own account. So designs *à la grecque*, foliage for framework or on wall-papers, etc., have no intrinsic meaning; they represent nothing – no object under a definite concept – and are free

[54] Andrew Bowie, "Romanticism and Music", chap. 15 in *The Cambridge Companion to German Romanticism,* ed. Nicholas Saul (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 246-249.
[55] Téodor de Wyzewa, "Wagnerian Art: Painting", in *Art in Theory 1815-1900: An Anthology of Changing Ideas,* eds. Charles Harrison, Paul Wood, and Jason Gaiger (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998), 1009.
[56] Bonds, "Idealism and Aesthetics", 387.

> beauties. We may also rank in the same class what in music are called fantasias (without a theme), and, indeed, all music that is not set to words.[57]

Instrumental music, as Bonds has specified, was problematic for Kant; music "speaks entirely through sentiments, without concepts, and thus leaves nothing on which the mind can reflect".[58] As such, Kant classed it with the *angenehme Künste* or 'agreeable' arts since it was pleasant to the eyes but lacked in intellectual substance. Yet Kant hesitated, since he did not want to relegate the position of so captivating an art as music to the lowest rung within the hierarchy. To resolve this, he proclaimed instrumental music to be "more a matter of enjoyment than of culture".[59] Regardless, the power Kant yields to the impact music can have was significant for later thinkers, as was his formulation of 'all music that is not set to words' as a 'self-subsisting' beauty.

The shift from Enlightenment to Romantic aesthetics is often seen as a drastic change, because of the opposing viewpoints they ultimately came to embody. This shift, as Dahlhaus has astutely observed, was nonetheless a continuation "from the *empfindsam* music aesthetics of the 1780s and 1790s", a continuation that that was part of "a process of transformation that contemporaries must have found nearly imperceptible".[60] Whereas Kant saw tone as "merely an agreeable sensation" comparable to how we experience colour as abstracted from nature, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau described the sounds of instrumental music as "only a succession of sounds" as "design is only an arrangement of colours", the ideal Wackenroder, Tieck, Novalis, Hoffmann, and Schelling had in mind still contained these characteristics, but they praised this as an ideal rather than as a criticism.[61] Their writings, even if reflective of earlier ones, were radical in terms of their celebration of the theoretical and aesthetic potential of music.[62] Moreover, the language used by these writers was highly emotionally charged, which lent itself well to the rhapsodising over a type of music that was seen as "sharing an analogously elusive and ever-changing essence" with the human soul.[63] This ineffable yet

---

[57] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement,* trans. James Creed Meredith, ed. Nicholas Walker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008 [[1790]), 60.
[58] Mark Evan Bonds, *Absolute Music: The History of an Idea* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 87.
[59] Kant, *Critique of Judgement,* 156.
[60] Carl Dahlhaus, *The Idea of Absolute Music*, trans. Roger Lustig (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 60.
[61] Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, 153; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Essai sur l'origine des langues", in *Music and Aesthetics in the Eighteenth and Early-Nineteenth Centuries,* eds. Peter le Huray and James Day (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 93.
[62] Bonds, "Idealism and Aesthetics", 388.
[63] Hosler, *Changing Aesthetic Views,* xiv.

confusing 'essence' came to define the Romantic attitude towards instrumental music. The keyword is ineffable; music appeared to provide knowledge about and access to a transcendent realm that other art forms were not able to reach. As such, the language used to write about instrumental music became defined by this conception of an otherworldly, mystical realm that was defined by subjectivity and emotionalism over rationalism. Over time, as Bowie has written, "Romantic art becomes concerned with representing that which is *per se* unrepresentable".[64]

This 'unrepresentable' other world was found only in music, wrote Tieck in his influential essay "Symphonien":

> Art is independent and free in instrumental music; it prescribes its own rules all by itself […] it completely follows its dark drives and expresses with its triflings what is deepest and most wonderful […] [sounds] do not imitate and do not beautify; rather, they constitute a separate world for themselves.[65]

This is in line with what Hoffmann wrote of his personal Romantic hero, Beethoven:

> Beethoven's music sets in motion the machinery of awe, of fear, of terror, of pain, and awakens that infinite yearning which is the essence of romanticism. He is therefore a purely romantic composer. Might this not explain why his vocal music is less successful, since it does not permit a mood of vague yearning but can only depict from the realm of the infinite those feelings capable of being described in words?[66]

This type of emotionalist language, writes Marsha Morton, was introduced in order to describe the new instrumental genres in the legacy of Beethoven, Mozart, and Haydn, mainly to "broaden the expressive range and drama" of both the orchestral compositions and the interpretation of music.[67] As Charles Rosen has argued, one way of understanding this elevation of the emotions in lieu with musical impact, was to create the analogy with sound

---

[64] Andrew Bowie, *Aesthetics and Subjectivity: From Kant to Nietzsche* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1990), 43 [italics in original].
[65] Ludwig Tieck, "Symphonien", quoted in and translated by Neubauer, *The Emancipation of Music,* 199-200.
[66] Hoffmann, *Hoffmann's Musical Writings,* 98.
[67] Marsha L. Morton, "'From the Other Side': An Introduction", chap. 1 in *The Arts Entwined: Music and Painting in the Nineteenth Century,* ed. Marsha L. Morton and Peter L. Schmunk (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 4.

and colour.[68] This musical-visual discourse, most of all, became "the meeting point" of "emotional longings, a painterly manifestation of the gulf between the desire for the infinite and the impossibility of its fulfilment", characterised by such terms as *das Unendliche* and *Innerlichkeit*.[69] So, we see how the debates in musical aesthetics were hence informed by the German philosophy produced by figures such as Schelling, Schiller, and other German Romantics.[70] From this complex discourse, I want to distil a number of aspects from this aesthetic paradigm I consider to be most important to the formation of music as the ideal art for nineteenth-century English painters, starting with form and autonomy.

Form and autonomy

"To think about form", writes Bonds in *Absolute Music: The History of an Idea* (2014), "is to approach music in a way that emphasises abstraction".[71] If we define form to mean the formal components of an artwork, whether that is a material substance or not – audible sounds in music, as well as visible musical notes on a musical score, and colours and shapes in painting – then an emphasis on form means an emphasis on what we experience with the senses.[72] Within the model of instrumental music as "increasingly self-contained and self-reflective", music as an art becomes comprehensible not through semantics or language but through, in Wagner's words, "conceptless [sic] cognition".[73] However, the relationship between form and expression was tense at times. As Paddison has pointed out, by the mid-nineteenth century the "immanent formalist relations of musical structure and the need to justify music's free-floating, dynamic expressivity with reference to an object exterior to it" became strained, leading to some composers anxious to "anchor musical expression in more concrete terms in the extra-musical" while others embraced the promise of pure formalism.[74]

---

[68] Charles Rosen, *The Romantic Generation* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1995), 127.
[69] Diane V. Silverthorne, "Introduction: A Work in Two Parts – Continuities and Discontinuities from Romanticism to Postmodernism", chap. 1 in *Music, Art, and Performance from Liszt to Riot Grrrl: The Musicalization of Art,* ed. Diane V. Silverthorne (New York and London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2019), 4.
[70] See Bonds, "Idealism and Aesthetics", 389-395; Dahlhaus, *Absolute Music,* chap. 1, "Absolute Music as an Aesthetic Paradigm", 2-42; Max Paddison, "Music as Ideal: The Aesthetics of Autonomy", chap. 12 in *Nineteenth-Century Music,* ed. Samson, 318-342; Bonds, *Absolute* Music, 79-89, 98-102; Shaw-Miller, *Eye hEar,* 29-34; Bowie, "Romanticism and Music"; and Neubauer, *Emancipation of Music,* chap. 13, "Kant and the Origins of Formalism", 182-192.
[71] Bonds, *Absolute Music*, 90.
[72] In the nineteenth century, form in figurative painting was often based in and around the human body, as was especially the case in reviews of Leighton's and Moore's art because of their shared interest in the Greek sculptural body. See J. Beavington Atkinson, "English Painters of the Present Day: No. XVI. – Frederick Leighton, R.A.", *The Portfolio* no. 1 (January 1870): 162; and Cosmo Monkhouse, "Albert Moore", *The Magazine of Art* 8 (January 1885): 195.
[73] Paddison, "Music as Ideal", 321; and Richard Wagner, "The Artwork of the Future" (1849), quoted in Paddison, 321.
[74] Ibid., 321.

The aesthetics of expression also rested on content, while the other branch, the aesthetics of form, was the precursor to artistic formalism which "in its broadest sense encompasses any theory that equates a work's form with its content".[75] This is instantly reminiscent of Pater's advocacy for music as the only art form to successfully fuse form and content, a theory he derived from the aesthetics of musical formalism.[76] Pater's thinking about form and content had its foundations in Hanslick, but also in a number of influential Romantics: Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), Christian Friedrich Michaelis (1770-1834), and Schiller. Goethe acknowledged music's autonomy and, by extension, the possibility of autonomy in other arts, but attempted to dispel with the binary distinction between either autonomous or not at all. He wrote that one "cannot escape the world more certainly than through art and cannot bind it more certainly than through art", acknowledging the separate ideals of art for art's sake versus art for humanity's sake, a distinction that resurfaced in discussions on social and artistic engagement as opposed to detachment.[77] Michaelis extended Kantian aesthetics into the realm of music when he perceived the value of musical works to lie not in "how they can *represent* something else, or *signify* something else, but what they *are* in themselves" and, as such, "this independent, pure music pleases by itself, without meaning, without describing, without imitating or expressing something specific".[78]

Schiller took this a step further, advocating for a specific and idealised *condition* of music, formulating a discourse centring on the fulfilment of certain conditions for an art to be equally autonomous and formalist. *On the Aesthetic Education of Man* (1794) reveals his celebration of autonomous, ideal instrumental music as the quintessential art of form and formalism:

> In its highest refinement music has to become form, […] the plastic arts must, in their highest perfection, become music and move us by their directly sensuous presence; poetry in its most complete development must seize us as music does, but also like the plastic arts envelop us with serene clarity. This marks the perfection of style in every art: that it is able to remove its

[75] Bonds, *Absolute Music,* 98. Aestheticism ended up comprising both, championing purity and formalism while also capitalising on the subjective experience of art, which I will discuss in more detail in the next chapter.
[76] See my later section on Hanslick, 64-71.
[77] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Die Wahlverwandtschaften [Elective Affinities]*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (1971 [1809]), quoted in Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum,* 211.
[78] Christian Friedrich Michaelis, "Ueber das Idealische der Tonkunst", *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* 10 (1808): 450 [my translation; italics in original]; Christian Friedrich Michaelis, "Ein Versuch, das innere Wesen der Tonkunst zu entwickeln", *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* 8 (July 30, 1806): 691 [my translation].

> own limits without annulling its own specific properties, and by prudent use of its particular nature lend it a general character.[79]

The outcome of this statement is that Schiller is advocating for the idealisation of music itself. Once it reaches that supposed ideal stage, music becomes form itself and the way we as listeners become cognizant of it is entirely through 'sensuous presence'. This 'perfection' is ideal music and, in one stroke, Schiller places formalist, empty, instrumental music at the top of the hierarchy of the arts and the other arts can only aspire towards it *through* form. These features of autonomy and abstraction, at the time not considered inherent to an art like painting, transformed music from a supporting art to an art to aspire towards, as it did in Arthur Schopenhauer's writings when he wrote that "the goal of all art is to resemble music".[80] It is no coincidence both Schopenhauer's and Schiller's passages sound remarkably like Pater's statement that "all art constantly aspires towards the condition of music" of 1877.[81] As early as 1794, Schiller bridged the discourse of art for art's sake with beauty: "What is man before beauty coaxes from him unbridled pleasure for its own sake?"[82]

His ideal of music, through his emphasis on "*purely aesthetic* effect", took two shapes: first, as an art superior to others, distinguishing the arts as separate in order to highlight respective qualities; and second, as a model for other arts to aspire towards since music contained desirable artistic qualities. One of these qualities, overall, was immateriality, premised in the understanding of music as "pure form, liberated from any other object or from matter".[83] Using this premise, F.W.J. Schelling argued in *Philosophie der Kunst* (1802-1803) that "music is the art that is least limited by physical consideration in that it represents *pure* motion as such" and, hence, since art "strives after pure form, the ideal", it strives after music.[84] Indeed, argued Schiller, form should supersede content and provide a "high level of equanimity and freedom of the mind, linked to power and vigour" in order to generate a "*purely aesthetic effect*": the "mood in which a genuine work of art should leave us; there is

---

[79] Friedrich Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man,* trans. Keith Tribe (London: Penguin Classics, 2016 [1794]), 81.
[80] Arthur Schopenhauer, *Gesammelte Werke in zehn Bänden* (1977), quoted in Philippe Junod, "The New *Paragone*: Paradoxes and Contradictions of Pictorial Musicalism", chap. 2 in *The Arts Entwined,* eds. Morton and Schmunk, 27.
[81] Walter Pater, *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry, the 1893 Text,* ed. Donald L. Hill (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1980 [1877]), 106; Billie Andrew Inman, *Walter Pater and his Reading, 1874-1877: With a Bibliography of his Library Borrowings, 1878-1894* (New York: Garland, 1880), 386, 390.
[82] Schiller, *Aesthetic Education*, 89.
[83] Friedrich Wilhelm Josef von Schelling, *Philosophie der Kunst* (1802-1803), in *Music and Aesthetics,* eds. le Huray and Day, 280.
[84] Ibid., 280 [italics in original].

no more certain touchstone of authentic aesthetic quality".[85] As such, the "work of the artist must overcome not only the limitations that the specific character of his art involves, but also those presented by the particular material", and then, only then, can the "plastic arts" transcend to pure form.[86] Within this guise, the arts, as quoted above, had to 'become music' by emphasising its own form and autonomy.

The moment where the formal concerns of an artwork could encourage such absorption in the viewer or listener to the point where form *becomes* the content, said artwork can become semantically and artistically independent. In other words, as Shaw-Miller has written, "in this equation" music "was an art of pure form, an abstract model, an absolute art".[87] The epithets 'absolute' and 'pure' are significant here. 'Pure' was the term used by Schelling to denote music as immaterial:

> Music manifests, in rhythm and harmony, the pure form of the movements of the heavenly bodies, freed from any object or material. In this respect, music is that art which casts off the corporeal, in that it presents movement in itself, divorced from any object.[88]

The term carried connotations of autonomy and self-sufficiency; a notion of absolute form that could exist independently, as when Baudelaire described a painting as "absolute, self-convinced painting, which cries aloud 'I will, I will be beautiful, and beautiful according to my own lights'".[89] Théophile Gautier (1811-1872) was aiming at the same lofty goal of autonomous and pure beauty when he wrote about "l'effet esthétique du beau absolu", or 'the aesthetic effect of absolute beauty'.[90] As Andrew Kagan has discussed in his work on absolute art, the idea of the 'absolute' in music is "that which contains not imitative or descriptive elements, and no intent to symbolise".[91] We can discern, then, that the merging of form and content contributed to abstraction in art and that this union was derived from the art of music. Music was then raised to the position of paradigm because it was perceived to be so

[85] Schiller, *Aesthetic Education,* 80 [italics in original].
[86] Ibid., 81.
[87] Shaw-Miller, *Eye hEar*, 30.
[88] F.W.J. von Schelling, *Philosophie der Kunst,* quoted in Bonds, "Idealism and Aesthetics", 403. This is a spiritualist and metaphysical interpretation of music; see Gustavo Cataldo Sanguinetti, "La Armonía de lo Invisible: La Música como Movimiento Puro en Schelling", *ÉNDOXA: Series Filosóficas* no. 36 (2015): 181-194.
[89] Charles Baudelaire, "The Salon of 1845", in *Art in Paris, 1845-1862: Salons and Other Exhibitions,* ed. and trans. Jonathan Mayne (London: Phaidon, 1965), 9.
[90] Théophile Gautier, "Du beau dans l'art", *Revue des deux mondes* 19 (1847): 899 [my translation].
[91] Andrew Kagan, *Absolute Art* (St Louis: Grenart Books, 1995), 22-23.

successful at combining form and content and, hence, be abstract. It is no surprise, then, that Pater and other theorists elevated music to the position of the paradigmatic or ideal art over the course of the century.

Philippe Junod has argued how the "new awareness of the means of expression" in instrumental music resulted "in the development of orchestration and an emphasis on timbre itself".[92] By extension, once these developments transferred outside of music and bled into the other arts, an emphasis on formal considerations served those artists who did not want to rely on imitation or mimesis very well. Music was nonimitative, formal, absolute, abstract, and autonomous; once these themes became desirable in painting, the *condition* of music was appealed to. The roots of these developments are much older than the nineteenth or the eighteenth century, but in the former the attention shifted from an acknowledgement of these themes to an elevation of instrumental music specifically.[93] This shift was made possible, as I have demonstrated, only once music was understood and appreciated as a fine art in its own right; in other words, after it gave up attempting to be mimetic and emulate the other arts. Because instrumental music was 'allowed' to be formally and autonomously beautiful and meaningful, it became sufficiently abstract if we take abstract art to mean self-contained, non-imitative, and meaningful through its forms and not its referentiality or illustrative power. Form itself became the content in an aspiration towards artistic autonomy. Indeed, as Schiller wrote how "in its highest refinement music has to become form", so "the plastic arts must, in their highest perfection, become music and move us by their directly sensuous presence".[94] The success of form was hereby connected to beauty: "In a genuinely fine work of art the content should do nothing, the form everything; for it is form alone that has an impact on the whole man".[95]

Temporality

The differing temporalities between subject and object were of critical importance in the ways artists applied music to painting in the nineteenth century. Brad Bucknell observed a similar notion in Pater's writing how, in his rare statements on music, Pater "may be offering

[92] Junod, "The New *Paragone*", 33.
[93] Ibid., 34; Peter Vergo, "Music and Abstract Painting: Kandinsky, Goethe and Schoenberg", in *Towards a New Art: Essays on the Background to Abstract Art, 1910-1920,* ed. Michael Compton (London: Tate Gallery, 1980), 41-63; Otto Stelzer, *Die Vorgeschichte der abstrakten Kunst* (München: Piper, 1964); and Tim Shephard, "Leonardo and the Paragone", chap. 26 in *The Routledge Companion to Music and Visual Culture,* eds. Tim Shephard and Anne Leonard (New York and London: Routledge, 2019), 229-237.
[94] Schiller, *Aesthetic Education*, 81.
[95] Ibid., 81.

through his use of music as the paradigmatic art a concise expression of the difficulty and provisionality of the subject's position in relation to time and art".[96] It is worthwhile, therefore, to consider the fundamentals of musical temporality as opposed to painting's spatiality and why it attained such prominence within the musical paradigm.

In the seminal *Laocoön: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry* (1766), Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-1781) drew the sharp distinction between literary and poetic temporality and the degree of spatiality the visual arts enjoyed. He wrote, "in its imitations painting uses completely different means or signs than does poetry, namely figures and colours in space rather than articulated sounds in time".[97] His conclusion was firm: "It remains true that succession of time is the province of the poet just as space is that of the painter".[98] This became, writes Armel Mazaron, an opposition of "the Readable" and "the Visible" with, in the eyes of Lessing, no possibility of equivalence among the two.[99] Lessing was by no means the first to make this distinction, but his text became one of the most influential, mapping the proposed dichotomy of space versus time onto a rigid philosophical framework.[100] As such, he profoundly contributed to the aesthetic theory of difference, or irreconcilability, between the arts, through "his reduction of the generic boundaries of the arts to this fundamental *difference*".[101] Some thinkers included music in this distinction, as did Schelling:

> The essential form of music is *succession,* for the idea of eternity assumes form as duration by expanding into time, form being regarded as something abstracted from substance. A subject that becomes aware of its own continuity becomes aware of *itself*.[102]

---

[96] Brad Bucknell, "Re-Reading Pater: The Musical Aesthetics of Temporality", *Modern Fiction Studies* 38, no. 3 The 'Politics' of Modernism (Autumn 1992): 598.
[97] Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Laocoön: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry,* trans. Edward Allen McCormick (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1962), 78.
[98] Ibid., 91.
[99] Armel Mazaron, "Le lisible et le visible selon Lessing", *Methodos* 20 (2020), https://doi.org/10.4000/methodos.7121, accessed 13/10/2020. For more on Lessing, see Simon Richter, "Intimate Relations: Music In and Around Lessing's 'Laokoon'", *Poetics Today* 20, no. 2 Lessing's Laokoon: Context and Reception (Summer 1999): 155-173; and W.J.T. Mitchell, "The Politics of Genre: Space and Time in Lessing's Laocoon", *Representations* 6 (Spring 1984): 98-115. For the relation between beauty and *Laocoon*, see Elizabeth Prettejohn, *Beauty and Art 1750-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 22-27.
[100] Mitchell, "The Politics of Genre", 98; and Lene Østermark-Johansen, *Walter Pater and the Language of Sculpture* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 71.
[101] Mitchell, "The Politics of Genre", 98 [my italics].
[102] Schelling, *Philosophie der Kunst,* in *Music and Aesthetics,* ed. and trans. le Huray and Day, 275 [italics in original].

However, as Anne Leonard has pointed out, Lessing considered "a painting's capacity to be taken in all at once by the viewer" to be a virtue "when visual description was paramount, but a liability when its content involved a temporal element".[103] Moreover, the application of metaphor would often allow transference between and through temporality and spatiality. The distinction is therefore too binary as, through metaphor, we can extend and transcend the limits between the arts. As James Heffernan has pointed out, we have to constantly question this spatial distinction, as "implicit in the axiom that painting must confine itself to a single moment of time is the principle that our experience of painting is instantaneous".[104] As I will argue, and which I will demonstrate to be a crucial aspect of Aestheticism's interest in music, music's ability to *extend* and *unfold* through time, its ability towards both instantaneity and duration, was of paramount significance. For the Aesthetic artists under consideration in this thesis, the tension between temporality and spatiality in music and painting respectively would constitute one of the main interests in approaching the intersection between the two arts.

Whereas Lessing operated on the assumption that poetry and literature – in other words, narrative and verbal dependents – furnished the meaning in all the other arts, his framework would be replaced with anti-mimetic specifications, as I have already mentioned.[105] Indeed, as Philip Alperson has astutely observed, in the wake of Kant music has been claimed as "an art of time, if not *the* art of time", which included the consideration of "'musical time' which is somehow to be distinguished from other kind or kinds of time".[106] Kant discussed this temporal dimension in relation to both music and the "art of colour" being "the artistic play of sensations of hearing and of sight", respectively.[107] He connects both through interrelations with "the velocity of the vibrations of light" and "of the air", bridging the two through "the mathematical character" of "those vibrations in music, and of our judgement upon it, and, as is reasonable, form an estimate of colour contrasts on the analogy of the latter".[108] This relationship based on mathematical vibrations through space led Kant to

[103] Anne Leonard, "Time in Fin-de-Siècle Painting", chap. 3 in *Liszt to Riot Grrrl,* ed. Silverthorne, 67.
[104] James A.W. Heffernan, "Space and Time in Literature and the Visual Arts", *Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal* (Spring/Summer 1987): 97.
[105] James H. Rubin and Olivia Mattis, "Musical Paintings and Colourful Sounds: The Imagery and Rhetoric of Musicality in the Romantic Age", chap. 1 in *Rival Sisters: Art and Music at the Birth of Modernism, 1815-1915,* ed. James H. Rubin and Olivia Mattis (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 3.
[106] Philip Alperson, "'Musical Time' and Music as an 'Art of Time'", *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 38, no. 4 (Summer 1980): 407.
[107] Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, 153.
[108] Ibid., 153.

conclude music was either beautiful per the categories of fine art, or merely composed of "*agreeable* sensations".[109] Music was and is an art form experienced *through* time, its sounds and tones the formal building blocks for musical pieces that are themselves played out on, constructed in, and set through time. It is this formal dimension that is often appealed to in inter-art relationships, rather than other kinds of time, such as those pointed out by Micheline Sauvage as the time required for composing, performing, or time as content, for example.[110] According to Sauvage's reasoning, however, all art that is even tangentially related to time is a temporal art.[111] And she is correct; our experience of a painting is, by its very nature and unfolding over time, a temporal one. Yet the Victorian interpretation of simultaneity versus temporal duration was different and has to be clarified in order to understand Whistler, Moore, and Leighton's distinct interest in temporality and, specifically, musical temporality. Alongside its ability to be non-imitative and non-representational yet still meaningful, music's extension through time became a crucial formalist quality in the discourse around music as an aesthetic paradigm.

The strict separation of the arts proposed by Lessing would become less sharp over the course of the nineteenth century as its opposite model, a blending of form and content and the mixing of media, became a plausible option. In a sense, Lessing was striving for autonomy as well, in distinguishing the arts as *autonomous* from each other. The Romantic connection to *formal* meaning, however, allowed an alternative, seemingly paradoxical, reasoning to take shape in which the subjective experience of an artwork and its formal success – beauty, in other words – was premised as aesthetically autonomous. Similarly for artists working in the mid-nineteenth century, the legacy of Romantic music left a tension between striving for autonomy through escapism per art for art's sake, while simultaneously attempting to emphasise the pictorial over the narrative (in itself a form of material and ethical autonomy), while *also* attempting to impact the viewer through the emotions. There is a way this can all intersect, which I will demonstrate in Chapter Two, as there were multiple strands active at the same time, all of which fell under the umbrella of paradigmatic instrumental music.[112]

---

[109] Ibid., 153 [italics in original].
[110] Micheline Sauvage, "Notes on the Superposition of Temporal Modes in Works of Art", in *Reflections on Art: A Source Book of Writings by Artists, Critics, and Philosophers,* ed. Susanne K. Langer (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1968), 161-162.
[111] Ibid., 161.
[112] See Paddison, "Music as Ideal", section "The Aesthetics of Feeling: Schopenhauer and Nietzsche", 330-333; Bowie, "Music and the Rise of Aesthetics".

This paradoxicality has been observed by Bucknell in his discussion of Pater and temporality, when he wrote how Pater reintroduced "the temporal into the very heart of the synchronic moment", therefore linking "the limitations of the subject to the issues of artistic evaluation, history, and the provisionality of knowledge".[113] While the emphasis on subjectivity was clearly arch-Romantic, music for Pater – at least his *idea* and *understanding* of music as an art form – was intricately tied to both temporality and atemporality under the guise of intensified experience, "that strange, perpetual, weaving and unweaving of ourselves".[114] This idea of weaving is particularly interesting, as it points to an active generation, a self-construction, on the part of the viewer when confronted with an artwork. It relates, moreover, to the complex interplay of instantaneity and duration in musical painting, where musical temporality enters into other media by virtue of its inherent duration. A useful tool here is Henri Bergson's notion of *durée*, introduced in *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience* (1889).[115] *Durée* is not material nor measured by clock-time, but is instead a delineation of how we experience varying states of consciousness; it encompasses "the efflorescence of ceaseless novelty and inner continuity that is our consciousness".[116] Not only are the notions of musical duration and Bergson's *durée* useful to help us understand ideas of continuity in other arts, but they also aid in fully grasping how radical it was to introduce temporality into an art of instantaneity in Victorian London. Through the *appeal* to music temporality is drawn out of painting as a plausible characteristic.

The implications of music's incorporeality and abstract nature are apparent and, as Benedict Taylor writes, the "absence of any performer" and, by extension, a "lack of materiality", formed a "clear correlate to the incorporeal and invisible substance of music".[117] However, after the Romantic era there are multiple issues that raised the awareness of the temporality of music, particularly the new-found interest in subjectivity as mentioned above; the rise of instrumental music as a serious art form and, eventually, as aesthetic paradigm; and the increased attention in the wake of Kant on the type of aesthetic experience generated by the arts. As Taylor points out, "obviously all art forms require time for their apprehension, but there is something peculiar to music – its apparent absence of materiality, the relative

[113] Bucknell, "Re-Reading Pater", 598.
[114] Pater, *Studies,* 119.
[115] Henri Bergson, *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1889).
[116] G. William Barnard, *Living Consciousness: The Metaphysical Vision of Henri Bergson* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2011), 28.
[117] Benedict Taylor, *The Melody of Time: Music and Temporality in the Romantic Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 3.

insignificance of any visual or spatial dimension".[118] I disagree, however; music necessarily exists only in space and time – it needs time to unfold, but space to exist within. Painting, on the other hand, needs space to exist in and a sense of sight to appeal to. Music, with its inherent immateriality, abstraction, and temporal dimensions, appealed to artists interested in bringing this temporal dimension into their work.[119]

Yet duration itself was also conducive to suspension, in time and place, brought about by the prolonged aesthetic experience of an artwork. If we recall Pater's writings, he wrote about the compression of temporality into one single, aesthetic moment: "Every moment some form grows perfect in hand or face; some mood of passion or insight or intellectual excitement is irresistibly real and attractive for us, - for that moment only".[120] This moment of suspension becomes a burning of a "hard gem-like flame" for "art comes to you professing frankly to give nothing but the highest quality to your moments as they pass, and simply for those moments' sake".[121] This prolonging and extending was a musical experience, according to a number of Victorian critics, and the suspension in space was a necessarily abstract and immaterial experience. This was particularly emphasised in response to Whistler's effervescent and ethereal *Nocturnes*, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Five, as a subjective experience bound by time, space, and a musical interpretation of formal elements in art.

Temporality could also take a more visible shape in the form of succession, the element Schelling isolated as a feature as mentioned above. Within painting, the idea of 'succession' was particularly applied to repetition in design and decorative forms, a succession or visual rhythm that "corresponds with melody in music".[122] An "arrangement of tonal masses" could, hence, be musical, where the "effects of succession, of the linking of sounds" was "the Painting of Music".[123] James Sully, writing for the *Fortnightly Review* in 1873, concurred:

---

[118] Ibid., 7.
[119] For more on the relationship between musical temporality and artistic modernism in general, see Julian Johnson, *Out of Time: Music and the Making of Modernity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); Taylor, *The Melody of Time*, esp. chap. 2, "Music, Time, and Philosophy", 47-129.
[120] Pater, *Studies,* 119.
[121] Ibid., 120-121.
[122] Ernst H. Gombrich, *The Sense of Order: A Study in the Psychology of Decorative Art* (London: Phaidon, 1979), 38.
[123] Joseph Goddard, "On the Principle of Dramatic Composition", *The Musical World* 40, no. 20 (May 18, 1861): 309.

> The property which appears most conspicuously to colour and give shape to music is that of measure or time. Just as spatial order is essential to the arts that gratify the eye, so temporal order is a prime requisite in the sequences of tone and harmony. The sense of *duration* which belongs to every order of sensation affords the simplest and most effective instrument for bringing a number of consecutive tones under a general aspect and uniting law.[124]

The close affiliation between succession, rhythm, colour, duration, and time would grow into one of the main branches of the paradigm of instrumental music in the nineteenth century. It would also come to encompass, as I will demonstrate in my case studies in the second half of this thesis, expression of movement in painting. Even if painting was an art of space, and music an art of time, Aesthetic painters found a particular way to bridge the two. Temporality became tied to aesthetic experience, a quasi-musical experience in itself as I will show in the following section.

W.J.T. Mitchell makes an excellent point by describing it as the difference between "primary and secondary representation", or "direct and indirect expression".[125] Even if painting, in itself, was more an art of spatiality than of temporality, it could still *refer* to temporality or *appeal to it* via the representation of music and vice versa. Romantic philosophers saw music's "ability to model a living flow of temporal becoming" as an "invaluable exemplification of how subjective time might be constituted, its ability to suggest a duration that endures even while it perishes being seen as the perfect instantiation of the paradox of human self-consciousness".[126] This is a particularly interesting point. Subjective time was an essential part of the musical experience since music could only exist in space and time and its experience – its artistic meaning – in its formalist independence could only be generated between subject and object. As such, music did indeed provide the perfect aesthetic model for subjective experience, one that other art forms should strive to become like. Music was not just a model, but a tool, a "tool for philosophers to articulate and try to understand problems of time, be it merely as a metaphor, an instantiation, or even a potential solution".[127] In Aesthetic painting of the mid-nineteenth century, music was a model, a tool, and a metaphor, but also provided a conceptualisation of spatiality and temporality that transcended the limits of painting itself.

---

[124] James Sully, "The Perception of Musical Form", *Fortnightly Review* 14, no. 81 (September 1873): 371 [my italics].
[125] Mitchell, "The Politics of Genre", 102.
[126] Taylor, *The Melody of Time,* 50.
[127] Ibid., 50.

Moreover, as Étienne Souriau has pointed out, Kant's aesthetics have allied the arts of space with the "external senses" and appropriated for "the internal sense" the form of time.[128] This is allied, also, to the slippery nature of time. After all, in any given experience of a work of art there are multiple temporalities at play. Despite being a static art, painting provides numerous temporalities, all closely allied to music and musical features. In music, there is a certain directionality, a melodic order which governs the experience, yet one bound by time. In painting, where multiple glances are possible, there is a movement of the eye; motion is even insinuated in the composition and arrangement of visual works of art. The time taken for contemplation is temporality; the topography of the painting is understood only over time, never in one total moment. While we, nowadays, can afford and understand and interpret multiple temporalities as easily, in the Victorian era, this type of extension through time was best understood through the analogy with music. Hence, the psychological temporality of aesthetic contemplation was bound up with the temporality inherent in music and the experience of music. By appealing or referring to this in painting, artists, such as Whistler, Moore, and Leighton, attempted to model their painting on music and allow some of music's abilities to bleed over into their own.

Aesthetic Contemplation

There is something particularly musical about sustained attention towards an aesthetic object, related as it is to duration, unfolding over time, length, immersion, and impact on the external senses while inviting internal reflection. Contemplation is not incidental. Indeed, it is highly intentional; it is far from simply casting your gaze on an object as the very "act of contemplation also acts on its subject" and "reorients the self in relationship" to the surrounding world.[129] The very act of contemplation was not new to the Romantic discourses around instrumental music, nor was it an exclusively musical development. After all, in the eighteenth century, as Michael Fried's seminal study on *Absorption and Theatricality* (1980) has pointed out, painting developed new attitudes towards representing and provoking contemplation or 'absorption'.[130] Similarly in musical circles, as Lawrence Kramer has written, did an interest in the psyche develop in order to "grasp interiority as something complex and heterogeneous" as well as seeing this as a pathway towards elevating the spirit

[128] Étienne Souriau, "Time in the Plastic Arts", in *Reflections on Art*, ed. Langer, 122. See also Elena de Bértola, "On Space and Time in Music and the Visual Arts", *Leonardo* 5, no. 1 (Winter 1972): 27-30.
[129] Lucy Alford, *Forms of Poetic Attention* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2020), 54.
[130] Michael Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980).

"through acts of attention".[131] Yet in the nineteenth century, especially in artistic centres like London, where paintings were used as illustrative of literary, narrative, or historic events rather than direct invitations for immersion and self-reflection, contemplation took on a different degree of musical importance. Aesthetic experience in general intensified under Aestheticism in the wake of Kant and Romantic subjectivity, leading to a renewed aesthetic appreciation of what defines our – as viewers or listeners – understanding and interpretation of art. Within these renewed attempts to identify and define aesthetic experience in a highly interdisciplinary and inter-art discourse, music often became the art to appeal to in order to emphasise either the representation or provocation of a specific type of contemplation. So, when Valentine Prinsep saw Leighton's *Flaming June* (fig. 8, 1895) it seemed to him "like music – the harmonies all thought out, the lines carefully and artfully composed, self-contained, melodious and monumental in qualities, like a great sonata".[132] This statement is particularly interesting; *Flaming June* represented an appeal to musical contemplation, yet it was simultaneously 'self-contained', autonomous, independent. Similarly, when F.G. Stephens deemed Moore's *The Musicians* (fig. 2, 1865-1867) "a sort of pictorial music" and Tom Taylor defined Whistler's earliest Nocturnes as "the exact correlative of music", these writers were doing so because of an *induced* quasi-musical experience of these visual artworks.[133] There was a visible and orchestrated attempt in the 1860s and 1870s, by critics appreciative of efforts by likeminded Aesthetic painters, to integrate the aspects of musical experiences with those of painting; to align an immaterial, intangible, abstract, temporal experience onto that of the static, momentary, and instant. I want to isolate a number of important features of the musical-aesthetic type of contemplation that was formulated under German Romanticism and its successors in order to demonstrate how and why the abstract notion of contemplation as well as the act of listening to music became so important for Leighton, Whistler, and Moore.

Karl Schawelka uses the term *Kunstkontemplation*, or 'art contemplation', to discuss what he sees as the aesthetic experience of nineteenth-century art that, through its type of sustained attention, was inherently quasi-musical.[134] He argues that the contemplation of an

---

[131] Lawrence Kramer, "The Devoted Ear: Music as Contemplation", chap. 3 in *Musical Meaning and Human Values,* eds. Keith Chapin and Lawrence Kramer (New York: Fordham University Press, 2009), 59.
[132] Valentine Prinsep, "Reminiscences of Millais, by Valentine Prinsep, R.A.", chap. 23 in *The Life and Letters of Sir John Everett Millais*, ed. John Guille Millais, vol. 2 (New York: Frederick A. Stokes, 1899), 402.
[133] F.G. Stephens, "Mr. Humphrey Roberts's Collection: Modern English Oil Pictures", *The Magazine of Art* (January 1896): 47; and [Tom Taylor], "Dudley Gallery – Cabinet Pictures in Oil", *The Times* no. 27531 (November 11, 1871): 4.
[134] Karl Schawelka, *Quasi una Musica: Untersuchungen zum Ideal des 'Musikalischen' in der Malerei ab 1800* (München: Mäander, 1993), 12.

artistic object, regardless of its medium, negates the simultaneity of painting because of the nature of *how* we philosophically and subjectively experience art. As much as the first glance, that first single moment of capture, is important to inducing aesthetic appreciation, surely a more complete experience is one that takes place over multiple, successive moments, hence unfolding over time? This is the point of intersection between painting and music that became so significant in Victorian London – music as the art where successive, unfolding, and perpetually developing experience was possible, glued onto the plastic rather than phonetic art of painting in order to simulate and provoke a similar experience. Through this it becomes possible to have a quasi-musical aesthetic experience of a painting or static work of art that, at first glance, might not even seem visibly attached to music. Étienne Souriau summed it up neatly when he wrote how, even if "the *physical frame* enclosing" successive glances "remains materially unchanging", this did not preclude a potential musical or musical-temporal experience of the artistic work itself.[135]

In the wake of these musical and aesthetic developments, there was an increase in the discussion of what the *experience* of an artwork was rather than what it could represent. In other words, there was a marked shift from the aesthetics of production to the aesthetics of reception, demonstrated in the musical spheres by the popularity of instrumental music as a subjective and emotional art and, in London, in the writings of Swinburne and Pater where the emphasis moved to *how* they experienced an artwork rather than what it pointed towards or illustrated. It is, it appears, as much an experience of what is artistically viable and significant and of what is aesthetically pleasurable, as that it needs to be a disinterested experience. Here I want to distinguish between Kant's proposition of disinterested experience, its importance for mid-century escapism and a turn away from 'reality' through art for art's sake, and how this evolved into the aesthetic contemplation of artistic matters above representational or content-related matters.[136] As Paddison has argued, the 1848 "retreat into inwardness" following the European revolutions became a catalyst for an altered aesthetic experience premised on an escape from politics or, conversely, an immersed engagement in politics, two "extremes" that he sees as "epitomised in the poetry of

[135] Souriau, "Time", in *Reflections on Art,* ed. Langer, 124 [italics in original].
[136] For more on Kant, see Prettejohn, *Beauty and Art,* 40-54; Casey Haskins, "Kant, Autonomy, and Art for Art's Sake", *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 48, no. 3 (Summer 1990): 235-237; and Andrew Bowie, "German Idealism and the Arts", chap. 15 in *The Cambridge Companion to German Idealism,* ed. Karl Ameriks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 336-357.

Baudelaire in France and – to an extent – in the music of Wagner in Germany".[137] Baudelaire's preferred aesthetic experience led, paradoxically, to both a more involved and immersed experience of formalist aesthetic matters through sensuous engagement as well as a semblance of autonomy through distinction.[138] While Kant would dismiss formalist contemplation instantly, as music "speaks by means of mere sensations without concepts", leaving nothing to be contemplated intellectually, Schiller developed these ideas and mapped them onto an ideal of instrumental music.[139] As Bonds has shown, Schiller "moved the focus of the debate away from content and toward form" in 1794: "Now the entire effect of music, however (as a fine art, and not merely as an agreeable one), consists of accompanying and producing in sensuous form the inner movements of the emotions through analogous external motions". Schiller continued, "although the *content* of motions cannot be represented", the "*form* certainly can be".[140] While Bonds delves into the importance of German Idealism for idealising art in order to gain the Absolute through contemplation, the focus on formal contemplation was responsible for the acceleration, by the mid-nineteenth century, on the notion of independent aesthetic contemplation focused on form, not content, one premised on sensuous experience and inward reflection.[141]

This type of contemplation extended by mid-century beyond the philosophical realm, especially that of German Idealism; it had a social equivalent in the direct experience of music by the physical listener. In order to understand this, I want to apply both Schawelka's idea of musical *Kunstkontemplation* and Fried's ideas on absorption. Fried applied the use of 'absorption' in order to analyse eighteenth-century paintings that depicted states of absorption, attentiveness, and reflection as subject matter, especially in relation to the position of the audience, the beholder.[142] Above all, through the depiction of absorption, and an absorptive attitude on the part of the beholder, mood rather than anecdote prevails, and the individualised, subjective experience of the beholder becomes the core of the aesthetic interpretation and experience. Alois Riegl (1858-1905), later in the nineteenth century, would

[137] Paddison, "Music as Ideal, 325, 326.
[138] For more on aesthetic autonomy specifically in relation to Kant's aesthetic judgement, rather than as I apply it here, to art, see Eileen John, "Beauty, Interest, and Autonomy", *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 70, no. 2 (Spring 2012): 193-202.
[139] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, ed. Nicholas Walker, trans. James Creed Meredith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008 [1790]), 156.
[140] Bonds, *Absolute Music,* 400; Friedrich Schiller, "Über Matthissons Gedichte" (1794), quoted in Bonds, 400 [italics in original].
[141] Bonds, "Idealism and Aesthetics", 404.
[142] Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality,* 60-61, 66.

claim that 'mood' and 'musicality' were the two most significant aspects of nineteenth-century painting, upon which the "actual purpose of art is only aimed at depicting things in outline and colour, in place and space", only to "excite" the "pleasure of the beholder".[143] My thinking on Whistler, Moore, and Leighton, as will become evident in the later chapters, has been informed by Fried's study on absorption in eighteenth-century France, but I choose to use the term 'contemplation' in order to distinguish my three case studies from other time periods. Contemplation, in the case of Aestheticism, extended to both the content of a work – representations of contemplation – as well as to the preferred behaviour of the audience, the beholder. In this sense, it lies closer to Schawelka's idea of *Kunstkontemplation*. Within musical and painting aesthetics, contemplation, then, applies equally to the private action of contemplating a work of art, whether that is a symphony by Beethoven or an oil painting by Leighton. It refers explicitly to the subjective experience, characterised by an inward turn, that accompanies the thorough examination and experience – the result of contemplation – of a work of art. As Johnson writes, the musical experience engendered by new instrumental genres, new instruments, and the philosophical Romantic framework provoked a new type of listening behaviour. At the core of "the new way of hearing was the liberation of music from language", hence creating an experience conducive to create a sense of reverie.[144] Instead of identifying what the musical piece referred to or represented, the listener was encouraged to explore how they *experienced* a musical piece and what mood it provoked.[145] Equally so, Aesthetic artists of the nineteenth century moved away from the direct representation of narrative to focus on the subjective experience of the viewer, one generated by the relationship between subject and object. Instead of representative content, their artwork often focused on mood, effect, and experience. This was rooted in the Romantic "listening for abstract meaning" generated by the new instrumental discourse, and, as François-Joseph Fétis pointed out in 1831, "to say what Haydn, Mozart, or Beethoven intended to paint or express in their admirable quartets, quintets, sonatas, or symphonies would not be easy".[146]

Accompanying this contemplative attitude was a retreat into subjectivity and inwardness, a remove from society related to the fundamental question of what art could do

[143] Alois Riegl, *Spätrönomische Kunstindustrie* (1927), quoted in Schawelka, *Quasi una Musica,* 42 [my translation]. See also Riegl, "Die Stimmung als Inhalt der modernen Kunst", in *Gesammelte Aufsätze* (Augsburg-Wien: Benno Filser Verlag, 1928), 28-39.
[144] Johnson, *Listening in Paris,* 270.
[145] See Schiller, *Aesthetic Education,* 80: "[…] we will always move on in a particular mood, and with our own thoughts. The more universal the mood, and the less limited the thoughts that a particular kind of art and its particular effects arouse in our soul, the more refined that kind of art".
[146] Ibid., 271; and François-Joseph Fétis, "De l'influence de la musique instrumentale sur les révolutions de la musique dramatique", *Revue musicale* 10 (November 1830 – January 1831), quoted in ibid., 271.

for society and whether it should do anything at all. Paddison, in discussing the expressiveness of instrumental music in relation to Wagner, Søren Kierkegaard, and Friedrich Nietzsche, points to the developing notion of "art music, which had detached itself historically from any direct social function", as an art which "was generally understood as the ultimate vehicle for a free-floating, inward-looking subjectivity which, in the absence of concepts and representation, referred only to itself".[147] The true essence of Romanticism, to quote G.W.F. Hegel, was "an absolute inwardness" which was the reason for its "independence and freedom".[148] Indeed, instrumental music was able to free itself from supporting texts or specific content by focusing instead on its formal content. It is no coincidence that a painter like D.G. Rossetti entitled one of his paintings *Reverie* (fig. 9, 1868) and another *Silence* (fig. 10, 1870). Enjoying and experiencing art was a private activity that became a pictorial trope in Aestheticism, extending from the private activity of reading to that of listening to music as interiorised, emotional, and extending through time through consistent attention.

Schawelka has argued that the position of the recipient in nineteenth-century art, growing out of German Romanticism, was an unequivocally musical one. The experience of music existed far before German Romanticism, of course, but in the nineteenth century it grew to an ideal, "the ideal of the 'musical'" which encapsulated a "certain communicability of one's own experience" despite the "non-communicable core" premised in the language of instrumental music.[149] There is still an element of Kantian disinterest in this musical experience, as canonised by Schopenhauer, Schlegel, Schiller, and others; a type of passivity on the part of the beholder. This was particularly crucial to Schopenhauer's theories of the Will, but it is also reminiscent of the construction of a specific mood, a *Stimmung*, not just in art, but in response to art; a contemplative attitude, indeed, of which 'the musical' was one dimension.[150] The difficulty here is, of course, that there is no typology for musical-aesthetic experience and contemplation. That is why statements such as Prinsep's on *Flaming June* or Taylor on Whistler's Nocturnes seem trivial to some, while enlightening to others. Again, subjectivity reigns supreme and muddies the waters. Yet this subjectivity, this type of inward reflection, is exactly what engenders experience, however slippery; in essence, contemplation

[147] Paddison, "Music as Ideal", 320.
[148] G.W.F. Hegel, *Hegel's Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art,* vol. 1, trans. T.M. Knox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 519.
[149] Schawelka, *Quasi una Musica,* 42 [my translation].
[150] For more on the beholder's position in German Romanticism, see ibid., esp. section (b) "Der Rezipientenstandpunkt" in Chap. 2, "Historische Bedingungen", 46-55.

is attention, and the self is set aside in order to better understand and appreciate and experience a given artwork. As Schawelka has argued, in this specific type of quasi-musical experience, which became the 'thing to be aspired towards' in the nineteenth century, "the boundary between subject and object is blurred", the individual is lost through opening themselves "to a stream of consciousness" to better experience the artwork.[151] For some Romantic philosophers, this was the path towards the Absolute; for others, especially later in the century, this constituted the ideal type of experience of art.[152] This ideal experience, then, was modelled on the musical and, by extension, allowed some of the musical to flow into the other arts. Anne Leonard makes the excellent point that, while there was an interest in the "formal unity" between painting and music in France spurred on by Wagner's music and its potential, there was a profound new development when many artists tried to "appropriate for painting qualities peculiar to music, including its emotional force and its capacity to command sustained attention".[153] The key word here is 'appropriate', since it was, effectively, a mapping of musical qualities onto the art of painting in order to enrich its expression, extend the viewers' contemplation, and be emotionally and formally more profound.

Wagner, Hanslick, and a Split in Aesthetics

The Romantic attitude at the turn of the nineteenth century towards instrumental music was one of immateriality, abstraction, and autonomy. As Bowie has illustrated, "early German Romanticism is inextricably linked with the notion of aesthetic autonomy, the ability of art to represent that which cannot be represented in any other way".[154] This interest in musical autonomy was paralleled, especially from 1848 onwards, as Bonds has argued, by the desire for a "refuge" from the "failed world of social and political life".[155] It was in the late 1840s and early 1850s that the discourse of instrumental music as abstract and aesthetically autonomous coalesced into a dichotomy: the aesthetics of expression versus the aesthetics of form. Both were, in effect, formulations of music as an aesthetic ideal, but with regards to a different understanding of art's general role in society. To understand this dichotomy, which

[151] Ibid., 93 [my translation].
[152] Arthur Schopenhauer, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung: Vier Bücher, nebst einem Unhange, der die Kritik der Kantischen Philosophie enthält* (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1819); for the concept of the 'absolute', see Hegel, *Lectures on Aesthetics*.
[153] Anne Leonard, "Picturing Listening in the Nineteenth Century", *The Art Bulletin* 89, no. 2 (June 2007): 266.
[154] Bowie, *Aesthetics and Subjectivity,* 43.
[155] Bonds, "Idealism and the Aesthetics of Instrumental Music", 397.

was crucial in furthering the developments around *l'art pour l'art*, we must turn to Richard Wagner and Eduard Hanslick.

John Neubauer has demonstrated how theories of expression in music, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, were fundamentally "modifications of traditional mimesis".[156] There were attempts at autonomy in various strands of aesthetics in the eighteenth century, but it did not become an inspiration for other art forms until, firstly, as I have established, German Romanticism structured it into an aesthetic framework and, secondly, Wagner and Hanslick formulated their theories. In the former, there was a tension between the expressive side of music, with its roots in the language used by Wackenroder and Hoffmann, and its self-referentiality and self-sufficiency. In the mid-nineteenth century this grew into a desire to formulate this tension in more concrete terms, leading to a contest between what instrumental music could and should do.[157] It was Wagner who coined the term *absolute Musik* in 1846, or 'absolute music', as a theoretical ideal of instrumental music.[158] In 1849, in his seminal text on his notion of an artwork of the future, Wagner defined the term further in order to argue against its validity in the political climate following the 1848 revolutions.[159] It was the non-conceptual nature of instrumental music that the composer detested, proposing, instead, for an "aesthetics of content", the content being the listener's own emotional response to the music.[160] This would become part of his famous *Gesamtkunstwerk*. This term, however, was often interchanged in English with the idea of a 'total artwork' or 'total work of art' and, hence, has often been misunderstood and applied to works that merely incorporate multiple media. It was originally aimed at a total and all-encompassing experience within the *Musikdrama*, Wagner's original conception of a multimedia installation in promotion of operatic drama where expression counted for more than form.

Schiller's writings provided the roots for the antithetical development to this aesthetics of expression, which flourished into an aesthetics of abstraction, autonomy, and self-sufficiency – the aesthetics of form – through Hanslick. Indeed, Hanslick's work has often been cited as an early source of musical formalism and as a predecessor to artistic

[156] Neubauer, *The Emancipation of Music,* 168. See also Bonds, *Absolute Music,* 69-78.
[157] Paddison, "Music as Ideal", 318-319.
[158] Richard Wagner, "Programm zur 9. Symphonie von Beethoven", repr. in *Gesammelte Schriften und Dichtungen,* ed. Wolfgang Golther (Berlin: Bong, 1913), vol. 2, 61.
[159] Richard Wagner, "The Art-Work of the Future" (1849), in *Art in Theory*, eds. Harrison, Wood, Gaiger, 471-478. See also Wagner, "The Revolution" (1849), in ibid., 323-325.
[160] Paddison, "Music as Ideal", 322.

formalism in general.[161] This was acknowledged as early as 1883 by the Victorian music critic Eustace Breakspeare, and again in 1886 when he wrote how "the pleasure in art taken in formal design for its own sake" was fundamentally a musical condition. This "'formal' theory" he dubbed "*formalism*".[162] Evidently, the concept of aesthetic autonomy stood at the core of both theories and would form the centre of a whole constellation of ideas, including forming a central cog in the mechanism of ideas that was to become Aestheticism in the 1860s.

Richard Wagner

Writing on Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in 1846, Wagner posited the term *absolute Musik* as a critique on the type of instrumental music that "by itself offers a means of expression that is emotionally powerful yet conceptually vague and therefore limited in what it can convey".[163] Using the Ninth Symphony as example, Wagner argued that instruments by themselves were not enough, could never be enough; instrumental music needed the addition of a human voice to reach a more powerful and transcendental form of articulation and expression. It was, as Thomas Grey has pointed out, not a coincidence that Wagner used Beethoven's Ninth Symphony to introduce the term, since this specific piece was "the gravitational centre of debates about the nature and limits of musical form, expression, autonomy, genre, and meaning throughout the century".[164]

The choice of the adjective 'absolute' was hardly a coincidence either, given its pervasiveness in German philosophy. While Wagner was the first to apply the term to music,

---

[161] Arthur Berndtson, *Art, Expression, and Beauty* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1969), esp. chap. 7, "Art as Form", 139-137 on "Formalism in Music: Hanslick"; Bonds, *Absolute Music,* 111; Enrico Fubini, *A History of Music Aesthetics,* trans. Michael Hatwell (London: Macmillan, 1991)*,* 277; James Hepokoski, "Programme Music", chap. 4 in *Aesthetics of Music: Musicological Perspectives,* ed. Stephen Downes (New York and London: Routledge, 2017), 62.

[162] Eustace J. Breakspeare, "Musical Aesthetics", *Proceedings of the Musical Association*, 9th Session (1882-1883): 39-58; and Eustace J. Breakspeare, "Formal Design in Music", *The Musical Standard* 31, no. 1164 (November 13, 1886): 310 [italics in original].

[163] Bonds, *Absolute Music*, 131. Since I will focus exclusively on Wagner's contribution to the discourse around *absolute Musik*, and other scholars have done thorough and excellent research on the composer already, for more on Wagner in general see Thomas S. Grey, *Wagner's Musical Prose: Texts and Contexts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Diane V. Silverthorne, "Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*", chap. 28 in *The Routledge Companion to Music and Visual Culture,* eds. Shephard and Leonard, 246-254; and Simon Shaw-Miller, *Visible Deeds of Music: Art and Music from Wagner to Cage* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), esp. chap. 2, "'Deeds of Music Made Visible': Wagner, the Gesamtkunstwerk, and the Birth of the Modern", 36-88. On various connections with the visual arts, see Therese Dolan, *Manet, Wagner, and the Musical Culture of Their Time* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013); Annegret Fauser, "Wagnerism: Responses to Wagner in Music and the Arts", chap. 13 in *The Cambridge Companion to Wagner,* ed. Thomas S. Grey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 219-234; and David Huckvale, "Wagnerian Visual Imagery from France and Germany (1860-1940)", *RIdIM/RCMI Newsletter* 18, no. 1 (Spring 1993): 17-25.

[164] Grey, *Wagner's Musical Prose,* 2.

Schelling had written about there was only one "absolute artwork", a theoretical ideal that embodied itself in all extant art forms, but only through this unity could the Absolute be reflected.[165] The 'Absolute', in this case, being the same Absolute that Hegel argued for as "a state of complete self-consciousness" where subject and object fused, and any distinctions between form and content, subject and object, were obliterated.[166] For German Romantics and Idealists, the idea of *das Absolute* uncovered and promised a state of intense and heightened consciousness. This was partially in line with the promised fusion of subject and object, of which music was the only art form perceived capable of doing so. It is no coincidence, then, that Wagner applied the term to music. In essence, the composer saw absolute music as an impossibility since, for him, music had to respond to social, political, and societal concerns, and, as Bonds has written, Wagner specifically saw music as a "catalyst of social and political reform" and condemned any proposition that it could be otherwise.[167] Especially after the 1848 revolutions that raged through Europe, the uproar of which he witnessed in Dresden, Wagner became more thoroughly convinced that art should be a part of the ongoing changes, not, as others would argue, sheltered from it.[168] In essence, both Hanslick and Wagner responded to political fluctuations by altering the aesthetics of music in the Romantic period. The political landscape had changed significantly by the 1840s, and as a result the interest in Romantic art decreased. It even grew hostile in Germany and France, where "liberal intellectuals who now focused on how to seize governmental power blamed Germany's political and economic backwardness on the people's fascination with Romanticism". As a result, "subjective inwardness was equated with passive, ineffective and escapist behaviour" and, of course, "music did not escape the increasing tendency to treat Romanticism with suspicion".[169] Wagner himself likened Europe to a volcano, the revolution being a "supernatural force", coming in to "lift [Europe] from its well-tried course" and "the old world, we can see, is about to collapse; from it a *new* world will arise, for the sublime Goddess of *Revolution* comes thundering in on the wings of the storm".[170]

[165] F.W.J. Schelling, *System des transzendentalen Idealismus* (Tübingen: J.G. Cotta'schen Buchhandlung, 1800), 474.
[166] Bonds, *Absolute Music,* 133.
[167] Ibid., 129.
[168] He would alter his opinion slightly in later years, especially after rediscovering the writings of Schopenhauer, Ludwig Feuerbach, and Beethoven's Ninth; see Grey, *Wagner's Musical Prose,* 1-50.
[169] Sanna Pederson, "Romantic Music Under Siege in 1848", chap. 4 in *Music Theory in the Age of Romanticism,* ed. Ian Bent, 64 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
[170] Wagner, "The Revolution", in *Art in Theory,* eds. Harrison, Wood, Gaiger, 323 [italics in original].

In Wagner's reasoning, instrumental music was a vehicle for expression, but should not exist as "isolated, sterile, and irrelevant to life", as a "self-contained art of *pure form* could serve no useful purpose in society".[171] In this sense, Wagner's aesthetics of expression catered more strongly to programme, rather than instrumental, music. It remained, however, an effort to "reconcile this Romantic idea of a 'higher' language" of music, with "its privileged access to the philosophical Absolute, as essence or 'Idea'", with "a new valorisation of music's ability to convey 'meaning' of a more concrete (determinate) kind by means of a new characteristic, representational, dramatic or narrative capacities".[172] This re-evaluation of the *purpose* of art is what engendered ideas about Wagner's delineation of a "Music of the Future".[173] Even if Wagner argued against the formalist interpretation of instrumental music, his presence, thinking, and musical performances played a key role in furthering the exposure of music in the nineteenth century. In effect, his presence on the musical scene significantly reinforced the importance of music for the other art forms simply by bringing it into wider discussion and granting music a larger visibility.[174] While Wagner paved the way for new and more total approaches to experiencing music, it was Hanslick who argued most forcefully for instrumental music's ability to completely overcome naturalism and imitation, positing music as a powerfully abstract art form that could inspire painters. In summation, while Hanslick provided ground-breaking new ideas in the field of formalism and autonomy, Wagner affected English Aestheticism by raising the presence of music in the public sphere and, as a consequence of his theories and writings, rigorously and publicly questioning the purpose of *all* art.

Eduard Hanslick

Even though Wagner coined the term 'absolute music' in 1846, only to argue against it in 1849, it is important to point out that phrases like 'instrumental music', 'pure music', and 'pure instrumental music' had been in use since the beginning of the nineteenth century and were used much more frequently and more widespread than 'absolute music'. Hanslick combined Wagner's phrase with this more popularised understanding of 'pure instrumental music' and wrote an instantly influential and highly significant treatise he entitled *Vom*

[171] Ibid., 1 [my italics].
[172] Grey, *Wagner's Musical Prose,* 7.
[173] This notion of an 'art of the future' was tied to a more generalised and subjective perception of radical art as avant-garde and untraditional. This is why Frederick Wedmore labelled Whistler's work as 'Art of the Future' in 1879; Wedmore, "Mr. Whistler's Theories and Mr. Whistler's Art", *The Nineteenth Century* 6, no. 30 (August 1879): 336.
[174] Walter Frisch, *German Modernism: Music and the Arts,* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 88.

Musikalisch-Schönen: Ein Beitrag zur Revision der Ästhetik der Tonkunst (*On the Musically Beautiful: A Contribution towards the Revision of the Aesthetics of Music*) in 1854. He divided this treatise into seven parts, in order to thoroughly analyse what music was *not* in order to posit what it *could* be. His aim was to indirectly respond to Wagner's texts and propose the importance of music as an autonomous art form, meaningful in and of itself from a formalist standpoint. By doing so, Hanslick also made a strong case for what effectively constituted a strand of music for music's sake with music as an aesthetic paradigm. This was in the discourse of absolute music what art for art's sake was for the Aesthetic painter. With his structure, Hanslick builds on a refutation of expressive theories of music in order to buttress his own formalist interpretation.[175] Accordingly, he was keen to establish that the emptiness Hegel considered anti-spiritualist in music did not mean that "music lacks *substance*".[176] Indeed, the use of 'form' is especially significant. Hanslick wanted to establish that formal sounds, despite Hegel's and Wagner's insistence to the contrary, were not 'empty'. For the purposes of this thesis, I do not want to debate the impossibility of a neologism like 'absolute music' as Daniel Chua has done, nor provide the type of thorough overview Bonds has achieved. I also do not want to provide a historical overview of the term as Dahlhaus has so effectively done already.[177] Instead, I want to use Hanslick's writings as a focal point of the type of aesthetics of form and music that became significant in the mid-nineteenth century and how this then followed into the discourse around art for art's sake. Similarly to how Pater would elegantly collect the various strands of aesthetic thinking of his contemporaries in the 1870s, so did Hanslick's *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen* reflect the contemporary formalist discourse. It did not come out of nowhere, nor was it entirely unexpected. Hanslick was the first to collate the ideas in an elegant and succinct format, yet radical and unprecedented through his strong stance on music's extreme aesthetic autonomy.[178] As such, I will demonstrate how Hanslick constructed a formalist discourse that was subsequently applicable and relevant to the art of painting.

---

[175] See Bonds, *Absolute Music*, 141-143 for an overview and thorough analysis of the separate sections. For a contextualisation and positioning of Hanslick's aesthetics, see also Mark Burford, "Hanslick's Idealist Materialism", *19th-Century Music* 30, no. 2 (Autumn 2006): 166-181; and Barbara Titus, "The Quest for Spiritualised Form: (Re)positioning Eduard Hanslick", *Acta Musicologica* 80, no. 1 (2008): 67-97.
[176] Eduard Hanslick, *On the Musically Beautiful: A Contribution towards the Revision of the Aesthetics of Music,* trans. Geoffrey Payzant (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1986 [1854]), 82 [italics in original]. For Hegel and spiritual emptiness, see Pederson, "Romantic Music", 60.
[177] Daniel K.L. Chua, *Absolute Music and the Construction of Meaning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Bonds, *Absolute Music*; Dahlhaus, *The Idea of Absolute Music*; Sanna Pederson, "Defining the Term 'Absolute Music' Historically", *Music & Letters* 90, no. 2 (May 2009): 240-262; and Thomas S. Grey, "Absolute Music", chap. 3 in *Aesthetics of Music,* ed. Downes, 42-61.
[178] Bonds, *Absolute Music,* 173-182.

A number of important musical-aesthetic themes present themselves in Hanslick's writings: beauty, autonomy, form, a disinterested aesthetic experience, purpose, and abstraction. All these themes, as we will see in the later chapters, were relevant to the discourse of art for art's sake and English Aestheticism. For Hanslick, these themes created a framework which provided the theoretical backdrop for his formalist argument. This is most emphatically postulated when he stated: "The content of music is tonally moving forms" (*tönend bewegte Formen*).[179] Hanslick did not exclude human emotions from the realm of music, but these were not its content, merely a by-product of its experience; as such, music was beautiful "without a specific feeling as its content", and instead there exists a "specifically musical, autonomous beauty" as "music demands once and for all to be grasped as music and can be only from itself understood and in itself enjoyed".[180] He agreed with the Romantic notion that music was not representational or conceptual, not "of this world", but instead the exclusive vehicle of "ideal content" Hanslick focused on the beauty of aesthetically autonomous forms. Interestingly, he parallels the arabesque with a kaleidoscope, drawing on intensely visual imagery in order to explain the experience of instrumental music, while writing that "music is actually a *picture,* but one whose subject we cannot grasp in words and subsume under concepts".[181] This recalls the Romantic response to music that could not be encapsulated in words, as formulated by Hoffmann or Wackenroder. Within a formalist argument, however, this lends more strength to the proposition that form could and should speak for itself.

Despite the indication of the subtitle – "A Revision towards *Music*" – Hanslick connects his theory to all the other arts, writing that in "pure contemplation the hearer takes in nothing but the piece of music being played; every material interest must be set aside", and sees this type of contemplation as "equally valid for the beauty that is in each of the arts".[182] Weaving together his knowledge of art, architecture, poetry, and music, he argued for the importance of a specific type of contemplation, one premised in Kantian disinterestedness and one inclined towards subjective beauty. This was a contemplation of form, first and foremost, a form that generated "a beauty that is self-contained, and in no need of content from outside itself" and, which in music "consists simply and solely of tones and their artistic

[179] Hanslick, *On the Musically Beautiful,* 29.
[180] Ibid., 29-30.
[181] Ibid., 30.
[182] Ibid., 4-5.

combination".[183] This type of reasoning foreshadows Sidney Colvin's argument of 1867 in relation to a number of prominent Aesthetic artists:

> Pictorial art addresses itself directly to the sense of sight; to the emotions and the intellect only indirectly; […] The only perfection of which we can have distinct cognizance through the sense of sight is the perfection of forms and colours; therefore perfection of forms and colours – beauty, in a word – should be the prime object of pictorial art.[184]

Indeed, the notion of the self-sufficiency of art, whether pictorial or musical, was the core of the discourse of art for art's sake that paralleled Hanslick's own musical aesthetics so closely. Swinburne raised the same sentiment when he wrote about Albert Moore's *Azaleas* (fig. 12, 1868) that "its reason for being is to be", just as Hanslick wrote that music "is already a self-subsistent beauty; it is an end in itself".[185]

So, where in Hanslick's argument did painting and music intersect on the basis of formalism and 'self-subsistent' autonomy? The answer lies in Hanslick's notion of subjective contemplation; the metaphor of forms and colours in both art forms; and instrumental music's success in fusing form and content and, hence, providing a model for other art forms. The way Hanslick discusses the effects of beauty firmly has its roots in Kant's and Baumgarten's aesthetics, especially the former's *Critique of Judgement*.[186] Indeed, Kant's notion of an aesthetic judgement autonomous in nature was crucial to Hanslick and, later, Swinburne, Pater, and the British Aesthetes. As Chua has argued, "the disinterestedness necessary in Kant's aesthetic judgement had already alienated art from the sphere of practical (moral) reason", whereupon "Hanslick merely translates this into absolute music".[187] The notion of autonomy, writes Peter Bürger, "does not permit the understanding of its referent as one that developed historically" and, instead, "the relative dissociation of the work of art from the praxis of life in bourgeois society thus becomes transformed into the (erroneous) idea that the work of art is totally independent of society".[188] In the wake of the 1848 revolutions, this was a price Wagner was unwilling to pay, yet it is exactly what Hanslick, and Swinburne, would argue for. It was precisely through the reverent contemplation of art that beauty could be

[183] Ibid., 28.
[184] Sidney Colvin, "English Painters and Painting in 1867", *Fortnightly Review* 2, no. 10 (October 1867): 465.
[185] W.M. Rossetti and A.C. Swinburne, *Notes on the Royal Academy Exhibition, 1868* (London: John Camden Hotten, 1868), 32; Hanslick, *On the Musically Beautiful,* 28.
[186] Hamilton, *Aesthetics and Music,* esp. 70-72; Bonds, *Absolute Music,* 80-82.
[187] Chua, *Absolute Music*, 229.
[188] Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, and Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), 46.

experienced, extracted from the beauty of forms and colours. This is how Kant, and Hanslick after him, secured "an autonomous domain of aesthetic judgement, a domain with its own norms, language and set of practices", retreating from society into rich subjectivity.[189]

At numerous points in his treatise, Hanslick relates his notion of autonomous instrumental music to the visual arts, especially ornamentation and decoration. After his striking statement that music is essentially "tonally moving forms", Hanslick appeals to the visual arts to explain what he means, a segment worth quoting in full:

> How music is able to produce beautiful forms without a specific feeling as its content is already to some extent illustrated for us by a branch of ornamentation in the visual arts, namely arabesque. We follow sweeping lines, here dipping gently, there boldly soaring, approaching and separating, corresponding curves large and small, seemingly incommensurable yet always well connected together, to every part a counterpart, a collection of small details but yet a whole. Now let us think of an arabesque not dead and static, but coming into being in continuous self-formation before our eyes. How the lines, some robust and some delicate, pursue one another! […] Finally, let us think of this lively arabesque as the dynamic emanation of an artistic spirit who unceasingly pours the whole abundance of his inventiveness into the arteries of this dynamism. Does this mental impression not come close to that of music?[190]

This idea of a 'mental impression' is crucial to understanding the subjective experience of a work of art that exists autonomously, whereas the 'continuous self-formation' reflects how the meaning of an artwork is generated within a temporal framework, not from within itself but between subject and object, viewer and painting, listener and musical piece. The idea of 'impression', moreover, suggests that the translation or transference between media was not one of representation, but one of general effect. Painting acquires musical *effects* when it references music – and vice versa – without having to resort to representing it pictorially. This distinction between the aesthetics of production and the aesthetics of reception would become crucial to the paradigmatic position of music in the nineteenth century.

Hanslick extends this comparison by referencing a kaleidoscope, an optical instrument where repeated reflections create an image through light, vision, and form. Music

[189] J.M. Bernstein, *The Fate of Art: Aesthetic Alienation from Kant to Derrida and Adorno* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 5.
[190] Hanslick, *On the Musically Beautiful,* 29.

becomes “a kind of kaleidoscope”, as “music produces beautiful forms and colours in ever more elaborate diversity, gently overflowing, sharply contrasted, always coherent and yet always new, self-contained and self-fulfilled”.[191] The choice of kaleidoscope for colour and the arabesque for line allowed Hanslick to argue for the close parallel between the formal elements in music and painting, especially colour, writing how the kaleidoscope shows “how the *formal* aspects of both music and colour rest on the same basis”.[192] Often, discussions about the analogies between the different arts relied on the presence of such formal qualities as they were not exclusive to one art form. The close affinity between colour and music will be discussed more thoroughly in the next chapter, but it is worth pointing out that visual metaphor in musical circles was equally prevalent.[193] The close connection between ornamentation and music would recur throughout the nineteenth century, especially in works by Leighton, Whistler, and Moore that were deemed non-narrative, subject-less and hence considered “decorative”, a term used by critics in both a negative and positive fashion.[194] The beauty that Hanslick considered present in instrumental music was also present in “the arabesque, the ornamental column, or like products of natural beauty such as leaves and flowers”.[195] Compare this with Kant’s statement mentioned previously that “designs *à la grecque,* foliage for framework or on wallpapers, etc., have no intrinsic meaning […] We may also rank in the same class what in music are called fantasias (without a theme) and, indeed, all music that is not set to words”.[196] As autonomously beautiful, music was semantically independent, “self-contained”, and “in no need of content from outside itself”, consisting exclusively “of tones and their artistic combination”.[197] Music, as this independent art, became a model for the other arts through its success in autonomy, offering “an intoxicating promise of freedom to visual artists hemmed in by the responsibility of a

[191] Ibid., 29.
[192] Ibid., 29 [my italics].
[193] Gurminder Kaur Bhogal, “Visual Metaphors in Music Analysis and Criticism”, chap. 22 in *The Routledge Companion to Music and Visual Culture,* eds. Shephard and Leonard, 191-199.
[194] “The Royal Academy”, *Art Journal* (July 1874): 197; “The Royal Academy Exhibition: Third Notice”, *Saturday Review* 19, no. 501 (June 3, 1865): 665; “Royal Academy. IV”, *Saturday Review* 27, no. 710 (June 5, 1869): 744; and [P.G. Hamerton], “Pictures of the Year”, *Saturday Review* 25, no. 650 (April 11, 1868): 486-487. These are only a handful of examples relating to Moore, Whistler, and Leighton, respectively, including a more general overview. The topic itself will be discussed throughout this thesis in relation to all three case studies.
[195] Hanslick, *On the Musically Beautiful,* 32.
[196] Kant, *Critique,* 60.
[197] Hanslick, 28.

subject".[198] In its status of ideal or paradigmatic art, absolute music became "the touchstone for all aesthetic experience".[199]

As a final note, the reality was hardly this binary. Both these types of aesthetics contributed to the overarching idea of music as an aesthetic paradigm. It was not only autonomous instrumental music that was the sole and exclusive ideal; on the contrary, it was one of the numerous contributing factors. For the art of Whistler, Moore, and Leighton, however, as well as the doctrine of art for art's sake, the aesthetics of form was one of the most important ones. As Hamilton has pointed out, "the ideal of absolute music is central to musical modernism", part of a progress towards abstraction in the arts of which music "became a paradigm as a result of its own struggle" to "become abstract or 'absolute'".[200] This idea of the ideal, however, did strongly inform Pater's statement that "all art constantly aspires towards the condition of music".[201] It is important to note he did not speak of music as an art form, but as a *condition*. This condition is the paradigm: the attributes absolute music innately possessed were seen as favourable for the other arts. As I will demonstrate, Moore, Whistler, and Leighton did not always necessarily represent music-making, but they appealed to this paradigm in order to enrich their work and, in turn, enrich the subjective experience of their art.[202] Pater's associations have been analysed before, predominantly in relation to intermediality and literature and, over the last 20 years, also in relation to painting.[203] As mentioned before, he was significant in weaving together the separate narratives into one seemingly coherent study in the 1870s, but, as the following chapters will show, the ideas were much more prevalent in English Aestheticism before this.

---

[198] Anne Leonard, "Musical Metaphors in Art Criticism", chap. 24 in *The Routledge Companion to Music and Visual Culture,* eds. Shephard and Leonard, 211.
[199] Paddison, "Music as Ideal", 319.
[200] Hamilton, *Aesthetics and Music,* 85.
[201] Pater, *Studies*, 124.
[202] Lydia Goehr, "'All Art Constantly Aspires to the Condition of Music' – Except the Art of Music: Reviewing the Contest of the Sister Arts", chap. 6 in *The Insistence of Art: Philosophy and Aesthetics after Early Modernity,* ed. Paul Kottman (New York: Fordham University, 2017), 140-169; Patricia Herzog, "The Condition to Which All Art Aspires: Reflections on Pater on Music", *British Journal of Aesthetics* 36, no. 2 (April 1996): 122-134; and Bucknell, "Re-reading Pater".
[203] Østermark-Johansen, *Pater and Sculpture*; Rachel Teukolsky, "The Politics of Formalist Art Criticism: Pater's 'School of Giorgione'", chap. 12 in *Walter Pater: Transparencies of Desire,* eds. Laurel Brake, Lesley Higgins, Carolyn Williams (Greensboro, North Carolina: ELT Press, 2002), 151-169; Brad Bucknell, *Literary Modernism and Musical Aesthetics: Pater, Pound, Joyce, and Stein* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); and Elizabeth Prettejohn, "Walter Pater and Aesthetic Painting", chap. 2 in *After the Pre-Raphaelites: Art and Aestheticism in Victorian England,* ed. Elizabeth Prettejohn (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 36-58; and Elizabeth Prettejohn, *Art for Art's Sake: Aestheticism in Victorian Painting* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), chap. 9, "Walter Pater", 255-281.

Hanslick was not officially translated until 1891, but it was very common for Victorians to be able to read other languages like French and German, including Pater and Leighton, both of whom spent time in Germany and whose writings echo those of Hanslick. Moreover, Hanslick was discussed at length in contemporary musical journals, including some translations of his works and arguments, and composers, musicians, and artists knew him personally if not about him.[204] Francis Hueffer demonstrated in *Half a Century of Music in England* (1889) how pervasive the term absolute music had become by the 1880s, when he related the term to Whistler's art practice in a passage worth quoting in full:

> Not many weeks ago I had a conversation with a young English composer, […] I was exceedingly struck by the emphatic manner in which my young friend held forth against so-called 'absolute music'. The Symphony, the Sonata, and other classical forms appear to him to be the effete types of a bygone age. A piece of music without a subject, he thought, was as meaningless as a picture without a subject. In short, he expressed the most unqualified allegiance to that 'poetic idea in music' which Wagner, Liszt, and Berlioz have proclaimed in their various ways.
>
> With his thorough-going revolutionism I was, of course, unable to agree in all its bearings. Ripe experience has taught me that in the house of music there are many habitations, that the classical form created by Haydn, and imbued with infinite varieties and depths of beauty by Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann, Mendelssohn, and many others, is by no means obsolete; that in the hands of genius it may still bring forth rich and noble fruit. Neither can I admit that must necessarily deal with an extraneous subject; even painting may to a certain extent dispense with such a subject, may become a vague and delightful harmony of colour, as Turner and Mr. Whistler have taught us.[205]

The connection with music is far from incidental. As Hueffer's colleague Edward Dannreuther wrote in 1875, "Music is continually saying, *This is*; all other arts say, *This*

[204] Leighton's close friend Charles Hallé, for example, was acquainted with Hanslick; see Hallé, *Life and Letters of Sir Charles Hallé: Being an Autobiography (1819-1860) with Correspondence and Diaries,* eds. C.E. Hallé and Marie Hallé (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1896), 304. There are numerous journals covering Hanslick as musicologist in England, too many to cover here. Particularly interesting are the comments on aesthetics, as when Fr. Niecks wrote that "among the more modern publications on the subject of aesthetics, none has made a greater stir in the world than Hanslick's 'On the Beautiful in Music'"; Niecks, "Aesthetical Notes", *The Monthly Musical Record* 13, no. 150 (June 1883): 128. Some of Hanslick's own writings were published from 1878 onwards, such as "Hanslick and Wagner", *The Musical World* 56, no. 13 (March 30, 1878): 218-220.

[205] Francis Hueffer, *Half a Century of Music in England 1837-1887: Essays Towards a History* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1889), 235-236.

signifies".[206] Other developments in the 1860s were responsible for the intersection of music and painting in London, which is what I will discuss in the next chapter. It was during this decade that music-painting metaphors, already in existence, really flourished.

[206] Edward Dannreuther, "The Musical Drama", *Macmillan's Magazine* 33, no. 193 (November 1875): 81 [italics in original].

Chapter Two: Music Theory and Art for Art's Sake in Victorian Britain

In 1893, John van Dyke wrote in *Art for Art's Sake* how "colour-harmony is now the loftiest pitch to which the painter may attain", the "consummation of his art".[207] In doing so, he was explicitly bridging music theory and the discourse of art for art's sake in painting. This association was based in the close parallels between colour (in painting) and sound (in music):

> The similarity of tone in colour to tone in music offers one way of illustrating a meaning rather difficult of explanation […] a true or false tone in painting is the exact counterpart of a true or false tone in a piece of music. The analogy certainly seems quite perfect.[208]

By the 1880s and 1890s, the understanding of art for art's sake had coalesced into an interpretation of painting as independent from external subject matter. Instead of a narrative reading, a formal combination of "beauties of colour, form, tone, atmosphere, light", carrying a "pictorial beauty" which "should exist for its own sake" furnished artistic meaning.[209] Through the actions of Whistler, Moore, and Leighton, music was mapped onto this discourse from the 1860s onwards. Similarly, because of Wagner and Hanslick, among others, the aesthetic attitude of art for art's sake was woven into the understanding of absolute music in the 1840s and 1850s.[210] As both writers were well aware of the contemporary developments of *l'art pour l'art* in Paris, it is possible absolute music was even formulated with the French discourse in mind.[211] At their roots, both art for art's sake and absolute music were a renunciation of art's presumed dependence on external associations and, consequently, a celebration of potential autonomy and abstraction. Walter Hamilton in *The Aesthetic Movement* (1882) argued as much:

> A great literary controversy has been going on in Germany for a century and a-half [sic], the chief topic in dispute being the question as to whether an object is actually beautiful in itself, or merely appears so […] From this dispute came the origin of the school, and the *Aesthetes*

[207] John C. Van Dyke, *Art for Art's Sake: Seven University Lectures on the Technical Beauties of Painting* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1893), 41.
[208] Ibid., 80.
[209] Ibid., 5-6.
[210] Mark Evan Bonds, *Absolute Music: The History of an Idea* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 135-136.
[211] Ibid., 111.

> are they who pride themselves upon having found out what is the really beautiful in nature and art.[212]

To understand how the aesthetic paradigm of music came to be established, albeit not universally accepted, in Victorian England in the 1860s, it is necessary to understand how the discourse transferred from Austro-German areas to England. As I will demonstrate below, this transference of ideas developed conjointly with the rise of *l'art pour l'art* and its English translation of 'art for art's sake'. The various modes of expression of music as paradigmatic took shape in a number of different models, including analogy, convergence, and metaphorical parallelism. In fact, the musical ideal proposed a range of interpretations and experiences of the intersection of music with the other arts. Within this, the notions of absolute music separated from society and autonomous painting separated from narrative were only a few of many possible interpretations. As established in the previous chapter, two branches of aesthetics developed in parallel: that of expression and that of form. Ultimately, it was a blend of the two that became the most suitable and significant for Moore, Whistler, and Leighton, a blend filtered through the French *l'art pour l'art*. To fully understand and appreciate how music intersected with painting, and what model I propose to be the most suitable to interpret the art of Moore, Whistler, and Leighton, a number of musical-aesthetic models need to be explored first in conjunction with contemporary musical-cultural developments. This will also demonstrate how and why art for art's sake and instrumental music worked so well together for Aesthetic painters.

Finally, I will use this chapter to demonstrate how the meeting place between music and painting was earlier than has been generally acknowledged in the existing scholarship. I propose to take this a step further, too, by demonstrating how the aesthetics of form, the aesthetics of expression, absolute music, and art for art's sake were interwoven into a complex discourse that provided a theoretical and aesthetic framework for Whistler, Moore, and Leighton. I then want to use Section II to demonstrate how this works itself out in their oeuvres. I am not claiming that art for art's sake developed *because of* music for music's sake, form for form's sake, or absolute music. Rather, both discourses share the same foundation and, ultimately, provoke similar themes of artistic expression. It was because the two arts had shared ideals under the aegis of autonomous and abstract art that they were brought closer together and became so intertwined in the 1860s in London. Following on from this, it is hence not sufficient to quote Pater's famous statement that "all art constantly

[212] Walter Hamilton, *The Aesthetic Movement* (London: Reeves & Turner, 1882), vi-vii.

aspires towards the condition of music" and ergo assume the musical rhetoric, musical-aesthetic art criticism, and musicality was a product of the 1870s and must have been true for all Aesthetes.[213] Instead, the increasingly central position of music in Victorian culture and the dissemination of Austro-German aesthetics alongside French ideas of *l'art pour l'art* in the 1860s led to re-evaluations of aesthetic criteria in favour of abstraction and intermediality.

From Vienna, Leipzig, and Paris to London

The nineteenth century was one of the most pluralistic and variegated periods in Western music history. It saw the rise of popular music industries and concert series such as the London Philharmonic Society in 1813, which was responsible for the dissemination of classical music to the Victorian public. Ludwig Spohr (1784-1859), Hector Berlioz (1803-1869), and Wagner all conducted concert series for the Society, as well as William Sterndale Bennett (1816-1875), Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900), and Pyotr Illyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893). The Society later moved to St James's Hall, where Frederic Leighton would become heavily involved with its programme and musical production from 1869 until his death in 1896. The Society also played a significant role in furthering the interest in concert performances in general in London, as well as establishing the role of conductor as a notable public figure.[214] Moreover, as Jim Samson has pointed out, the Society provided a model framework for others by including "a permanent musical director, professional performers, and a repertory centred on the Viennese classics with a sprinkling of ambitious modern works".[215] The 'Viennese classics' equated to quintessentially instrumental pieces by Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn, Schubert, and the like, and the foregrounding of these pieces helped popularise its associated musical theories.

The Crystal Palace, erected in 1851 and then moved to a permanent location in Sydenham in 1853, was instrumental in establishing a number of such popular concert series, especially the Handel Festivals (1857-1926) and the Saturday Concerts organised by August

[213] Walter Pater, *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry, the 1893 Text,* ed. Donald L. Hill (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1980 [1877]), 106.
[214] Berlioz and Wagner wrote essays on the topic and are commonly seen as some of the earliest notable conductors in Western music history. Hector Berlioz, *À travers chants: Études musicales, adorations, boutades et critiques* (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1862), esp. the address to "Les membres de l'Académie des Beaux-Arts" of 11 September 1862, 359-277, 269; Richard Wagner, *Über das Dirigieren* (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1869). For more on conductors in England, see José Antonio Bowen, "Mendelssohn, Berlioz, and Wagner as Conductors: The Origins of the Ideal of 'Fidelity to the Composer'", *Performance Practice Review* 6, no. 1 (Spring 1993): 77-88.
[215] Jim Samson, "Music and Society", chap. 1 in *The Late Romantic Era: From the Mid-19th Century to World War I,* ed. Jim Samson, 5 (London and Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press Limited, 1991).

Manns (1855-1900).[216] The latter offered "complete symphonies by Beethoven, cycles of symphonies by Schubert and Schumann, works by Berlioz and Wagner, and new works by British composers".[217] A close friend of Leighton's and co-founder of the Grosvenor Gallery, Charles Hallé (1819-1895) was equally important, organising the Popular Monday Concerts at St James's Hall and conducting the Hallé Orchestra from 1857 onwards. With the massive increase in popularity of commemorative festivals like the above-mentioned Handel Festivals, musical soirées, popular concerts, and large-scale classical musical performances, on an ideological level "British intellectuals", Colin Eatock has argued, were keen to "align themselves with the pan-European cultural project of canon formation, firmly adhering to the concept of greatness in the arts".[218] Part of this was the popularity of foreign composers and the dearth of English composers, while it also fit within the Hegelian framework of succession and synthesis. There was a widespread celebration of "the Great Trinity of Genius", consisting of Beethoven, Mozart, and Haydn, which expanded in 1842 to include Felix Mendelssohn in London.[219] These composers were elevated because their art and musical compositions were considered durable, timeless, and universal in accordance with an understanding of music as 'great' within the Victorian framework of progress and Romantic genius.

Alongside the increase in the status of the composer, there was an expansion in the appreciation and enjoyment of concert series as a leisurely and intellectual activity, equally leading to an increase in music criticism. As Leanne Langley has demonstrated in her research, music journals underwent a massive expansion in content, influence, and audience.[220] It is fascinating how music journals experienced such new-found popularity and growth when, admittedly, England was reliant on foreign (mostly Austro-German) composers to the point that it was dubbed *das Land ohne Musik* by Oskar A.H. Schmitz in 1904.[221] This was consistently questioned by English music critics throughout the nineteenth century, demonstrating the extent to which the Victorian musical scene relied on foreign instrumental

[216] Michael Musgrave, *The Musical Life of the Crystal Palace* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).
[217] Stephen Johnson, "The English Tradition", chap. 13 in *The Cambridge Companion to Conducting,* ed. José Antonio Bowen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 181.
[218] Colin Eatock, "The Crystal Palace Concerts: Canon Formation and the English Musical Renaissance", *19th-Century Music* 34, no. 1 (Summer 2010): 88.
[219] G.A. MacFarren, "No. I. Symphony in A Minor of Dr. Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy", *The Musical World* 17 (June 16, 1842): 187.
[220] Leanne Langley, "Music and Victorian England: A Tale of Two Myths", paper given at IMS Study Session 'Nineteenth-Century Musical Life, The Contemporary Press, and Musical History', 15th Congress of the International Musicological Society, Madrid, April 1992, http://www.leannelangley.com/site/assets/files/1063/taleoftwomyths.pdf, accessed 15/02/2018.
[221] Oskar A.H. Schmitz, *Das Land ohne Musik: Englische Gesellschaftsprobleme* (München: Georg Müller, 1914).

music – again, mostly Austro-German.[222] This did not mean that England was *without* music, since, as Christina Bashford wrote succinctly, "if ever demonstration of the centrality of music to nineteenth-century life and of the extraordinary growth in musical consumption at the time were wanted, one would need to look no further than the vigorous, vibrant musical culture of Victorian London".[223] It was, in Langley's words, a "paradoxical age of increasing musical literacy and impressive institutional growth, but elusive musical audiences and lacklustre composition".[224] Frederick Crowest concurred, writing in 1881 that England has the "continental reputation for being the Great Un-musical Power of Europe" though "we probably spend upon the Art and its Artists more money than any two or three other nationalities combined", a factor which is reflected in the choice of case studies in the influential writings by Francis Hueffer and H.R. Haweis.[225] Hence, even if the taste for and consumption of music dominated over its local production, it is evident that music became one of the most central aspects of Victorian life. Indeed, instrumental performances as well as Italian and French opera became incredibly successful.[226] Major themes connected to it were nationalism, gender construction, social theory, and industrialism.[227]

Because of the rise of instrumental music, paired with the rise of musical culture in general, there are a number of rubrics we can use to more accurately delineate how the

---

[222] "Why are Not the English a Musical People", *The Mirror of Literature* 12, no. 330 (September 6, 1828): 146-147; "Are the English a Musical People?", *Fraser's Magazine* 43, no. 258 (June 1851): 675-681; Algernon Ashton, "Are the English Musical?", *The Musical World* 71, no. 3 (January 17, 1891): 45-46. This is merely a selection of a recurring type of article, but it nonetheless demonstrates how pervasive the question of musicality remained throughout the nineteenth century.

[223] Christina Bashford, "The Late Beethoven Quartets and the London Press, 1836-ca. 1850", *The Musical Quarterly* 84, no. 1 (Spring 2000): 84.

[224] Langley, "A Tale of Two Myths", 2.

[225] Frederick Crowest, *Phases of Musical England* (London: Remington, 1881), vii; Francis, Hueffer, *Half a Century of Music in England 1837-1887: Essays Towards a History* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1889); and H.R. Haweis, *My Musical Life* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1898).

[226] French opera was, for example, incredibly important to Frederic Leighton, such as works by Hector Berlioz. For an analysis of the opera industry in nineteenth-century Europe, particularly the significance of Italian opera and its cross-currents with French imperial opera, see Roger Parker, "The Opera Industry", chap. 4 in *Nineteenth-Century Music,* ed. Samson, 87-117.

[227] These ancillary themes will resurface occasionally in Section II but are beyond the focus of this thesis. See Nicholas Temperley, "Xenophilia in British Musical History", chap. 1 in *Nineteenth-Century British Music Studies,* vol. 1, ed. Bennett Zon (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 3-19; Katharine Ellis, "The Structures of Musical Life", chap. 13 in *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music,* ed. Jim Samson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 343-370; Derek Carew, "The Consumption of Music", chap. 9 in ibid., 237-258; Ruth A. Solie, "Music", chap. 6 in *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian Culture,* ed. Francis O'Gorman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 101-118; Karen Yuen, "Bound by Sound: Music, Victorian Masculinity and Dante Gabriel Rossetti", *Critical Survey* 20, no. 3 Victorian Masculinities (2008): 79-96; Susan McClary, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1991); Leo Treitler, "Gender and Other Dualities in Music History", chap. 2 in *Musicology and Difference: Gender and Sexuality in Music Scholarship,* ed. Ruth A. Solie (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 23-45; Derek B. Scott, "The Sexual Politics of Victorian Musical Aesthetics", *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 119, no. 1 (1994): 91-114; Marcia J. Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), chap. 4, "Music as Gendered Discourse", 120-164.

intersection between music and the other arts took place within the paradigm of music as an aesthetic ideal. Philippe Junod has proposed the following categories: parallelism, convergence, divergence, and succession.[228] In short, parallelism was the notion, in the words of Robert Schumann, that "the aesthetic of an art is as that of another; only the materials are different".[229] Convergence, then, was the "meeting place of all the arts", the area where they lent strength to each other side-by-side, culminating in Wagner's famous total work of art, the *Gesamtkunstwerk*.[230] Divergence, on the other hand, presupposes a unity that is corrupted by any division among the arts, while succession is Junod's term for the "successionist viewpoint" in which "music is the logical and necessary outcome of the evolution of the arts".[231] Here he cites Schiller, Pater, and Schopenhauer on their shared notions that art must become *like* music. I disagree that this is an exclusively successionist viewpoint, however. Instead, I see Pater's – and Schiller's and Schopenhauer's – views as those of desirability and appeal. Music held certain characteristics that were desirable and successful and, if the other arts such as painting wanted to achieve the same level of expression, they should become *like* music. Not represent it or signify it, but *resemble* it, per Pater's 'condition' of music. Those features desirable in music – autonomy, abstraction, formalism, temporality – were elevated to an ideal status and once achieved, painting could become *like* music.

Similarly, James Rubin and Olivia Mattis have proposed both 'convergence' and 'analogy' as opposing rubrics for nineteenth-century painters interested in music.[232] The model of analogy here has its foundation in Louis Viardot's coinage of *ut pictura musica* in 1859 which has been mentioned above.[233] I disagree that the exploration of the art-music relationship is limited to either convergence or analogy, seeing as there are numerous models

---

[228] Philippe Junod, "The New *Paragone*: Paradoxes and Contradictions of Pictorial Musicalism", chap. 2 in *The Arts Entwined: Music and Painting in the Nineteenth Century,* ed. Marsha L. Morton and Peter L. Schmunk (New York: Routledge, 2000), 26-27.
[229] Robert Schumann, *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker* (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1891), vol. 1, 34 [my translation].
[230] Junod, "The New *Paragone",* 26. For more, see Anke K. Finger and Danielle Follett, eds., *The Aesthetics of the Total Artwork: On Borders and Fragments* (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 2011); Thomas S. Grey, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Wagner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), esp. Section III, "Ideas and Ideology in the *Gesamtkunstwerk*"; for more on the intersection between the 'total work of art' and painting, see Simon Shaw-Miller, *Visible Deeds of Music: Art and Music from Wagner to Cage* (New Haven and London: 2002), esp. chap. 2, "'Deeds of Music Made Visible': Wagner, the *Gesamtkunstwerk,* and the Birth of the Modern", 36-88; Simon Shaw-Miller, "*Opsis Melos Lexis:* Before and Around the Total Work of Art", chap. 2 in *Rival Sisters: Music at the Birth of Modernism, 1815-1915,* ed. James H. Rubin and Olivia Mattis (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 37-51; and Annegret Fauser, "'Wagnerism': Responses to Wagner in Music and the Arts", chap. 15 in *The Cambridge Companion to Wagner,* ed. Grey, 219-234.
[231] Junod, "The New *Paragone*", 27.
[232] James H. Rubin and Olivia Mattis, "Musical Paintings and Colourful Sounds: The Imagery and Rhetoric of Musicality in the Romantic Age", chap. 1 in *Rival Sisters,* eds. Rubin and Mattis, 3.
[233] Viardot, "Ut Pictura Musica", 19-29.

that investigate it through different lenses, whether social, cultural, philosophical, aesthetic, or artistic.[234] Similarly, such seemingly opposed models as convergence and analogy, or the aesthetics of formalism and that of expression, often combined in varied ways rather than function entirely as isolated branches of aesthetics.[235] Indeed, music in art could take a multitude of shapes, ranging from Orpheus and his lyre, to religious imagery in the figure of Saint Cecilia, to the representation of physical instruments and musical performances and, later in the century, also Wagner-inspired imagery.[236]

These different perspectives on the intersection between painting and music offer explanations on the compatibility between the two arts; they are all valid intersections with music. Indeed, as mentioned above, these intersections could become as pluralistic as the musical culture of the time. For many nineteenth-century critics, the intersection could also take place via physics and physiological phenomena by means of the affiliation between colour and sound through vibrations, vision, and audition. George Airy's *On Sound and Atmospheric Vibrations* (1868), Hermann von Helmholtz's *On the Sensations of Tone as a Physiological Basis for the Theory of Music* (1863, translated 1875), and Edmund Gurney's *The Power of Sound* (1880) formed the backdrop to a physiological investigation into sound, while scientific works like Isaac Newton's *Opticks* (1704) and Michel-Eugène Chevreul's *De la Loi du Contraste Simultané des Couleurs* (1839, translated into English in 1854) drastically increased the interest in colour theory and its intersections with music.[237] The latter also took place on a metaphorical level, in a way many scholars are inclined to label 'synaesthetic'.[238] As Paul Gordon has pointed out in a recent study on synaesthesia in the

---

[234] Junod, "The New *Paragone*", 26-28.
[235] Rubin and Mattis, "Musical Paintings and Colourful Sounds", 4; Max Paddison, "Music as Ideal: The Aesthetics of Autonomy", chap. 12 in *Nineteenth-Century Music,* ed. Samson, 318-342.
[236] For more on Orpheus, see Dorothy M. Kosinski, *Orpheus in Nineteenth-Century Symbolism* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1989). Both Aubrey Beardsley and Henri Fantin-Latour, the latter a close friend of Whistler, became intensely interested in Wagnerian imagery; see Emma Sutton, *Aubrey Beardsley and British Wagnerism in the 1890s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Valérie Bajou, "Fantin-Latour et ses musiciens", *Revue de Musicologie* 76, no. 1 (1990): 45-76; and Anne Leonard, "The Musical Imagination of Henri Fantin-Latour", chap. 11 in *Rival Sisters,* eds. Rubin and Mattis, 203-221.
[237] George Biddell Airy, *On Sound and Atmospheric Vibrations, with the Mathematical Elements of Music* (London and Cambridge: Macmillan, 1868); Hermann von Helmholtz, *Die Lehre von den Tonempfindungen als Physiologische Grundlage für die Theorie der Musik* (Braunschweig: Friedrich Vieweg und Sohn, 1863); Edmund Gurney, *The Power of Sound* (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1880). Michel-Eugène Chevreul, *De la Loi du Contraste Simultané des Couleurs* (Paris: Pitois-Levrault, 1839); Isaac Newton, *Opticks: or, A Treatise of the Reflexions, Refractions, Inflexions and Colours of Light* (London: Royal Society, 1704). This body of theory was extended by the French critic Charles Blanc when he published *Grammaire des arts du dessin* (Paris: Librairie Renouard, 1880 [1867]) and *Les artistes de mon temps* (Paris: Librairie de Firmin-Didot, 1876), both dealing with issues of colour-music and significant musical metaphor.
[238] Simon Shaw-Miller, *Eye hEar: The Visual in Music* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), chap. 1, "Opening Our Eyes to Hear More Clearly: The Culture of Synaesthesia", 7-28; Margaux Lynn Rose Poueymirou, "The Sixth Sense: Synaesthesia and British Aestheticism" (PhD diss., University of St Andrews,

arts, music, as the major art form of the nineteenth century, led us to the "edge of infinity", an edge which "combines the arts in a unified whole, whether or not the other arts are explicitly involved".[239] He proceeds to claim that all art is "inherently synaesthetic" since the proposition of a metaphorical relationship undermines art's "obvious synaesthetic underpinnings".[240] My main issue with using the term 'synaesthesia' to describe musical paintings is that synaesthesia is a neurological, involuntary, and compulsive action. It acts very differently from colour and music on a metaphorical level, where the relation is set, implied, and far from compulsory. There does seem to be a definite forerunner for the term 'synaesthesia' in Baudelaire's "Correspondances" (1857), and his writings resonate with similar involuntary responses to music.[241] I want to posit that we need to treat the term 'synaesthesia' with care; it is a neurological, scientific term that is sometimes convenient to help explain musical intersections in art, but at other times is blatantly unwanted. Simon Shaw-Miller defines synaesthesia as the cultural "cross-stimulation of sensory modalities".[242] However, I want to emphasise that we must endeavour to understand the metaphorical relationship between tone in colour and tone in sound, one that is fascinating and leads to insight into musical painting and the purpose of metaphor. I do not mean to negate the potential and presence of inter-art relations and intersensory aesthetics, but I will not use the term 'synaesthesia'. The term 'colour-music' did not denote synaesthesia, nor did the Victorian physicist George Henry Lewes's use of *Klang-farben* and 'double-sensation'.[243] Lewes, in applying 'double perception' and 'double sensation', affirmed that neurological synaesthesia and the metaphorical use of analogy were entirely different. On researching one of his patients, he recorded:

> One of the brothers has a great facility in distinguishing the overtones which accompany the ground tone; yet very often when these overtones are delicate and breathlike, his perception

---

2009); Jo Sager, "Whistler's Application of Musical Terminology to his Paintings: The Search for a Synaesthetic Response", PhD diss. (Ohio University, 2004); Robin Spencer, *James McNeill Whistler* (London: Tate Publishing, 2003), 16-17; and Judith Zilczer, "'Colour Music': Synaesthesia and Nineteenth-Century Sources for Abstract Art", *Artibus et Historiae* 8, no. 16 (1987): 101-126. For a more coherent cognitive and psychological approach, see Ophelia Deroy, ed., *Sensory Blending: On Synaesthesia and Related Phenomena* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017); and Lynn C. Robertson and Noam Sagiv, eds., *Synaesthesia: Perspectives from Cognitive Neuroscience* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[239] Paul Gordon, *Synaesthetics: Art as Synaesthesia* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020), 3.

[240] Ibid., 6.

[241] Charles Baudelaire, "Correspondances", in *Les Fleurs du Mal* (Paris: Poulet-Malassis et de Broise, 1857), 19-20.

[242] Simon Shaw-Miller, "Synaesthesia", chap. 2 in *The Routledge Companion to Music and Visual Culture,* eds. Tim Shephard and Anne Leonard (New York and London: Routledge, 2019), 13.

[243] George Henry Lewes, *Problems of Life and Mind* (London: Trübner & Co., 1879), 281.

> of them is *somewhat disturbed by the accompanying colours.* […] In later years Nussbaumer learning that painters spoke of the tones of colour, and musicians of the colour of tones (*klang-farben*), imagined that they also had the double sensation which he noticed in himself. But he learned on inquiry that this was not so; their terms were metaphorical.[244]

This does mean that, however appealing it is to have a set number of rubrics, this can never cover the variegated and complex ways in which music intersected with painting in Victorian London. Schawelka has described not a set of rubrics, but a set of conditions that made music appealing to visual artists, among them being the 'musical', *das 'Musikalische',* as aesthetic experience; the 'musicalisation' of the senses; and art against anecdote.[245] And indeed, music could be and, sometimes was, all of these things for painters, musicians, composers, theorists and the like. We have to acknowledge the difficulties in reconstructing these rubrics, difficulties that grip us as twenty-first century art historians as much as it gripped contemporary authors.

L'art pour l'art, **Art for Art's Sake, and Absolute Music**

In order to understand exactly where, how, and why music theory was able to intersect and overlap with art for art's sake in the 1860s, it is necessary to dissect and contextualise what the phrase means. The phrase itself is a translation of *l'art pour l'art*, a phrase often credited to Théophile Gautier, who laid the foundation for the term though did not actually use it.[246] As Jonathan Wilcox has astutely pointed out, any study into the history of *l'art pour l'art* warrants our diligence to terminology and our ability, as scholars, to cast our net wider and include a number of complementary rubrics related to the discourse.[247] The root of the phrase, after all, was the same as for Hanslick's formulation of musical formalism: Kantian aesthetics. In 1804, Benjamin Constant (1767-1850) affirmed as much:

> Schiller calls. He is a man of keen mind in his art but almost wholly the poet. It is true that the fugitive poetry of the Germans is of a completely different kind and depth from ours. I have a visit with Robinson, pupil of Schelling's. His work on the *Esthetics* [sic] of Kant has some

[244] Ibid., 280-281 [italics in original].
[245] Karl Schawelka, *Quasi una Musica: Untersuchungen zum Ideal des 'Musikalischen' in der Malerei ab 1800* (München: Mäander, 1993).
[246] Théophile Gautier, *Mademoiselle de Maupin* (London: Gibbings and Company, 1899 [1835).
[247] Jonathan Wilcox, "The Beginnings of l'Art Pour l'Art", *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 11, no. 4 Special Issue on the Interrelations of the Arts (June 1953): 360.

> very forceful ideas. *L'art pour l'art* without purpose, for all purpose perverts art. But art attains the purpose that it does not have.[248]

Considering Schelling's involvement, it is likely Constant's use of *l'art pour l'art* was based on Schelling's interpretation of Kant or at least, as Wilcox has argued, as a synonym for Kantian disinterestedness.[249] These first formulations of *l'art pour l'art* were based on what can either be understood as a deliberate and wilful alienation from society, or the desire for art to be understood and interpreted only in relation to itself rather than what it can represent or signify. Out of this grew the potential for a new aesthetic framework in which art could be conceived of as detached from any concerns external to it, whether didactic, moral, religious, political, or otherwise. It was within these lines of reasoning that Gautier more radically extended the discourse towards anti-utilitarianism and anti-materialism in 1835:

> What is the good of music? of [sic] painting? Who would be foolish enough to prefer a Mozart to a Monsieur Carrel, and Michael Angelo to the inventor of white mustard? There is nothing truly beautiful but that which can never be of any use whatsoever; everything useful is ugly, for it is the expression of some need, and man's needs are ignoble and disgusting like his own poor and infirm nature.[250]

Wilcox has emphasised the role Madame de Staël (1766-1817) played as a precursor to Gautier through her seminal work *De l'Allemagne* (1810, 1813), most notably her interest in Kant and translation of the phrases *désintéressement absolu* and *noble inutilité*.[251] At this stage, the doctrine aligned with ideas of pure beauty, formal beauty, aesthetic autonomy, and abstraction – albeit in the realm of poetry, not painting. De Staël was instrumental in transferring these ideas from France to England and firmly cementing the bridge between Kantian aesthetics and the idea of non-narrativity or subjectlessness in art:

> Those who are not admirers of painting considered in itself, attach great importance to the subject of a picture; they wish, in contemplating it, to feel the impressions which are

[248] Benjamin Constant, *Journal intime* (1804), quoted in ibid. 360.
[249] Ibid., 361.
[250] Gautier, *Mademoiselle de Maupin,* 31.
[251] Wilcox, "The Beginnings", 365; Madame de Staël [Anne-Louise-Germaine], *De l'Allemagne* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1852 [1810]), 450. The first edition of 1810 was destroyed by Napoleon on the basis of de Staël's public opposition to his reign, so in 1813 she republished the volume in England. See Beatrice Guenther, "Trading on Cultural Capital: Madame de Staël's Politics of Literature", *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* 40, no. 3/4 (Spring-Summer 2012): 203-221.

> produced by dramatic representation: […] but the arts are superior to thought: *their language is colour, forms or sounds*. If we could form an imagination of the expressions of which our souls would be susceptible without the knowledge of words, we should have a more just idea of the effect to be produced by painting and music.[252]

Above all, *l'art pour l'art* grew into an understanding and appreciation of autonomous and self-sufficient beauty when Gautier wrote how "art for art's sake does not mean art for the sake of form, but form for the sake of the beautiful, apart from any external idea, from any diversion in favour of a doctrine or any direct utility".[253] Victor Cousin (1792-1867) then took up these ideas to weave together idealist and Platonic theory with occasional references to German music theory in his lectures on the beautiful wherein he specifically rejected imitation and, instead, focused on expression.[254] Cousin had a key role in publicly disseminating the phrase *l'art pour l'art* since he discussed it in public lectures whilst Constant's use was restricted to a private diary. Moreover, Cousin's conflation of Kantian aesthetics with Platonic philosophy led to an idealisation of specific aesthetic attitudes and art's withdrawal from society.[255] Hence, when theories of autonomy were developed in the visual arts, this happened simultaneously with an increased interest in instrumental music because this was the art most adept and most successful at being autonomous, being abstract, and being meaningful in and of itself. As such, music did become an ideal; an ideal premised not in perfection imitation of music, but in aspiration *towards* the capabilities music inherently possessed.

When the discourse around *l'art pour l'art* first travelled to England, it did so predominantly in relation to poetry and not the visual arts.[256] The English translation of 'art for art's sake' made scattered appearances in English criticism and periodicals before 1868 when, as Elizabeth Prettejohn has pointed out, it was first recorded in use in relation to the

---

[252] Madame de Staël, "Of the Fine Arts in Germany", in *Music and Aesthetics in the Eighteenth and Early-Nineteenth Centuries,* eds. Peter le Huray and James Day (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 301 [my italics].
[253] Théophile Gautier, "Du beau dans l'art", *Revue des deux mondes* 19 (1847): 900 [my translation]. For more on Gautier's proclamations of ideal beauty, see Prettejohn, *Beauty and Art 1750-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), esp. section "Ingres, Gautier, and *l'art pour l'art*", 89-101.
[254] Ibid., 74.
[255] Ibid., 71.
[256] Karen Yuen, "Music's Metamorphosis in the Life and Creative Works of Dante Gabriel Rossetti", PhD diss. (Royal Holloway, University of London, 2008), 43-49; Wilcox, "The Beginnings", 373; and Gene H. Bell-Villada, "The Idea of Art for Art's Sake: Intellectual Origins, Social Conditions, and Poetic Doctrine", *Science & Society* 50, no. 4 (Winter 1986/1987): 432, 434; Gene H. Bell-Villada, *Art for Art's Sake and Literary Life: How Politics and Markets Helped Shape the Ideology and Culture of Aestheticism, 1790-1990* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 45-49.

visual arts.[257] Tom Taylor used the phrase in July of 1868 when reviewing that year's Royal Academy exhibition, applying it to the art of Frederic Leighton: "Mr. Leighton stands alone in his sustained aim at purity of style, expressed by delicate drawing of contours, and a smooth and finished elaboration of surface. 'Art for Art's Sake' is his motto".[258] Pater then used the same term in relation to William Morris's poetry, closely related to the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and in terms of language foreshadowing his own *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*:

> High passions give one this quickened sense of life, ecstasy and sorrow of love, political or religious enthusiasm, or the 'enthusiasm of humanity'. Only, be sure it is passion, that it does yield you this fruit of a quickened, multiplied consciousness. Of this wisdom, the poetic passion, the desire of beauty, the love of *art for art's sake,* has most; for art comes to you professing frankly to give nothing but the highest quality to your moments as they pass, and simply for those moments' sake.[259]

Algernon Charles Swinburne, who had been working on his biography of William Blake for a number of years, famously used the phrase to denounce *all* art not in service of itself:

> Art for art's sake first of all, and afterwards we may suppose all the rest shall be added to her […] Once let art humble herself, plead excuses, try at any compromise with the Puritan principle of doing good, and she is worse than dead. Once let her turn apologetic, and promise or imply that she really will now be 'loyal to fact' and useful to men in general (say, by furthering their moral work or improving their moral nature), she is no longer of any human use or value.[260]

Art was not a "handmaid of religion, exponent of duty, servant of fact, pioneer of morality", but carried the potential to be self-sufficient, self-referential, and abstract if it were valued for its own formal elements instead of what is could illustrate, represent, or signify.[261] The phrase, however, quickly became interchangeable with 'aesthetic' and 'aestheticism' in the 1870s, with a switch between 'art for art's sake' and 'art for its own sake' in Pater's own

---

[257] Elizabeth Prettejohn, *Art for Art's Sake: Aestheticism in Victorian Painting* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 33.
[258] [Tom Taylor], "Among the Pictures," *The Gentleman's Magazine* 1 (July 1868): 151.
[259] "Art. II. – Poems by William Morris", *Westminster Review* 34, no. 2 (October 1868): 312 [my italics].
[260] Algernon Charles Swinburne, *William Blake: A Critical Essay* (London: John Camden Hotten, 1868), 91-92.
[261] Ibid., 90.

writings.[262] The focus of Taylor's, Swinburne's, and Pater's use may be different, but the implications were similar: 'art for art's sake' was the preference for formal matters in art, leading to the experience of art *as art*. As such, the discourse came to encompass multiple facets, including but not limited to aesthetic experience, escapism, abstraction, autonomy, and self-referentiality. Specific phrases will become important, such as 'pure', 'ideal' and, once connected to musical terminology, 'harmony in form and colour', 'symphony in colour', 'arrangement in form and colour', and 'decorative'. 'Pure', for example, was used by Victorian critics to denote something autonomous, something *an sich*, as when Whistler's paintings were described as "pure brushwork".[263] This exact phrase had identical connotations in discussions of instrumental music, as when Wagner defined programme music in opposition to *reine Instrumentalmusik*, or when Hanslick consistently used *rein* in his conceptualisation of absolute music.[264] As I will demonstrate in Section II, the idea of abstract forms and colours – conceptualised through the use of rich musical terminology – was only possible through the overlap between the discourse of absolute music on the one hand and art for art's sake on the other.

The reason for a reconsideration of artistic purpose was partially due to political changes, as mentioned above. It was only in the second half of the nineteenth century that a doctrine like art for art's sake became fully feasible, as, "owing to a number of political and cultural factors", writes Gene Bell-Villada, "the early-nineteenth-century English mind, the mind of the poet included, was neither ready to stake out such claims for a separate beauty [through art for art's sake] or even imagine such claims".[265] When the political revolutions of 1848 swept through Europe, Gautier perceived this as an opportunity for revitalisation and revolution: "Artists, never was the moment more beautiful. Nothing now hinders your development".[266] Walter Hamilton connected the revolutions with the creation of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.[267] These same revolutions provided Wagner with an opportunity to

[262] Elizabeth Prettejohn, "Introduction", in *After the Pre-Raphaelites: Art and Aestheticism in Victorian England,* ed. Elizabeth Prettejohn (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 4.
[263] [P.G. Hamerton], "Pictures of the Year", *Saturday Review* 23, no. 605 (June 1, 1867): 691.
[264] Eduard Hanslick, *On the Musically Beautiful: A Contribution Towards the Revision of the Aesthetics of Music*, trans. Geoffrey Payzant (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1986). See Carl Dahlhaus, "Wagner and Program Music", *Studies in Romanticism* 9, no. 1 (Winter 1970): 3-20; and James Hepokoski, "Beethoven Reception: The Symphonic Tradition", chap. 15 in *Nineteenth-Century Music*, ed. Samson, section I, "The Purely Abstract Symphony", 435-436.
[265] Bell-Villada, *Art for Art's Sake,* 68.
[266] Théophile Gautier, "Art in 1848", in *Art in Theory 1815-1900: An Anthology of Changing Ideas,* eds. John Harrison, Paul Wood, and Jason Gaiger (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998), 316.
[267] Hamilton, *The Aesthetic Movement,* 1.

participate in Dresden, the political developments culminating in an impetus for his re-evaluation of instrumental music.[268] The result was one of division: on the one hand, musicians, writers, and artists alike wanted to strengthen the bond between society and art. On the other hand, other musicians, writers, and artists wanted to separate art from societal affiliations in what Paddison terms a "retreat into inwardness".[269] Dahlhaus posited that, despite Baudelaire's love for Wagner, the two represented different ways of retreat, yet he called attention to a conspicuous moment of cultural significance:

> As chary as we should otherwise be of historiological speculations based on dates, the temptation is well-nigh irresistible to see more than a mere coincidence in the fact that *Tristan* was written at the same time as Baudelaire's *Fleurs du Mal* (1857), the *fons et origo* of the modern movement in poetry.[270]

This 'retreat into inwardness' was simultaneously a retreat from social, political, moral, and religious engagement and an avenue into artistic autonomy. Eric Hobsbawm has located the start of *l'art pour l'art* in these revolutions, writing:

> 'Art for art's sake', though already formulated, mostly by conservatives or dilettantes, could not as yet compete with art for humanity's sake, or for the nations' or the proletariat's sake. Not until the 1848 revolutions destroyed the Romantic hopes of the great rebirth of man, did *self-contained aestheticism* come into its own.[271]

It is no coincidence that Gautier, as one of the major proponents of *l'art pour l'art* in France, used the 1848 revolutions as a chance to promote the need for "a whole new vast system of symbols" with the potential to answer "the needs of our times".[272] Art for art's sake and, I argue, musical terminology furnished the same function when it was introduced in England in the 1860s: it provided an alternative framework to reconfigure the meaning and experience of art.[273] This was partially based in Hanslick's aesthetics of form and the new-found

---

[268] See Robert Giddings, "Wagner and the Revolutionaries", *Music & Letters* 45, no. 4 (October 1964): 438-458.
[269] Paddison, "Music as Ideal", 625.
[270] Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music,* trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1989), 203.
[271] Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution 1789-1848* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1962), 325.
[272] Gautier, "Art in 1848", 317.
[273] For more on the history of art for art's sake itself, see Wilcox, "The Beginnings of l'Art Pour l'Art"; Bell-Villada, *Art for Art's Sake*, chaps. 2-3, 35-96; Prettejohn, *Art for Art's Sake,* 50-55, 268-270; L.M. Findlay, "The Introduction of the Phrase 'Art for Art's Sake' into English", *Notes and Queries* 20, no. 7 (July 1973):

appreciation of formal features as independently beautiful and meaningful, and it was partially based in the new explorations within the aesthetics of reception whereby the subject's aesthetic experience of the object – the viewer's experience of a painting, for example – was subjective, individualised, and characterised by inward reflection rather than outward signification and illustration through a painting's content. As such, art for art's sake as a doctrine held a direct theoretical parallel with the theory of absolute music as formulated by Hanslick. Both strove for subjectlessness, an emphasis on inherent formal features, and a stronger emphasis on the subjective experience of art *as art*.

The groundwork for the dissemination of these aesthetics in Victorian England were fundamentally musical in nature, part of which came from Baudelaire's writings of the 1840s and 1850s in which he connected colour with music as well as the interest in music Wagner generated with his first Paris performances of 1861. One crucial question hovered over all these changes, however: if an artwork was considered empty or subjectless due to a lack of subject matter, where did its meaning lie? For some critics this became an insurmountable obstacle, while for other critics and artists alike it provided an opportunity for artistic freedom and a prioritisation of form, mood, and aesthetic experience.

Musical Terminology in the 1860s

One answer to the question of where meaning lies is form, extending to line, colour, and form in painting or sounds, rhythm, harmony, and melody in music. Within the framework of the latter, Hanslick referred to form specifically as *tönend bewegte Formen,* using this phrase to refer to both its form and content.[274] A similar notion was brought forward with regards to painting in the 1860s through the close association of colour and sound. This was hardly a new relationship, but a novel element of this discourse, at least as it took place in Paris and London in the mid-nineteenth century, was the reconsideration of colour within the framework of art for art's sake. This led to a perception of sound and colour as formal elements capable of being autonomously meaningful, self-sufficient, and self-referential; a quasi-formalist formulation. This specific relation was explored and popularised by Leighton, Whistler, and Moore in this way: working towards the formal abstraction of a work of art in an attempt to achieve artistic autonomy. On the other hand, somewhat paradoxically, there was a shift from the idea of inherent beauty to that of beauty as the result of subjective

246-248; and Marguerite Murphy, "Pure Art, Pure Desire: Changing Definitions of 'l'art pour l'art' from Kant to Gautier", *Studies in Romanticism* 47, no. 2 (Summer 2008): 147-160.
[274] Hanslick, *On the Musically Beautiful,* 29.

experience. Hence, autonomy in an artwork became a desirable characteristic, yet simultaneously the potential of individualised experience was given more value. As Andrew Kagan has pointed out, using the term 'abstraction' or 'abstract' can be semantically problematic, and in any historical research we have to acknowledge how the term changed over time. Over the twentieth century, there was an attempt to define abstraction as "the blurring of distinctions between objects and space, as in 'cubist abstraction'", as well as "accommodating natural forms to a scheme of design" and using it "as a label for nonresemblant high art in which images are not derived from nature or the visual world".[275] How I want to identify the term 'abstract' in relation to nineteenth-century imagery is threefold: firstly, as a term denoting the idealisation of naturalist forms, or the expression of an abstract notion. Secondly, as a term denoting a preference for formal elements in art rather than representational and signifying ones: the "abstract properties of form and colour".[276] And thirdly, as a direct analogy to the absolute in instrumental music. There is a tension between "two kinds of art – representational or depictive art, and that which we want to call abstract art".[277] This debate of "'decorative v. realistic' art" had a direct parallel with music aesthetics according to Victorian critics, a debate which will resurface continuously in this dissertation.[278]

The connection with subjectlessness or non-narrativity in painting and music was made by Charles Lamb (1774-1834), a poet and essayist admired by both Swinburne and Pater. In *Essays of Elia* (1823) Lamb connected music with art that did not present a narrative on the basis of a shared emptiness:

> Above all, those insufferable concertos, and pieces of music, as they are called, do plague and embitter my apprehension. – Words are something; but to be exposed to an endless battery of mere sounds; to be long a dying; to lie stretched upon a rack of roses; to keep up languor by unintermitted effort; to pile honey upon sugar, and sugar upon honey, to an interminable tedious sweetness; to fill up sound with feeling, and strain ideas to keep pace with it; to gaze upon empty frames, and be forced to make pictures for yourself; to read a book, *all stops,* and be obliged to supply the verbal matter; to invent extempore tragedies to answer to the vague

[275] Andrew Kagan, *Absolute Art* (St Louis: Grenart Books, 1995), 21.
[276] W.M. Rossetti, "The Fine Art of the International Exhibition", *Fraser's Magazine* 66, no. 392 (August 1862): 188.
[277] Kagan, *Absolute Art*, 28.
[278] Gleeson White, "Albert Moore", *The Bookman* 7, no. 39 (December 1894): 83.

> gestures of an inexplicable rambling mine, - these are faint shadows of what I have undergone from a series of the ablest executed pieces of this empty *instrumental music*.[279]

Lamb draws an important distinction here: without representational content, all that is left is form. Just as a piece of instrumental music was 'empty' because of its disavowal of signification and emphasis on form, consequently a painting was considered 'empty' if it prioritised form and colour over narrative. Even more importantly, this did not remain an isolated development but became a driving force in avant-garde artistic circles of the mid-nineteenth century to re-evaluate the interrelationships of the arts – not just music, but also poetry, sculpture, drama, dance, and architecture reflected in Gautier's idea of *transposition d'arts*.[280] This, in turn, led to a massive increase in musical-aesthetic terminology in critical writings on art. This was spearheaded in Paris by the writings of Baudelaire, ranging from his influential reviews of the Salons in Paris, to his poetry (*Les Fleurs du Mal,* 1857), to his review of Wagner's performances in 1861, and to his essays in *The Painter of Modern Life* (1863). Despite not using the phrase *l'art pour l'art,* Baudelaire engaged with many of the core tenets of the discourse and related it to what he saw as modernity and modern life. It is noteworthy to point out how much value Baudelaire attached to the power of colour, something he envisaged and interpreted with the use of music, using phrases like "tonal combinations", "absolute, self-convinced painting", a visual "musical seductiveness", a "total harmony", "harmonious colour-masses" and "perfect harmony".[281] In his Salon review of 1846, Baudelaire rhapsodised:

> I do not know if any *analogist* has ever established a complete scale of colours and feelings, but I remember a passage in Hoffmann which expresses my idea perfectly and which will appeal to all those who sincerely love nature: 'It is not only in dreams, or in that mild delirium which precedes sleep, but it is even awakened when I hear music – that perception of

[279] Charles Lamb, *Essays of Elia* (London: F. Moxon & Co., 1869 [1823]), 62 [italics in original]. Swinburne wrote in 1868 that Lamb was "the most supremely competent judge and exquisite critic of lyrical and dramatic art that we have ever had"; Swinburne, *William Blake,* 8. Pater published an essay on Lamb in 1878, included in *Appreciations* (1889); Walter Pater, *Appreciations with an Essay on Style* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1889), 107-126.

[280] Théophile Gautier has used the term *transposition d'art*, or the transposing of art, to write about cross-media references. Since it is inconclusive where Pater had the phrase "*Anders-streben*" from, I cannot say with certainty the two are related, but the respective translations lie close to each other in English. For a discussion of Gautier's *transpositions*, see Marie Fournou, "L'écriture picturale dans les nouvelles de Théophile Gautier: Entre dialogisme et interference", *Postures: critiques littéraires* no. 7 (2005), esp. section "La transposition d'art", 153-154.

[281] Charles Baudelaire, "The Salon of 1845", in *Art in Paris 1845-1862: Salons and Other Exhibitions, Reviewed by Charles Baudelaire,* ed. and trans. Jonathan Mayne (London: Phaidon Press, 1965), 8, 6, 5, 3.

> an analogy and an intimate connexion between colours, sounds and perfumes. It seems to me that all these things were created by one and the same ray of light, and that their combination must result in a wonderful concert of harmony. The smell of red and brown marigolds above all produces a magical effect on my being. It makes me fall into a deep reverie, in which I hear the solemn, deep tones of the oboe in the distance'.[282]

He added that when the sun sets, "fanfares of red surge forth" and a "harmony of blood flares up at the horizon", with shadows "rhythmically sweeping" to create "succession of melodies whose variety ever issues from the infinite". This, to him, was a "hymn" called colour.[283] It is no surprise nor coincidence that Baudelaire appeals to Wagner and Hoffmann in his writings in order to define the bridge between colours and sounds as something emotional. Wagner in particular became an important influence in the early 1860s when Baudelaire attempted to define how one art can *translate* into another.[284] Eventually, Baudelaire achieved for critical writing what Wagner and Hoffmann achieved for music and musical writing, respectively: providing an alternative aesthetic framework complete with nomenclature to interpret the analogies between the arts. Indeed, Baudelaire created a theory of colour:

> Harmony is the basis of the theory of colour. Melody is unity within colour, or overall colour. Melody calls for a cadence; it is a whole, in which every effect contributes to the general effect. Thus melody leaves a deep and lasting impression on the mind. Most of our young colourists lack melody. The right way to know if a picture is melodious is to look at it from far enough away to make it impossible to understand its subject or to distinguish its lines.[285]

Baudelaire's writings were well-known in the artistic circles around Swinburne, Rossetti, and Pater in England, and many of his ideas wound their way into the art of Whistler, Leighton, and Moore. Furthermore, the analogies he established, which Viardot repeated in 1859 and Leighton in 1879 – harmony is colour, melody is line – would become more and more prevalent in late-nineteenth-century discussions of paintings, extending from mere "parallelism" to a school of self-professed "'tone harmonies'".[286] This was reiterated in 1861,

---

[282] Charles Baudelaire, "The Salon of 1846", in ibid., 51 [italics in original].
[283] Ibid., 49.
[284] Charles Baudelaire, "Richard Wagner and Tannhäuser in Paris", repr. in *The Painter of Modern Life: And Other Essays,* ed. and trans. Jonathan Mayne (London: Phaidon Press, 1964), 111-164.
[285] Baudelaire, "The Salon of 1846", in *Art of Paris,* 50.
[286] Charles W. Dempsey, "'Tone Harmonies', and the Modern Scheme of Colour", *The Magazine of Art* (January 1880): 258. Leighton's reference to this equivalence will be discussed in Chapter Five; Leighton, *Addresses Delivered to the Students of the Royal Academy* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1897), 14.

when Baudelaire professed that "what would be truly surprising to find out that sound *could not* suggest colour, that colours *could not* evoke the idea of a melody, and that sound and colour were *unsuitable* for the translation of ideas".[287] With his writings, Baudelaire offered the possibility that paintings, whether or not they actually contained musical references or illustrated music, could give the "impression" of music.[288] Austro-German musical models and theories of instrumental and absolute music, then, provided a possibility of autonomy and abstraction. Because many of these theories arrived in Victorian England via France, there was a second layer of rich musical-aesthetic terminology popularised by Baudelaire and his legacy. Both the Austro-German and the French theories on music emphasised form and formal elements, albeit in different ways, and both highlighted similar themes: contemplation or reverie; the intensification of feelings and sensations through music or the arts in general; and the importance of formal qualities in art.

Anne Leonard has pointed out how the use of musical terminology in art criticism, or at least the existence of such a "critical lexicon", only became possible in the nineteenth century once museums and concert halls had become notable and established public and social places. As she writes, affinities between music and painting were evident far before this, but only once "music-listening and art-viewing had become established social practices" did critical language become more thoroughly infused with musical nomenclature and metaphors.[289] This coincided in the 1860s with an increase in the representation in art of musical instruments, performances, and the experience of music as an art, as well as references in artistic writing of musical metaphors, especially by Whistler and Leighton. Questions concerning the equivalence of musical movements and painting, or pictorial music, only increased in other fields once artists became interested in it themselves. This is particularly evident in relation to Whistler's paintings with musical titles and his use of *Symphony in Grey and Green: The Ocean* (fig. 12, 1866-1872), *Harmony in Red: Lamplight* (fig. 13, 1884-1886), or *Nocturne: Blue and Silver – Bognor* (fig. 14, 1874/1876), as will be further discussed in Chapter Five.

This started a trend that would continue well into the twentieth century with Wassily Kandinsky's (1886-1994) *Improvisations* and *Compositions*, František Kupka's (1871-1957) *Amorpha: Fugue in Two Colours* (1912), or Paul Klee's (1879-1940) *Im Baschen Stil* (1919)

[287] Baudelaire, "Richard Wagner", in *The Painter of Modern Life,* 116 [italics in original].
[288] Charles Baudelaire, "The Exposition Universelle, 1855", in Baudelaire, *Art in Paris,* 141.
[289] Anne Leonard, "Musical Metaphors in Art Criticism" chap. 24 in *The Routledge Companion to Music and Visual Culture,* eds. Shephard and Leonard, 209.

and *Fuge in Rot* (1921).[290] Even Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890) was enraptured by the precedent set by Whistler: "If I carry out this plan there'll be a dozen or so panels [writing of his *Sunflowers*]. The whole thing will therefore be a symphony in blue and yellow".[291]

Musical metaphors lend themselves very well to music's indeterminacy; with a transference of the focal point of experience from object to subject, artistic meaning can become ambiguous, fluid. Writing for *The Musical Times,* G.A. MacFarren commented in 1875 that "indisputably, all musical images are vague, and are susceptible of various interpretation by different hearers".[292] This extended range of expression and subjective interpretation led to a greater incorporation into and use of pictorial terminology for musical pieces as well as musical terminology for visual artworks. The latter progressed particularly fast once a number of English painters became interested in non-narrative painting in the 1860s. For some critics this led to a deeper consideration of transpositions among the arts, but for others, these developments crystallised into a new-found appreciation for the musical qualities of painting. The latter expressed itself in a new attitude towards art, premised on experiencing 'the musical' through aesthetic experience. Music became an ultimate form of art for art's sake; untied as it was to social restrictions or expectations, music was completely and utterly autonomous. A painting can achieve the same if the viewer experiences it as such.[293] In other words, the experience of pictorial music was often defined as a specific response to art, premised in a specific type of aesthetic experience.

The 1860s proved a particularly fruitful ground for the retreat from strict realism, imitation, and naturalism as part of the English response to French art criticism. This was set in motion once Baudelaire's Salon reviews started gaining in popularity and, apart from English artists and critics reading French articles continuously, became a noticeable issue in London through a number of events: the Exposition Universelle of 1855, its successor the International Exhibition of 1862 held in South Kensington, and Wagner's première of *Tannhäuser* held at

[290] See Hajo Düchting, *Paul Klee: Painting and Music* (Munich, London, and New York: Prestel, 2016 [1997]); Shaw-Miller, *Visible Deeds,* chap. 4, "Quasi una Musica: Kupka and Klee, Music, and the Idea of Abstraction", 121-162; and Schawelka, *Quasi una Musica*, chap. 3, "Einige Fallbeispiele", on "Wassily Kandinsky", 270-289.
[291] Letter by Vincent van Gogh to Theo van Gogh, letter 666 in *Vincent van Gogh – The Letters,* eds. Leo Jansen, Hans Luijten, and Nienke Bakker (Amsterdam and the Hague: Van Gogh Museum & Huygens ING, http://vangoghletters.org, digital database), accessed 26/02/2020. Van Gogh, during his time in London saw Whistler's paintings at the latter's 1874 exhibition. For more, see Peter L. Schmunk, "Van Gogh in Nuenen and Paris: The Origins of a Musical Paradigm for Painting", chap. 8 in *The Arts Entwined,* eds. Morton and Schmunk, 177-207; and Natascha Veldhorst, *Van Gogh and Music: A Symphony in Blue and Yellow,* trans. Diane Webb (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2018).
[292] MacFarren, "The Pictorial Power of Music", 104.
[293] Schawelka, *Quasi una Musica,* 11-12.

the Paris Opéra in March of 1861. While some Austro-German theories of instrumental music encompassed moods, ambiguities, passions, and emotions, and others emphasised formalism, abstraction, and autonomy, the intersection with music in French art criticism was particularly rich in metaphor and colour-relations. These separate influences connected in London in the 1860s to form part of a doctrine as complex as art for art's sake. These separate events provided fruitful ground for a convergence of separate aesthetic theories on a broader scale. The reviews by critics instigated widespread reconsiderations of artistic evaluative criteria, while Wagner's *Tannhäuser* catapulted music to the forefront of all cultural production in Paris.

The use of musical terminology, then, became particularly prominent in the writings of those critics already affiliated with avant-garde artistic circles in London, such as William Michael Rossetti and Frederic George Stephens. Rossetti wrote in 1863 how there were a number of foreign influences at work in the Royal Academy, specifically what he described as a French influence, an aspect he repeated and emphasised the year after.[294] Indeed, of Leighton's *A Girl Feeding Peacocks* (fig. 15, 1863) Rossetti wrote in laudatory tones that it was "the art of luxurious exquisiteness; beauty, for beauty's sake; colour, light, form, choice details, for their own sake, or for beauty's".[295] Rossetti aptly recognised how moods rather than illustrative narratives became interesting to some artists, using Moore, Leighton, G.F. Watts, and Frederick Sandys, among others, as examples of classical revivalists working in this vein.[296] Stephens, working for *The Athenaeum* in this period, seemed to have made it his project to describe Dante Gabriel Rossetti's art in musical nomenclature, using this platform to associate non-narrativity with a musical effect: "[*The Blue Bower*, fig. 16] aims at effect quite as much by means of inherent beauty and melodious colouring as by the mere subject, which is superficial".[297] This increase in musical metaphors to describe paintings, becoming more widespread in the 1860s than just these two critics, was buttressed and reinforced by other essays and analyses confirming the importance of non-narrativity and the dedication of art to itself. As such, new aesthetic criteria were developed to interpret painting, ones premised not on illustration and signification, but on technicality, beauty, visual effect, and

[294] W.M. Rossetti, "The Royal Academy Exhibition", *Fraser's Magazine* 67, no. 402 (June 1863): 784; W.M. Rossetti, "The Royal Academy Exhibition", *Fraser's Magazine* 70, no. 415 (July 1864): 57.
[295] Rossetti, "The Royal Academy Exhibition" (1863): 790.
[296] W.M. Rossetti, "The Royal Academy Exhibition", *Fraser's Magazine* 71, no. 426 (June 1865): 744-746.
[297] [F.G. Stephens], "Fine Arts: Mr. Rossetti's Pictures", *The Athenaeum* no. 1982 (October 21, 1865): 545. For more on Stephens's use of colour-music metaphors, see Robert Wilkes, "The Hidden Pre-Raphaelite: The Art and Writings of Frederic George Stephens from 1848-1870", PhD diss. (Oxford Brookes University, 2019), chap. 9, "Colour, Music and 'Art for Art's Sake' in Stephens's Art Criticism in the 1860s", 182-194. Robert kindly let me read this chapter of his thesis.

aesthetic impact.[298] Most significantly, all these four categories were applied using the lens of music. The increased attention to the use of colour in contemporary painting, led on by a surge of interest in sixteenth-century Venetian painting, fitted very well in this musical framework. Musical metaphor, after all, was a convenient way to describe effects that are otherwise difficult to verbalise. This way, a term like 'harmony' could be applied to composition and symmetry as easily as to the effects of colour, the critic switching between the term's connotations for maximum impact.[299] There was a marked increase, also, in writings on linking music and the others from mid-century onwards, with phrases like 'sister arts', analogies between the arts, and the perceived connection between colour and music becoming more prevalent. As Robert Wilkes has pointed out in his doctoral research, Stephens first connected music and colour upon reviewing John Everett Millais's *The Black Brunswicker* (1860):

> Colour is as much an art as music, being in fact to the eye what music is to the ear, - the expression of beauty –
> 'That may overtake far thought,
> With music that it makes.'
> The time is rapidly coming when this will be understood, and critics no more omit to describe the colour of a picture – heart of art as it is – than they would the melody of a piece of music.[300]

Stephens would, indeed, become instrumental in popularising the musical associations implied in colour, as well as popularising analogies between music and painting from the mid-1860s onwards because he shared these interests. In 1862, Joseph Goddard, philosopher and historian, published *The Philosophy of Music: A Series of Essays*, which focused specifically on the relationship of music to the other arts and music's moral dimension. A reviewer described the contemporary situation with regards to musical analogies to be "frequently treated", as "not merely have we seen music written to pictures, or pictures inspired by music, - but ingenious folk have made rainbow scales – have dubbed one

[298] See Elizabeth Prettejohn, "Morality Versus Aesthetics in Critical Interpretations of Frederic Leighton, 1855-1875", *The Burlington Magazine* 38, no. 1115 (February 1996): 80.
[299] See Mark A. Cheetham, *The Rhetoric of Purity: Essentialist Theory and the Advent of Abstract Painting* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), for a discussion of phrases like 'pure', 'abstract', and 'harmony' in relation to the painting. See also Kagan, *Absolute Art,*19, 22-23.
[300] [F.G. Stephens], "The Royal Academy", *Macmillan's Magazine* (June 1860), quoted in Wilkes, "The Hidden Pre-Raphaelite", 186-187.

instrument *purple*, another *yellow*".[301] The reviewer does concede that "the connexion and relation of music to the other Fine Arts are so subtle, so capricious, so regulated by chances and conditions which elude all calculation and definition, that the student can […] merely collect facts, coincidences and discrepancies".[302] Regardless of the slippery nature of musical and artistic analogies, it is evident that in the early 1860s such analogies were becoming more and more widespread.

The significant increase in the writings on music and painting ranged from articles dealing with perceived analogies between the two arts (often founded in mathematical principles),[303] to perceived relations between the emotional effects of both arts,[304] to the hierarchy implicit in the comparison of the arts.[305] Significantly, there was a change in the critical language used to write about art, with specifically an increase in the use of 'form and colour' as counterpoints to music's harmonies and movements as well as a move towards abstraction in the visual arts grounded in the perceived abstraction of absolute instrumental music.[306] An early example of this is an article from 1858 in the *Art Journal* which is an essay on artistic principle in the form of a dialogue between artist and sitter, or photographer and sitter. The author, Ronald Campbell, acknowledges that this dialogue serves as an essay-format for him to write about matters of artistic and aesthetic interest. Despite being a writer primarily on photography, this essay-dialogue delves into artistic ideas and themes that would become central to the debates of the later 1860s. At the heart of Campbell's discussion is his reasoning that art does not and should not copy nature, and even imitations it should search for that glimmer of beauty that only the artist can discern in it. As such, he constantly

---

[301] "The Philosophy of Music: A Series of Essays", *The Athenaeum* no. 1814 (August 2, 1862): 144 [italics in original].
[302] Ibid.
[303] See J.A., "Music and Painting", *The London Reader* 5, no. 118 (August 12, 1865): 476-477; George Biddell Airy, *On Sound and Atmospheric Vibrations, with the Mathematical Elements of Music* (London and Cambridge: Macmillan and Co., 1868); David Ramsay Hay, *The Natural Principles and Analogy of the Harmony of Form* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1842); and Hay, *A Nomenclature of Colours Applicable to the Arts and Natural Sciences, to Manufactures and Other Purposes of General Utility* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1846).
[304] See "Music and Painting", *The Musical Monthly* 1, no. 2 (February 1864): 19; H.R. Haweis, *Music and Morals* (London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1872); "The Philosophy of Music", *The Musical World* 38, no. 50 (December 15, 1860): 791-792; "Music", *The Reader* 3, no. 56 (January 23, 1864): 116.
[305] See Frances Power Cobbe, "The Hierarchy of Art", *Fraser's Magazine* 71, no. 421 (January 1865): 97-108; and Frances Power Cobbe, "The Hierarchy of Art", *Fraser's Magazine* 71, no. 423 (March 1865): 334-346.
[306] I have extensively used a vast online database, ProQuest, which includes a truly massive amount of digitised primary sources, such as historical newspapers, periodicals database (England as well as the United States), and digitised texts. These keyword-searchable sources have provided me with the opportunity to delve into specific searches, such as 'art for art's sake' or 'form and colour', returning results that show to what extent and how such phrases were used and applied in the contemporary public press.

references the "sisters – Painting, Music, Statuary, Architecture".[307] His emphasis on beauty and aesthetics is fascinating in itself, but especially intriguing is the following passage, spoken by Campbell's fictional artist:

> … the painter, whose province it is to point out and interpret the meaning of their [landscapes'] ever-varying beauties – 'Come now, paint me as I am; none of your perspective – your arrangements of chiaroscuro – your harmonies of colour and form, and so forth; just take me as you find me – you cannot improve me'. The painter would modestly reply, 'Pardon me, divine creature, I should never think of turning my pencil to so servile a use; I am only poring over your exquisite leaves that I may read and manifest to others the mystery of beauty and of love which it is your high vocation to reveal'.[308]

This type of expression – 'harmony in form and colour' – made an appearance in critical writing nine years before artists such as Whistler and his critics starting using such phrases. In the 1850s, however, there seems to have been a stronger emphasis on the scientific side of colour and light in relation to harmonies in colour or art.[309] What does it mean that painting can be interpreted as 'arrangements in chiaroscuro' or a 'harmony in form and colour'? And why did this type of musical terminology increase in the 1860s? In particular, the use of the term 'harmony' in relation to colour increased proficiently over this decade. In 1865, an article was published in the *Art Journal* which saw the use of 'harmony' as "a term upon which the whole world is at present at loggerheads".[310] The author added that this was not in relation the exclusive use of harmony in relation to music, but "Harmony as relating to colours".[311] However, the main implication of the term remains one defined in physiological or scientific terms, as three possible theories are named: the "prismatic theory" by Newton, the one by Goethe, and the "theory of chromatic harmony by contrast or opposition" as espoused by Field. However, the author concedes that this can hardly be the only way of looking at the situation, since the term is so indefinite and vague that it defies strictly rational explanations. The article demonstrates, if anything, that there was an increase in the use of

[307] Ronald Campbell, "Photography for Portraits", *Art Journal* 45 (September 1858): 273.
[308] Ibid., 273.
[309] "Society of Art", *The Athenaeum* no. 1219 (March 8, 1851): 272-273; P.J. Liv, "Letters to a Young Photographer of Art – No. 20", *Humphrey's Journal of the Daguerrotype and Photographic Arts* 11, no. 15 (December 1, 1859): 233. There is also some writing on the arrangement and harmony of colour with regards to dress and fabric. See Merrifield, "The Harmony of Colours", *Art Journal* (January 1851): 1-8; Merrifield, "On the Harmony of Colours in its Application to Ladies' Dress", *Art Journal* 4, no. 162 (January 1852): 13-15.
[310] J.B. Pyne, "Nomenclature of Pictorial Art", *Art Journal* no. 39 (March 1865): 65.
[311] Ibid., 65.

musical terminology with regards to painting, specifically the term 'harmony', and contemporary critics were picking up on this. A source that may have had influence on this was Eugène Chevreul's *The Principles of Harmony and Contrast of Colours* of 1855, translated into English in the same year. Most of the time, 'harmony' is used in order to describe "beauty of colour".[312] Already in the late 1850s and early 1860s the abstractness and vague nature of the medium of music were being acknowledged in critical writing, which was exacerbated by pictorial efforts with more musical subject material.

Once this type of nomenclature began to gain traction, a new aesthetic framework formed itself. To return to the idea of art for art's sake, this was assisted by writers like Frances Power Cobbe and her essays on the hierarchy of art and *l'art pour l'art* of 1865 and Edward Dowden when he discussed the influence of French aesthetics.[313] The latter commented on the presence of "painting with words, and colouring in music", acknowledging this French influence to be part of the discourse on "words and sounds, and colouring and form" being "only different languages by which the same great ideas are uttered".[314] Moreover, Dowden connected *l'art pour l'art* with the search for autonomy and independence in art, dubbing it a pervasive "watchword" now "so well known".[315] Following on from Rossetti and Stephens, P.G. Hamerton published "The Artistic Spirit" in 1865, arguing for the benefits of technical analysis over narrative interpretation, bringing in a discussion of "The Principle of Art for Art" in relation to Whistler's painting.[316] There is an insistence on the subjective experience of art by paying attention to technical details, which had a direct parallel with how instrumental music was enjoyed, listened to, appreciated, and interpreted. Stephens argued for the same, writing in 1867 that Whistler produced "pictures for the sake of ineffable Art itself, not as mere illustrations of 'subjects'".[317] The key word here is 'ineffable' in relation to subjectless art. For Baudelaire, to conceptualise Wagner's music verbally, he resorted to musical liaisons and subjective experiences, using phrases like "ineffably beauty", "azure wave", "iridescent cloud", a "dazzling burst of colour", or "a vast, slumbering lake of melody, a vaporous, extending ether".[318] Swinburne used it to describe Whistler's *Six*

[312] W. Barnes, "Thoughts on Beauty and Art", *Macmillan's Magazine* 4, no. 20 (June 1861): 131.
[313] Cobbe, "The Hierarchy of Art: Part I", 97-108; Cobbe, "The Hierarchy of Art: Part II", 334-346; Edward Dowden, "French Aesthetics", *The Contemporary Review* 1 (January 1, 1866): 279-310.
[314] Ibid., 280.
[315] Ibid., 288. For more discussion on this, see Prettejohn, *Art for Art's Sake*, 31.
[316] P.G. Hamerton, "The Artistic Spirit", *Fortnightly Review* 1 (June 15, 1865): 341.
[317] [F.G. Stephens], "Fine Arts: Royal Academy", *The Athenaeum* no. 2064 (May 18, 1867): 667.
[318] Baudelaire, "Wagner", in *Art in Paris,* 115.

Projects in 1868, labelling them a "melody of ineffable colour".[319] As Jerome McGann has pointed out, when Swinburne "speaks of a poem's harmony, his thought is always tied to a set of musical ideas and analogies".[320] Similarly, then, when Swinburne writes of a painting's harmony or melody, this is also tied to 'a set of musical ideas and analogies'. Crucially, however, for this period, as demonstrated by Prettejohn, there was a significant increase in a new type of aesthetic criticism partially based in French aesthetics, only to result in a new type of aesthetics for British artists.[321] Scattered reviews from earlier connected it exclusively to French literature and poetry, but by the mid-1860s this started to transfer to painting and, significantly, was rich with musical nomenclature.[322]

It was also Hamerton who, in 1868, equated subjectless painting with the emptiness of instrumental music wherein "the especial merchandise of painting" was "the visible melodies and harmonies, - a kind of visible music, - meaning as much and narrating as much as the music which is heard in the ears, and nothing whatever more".[323] This equation then became more widespread in later critical writing, such as when R.A.M. Stevenson saw those cases "where the art is purely for the art's sake" as equivalent to "a symphony in the material", or when Van Dyke analysed colour harmony as "the loftiest pitch to which the painter may attain, the consummation of his art" by virtue of its formal impression and self-sufficient meaning.[324]

We may never uncover the full historical truth, but I believe that the reason musical discussions of art and, in parallel with it, the establishment art for art's sake as a model for painting and visual artists, is due to a number of reasons. Firstly, as discussed above, the increase in musical performances in general and the increased presence of music in bourgeois society; secondly, the increased intersections between music and the other arts leading on from Wagner's first performances and massive waves he caused in all cultural sections in 1861, Paris; and, lastly, the groundwork laid by Pre-Raphaelite artists, poets, and authors for

[319] W.M. Rossetti and A.C. Swinburne, *Notes on the Royal Academy Exhibition* (London: John Camden Hotten, 1868), 44.
[320] Jerome McGann, "Wagner, Baudelaire, Swinburne: Poetry in the Condition of Music", *Victorian Poetry* 47, no. 4 'A hundred sleeping years ago': In commemoration of Algernon Charles Swinburne (Winter 2009): 621.
[321] Prettejohn, *Art for Art's Sake,* 31-33.
[322] "Art. VI. – Études sur la littérature française au XIX. siècle", *London Quarterly Review* 5, no. 10 (January 1856): 431-454; "A New French Revolutionary Manifesto", *New York Daily Tribune* (October 19, 1858): 3; "French Literature", *Saturday Review* 11, no. 288 (May 4, 1861): 457-459; and "Art. II. – Scènes de la Vie de Bohème", *The Quarterly Review* 103, no. 206 (April 1858): 328-346.
[323] P.G. Hamerton, *Contemporary French Painters: An Essay* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1895 [1868]), 76.
[324] R.A.M. Stevenson, "Art in France", *The Magazine of Art* 7 (January 1884): 465-466; Van Dyke, *Art for Art's Sake,* 41.

Aestheticism to blossom in the 1860s. This developed slightly differently from Paris, for example, creating a unique situation in this decade. As Kermit Champa has written, in England this discourse full of rich, critical musical-aesthetic writing had no place in Paris, where there was "nothing like the cumulative critical-theoretical tradition dedicated to music's pre-eminence that one finds in England", rather there was a "higher degree of application of much looser notions of music as some sort of aesthetic talisman for all the contemporary arts".[325] What the extent of musical metaphor to describe painting demonstrates is the importance of the Victorian engagement with and response to both paintings and music. The temptation of critics to find musical metaphors is deeply suggestive of a musical experience of visual artworks as a common and valid experience and is, in itself, a specific type of expression.

In 1867, Rossetti posited that the main requirement of all art should be "that a work professedly of fine art shall above all things fulfil this profession, be primarily a work of *art,* and that *fine* art".[326] In the same year, Sidney Colvin published an article reflecting on the state of English art at that point in time. Colvin took a similar requirement as Rossetti, proposing to judge all art by the aesthetic standard or principle of beauty. For his purpose of surveying the quality of contemporary English art, he divides it into a number of themes: anecdote, both contemporary and historical; academic, mimetic art; and scientific mimetic painting, with an emphasis to absolute fidelity to imitation. But by the year 1867, Colvin acknowledges another theme on the rise in contemporary painters: "the art that seeks perfection of forms and colours – the art whose aim is beauty".[327] According to him, there were those artists keen on "pleasing the public with anecdote and illustration", while there were a number of notable artists who "set the true end of art before their eyes": beauty. Colvin lists, in the following order, the painters he saw as adhering to the latter: Leighton, Moore, Whistler, D.G. Rossetti, Edward Burne-Jones, Simeon Solomon, G.F. Watts, Arthur Hughes, and George Heming Mason. Within this classification, there was another division: Rossetti, Burne-Jones, Solomon, Watts, Hughes, and Mason were artists who "combined beauty with passion and intellect".[328] Leighton, Whistler, and Moore, on the other hand, were

[325] Kermit S. Champa, "Painted Responses to Music: The Landscapes of Corot and Monet", chap. 5 in *The Arts Entwined,* eds. Morton and Schmunk, 102.
[326] W.M. Rossetti, *Fine Art, Chiefly Contemporary: Notices Reprinted, with Revisions* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1867), ix.
[327] Sidney Colvin, "English Painters and Painting in 1867", *Fortnightly Review* 2, no. 10 (October 1867), 472.
[328] Ibid., 474.

the only artists, in Colvin's opinion, striving for "beauty without realism".[329] Hence, both classifications within this "sequel to Prae-Raphaelitism [sic]" did not seek "edification" but "perfection of forms and colours", that art "whose aim is beauty".[330] Only Leighton, Whistler, and Moore, however, sought a type of "decorative art which despises realism", elevating it, idealising it through, crucially, references to music.[331] The relation between form and content would become paramount in the discussions of these artists over the rest of their lives and careers, particularly in the relation to the promise of abstraction and autonomy.

Colvin's delineation of these three artists has been recognised by Bonds as creating a triad of visual artists with parallel aims to Hanslick's formalist aesthetics of instrumental or absolute music.[332] I agree with Bonds; indeed, my three case studies consist of Leighton, Moore, and Whistler for the very reason that I see them as seminal artists that explored musical aesthetics and the experience of music on a fundamental, theoretical, and aesthetic level. As mentioned, scholars often take Pater's famous statement on music as a segue into the analogy between music and painting, but by looking more closely at Leighton, Moore, and Whistler through the dimension of music aesthetics I can discern that the movement of aspiring towards the condition of music started significantly earlier in the 1860s.

Pater takes up these ideas on music as a paradigm in "The School of Giorgione", originally published for the *Fortnightly Review* in 1877 and later incorporated into *Studies on the History of the Renaissance*. As has been mentioned earlier in this thesis, Pater's statement that "all art constantly aspires towards the condition of music" is often cited and interpreted as a dictum confirming a musical approach towards modernist abstraction. Upon looking more closely at the actual text, however, another dimension emerges, and that is the relationship with the discourse of absolute music. In the actual essay, Pater wrote that it was the job of the critic to "estimate the degree in which a given work of art fulfils its responsibilities to its special material", to "note in a picture that true pictorial charm" or "to note in music the musical charm, that essential music which presents *no words*, no definable matter of sentiment or thought, separable from the special form in which it is conveyed to us".[333] Following this setup, Pater proclaims that all art should strive after a specific

[329] Ibid., 473.
[330] Ibid., 472. The 'sequel to Prae-raphaelitism' is now commonly known as Aestheticism or the Aesthetic Movement; see Prettejohn, *Art for Art's Sake*; and Allen Staley, *The New Painting of the 1860s: Between the Pre-Raphaelites and the Aesthetic Movement* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011).
[331] Ibid., 473.
[332] Bonds, *Absolute Music,* 274.
[333] "The School of Giorgione", in Pater, *The Renaissance,* ed. Hill, 102-103 [my italics].

condition, the "condition of music", that being the merging of form and matter. As such, Pater argued,

> Art, then, is thus always striving to be independent of the mere intelligence, to become a matter of pure perception, to get rid of its responsibilities to its subject or material; the ideal examples of poetry and painting being those in which the constituent elements of the composition are so welded together that the material or subject no longer strikes the intellect only; nor the form, the eye or the ear only; but form and matter, in their union and identity, present one single effect to the 'imaginative reason', that complex faculty for which every thought and feeling is twin-born with its sensible analogue or symbol.
> It is the art of music which most completely realises this *artistic ideal,* this *perfect identification of form and matter*. In its consummate moments, the end is not distinct from the means, the form from the matter, the subject from the expression; they inhere in and completely saturate each other; and to it, therefore, to the condition of its perfect moments, all the arts may be supposed constantly to tend and aspire. In music, then, rather than in poetry, is to be found the true type or measure of perfected art.[334]

The 'artistic ideal' Pater proposes is clearly not merely music, but it is instrumental music. I would even take it a step further and argue that he is thinking of absolute music specifically. There is no recorded evidence that Pater read Hanslick's *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen* and he was not among the many German authors Billie Andrew Inman cited in *Walter Pater's Reading* (1989), but considering the passage above (and many others) we can assume that Pater was at least familiar with the treatise. What Pater sets out to do is find a type of visual art that can corroborate this ideal expression and adhere to its 'special responsibilities to its material'. This, naturally, leads to notions of abstraction and autonomy where all the arts should aspire after the *condition* of music in its freedom and abstraction.

One reason why the musical-aesthetic discourse was so eagerly mapped onto the art of Leighton, Whistler, and Moore was because their non-narrative paintings escaped direct definition and conceptualisation; they did not fit into the extant interpretive models. Many of their paintings were devoid of narrative and story and full of mood and evocative colour and, hence, particularly susceptible to a musical interpretation. Pater echoes earlier statements, including some by Hegel, Kant, Colvin, and Hanslick, while nonetheless identifying a crucial aspect of the Aestheticist discourse in England at that time. What characterises the Aestheticist discourse or project is precisely this "correlation of the arts", as Hamilton wrote

[334] Ibid., 108-109 [my italics].

in 1882, or such a distinct interest in intermediality and inter-art analogies. While there were multiple intermedial projects, in the following case studies I will exclusively focus on the relationship between painting and music, as I stipulated in the introduction to this dissertation.

Hence, I identify a shared project among Leighton, Moore, and Whistler, not exclusively linked by Colvin's, albeit astute, observation that all three aimed at autonomous, decorative, abstract beauty, but also by their shared interest in the confluence of art for art's sake and music theory. All three, I believe, were fundamentally interested in a number of musical theories in their pictorial work: form and autonomy leading to abstraction; temporality in both music and painting; and aesthetic contemplation, both visually and in real-time. This culminated in a shared elevation of absolute instrumental music as an aesthetic ideal, a paradigm, which possessed a number of ideal characteristics to which they hoped their art could aspire. This was never an ideal of representing specific musical genres, but an ideal where painting could become *like* absolute instrumental music and engender a similar experience in their viewers.

SECTION II

THE CASE STUDIES: LEIGHTON, MOORE, WHISTLER

Chapter Three: Frederic Leighton: Music, the Aesthetic Listener, and Immersion

In 1890, Frederic Leighton wrote that his aim in art was to focus the attention on "essentially artistic attributes" in the hope to "intensify in the spectator that perception of what is beautiful in the highest, widest, and fullest sense of the word". This intensification of experience was modelled on the ways in which "the noblest and most entrancing music" can bestow "different forms of aesthetic emotion".[335] Drawing on primary sources and artworks, this chapter aims to demonstrate Leighton's close engagement with music on an experiential, theoretical, and aesthetic level and how this influenced his own understanding and conception of painting. Leighton's use of musical subject matter in his art and his aesthetic interest in analogies between painting and music points to a closer engagement with the idea of absolute instrumental music than the scholarship has previously allowed. Indeed, as President of the Royal Academy and a staunch supporter of the arts, Leighton was situated in a vast network of musicians, composers, critics, writers, poets, painters, and singers of numerous nationalities and backgrounds, a network which he simultaneously used to define his own artistic identity and as a way to enrich his personal enjoyment of music. This aspect of his social life has often been noted in the existing scholarship, most notably by Michael Musgrave.[336] I want to explore Leighton's interest in music from a very specific angle, however. For Leighton, the 'beauty' delineated in Colvin's 'beauty without realism' resided in 'essentially artistic attributes' – those formal elements inherent to painting – with the aim to provide a more intense aesthetic experience. To achieve this experience in his painting, the artist turned to music as an aesthetic ideal, a guide, a model.

Given the prominence of music in his life, practice, thinking, and art, I propose that the *condition* of absolute music – the *notion* of absolute instrumental music and all its connotations – as well as the experience of musical performances provided Leighton with a framework in order to elevate his own painting to a level of abstraction. The language, terminology, and principles used to discuss music supplied Leighton with a model to discuss and think about painting, informing his pictorial practice and hence forming a lofty paradigm influencing all of his artistic output. By analysing his representations of the experience of music and linking this to the performativity of Leighton House and his status as a cosmopolitan artist, I argue that Leighton was significantly influenced by the idea of music in

[335] Frederic Leighton, letter to T.C. Horsfall, reprinted in "The Management of Art Galleries", *British Architect* (September 5, 1890): 179.
[336] Michael Musgrave, "Leighton and Music", chap. in *Frederic Leighton: Antiquity, Renaissance, Modernity,* ed. Tim Barringer and Elizabeth Prettejohn (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999), 295-314.

conceptualising his own art. Most importantly, this helped him to explore formalism in his own art to sidestep Victorian anecdotalism and generate an enriched and immersive experience of his art based in freestanding pictorial technique.

Leighton was situated at the intersection of art for art's sake and absolute music, allowing for a vast constellation of musical-aesthetic ideas to filter into his art. It was instrumental music that he cared most for, or 'classical music' as he referred to it in one of his letters.[337] His love of music was so pervasive that, upon his death, the composer Sir Charles Villiers Stanford wrote that:

> [Leighton's] death is almost as great a loss to the art of music as to his own. His active sympathy with every musician of high aim and sincerity of purpose brought together the two professions in closer relations than they had ever experienced before. He set thereby an example which was followed by many of his brethren to the great mutual advantage of both branches of the artistic world.[338]

Equally, Leighton was interested in the construction of pictorial acoustic space, which I want to refer to as soundscapes. Painting was, after all, a spatial experience while music was a temporal one. Music needed space to inhabit, which Leighton was critically aware of. During a performance in his studio of Bach's *Chaconne* by Joseph Joachim, he wrote to his sister how:

> To me perhaps the most striking thing of the evening was Joachim's playing of Bach's 'Chaconne' up in my gallery. I was at the other end of the room, and the effect of the distance of the dark figure in the uncertain light up there, and barely relieved from the gold background and dark recess, struck me as one of the most poetic and fascinating things that I remember. At the opposite end of the room in the apse was a blazing crimson rhododendron tree, which looked glorious where it reached up into the golden semi-dome.[339]

[337] Frederic Leighton to Lady [Frances Isabella] Bath, GB 950: Leighton House Archive, LH/1/1/5/B/B3, n.d. [pre-1881], *The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Archives and Museum Catalogue,* digitised archive, accessed 10/04/2020. The letter concerned an invitation to listen to the violinist Joseph Joachim and the pianist Mme Schumann.
[338] Sir Charles Villiers Stanford, *Pages from an Unwritten Diary* (London: E. Arnold, 1914), 240.
[339] Frederic Leighton to Augusta (Gussy) Leighton, April 1871, repr. in Mrs. Russell Barrington, *Life, Letters, and Work of Frederic Leighton,* vol. 2 (London: George Allen, and New York: The Macmillan Company, 1906), 216-217.

By using contemporary musical and artistic sources, including Leighton's own writings as President of the Royal Academy, anecdotes provided by his musical connections, and his critical reception in the Victorian press, this chapter will argue that Leighton was deeply and profoundly influenced by instrumental music to the extent that he upheld it as an aesthetic ideal. His art offered an intensification of experience which paralleled his own experience of music, thereby making the interdisciplinary approach towards his art through the lens of music a viable and worthwhile approach. In order to interpret his art through this intermediary, I will first analyse some of his interior musical scenes in which Leighton focused on the production of music between a number of intimately grouped figures, particularly in *Lieder ohne Worte* (fig. 5) and *Golden Hours* (fig. 6), both referencing ideas of instrumental music rather than programme music. This helped Leighton develop his ideas of a sensuously charged and musical interior space, extending into his ideas of landscape in the 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s. In the latter category, I argue, Leighton particularly successfully developed his ideas of musical 'looking-time', a provocation of musical experience in his viewers, and landscapes which, regardless of content, could be highly musically charged.

Knowing his preference for instrumental music, and considering his extensive knowledge of music, composers, and music theory, then to what extent did the condition of absolute instrumental music work itself out in Leighton's oeuvre? How did Leighton appeal to this condition not only to enrich his pictorial spaces as immersive soundscapes, but in order to abstract his art and make it formally more meaningful? And, finally, by using this interpretive lens of absolute instrumental music, how does this change our understanding and experience of Leighton's art as avant-garde, musical, and original?

The Translation and Adaptation between Media

Once Leighton settled in London in 1859, he had already trained as an artist in Frankfurt, Rome, and Paris, inundating himself with knowledge, experiences, artworks, theories, and connections. Indeed, his time in Germany in the 1850s was the decade in which the schism between opposing musical factions fully crystallised with the notion of programme versus absolute music in the work of Wagner and Hanslick, respectively. Considering his upbringing and lust for knowledge, Leighton was keenly aware of the contemporary developments in musical aesthetics. Hence, I think it is no coincidence that one of his early musical works was intimately tied to these discourses. The work in question was *Lieder ohne Worte* (fig. 5, 1860-1861), a large oil painting exhibited alongside *A Dream* (1859-1860) and *Paolo and Francesca* (1860-1861) at the Royal Academy exhibition of 1861. *Blackwood's Edinburgh*

Magazine commented on the mixture of styles, perceiving Leighton to combine "a distant dreamy remembrance of the old Italian" with the "artificial manner of the French" and "the mazy abstractions of the more morbid German".[340] Of the three he exhibited, *Lieder ohne Worte* was the only one not reliant on narrative and, I argue, represents an important turning point in Leighton's thinking on musical analogies. Writing to his former mentor at the Städelsches Kunstinstitut in Frankfurt, Eduard von Steinle, Leighton explained his approach in a passage worth quoting in full:

> It [the painting] represents a girl, who is resting by a fountain, and listening to the ripple of the water and the song of a bird. The subject is, of course, quite incomplete without colour, as I have endeavoured, both by colour and by flowing delicate forms, to translate to the eye of the spectator something of the pleasure which the child receives through her ears. This idea lies at the base of the whole thing, and is conveyed to the best of my ability in every detail, so that in the dead photograph one loses exactly half.[341]

The association of water and music was hardly new. A few years before Leighton had painted *The Fisherman and the Syren* (fig. 17, 1858-1859), a visual meditation on the seductive power of music personified in the water siren. The rhythmic dripping and melodic flowing of water in a fountain, however, could be considered a type of music in itself, a notion Leighton actively incorporated into the Arab Hall in his studio home.[342] The depiction of a siren was still too closely tied to ideas of death, drowning, and sensuality.[343] Beyond any obvious symbolism, Leighton intended to engage with sound and music in other ways and his letter to Steinle reveals potential approaches to incorporating it visually. It not only provides us with information regarding his work processes, intentions, and ideas, but the letter provides useful commentary on the idea of *translation* between media.

First of all, Leighton tells us that the painting, which is of a girl listening to 'the ripple of water and the song of a bird', is 'incomplete without colour'. In other words, the act of

---

[340] "The Royal Academy and the Water-Colour Societies", *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 90, no. 550 (August 1861): 217.
[341] Frederic Leighton to Eduard von Steinle, April 30, 1861, repr. in Barrington, *Life and Letters,* vol. 2, 63.
[342] Baudelaire evoked such music-water associations in "La Musique", in Charles Baudelaire, *Les Fleurs du Mal* (Paris: Poulet-Malassis et de Broise, 1857), 174-175. Equally, Franz Liszt elicited such ideas in *Les jeaux d'eaux à la Villa Este,* composed in 1877. See Arabella Teniswood-Harvey, "The Piano/Fountain Association: From Franz Liszt to Salvador Dalì", in *Music Cultures and Sounds, Words and Images: Essays in Honour of Zdravko Blažeković,* ed. Antonio Baldassare and Tatjana Marković (Vienna: Hollitzer Verlag, 2018), 603-618.
[343] For an analysis of these themes in Leighton's work in comparison with one of his contemporaries, Edward Burne-Jones, see Suzanne Fagence Cooper, "The Liquefaction of Desire: Music, Water, and Femininity in Victorian Aestheticism", *Women: A Cultural Review* 20, no. 2 (2009): 186-201.

listening constitutes the content which is exclusively constructed by a specific combination of forms and colours. Arguably, this is true of any painting, but Leighton emphasises that 'both by colour and by flowing delicate forms', he aimed to 'translate to the eye of the spectator something of the pleasure which the child receives through her ears'. The key word here is 'translate'. A term reminiscent of (inter)change and adaptation, it is both evocative of the sensuous power of sound and music as well as indicative of Leighton's action as a painter to translate an aural experience to a pictorial depiction. Yet 'translation' equally strongly demonstrates difference; as both music and painting rely on a subjective experience for meaning, mistranslation might just as easily occur.[344] The idea of translation also points to the shared signifiers between the rhetoric of music and painting, respectively, and such a translation inevitably carried with it musical values and associations – a process of visualising something unseen, making tangible the intangible, making material the immaterial – that were then encapsulated in the figure of the listening girl, herself embodying the abstract notion of musical experience. As Section I of this thesis has demonstrated, a direct translation was hardly ever possible as sound and vision are entangled across a wide spectrum of themes and concepts. It remains a powerful theme however, and this idea of 'translation' did not go unnoticed in contemporary art criticism. The spectator's attention was diverted to pictorial beauty in the absence of linear narrative and overt subject. F.G. Stephens, friend and supporter of Leighton, wrote that the "exquisite and ineffable quality of indolent lotus-eating was never more perfectly expressed" as Leighton only wished "to convey a mere idea of beauty and graceful fancy".[345] Stephens's interpretation of *Lieder* as a work without subject, with its only aim being beauty, was used by him to map musical experiences onto painting, as he did with D.G. Rossetti's *The Blue Bower* (1865) as critic for *The Athenaeum* and in response to Leighton's own *David, 'O that I had wings like a dove!'* (1865).[346]

Macmillan's Magazine perceived the title to indicate Leighton's refusal to infuse his "representations with anything that is definite"; it is "truly a 'song without words', in the

[344] The idea of intermedial translation hints at a true, authentic, and 'correct' translation, while the adaptation of a musical subject to a pictorial medium resides in the grey area between the two domains due to its subjectivity. There is no one way to translate from one medium to the other; Baudelaire's "Correspondances" and its legacy has proven that time and time again. A recent work on intermediality between music and painting provides a thorough overview of exactly the difficulty of translation, see *Experiencing Music and Visual Cultures: Threshold, Intermediality, Synchresis,* eds. Antonio Cascelli and Denis Condon (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2021).
[345] [F.G. Stephens], "Fine Arts: Royal Academy", *The Athenaeum* no. 1749 (May 4, 1861): 601.
[346] [F.G. Stephens], "Fine Arts: Mr. Rossetti's Pictures", *The Athenaeum* no. 1982 (October 21, 1865): 545-546; "Fine Arts: Royal Academy", *The Athenaeum* no. 1957 (April 29, 1865): 592.

sweetest musical sense".[347] Its non-narrativity lay not only in this representation of an abstract experience, but the lack of locality:

> There is nothing to tell that the fair young girl who sits before us, lost in a dream, is of Roman, Egyptian, Grecian, or Mediaeval time or country. As her fancies are proper to girlhood, so her costume, her beauty, and the architecture with which she is surrounded are *indefinite* and *only beautiful*.[348]

Without a definite location or time period, *Lieder* was suggestive, not descriptive. This being the case, the work approached the *condition* of a piece of music in being abstract, non-descriptive, suggestive, a work of "pure, luxurious sensuousness" rather than directly addressing a viewer's intellect.[349] Its meaning lies in its formal features and technical qualities. From Leighton's letter, it is clear this was his intention as the work would be 'quite incomplete without colour'. This is a striking admission. It demonstrates that Leighton's view of colour not only adds to the experience but is a crucial cog in the overall process of provoking an aesthetic experience in his viewer. We have to ask ourselves what this translation amounts to, and how it takes effect? How can we 'read' – or more cogently, experience – *Lieder ohne Worte* as a musical painting?

One answer lies in form, as Leighton has already indicated. On this level, the work is abstract in the sense that it can easily be reduced to the geometric forms the work consists of in and of itself. Strong lines and circular masses repeat themselves throughout the painting. The shape of the vase is repeated in the retreating figure, her body mimicking the spout, the handles, and the curves of the ceramic ware. The fluid whorls of blue fabric present a frontal mass which is repeated in the circular shape of the fountain next to her as an angular line of water trickles out of it. Sharp lines contrast with soft curves as the rigidity of the architectural features stand in opposition to the soft, delicate, and flowing fabric of woman and girl. As viewers we are reminded of another sense besides sight and hearing, and it is that of touch: the touch of the girl's hand to the flesh of her foot; the dangling fingers, limp and comfortable, on the cold marble; the malleability and softness of fabric against skin; the contrast between hard, fragile ceramic vases and pliable fabric and flesh. As the woman in the background retreats, she leads us into the architectural maze of the picture, yet our attention is inexorably drawn towards the girl, resting in a meditative state, her eyes downcast

[347] "The Royal Academy", *Macmillan's Magazine* 4, no. 21 (July 1861): 206.
[348] Ibid., 206 [my italics].
[349] Ibid., 206.

and inaccessible, lost in her fabric as she is lost in the sound, completely entranced by the water and the birdsong, stuck in a reverie. All this is enhanced by Leighton's use of colour. In his letter to Steinle, he is essentially encouraging a study of *Lieder* as a monochrome production, commenting how, without colour, it could never be complete.[350] Despite the emphasis on form through the effacement of narrative and any expected emotional content, it is colour which gives the work a degree of harmonic complexity. The deep blue, a receding colour, is accented by the strong, resonant, vibrating red of the vase and the corrosion of the stone underneath the water spigot. The stone remains soft, described by one critic as the "pure semi-transparency of the alabaster".[351] The colours lead the eye through the painting, the opposing shades either advancing or receding akin to the attack and decay of timbre and musical sound. Considering Leighton's education in Germany, we can assume he was familiar with Goethe's *Farbenlehre* as well as other theories then-popular in student circles in Frankfurt. As such, through the colours and the forms, the viewer experiences a pictorial rendition of what Leighton intended the 'child perceives through her ears'. As Charles Dempsey would write in 1882 concerning artists who worked 'for art's sake', painting "requires the charm of colour to perfectly complete the appeal to the emotions". This way, colour without recourse to "definite" ideas – anti-narrative and empty – was "comparable to a piece of pure music" on a theoretical level.[352]

Not only were form and colour important to the viewer's experience of the painting, but Leighton also set up a particular directive by using the title *Lieder ohne Worte*, a reference to Felix Mendelssohn's famous eponymous piano pieces of 1829-1845.[353] It is likely Leighton was aware of Moritz von Schwind's *Eine Symphonie* (1852), an elaborate visualisation of Beethoven's *Choral Fantasy* (1808). Leighton copied part of Schwind's *Cinderella Cycle* (1852) in the early 1850s and must have been aware of Schwind's attempt to translate Beethoven's piano music to a visual medium.[354] Schwind specifically wanted to integrate programme music and painting in a visually densely packed work along similar ideas as

[350] Leighton did produce a line sketch of *Lieder,* which is Leighton House Museum, London.
[351] [Stephens], "Fine Arts", 600-601.
[352] Charles W. Dempsey, "Advanced Art", *The Magazine of Art* 5 (January 1882): 359.
[353] Leighton knew Mendelssohn and loved his work before this, in the mid-1850s at the earliest. See *Frederic Leighton 1830-1896,* eds. Stephen Jones, Christopher Newall, Leonée Ormond, Richard Ormond, and Benedict Read, exh. cat. (London: Royal Academy of Arts and Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1996), 72.
[354] *Trying on the Glass Slipper* (1852-1854), repr. in Leonée Ormond and Richard Ormond, *Lord Leighton* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, published for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 1975), 21. Leighton also made a work called *Midsummer Night's Dream* (c. 1850) that compositionally and visually strongly resembles Schwind's *A Symphony*; repr. in ibid., 18.

Wagner would espouse with the *Gesamtkunstwerk*.[355] Even if *Lieder* functioned as a translation of music or sound to abstract colour and form, it was not a visualisation of Mendelssohn's music. Leighton did not even come up with the title himself, as it was suggested by one of his visitors.[356] Crucially, though, Leighton did use the title to exhibit the work and, as immersed in contemporary musical culture as he was, was surely aware of the connotations the title brought with it. In the 1850s and 1860s, Mendelssohn had become immensely popular in London, his *Elijah* oratorio having been performed almost continuously from 1845 until 1864 and Leighton himself particularly enjoyed Mendelssohn's compositions.[357] In 1854, Leighton had met Adelaide Sartoris, the opera singer, who introduced him to her musical soirées in Rome and London – which would serve as a model for his own musical soirées from 1867 onwards – and her extensive musical connections. Through her, Leighton extended his own singing expertise and his return to London in 1859 particularly strengthened his own musical activities. He became a constant patron and attendee of concerts, operas, theatrical and musical performances, musical soirées, and the like. Leighton attended almost every one of the Monday Popular Concerts, held in St. James's Hall from 1859 onwards, attended the Crystal Palace Concerts and Handel Festivals with friends such as George Eliot, Robert Browning, G.H. Lewes, and others, and passionately attended and commented on new performances and operas.[358] Through Sartoris, he was introduced to prominent figures such as Pauline Viardot-García, the wife of Louis Viardot, the author of "Ut Pictura Musica" for the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*; the composers Gioachino Rossini and Hector Berlioz; and notable musicians who became close friends, such as the violinist Joseph Joachim, the pianist Sir Charles Hallé, the cellist Alfredo Piatti, Robert and Clara Schumann, and Ignaz Moscheles, to name a few.[359]

Leighton's choice, then, to use the suggested title of *Lieder ohne Worte* became a conscious choice considering his knowledge of music. Indeed, Leighton's later *Elijah in the Wilderness* (fig. 18, 1877/1878), was similarly inspired by his interest in Mendelssohn's oratorio which, despite its biblical connotations, hangs back from the usual anecdotalism or sentimentalism.[360] Part of Mendelssohn's motivation to create the *Lieder ohne Worte* pieces

[355] Moritz von Schwind, *Moritz von Schwind Briefe,* ed. Otto Stoessl (Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, 1924), 254.
[356] Barrington, *Life and Letters,* vol. 2, 57.
[357] *Frederic Leighton 1830-1896,* eds. Stephen Jones, Christopher Newall, Leonée Ormond, Richard Ormond, and Benedict Read, exh. cat. (London: Royal Academy of Arts with Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1996), 72.
[358] Musgrave, "Leighton and Music", 298.
[359] For more on the musical soirées, see Musgrave's analysis and discussion in ibid., 299-306.
[360] Barrington, *Life and Letters,* vol. 2, 260.

was because, as he wrote in 1842, that "people usually complain that music is too many-sided in its meanings; what they should think when they hear it is so ambiguous, whereas everyone understands words". He continues,

> For me, it is precisely the opposite, not only with entire speeches, but also with individual words. They too seem so ambiguous, so vague, so subject to misunderstanding when compared with true music, which fills the soul with a thousand better things than words.[361]

Mendelssohn's intentions with *Lieder,* then, was to dissuade his critics from attempting to supply his instrumental pieces with a verbal or poetic interpretation. His type of absolute music was the case where the *actual* music – its formal elements – furnish artistic meaning and experience, regardless of the semantics or verbal associations. While Leighton would never again use such a direct musical title, it gives us insight into a titular analogy between painting and music, where a painting without a subject is like a song without words. To answer the question, then, of where the meaning lies: in the forms and colours. Leighton's visualisation of music was, hence, different from someone like Schwind. While the latter strove for a pictorial representation of a musical piece, Leighton was looking for shared themes, signifiers, and rhetoric between the two arts; over time, this grew into a sustained exploration of the type of abstract, aesthetic experience absolute instrumental music excelled at.[362]

Lieder ohne Worte was not, as I mentioned, Leighton's first musical painting. In 1855, he started work on *The Triumph of Music: Orpheus by the Power of his Art, Redeems his Wife from Hades* (1855-1856) as a successor to *Cimabue's Celebrated Madonna Carried in Procession through the Streets of Florence* (fig. 19, 1853-1855). After the latter's display of the celebration of the art of painting, Leighton attempted to construct a celebration of music embodied in the mythological figure of Orpheus. Leighton resided in Paris during this time, taking a studio in the rue Pigalle from 1855 until 1859, meeting, among others, James

[361] Felix Mendelssohn, November 15, 1842, copy in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (MS M. Deneke Mendelssohn c. 32, fols. 56-57), quoted in Susan Youens, "Mendelssohn's Songs", chap. 11 in *The Cambridge Companion to Mendelssohn,* ed. Peter Mercer-Taylor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 190.
[362] For an analysis of Schwind's musical motivations, see Walter Salmen, "'Eine Bande von Musikanten': Die Genese eines Gemäldes von Moritz von Schwind", *Music in Art* 26, no. ½ (Spring-Autumn 2001): 113-121.

McNeill Whistler.[363] I do not believe it is a coincidence that Leighton opted for a celebration of music during this time; the late 1850s, after all, was the time that musical-aesthetic writing in Paris reached a climax through prominent figures such as Baudelaire and Berlioz. The latter, for example, provided compelling accounts of the abstraction of music given to the listener through the aesthetic experience of concert performances.[364] Concert music was virtually everywhere, buttressed by theoretical and aesthetic explorations of tone music and tonal painting, albeit mostly in literature, criticism, and poetry, not fully extending to painting until the 1860s. It is likely Leighton wished to participate in these discourses by creating a work that equally celebrated painting and music by appealing to the myth of Orpheus. Assuming the colour sketch corresponded to the final work, Leighton's intentions were to shift the focus from Orpheus escaping with Eurydice to the moment of musical experience.[365] However, when it was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1856, *Triumph* was dismissed as too theatrical, too "unequivocally operatic".[366] Embarrassed, Leighton rolled the canvas and stowed it away until his death, after which it was sold into a private collection and has not resurfaced since. All that we have is a colour sketch kept in Leighton House, giving only a rough indication of the composition and formal choices (fig. 20). It shows a procession of figures lined from left to right, with Orpheus, the famed Greek musician, attempting to entrance Hades with his musical prowess in order to resurrect Eurydice and bring her back to the real world. Considering its subject of the triumph of music over death, critics expected vibrancy, motion, energy; instead, "there is no motion in the bow, there is no music in the air, and for composition, for colour, and for expression, the whole thing is unfortunate".[367]

Leighton's choice is not altogether surprising, however; the legend of Orpheus was one of the most well-known examples of the power of music to overcome even death. This connection between life, death, immortality, sensuous power, and music would recur throughout his career, especially in relation to the immersive power of music over listeners who, in turn, become suspended in a liminal state of either reverie, death, sleep, or intense

[363] Leighton and Whistler could have met as early as 1855, as there is evidence of correspondence in 1856. See Arabella Teniswood-Harvey, "Colour-Music: Musical Modelling in James McNeill Whistler's Art", PhD diss. (University of Tasmania, 2006), 249-250.
[364] Kermit S. Champa, "Painted Responses to Music: The Landscapes of Corot and Monet", chap. 5 in *The Arts Entwined: Music and Painting in the Nineteenth Century,* eds. Marsha L. Morton and Peter L. Schmunk (New York and Routledge, 2000), 102-103.
[365] Other moments of the story of Orpheus were equally popular. Leighton would have known Ary Scheffer's *Orpheus Mourning the Death of Eurydice* (c. 1814). It was an equally popular subject for some of Leighton's colleagues; Edward Poynter painted *Orpheus and Eurydice* in 1862, G.F. Watts painted *Orpheus and Eurydice* in 1880-1890, and Leighton himself painted *Orpheus and Eurydice* in 1864.
[366] "Art and Artists: Royal Academy", *The Critic* 15, no. 365 (June 16, 1856): 308.
[367] "Royal Academy of Arts", *The Observer* (May 4, 1856): 5.

introspection.[368] Indeed, this tension between active and passive states – whether that of musician and listener, or attacker and victim as in *The Fisherman and the Syren* – is a theme that, I argue, was closely connected to Leighton's understanding and experience of music. As will be evident in the art of Albert Moore in the next chapter as well, there was a dichotomy between male and female, making music and listening to it, active and passive, doing and listening, respectively. This generated the trope of what I want to call the 'aesthetic listener', premised in the aesthetics of reception rather than those of production. This would evolve from the literal represented listener to the more abstracted state of reverie and contemplation even in the absence of any musical accompaniment. Most significantly, the presence of a visual listener in a work like *The Triumph of Music* or *Lieder ohne Worte* would come to function as a directive for the physical viewer, prompting an immersive and aesthetic experience in the viewer best understood by and emulated on that of absolute instrumental music.[369]

Triumph is an early indicator of Leighton's interest in such a figure. Unlike *Orpheus Mourning the Death of Eurydice* (fig. 21, 1814) by Ary Scheffer, an artist he knew and admired, Leighton focuses on the moment of musical *creation* and *reception* rather than the aftermath of Orpheus's mission to the underworld. This is also, I believe, the reason Leighton opted for a violin and not Orpheus's lyre: "About fiddles, I *know* that the ancients had *none*; it is an anachronism I commit with my eyes open, because I believe that the picture will go home to the spectator much more forcibly in that shape".[370] The *Art Journal* ridiculed his choice, writing that Orpheus resembled an "extremely ill-conceived mythological Paganini".[371] The inclusion of a modern instrument to ensure the 'picture will go home' more 'forcibly' is fascinating, however. It fit in with Leighton's explorations of uncertain locations and time periods while also setting a precedent for Moore's later anachronistic explorations in *A Quartet: A Painter's Tribute to the Art of Music, A.D. 1868* (fig. 7). It also echoes, as Elizabeth Prettejohn has argued, Hegel's statement on the negativity of anachronism: "It is worse when Orpheus stands there with a violin in his hand because the contradiction appears all too sharply between mythical days and such a modern instrument, which everyone knows

[368] See Keren Rosa Hammerschlag, "The Deathly Sleep of Frederic Leighton's Painted Women", *A Cultural Review* 23, no. 2 (2013): 201-215; and Hammerschlag, *Frederic Leighton: Death, Mortality, Resurrection* (Farnham: Ashgate, and Abingdon: Routledge, 2015), esp. chap. 3, "Beautiful Death: Aestheticism", 79-114.
[369] There are many more examples of a visual listener in Leighton's oeuvre; see *Music Lesson* (1877), *Golden Hours* (1864), *Idyll* (c. 1880-1881), *The Garden of the Hesperides* (1892), all of which will be discussed below.
[370] Leighton to his father, Dr Septimius Leighton, quoted in Barrington, *Life and Letters,* vol. 1, 245 [italics in original].
[371] "The Royal Academy: Exhibition of the Eighty-Eighth: 1856", *Art Journal* (June 1, 1856): 172.

had not been invented at so early a period".[372] This connection with German aesthetics is highly significant; indeed, in 1850 he made a portrait of Arthur Schopenhauer (untraced) and his letters of this time, as well as his later *Royal Academy Addresses*, contain passages that echo the writings of Hegel, Schopenhauer, Kant, but also later figures like Pater, Hanslick, and the Frenchman Viardot.[373] By using a violin instead of the archaic lyre, Leighton had the experience of *his* spectator in mind and anticipated that, by placing his image in modernity, his picture would be more engaging. *Triumph*, then, embodies both the influence of French and German aesthetics and, regardless of the negative outcome, provided Leighton with a different attempt to incorporating music into his painting, especially his interest in visualising the experience of music in relation to the (aural and visual) beholder.

I want to comment on the figure of the listener a bit further, because I see it as integral to Leighton's own 'translation' or adaptation of music to canvas. Of the works Leighton created in the 1860s, a few overarching themes form themselves: historical subjects, Italian themes, religious subjects, classical subjects, and suggestive musical spaces and soundscapes. The latter was most notably given form in *Lieder ohne Worte, Rustic Music* (1861), *Duett* (1862), *Orpheus and Eurydice* (1864), *Golden Hours* (1864), *A Pastoral* (1866-1867), and *Spanish Dancing Girl: Cadiz in the Olden Times* (1867). These paintings are all, with the exception of *Orpheus and Eurydice,* a meditation on the experience of music. *Lieder ohne Worte* was a significant moment in this development, a work which relieved Leighton from some of the restrictions of narrative and historical painting. It allowed him to meditate on what the *experience* of art can be like, visually, and how he could model this on his own experience on music. These works of the 1860s functioned as steppingstones towards absolute autonomy, an autonomy unachievable in painting if Leighton did not model it on the condition of absolute instrumental music. They are all characterised by an evocation of musical concepts (rhythm, line, melody, harmony) or given shape through sound and motion in a specific space. Throughout this decade, Leighton became increasingly interested in the evocation of 'mood'. As a critical term, 'mood' denoted the overall atmosphere of a painted scene and the evocation of emotions and states of feeling which could be slippery, intangible, and abstracted from reality. Moreover, 'mood', in aesthetic theories of art and music, denoted

[372] G.W.F. Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art,* trans. T.M. Knox (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), vol. 1, 277; Elizabeth Prettejohn, *Art for Art's Sake: Aestheticism in Victorian Painting* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005)*,* 134.
[373] Leighton knew Viardot personally, through his connection with Viardot's wife, Pauline Viardot-García. Barrington, *Life and Letters,* vol. 2, 52-53, 217. The Schopenhauer portrait is catalogued in the Ormonds, *Leighton,* 152.

aesthetic experience as it was canonised by authors like Schopenhauer and Schlegel. It is partially a state of passivity in front of an artistic object, producing a state of mind or mood in the spectator, and partially a way of intensifying a specific aesthetic moment, extending its temporality while remaining suspended in time.[374] As with other Aesthetic painters, Leighton's interest in mood over narrative first began manifesting itself through the depiction of temporary states: a feeling, a sensation, a moment rather than the imposition of a narrative. These ideas of suspension and duration I want to explore in relation to immersive acoustic spaces Leighton created in the 1860s, spaces that included an aesthetic listener.

Immersive Acoustic Spaces

Golden Hours (fig. 6, 1864) is a prime example of a meditation on mood, music, and colour achieved through the prioritisation of mood over narrative. A young man is seated at a pianoforte, his eyes downcast as he is watched by "a girl with an intensity of gaze which we feel but cannot see".[375] The composition is marked by the edge of a frame or wall with the edges of a piano visible in the foreground. Our attention is directed to the visual luxuriousness of the fabrics; the shining cream decorated with flowers in the woman's dress, her head in an intricate bun adorned with a red ribbon, the glossy puffed-up sleeves framing the man's body. This man, decked out in Italianate costume, strongly resembles Leighton himself as he was presented in a photograph made by David Wilkie Wynfield in the 1860s (fig. 22). Despite the differences in colour, the cut of the costume is similar and so is the hair, face, and beard. The most striking feature in *Golden Hours*, however, is the shimmering gold background. On the far right, in particular, the gold is layered more thickly, giving an impression of scales or plastered gold. This thicker gold would recur throughout Leighton's works, most notably in the golden burst of light in the background of *Lachrymae* (fig. 23, 1894-1895) and the shimmering gold on the ocean in *Flaming June* (fig. 8). In *Golden Hours,* there is no depth of field to speak of, however, and the effect of a massive block of gold on the spectator is markedly different. It presages Pater's interest in gold and his emphasis on colour as a thread in an elaborate embroidery. Whistler was also interested in this effect, as he commented in 1868 that "the colour should be so to speak *embroidered* on [the canvas]".[376] Gold held a transformative, alchemical power as the background in *Golden*

[374] Karl Schawelka, *Quasi una Musica: Untersuchungen zum Ideal des 'Musikalischen' in der Malerei ab 1800* (München: Mäander, 1993), 42-43.
[375] "The Royal Academy of 1864: First Notice", *The Saturday Review* 17, no. 446 (May 14, 1864): 593.
[376] James McNeill Whistler to Henri Fantin-Latour, 30 September – 22 November 1868, PWC 1/33/28, included in Margaret F. MacDonald, Patricia de Montfort, and Nigel Thorp, eds., *The Correspondence of James McNeill*

Hours; it proves a different embodied experience with every flicker of light and every glance. In Pater's writings, it was intricately connected to the effects of light as colour: "That weaving of just perceptible gold threads of light through the dress, the flesh, the atmosphere".[377] He wrote,

> This particular *effect of light*, this sudden inweaving of gold thread through the texture of the haystack, and the poplars, and the grass […] Only in Italy all natural things are as it were woven through and through with gold thread. And it is with gold dust, or gold thread, that these Venetian painters seem to work, spinning its fine filaments, through the solemn human flesh.[378]

As Lene Østermark-Johansen has argued, Pater's "juxtaposition of 'gold' with 'delight' couples the material with the immaterial and abstract", resulting in a loss of "physical and tactile quality".[379] Pater's identification of Venetian painting with rich colour as he wrote in about it in 1877 was rapidly becoming an established phenomenon by the time Leighton exhibited *Golden Hours* in 1864. The coupling of 'delight' with a material as luxurious and visually tantalising as gold establishes a certain mood in *Golden Hours* by appealing to the perceived luxury of colour Venetian painting was famous for. This 'mood' is then created by the spectator's attention to and meditation on the formal appearance of gold and its effects, rather than a linear narrative. Indeed, one reviewer dubbed the work a "Venetian musical piece" whereas J. Beavington Atkinson perceived Leighton's work as a whole to be based on a combination of "the antique" and Venice.[380]

But the Venetian influence only goes so far. It is evident this is where Leighton drew his inspiration, but *Golden Hours* does something more by virtue of its formal elements alone. It offers a depiction of musical absorption, more overtly than in *Lieder ohne Worte*; the musician draws from the piano "notes that enthrall [sic] both himself and a lady, who, leaning

---

Whistler, 1855-1903, including *The Correspondence of Anna McNeill Whistler, 1855-1880,* ed. Georgia Toutziari, online edition, University of Glasgow, http://www.whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk/correspondence, accessed 06/05/2020 [italics in original].

[377] Walter Pater, *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry, the 1893 Text,* ed. Donald L. Hill (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1980 [1877]), 104.

[378] Ibid., 106, 120 [my italics].

[379] Lene Østermark-Johansen, "'The Primary Colour of Delight': Walter Pater and Gold", *Polysèmes: Revue d'études intertextuelles et intermédiales* 15 (2016): 2.

[380] "Fine Arts: Fine-Art Gossip", *The Athenaeum* no. 1895 (February 20, 1864): 270; J. Beavington Atkinson, "English Painters of the Present Day: No. XVI. – Frederick Leighton, R.A.", *The Portfolio* no. 1 (January 1870): 163.

in front, is all absorbed".[381] It is the effect of mood and colour, applied by Leighton at the expense of narrative or morality, that become crucial to our understanding and interpretation of *Golden Hours* as a musical painting. A deeper consideration of his use of colour, space, contemplation, and temporality will illuminate Leighton's artistic choices beyond the obvious inclusion of a musical instrument. The lack of subject paired with attention to formal features under the aegis of instrumental music is what elevates this painting as a musical work.

At first glance, *Golden Hours* depicts a young man seated at a piano, facing the viewer but his eyes downcast, focusing instead on the fingers that delicately trace the ivory keys. His listener, enraptured, is seen from the back leaning against the waist of the pianoforte, her features hidden in a stance vividly recalling Whistler's *At the Piano* (fig. 24, 1860-1861), a work Leighton was familiar with. Indeed, we can almost imagine the legs casually crossed at the ankles as the listener leans forward, embodying the physical action of listening to musical sound. It also echoes Leighton's own *The Painter's Honeymoon* (fig. 25, 1863-1864) as the creation of an intimate domestic scene characterised by close interaction around a private activity, such as reading or making music. In 1877, Leighton would paint *The Music Lesson* (fig. 26, 1877), a similar exercise in domestic music-making that he nonetheless considered part of his "pot-boilers (the fatal, inevitable pot-boilers!)" because of their marketable value.[382] *Golden Hours,* however, falls into a slightly different category.

Despite the luxurious and sumptuous fabric of deep blacks, creamy gold, lines of blue, and hints of red, the piano itself is highly decorative with a frieze of figures lining the side facing the viewer. As viewers we do not know *where* exactly we are looking at, or *when*. Precisely because we do not know its locality, our aesthetic experience of the work is shaped differently. This a-locality also strongly contributes to the mood or atmosphere – the *Stimmung* – of the painting. It is the lack of determinacy that enhances mood so particularly powerfully. Equally, this lack of certainty abstracts the scene from reality and forces the spectator to focus on other elements in the work, especially the Victorian viewer who is accustomed to an anecdotal or linear reading of a work. In *Golden Hours,* Leighton chose to depict a specific moment, albeit a temporary one: the creation and reception of music. It is a state of universality and timelessness; there is no attainable or definable location or time period, similar to *Lieder*, rendering the scene immaterial. I want to propose another

[381] "Fine Arts: The Royal Academy", *The Athenaeum* no, 1905 (April 30, 1864): 616.
[382] Frederic Leighton to his father, Dr Frederic Septimus Leighton, October 18, 1873, Leighton House Archive, *The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Archives and Museum Catalogue,* digitised archive, https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/leightonarabhall/letter_from_leighton.html, accessed 19/12/2020.

temporality, one intricately tied to Leighton's own experience of music, one he wished to transfer to his painting as a model of experience for his own viewers.

Indeed, *Golden Hours* provokes an aesthetic experience independently of storytelling, an experience which rests on the subjective, personal, and sensuous experience of form, line, and colour. This is comparable to the experience of a musical piece, where the immersive aesthetic experience takes place in an acoustic space, enhanced by light and colour, while you engage with the music on a sensuous and emotional, rather than intellectual, level. Historical context is significant here; as twenty-first-century viewers, cognizant of twentieth-century modernist abstraction, we are influenced in how we approach a picture like *Golden Hours.* For a contemporary audience, however, especially Leighton's rich, bourgeois, Victorian audience, this became a quasi-abstract scene capitalising on the aesthetic effect of form and colour in parallel with the features of absolute instrumental music.

This specific experience was confirmed by Leighton when he wrote to his sister in 1871, describing one of the musical soirées he hosted in his house in Holland Park:

> To me perhaps the most striking thing of the evening was Joachim's playing of the Bach 'Chaconne' up in my gallery. I was at the other end of the room, and the effect from the distance of the dark figure in the uncertain light up there, and barely relieved from the gold background and dark recess, struck me as one of the most poetic and fascinating things that I remember. At the opposite end of the room in the apse was a blazing rhododendron tree, which looked glorious where it reached up into the golden semi-dome.[383]

I want to isolate a number of elements here. First, music, as an acoustic art, only existed in space and time and, *ergo*, the construction of spatiality and temporality in art was musically influenced for Leighton. He writes about the 'effect' of distance, background, and recess, effectively integrating the experience of space with the interplay between shadow and light, reflective and dull material, far away and close up. Leighton adds the enhanced effect the rhododendron tree had on him because of the addition of music in the space. In essence, the rhododendron gains a different expressional significance for Leighton because of the added dimension of music. This became part of his aesthetic framework, as he wrote in his *Academy Addresses* of 1879 how art was the "intensification" of "aesthetic sensation".[384] The idea of

[383] Leighton to Augusta 'Gussy' Leighton-Matthews, April 1871, quoted in Barrington, *Life and Letters,* vol. 2, 216-217.
[384] Frederic Leighton, *Addresses Delivered to the Students of the Royal Academy* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1879), 57.

intensification, furthermore, emphasises how important performativity is. The music exists exclusively in the moment that Joachim put his bow to the strings and performed Bach's Chaconne, the Partita No. 2 in D Minor. In that performative moment, extended for as long as the music is played, the colours and forms of Leighton's art studio are intensified, they transform, they become sensuously and emotionally more meaningful. This spatial awareness of sounds and the effect of music on and its interaction with the human body helps clarify Leighton's intentions with a work like *Golden Hours.*

The spatial composition of the painting, then, is marked by the edge of a frame or wall we see just behind the figures, as mentioned above, and the edges of the pianoforte in the foreground. Our attention is pulled straight towards the aesthetic moment of the work and, free from the restrictions of verbal interpretation, we are allowed to muse on the forms, lines, and colours. Its indeterminacy is in itself intensely musical; as a piece of instrumental music can exist without programmatic content, so a painting can furnish meaning through its formal elements only. Even if the clothing is inspired by the Venetian Renaissance, what prevents this interpretation is the appeal to the musicality of colour through the lack of background. Instead of providing a visual avenue into Venice, which would have supported such an interpretation, we are met with a solid wall of gold with only a door jamb or the edge of a frame on the far right as deviation. Its solidity and oppressing state force our attention to the figures in the forefront. It is the type of artwork which could capture a mood, an atmosphere, and hone in on this; as Pater would write in 1871, it was the type that could "concentrate and express, less by way of definite conceptions than by the touches, the promptings of a piece of music, all those vague fancies, misgivings, presentiments, which shift and mix and are defined and fade again".[385] Mood is difficult to verbally capture; it contains echoes of the German Romantic *Stimmung* as an embodied response to art. Instead, it is undefinable and untouchable; this does not, however, have to be negative.[386] By presenting the woman with her face away from us, as spectators Leighton invites us to muse on the formal features of his painting as the woman does on the chords produced by the musician. The connection with music is implied through the title as the source of pictorial meaning, as the musician "makes the hours golden through music".[387]As Leighton purposefully places the two figures in an undefined location in order to intensify the aesthetic

[385] Pater, *Renaissance,* ed. Hill, 75.
[386] This emphasis on 'mood' presages the Cubist obsession with mood, as when Max Weber wrote that "To express moods that stir the emotion from within as does music, the plastic artist when he conceives of energetic rhythmic interlaced forms or units should be much more moved than even by music". Max Weber, "The Equilibrium of the Inanimate", in *Essays on Art* (New York: W.E. Rudge, 1916), 69.
[387] "The Royal Academy", *Art Journal* (June 1864): 158.

sensation of mood and eliminate any unnecessary distractions, the painting exists within a temporality of its own. It appeals to both musical temporality in how we approach art and the atemporality of an unknown location, wavering between an extended temporality of musical creation and suspension outside of time altogether. As the displayed response is immersion, we are invited to do the same. Through the gold backdrop, which excludes and suffocates, barring our entry into the rest of the picture, as viewers we are kept firmly at the forefront, in the space where the music is being created; there is nothing *but* the music. Because the man is playing the piano his stature is changed; that the eyes are downcast now become meaningful instead of simply melancholic. The woman, with her back to us, might be seen as a focaliser, drawing us in; yet her face is invisible, her emotions unknown. We still attribute meaning to her, we can still imagine what she is experiencing purely *because* she is listening to music. The picture, hence, becomes defined by a specific type of aesthetic immersion engendered by instrumental music, an experience premised in Leighton's own experience of music. He wrote often to family members and relatives in the 1860s about musical performances and theatrical pieces he saw and experienced. They were more than an enjoyable pastime; they infused how Leighton understood art in general, and his own painting in particular.

Leighton himself was keenly aware of the aesthetic theories surrounding painting as a spatial art and music as a temporal one, and it is possible he was striving for a synthesis of the two in his home in Holland Park. In 1864 Leighton contracted George Aitchison to construct a studio-home for him, which would result in a lifelong obsession to create an aesthetic and integrated space that was both home and studio. The studio itself doubled as a musical space, where Leighton held all of his musical soirées. The entire house was defined through visuality, sound, the senses, light, and, most of all, colour. Aitchison, close friends with Leighton, saw his ideal building as shining with "eternal colours", "enriched with sparkling panels", and "friezes of gold will run the length of our buildings". These works of "opulence" and "sincerity" will "make all admire *colour* and *movement*".[388] These last two features, colour and movement, are particularly pertinent in the case of Leighton House. The deep turquoise wall tiles in the Narcissus Hall would reflect candlelight in mesmerising ways, using colour and reflected movement to generate an enriched experience of the space, while

[388] George Aitchison, lecture given on May 7, 1888, at the Society of Arts, repr. in "Proceedings of the Society: Cantor Lectures, Decoration, by Professor G. Aitchison, A.R.A. Lecture II. – Delivered May 7, 1888", *Journal of the Society of Arts* 36, no. 1860 (July 13, 1888): 921.

the Arab Hall, finished in 1877, was a musically inflected space through the use of running water and sound as in *Lieder ohne Worte*. It became an integration of colour and sound in a dedicated acoustic space, a type of interior design that then translated into Leighton's art, such as in *Music Lesson* (fig. 26) or *After Vespers* (fig. 27).

Charles Hallé, the famous pianist and co-founder of the Grosvenor Gallery, wrote how Leighton's favourite space to make music was in a studio surrounded by paintings, and how "one of the dreams of his life was to found an institution where the two arts should work in harmony together".[389] I see Leighton's studio as a template for such an institution, where he could create music and paintings all in one space while listening to music, the sister arts fuelling and complementing each other. Moreover, the type of aesthetic experience Leighton had of instrumental music, and the qualities instrumental or "Classical Music" held such as abstraction, immersion, and autonomy, then became idealised qualities for his own art to aspire towards.[390]

So, what does this mean? I argue that these specially constructed spaces elevated sound and music to an ideal experience where it could set the tone for *all* artistic experience. It becomes mingled with colour, texture, light, and touch to create a highly charged and sensuous atmosphere modelled on music and achieved through all the arts. Leighton House, then, became a performative space where this ideal was constantly and consistently achieved and re-generated. The house and its rooms became a synthesis on multiple levels; the transformation and synthesis of old and new, Renaissance and medieval, painting and music – a mingled atmosphere of light, sound, colour, scent, and mood. The interior, modelled through these elements, was consequently understood through musical metaphor and recent decorative developments, such as the work by Christopher Dresser.[391] The musical soirées that Leighton hosted from 1867 onwards complemented such an interpretation of the house. Inasmuch as they were social events, these soirées were also moments of magnificent musical production and a time for Leighton to immerse himself in an embodied musical experience.

The 'musical' in Leighton's art was not restricted to the representation of musical subject matter, although this remained a recurring topic of interest. As I have already established, musical subjects were a convenient method in the nineteenth century to avoid the restrictions

[389] Charles Hallé, *Life and Letters of Sir Charles Hallé: Being an Autobiography (1819-1860) with Correspondence and Diaries,* ed. C.E. Hallé and Marie Hallé (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1896), 166.
[390] Leighton to Lady Bath, *Kensington and Chelsea Archives,* accessed 10/04/2020. For more on his musical soirées, see Musgrave, "Leighton", 299-306.
[391] Louise Campbell, "Decoration, Display, Disguise: Leighton House Reconsidered", chap. in *Frederic Leighton*, eds. Barringer and Prettejohn, 276, 281.

of anecdotalism; indeed, anti-narrative or a-narrative painting by way of an appeal to music became a popular way, by the second half of the century, to approach pictorial abstraction. Significant for my argument here is how I use the term 'abstraction', as I do not use it in the Modernist sense of the term. In the nineteenth century, the notion of a visual-formal feature such as form or colour as independently expressive constituted a type of abstraction. Théophile Gautier's analysis of Eugène Delacroix's *Les Femmes d'Algers* (1834) written for *La Presse* is useful in this regard. Here, Gautier made a clear demarcation between the 'idea in painting' and the 'idea in literature', proclaiming that they have no connection with each other. The actual content of a painting, argued Gautier, were "a curved head, a subdued or emphasised contour, a marriage of colours", a "hand gripped in a specific way", a "stream of folds". In other words, form and colour formed the 'idea in painting', the "subject being only a sort of accident".[392]

This is a crucial distinction. It helps us understand, in our twenty-first century climate, how representational painting could still be abstract. This shifts the purpose of art from illustration to visual pleasure, leaving behind any moral and storytelling concerns. Leighton had similar ideas, where visual art was an unsuitable medium for the translation of literary or verbal ideas, which he expounded upon in his *Addresses*:

> Now the language of Art is not the appointed vehicle of ethic truths; of these, as of all knowledge as distinct from emotion, though not necessarily separated from it, the obvious and only fitted vehicle is speech, written or spoken – words, the symbols of ideas. The simplest spoken homily, if sincere in spirit and lofty in tone, will have more direct didactic efficacy than all the works of all the most pious painters and sculptors from Giotto to Michael Angelo, more than the Passion Music of Bach, more than a Requiem by Cherubini, more than an Oratorio of Handel.[393]

This is precisely why Leighton was so invested in absolute instrumental music and its theories of autonomy, rather than programmatic music. He enjoyed both, but when it came to the composition of his own paintings, he was most influenced by the principles of the former to conceptualise how his own painting could be abstract, echoing Swinburne's theory of art

[392] Théophile Gautier, "Feuilleton: de la composition en peinture", *La Presse* no. 133 (November 22, 1836): n.p. [my translation]. For more on this, see Stéphane Guégan, "Gautier et l'art pour l'art 1830-1848", *Quarante-huit/Quatorze* no. 5 (1993): 63-68.
[393] Leighton, *Royal Academy Addresses,* 55.

for art's sake, Hanslick's theories on musical formalism, and Colvin's ideas on 'beauty without realism' in the process:

> Form, Colour, and the contrasts of Light and Shade are the agents through which it is given to her [Art] to set them in motion. Her duty is, therefore, to awaken those sensations directly emotional and indirectly intellectual which can be communicated only through the sense of sight, […] It is this intensification of the simple aesthetic sensation through ethic and intellectual suggestiveness that gives to the Arts … so powerful, so deep, and so mysterious a hold on the imagination.[394]

As such, narrative and representational painting were not identical. Decipherable characters have always been a part of Leighton's practice, but he nonetheless avoided illustrating the plot, instead focusing on design and decorative aspects, using the characters to generate the classical and antique atmosphere. Leighton was not the first artist to do this, but he did do it at a time when instrumental music was considered the only art capable of being independently formalist and abstract, and he did so concomitantly with a number of musical-aesthetic themes in line with this ideal of instrumental music.[395] Yet Leighton did not strive for a decorative effect at the expense of genre, nor did he attempt to devalue one genre over the other. Instead, by appealing to the condition of music and attempting to appropriate its values onto the art of painting, thereby enriching it and intensifying its experience, he prompted a rigorous re-evaluation of the aesthetic criteria used to interpret painting. Leighton was only one of the artists participating in this discourse, but he did so at a specific time and location, allowing his actions to be grouped together with those of Moore and Whistler. What he did so effectively was to model his experience of painting on that of instrumental music, using musical-aesthetic theories of temporality and spatiality, contemplation, form, and autonomy to influence how he conceptualised his own paintings. Indeed, by taking a closer look at some of his later works, I aim to demonstrate how music became embedded in Leighton's art by the 1890s, going much deeper than the mere representation of musical subject matter.

[394] Ibid., 56-57.
[395] Schawelka, *Quasi una Musica,* 140-141.

Looking-Time and the Musical Landscape

In 1867, Leighton exhibited *Spanish Dancing Girl: Cadiz in the Olden Times* (fig. 3) in the same exhibition as Moore's *The Musicians* (fig. 2) and Whistler's *Symphony in White, No. 3* (fig. 1). We see a woman, elegantly dressed in Greek drapery complete with girdle and cross-chords. The chords allow the material to bunch up and fold over the waist, creating wide swathes of fabric buoyant with movement in correspondence with the woman's dancing. Looking at her are three spectators, each dressed in warmer colours of red, orange, and deep blue, offset by the paleness of the first woman and her white himation under a yellow cloak. Their legs extended, the audience appears relaxed and at ease, engaging with the spectacle by clapping their hands in beat to the dancer's rhythm. The work is organised along the same compositional structure that governs both *Musicians* and *Symphony in White*: a strong horizontal demarcation, here in the form of a marble bench, juxtaposed with a number of strong verticals in the shape of trees and the flowing, gentle curves of the figures, limbs, and drapery. The flowering trees in the background provide a pictorial rhythm for the eye in coordination with the implied rhythm of dance. Drapery became an essential component in this, as Rosemary Barrow has discussed in her work on Leighton and Praxiteles.[396] In 1873, Leighton wrote to Joseph Comyns Carr how he preferred Greek subjects in paintings precisely because they allowed him so much pictorial freedom as "abstract form":

> By degrees my growing love for Form made me intolerant of the restraints and exigencies of costume and led more and more, and finally, to a class of subjects, or more accurately to a state of conditions, in which supreme scope is left to *pure artistic qualities*, in which no form is imposed upon the artist by the tailor, but in which every form is made obedient to the conception of the design he has in hand. These conditions classic subjects afford, and as vehicles, therefore, of *abstract form*, which is a thing not of one time but of all time, these subjects can never be obsolete, and though to many they are a dead letter, they can never be an anachronism.[397]

Within this framework, the placement of drapery and the opposition of skin and fabric would become a recurring motif in Leighton's work, to the point that the use of drapery was in itself an exploration of autonomous form, colour, and line. In other words, such a representation

[396] Rosemary Barrow, "Drapery, Sculpture and the Praxitelean Ideal", chap. in *Frederic Leighton,* eds. Barringer and Prettejohn, 49-66.
[397] Leighton to J. Comyns Carr, 27 November 1873, quoted in J. Comyns Carr, *Some Eminent Victorians: Personal Recollections in the World of Art and Letters* (London: Duckworth & Co., 1908), 98 [my italics].

could become an autonomous vehicle of pictorial beauty, independently of a storyline it would otherwise contribute towards. For one reviewer in 1867, *Spanish Dancing Girl* provided "symmetry and rhythm" in its drapery, which came as "music after discord" as it so wonderfully complemented the rigidity of the horizontal and vertical lines.[398] On a formal level, the pictorial shape is then formed through parallels with musical rhetoric, and it is no stretch to conceive of the depicted space as quasi-musical when interpreted through rhythm, tempo, and harmonious colour. Beyond its figural composition, I see this picture as a developmental piece in Leighton's exploration of his soundscapes. It developed out of the immersive interior spaces of *Golden Hours* and *Lieder ohne Worte,* which then extended into Leighton's interest in natural landscapes and vast vistas.[399] This would become especially significant in the 1880s and 1890s, when he began painting particular temporalities such as twilight or sunset, but it began in the 1860s with an exploration of the aesthetic listener extrapolated into a natural landscape.

This listener, as in *Golden Hours* and *Lieder*, is the subjective, embodied reception site of auditory sound and hence can function as a directive for Leighton's viewers as the ideal type of experience. Leighton discussed this type of experience himself, as mentioned previously in relation to his vividly colourful and immersive experience of Bach's *Chaconne* in 1871. According to Hallé, Leighton's dream was to construct an exhibition space where music and painting as sister arts could co-exist; such an aim dovetails with the notion of an immersive pictorial experience guided and inspired by the art of music.[400] A significant component in this experience, as Leighton wrote in 1871, was light, a factor that bridges the two arts in a scientific as well as visual manner. As such, I want to discuss a number of Leighton's later landscapes, particularly *The Garden of the Hesperides* (fig. 28, 1892), *Idyll* (fig. 29, 1880-1881), *Cymon and Iphigenia* (fig. 30, 1884), and *Flaming June* (fig. 8, 1895), as examples of a fusion of light, atmosphere, temporality, the figure of the listener (however abstracted), and immersive spaces which emulate the condition of absolute instrumental music. Crucial to this analysis is the idea of looking-time or an extended duration of looking-time based in the experience of music as well as the sonoric potential of form and colour in correspondence with a quasi-musical landscape. As has been discussed in Section I of this thesis, striving

[398] "The Royal Academy and Other Exhibitions", *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 102, no. 621 (July 1867): 86.
[399] For more on Leighton and landscapes, see Christopher Newall, "Leighton and the Art of Landscape", in *Leighton*, eds. Jones, Newall, Ormond, Ormond, and Read, 41-54.
[400] Hallé, *Life and Letters,* 166.

after or emulating the condition of music was not necessarily to provoke a quasi-synaesthetic experience of visual art or even to visualise a pictorial form of a specific musical genre like Schwind did in his Biedermeier *Symphony*. Instead, striving after this condition was to figure out a way to pictorially engender an experience that could be as rich, subjective, embodied, immersive, and temporal as music could. This was then couched in musical rhetoric, allowing for a much wider range of pictorial interpretability in the case of Leighton's art.

The Garden of the Hesperides, painted in 1893, showcases a scene taken from Hesiod's *Theogony* (c. 700 BCE) as part of the genealogy of the ancient Greek deities. Originally, there were three, as there were Three Graces and Three Fates. The idea of the triad comes at an interesting time in 1893, since this was the time in which Richard Wagner's popularity in England increased rapidly.[401] In fact, despite anecdotes that Leighton disliked Wagner, he did visit Bayreuth where he saw Wagner's *Ring des Nibelungen* and, consequently, the *Hesperides* strongly echoes the motif of the triad in the form of the three Rhinemaidens in the *Ring*.[402] Henri Fantin-Latour, whom Leighton knew through Whistler, became involved with a number of musicians and composers in the 1860s when he painted *Hommage à Delacroix* (fig. 31, 1864) and, later, *Autour du Piano* (fig. 32, 1885), both featuring prominent *mélomanes*, painters, and musical figures. Fantin became heavily infatuated with Wagner's music and artistic potential; he saw the *Ring* in 1876 in Bayreuth, leading to a series of lithographs pictorializing Wagnerian music. As such, Fantin made *Siegfried and the Rhinemaidens* as well as *The Three Rhinemaidens*, further popularising, in both Paris and London, the German version of a triad of women.

Leighton's three Hesperides, then, echoes this then-popular motif. However, his choice of the Hesperides specifically as nymphs of the evening is arguably more significant. Apart from symbolising evening through their connection to Hesperos, the evening-star, they symbolised the golden light of sunset specifically, the time of day (or night) Leighton loved so dearly: "The most mysteriously beautiful in the whole twenty-four hours, when the *merest lip* of the moon has risen from behind the sea horizon, and the air is still haunted with the flush of the after-glow from the sun hidden in the west".[403] Moreover, there are numerous

[401] See Emma Sutton, *Aubrey Beardsley and British Wagnerism in the 1890s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), esp. "Introduction: Wagnerism in Britain in the 1890s", 1-23.
[402] W.B. Richmond wrote that "Wagner never appealed to him [Leighton] as Mozart did; it was too strenuous, too busy in changes of key, too incomplete in the finish and development of phases", quoted in Barrington, *Life and Letters,* vol. 2, 6; Daniel Robbins, "'No Weakness or Wavering': Leighton at Work, 1894-1896", in *Flaming June: The Making of an Icon,* exh. cat. (London: Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Leighton House Museum, 2016), 52.
[403] Quoted in Barrington, *Life and Letters,* vol. 2, 258 [italics in original].

layers to the story of the Hesperides and the golden apples they guard, all of which Leighton would have been aware of, yet he purposefully chose to depict them in a state of repose rather than any other, more dramatic and energetic part of the narrative. This is not out of place in relation to Leighton's overall working process and preference for images of languorous and reclining, even sleeping, women.[404] Indeed, I think that Leighton chose such a moment not only to focus on the formal effect of his work through non-narrativity, itself in emulation of the condition of absolute music on the basis of instrumental music being 'empty', but also to meditate on the effect of music on its listeners. Indeed, in the original lore the Hesperides were reputed to be talented singers, and to the left we see a woman in luxurious orange drapery holding a lyre and, with open mouth, sing a tune. Another figure is entwined by the serpent Ladon and gazes ahead, while the other rests on the former's shoulder, her hands in a bowl, eyes closed. Overall, the scene exudes peace, meditation, even immersion. The suggestion of a hot and suffused atmosphere is captivated in every detail, from the warm, deep hues of the fabric to the overpowering foliage, to the deep blue of the ocean beyond as the branches droop with its famed golden apples. Yet as I have mentioned, Leighton does not provide his viewers with any contextual information, of how Eris obtained the Apple of Discord from this garden or how Heracles made his visit. Instead, he uses the premise of the three Hesperides as personifications of sunset to meditate on the effect of light and sound intermingled into one visually rich display.

Knowing that Leighton experienced music through the lens of colour, particularly gold, in relation to space and light, our experience of the *Hesperides* is altered to become one of a quasi-musical nature. The ability of music to enrich a space visually and experientially was of paramount importance in crafting a visual scene that could have the same effect on his audience. This is where I want to bring in the concept of the aesthetic listener again, which I have alluded to before. In *Idyll* (fig. 29), exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1881, Leighton depicts another triad, this time in mimicry of Moore's *The Musicians:* a male performer on the left, two listening women on the right. We are no longer placed in an interior, but we are outside, a vast striated landscape spreading out before us and beyond the three figures in the foreground. The man on the left, bare backed and facing away from us, plays on his instrument a song which, combined with the suggestion of the title, has connections to the idyllic and sonoric potential of nature. This was touched upon earlier in relation to *Lieder ohne Worte,* when a girl was listening to the sound of water, but in this landscape I believe

[404] Hammerschlag, "Deathly Sleep", 201-215.

Leighton wanted to capitalise on the sonic or sonoric potential of landscape as German Romantic painters like Caspar David Friedrich had done before him.[405] Richard Leppert has used the term "sonoric landscape" in relation to the visual impression of landscape as "a sweep of sound as broad as the land itself".[406] Bearing these dimensions in mind, Leighton still differs from these more straightforward approaches at fusing nature and musical harmony, in that his aim at subjectlessness and decorative abstraction contributed to a specific, immersive, and aesthetic experience for his spectator.

The women on the right are, however, no mere listeners, but I argue they embody an aesthetic ideal – they are the aesthetic listener as the perfect audience, immersed, captivated, embodied, and subjective. This was the type of ideal audience for an Aestheticist painter like Leighton, one that was immersed and experienced the artwork in the same way as one would a piece of music. With no narrative to focus on, the viewer is forced to consider other pictorial aspects. In this case, the colour of the land, the striations, the forms of the fabric, the rhythm of limbs and bodies. Because we, as viewers, view the musician from behind, we are invited further into the landscape, the natural composition rippling outwards from this central figure. The striations, curved and elongated, stream out from the female figures as they lie recumbent under the tree. The women, then, *as* aesthetic listeners, not only provide a visual response to music but act as a template. They embody this ideal response to art, the type of response that, in the second half of the nineteenth century, was more easily engendered with music rather than with painting. As such, these women, sensuously and visually, act as a directive for the viewers of *Idyll*; we are directed to contemplate the visual and formal aspects of the painting over a length of time and through a certain approach. This is, then, a visual response grounded in music, where we would also turn to the formal aspects because of a perceived emptiness in narrative. By doing so, we enter a meditative and contemplative state similar to how the women appreciate and experience the depicted musical performance.

Music here provides the type of temporality that painting innately lacks. As such, the depiction of music combined with an instruction to linger and meditate over the work's formal aspects as we would over a musical piece's rhythm, tempo, and notes, we naturally spend more time *looking* at the work of art. The extension of this looking-time is by its very nature a quasi-musical act; when a painting is approached and admired *as* a painting, then

[405] For an analysis of Friedrich's musical associations, see Schawelka, *Quasi una Musica*, 225-238. For an analysis of the German musical landscape from a broader perspective, see Maria Teresa Arfini, "Musical Landscape: The Correspondence between Music and Painting in Early-Nineteenth-Century Germany", *Music in Art* 39, nos. 1-2 (Spring-Autumn 2014): 125-144.
[406] Richard Leppert, *The Sight of Sound: Music, Representation, and the History of the Body* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1993), 18.

there is an immediate attention to what makes a painting a painting. To present it less convolutedly, the forms and colours are what, ultimately, furnishes the visual aspects of a painting. If these are appreciated in and for themselves, the type of aesthetic contemplation the viewer is induced towards is similar to that of a listener towards an instrumental piece. Leighton's preferred experience was the same one he had when listening to music; transplanted onto the art of painting, the musical, then, becomes an ideal criterion to fulfil and aspire towards. The encouragement of an autonomous and formalist experience of an artwork was strongly liaised to the art of instrumental music in that music offered such an ideal experience where the emotions were accessed immediately and sensuously, while nonetheless providing artistic meaning and content. The musical then becomes a class or category of aesthetic experience in and of itself.

This applies in paintings that do not depict musical performances as well. The oblong composition capitalising on a horizontal sweep in *Idyll* was transplanted by Leighton into *Cymon and Iphigenia* (fig. 30, 1884) in order to maximise the visual effect of Iphigenia's sleeping body. It is based on Boccaccio's *Decameron* (c. 1348-1353) but, again, as in the case of the *Hesperides,* Leighton's conceptualisation of the scene avoids a narrative and contains only minimal literary hints. Instead, it is centred entirely on the moment of beholding beauty, where Cymon gazes upon the sleeping Iphigenia and is entranced by ideas of beauty and love, leading to absorption. As such, Leighton manages to shift the focus to this precise moment of *looking*. There is no progression, no linear development; instead, there is *suspension*. This suspension was particularly effective in *Idyll,* too; it concerns a moment captured in space, as paintings do so successfully, yet there is equally a tension between duration and suspension. *Idyll* focuses on a specific moment – the musician strumming his instrument for his audience, or Cymon gazing at Iphigenia – yet such a moment invites duration in a simulation of a highly intense and rich musical experience. Let me explain at the hand of *Cymon and Iphigenia.* The foreground of the painting is littered with a number of sleeping figures dressed in rich and sumptuously flowing drapery. In the centre, her body at rest and elongated like the landscape behind her, lies Iphigenia, resplendent in a cream-coloured fabric that appears to glow from within. This glow mimics the suffused warmth of the sunset beyond, resonating with all other forms and colours in the work; the vase, the tree trunk, the rocks, the water. To the right, beyond this pool of light, stands Cymon, dressed in a deep red. Beyond him extends a vast expanse, ending in a stretch of sea and the hint of a horizon. The dreamy atmosphere seems unreal, even supra-real. The moment is as the one in

Hesperides, a moment suspended between temporal states. These features are not in themselves musical. As I have alluded to in earlier chapters, however, features like temporality, suspension, and abstraction were all characteristics absolute instrumental music inherently possessed at the time and painting did not. Leighton was keenly aware of this; this is why his striving after the condition of absolute music as an aesthetic *ideal* – somehow more enriched and subjective than painting – is so significant.

Just as in *Idyll, Cymon and Iphigenia* proffers suspended time, creating a bubble in which the painting can operate autonomously yet provoking a prolonged contemplation on the part of the viewer. The latter was an action similar to and inspired by the abilities of absolute instrumental music – again, the emulation becomes a provocation or directive for the viewer. This idea of suspension in time to extend the duration of *looking-time* as in itself a musical act can make a painting musical by association. How does this change our experience of works like *Idyll* and *Cymon and Iphigenia*? In a visual description of Leighton's work in the contemporary press, it was not uncommon for critics to use musical terminology. Here, these became aesthetic descriptors used to better verbally capture the impression or effect of his art. But abstraction, even in the case of Leighton where non-narrativity was a type of abstraction, strongly corresponds with our understanding of the musical. It is somehow supra-real as it indicates a surplus dimension, something extra; the musical exists in a sphere beyond the real in its immateriality and intangibility. This applies in a similar theoretical way to colour and form on their own; to describe them, critics utilised musical nomenclature because it was convenient and because it helped to explain the subjective experience art could offer from a recipient's viewpoint. The musical, then, is all about the subjective and individual experience of the viewer. If a painting is viewed, admired, and appreciated in its autonomy, as a work of art first and foremost, the result is a quasi-musical experience. This takes shape in a painting like *Cymon and Iphigenia* through two factors: suspension and prolonged looking-time, and non-narrativity in service of abstraction.

This is the place where the ideal of the musical becomes so effective in reconsidering the idea of art-contemplation, or aesthetic contemplation. This is also why the figure of the aesthetic listener became so powerful in Leighton's art. Knowing Leighton's propensity to experience music through colour and listening to music while viewing and creating art, it follows that the experience of one of his visual artworks could become musical from the recipient's standpoint. Because of the lack of narrative direction, we can then appreciate the formal aspects of *Cymon and Iphigenia*, or *Hesperides* or *Idyll*; the rhythmic motion of fabric, the effects of light on different surfaces, the materiality of paint, textures, and rich

colours. Beholding all this in a contemplative mood, not unlike that of Cymon beholding Iphigenia or the Hesperides beholding each other, leads to a musical experience of these forma elements. They behave autonomously, meaningful in and of themselves, constructed in aspiration of the condition of absolute instrumental music. Here, painting has become like music per Viardot's conceptualisation of 'ut pictura musica'.

An important step in the development towards such an abstraction, autonomous artform in emulation of the musical was *Summer Moon* (fig. 33), exhibited at the Royal Academy to great acclaim in 1872.[407] It made a huge impact on artists and critic alike upon exhibition, to the extent that G.F. Watts declared it his favourite picture Leighton ever made and Walter Sickert, despite his general anti-academic stance, wrote that he "saw no picture that seemed to me to have surer claims to immortality".[408] In terms of body positioning and theme, it is a clear continuation of the earlier *Lieder ohne Worte* in that it depicts a figure or figures listening in repose to the sound of birdsong in a quasi-classical setting. Indeed, both works contain a singing bird, the result of its sound and musical effects being the depicted introspection and relaxed limbs. I believe this introspection or contemplation, even sleep, in *Summer Moon* held a double meaning. Leighton was not offering the female body to his viewer for visual gratification or delectation, as some scholars have argued, but he is extending the figure of the immersed and aesthetic listener to other states of passive being (sleep, meditation, reverie) in order to abstract these figures even further from any dramatic action.[409] This way, the focus of the viewer shifts to the formal elements that make up these figures rather than any external themes they may illustrate or signify. Our attention is drawn to the delicate placement of limbs, soft skin and intricate hands; our experience of the work is hence furnished by Leighton's manipulation of swaying and rippling swaths of drapery and harmonious colour. Through this effect, *Summer Moon* becomes a visual meditation on restfulness, one prompted and consequently enriched by the potential of music to entrance. Critics picked up on this, labelling the work a "pictorial poem", a "lovely harmony", a

[407] *Summer Moon* is currently located in a private collection in India, and only low-quality colour reproductions or black-and-white reproductions are publicly available.
[408] Barrington, *Life and Letters,* 192; Walter Sickert, "The Royal Academy", *New York Herald* (May 8, 1889), repr. in *Walter Sickert: The Complete Writings on Art,* ed. Anna Gruetzner Robins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 47. For a comprehensive analysis of Sickert's critical attitude towards Leighton, see Anna Gruetzner Robins, "Leighton: A Promoter of the New Painting", chap. in *Frederic Leighton,* eds. Barringer and Prettejohn, 323-325.
[409] Joseph Kestner, for example, has argued that Leighton's images of reclining and sleeping women are misogynistic because of the women's passivity; Kestner, *Mythology and Misogyny: The Social Discourse of Nineteenth-Century British Classical-Subject Painting* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 172.

"melodious" composition that was at once "exalting, delighting, purifying".[410] A poet, signing off simply as 'H.A.D.', offered a poem in response to the picture which resonates with its musical associations, writing of its "music of painting, the colour of time", the "cadence of golden sound, a '*Schlummerlied'*, striking a chord for a rest".[411] Again, the references to gold and sound, equally reminiscent of Leighton's own *Golden Hours*, the effect of music in space, as well as the potential of gold to provide a subjective embodied experience bound by both spatiality and temporality, are fascinating in connection to a *Schlummerlied* or 'slumber song'. As such, Leighton's later *Summer Slumber* became an extension in this vein of musical rest and repose, particularly considering Leighton's own love for Robert Schumann, the composer of the most renowned *Schlummerlied*, Op. 24, no. 16 in 1853.[412]

A number of statements by Leighton himself, both in public speeches, the Royal Academy Addresses, and his Royal Academy notebooks, support the idea that he interpreted art through musical metaphor. The notebooks are filled with vivid references to colour and vague descriptions of mood: "strong sidelight (rich indigo blue against Lt [light] olive green rich scumble)", "the whole thing like a writhing dragon, sinister – pale ash black ghostly falls pouring in from sides – one from under a large grey green skeleton of a mill – and gaunt on the banks autumnal trees yellow brown grey", "Aphrodite mood of erotic like flowers".[413] Elsewhere, Leighton recorded how art should cater to temperaments in an analogy with music, as there are artists "whose delight is in the pure expression of the imagination & whose mode of procedure is akin to music – and those on the other hand in whom the vivid pulse of life is strongest". As such, "it must be the province of some to uphold the lamp of abst[ract] beauty".[414] In 1881 Leighton gave a speech, reported verbatim in *The Musical World*, in which he proclaimed, "the intimate and deep connection that existed between music" and the other arts. Through formal and musical metaphor, Leighton effectively bridged the two arts:

> It [this connection] was outwardly signified by the use of certain terms common to them all. Form and colour, for instance, breadth, style, and tone were words used alike by *the artist and*

[410] "Art Notes", *The Academy* 3, no. 46 (April 1872): 148; "The Royal Academy: First Notice", *The Athenaeum* no. 2323 (May 4, 1872): 564.
[411] H.A.D., "Summer-Moon: A Picture in the Royal Academy, by Frederick Leighton, R.A.", *St. James's Magazine* no. 9 (April 1872): 272 [my italics].
[412] *Summer Slumber,* as a photogravure, is reproduced in Barrington, *Life and Letters,* vol. 2, nr. 72.
[413] Frederic Leighton, Notebooks (1860s-), Royal Academy archives, quoted in Ormond, *Leighton*, 84.
[414] Leighton, Royal Academy Notebooks, quoted in ibid., 83-84.

> *the musician*. Rhythm was used alike of the relation of intervals of space and time. Harmony *described the consent of colours as well as that of sounds*, and these points of contact were the outward signs of that inner bond of kinship which united them.[415]

Leighton had earlier incorporated these ideas into his Academy Addresses, writing that "lines and forms and combinations of lines and forms, colours and combinations of colours have acquired a distinct expressional significance, and, so to speak, an *ethos* of their own".[416] This formalist thinking he acquired from the art of music and its aesthetic tenets, initially using music as content in order to sidestep narrativity and hence focus on formalist features. Moreover, our perception of form and colour "has in its action upon us in common with melody, of proportion, which is to intervals of space what rhythm is to intervals of time, and of light and shade".[417] Leighton draws here a direct formal parallel between the arts of music and painting, appealing to the condition of music to borrow and appropriate certain aesthetic characteristics while simultaneously finding an analogy in shared terminology and formal effects. This type of reasoning helps explain why a work like *The Daphnephoria* (fig. 34, 1876) had the effect on reviewers of "exquisite *harmonies* of line and colour", or *Hercules Wrestling with Death for the Body of Alcestis* (fig. 35, 1871) could be rendered musical through its "*melody* of lines".[418] The tonal relation in colour became equivalent to the tonal relation in sound, leading colour to become capable of imparting a musical effect regardless of subject matter.[419] Ultimately this analogy led, according to Leighton, to a "more abstract pleasure in form and colour, for their own sakes and independently of imitation".[420]
To return to *Summer Moon,* then, the a-locality of the scene contributes significantly to a sense of musical spatiality and temporality. As we do not know *where* the scene takes place, exactly, Leighton exploits the potential of artistic duration by depicting a suspended temporality.

Often considered the pinnacle of his oeuvre, *Flaming June* was one of the last paintings Leighton created (fig. 8) At first glance we are met with, above all, *colour*. A resplendent display of rippling drapery washes over us and envelopes us in much the same way as the fabric clings to the woman depicted in the painting. Indeed, given shape through colour and a

---

[415] "Sir F. Leighton Among the Musicians", *The Musical World* 59, no. 8 (February 19, 1881): 115 [my italics].
[416] Leighton, *Academy Addresses,* 57.
[417] Ibid., 14.
[418] W.B. Richmond, "Lord Leighton and His Art", *The Nineteenth Century* 39, no. 229 (March 1896): 473; "Fine Arts: Royal Academy", *The Athenaeum* no. 1947 (April 29, 1865): 592 [my italics].
[419] "Music, and its Relation to the Other Fine Arts", *The Musical World* 67, no. 34 (August 25, 1888): 666-667.
[420] Leighton, *Academy Addresses*, 15.

delicate oscillation between concrete form and transparent drapery, there is a figure; a sleeping woman, curled in on herself, the blush on her cheeks high and warm. The pose itself is a continuation of a frieze incorporated by Leighton into *Summer Slumber*, as well as a continuation of the poses in *Summer Moon* and, as argued by the Ormonds, Michelangelo's *Night* (fig. 36, 1526-1531).[421] However, in the case of *Flaming June* the sleeping figure is not accompanied by another, nor is it a supportive figure; instead, it is the pose stripped down from any and all extraneous connotations. All the attention is brought to what really mattered: form and colour. Our attention is also called to questions of space and time; where is the scene located? Is it a physical terrace near the Mediterranean, adorned with flowers and foliage Leighton could have seen on his travels? Or, as with *Idyll* and *Cymon and Iphigenia*, is it an idealised space, abstracted from the real?

As with *Iphigenia,* Leighton chose to depict a specific temporality in *Flaming June* – a time of day that could provoke a specific mood or sensation. This was an opportunity for Leighton to evolve the figure of the aesthetic listener he had applied earlier. This figure and its pose – legs drawn in, lounging, head at an angle, body awash in drapery as it was used in *Lieder ohne Worte, Summer Moon*, and *Idyll* – was abstracted even further from any associated interpretations. I see a significant development here; in earlier works, Leighton explored immersion through music. In *Summer Slumber,* the associated pose of the listener as described above became a decorative feature, part of a frieze running rhythmically along a horizontal line in the work. Then, in *Flaming June,* the 'listener' has become completely autonomous. Kenneth Bendiner and Paul Barlow have interpreted the figure as a personification of the month June.[422] I wonder whether *Flaming June,* as a title, does not refer to the *effect* of June; the summer heat, flaming hot, can be conducive to sleep and drowsiness, after all. Nonetheless, the vibrant orange drapery does conjure up connotations of heat itself. The woman, in a deep sleep, nestles further into herself, calm and still as the ocean behind her. The drapery, on the other hand, is alive with movement, visually striking in its colour and shape. It recalls passages Leighton recorded in his Royal Academy Notebooks, how a "combination of expressed motion & rest" was his "fascination in drapery – wayward flow & ripple like living water together with absolute repose".[423] Indeed, the drapery itself *is* motion, and the effect on the viewer is quasi-musical by association. It echoes, moreover, the

[421] Ormonds, *Leighton,* 91, 130-131; see also Stephen Jones, "Leighton's Debt to Michelangelo: The Evidence of the Drawings", *Apollo* 143, no. 408 (1996): 35-39.
[422] Kenneth Bendiner, *Introduction to Victorian Painting* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), 142; Paul Barlow, "Transparent Bodies, Opaque Identities: Personification, Narrative and Portraiture", in *Frederic Leighton,* eds. Barringer and Prettejohn, 196.
[423] Royal Academy Notebooks, quoted in Ormonds, *Leighton,* 131.

contemporary notions of sound as waves and vibrations, particularly so considering Leighton's admiration of and friendship with John Tyndall, the author of *Sound* (1878). The idea of sound as waves emerges in Leighton's wording of 'ripple like living water' and 'expressed motion & rest' as quoted above. There is even a sense of concretised light, shining like a thick burst of impastoed paint on the horizon, wavering and rippling like the drapery. This also connects with another of Leighton's last works, *Clytie* (fig. 37) where Clytie falls in love with Apollo, the Greek god of, among other things, sun, light, and, crucially, music. Here, the confluence of light and sound was one of effect; the feeling of light and heat on skin, the impact of sound on your ears and your emotions, combined to generate feelings of headiness, immersion, and sensuality.

As I have argued above in relation to *Idyll*, our experience of *Flaming June* as spectators is shaped by how we respond to its forms and colours, not how we would interpret any represented narrative. It is a successfully self-contained painting which relies not on such a narrative but on its self-sufficient formalism. If we test the theory of the condition of absolute instrumental music against *Flaming June*, we see that it merges form and content, to the extent that the forms and colours *are* the content in a simulacrum of the theoretical condition of absolute instrumental music. Our response to the work is musical by virtue of temporality, metaphorical sensations, and Leighton's appeal to incorporate absolute instrumental qualities into the work. Letting our eyes travel over the myriad folds of fabric is an act of aesthetic contemplation extending over time where the dominant sensation is pictorial as well as physical immersion. As Leighton wrote, "all the qualities of a work of art must be struck in one key and appeal to one order of sensation", and in the case of *Flaming June,* it appeals to our eyes.[424] Harmonious colour and rhythmic line combine to lead to a temporary state of immersion, much alike to the depicted state of immersion in the painting itself.

Perhaps Leighton's wish, if Hallé is to be believed, of a space where music and painting could co-exist was realised in his dedicated studio space. Upon his death in 1896, Mrs Barrington describes in her biography on Leighton:

> All who were present must ever remember the last 'Music' in the March before, when (contrasting so strongly in colour and sentiment) 'Lachrymae' and 'Flaming June' stood on the easels, and for the first time the silk room was open, hung with the works of Leighton's

[424] Royal Academy Notebooks, quoted in ibid., 131.

> friends; how, through all the beautiful strains from Joachim and the rest, a tragic note rang out to tell, as it seemed, of the waning life of the centre of it all.[425]

Leighton's passion for music has been well documented but, as I have shown in this chapter, his engagement with the paradigm of absolute instrumental music has not been sufficiently researched before. Leighton's work, directly and indirectly, involves itself with this paradigm, particularly its facets of enhancing aesthetic contemplation and experience, directing a viewer's attention to the musical potential of pictorial features, and extending painting towards abstraction. It is worth questioning whether he does so successfully, and to what extent music can enrich this experience of abstraction and pictorial beauty. Leighton's personal experience of music was compelling and, as I have argued, was fundamental in shaping his approach to art in general. Within his life, public and private, instrumental music became an ideal art that could shape and form how the artist interacted with the effects of art. Through Leighton's friendship with prominent musicians and musical figures like Joachim, Hallé, Piatti, Viardot-García, Sartoris, and many others, he ensured a first-hand experience of many contemporary masterpieces and direct access to the world of music performance and theory. Examining his work, then, through the lens of absolute instrumental music offers a new perspective on the importance of contemplation, temporality, and form and autonomy in his work. Through an analysis of newly found data, particularly Leighton's relationship with Viardot and the parallels between his *Addresses* and Hanslick's writing, as well as the use of existing data to offer new interpretations, this chapter provides a significant contribution to the field of Victorian studies in art history.

For many twenty-first-century observers, Leighton's work might read as decorative but not abstract. The visual attention to decoration, whether in texture, colour, form, or fabric, was in service of decorative effect. However, since these features functioned independently from narrative, they were, within a Victorian context, considered abstracted from the real. The freedom from narrative restrictions, inspired by the freedom instrumental music possessed inherently, was one avenue towards abstraction, as was an emphasis on formal features. After all, these formal features as "essentially artistic" elements was what Leighton hoped to elevate, leading to an intensification of the experience "of what is beautiful in the highest, widest, and fullest sense of the word".[426] This was achieved through an appeal to the condition of absolute instrumental music, an appeal calculated to intensify the aesthetic effect

[425] Barrington, *Life and Letters,* vol. 2, 335.
[426] Leighton, "Management of Galleries", 179.

of his art. Moreover, the composition of pictorial space was musical for Leighton. This was effective in *Golden Hours* to the extent that its delineation of space and positioning of the musician and listener created an autonomous, idealised, and abstract space given shape through music. Similarly, in *Lieder ohne Worte* and *Summer Moon* Leighton strove to use colour in order to translate the impression of musical sound to canvas. On the one hand, this developed into the aesthetic listener which acted not only as a visual listener but also as a template for its real-life spectator, instigating a temporal and sensuously rich aesthetic experience modelled on that of music. On the other hand, Leighton's fascination with music led to the creation of such pictorial immersive spaces in which form and colour were constructed through and on the basis of musical analogies and metaphor. Ultimately, this led to a delineation of pictorial space in his later landscapes, such as *Idyll* and *Cymon and Iphigenia*, where narrative concerns were put aside in favour of a fusion of form and content in a simulation of the condition of absolute instrumental music. The *effects* of a painting like *Flaming June* were designed to be similar to the effects of an instrumental piece. This condition of music, moreover, afforded such artistic and pictorial potential that, when appealed to, could lead to a quasi-musical experience in the viewer regardless of content. The successful merging of form and content, then, based on the condition of music, can take multiple forms where our attention is directed towards the formal potential of the work itself; those 'essentially artistic' elements. The notions of self-sufficiency, formalism, and self-referentiality, based in the theoretical ideal of music, became a model Leighton upheld for his own art. It was an ideal for painting to become as autonomous as instrumental music but in a way that could still engender an emotionally and sensuously rich experience. Indeed, as Leighton wrote himself, "from time immemorial a channel of purest emotion, and Art divine, if a divine Art there be: the Art of Music".[427]

[427] Leighton, *Addresses,* 53.

Chapter Four: Albert Moore and Absolute Decorative Art

When Albert Moore exhibited *Azaleas* (fig. 11) at the Royal Academy in 1868, Swinburne commended its "exclusive worship of things formally beautiful", comparing his art to the poetry of Théophile Gautier. He added, "The melody of colour, the symphony of form is complete: one more beautiful thing is achieved, one more delight is born into the world; and its meaning is beauty; and its reason for being is to be".[428] Sidney Colvin similarly emphasised such a type of visual beauty in 1870, writing that Moore always made "the decorative aspect of his canvas, regarded as an arrangement of beautiful lines and refreshing colours, the one important matter in his work".[429] The idea of the decorative in opposition to 'realistic' painting by Victorian standards had a parallel with discourses of instrumental music. Gleeson White, upon reviewing Moore in 1894, wrote of the artist's clear preference for the decorative over the realistic for which he saw a correlation in the debate of absolute and programme music, respectively.[430]

I argue in this chapter for the strong connection between the artistic decorative and Moore's methods of appealing to the idea or condition of absolute instrumental music. In nineteenth-century aesthetics, the term 'decorative' denoted those types of visual art which were predominantly ornamental; art that visually *decorated*. Moreover, the decorative was considered the opposite to realism as well as a secondary and supposedly inferior category to pictorial or easel painting. The bridging element here was an emphasis on formal features in favour of non-narrativity or subjectlessness. Hence, a painting could, and was, often considered musical purely through its subjectlessness and the autonomous potential of its formal features – form, colour, line. At the time, Victorian colour theorists saw a painting's ability to be autonomous and independently beautiful as having a direct analogy with the ideal of absolute instrumental music: "Forms are in all respects analogous to sounds, and that consequently a system of linear harmony can be established, similar to that which regulates the arrangement of musical notes".[431] Proclaimed by his biographer and former pupil, Alfred Lys Baldry, to be "one of the greatest exponents of pure aestheticism", Moore constructed pictures with a "power of arranging and combining the lines of the human form into a visible

[428] A.C. Swinburne, W.M. Rossetti and A.C. Swinburne, *Notes on the Royal Academy Exhibition* (London: John Camden Hotten, 1868), 32.
[429] Sidney Colvin, "English Painters of the Present Day. II. – Albert Moore", *Portfolio* no. 1 (1870): 5.
[430] Gleeson White, "Albert Moore", *The Bookman* 7, no. 39 (December 1894): 83.
[431] David Ramsay Hay, *The Natural Principles and Analogy of the Harmony of Form* (Edinburgh: W. Blackwood, 1842), 3.

rhythm and symmetry not less delightful than the audible rhythm and symmetry of music".[432] The fundamental difference in how Moore approached the decorative as opposed to Leighton, is that Moore subordinated everything in his paintings for aesthetic effect. He avoided narrative so completely, that the method he employed to construct his works was one of mathematics, schematics, and grids, as opposed to Leighton who, much more often, took an academic approach where there was still often a reference to narrative moments and where his approach to the picture plane was academic in nature. For both, however, the idea of the decorative was defined as a prioritisation of form and colour for aesthetic effect and attention to visual design. Within Victorian criticism, then, the decorative was a value judgement established in analogy to non-narrativity. Moore avoided facial expressions, subordinating all formal elements to his pictorial design, striving exclusively after harmonious compositions which were supposed to be visually pleasing to the eye as music was pleasing to the ear.

In this chapter, I want to analyse how Moore engaged with the art of absolute instrumental music under the aegis of 'beauty without realism' in order to test this idea of the decorative as quasi-musical. His work was consistently reviewed by his critics and colleagues in extensive musical terminology, and he purposefully created non-narrative or 'empty' works to search for the type of pictorial art capable of being abstract and autonomously beautiful in emulation of music. Indeed, I want to argue that Moore was only able to arrive at this type of art through his interest in the idea or condition of absolute instrumental music. His use of form and colour was deeply inflected by this. By exploiting the theoretical parallel between decorative art and absolute music under the auspices of art for art's sake, I want to argue that music offered Moore a direct avenue towards pure, autonomous beauty and pictorial abstraction hitherto unknown in Victorian art. In other words, I want to question in this chapter to what extent Moore was influenced by the aesthetics of absolute instrumental music to construct pictorially abstract works. As with Leighton, the musical dimensions of Moore's oeuvre are under researched and I aim to rectify this in this chapter.

I will do so by looking at three developments. First, Moore's representation of musical subjects in the late 1860s and how he marketed these to his audience. Secondly, how Moore capitalised on the new musical-aesthetic criteria to generate a musical experience of his art. And finally, how his decorative work became a type of absolute decorative form, abstract through musical inflection and appeal on a formal level. This way, absolute instrumental music functioned as an aesthetic paradigm for Moore as the only art form, at the

[432] Alfred Lys Baldry, "Albert Moore: An Appreciation", *The Art Journal* 65 (February 1903): 34; Colvin, "Albert Moore", 6.

time, capable of being eminently abstract, autonomous, and yet formally meaningful. Moore's approach to formal composition, similarly to both Leighton and Whistler, was influenced by this paradigm in which formal interest takes precedence over narrative and historical concerns. The very experience of art *as art* and the rhetoric around absolute instrumental music informed his search for freestanding pictorial technique and ideal beauty. After all, as Frederick Wedmore claimed with manifesto-like grit, Moore did "not seek to render any phase of human passion; but, resting merely upon the claims of abstract beauty, he is able to demonstrate how wide is the empire of plastic art *even when it is completely isolated*".[433]

Music guided Moore to the extent that he owed it a debt of musical inspiration as he declared in 1868 in *A Quartet: A Painter's Tribute to the Art of Music, A.D. 1868* (fig. 7). What were the consequences of this declared inspiration? How can a musical lens help us better understand Moore's formal and formalist decisions in his pictorial constructions, particularly in appreciating his fusion of form and content? And, finally, by using a recognised theoretical parallel between the aesthetics of absolute music and that of decorative form, how is our experience of Moore's art altered?

The Music-Listener Duality

In 1865, Moore started work on a small painting that was exhibited in the Royal Academy in 1867 as *The Musicians* (fig. 2). It was hung almost next to Whistler's *Symphony in White, No. 3* (fig. 1), separated by one other painting.[434] The two works are strikingly similar in approach, both compositionally and thematically, an occurrence not left unnoticed by critics: "[*The Musicians*] assimilates with Mr. Whistler's 'Symphony' in being a study in white, and combined with that the tints of yellow and pink".[435] Moore and Whistler had met in 1865 and have been close friends and colleagues ever since, sharing ideas, aims, desires, and theories with each other. Elizabeth Prettejohn has extended the comparison between these two evidently musical works to include Leighton's *Spanish Dancing Girl: Cadiz in the Old Times* (fig. 3), in the same exhibition, arguing that "all three paintings order their compositions on principles of rhythm or proportion that can be seen as analogous to the proportional

[433] "Grosvenor Gallery: Second Article", *The Manchester Guardian* (May 31, 1878): 6 [my italics].
[434] The untraced *Waste Water from the* Mill by a 'W. Field'; *The Exhibition of the Royal Academy of Arts. The Ninety-Ninth* (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1867), 13.
[435] [F.G. Stephens], "Fine Arts: Royal Academy", *The Athenaeum* no. 2064 (May 18, 1867): 667.

relationships of musical intervals and chords", perceiving the "idea of an analogy with music" to lie at the basis of all three works. [436]

It is no coincidence that Leighton, Whistler, and Moore, at this particular point in time anchored around the rapidly progressing discourse of art for art's sake when concert halls and instrumental music performances became a more established part of the cultural fabric, became interested in music and its translation into painting, nor that they exhibited these musical paintings at the same time as I discussed in Chapter Two. In the case of *The Musicians,* the horizontal line acts similar to the bar or measure in sheet music, creating the groundwork for the rest of the painting to be mapped onto. We see a marble bench running the length of the canvas, connected to the back wall with a decorative dado and, above that, a picture rail, providing the illusion of a continuous wall. On the left is seated a male musician, draped in a transparent yellow fabric while cradling a lyre in his lap. On the right two women lounge against each other, languishing in vibrant crinkly cloth as they recline in introspective contemplation of the music provided to them. The formal visual elements set against this strong central horizontal line then act as counterpoints to generate a visually harmonious composition, essentially in simulation of a musical score. Despite being small in size, Moore paid extreme attention to his colour use. Indeed, throughout his entire career his eye for chromatic balance was praised frequently by his friends, colleagues, and critics. We already perceive his keen feeling for "the harmonies of faint and tender colour".[437]

Significantly, Moore did not choose to depict a developing storyline based around musical performance. Through his avoidance of anecdotalism, he instead leaves his viewers no other choice but to appreciate what is offered visually in simulation of how the depicted listeners appreciate what is offered to them aurally. Here, the two female listeners take on a role more meaningful to our pictorial experience apart from mere listeners. The action of the work shifts to passive absorption and contemplation: "The damsels of Mr. Moore listen to the music of the lyre, and, with limbs and heads at ease, *meditate its beauty*".[438] The act of meditation becomes the content of the picture, realised through a particular arrangement of form and colour. There is no longer a need to represent a narrative, even in relation to musical performance; instead, the temporality and spatiality shift to encompass the production of music through plucking the strings of a lyre and the subjective, inward experience of this music: a meditation on abstract beauty. As a result of this intellectually

[436] Elizabeth Prettejohn, *Art for Art's Sake: Aestheticism in Victorian Painting* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 111.
[437] "The Exhibition of the Royal Academy: Second Notice", *The Manchester Guardian* (May 21, 1867): 5.
[438] [Stephens], "Royal Academy", 667 [my italics].

'empty' canvas, we, as viewers, shift our attention to the musical potential of form and colour. Through the process of contemplating the formal features of this artwork we, as viewers, are made aware of the painting *being a painting,* consisting of these forms, colours, and lines in specific combinations.

Moore did not just appeal to music formally, however, but he foregrounded a specific type of experience in *The Musicians*: a visualisation of the abstract notion of musical experience, similar to Leighton as I explored in the previous chapter. Indeed, Moore made a number of deliberate compositional decisions in *The Musicians* that would recur throughout his entire oeuvre, such as the frieze-like construction of the interior, the open foreground space, and the juxtaposition of delicate horizontal, diagonal, and vertical lines to generate visual symmetry. I want to extend this to a number of musical-aesthetic tropes, however, and I will argue that the way Moore pictured the listeners in *The Musicians* was a conscious decision and one made with music as a theoretical ideal in mind. In order to dissect this, we need to look more closely at the way Moore depicts his listeners. In a number of his recent works before *The Musicians,* particularly *The Shulamite* (fig. 38, 1864-1866) and *The Marble Seat* (fig. 4, 1865), the latter arguably being his first Aesthetic artwork, Moore explored the interaction between the subject and object, often in the form of an individual and their audience.[439] The interaction between audience and performer, resulting in the former's subjective and inward experience of the music, is put on display for us to contemplate. This way, because Moore has chosen to arrange the figures as if his painting were a frieze, the women's reaction to the music acts as a display or template. With the abstract notion of experience as subject, *The Musicians* suggests that one way of experiencing art is to experience it as you would a piece of music: sensuously, emotionally, and subjectively. This motif of the aesthetic listener will figure consistently throughout Moore's oeuvre, either as listener or abstracted to be a totally autonomous and subjectless figure similar to Leighton.

There remains a sense of ambiguity in *The Musicians,* however, both intentionally and visually. Much like Leighton's *Lieder ohne Worte,* there is no definite geographical location or temporality that binds *The Musicians*. Indeed, there is a curious combination of artefacts, ranging from a classical lyre to the Japanese fans on the dado rail to the Greek drapery hanging on bodies of English models. What some critics considered an imitation of the antique is, rather, a reformulation as Moore deliberately infused his art with Japanese

[439] The work has been labelled as such due to its non-narrativity; see Asleson, *Albert Moore,* 79; W.M. Rossetti, "The Royal Academy Exhibition", *Fraser's Magazine* 71, no. 426 (June 1865): 744.

elements, Greek art, English models, and modern artistic ideas; a hybrid composition, in other words, mixing media and theories. One of Moore's two pupils, W.G. Robertson, reflected on this, writing, of the "Graeco-West Kensington women" Moore painted, admiring the "technical perfection" even if he found them "a little monotonous in their calculated loveliness".[440] This hybridity led to ambiguity and a more forceful removal from literary and moral interpretability. Moreover, it allowed Moore to pick and choose those elements he considered visually to be the most beautiful. The fans on the picture rail resonate, in terms of shape, with the lyre below, while the positioning of the fans reverses that of the figures. The heavy emphasis on architecture and richly decorated accessories, paired with attention to a strict tonal balance, add colour and shape to an interior that would otherwise prove quite barren and hard to grasp. The light character of hues Moore chose – white, yellow, rose pink – would have bordered on garishness had he not exactly planned out the placement of each tone.

In the Royal Academy exhibition of 1867, as mentioned, *The Musicians* was hung close to Whistler's *Symphony in White, No. 3*, marking the beginning of the latter's titular and musical re-evaluations. Moore and Whistler were close friends at this point in time, sharing their ideas on music in art, art for art's sake, and their respective search for pictorial beauty. Robertson wrote in his memoirs that Whistler had many friends, "but Albert Moore was one the few men whom he respected".[441] In 1868, Moore painted a successor to *The Musicians* and gave it a verbose title, rich with connotations. *A Quartet: A Painter's Tribute to the Art of Music, A.D. 1868* (fig. 7) was consequently exhibited at the Royal Academy exhibition of 1869. It is likely that Moore was influenced by the critical response to Whistler's *Symphony*, leading to his decision to employ a manifesto-like title to emphasise his own musical associations.[442] After all, titles were a particularly effective tool in moulding a viewer's response to a painting, as Moore was well aware of. Whistler was more verbal about this facet of his work, as he would write in *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies* (1890) how titles were "a key to my work", an idea both artists already worked out in the 1860s and 1870s.[443]

[440] Walford Graham Robertson, *Time Was: The Reminiscences of W. Graham Robertson* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1931), 57.
[441] Ibid., 275.
[442] At this point, Moore usually employed short titles, such as *Apricots* (1866), *Lilies* (1866), *Pomegranates* (1866), or, indeed, *Azaleas*. He would continue to do so for most of his paintings, using them as a red herring and divert the viewer's attention towards formal features.
[443] James McNeill Whistler, *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies* (New York: Frederic Stokes & Brother, 1890), 55.

Both *A Quartet* and *Azaleas* were significant in the critical reception of Moore, the former in terms of revealing his artistic intentions and the latter because of the interpretation Swinburne attached to it. Colvin saw these two works to be important steppingstones in Moore's "development of a very rigorous and very resolute artistic faculty directed to a single and very definite artistic aim", reiterating some of his earlier comments of 1867.[444] This 'artistic faculty' and 'artistic aim' was the integration of instrumental music into painting under the aegis of art for art's sake. In *A Quartet,* we are treated to a delicately coloured classical interior, similar to the one in *The Musicians.* Again, there is a marble bench running the entire length of the picture plane, precluding access to the rest of the space. Instead of an ornamental dado, there is simply the picture rail, carrying a number of vases, soft blossoms, and a purely decorative bass-viol which is cut off by the top of the canvas. The composition is a clear continuation from *The Musicians*, yet it emphasises the theme of an intimate musical performance in close quarters in a different way. Contrary to the obviously classicising Greek lyre, however, the instruments are decidedly modern in an echo of Leighton's anachronistic *The Triumph of Music*: three violins, a violoncello, and a bass-viol. This creates an immediate sense of geographical and temporal displacement, as Leighton achieved with *The Triumph of Music* in 1856; if the figures wear classical drapery and are situated in a classical interior, why the Japanese blossoms and modern instruments? Alfred Baldry, Moore's biographer, reasoned that "out of the whole range of musical instruments", the ones Moore chose were "most capable of producing the finest qualities of sound and the greatest charm of expression".[445] Even if so, I think Moore consciously and deliberately chose modern instruments for a number of reasons. First of all, how Moore created his compositions was entirely based in how harmonious and visually rhythmic the end result would be. In a late article, Baldry argued for the same:

> It was immaterial whether the objects represented in [Moore's] pictures were relics of the past or modern manufactures, so long as they fitted appropriately into his pre-eminently classical system. If a tulip, for instance, would give him the accent he wanted in one of his colour combinations, he attached no importance to the fact that it came from Haarlem and not from

[444] Colvin, "Albert Moore", 5. Colvin wrote on Poynter, Burne-Jones, and Moore alongside other prominent critics sympathetic to Aestheticism, including Taylor, Rossetti, Beavington Atkinson, and Hamerton. These were later republished in *English Painters of the Present Day: Essays by J. Beavington Atkinson, Sidney Colvin, P.G. Hamerton, W.M. Rossetti, and Tom Taylor* (London: Seeley, Jackson, and Halliday, 1871).
[445] Alfred Lys Baldry, *Albert Moore: His Life and Works* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1894), 36.

> Athens. It was beautiful, it touched the right note in his scheme, and in his view of his duty to art those were the only points he had to consider.[446]

This was not only true for *A Quartet*; Moore's obsession with creating visually beautiful pictures rather than archaeologically accurate ones was one of the overarching themes throughout his oeuvre. Indeed, Moore is believed to have claimed that "anachronism is the soul of Art", creating "the ideal world in which, pictorially, he lived".[447] I believe, however, there was an alternative motive attached to including these modern instruments in *A Quartet*, the answer to which lies in the title. From *The Marble Seat* onwards, we find a peculiar trend in Moore's choice of titles, which Walter Armstrong picked up on in 1888:

> It is from about 1865 that Mr. Moore's restriction of his brush […] must count. Before then we find his name in the catalogues set to subjects like the *Sacrifice of Elijah* and the *Shulamite.* From 1865 onwards his path is marked by titles – *Pomegranates, Lilies, Shells, Marguerites, Silver* – which seem determined by the wish that no idea of illustration, no literary *nexus*, shall attach itself to his art. Some day [sic] the dictionary-makers, blundering as is their wont, will tumble to a certainty into the pitfall here dug before their feet, and will range Mr. Moore with the plodders at still life![448]

Starting with *Lilies* (1866) and *Apricots* (1866), Moore would regularly employ shorter titles for his paintings, such as *Azaleas, Pansies* (1875), *Beads* (1875), *Birds* (1878), and *Topaz* (1879), to name a few examples. These titles were a deliberate choice in order to create a sense of ambiguity for the spectator. In a way, they function as red herrings, baiting the viewer into unrealised expectations and thwarting any narrative interpretations. Indeed, so devoid of subject matter were almost all of his works that critics had no choice but to turn to their experience of the formal elements rather than attempt to (re)construct a narrative. Often, as mentioned before, this led to the extensive use of musical metaphor, since such terminology was a convenient method at the time to describe formal pictorial elements that defied verbal interpretation. It was not only convenient, but it was a particularly powerful way of describing one's own experience of and response to a work of art. This way, a work like *Birds* (fig. 39) was interpreted as a piece of "abstract beauty" since it "refuses the aid of

[446] Baldry, "Moore: An Appreciation", 6.
[447] Quoted in Cosmo Monkhouse, "Albert Moore", *The Magazine of Art* 8 (January 1885): 195.
[448] Walter Armstrong, "Study. By Albert Moore, A.R.W.S.", *The Portfolio* 19 (January 1888): 147 [italics in original].

any poetic suggestion".[449] Frederick Wedmore perceived the "harmonies of light and delicate tints" in *Birds* to create an "absolute harmony of tints pale or bright", using this musical-aesthetic terminology to describe his experience of the picture rather than attempt to interpret it.[450] A good example is also *The End of the Story* (fig. 40), exhibited at the first opening of the Grosvenor Gallery in 1877. In response to the title, one critic complained that "such a title naturally excites our interest" and they expected "to see in the expression of the figure something that may suggest to our imagination the nature of the story and of its effect on the reader". Disappointed, they added that "Mr. Moore gives us nothing of this. His figure is a graceful woman, charmingly draped, and she holds a book; but that is all that he tells us".[451]

It seemed many Victorian critics did not want to accept that 'that is all'. Moore knew this; I believe he used the titles as a linguistic tool to set a certain expectation only to taunt his spectator and accentuate the decorative and formal aspects of his works. This was precisely the reasoning for many to dismiss Moore's art as 'decorative', a term applied in opposition to realism as well as a secondary category to pictorial or easel painting.[452] If we follow this line of reasoning, decorative art was that which had ornament or decoration as its primary purpose: in other words, to be visually pleasing to the eye, much as instrumental music is aurally pleasing to the ear. But if we take into consideration the other dimension, that of the decorative versus realism, the decorative is art that was able to be abstract, or at least abstracted from reality, idealised and supra-real. It is at this junction that Moore's art resides, since the decorative allowed for a certain degree of subjectlessness which, significantly for my argument in this chapter, had a theoretical parallel in the discourse of absolute music. Cosmo Monkhouse summed it up accurately when discussing Moore's application of the 'decorative', in a passage worth quoting in full:

> Albert Moore's pictures then must be allowed to be destitute, or nearly destitute, of 'subject', in the sense in which the objectors are using it. They tell no tale worth mentioning, they have no connection with any legend or history, they represent no incident from real life, they are unconnected with our experience and our reading, they do not raise (except by the merest accident, perhaps, now and then) any vision of the past, they awaken (unless by still rarer chance) no dream of the future: they are, to put it shortly, as far removed from the realities of our lives, and from our personal human sympathies, as it is possible for representations of

[449] "Grosvenor Gallery", *The Manchester Guardian,* 6.
[450] Frederick Wedmore, "Some Tendencies in Recent Painting", *Temple Bar* 53 (July 1878): 345.
[451] H. Heathcote Statham, "The Grosvenor Gallery", *Macmillan's Magazine* 36, no. 212 (June 1877): 117.
[452] White, "Albert Moore", 82.

> beauty (human or otherwise) to be, or, to generalise still more tersely, they are outside of us altogether.[453]

Moore's aim was never one of subject or narrative, but one of beauty:

> To be attractive is therefore its first function, and of all sources of attraction that most special to art is beauty, and the sensation of beauty is pleasure. The aim, therefore, of 'an artist for art's sake', in the sense I use the phrase, is to convey a pleasure, and that pleasure is first and foremost the pleasure of seeing.[454]

This is where the intersection with music becomes so useful to understand and visualise Moore's aim of art for art's sake and autonomous beauty. As I have established in Section I of this thesis, the formulation of art for art's sake in the late 1860s had a direct parallel with the construction of absolute music in the 1850s. As his Victorian audience expected a narrative unfolding, Moore used the art of music to sidestep this expectation. As he wanted his art to appeal to the eye, this had no precedent; so, Moore modelled this on music's offering of pleasure through the ear. Here, the intersection with music is perhaps less obvious, but equally poignant. *A Quartet*, through its composition and titling, reveals a lot about Moore's attitude towards absolute music: "It appeals to the eye as a strain of clear and shapely music to the ear, and it gratifies the sense of seeing with something of that entire contentment which it is the privilege of beauty to bestow".[455] Not narrative beauty, but *pictorial* beauty, *formal* beauty: autonomous beauty. This operated in multiple ways. Firstly, the composition can be a pictorial equivalent of musical forms, as I will discuss below. Secondly, there is a formal analogy between colours and tonal movements, harmony in colour, a melody in form: a musical-aesthetic discourse modelled on formal analogy. Thirdly, there is an analogy of experience. Moore wants us, as spectators, to experience his art the way we experience a musical piece. This is perhaps the most poignant of all three in approaching the attitude of appealing to the condition of music and the key to understanding how music remained an influence even when Moore moved away from the representation of musical subject matter and abstracted it into autonomous pictures. A closer analysis of *A Quartet* can provide us with insight into these three points.

---

[453] Monkhouse, "Albert Moore", 192-194.
[454] Ibid., 194.
[455] "Henry and Albert Moore", *Art Journal* (June 1881): 164.

In a way, *A Quartet* is a continuation of *The Musicians* as they are marked by similar dualities, particularly the performance-audience duality that Moore first explored in *The Shulamite*.[456] Instead of positioning the audience – us, the viewers – on the side, we are now placed behind the group of listeners and effectively *in* the depicted audience, augmenting the distinction between the two groups: the male musicians on the bench and the female listeners grouped in front. Despite the irregularity in number, or even because of it, Moore has achieved a very delicate compositional balance; as our gaze moves from left to right, back and forth between background and foreground, we are inexorably drawn towards the empty space in front of us. Indeed, the entire composition is primarily constructed through the use of combining diagonal, parallel, horizontal, and orthogonal lines placed over an underlying armature or grid. As I will discuss in more detail later in this chapter, Moore's use of a grid to construct his pictures is key to understand how he approached visual abstraction. The decorative dado of *The Musicians* is replaced in *A Quartet* by a bare whitewashed wall, thereby avoiding an overly cramped foreground. The two dominant colour choices contribute to the compositional balance, playing with and against each other throughout the work. The lighter and darker tones, respectively, are characterised in and by the two groups. The light orange, almost peach or apricot, is accompanied by white and variations on white; the other tone, a brown or tan hue, is variously paired with beiges, yellows, and greys. The intricacy and technical ability with which Moore has applied these colours to canvas conveys how thought-out this process was for him; as such, he was praised as a "colourist of rare quality" and even a "composer of harmonious combinations".[457] Looking more closely at how the colours are distributed, we can see how they buttress the inherent dualities of *A Quartet*: two groups, men and women; two dominant colours, respectively; diagonal versus horizontal lines; seated performance versus standing contemplation; linearity versus curvature; modern versus antique. The entire scene is set, regulated, and controlled through these dualities and Moore's expert manipulation of the diagonal and horizontal lines at play with each other. Formally, then, from the outset, the composition is constructed to be as visually harmonious and pleasing as possible.

For example, there is the strong horizontal line of the bench, juxtaposed by the strong diagonals of the violin bows. Firstly, the bench serves as a poignant reminder of the two-dimensionality of the work, simultaneously thrusting the foreground space towards the viewer. Secondly, Moore established a central, linear component to position all other formal

[456] Wedmore, "Some Tendencies", 343.
[457] Monkhouse, "Albert Moore", 191.

elements against. In this sense, we can view or 'read' the painting as a musical score. Against the central staves, the abstract notations of musical sounds are written to gather them into a complete musical composition. Similarly, against the singular stave, pictorially this time, the figures are grouped like protruding notes in *A Quartet*. At the time, Stephens was enthralled by this analogy:

> Three ladies, who are robed in the Greek manner, stand listening before the harmonists, and, by the grace of their noble forms, the varied, flowing and broken lines of their diversely-textured draperies, render to the eye of the student in loveliness the suave, long-sustained and fluttering harmonies of the lighter order in music, as the graver, more sedate and powerful poses of the men offer to the same judgement apt suggestions of the more serious elements of melody.[458]

In such an analogy, any painting can be interpreted as representing a musical model through a juxtaposition of horizontal and vertical lines. It is a good example of the type of critical response to Moore's art that appealed to the sister art of music as an interpretive model for its pictorial forms, especially in the absence of a clear-cut narrative or storyline. Stephens's description is similarly expressive of the type of response that would come to typify the critical response to Moore's work regardless of musical subject matter: a personal, individualised, subjective, aesthetic, and often quasi-musical description based in the individual experience of the artwork. Swinburne was a major catalyst in this development, not only through his delineation of art for art's sake in 1868 but through his conceptualisation of pure art made possible through the framework of music. In response to Moore's *Azaleas*, exhibited the year before *A Quartet*, Swinburne praised the artist's sense of "absolute" and "pure" beauty.[459] Note the type of phrases Swinburne employs here; he purposefully uses terminology common to the discourse of instrumental music and the aesthetics of absolute music. He continued,

> [Moore's] painting is to artists what the verse of Théophile Gautier is to poets; they leave to others the labours and the joys of thought or passion. The outlines of their work are pure, decisive, distinct; its colour is of the full sunlight. This picture of 'Azaleas' is as good a type as need be of their manner of work. A woman delicately draped; […] a strange and splendid vessel, inlaid with designs of Eastern colour; another – clasped by one long slender hand and

[458] [F.G. Stephens], "Fine Arts: Royal Academy", *The Athenaeum* no. 2169 (May 22, 1869): 707.
[459] Swinburne, in Rossetti and Swinburne, *Notes,* 32.

> filled from it with flowers – of soft white, touched here and there into blossom of blue: this is enough. The melody of colour, the symphony of form is complete: one more beautiful thing is achieved, one more delight is born into the world; and its meaning is beauty; and its reason for being is to be.[460]

Not only does Swinburne demonstrate in this passage the validity and effectiveness of using musical terminology to describe an otherwise naturalistic painting, but he swiftly connects this to the Kantian discourse of beauty as the result of the subject-object relationship instead of an inherent beauty. The painting exists, in and of itself; self-referential, autonomous, and independent, much like a piece of instrumental music as its 'reason for being is to be'. On top of this, the analogy with music is strengthened through the direct formal analogy between form and colour to tones and melodies. Finally, the interpretive criteria of painting shift within this discourse; instead of using those of traditional narrative painting, those of instrumental music are used, precisely for the reason that instrumental absolute music was considered the most expressive, autonomous, and abstract art at that time. This is a crucial distinction to make: there was still a pervasive analogy with music in Moore's art even if he did not depict musical subject matter as he did in *The Musicians* and *A Quartet*. The latter does, however, reveal the extent to which Moore was interested in the subject-object relationship Swinburne also capitalised on in *Notes*, precisely through the empty space in the foreground I mentioned above, the type of foreground mimicked in many of his later paintings.

In *A Quartet*, this space becomes a space for listeners and audience as much as it is a space of performance and performativity. The pictorial space is carefully centred around this empty space, serving as entry as well as focaliser. The women with their backs to us, resembling the trope of the *Rückenfigur*, steer our experience as Moore invites us to identify with the listeners in the picture. The women are not merely represented as painted figures but become an artistic representation and visualisation of the abstract concept of aesthetic experience, fulfilled most effectively in the experience of abstract and autonomous instrumental music. As such, it is not a coincidence that Moore uses modern instruments; it is not so much a tribute to classical art as it is a tribute to the quintessentially modern art of instrumental music and the associations it acquired in the nineteenth century through German Romanticism. Indeed, a quartet was one of most typical instrumental genres of the time,

[460] Ibid., 32 [my italics].

alongside the symphony, sonata, and concerto.[461] It was not only one of the most popular instrumental genres, but it allowed Moore to explicitly refer to the legacy of German instrumental music and its associated aesthetics in his title. Which brings me to the implications of Moore's chosen title and the importance of *A Quartet* in this regard.

In the subtitle, Moore identifies himself as the painter who heavily inspired by music. Not even any kind of music but modern instrumental music in particular. The painting functioned as a tribute, an acknowledgement of the extent to which instrumental music has inspired Moore's artistic aims as a painter. I want to read his use of titles not just as an opportunity for dedication and gratitude, but as a guide to viewers. Titles were, and still are, extremely effective in providing hints to the intended meaning of a visual artwork otherwise non-narrative in nature. Moore, keenly aware of this not just through his own practice but also through his friendship with Whistler and knowledge of Whistler's musical titles from 1867 onwards, capitalised on this effect with *A Quartet*'s verbose subtitle. It carried, as Robyn Asleson has aptly written, a "manifesto-like thrust".[462] Not only does Moore explicitly acknowledge his own interest in and debt to the sister art of music, but he instructs us, as viewers, to take this into account when we experience and interpret his artwork. Knowing how careful Moore was with his titles, then, it is, at first glance, peculiar that *The Musicians* is plural while there is only one musician depicted. Or is there? It is entirely possible that the women, albeit acting as listeners, are equally musicians. This becomes more plausible when we consider that Moore once wrote to *The Standard* to correct the changes to his titles both exhibition spaces and owners enacted.[463] At some point, Moore's approach to titles became one of a red herring; they "indicated nothing but certain purely technical elements in the productions to which [Moore] attached them", leading the spectator's attention to purely visual and autonomous formal elements.[464] As Asleson has pointed out, the titles "dissociate Moore's works from any nuance of sentimental or historical meaning", leading to a perception of the titles as "all but meaningless".[465]

I want to counter this. Moore did not make his art meaningless; instead, he made it empty. Not vacuously so, but in an attempt to foreground the formal elements and generate

[461] H.R. Haweis reviewed Haydn in 1868 as "the founder of the modern orchestra, certainly the founder of the modern quartet and symphony" alongside Mozart and Beethoven, while popularity for the string quartet, particularly those composed by Haydn, skyrocketed in the late 1860s; H.R. Haweis, "Gluck and Haydn: Part I", *The Contemporary Review* (April 1868): 535; see also "Monday Popular Concerts", *Saturday Review* 25, no. 648 (March 28, 1868): 419; "Music Hall Art", *Musical Standard* 5, no. 126 (December 19, 1866): 397.
[462] Asleson, *Albert Moore,* 102.
[463] "Notes on Art and Archaeology", *The Academy* no. 471 (May 14, 1881): 363.
[464] "Mr. Albert Moore", *The Athenaeum* no. 3440 (September 30, 1893): 459.
[465] Asleson, *Albert Moore,* 87; "The Royal Academy. III", *Saturday Review* 41, no. 1073 (May 20, 1876): 649.

an aesthetic experience between subject and object based *on* these formal elements rather than have a narrative furnish all meaning. As painting was not seen as capable of this at the time, and instrumental music was, music was the art Moore felt indebted towards and hence paid tribute to. *A Quartet* remains one of the more poignant examples in Moore's oeuvre in which the importance of the figure of the listener is underscored in tandem with a very particular, sensuously charged pictorial atmosphere geared towards generating a specific aesthetic experience of visual art by appealing to the intangibility, immateriality, and autonomy of instrumental music. As Anne Leonard has written in her important work on the figure of the listener in *fin-de-siècle* art, the pictorial listener was not only a sign of "musical attentiveness" but can be used as a model for the ideal beholder.[466] Even if listening and viewing were, in a typical Victorian performance, interlinked if not intertwined activities, the pictorial visualisation of musical experience encapsulated in the figure of the listener allowed a painter to explore music's unfolding over time, of leading a viewer into a similar state of absorption or introspection, and, as such, become ideal models to "command sustained attention".[467] These early musical experiments also set a precedent for Moore's later explorations of the audience-artwork, or subject-object, relationship.

Moore extrapolated the figure of the listener, analogous to Leighton, to explore varying stages of consciousness, particularly from the mid-1870s onwards. The stillness of the depicted women – whether lost in thought, gazing ahead, reading, thinking, introspective and contemplative, or sleeping – is juxtaposed with the intense movement exuded by the wallpaper, drapery, and form. This curious dynamic between stillness and movement is an extension of the experience of music. Whereas music is punctuated by both movement – the action of drawing a bow across a violin's strings or pushing the keys of a piano – and stillness – pauses and silences, in both performer and audience – so are these paintings decorative and visually rich interplays within this duality. Moreover, this dynamic contributes significantly to Moore's incorporation of temporality into his art. As I have mentioned previously in this thesis, musical temporality seems, at first glance, to be at odds with the static nature of oil painting. Moore not only invites a temporal dimension through a prolonged aesthetic engagement with his work, inviting his spectator to roam freely over the visual elements offered on the canvas, but he also invokes a temporal realm removed from real life. Just as critics struggled to place his quasi-Greek, quasi-Japanese, and quasi-English

[466] Anne Leonard, "Picturing Listening in the Nineteenth Century", *The Art Bulletin* 89, no. 2 (June 2007): 266.
[467] Ibid., 266.

scenes in any specific locality, so did they struggle to identify its precise time period.[468] Baldry praised Moore's refusal "to limit ideal music by any restriction of period or place", generating instead an "atmosphere of unconscious physical perfection".[469]

Hence, Moore's paintings only seem to unfold before us via sustained attention, a type of behaviour modelled on how we would engage with a piece of instrumental music. This is why the figure of the aesthetic listener is so captivating in *The Musicians* and *A Quartet*; it is not merely a representation of a listener, but a visualisation of the ideal beholder. But just as the metaphor of music was a pivot into exploring non-narrative painting as an alternative to literature-dependent art, so was the figure of the attentive musical listener the avenue towards the exploration of other subjective states of absorption. Moore carried this through based on his early interest in sleeping figures, in *Somnus Presiding over Sleep and Dreams* (1866), a chalk drawing owned by Leighton.[470] This extended through this motif as well as the mentally occupied and meditative figure, such as in *Lilies* (fig. 41, 1866), *Dreamers* (fig. 42, 1879-1882), *Red Berries* (fig. 43, 1884), *Idyll* (fig. 44, 1892-1893), *A Reverie* (fig. 45, 1892), and *Midsummer* (fig. 46, 1887), to name a few examples. But I want to argue these figures are based in the subjective aesthetic experience of music and the figure of the listener, as a motif or tool to extend through the rest of Moore's oeuvre. The figure of the listener was hardly new, but it provided one method for the specific visualisation of something as intangible and abstract as 'experience'. It correlated very well with Moore's aims within art for art's sake and the exploration of not just abstraction and depicting something abstract(ed), but especially well with exploring the limits, potential, and effects of art. More subtly perhaps, he also depicted experience or states of being as tools for the beholder in tandem with the information (or lack thereof) we are presented with in his titles. The benefit of depicting such contemplative states, as I have already discussed in relation to Leighton in the previous chapter, was effectively to prolong the attention given to the work by the viewer.[471] This works particularly well in the absence of a narrative. For example, in

---

[468] See, for example, W.M. Rossetti, "The Royal Academy Exhibition", *Fraser's Magazine* 71, no. 426 (June 1865): 744; Rossetti, "The Royal Academy Exhibition: Second Notice", *The Academy* 7, no. 158 (May 15, 1875): 514; "The Grosvenor Gallery: Third Notice", *The Manchester Guardian* (June 2, 1884): 6; Claude Phillips, "The Summer Exhibitions at Home and Abroad", *Art Journal* (July 1892): 217; Phillips, "Fine Art: The Royal Academy. I", *The Academy* no. 1044 (May 7, 1892): 451; Phillips, "Fine Art: The Royal Academy. II", *The Academy* no. 838 (May 26, 1888): 364; "The Royal Academy. IV", *Saturday Review* 27, no. 710 (June 5, 1869): 744.

[469] Baldry, *Albert Moore,* 37.

[470] Repr. in Asleson, *Albert Moore,* pl. 51, 59.

[471] Leonard, "Picturing Listening", 266; Michael Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980), esp. chap. 1, "The Primacy of Absorption".

Jasmine (fig. 47, 1880) we are, perhaps voyeuristically so, encouraged to let our gaze linger over the myriad folds of pink fabric, the delicate arabesques in the wallpaper, the harmonious juxtaposition of complementing colour groups. In the absence of narrative, we experience the heady atmosphere of the painting first-hand, letting it impact our senses in a manner analogous to how sounds can impact our senses. It may be no more than a study of "abstract form and colour" to the Victorian critic, displaying "the subtlest forms of harmony in colour", but it only achieves this level of abstraction through appealing to the condition of music in its non-narrativity.[472] Moore aims for the work to convey a musical impression in formal features as well as desiring painting to carry attributes and characteristics otherwise present only in instrumental music.

Contemplation could also serve as a visual instruction. In *A Reverie*, both the title and the actual depiction serve as a reminder of the benefits and consequences of the mental state of reverie. By depicting the very experience and activity of the abstract notion of reverie, Moore invites his viewers to approach his work in a similar manner. In the absence of narrative, our eyes, rather than our intellect, are treated to a veritable feast. A woman, swathed in orange and cream drapery, gazes ahead almost listlessly, one of her hands curling around the armrest while the other holds a paper fan. The pose has been used and reused numerous times already, and here, as in many other of Moore's works, it merely serves its purpose as a cog in the larger formal composition. The mother-of-pearl inlay on the chair is painted with the greatest attention to detail while the background encloses the narrow foreground space. Elaborate flower trellises, arabesques, and foliage decorate the deep-green wallpaper, chromatically complementing the various shades of brown, orange, and cream in the painting. Similarly, in *Reading Aloud* (fig. 48, 1884) Moore provides a visual response to a contemplative activity, in this case reading: absorption through prolonged and sustained attention. Given the significance Moore attributed to the foreground space in *A Quartet* as both a space of tribute, gratitude, and contemplation, it is not unlikely that these later pictures were extrapolated and abstracted from the initial representation of the musical listener. Using this model of the listener, as well as being deeply impressed by the effects music could have – the power with which it could captivate an audience even purely through formal features alone – must have been on Moore's mind as he took his compositions and figures further and further away from narrative concerns and towards an abstract, pure type of visual beauty.

[472] "The Grosvenor Gallery Exhibition", *The Manchester Guardian* (May 17, 1880): 5.

Expressive Colour-Music: New Aesthetic Criteria

As I have established in Chapter Two of this thesis, the 1860s was the decade in which musical metaphor was increasingly used on a larger scale as a new aesthetic and reflective tool for the interpretation of art. Particularly insightful was P.G. Hamerton's observation how there was a noticeable shift in 1868 from "literary interest, dramatic interest, historical interest, and all other such extraneous interests" towards autonomy. The "especial merchandise" of painting itself were "the visible melodies and harmonies, - a kind of visible music, - meaning as much and narrating as much as the music which is heard in the ears, and nothing whatever more".[473] At this point in time, Whistler had already started using musical terminology in his titles and multiple critics, most prominently Stephens and Swinburne, were applying such nomenclature to visual works of art. This became particularly successful in the face of subjectless works, since these had in common with absolute instrumental music a degree of ineffability, indeterminacy, and inexpressibility; that *"'cela', presque inexprimable"* that captured the formal essence of a work of art independently of semantic associations or interpretations.[474] Ultimately, abstract formal elements resist easy verbal description and musical terminology lent itself well to fill in the gaps. As we have seen in Swinburne's response to Moore's *Azaleas* in 1868, musical-aesthetic terminology worked particularly well to capture a spectator's response to, or impression of a given artwork. In the case of Moore, regardless of musical subject matter – indeed, apart from *The Musicians* and *A Quartet* he hardly represented musical performance – critics kept consistently returning to musical nomenclature to record their response to his art. In this section, I want to demonstrate how musical-aesthetic criteria became particularly successful in the critical reception of Moore's art to delineate parameters of formalism, abstraction, non-narrativity, and the experience of art. This helps clarify why some of Moore's paintings could be and were considered musical even if there was no musical content present. Moreover, the abundance of musical-aesthetic rhetoric has affective relations which help reveal to what extent Moore's abstract use of colour could be emotionally impactful.

For the Royal Academy exhibition of 1882, Moore contributed *Dreamers* (fig. 42), a sumptuous painting displaying three women in varying states of repose. It shows Moore's ability to generate pictorial rhythm through abstraction at its best. A comment made by Wassily Kandinsky in *On the Spiritual in Art* (1911) would not seem out of place here: "That

[473] P.G. Hamerton, *Contemporary French Painters: An Essay* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1895 [1868]), 76.
[474] Wedmore, "Some Tendencies", 345 [italics in original].

modern desire for rhythm in painting, for mathematical, abstract construction, for repeated notes of colour, for setting colours in motion".[475] According to Baldry, *Dreamers* was part of Moore's "absolute repose"-period, alongside contemporary works representing similar states of rest as *Rose Leaves* (1880), *Yellow Marguerites* (1881), and *Blossoms* (1881).[476] In fact, all four of these works are reiterations of each other and were ultimately reworkings of the same poses and facial expressions.[477] Arguably Moore continued these figures of 'absolute repose' in later works, most notably in *Reading Aloud* (1882), *Midsummer* (1887), and *A Reverie* (1892). *Yellow Marguerites* was praised for its harmony of white and gold realised through the "scientific calculation in the system upon which Moore founds his delicate harmonies of colour".[478] It is this system, which I will elaborate on below, which determined the location of colours in Moore's paintings. Indeed, the tonal range in *Yellow Marguerites* or *Dreamers* might be narrow but the choices were done with precision and purpose. As one critic wrote, Moore "changes his tints like a kaleidoscope, but he rarely indulges in a new scheme of colour".[479] Indeed, in all these works belonging to the set of 'absolute repose', the colours play an important role in conveying this sense of repose. Moore, through his friends and colleagues, was aware of circulating colour theories at the time, including but not limited to the ideas of David Ramsay Hay, George Field, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Michel Eugène Chevreul, and later Charles Blanc and George Field. Goethe's *Zur Farbenlehre* (1810) expounded on the idea that colours could impact the emotions. It contained such descriptions as the now well-known idea of red and orange as warm colours, while green and blue were perceived as colder.[480] Considering Moore's strict attention to how he applied colour and *which* colours he used, it is apparent how in works like *Yellow Marguerites* and *Dreamers,* where a state of reverie and contemplation stands central, Moore opts for soft, warm, and gentle colour palettes.

---

[475] Wassily Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art,* trans. M.H.T. Sadler (New York: Dover Publications, 1977 [1911]), 19.
[476] Baldry, *Albert Moore,* 20. This period ended in 1883.
[477] The woman in *Rose Leaves* is almost identical to the third woman in *Dreamers*; *Blossoms* is a life-size figure of the latter; and *Yellow Marguerites* is very similar to the second woman in *Dreamers.*
[478] "The Royal Academy Exhibition", *The Manchester Guardian* (May 2, 1881): 8.
[479] "The Grosvenor Gallery Exhibition: Second and Concluding Notice", *The Athenaeum* no. 2793 (May 7, 1881): 629.
[480] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Zur Farbenlehre* (Tübingen: Cotta'schen Buchhandlung, 1810). The idea of emotional affect in colour is also the core of *Affektenlehre,* though this theory is more strongly connected to rhetoric, linguistics, and literature rather than music and painting*;* see Roger Matthew Grant, *Peculiar Attunements: How Affect Theory Turned Musical* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2020); and Dietrich Bartel, *Musica Poetica: Musical-Rhetorical Figures in German Baroque Music* (Lincoln, Nebraska, and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1997).

The difference in how a scene of repose is conveyed to the viewer is demonstrated by three nearly identical works Moore painted in 1875, *Apples, Beads,* and *A Sofa* (figs. 49-51). They appear, as did *Battledore* (1868-1870) and *Shuttlecock* (1868-1870), or *Seagulls* (1870-1871) and *Shells* (1874), as variations on the same pose, the same topic, or the same compositional orientation.[481] In *Apples, Beads,* and *A Sofa,* Moore repeats the same scene but in different colour schemes. *Beads* exhibits a colour scheme of predominantly browns with notes of a cool blue, especially in the rug, the pillows, and the back wall. In *Apples,* the browns are replaced with green, which act as the dominant hue offset by notes of brown. In *A Sofa,* on the other hand, the juxtaposed colours lie much closer together; the dominant brown is balanced with other shades of brown and a dark orange. The interesting effect of considering the three works alongside each other is how different the impressions are depending on Moore's colour choice. The repetition of the exact same composition in different colour schemes serves to emphasise how much more significant Moore considered his formal colour combinations over any subject matter or narrative content.[482] It also serves to consider our own impression in response to different colour combinations. Those with the sharper blues and greens appear colder and suggest a different time of day than the heady and suffused atmosphere of *A Sofa.*[483] Robertson recalled how the exact figural elements in any given situation were of less interest to Moore than the right colour combination:

> Moore would come in from a walk full of almost inarticulate delight at the memory of black winter trees fringing the jade-green Serpentine, or of a couple of open oysters lying on a bit of blue paper or of a flower-girl's basket of primroses seen through grey mist on a rainy morning.[484]

Whereas Burne-Jones, wrote Robertson, would "have woven a romance or told an amusing tale about the flower girl", the exact "combination of the silvery oysters and the blue paper",

[481] At the time *Battledore, Shuttlecock,* and *Seagulls* were painted, Whistler and Moore's styles lay so close to each other that the former feared that their public would mistake one for the other. This demonstrates how close their artistic ideas and intentions lay to each other. This has been extensively discussed in the scholarship, so I will not repeat it here; see Prettejohn, *Art for Art's Sake,* 114-115; John Sandberg, "Whistler Studies", *The Art Bulletin* 50, no. 1 (March 1968): 59-64; Allen Staley, *The New Painting of the 1860s: Between the Pre-Raphaelites and the Aesthetic Movement* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011), 144-146; Asleson, *Albert Moore,* 123; Maria Teresa Benedetti, "Whistler, Moore e 'Art for Art's Sake'", *Paragone* 32, no. 375 (May 1981): 33-34.

[482] Allen Staley both likens Moore's work to Mark Rothko's ideas of formalism and commented that "before Pater's theories appeared in print, Moore was providing their visual equivalent"; see Staley, "The Condition of Music", *The Academy: Art News Annual* 33 (1967): 81-87.

[483] For an analysis of Moore's approach to the female body within a Victorian context in these works, see Asleson, *Albert Moore,* 131-133.

[484] Robertson, *Time Was*, 82.

in their abstract colour harmonies, was what appealed to Moore.[485] There is the tantalising suggestion made by Baldry that Moore, in 1879, exhibited two colour studies with Whistlerian musical titles in Glasgow: *Harmony in Orange and Pale Yellow* and *Variation in Blue and Gold*.[486] It is unclear which two works these were, since *The Royal Glasgow Institute of the Fine Arts* dictionary, covering all exhibited paintings from 1861 until 1989, lists Moore's contributions to the 1879 exhibition as 'untitled'.[487] It is possible Moore referred to them with these titles in private, or that Robertson glorified the truth to strengthen Moore's connection to Whistler's aim retrospectively. While Moore was certainly familiar with Whistler's thoughts on such titles, he never publicly employed these types of titles so we have to take Robertson's words here with a grain of salt.

In later works of repose, Moore stuck to warmer colour palettes, most noticeable in *Dreamers*. For this work, Moore rhythmically extended the idea of suspended animation. At first glance, as Prettejohn has discussed, there appear to be four women on a bench which eventually turns out to be only three; the fourth "is nothing but a piece of drapery" which might, because of the precisely placed fan, "be described as clues to the absence of a figure".[488] One critic interpreted the work as "an impression of ideal beauty"; a scene supra-real and abstracted, artistically autonomous.[489] Indeed, Moore's art had previously been described as autonomous: "[Moore] refuses the aid of any poetic suggestion; he does not seek to render any phase of human passion; but, resting merely upon the claims of abstract beauty, he is able to demonstrate how wide is the empire of plastic art even when it is completely isolated".[490] As I mentioned previously, this subjectlessness was akin to music via the theoretical parallel of being exclusively accessible through the senses. In order to describe the effect of this, some critics wrote of "the subtlest combinations and concords of line and modulations of hue", which combined to create "pure beauties of chosen form".[491] The idea of a picture referring to music via analogy is striking; it helps illuminate how a picture can be "saturated with melody" or display "chromatic concord" despite having no musical subject

[485] Ibid., 82.
[486] Baldry, *Albert Moore,* 49.
[487] Roger Billcliffe, ed., *The Royal Glasgow Institute of the Fine Arts 1861-1989: A Dictionary of Exhibitors at the Annual Exhibition of the Royal Glasgow Institute of Fine Arts,* vol. 3 (Glasgow: The Woodend Press, 1991), 247.
[488] Prettejohn, *Art for Art's Sake*, 101.
[489] Frederick Dolman, "The Story of a Picture: 2. Albert Moore's 'The Dreamers'", *English Illustrated Magazine* no. 15 (June 1904): 226.
[490] "Grosvenor Gallery", *The Manchester Guardian* (1878), 6.
[491] Wedmore, "Some Tendencies", 344.

matter at all.[492] *Dreamers* is again useful for consideration here. For a critic writing for *The Portfolio*, the work displayed "delicate transpositions of creamy white, gold colour, soft green, and soft red", if one "can bear the ringing of changes in so limited a chime", a chromatic arrangement reminiscent of Edward Burne-Jones's *The Golden Stairs* (fig. 52, 1876-1880).[493] Here, the tight and limited tonal range in *Dreamers* was compared to a musical bell, clear but narrow. This correlates with Moore's chromatic choices; there are only two dominant colours, a light yellow and white. These are then juxtaposed with varieties that chromatically and harmoniously complement these two tones. Because of this chromatic balance, but also through the depiction of dreaming and repose, the women depicted seem to sink into the canvas, blending with the sofa and backdrop, while the eye of the spectator is treated to a specific pictorial rhythm. From left to right, we wander over the myriad folds of drapery, following the horizontal line established by the top of the bench and reinforced by the resting heads. The slumped positions, curving from shoulder to arm, resemble the opened fan on the right, aiding the visual trick of the eye Moore pulls of here. Only the accessories, such as the border of the rug on the floor and the decorations in the bench, deviate from the otherwise yellow-hued atmosphere. If the women were depicted nude or in different clothing, Moore would never have achieved the delicate waves of motion now generated by the drapery and colour choices. The seeming monotony is only dissipated by the differences in position on the part of the women, specifically the only awake one, staring right at the viewer.

Here I want to theorise whether the effect of colour in Moore's paintings, and the action of looking at them, cannot become a musical act in and of itself; not through performance, but through theoretical and aesthetic association. Karl Schawelka has argued in *Quasi una Musica* how *das Musikalische* is a delineation of a specific experience, one which became paradigmatic in the nineteenth century. With music as paradigm, painters "wanted to use pictorial means to generate an effect music could easily achieve".[494] Through the idea of *Kunstkontemplation* which I have discussed in Chapter One, or 'art contemplation', we can approach *Dreamers* not as an illustration of the women but *as a work of art.* If we do so, there is occasion for the rise of *das Musikalische* as a "special case of general contemplative

[492] "The Royal Academy. IV", *Saturday Review* 31, no. 813 (May 27, 1871): 667; and [Stephens], "Fine Arts" (1869), 707.
[493] "Art Chronicle", *The Portfolio* 13 (January 1882): 131.
[494] Karl Schawelka, *Quasi una Musica: Untersuchungen zum Ideal des 'Musikalischen' in der Malerei ab 1800* (München: Mäander, 1993), 53 [my translation].

experience".[495] This resonates with contemporary critical responses to Moore's art as pictorial music, but also with the contemporary understanding of absolute instrumental music as the only art capable of generating an aesthetic experience based entirely in the senses and formalism. This is what Moore was appealing to by disregarding subject matter and aiming for decorative perfection through forms and colours. This happened synchronously with the shift towards the aesthetics of reception at this time, where artists like Moore, though he was not the only one, worked towards stimulating an exclusively aesthetic experience in their beholder based in the common experience of absolute instrumental music. Moore's studio was based in Holland Park from 1877 onwards, close to Leighton, Alma-Tadema, Edward Poynter, and Valentine Prinsep, among others.[496] Both Leighton and Alma-Tadema were renowned for their musical soirées, which Moore could have attended. He did enjoy music, as W.B. Richmond recalls:

> Many were the pleasant evenings we spent together in [Moore's] brothers' rooms in 8, Berners Street, where much Handel and Bach went on, at which I assisted. The three brothers [Albert, Henry, and John Moore] all sang and played, and these gatherings, homely and snug, were presided over by the old widowed mother, Mrs. Moore.[497]

Moore was also familiar with a number of musical figures, including Ignaz Moscheles whose son, Felix, he was acquainted with.[498] Apart from anecdotal evidence, we know that Moore was deeply entrenched in the music theory Whistler applied in his work, evidenced by both their friendship and the former's defence of Whistler in the 1878 trial.[499] Ultimately, however, Moore's own pursuit of artistic beauty was most important to him; unlike his colleagues, he would seclude himself and have his art itself serve as the only explanation. This did not tamper his fascination with colour, nor did it stop his friends from writing down the musical connections that were most likely discussed: "I remember further that we [William de Morgan and Thomas Armstrong] went round – all we, like sheep – to Albert Moore's studio, somewhere between the two houses, and found him painting young ladies

[495] Ibid., 12 [my translation].
[496] Caroline Dakers, *The Holland Park Circle: Artists and Victorian Society* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999), 183.
[497] Stirling, *Richmond Papers,* 160.
[498] Albert Moore, *Albert Moore to Felix Moscheles, March 28, 1890,* letter, private collection. https://www.historicalautographs.co.uk/autographs/moore-albert-joseph-16943/ (accessed 10/11/2020).
[499] See Linda Merrill, *A Pot of Paint: Whistler v. Ruskin* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press in association with the Freer Gallery of Art, 1993), 88-89, 158-159; Benedetti, "Whistler e Moore", 21-39.

dressed in white and lilac *nocturnes*, and I think playing battledore and shuttlecock".[500] Indeed, when *Battledore* and *Shuttlecock* were exhibited, one critic regarded its "harmonies of white" as "approaching music in its appeal to the senses of the observer".[501] Here, again, we have the simultaneous effect of colour, as an autonomous formal element, having the ability to be musical in its impression, while there is also the theoretical analogy with music through *how* the painting arrives at the spectator, namely purely through the senses.

If we follow this line of reasoning, a picture like *Midsummer* or *A Summer Night* (fig. 53, 1884-1890) appeal to *das Musikalische* through a careful weaving together of colours and are *like music* in their emphasis on the visual. Whistler often wrote about colour as pattern and, considering his closeness with Moore, the latter would have been aware of these ideas.[502] Interestingly, in 1889 Walter Sickert reflected on the potential of modern ideas in *Summer Night*, as well as Leighton's *Summer Moon* (1872) and Whistler's *Portrait of Lady Archibald Campbell* (fig. 99; 1882-1885). After reviewing Leighton's picture as immortal, elegant, and educated, Sickert turned to *Summer Night,* describing it, as he did of Leighton, in decorative terms. It was "a consummate instance of deliberate patterning of rhythmical line and colour, borrowed from nature for a purely decorative purpose, and wilfully stripped of all literary or adventitious intention or association".[503]

This idea of patterning and weaving is particularly forceful in *A Summer Night*, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1890. In poses adapted from earlier works in a constant serialism, most notably *Somnus* (1866), *Reading Aloud* (1884), and *The Toilette* (1886), *Summer Night* also provides a view into a landscape, similarly to what Leighton did in *Flaming June*. Harry Quilter's analysis of this work is powerful and suggestive, writing about how Moore "moulded" his figures to his "artistic purpose", weaving them "into a wavering line of graceful gesture and lovely forms and faces", surrounded as they are "with pale harmonies of golden flowers and snowy draperies".[504] The weaving of the self into a "keener, newer life of art", per Quilter, can quicken and heighten the senses in an action rich with Paterian associations.[505] Indeed, Pater's call for the aspiration towards the condition of music

[500] William de Morgan to Mrs. Armstrong, August 24, 1912, in L.M. Lamont, ed., *Thomas Armstrong: C.B. A Memoir, 1832-1911* (London: M. Secker, 1912), n.p. [italics in original]
[501] "The Private Collections of England", *The Athenaeum* no. 2394 (September 13, 1873): 344.
[502] See Chapter 5.
[503] Walter Sickert, "The Royal Academy Exhibition II", *The Art Weekly* (May 17, 1890), repr. in Walter Sickert, *Walter Sickert: The Complete Writings on Art,* ed. Anna Gruetzner Robins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 65.
[504] Harry Quilter, "The Art of England I: The Royal Academy", *The Universal Review* 7, no. 25 (May 1890): 26.
[505] Ibid., 27.

was one in which absolute instrumental music could provide enriched sensory experiences encapsulated in spatiality and temporality. The subjective, physical, and sensual experience of music is, by Moore, translated to the disposition and placing of the body in *Summer Night*, "in which every form passes slowly, imperceptibly into another, changing like a great passage in immortal music, rising and falling in gradations as softly unmarked as the long swell of the mid-sea wave".[506] If Pater summed up the musical developments in 1877 with his now-famous statement, Moore's achievements in *Summer Night* were the product of a development starting in the 1860s with *The Musicians* and *A Quartet*. This "masterly weaving together of rare tints" and forms, as the critic Claude Phillips wrote, resulting in decorative opulence and luxury, is nonetheless reminiscent of contemporary physiological theories of music and states of matter such as by John Tyndall or Edmund Gurney.[507] It also alludes, however, to ideas of temporality. Weaving, as we have seen in Pater and Leighton, was an idea of becoming, of experiencing. Art could prompt such a weaving by virtue of intensifying a sensation or moment it offered. Instrumental music inherently possessed this quality, while painting did not, so Moore's ability to reference the *condition* of music in order to extend the temporality of his own art is crucial here. His work, then, does not necessarily need a musical subject in order to extend its temporality, since its non-narrativity and fusion of form and content provoke an experience similar to that of instrumental music.

Whether or not Moore was aware of such theories remains up to speculation, but there is a demonstrable connection between the visual effects of Moore's form and colour, as autonomous, formalist elements appealing to the condition of music, and this idea of 'weaving' and 'moulding'. There is a bridge between the personal, subjective experience of art and the emotions and colour achieving the same effects. Indeed, Phillips, as Tim Barringer has cogently discussed, was an influential figure in the late nineteenth century in his discussions of art and the emotions.[508] One of the ramifications of the musical paradigm, then, at least with regards to colour in Moore's art, was the autonomisation of its formalism and the impact on the spectator's emotional state and affections through visual (or aural) effects. The latter is precisely what led Phillips to "adopt the well-worn Whistlerian phraseology" and label *Summer Night* "a symphony, whose first theme is steel-blue, whose

[506] Ibid., 28.
[507] Phillips, "The Summer Exhibitions", 164; see also Hermann von Helmholtz, *Die Lehre von Tonempfindungen als Physiologische Grundlage für die Theorie der Musik* (Braunschweig: Friedrich Vieweg und Sohn, 1863); John Tyndall, *Sound* (New York: P.F. Collier & Son, 1867); Edmund Gurney, *The Power of Sound* (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1880).
[508] Tim Barringer, "Art, Music, and the Emotions in the Aesthetic Movement", *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century* no. 23 The Arts and Feeling (2016): 3-4.

second is primrose; the two, with their tributaries, being woven together into artful combinations".[509] This idea of 'weaving' is also what led Monkhouse, in his critical evaluations of Moore's work, to comment on colour as autonomous beauty, where Moore's art, through rhythm and repetition as musical-aesthetic devices, became "an organised whole in which the beauty of art of each thing should interweave with the beauty of every other thing, and the result should be a harmony of many beauties".[510] As such, Moore's art functioned exactly like music:

> Like music, painting is an art which appeals immediately to one sense only. As the ear to music, so the eye to art is the only aditum [sic], or means of communication to the intellect, the emotions, and the other senses.[511]

This appeal to absolute instrumental music in order to achieve higher levels of expressivity, and, by doing so, foregrounding materiality and visuality of painting *as painting*, was the art of the "artist for art's sake".[512] These ideas also carry implied connotations of duration and suspension; inevitably so in the field of interplay between painting's spatiality and music's temporality. If we recall Pater's descriptions of experiencing art, he wrote of the single aesthetic moment captured by an artwork which is nonetheless extended through our experience of said artwork. This "single sharp impression" of art, as fleeting and ephemeral as it is, prompts "that continual vanishing away, that strange, perpetual weaving and unweaving of ourselves".[513] This is an awakening of the self, prompted by the confluence of an extended and compressed temporality. This tension is evident in Moore's work, particularly in a painting like *Summer Night,* where he captured a moment in form and colour that nonetheless prompts extension and duration like a piece of music would. Our looking-time is extended by a formal invitation to dwell on the yellow benches, the cream drapery, the pictorial rhythm of the festoons, and the ripples of water. On a theoretical level, our aesthetic experience of the work, then, is comparable to how we would experience a piece of instrumental music. The way in which form and colour interacts with each other, and how this makes an impact on us as viewers, becomes quasi-musical in both nature and effect.

---

[509] Phillips, "The Summer Exhibitions", 164. *The Magazine of Art* equally labelled it a "symphony in pink and predominating yellow"; M.H. Spielmann, "Current Art: The Royal Academy. II", *The Magazine of Art* (January 1890): 258.
[510] Monkhouse, "Albert Moore", 194.
[511] Ibid., 194.
[512] Ibid., 194.
[513] Walter Pater, *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry,* ed. Donald L. Hill (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1980), 188.

Absolute Decorative Art

Following on from Moore's exploration of autonomous colour and the critical and artistic perception of it as musical, I want to propose a model with which we can interpret his oeuvre. Here I want to borrow a term proposed by Andrew Kagan in his research on absolute art, "absolute decorative form".[514] He uses this phrase in relation to "geometric or kaleidoscopic patterns and other nonnatural ornamental motifs" to argue that Morris Louis's (1912-1962) colour field paintings are absolute art.[515] I want to extend the definition to include abstract form and colour, regardless, at least in a Victorian context, of representational or figural detail. The decorative, always a point of contention among Victorian critics, was to Moore an ideal; it became, I want to argue, a pictorial parallel to absolute instrumental music. If we follow this line of reasoning, the decorative achieved in the realm of painting the same thing absolute music did in the realm of music: to be directly impactful on the senses rather than the intellect, abstract, indeterminate, and autonomous. It is at the confluence of the decorative as non-narrative and the decorative as abstract that Moore's art is located, those "decorative imaginings, cunning in form, exquisite in conception, dealing in types that are beauty only, in complex and charming arrangements of line, and in refined and novel harmonies of tone and colour".[516] As Gleeson White has argued in 1894, this had a direct parallel in the discourse of music.[517] From *The Musicians* and *A Quartet* – as explorations of musical subject matter – Moore abstracted his art, perfecting his manipulation of form and colour in order to generate a specific aesthetic experience based in absolute instrumental music. In a way, this was formalism before twentieth-century abstraction. Ultimately, this notion of pictorial formalism based in music was founded in Moore's knowledge of music theory, leading to a type of "pure aestheticism" that was pictorially grounded but *appealed* to music and *aspired* to the condition of absolute music.[518] Knowing this, how can we reinterpret Moore's art using this model of absolute decorative art?

Baldry proclaims at the start of his biography on Moore:

> When we welcome the statement that Albert Moore was a decorator, we do so with the fullest belief that decoration is the very highest function that art can fulfil, […] The ultimate aim and

[514] Andrew Kagan, *Absolute Art* (St Louis: Grenart Books, 1995), 32.
[515] Ibid., 32.
[516] "Henry and Albert Moore", 163.
[517] White, "Albert Moore", 83.
[518] Baldry, "An Appreciation", 34.

> object of all art that deals with either form or colour is to decorate; and the measure of artistic achievement is that of decorative perfection.[519]

This echoes what Colvin wrote about Moore, when the former argued that the "one paramount aim of the pictorial artist", because his work "addresses itself directly to the sense of sight", should be "the perfection of forms and colours". This was, in a word, the decorative and, in Colvin's eyes, pictorial beauty.[520] In 1870 he reaffirmed this perspective, that Moore made "the decorative aspect" of his work, which constituted the "arrangement of beautiful lines and refreshing colours", the most important part of his work.[521] Monkhouse reflected on this in 1885, expertly weaving together the narratives of art for art's sake, the decorative, and sensory pleasure of the beautiful:

> Like music, painting is an art which appeals immediately to one sense only. As the ear to music, so the eye to art is the only aditum [sic] or means of communication to the intellect, the emotions, and the other senses. […] [Moore's] pictures will be independent of what is usually called 'subject', or, in other words, his subjects will become more and more disconnected with sensations which are not immediate results of sights. The artist for art's sake, as thus explained, views his pictorial faculty as a special sense, […] To be attractive is therefore its first function, and of all sources of attraction that most special to art is beauty, and the sensation of beauty is pleasure. The aim, therefore, of 'an artist for art's sake', in the sense I use the phrase, is to convey a pleasure, and that pleasure is first and foremost the pleasure of seeing. Such an artist is Albert Moore.[522]

Moore's "divergence from mere literalism", similarly as for Whistler and Leighton, led him towards abstraction.[523] For Moore specifically, it led to an indulgence of visual patterning and arrangement, to a further extent than even Leighton. The decorative extended from this clear enjoyment in and appreciation of decoration and ornament to an emphasis on visuality in general, which, in turn, led to "colour harmonies and more gentle tone arrangements which were soon to become essential characteristics of his productions".[524] We can investigate the road towards abstraction by asking the question, as Prettejohn did in *Art for Art's Sake*

[519] Baldry, *Albert Moore,* 3.
[520] Sidney Colvin, "English Painters and Painting in 1867", *Fortnightly Review* 2, no. 10 (October 1867): 465.
[521] Colvin, "English Painters of the Present Day", 5.
[522] Monkhouse, "Moore", 194.
[523] Baldry, *Albert Moore,* 4.
[524] Ibid., 29-30.

(2005), what comes first?[525] The figural elements or the formal elements? The answer to this lies in Moore's use of a grid as the armature or groundwork for his pictures. Asleson was correct in pointing out Moore used an orthogonal grid as the basis of his pictures, involving the calculation of every single pictorial element as part of a geometric system of lines and angles.[526] It is particularly visible, through the thin and light paint Moore applied, in a work like *An Embroidery* (fig. 54), exhibited in 1881. The vertical and horizontal lines of the wardrobe, acting as background for the interior scene, act as counterpoints to the diagonal lines which are still visible, particularly to the right of the woman's body. It is even more powerfully present in some of Moore's preparatory sketches, such as those studies for *Dreamers* reproduced in Frederick Dolman's article for *The English Illustrated Magazine* of 1904 (fig. 55).[527] One of these sketches depicts the woman on the far right in *Dreamers*, here drawn in the nude. Behind her, there is a very precise system of lines and angles that functioned for Moore as a geometric instruction or geometric system in order to calculate where precisely every limb placement, every accessory, every formal detail should be in the final work. For example, we see that the raised knee combines with two lines to form a triangle, as does the top of the head and the left shoulder, whereas the downward curve of the shoulders line up perfectly with the underlying armature. Similarly, in the final picture of *Dreamers,* the sleeping women's heads line up to form a straight line; a linear backdrop on which sinuous curves and drapery in motion could be mapped.[528] This is even clearer in *Jasmine* (fig. 47) or *Acacias* (fig. 56, c. 1880), stand-alone pictures of the sleeping women. As Asleson has pointed out, this "underlying orthogonal grid" demonstrates how every naturalistic feature in Moore's paintings, including the human figure, were just cogs "in a unified decorative scheme".[529] Baldry describes the working process in elaborate detail:

> When [Moore] had completed this preliminary sketch he considered the directions of the more prominent lines of its composition, and, selecting those which dominated the design, he arranged a series of parallels to them throughout the drawing. He had always two sets of prominent lines, and sometimes three, crossing one another at an angle, and by the intersections of these and their subordinate parallels, he fixed the positions of all the details

[525] Prettejohn, *Art for Art's Sake,* 120.
[526] Asleson, *Albert Moore,* 105, 112. See also Robyn Asleson, "Nature and Abstraction in the Development of Albert Moore", chap. 5 in *After the Pre-Raphaelites: Art and Aestheticism in Victorian England,* ed. Elizabeth Prettejohn (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 115-134, for an analysis of the grid in relation to nature.
[527] Dolman, "Story of a Picture", 224-226.
[528] This is particularly visible in one of the nude studies, reproduced in ibid., 226.
[529] Asleson, *Albert Moore,* 158.

> and accessories. Even the shape and size of his canvas were settled by these same lines; and the exact arrangement of the folds and draperies, the final posing of the figures, the distribution of the hangings and panellings of the background, and the placing of the vases of flowers, the rugs, and fans, which played such important parts in his colour schemes, *depended upon one or other of the intersecting parallels*. Nothing was left to chance arrangement.[530]

Rosalind Krauss, in her seminal work on twentieth-century modernism, has written that the use of a grid by painters is exclusively modern and post-Cubist, having originated in Russia, France, and the Netherlands. Arguably, she is talking about visible grids – grids that are hostile "to literature, to narrative, to discourse" and which consequently lowered the barrier "between the arts of vision and those of language" in order to push the visual arts "into a realm of exclusive visuality".[531] However, even if paintings by Moore such as *Dreamers* or *An Embroidery* hardly resemble such twentieth-century abstractionist works like Wassily Kandinsky's *Composition VIII* (fig. 57, 1923) or Paul Klee's *Harmony of Rectangles with Red, Yellow, Blue, White and Black* (fig. 58, 1923), it does greatly reveal Moore's working and thinking process. It resolutely demonstrates that his aim was one of pictorial beauty and abstraction rather than realism. They did, however, share a similar goal, Moore and those twentieth-century abstractionists: to exclude literary associations and ground the aesthetic experience in the pictorial. Within the model of absolute decorative art, it functioned as an important tool to achieve abstraction where the geometric system generated autonomous and visually pleasing patterns of form and colour. Together with colour-music and musical metaphor, this became a tool to create a pictorial parallel or equivalent to absolute instrumental music for Moore.

Because of the grid, Moore managed to place every colour tone and shade at a very precise location. To investigate this, I want to refer to *A Yellow Room* (fig. 59, 1885), a small and delicate watercolour. The V&A holds a cartoon for *White Hydrangea* with the background of *A Yellow Room* (fig. 60, c. 1885) fully displaying the orthogonal grid. The dominant colour, also indicated by the title is yellow, but the underlying geometric system is the reason why the resulting work is so visually pleasing. There is the sensation of implied musical temporality as we let our eyes roam over the work's visual progression, following the lintel of the door, over the wallpaper, past the curved shoulder and bunched drapery, past the

[530] Baldry, *Albert Moore,* 81-82 [my italics].
[531] Rosalind Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London: MIT Press, 1995), 9.

hips and contrapposto knee, to the delicately patterned and ornamented floor. The two white blossoms frame the woman at either side, sensuous counterpoints to the rigidity and linearity of the intersecting diagonal lines. The effect of viewing a painting through these rhythmic intervals is one of pleasure and is musical by association. Moore has created a type of pictorial decorative art that can be meaningful and enjoyable purely through its forms and colours, generating a temporal aesthetic experience marked by intense contemplation in emulation of an absolute instrumental piece. Even the effect of the emphasised linearity of the door and walls, similar to the visuality of a musical score, creates striking alternating rhythms with the swirls and motion in the drapery, decoration, flowers, and chandelier. This interplay of motion and stillness is one modelled on that of musical sound and pause. The use of ornamental motifs in the wallpaper, similar to the abstract foliage applied by William Morris in his wallpaper, becomes a visual maze of swirling decoration, autonomous and beautiful in and of itself, independently from narrative. This recalls Kant's delineation of pure, absolute beauty:

> So designs *à la grecque*, foliage for framework or on wall-papers, etc., have no intrinsic meaning; they represent nothing – no object under a definite concept – and are free beauties. We may also rank in the same class what in music are called fantasias (without a theme), and, indeed, *all music that is not set to words.*[532]

Hanslick picked up this theme of comparing the decorative with instrumental music in 1854 when he wrote that "Accordingly, by contrast with arabesque, music is actually a picture, but one whose subject we cannot grasp in words and subsume under concepts".[533] He bridged this onto the decorative in criticism presaging that of Pater as he wrote of the analogy between the visual arts and music in terms of motion and stillness, flow and pause:

> We follow sweeping lines, here dipping gently, boldly soaring, approaching and separating, corresponding curves large and small, seemingly incommensurable yet always well connected together, to every part a counterpart, a collection of small details but yet a whole. Now let us think of an arabesque not dead and static, but coming into being in *continuous self-formation* before our eyes. […] let us think of this lively arabesque as the dynamic emanation of an

[532] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement,* ed. Nicholas Walker, trans. James Creed Meredith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 60 [my italics].
[533] Eduard Hanslick, *On the Musically Beautiful: A Contribution Towards the Revision of the Aesthetics of Music,* trans. Geoffrey Payzant (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1986), 30.

> artistic spirit who unceasingly pours the whole abundance of his inventiveness into the arteries of this dynamism. Does this mental impression not come close to that of music?[534]

These striking ideas of 'continuous self-formation', moving decorative elements in mental simulation of music, and the argument that the visual arts, leading the eye through curves and dips, would create the same impression as music, would resurface often in the critical response to Leighton, Moore, and Whistler throughout the nineteenth century.

Ideas of a decorative geometric system is echoed in the argument made by David Ramsay Hay, Scottish artist and colour theorist whose theories on harmony colour, and music were taught to Moore during his time as a student at both the York School of Design and the School of Art in South Kensington, as Asleson has discovered.[535] Hay believed that the same laws of nerve vibration and sensation, in sight and sound, could apply to aural and visual beauty.[536] He wrote emphatically that visual forms were analogous to aural sounds with the result of "a system of linear harmony". Indeed, "the effect produced by the harmony of sound, colour, and form, are equally the result of a susceptibility of the human mind, which renders it capable of appreciating an adherence to certain natural principles by which harmony in every case is produced".[537] The harmony of colour and the harmony of sound were thus connected on a scientific and mathematical level. Other colour theorists which I have mentioned previously, including Field, Gurney, Goethe, Blanc, and Chevreul, all strove after similar theories. Moore was most likely aware of all of these – including contemporary theories of decorative design in architecture by Christopher Dresser and inclinations towards decorative eclecticism in the work of Edward William Godwin and Moore's friend and colleague, William Eden Nesfield – but Asleson has argued that Hay's theories were one of the major reasons Moore opted for a grid in the first place.[538] I have to disagree; Hay's project is much too large and much too complex to have held such a substantial influence. As Prettejohn has pointed out, these types of theories are perhaps more useful "for their general ideas than for their specific mathematical calculations".[539] Regardless, the grid is semi-informed by music theory, including Hay's theories, though also Hanslick, absolute music in

[534] Ibid., 29 [my italics].
[535] Asleson, *Albert Moore,* 95.
[536] See David Ramsay Hay, *The Natural Principles*; Hay, *Proportion, or the Geometric Principle of Beauty, Analysed* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, and London: 22 Pall-Mall, 1843), and Hay, *The Science of Beauty: As Developed in Nature and Applied in Art* (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1856).
[537] Hay, *The Natural Principles,* 3-4.
[538] Asleson, *Albert Moore,* 95. For a discussion of the friendship and collaborations between Moore and Nesfield, see ibid., 58, 92.
[539] See also Prettejohn, *Art for Art's Sake,* 125.

general, and the confluence of art for art's sake and music theory. While Moore never attempted to integrate Hay's specific theories, it is evident that he was very invested in the geometric construction of his pictures and using the geometric systems (although not mathematical, as Hay did) to dictate his own chromatic harmonies. In this way, colour very much became analogous to sound and a tool to impact the viewer emotionally and sensuously. After all, in *A Quartet* Moore displayed his debt to music, not to Ramsay Hay.

Which brings me back to the particular effect of the geometric grid in conjunction with explicit musical subject matter, as was the case in *A Quartet*. The strong horizontals contrast to great effect in this picture with the diagonals of the musicians' arms and the drapery worn by all participants displayed. This was the first time that the grid came to particular fruition with Moore and, arguably, he was successful here because of the visible dualities I have discussed previously in this chapter. Here, Moore achieves an abstract artwork; achieved through the construction of a decorative art in equivalence to the effect of absolute instrumental music. Despite its naturalistic content, *A Quartet* operates as an abstract picture; Moore's intention was never to imitate, represent, or signify, but he wanted to explore an autonomous sphere where the formal elements of his art could have the same or parallel impact as sound could. Victorian critics might question Moore's aims at subjectlessness, praising his "*artistic* suggestiveness" as a "pure triumph of pictorial art" yet always seeking for a subject where there is none. There is only form and colour", these "sensuous, visible qualities" which are pleasing to the senses and furnish subject and content in the same way as tones, melodies, and harmonies furnish the content of an instrumental musical piece.[540] The subject no longer matters as form and content fuse together; the "decorative harmony" he creates, the "visible concord and consentaneousness", are there "not to imitate life, but to produce an agreeable pattern".[541] As Colvin astutely described, Moore adopted an "abstract system of colour" aimed at visual harmony in a method comparable to that of absolute instrumental music.[542]

When looking at *A Summer Night,* we are not looking exclusively at a representational rendition of a warm and heady summer evening, gazing out at reflected moonlight in the distance. We are also looking at a carefully constructed pictorial scheme aimed at maximising its aesthetic effect. We see a group of women in drapery, but we also see

[540] P.W., "Artist and Critic", *Fraser's Magazine* 12, no. 68 (August 1875): 266 [italics in original].
[541] Colvin, "English Painters of the Present Day", 5-6.
[542] Ibid., 6.

chromatic harmonies, rhythmic waves of fabric, musical tempo in the festoons and patterned trellis; we see a veritable "symphony in pink and predominating yellow".[543] Again, our experience of the work is marked by our experience of temporality in painting. Letting our gaze wander over these 'chromatic harmonies' and 'rhythmic waves of fabric' indeed generates 'musical tempo'. The experience of the work is a musical one because of the parallels with the actual experience of instrumental music; it extends over time, is sensuously rich, and is based off on this fusion of form and content.

Moore absolutely refused to provide narrative recourse; his works, above all, were *visual* works of art which purported to give you nothing but an experience of their visual information. Moore adhere, even more rigorously than Leighton perhaps, to the creation of art for art's sake in its purest form. As I have shown in this chapter, however, this was an art for art's sake mediated and given shape through the condition of absolute instrumental music. Even though there are almost no personal writings or statements by Moore himself, biographical and anecdotal evidence have shown that he was surrounded by music in the private, public, and artistic spheres he did move in. Moreover, there is a wealth of information in Moore's pictures themselves. The musical content of some of his early work, such as *The Musicians* and *A Quartet,* demonstrate not only a knowledge of instruments, but also an engagement with musical performance and reception. *A Quartet,* particularly, was an opportunity for Moore to publicly announce not just his interest in but his debt to music and explore the figure of the listener as a potent conduit for pictorial immersion as well as a directive for his viewers. Instrumental music, after all, was capable of providing a temporal, sensuously rich, and immersive experience Moore hoped to provoke with his own painting. Additionally, there are consistent references to the theories of absolute instrumental music in his art. Here, Moore was looking for something similar to Leighton: he was looking for pictorial beauty, making his art abstract, autonomous, and more expressive through an appeal to the condition of absolute instrumental music and the artistic features it offered. To approach abstraction through a theoretical resemblance to music – non-narrativity, autonomy, formalism – was to appropriate certain musical qualities for painting. Moreover, through such an appeal, the pictorial value no longer exclusively lies with what a painting like *A Quartet* represents, but what the *effect* of it is. In this case, the result is not a musical experience of art contingent on synaesthesia or cross-sensory blending, but the formation of a response to a pictorial work of art based on the response to an instrumental piece.

[543] Spielmann, "Current Art: The Royal Academy", 258.

Within the interpretational framework I have proposed in this chapter, the idea of the 'musical' in painting becomes a value judgement given shape by a supporting framework of rich musical terminology. Colour, in particular, played a very important role in this, as it became an expressive tool applied and understood in relation to music both by Moore and his critics. With narrative no longer a concern, Moore structured his pictures as geometric problems to be solved; using a grid and an interlocking system of lines, he rigorously mapped out the composition of his pictorial space. His use of the decorative became, then, more calculated and precise; the grid became a tool for abstract expression in order to maximise the aesthetic effect of painting's formal features. Indeed, the decorative when interpreted through the model I have proposed, is elevated to the status of absolute decorative form. Capable of being abstract and autonomous yet providing an enriched aesthetic experience, absolute decorative form operated in a similar manner as absolute music. The condition of absolute instrumental music, then, helped Moore to make the experience of his art quasi-musical yet also more about art *itself*. By drawing attention to the abstract and autonomous potential of form and colour in simulation of an instrumental piece, Moore created pure art *as* art and for its own sake.

Chapter Five: James McNeill Whistler's Musical Framework

In a key essay of 1885, the French critic Théodore Duret described James McNeill Whistler's Nocturnes as abstract landscapes: "The Nocturnes of Mr. Whistler remind us of these pieces of Wagnerian music where the harmonic sound, separated from all melodic drawings and all accentuated cadence, remains a kind of *abstraction* and gives us only an *indefinite* musical impression".[544] Duret added that Whistler referred to music for his use of colour in order to approach "the very limit of figurative painting", akin to producing a "powerful impression of space and a range of delicate and vibrating tones".[545] Duret's analysis, prompted by his admiration of and friendship with Whistler, testifies to the importance of music in the latter's oeuvre. When Whistler left Paris in 1859, he decided to pursue various avenues of representing or referencing to music in his paintings while striving to perfect his technique and personal style, beginning with the representation of musical instruments in *At the Piano* (fig. 24) and *Variations in Flesh Colour and Green: The Balcony* (fig. 61). These formative years provided the groundwork for the developments of the 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s, decades in which Whistler perfected his musical framework and systematic use of colour-music titles which began in 1867 with the exhibition of *Symphony in White, No. 3* (fig. 1). Though he remained interested in multiple subjects, media, and styles, music formed the core of his aesthetic. Involved with both the London and Parisian avant-garde, Whistler shrewdly constructed an image of himself as the flamboyant and eccentric artist, one interested not in anecdote but in freestanding pictorial technique, abstraction, and art for art's sake achieved through the overlap between music and painting. Even if by the 1890s Whistler's musical rhetoric had become popularised and widespread, when he embarked on this musical framework in the 1860s and 1870s it was met with mixed reactions, leading to outright ridicule in the aftermath of the 1878 trial against John Ruskin.[546] Nonetheless, the critical reaction to Whistler's musical paintings – musical only through reference in the title, rarely through a pictorial depiction of music – confirmed and perpetuated a specific musical model.

This chapter studies the importance of music for Whistler throughout his career, placing him firmly in the legacy of German Romanticism, Idealism, and French aesthetics surrounding the developments of absolute instrumental music. I will demonstrate how this

[544] Théodore Duret, *Critique d'Avant-Garde* (Paris: G. Charpentier, 1885), 256 [my translation and italics]. Duret's essay on Whistler was originally published in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* in April 1881.
[545] Ibid., 256-257.
[546] See Linda Merrill, *A Pot of Paint: Whistler v. Ruskin* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press in association with the Freer Gallery of Art, 1993).

informed his aesthetic and artistic decisions, demonstrating that by exploring this dialogue between music and painting further in the case of Whistler can help us understand some of his affiliations with instrumental music. Whistler played a pivotal role in the English avant-garde of the second half of the nineteenth century, yet he is often misunderstood and misinterpreted. This study aims to rectify this, demonstrating exactly how he was influenced by music, what the contemporary consequences of this were, and how Whistler used the paradigm of absolute instrumental music specifically as an avenue towards aesthetic autonomy, formalism, abstraction, an enriched experience of his art, and musical-aesthetic immersion. His aim was never to pictorially represent music, but, as one critic wrote in 1867: "[Whistler] would have painting do the work of music, embody moods and suggest emotions vaguely, but profoundly, through appeals to mysterious associations of feelings with colour, and of colour with feelings".[547]

Whereas Whistler's French connections have been vouched for numerous times, the exact impact of the Austro-Germanic music tradition, the aesthetics of absolute music, and how precisely Whistler's reference to music functioned within his systematic model have not been sufficiently explored.[548] Moreover, by placing Whistler alongside Moore and Leighton we have the opportunity to collectively analyse their efforts in integrating music with their kind of Aestheticist painting. Unlike previous arguments of Whistler's paintings as synaesthetic, I will argue that his interest in music lay not in blending the senses and conjuring up involuntary connections between different senses, but in the potential of music in enriching painting through immersion and abstraction as well as a conduit to artistic immersion within temporal bounds.[549]

In the rhetoric surrounding Whistler's reception in the nineteenth century his art has often been compared to music by virtue of its use of colour and through its lack of narrative interest. It has, for some critics, been comparable to the notion of 'pure' music or absolute art, a parallel Whistler himself draws in his revealing interview of 1878, published as "The Red Rag": "Beethoven and the rest wrote music – simply music: […] this is *pure* music as

[547] "The Exhibition of the Royal Academy: Second Notice", *The Manchester Guardian* (May 21, 1867): 5.
[548] For French connections, see Suzanne Singletary, *James McNeill Whistler and France: A Dialogue in Paint, Poetry, and Music* (London and New York: Routledge, 2017).
[549] For scholars that have argued for Whistler's art as synaesthetic, see Margaux Lynn Rosa Poueymirou, "The Sixth Sense: Synaesthesia and British Aestheticism" (PhD diss., University of St Andrews, 2009), chap. 2, "James McNeill Whistler and the Gentle Art of Synaesthesia"; Robin Spencer, *James McNeill Whistler* (London: Tate Publishing, 2003), 16-17; and Jo Sager, "Whistler's Application of Musical Terminology to his Paintings: The Search for a Synaesthetic Response" (PhD diss., Ohio University, 2004).

distinguished from airs". Significantly, Whistler instantly mapped this idea onto his own practice, relating the idea of 'pure music' to art being "independent of all clap-trap", standing alone and appealing exclusively "to the artistic sense of eye or ear".[550] Absolute instrumental music's ability to be independent from external subject matter and its ability to be abstract and inarticulate was popularised in musical as well as artistic circles, a discourse Whistler actively engaged with. This analogy was purposefully applied by the music critic Francis Hueffer in 1889 when he compared Whistler's quasi-musical landscapes to absolute music, as they dispense with external interest and instead become a "delightful and vague harmony of colour".[551] Music's ability to exist meaningfully only between the subject and object appealed to Whistler immensely. He wanted his art, like music, to be ambiguous, commenting in the 1878 trial that he was not providing mimetic scenes of locations: "It [*Nocturne in Black and Gold: The Falling Rocket*, fig. 95] wouldn't give the public a good idea of Cremorne. I do not know how to describe the picture. It is simply an arrangement of colour".[552] The meaning of his works lies in this relationship between beholder and painting, much like the meaning of an instrumental piece lies between listener and said piece. Whistler capitalised on this, referring to music in his titles to stimulate a specific aesthetic response to his art, one favouring subjective experience rather than a set anecdote or moral story.

As I mentioned above, there were a number of formative steps Whistler took to arrive at his musical model. These instances have all been discussed at length in the existing literature and will not be covered in this thesis, but a brief mention is necessary.[553] The artist explored a number of musical-artistic endeavours in the 1860s, of which there were four variants: *At the Piano* (fig. 24, 1858-1859) exemplifying the musical interior; *Variations in Flesh Colour and Green: The Balcony* (fig. 61, 1864-1873) with its inclusion of a visible instrument; the so-called *Six Projects* (figs. 62-67, c. 1868) as a musical frieze alongside the inclusion of musical notes a frame taken from Franz Schubert's *Moments musicaux* (Op. 94,

[550] James McNeill Whistler, *The Red Rag* (1878), republished in Whistler, *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies* (New York: Frederic Stokes & Brother, 1890), 68-70 [my italics].
[551] Francis Hueffer, *Half a Century of Music in England, 1837-1887: Essays Towards a History* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1889), 236.
[552] Whistler, quoted in Merrill, *A Pot of Paint,* 145.
[553] Arabella Teniswood-Harvey, "Colour-Music: Musical Modelling in James McNeill Whistler's Art" (PhD diss., University of Tasmania, 2006); Teniswood-Harvey, "Whistler's 'Six Projects' and Schubert's 'Moments musicaux', Op. 94", *British Art Journal* 15, no. 1 (Autumn 2014): 27-34; David Park Curry, *James McNeill Whistler: Uneasy Pieces* (New York: Quantuck Lane Press, 2004); Allen Staley, *The New Painting of the 1860s: Between the Pre-Raphaelites and the Aesthetic Movement* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011), 152-155; Robin Spencer, "Whistler, Swinburne, and Art for Art's Sake", chap. 3 in *After the Pre-Raphaelites: Art and Aestheticism in Victorian England,* ed. Elizabeth Prettejohn, 70 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999); Richard Dorment and Margaret MacDonald, *James McNeill Whistler,* exh. cat. (London: Tate Gallery, 1994), 71-73, 88-90, 92-94.

1828); and *Symphony in White, No. 3* (fig. 1), Whistler's first colour-music title. These works certainly demonstrate Whistler's desire to experiment and explore, yet I want to focus on my original contribution to the field: analysing his use of titles within a musical framework and the musical effects of his Nocturnes as striving for the condition of absolute music. I see these early musical works as necessary processes for Whistler to arrive, in the early 1870s, at a perfected technique and composition of his oil paints, a perfection of his "science of colour" as he termed it, as well as his systematic titular framework influenced by music.[554] Whistler began with his colour-music titles in 1867, firstly as an intuitive step in linking music and colour as immaterial agents of meaning, yet it became a move that grew into a larger musical framework that informed his artistic practice on a whole. His titles, parroting musical nomenclature – as there is a sonata in C sharp minor, there is a nocturne in blue and silver – served to appeal to the art of music to encourage and prescribe a specific experience of his paintings. Using the Nocturnes and exhibition designs of the 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s, I will argue how Whistler became interested in musical temporality and music's ability not only to be abstract and ambiguous but also to unfold over time. That Whistler owed this autonomy, abstraction, and formalism to music and music aesthetics has not been sufficiently researched. Despite its complexity and varying strands of interest, Whistler's career is held together by a consistent presence of music and musical references. It is worthwhile to question where this comes from and what the impact was. How did Whistler move from *At the Piano* to the compositional formulation of the visually arresting *Nocturne: Blue and Silver – Cremorne Lights* (fig. 68, 1872), the equally luminous *Nocturne in Blue and Silver* (fig. 69, 1871/1872), or the formless and atmospheric *Nocturne* (fig. 70, 1875/1878)? How was his proclamation that art "should stand alone, and appeal to the artistic sense of eye or ear" motivated by music?[555] And, significantly, to what extent was music a factor in the conceptualisation of Nocturnes and exhibition designs?

What's in a Title?

In 1861 Whistler embarked on the first of what would become his series of *White Girls*, which consisted of *The White Girl* (fig. 71, 1861-1863), *The Little White Girl* (fig. 72, 1864), and *The Two Little White Girls* (fig. 1, 1865-1867). These titles were not consistent, however; in fact, the latter was only known by its more famous name, *Symphony in White, No. 3*.

[554] JW to George A. Lucas, 18 January 1873, kept in Walters Art Gallery, Library, Baltimore, repr. in *The Correspondence of James McNeill Whistler, 1855-1903,* eds. Margaret MacDonald, Patricia de Montfort, and Nigel Thorp, online edition, GUW, accessed 22/05/2020.
[555] Whistler, *Gentle Art*, 69.

Despite the retrospective retitling of both earlier works to *Symphony in White, No. 1* and *Symphony in White, No. 2,* the third instalment was the very first work to be exhibited with a colour-music title.[556] This prompted a significant change in Whistler's oeuvre, not just because he would continue using colour-music titles for the rest of his life, but also because, with it, he allied colour and music together in one stroke. In the literary environment of Victorian society, visitors to galleries and museums were more inclined to 'read' a painting by its title than appreciate it for its visual effects.[557] Whistler's choice of a 'symphony in white' grew out of, firstly, his interest in experimenting with white on white in his earlier instalments and, secondly, out of his interest in fusing instrumental music more definitively to his art. There were scattered references in the critical responses to Whistler's paintings before he used this title, yet he took this a step further by explicitly referring to the musical connection and, hence, deliberately conditioning his viewer to experience the painting through a musical lens. Instead of leaving this interpretation solely to his critics, Whistler, as artist, author, and authority, took control of the intended interpretation. Why did he opt for a musical title in the first place, and why did it become such a crucial aspect of his musical framework?

When Whistler exhibited *The White Girl* in London in 1862, he commented that the "painting simply represents a girl dressed in white standing in front of a white curtain" and nothing more.[558] Though now considered the first *Symphony in White,* it is important to acknowledge that Whistler did not use that title until 1878 and never exhibited it publicly as such.[559] Nonetheless, the public reception of the work shaped the artist's thinking around the malleability and applicability of title use in Victorian London. I only want to briefly discuss this, as existing scholarship has discussed the rich and varied history of the work itself.[560] As

---

[556] *The White Girl* became *Symphony in White, No. 1: The White Girl* in 1878, though never exhibited as such during Whistler's lifetime; JW to James Anderson Rose, PWC 4/62, GUW, accessed 18/05/2020. The second instalment became *Symphony in White, No. 2: The Little White Girl* in 1892 when it was exhibited as such at the 1892 Goupil show.

[557] Ruth Bernard Yeazell, *Picture Titles: How and Why Western Paintings Acquired Their Names* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), chap. 7, "Reading by the Title", 81-96.

[558] Letter sent by Whistler to the editor of *The Athenaeum*; "Our Weekly Gossip", *The Athenaeum* no. 1810 (July 5, 1862): 23.

[559] JW to Rose, GUW, accessed 18/05/2020.

[560] See Aileen Tsui, "The Phantasm of Aesthetic Autonomy in Whistler's Work: Titling *The White Girl"*, *Art History* 29, no. 3 (June 2006): 444-475; Robin Spencer, "Whistler's 'The White Girl': Painting, Poetry, and Meaning", *The Burlington Magazine* 140, no. 1142 (May 1998): 300-311; Rachel Teukolsky, "White Girls: Avant-Gardism and Advertising after 1860", *Victorian Studies* 51, no. 3 Special Issue: Papers and Responses from the Sixth Annual Conference of the North American Victorian Studies Association (Spring 2009): 422-437; Nicholas Daly, "The Woman in White: Whistler, Hiffernan, Courbet, Du Maurier", *Modernism/modernity* 12, no. 1 (2005): 1-25; Dorment and MacDonald, 76-78; and Staley, 160-161; and Elizabeth Prettejohn, *Art for Art's Sake: Art and Aestheticism in Victorian Painting* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005)*,* 164-166.

Whistler's comment reveals, *The White Girl* was, first and foremost, an experiment in colour as an attempt to avoid representing a narrative. Painting white on white is immensely difficult, as the only variation will be one of tonality. It is the balance of something yet nothing, a colour yet not one, as white eliminates, denies, obscures, and mystifies. It excludes external impressions and operates on a stronger formal level than other colours and, hence, an experiment of white-on-white is an experiment of the palette most of all. It would become such overt tonal experiments with Kazimir Malevich's *White on White* (fig. 73, 1918) and Robert Rauschenberg's *White Painting (Three Panel)* (fig. 74, 1951). Indeed, the critic P.G. Hamerton perceived *The White Girl* to be such a technical exercise, in which Whistler was wrestling with "relieving white upon white" as there is "no subject worth representing".[561] As such, the colour white becomes a formal motif, reminiscent of the canvas as a space in itself as strongly as it dematerialises space altogether.

At its exhibition at the Berner Street Gallery in London, the proprietor labelled the painting *The Woman in White* on the grounds that "it could not be called 'The Woman in Black', or any other colour", leading one critic to interpret Whistler's work as an illustration of Wilkie Collins's recently published *The Woman in White* (1859).[562] The work was then classified *The White Girl* as done in a "non-colour", lacking anecdote, evoking emptiness; a non-entity.[563] Despite Whistler's subsequent public affirmation that he "had no intention whatsoever of illustrating Mr. Wilkie Collins' novel", the misinterpretation because of the title and title alone taught him how malleable public opinion could be based on what he chose to exhibit his work as.[564]

Symphony in White, No. 3, visually conceived of in 1865, was first known as *The Two Little White Girls*, a clear continuation of the two earlier instalments. Returning from his sudden flight to Valparaiso in 1866, where Whistler simultaneously gleaned inspiration for and practised techniques for his later Nocturnes, it appears he wanted to make a stronger impression on his audience in line with his aesthetic ideals.[565] His biographers, Elizabeth and Joseph Pennell, conspicuously attribute the musical title to a number of French sources: the

[561] P.G. Hamerton, "The Artistic Spirit", *Fortnightly Review* 1 (June 15, 1865): 341.
[562] "Our Weekly Gossip", *The Athenaeum* no. 1812 (July 19, 1862): 86; "Fine-Art Gossip", *The Athenaeum* no. 1809 (June 28, 1862): 859.
[563] "Our Weekly Gossip" (July 19), 86.
[564] "Our Weekly Gossip" (July 5), 23.
[565] Amalia Cross Gantes and Juliet a Ogaz Sotomayor have recently published a paper relating to the impact Whistler's travels to both Valparaiso and Venice had on him, as well as influences he may have had on Chilean art; see Gantes and Sotomayor, "James McNeill Whistler. De Valparaíso a Venecia: Un Viaje de Ida y Vuelta", *Revista 180* 44 (2019): 29-38.

writers Théophile Gautier, Baudelaire, Henri Murger, and the critic Paul Mantz.[566] These are likely sources, but hardly the only ones; Whistler's intentions were different from the manner in which these French authors used it. Baudelaire's review of Wagner's *Tannhäuser* in 1861 famously allied 'symphony' with colour, and Maxime du Camp, whose book *Les Forces de Perdue* (1867) was later owned by Whistler, described a number of Eugène Delacroix's paintings in 1855 at the *Exposition Universelle*, in a pamphlet Whistler likely read, as a "symphony in blue major", a "symphony in green minor", and a "variation on a theme of blue-red".[567] When Mantz described *The White Girl* at the Salon des Refusés in 1863 as a "symphony in white", he purposefully echoed Gautier's poem "Symphonie en Blanc Majeur", published in *Émaux et Camées* (1852).[568]

Whether or not Whistler gained inspiration from any one of these sources or, as is more likely, his title was an amalgamation of French references to a symphony in colour, we have to consider that 'symphony' as a musical term is strikingly Austro-Germanic, not French. Of the musical nomenclature Whistler would later use – symphony, nocturne, harmony, variations, arrangement, note, scherzo, bravura, and caprice – symphony is most strongly tied to the development in music aesthetics engendered by Beethoven's symphony and his subsequent idolisation.[569] The contemporary musical world saw his symphonies, because of the Romantic legacy, as synonymous with the most perfect productions of instrumental music: "Composers are often told, to their annoyance, that, since Beethoven, they should desist from all schemes for symphonies; and partly with justice, […] for most compositions are but poor reflections of Beethoven's method".[570] The transference of 'symphony' to a visual composition, then, conjures up connotations of an elaborate and structured artwork, a non-verbal, non-literary work that is aesthetically autonomous, and a

---

[566] Elizabeth Robins and Joseph Pennell, *The Life of James McNeill Whistler*, 5th ed. (London: William Heinemann, and Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1911), 101-102.
[567] Charles Baudelaire, "Wagner and Tannhäuser in Paris", repr. *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays by Charles Baudelaire,* ed. and trans. Jonathan Mayne (London: Phaidon Press, 1964), 111-146; Maxime du Camp, *Les Beaux-Arts à l'Exposition Universelle de 1855: Peinture, Sculpture* (Paris: Librairie Nouvelle, 1855): 95 [my translation]. The University of Glasgow keeps records of all the books Whistler owned, see their digitised archive of Whistler material at https://eleanor.lib.gla.ac.uk/search/csp+coll+whistler.
[568] Paul Mantz, "Salon de 1863: Peinture et Sculpture", *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 5, no. 15 (July 1, 1863): 61 [my translation].
[569] The German Romantics upheld Beethoven as the most Romantic composer, see Andrew Bowie, "Romanticism and Music", chap. 15 in *The Cambridge Companion to German Romanticism,* ed. Nicholas Saul (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 243-256. See also Scott Burnham, "The Four Ages of Beethoven: Critical Reception and the Canonic Composer", chap. 16 in *The Cambridge Companion to Beethoven,* ed. Glenn Stanley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 272-291; Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), chap. 8, "After 1800: The Beethoven Paradigm", 204-242.
[570] "Robert Schumann on Music and Musicians", *Musical Standard* 4, no. 92 (March 10, 1866): 288.

celebration and capitalisation of an art's inherent formal forms. Connected by Baudelaire to colour, 'symphony', then, was a way for Whistler to link his French influences and understanding of Austro-German music aesthetics together. This correlates with how the critic R.A.M. Stevenson defined the symphony in *Velasquez* (1895), which Whistler owned: there is "only one quite pure art – namely, symphonic music […] Every shade of the complicated emotion in a symphony by Beethoven depends entirely upon technique – that is to say, upon the relations established amongst notes which are by themselves empty of significance".[571] Supplant 'notes' with (colour) 'tones', and Whistler's *Symphony* drives his viewer to consider the visual composition as a musical one, premised in the abstract potential of colour in and of itself.

According to an anecdote by Whistler's friend Otto Bacher, the artist himself, albeit a little after the fact, told him in 1880 that "his most ambitious desire was to paint a grand concerto-like picture with the title 'Full Palette' – just as in music". To elucidate, Bacher quoted Whistler: "When they employ all instruments they make it 'Full Band'. If I can find the right kind of thing I will produce a harmony in colour corresponding to Beethoven's harmonies in sound".[572] Indeed, when Whistler exhibited the chromatic and numerical title *Symphony in White, No. 3*, he was fully aware of its connotations. Conservative critics of the time "clung to the old account of colour as a secondary, non-essential property, and hence as meaningless, base, and incapable of signifying anything".[573] Yet Whistler deliberately prioritised colour, proposing it as autonomous and complex; it functioned as a bridge between the worlds of painting and music. By including it in the title, and inscribing this title prominently on the canvas, he instantly draws the attention to colour and, in conjunction with the musical phrase, parallels his art's ability to be autonomous and formalist on a level with instrumental musical pieces. As such, Whistler capitalised on the effects of instrumental music as an independent art form that instantly draws the audience's attention to its technical features *as* independent agents of meaning. As one critic noted, Whistler "conceives that the function of art is to express these harmonies [in nature and art], not to tell a story, or to reproduce an expression, or to embody incidents". Instead, Whistler

[571] R.A.M. Stevenson, *Velasquez* (London: G. Bell & Sons, Ltd., 1912 [1895]), 38-39.
[572] Otto H. Bacher, *With Whistler in Venice* (New York: The Century Co., 1909), 58-59.
[573] Carrie Haslett, "Discussing the Ineffable: Colour in the Paintings of James McNeill Whistler" (PhD diss., Bryn Mawr College, 1999), 78.

> would *have painting do the work of music,* embody moods and suggest emotions vaguely, but profoundly, through appeals to mysterious associations of feelings with colour, and of colour with feelings. Hence the title of his picture is borrowed from music.[574]

Similarly, when Whistler exhibited *Symphony in Grey and Green: The Ocean* (fig. 12, 1866-1872) a few years later, one critic commented that "such high-sounding words as 'symphony' may be *intentionally suggestive of Beethoven*; only it is to be observed that Mr. Whistler, like Paganini, plays on only one string, or rather the analogy is closer to certain musicians in Russian bands who sound but a single note".[575] The contrast with Paganini is particularly effective. Instead of criticising Whistler's application of a musical term to his painting, this critic analysed the legitimacy of having a symphony in one colour, unconsciously adhering to the inter-art idea of the relationship between colours and notes. Hamerton concurred, writing that "there are many dainty varieties of tint, but it is not precisely a symphony in white", to which Whistler retorted:

> *Bon Dieu!* did this creature expect white hair and chalked faces? And does he then in his astounding consequence, believe that a symphony in F contains no other note, but shall be a continued repetition of F, F, F, F, F? … Fool![576]

This demonstrates that Whistler's intended use of 'symphony' was to balance his colour use against a musical model. Consciously invoking the association with Beethoven, Whistler combines French and German ideas of music and art to steer his viewer's experience of the painting. Whistler reaffirmed this analogy in 1878:

> As music is the poetry of sound, so is painting the poetry of sight, and the subject-matter has nothing to do with harmony of sound or of colour.
> The great musicians knew this. Beethoven and the rest [Haydn, Mozart, Mendelssohn] wrote music – simply music; symphony in this key, concert or sonata in that.
> On F or G they constructed their celestial harmonies as harmonies, as combinations, evolved from the chords of F or G and their minor correlatives. This is pure music as distinguished from airs.[577]

---

[574] "Royal Academy", *The Manchester Guardian,* 5 [my italics].
[575] "Winter Exhibitions", *Saturday Review* 34, no. 889 (November 9, 1872): 601.
[576] [P.G. Hamerton], "Pictures of the Year", *Saturday Review* 23, no. 605 (June 1, 1867): 691; and quoted in Whistler, *The Gentle Art,* 57.
[577] Whistler, "Red Rag", quoted in *The Gentle Art*, 69.

The phrase 'pure music' brings to mind absolute music, as autonomous, formally self-sufficient, and abstract. Within this vein of thinking, *Symphony in White, No. 3* is evolved from the colour white and its 'minor correlatives', structured akin to a musical symphony in, firstly, being independent from subject matter and, secondly, as a work addressing the senses primarily. It is not a pictorial representation of a symphony, but Whistler references it to enrich his own painting, elevating his work beyond its conventional restrictions.

Hence, we can ascertain that Whistler's appeal to music in his titles works twofold. First of all, it is a semantic appeal to the ability of a symphony (as well as any other musical title he applied) to be aesthetically autonomous and formally meaningful. Tautologically, perhaps, by appealing to another art that was so effectively existing for its own sake, Whistler desired to make it clear his painting existed similarly for painting's sake. Secondly, it is an aesthetic appeal to the ability of music to "embody moods and suggest emotions vaguely" and, hence, an appeal to aesthetic experience.[578] This was not referencing specific types of music but appealing to what music can do. As such, Whistler intended to cultivate a similar response in his viewers and he wanted to provoke a response to his artwork grounded in the temporal, spatial, and aesthetic response usually given to a musical piece. This would captivate him for the rest of his life and was brought to particular fruition in his most pervasive range of connected musically-titled paintings, the Nocturnes and, subsequently, the exhibition designs of the 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s as well as *The Peacock Room* of 1875.[579] As I will demonstrate in my discussion of the Nocturnes and the exhibitions, how viewers perceived his art was crucial to Whistler, taking into account lighting, distance, composition, effect, space, and atmosphere. This consideration of space and distance had its roots in Baudelaire's prompt to a viewer to stand far enough from an artwork to forget it subject and focus entirely on its formal features, allowing the work to crystallise into "wonderful *chords* of colour", creating an "impression" that would be "as it were, a musical one".[580] With this appeal to a temporal experience encapsulated in the title, *Symphony in White* invites the viewer to linger over the work. We are invited, as if we are experiencing a lengthy musical piece, to regard the painting over a longer period of time; not, significantly, like Ruskin's proposed manner of viewing in order to see the details, but the proposition to be as contemplative as the two girls

[578] "Royal Academy", *Manchester Guardian,* 5.
[579] For more on the Peacock Room, see Linda Merrill, *The Peacock Room: A Cultural Biography* (New Haven: Yale University Press in collaboration with the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1998).
[580] Charles Baudelaire, "Exposition Universelle", repr. in *Art in Paris 1845-1862: Salons and Other Exhibitions,* ed. and trans. Jonathan Mayne (London: Phaidon Press, 1965), 141 [italics in original].

in the painting. Whistler has depicted two girls staring ahead, disconnected. The tones, from the thick brushstrokes on the sofa, to the delicate purple flowers and aesthetically placed fabric, act as counterpoints to one another. The two girls, connected to the sofa by sitting or through a casually extended arm, establish a horizontal axis to which the fabric, fan, and flowers act as balancing points. Whereas in *At the Piano* the connection with music was instantaneous and visible, in *Symphony* this detail is effaced, eliminated, and the scene is abstracted from the real. Without an identifiable narrative, the formation of colour and form takes pride of place and constitutes the content of the picture. The allusion to music is no longer illustrative; instead, it becomes a reference to, firstly, colour as a formally meaningful agent akin to musical notes and, secondly, a bid for a temporal and spatial experience of music, visually denoted by the languorous atmosphere and reverie of the girls. Whistler's entire musical model was forged more strongly from 1871 onwards with the exhibition of *Harmony in Blue-Green: Moonlight* (fig. 75, 1871), now known as *Nocturne: Blue and Silver – Chelsea* and *Variations in Violet and Green* (fig. 76, 1871). The titles would become a distillation of what was most important for Whistler in his work: a musical model in a specific keynote, oftentimes with a location included.

Musical Nocturnes

From 1865 onwards, Whistler began exploring a style of landscape painting based in his interest in atmospheric and temporal states of nature, particularly in his Trouville series (1865, figs. 77-80) and the Valparaiso works (1866, figs. 81-83). At this point in time, Whistler and Moore were close friends, a fact documented extensively in the existing scholarship as mentioned in the previous chapter. Their friendship and styles grew so close, that Whistler developed fears of wrongful interpretation by critics, so, from 1871 onwards, he decided to change direction. Hence, he turned more forcefully to explorations of landscape painting – vaporous, colourful, indeterminate – which he then cast in a more overt musical model. By 1870, Whistler developed an interest in the effect of moonlight. This took shape in *Harmony in Blue-Green: Moonlight* (fig. 75), a work Edward Poynter described as rendering "the poetical side of the scene better than any moonlight picture I ever saw".[581] It was exhibited at the Dudley Gallery in 1871 alongside *Variations in Violet and Green*, a pair of works Whistler collectively referred to as his "harmonies".[582] His style was seen as vaporous, "but a mild variation on monotone", comparable to "a light passage in one of Beethoven's

[581] Edward John Poynter to JW, 10 October 1871, Glasgow University Library, GUW, accessed 15/08/2020.
[582] JW to Walter Greaves, 14 November/December 1871, PWC 9/645-6, GUW, accessed 15/08/2020.

sonatas".[583] The *Moonlight,* especially, was considered to attend to "the abstract balance or ponderation of colours", an advanced and aesthetic art that provoked "a dreamland of cloud, vapour, smoke; and so little subject have they that they are just as comprehensible when turned upside down".[584] The link with music was instantaneous, though not always accepted. W.B. Scott and Tom Taylor had the most comprehensive responses, both seeing in Whistler's nomenclature the key to understanding his musical-aesthetic theory. Taylor's response is worth quoting in full:

> They [*Harmony* and *Variations*] are illustrative of the theory, not confined to this painter, but most conspicuously and ably worked out by him, that painting is so closely akin to music that the colours of the one may and should be used, like the ordered sounds of the other, as means and influences of vague emotion; that painting […] should be content with moulding our moods and stirring our imaginations, by subtle combinations of colour through which all that painting has to say can be said, and beyond which painting has no valuable or true speech whatever.[585]

In other words, music offered a structural framework for painting which Whistler appealed to via his systematic use of musical titles. Music also, and crucially so, offered a new metaphorical lens through which to enrich and interpret colour. Moreover, it offered a direct avenue to the emotions and, hence, enriched subjective experiences of art.[586]

Whistler adored the public response his titles and works garnered, so when his patron Frederick Leyland, at whose residence of Speke Hall Whistler had been staying, suggested the title 'Nocturne', Whistler replied ecstatically that that would say "all I want to say and *no more* than I wish!"[587] Even if most statements on music Whistler made were done after the fact, in 1871 and 1872 he spent a lot of time at Speke Hall, where he would have been surrounded by music. Leyland was one of the major art collectors of Aesthetic painters, but he was also an avid pianist and supporter of instrumental music. His favourite composer,

---

[583] "Mr. Whistler's Etchings", *Saturday Review* 32, no. 824 (August 12, 1871): 224; "Dudley Gallery", *Art Journal* (December 1871): 285.
[584] P.G. Hamerton, "XXIII. – Thomas Armstrong", *The Portfolio* 2 (January 1871): 66; "Winter Exhibitions", *Saturday Review* 32, no. 835 (October 28, 1871): 559.
[585] W.B. Scott, "Dudley Gallery Winter Exhibitions of Cabinet Pictures in Oil", *The Academy* 2, no. 35 (November 1871): 493-494; and [Tom Taylor], "Dudley Gallery – Cabinet Pictures in Oil", *The Times* no. 27531 (November 11, 1871): 4.
[586] This had a wider presence and applicability within nineteenth-century circles; see Tim Barringer, "Art, Music, and the Emotions in the Aesthetic Movement", *Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century* no. 23 The Arts and Feeling (2016): 1-32.
[587] JW to Frederick Richards Leyland, 2/9 November 1872, PWC 6B/21/3, GUW, accessed 21/05/2020 [italics in original].

Frédéric Chopin, was likely the cause of Leyland's suggestion of the title 'Nocturne'. Whistler then met the pianist Horace Jee through the Leylands, who often played for Whistler in his studio, living close to him on Lindsey Row. Not only would the term 'Nocturne' be radical, original, and avant-garde, puzzling his critics, but it is an intensely musical term, referencing in one stroke both night-time, moonlight, and music, particularly piano. In the first place, the choice for Nocturne was instinctive, but it grew into a systematic model where Whistler's choice of title was far from coincidental nor just eccentric.

The Nocturnes, conceptualised as quasi-musical 'moonlights', evolved into tonal landscapes with the potential to unfold sequentially and temporally for viewers. For Whistler, the Nocturnes combine his love of rivers, bodies of water, atmospheric effects like moonlight, twilight, darkness, mist, and snow, with his love of colour in works that were, ultimately, experiments in tonality, pictorial movement, and musical immersion. Throughout the series, a number of themes are continuously revisited: temporary states, time, light, atmosphere, and space. Whistler premised his composition and conceptualisation of the Nocturnes in his understanding of the aesthetic autonomy and abstraction of colour in analogy to music. Simultaneously, as I will argue, the series functioned as an appeal to a type of aesthetic immersion and a subjective, enriched experience music offered as a paradigm for the arts as premised in the aesthetics of reception.

Whistler had a very particular method, one contingent on immersion, reproduction, consistency of the paint, and physical movement of the artist's body and the brush. This was caricatured in 1881 when Whistler was depicted as an artist-composer (1881).[588] He was represented orchestrating the colour of three portraits at once using his characteristic hog-hair brush, while placed at the appropriate distance to account for the effect of his works. Despite being parodied as artist, composer, and conductor, it is an accurate image that reflects, firstly, how particular Whistler was about his works and, secondly, how he had one foot in the painterly world and one foot in the musical world.[589] The latter was shaped through Whistler's social connections with prominent musical and artistic figures as well as his knowledge of musical performances.[590] Yet the caricature simultaneously reveals Whistler's highly controlled method. The mixture of oil paint he applied was carefully controlled; it was

[588] Repr. in Singletary, *Whistler and France,* 17.
[589] Teniswood-Harvey has done thorough research on Whistler's involvement with contemporary musical and theatrical endeavours; see Teniswood-Harvey, "Colour-Music", 50-69.
[590] Teniswood-Harvey has included an appendix with invaluable information regarding a wide range of musical and theatrical connections Whistler may have had; see ibid., 235-257.

a very thin paint that allowed him to let colours and forms emerge gradually from heady vapours, thick mists, and dense atmospheres that overlay his reproductions of rivers, seas, and cities. At its very foundation, the Nocturnes portray a natural phenomenon that inhibits visibility: night-time, darkness, and mist force us to reconsider what visibility *is* in a supremely visual medium like painting, how we perceive artworks, and how we respond to them. The Nocturnes impede visibility, questioning the relationship between subject and object and hence, as Hélène Valance has recently argued, creating an "antivision" which reconfigured "the space of the picture and its mode of perception".[591] Where his Impressionist colleagues strove to represent light, Whistler opted for obscurity and ambiguity, creating an effect of immersion, reverie, and contemplation, even confusion. As night-time effaces details and defamiliarises the familiar, so the rivers become cloaked with a veil, especially in the heavy pollution of nineteenth-century London. Yet Whistler found in the fogs and nocturnal mists a particular beauty:

> And when the evening mist clothes the riverside with poetry, and the poor buildings lose themselves in the dim sky, and the tall chimneys become campanile, and the warehouses are palaces in the night, and the whole city hangs in the heavens – and fairy-land is before us, then the wayfarer hastens home, the working man, and the cultured one, the wise man, and the one of pleasure, cease to understand as *they have ceased to see*, and Nature, who for once, has sung in tune, *sings her exquisite song* to the artist alone, her son and her master.[592]

As dusk falls, we 'have ceased to see' and Nature 'sings her exquisite song' to the artist and the artist alone. The Nocturnes are deliberately ambiguous; they require a viewing grounded in temporality and consistent viewing. As such, Whistler can move away from illustration and, instead, let the colours, forms, the act of viewing and immersion, and the musical references implicit in the title become the work's content. However radical Whistler's Nocturnes were for their time, it is worth questioning what he intended to achieve with the reference to music, considering none of the Nocturnes had any musical subject matter. He could just as easily have called the works a 'nocturnal scene in blue and gold', but he deliberately chose the musical phrase instead. After all, it implies both night-time and music at once and, as such, it was Whistler's deliberate choice to make his art more overtly musical.

---

[591] Hélène Valance, *Nocturne: Night in American Art, 1890-1917* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), 19.
[592] Whistler, "Ten O'Clock Lecture" (1885), published in *Mr. Whistler's 'Ten O'Clock'* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1888), 15 [my italics].

I want to argue that not only did he employ his title to appeal to the colour-associations of music and its abstraction, but he did so in order to appeal to instrumental music's ability to be aesthetically autonomous and invoke a specific aesthetic experience grounded in time. How this took shape can best be understood with the Nocturnes as abstracted and musically inflected landscapes informed by a musical understanding of spatiality and temporality, as well as Whistler's exhibition designs which I will discuss below.

During the 1878 trial, the result of Whistler suing John Ruskin for libel, the question of what a Nocturne meant arose. Whistler replied:

> By using the word 'nocturne' I wished to indicate an artistic interest alone, divesting the picture of any outside anecdotal interest which might have been otherwise attached to it. A nocturne is an arrangement of line, form, and colour first. The picture is throughout a problem that I attempt to solve. I make use of any means, any incident or object in nature, that will bring about this symmetrical [balanced, harmonious] result. […]
> Among my works are some night pieces, and I have chosen the word 'nocturne' because it generalises and simplifies the whole set of them; it is an accident that I happened upon terms used in music.[593]

This provides us with a number of key characteristics. First, the Nocturnes focus almost exclusively on pictorial technique as they are 'divested of any outside sort of interest'. Second, there is no literary or anecdotal content necessary since they are arrangements 'of line, form, and colour first'. And finally, the Nocturnes form a decided set, a series, unified and linked through these characteristics and their condition as 'night pieces'. Looking at Whistler's oeuvre as a whole, while the Nocturnes are all night pieces not all of the night pieces are Nocturnes; moreover, the title 'Nocturne' was never used for portraits or studies of people, further reinforcing the idea of them as a set.[594] There is, however, often a reminder of humanity, from the location given in the title – 'Cremorne Lights' (fig. 68) or 'Southampton Water' (fig. 83) – or the visual inclusion of a barge, an indistinct human figure, or human-occupied and human-created buildings. Yet these reminders are abstracted, undefined and entirely subordinated to the presence of colour. This significantly increased the sonic and

[593] Quoted in Merrill, *A Pot of Paint,* 144.
[594] *Harmony in Red: Lamplight,* a night-time study of Beatrix Whistler, is a night piece but hardly a Nocturne. *Symphony in Grey and Green: The Ocean* and *Grey and Silver: The Thames* could both be potential Nocturnes but were never exhibited as such.

formalist potential of colour. Moreover, the Nocturnes were unified in their size; they were small works, never exceeding either 80 centimetres in height and 90 centimetres in width. In the 1880s, Whistler would explore the visual possibilities of smaller landscapes in restricted tonalities, centring entire shows around them which I discuss below. Overall, the Nocturnes are Whistler's most consistently musical series, all executed with similar compositional strategies, showing a persistent interest in rivers, boats, fireworks, mist, twilight, natural and artificial light, vague and indistinct human figures, trees, reflections, and buildings. Whistler engaged with musical temporality and spatiality in his Nocturnes, elevating them to the status of musical landscapes. Finally, even if Whistler's use of the appropriate musical terms was often inconsistent, he deliberately and consciously continued using it, extending it to his entire oeuvre. As music was the only art capable of being abstract and autonomous at this time, he used the terms knowingly. As I will demonstrate below, these abstract musical notions informed his artistic decisions and some of the works, especially those concerned with fireworks, experimented with musical notions of movement, rhythm, ephemerality, counterpoint, and tempo.

A Temporal, Aesthetic Experience of Form and Colour

First and foremost, the Nocturnes were evocations of space. The first Nocturne, albeit not so titled until 1875, can be traced to 1866, when Whistler painted *Nocturne in Blue and Gold: Valparaiso Bay* (fig. 81). From a jutting quay, we gaze out over the harbour of Valparaiso, Chile, with ships quietly moored, their reflections cast in the murky water. A scattering of fireworks, forming as flaky ashes of gold in the top-left corner, complements the pinpricks of light cast over the shore and the ships. Whistler kept a profound interest in harbours, ships, and fireworks, but he quickly moved away from the compositional delineation of *Valparaiso Bay* in favour of a more spacious and sweeping panorama that opens out in front of the viewer. Space unfolds through delicate gradations of colour in the first publicly exhibited Nocturnes of 1871, *Nocturne in Blue and Silver* and *Nocturne in Black and Gold*, most likely corresponding to *Nocturne: Blue and Silver – Cremorne Lights* (fig. 68) and *Nocturne: Blue and Gold – Southampton Water* (fig. 83), respectively. As the viewer is suspended over a vast body of water, we gaze out over a river given shape through broad and sweeping brushstrokes of a luminous and lucid silvery-blue. The shoreline encloses the river in the far distance, the artificial lights shimmering on the water's reflection. It is a far cry from the more illustrative view of the river James Tissot chose to depict in *On the Thames*, for example (fig. 84, c. 1876). Rather than a mimetic representation of the river near Cremorne,

Whistler used a very specific technique and manner of execution to arrive at his purposefully anti-mimetic and abstracted landscapes, a technique perfected over a number of years. As Stephen Hackney and Joyce Townsend have revealed, Whistler would not have been able to make a Nocturne such as *Cremorne Lights* without his use of diluted oils, where the broad passages of colour seem as liquid as a river, counterpointed by the textured, tangible pinpricks of light.[595] The effect of this Nocturne lies not in what it represents, but how the viewer experiences the manipulation of abstract features – form and colour – inherent to the work. Is it an evocation of night as a temporal and (in)visible state, given form through the colour blue and enhanced by silver and, arguably, gold in the lights: a Nocturne (a musical, temporal state) in blue *and* silver as keynotes. Night-time conceals, dematerialising concrete and familiar forms into a fluid atmosphere where colour permeates everything in a move echoing Baudelaire's visualised voyages in response to music in "La Musique" and his 1861 essay on Wagner. Suzanne Singletary followed this argument in her work on Baudelaire and Whistler, arguing that music, for both, facilitated "by its intrinsic ethereality" the "transition from the concrete to the abstract".[596] Positing Baudelaire as Whistler's main source of musical and spatial aesthetics, Singletary discusses the artist's visual unfolding of space as rooted in his French connections. While Baudelaire's visualisation of musical space was similar to Whistler's, the latter took it much further than the poet, tying spatiality to temporality and extending the musical analogy to artistic experience and immersion.

Using *Nocturne in Blue and Silver* (fig. 69), it is evident how Baudelaire's ideas that music can generate or convey space can be used to 'read' the composition.[597] Significantly, these ideas are quintessentially modern: "Modernity is the transitory, the fugitive, the contingent, the half of art, the other half is the eternal and the immutable".[598] If the experience of a musical piece in an acoustic and performative realm can conjure up balanced images of "space and depth, both material and spiritual", as Baudelaire wrote in response to Wagner, Whistler is encouraging a similar experience of this Nocturne.[599] The river and buildings are overlain with a thin layer of diluted oil, what he called his 'sauce', rendering the

[595] Stephen Hackney, "Colour and Tone in Whistler's 'Nocturnes' and 'Harmonies' 1871-72", *The Burlington Magazine* 136, no. 1099 (October 1994): 695-699; and Joyce Townsend, "Whistler's Oil Painting Materials", *The Burlington Magazine* 136, no. 1099 (October 1994): 690-695.
[596] Singletary, *Whistler and France,* 16.
[597] See Charles Baudelaire, "La musique", in *Les Fleurs du Mal* (Paris: Poulet-Malassis et de Broise, 1857), 174-175. Suzanne Singletary develops this argument in "Music as Magic Architecture: Immersive Environments in Baudelaire and Whistler", chap. 5 in *Rival Sisters: Art and Music at the Birth of Modernism, 1815-1915,* eds. James H. Rubin and Olivia Mattis (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 93-114.
[598] Charles Baudelaire, "Le peintre de la vie moderne", in *Oeuvres complètes,* ed. Claude Pichois, vol. 2 (Paris: Gallimard et Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1975), 694 [my translation].
[599] Baudelaire, "Wagner and Tannhäuser", 117.

work a more liquid appearance while simultaneously drawing attention to the indexical marks of the artist's brush. The thick brushstrokes of Whistler's hand are instantly visible, shattering any illusion and reminding the viewer of the artist as composer. The strata of colour reconstruct Whistler's physical movement in creating the painting, transforming the static canvas into a space that records the artist's sweeping of the hand, dotting of the staccato lights, the rise and fall of the buildings. It becomes a quasi-musical space visualised through artistic movement and serves as a reminder to both Whistler's studio space and time spent on the work – quite literally in the blottings, the smearings, and rushes of paint – as well as the viewer's space and time.

Superficially, all of the Nocturnes were evocations of temporal states. In *Nocturne in Grey and Gold – Westminster Bridge* (fig. 85, 1872/1874) Whistler depicted the flat colouration of night, the sky lightening only ever so slightly in anticipation of dawn. In *Nocturne in Blue and Silver* (fig. 86, 1875/1878) the deep gloom of night is all-encompassing. The river lies quiet as a barge, indistinct. Peering through the murk we perceive a shoreline, counterpointed by circles of artificial illumination. Conspicuously, one red light on the far-right pierces through the darkness. From close-up, the weave of the canvas is visible, a reminder of the artist's medium. In *Nocturne: Silver and Opal – Chelsea* (fig. 87, 1884) twilight is given shape through whorls of colour, thickly applied and wild, while in *Nocturne* (fig. 70) Whistler represents a pit of darkness dissected by a strong light in the distance, its reflection vibrating on the river's surface. The expanse of sky and river being almost alike obliterates the function of a traditional landscape and, instead, calls into question the very notion of visibility and mimesis. This is further undermined by how Whistler proceeded to paint the Nocturnes, as documented by friends and colleagues.[600]

Whistler would go out at night, standing on the shore or go out on the water in a rowboat, and look at the scene unfolding before him. Using his carefully honed skills of observation, he would commit the scene to memory, making sure someone was with him. As the Pennells record, "the listener corrected errors when they occurred, and, after Whistler had looked long enough, he went to bed with nothing in his head but his subject".[601] The morning after he would paint the scene, not through imitation but imagination and memory. For Whistler, this activity was similar to that of the musician:

[600] Mortimer Menpes, *Whistler As I Knew Him* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1904), 11; Pennells, *Whistler,* 113.
[601] Ibid., 113.

> Nature contains the elements, in colour and form, of all pictures, as they keyboard contains the notes of all music.
> But the artist is born to pick, and choose, and group with science, these elements, that the result may be beautiful – as the musician gathers his notes, and forms his chords, until he brings forth from chaos glorious harmony.[602]

How Whistler chose to paint was not "with the enlarging lens" but "with the light of one who sees in her [Nature's] selection of brilliant tones and delicate tints, suggestions of future harmonies".[603] As such, the Nocturnes do not display nor illustrate; they are scenarios *abstracted from* reality. The subject of a work like *Nocturne* (fig. 70) is not premised in dependence on a real scene, but rather in aesthetic autonomy; lacking an identifiable progression or specific locality and instead prioritising form and colour, such a painting was abstract by Victorian standards. In their refusal to provide direct meaning, instead leaving the viewer transported to the suggested location and struggling to perceive what lies before them, the Nocturnes became an "art so abstract and fantastic" providing "beauty in the tones of water".[604] Night-time was, moreover, an excellent conduit for indeterminacy, ambiguity, and obscurity, an ambiguity premised in Whistler's experience of instrumental music. Without a semantic content to illustrate, the meaning of an instrumental piece resided in its experience for the listener; different listeners could experience different meanings in the same sounds. Musicologist Vladimir Jankélévitch wrote in *Music and the Ineffable* (1983) that music is "naturally nocturnal" as it bears upon that "privileged moment when form and images dim into the indistinct, moving toward chaos, and for midnight, which submerges all multicoloured patterns into its great shadow".[605] During the 1878 trial, Whistler was asked what the figures at the top of *Nocturne: Blue and Gold – Old Battersea Bridge* (fig. 88, 1872-1875) represented, to which he replied, "They are just what you like".[606] This type of art for art's sake, where the visual composition is generative of new meaning for the beholder and is simultaneously aesthetically autonomous, had its roots – for Whistler, at least – in absolute instrumental music.

---

[602] Whistler, *Ten O'Clock,* 14.
[603] Ibid., 15.
[604] "Notes and News", *The Academy* no. 221 (July 29, 1876): 120.
[605] Vladimir Jankélévitch, *Music and the Ineffable*, translated by Carolyn Abbate (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003 [1983]), 94.
[606] Merrill, *A Pot of Paint,* 151.

As night-time obscures, so did snow, as Whistler explored in *Nocturne – Trafalgar Square, Snow* (fig. 89, 1875/1876) and *Nocturne: Grey and Gold – Chelsea Snow* (fig. 90, 1876), arguably the only street scenes that were classed as Nocturnes alongside his Cremorne scenes.[607] Another approach was through mist, beautifully rendered in *Nocturne: Blue and Gold – St Mark's, Venice* (fig. 91, 1879/1880), *Nocturne: Blue and Silver – Battersea Reach* (fig. 92, 1875/1878), and *Nocturne: Grey and Silver* (fig. 93, 1875/1878). The latter was more daring than many other works Whistler created, consisting of three colour fields, the mist acting as a veil where the transition from water to land to sky is nearly unknowable. The unhindered perspective contributes to generating an immersive space defined by its fluidity and formlessness, enveloping the viewer in its mists and ambiguous spaces. Writing from Venice, Whistler commented in 1879 how he missed "my own lovely London fogs": "They are lovely those fogs – and I am their painter!"[608] As the relationship between listener and musical piece was a territory of ambiguity, where the imagination of the listener was left to constitute the aesthetic experience, so did one critic perceive the Nocturnes' "vagueness, the void and formless chaos, which they leave for the creative power of the imagination to fill up". They only present "vague outlines, suggestions of bulky forms, shadowy indications of an unseen presence, and the mere framework of a phantasm, which the beholder is expected to fill up".[609] The Nocturnes were sensuous works, as "they say very little to the mind, but are restful to the eye, in their agreeable simplicity and emptiness".[610] Nelson Kauffman has argued for Whistler's use of fogs and mists as a 'veil', a "disguising, obscuring, or dissolution of formal clarity", detracting attention towards colour as an abstract, autonomous feature.[611] The critic Charles Morice went so far as to class a range of words to describe Whistler's art, among them "fluid, vapour, spiritual, fantastic, super-terrestrial, super-sensitive, extra-lucid, plastic abstraction, physical radiation".[612]

---

[607] *Nocturne: Cremorne Gardens, No. 3* (1875/1877) and *Nocturne in Black and Gold: The Gardens* (1875/1876). *Nocturne – Trafalgar Square, Snow,* was likely given by Whistler to Moore considering it was sold by Moore in 1892 and is mentioned by his pupil, Robertson, as the only Whistler he owned; Walford Graham Robertson, *Time Was: The Reminiscences of W. Graham Robertson* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1931), 227; YMSM 173 "Nocturne: Trafalgar Square – Snow", in Margaret F. MacDonald and Grischka Petri, eds., *James McNeill Whistler: The Paintings, A Catalogue Raisonné,* University of Glasgow, digital catalogue, 2020, http://whistlerpaintings.gla.ac.uk, accessed 09/04/2021.

[608] JW to Helen Euphrosyne Whistler, October/November 1879, Glasgow University Library, GUW, accessed 11/08/2020.

[609] "Flinging Paint in the Public's Face", *New York Times* (December 15, 1878): 6.

[610] Frederick Wedmore, "Mr. Whistler's Theories and Mr. Whistler's Art", *The Nineteenth Century* 6, no. 30 (August 1879): 336.

[611] Nelson Kauffman, "Aesthetics of the Veil: Conceptual Correspondences in the Nocturnes of Whistler and Debussy" (PhD diss., Ohio University, 1975), 32.

[612] Charles Morice, *Quelques Maîtres Modernes: Whistler, Pissarro, Fantin-Latour, Constantin-Meunier, Paul Cézanne* (Paris: Société des Trente, 1914), 24.

In order that his audience understood his intentions, Whistler used colour-music titles to encourage an experience of his art similar to that of music. Charles Dempsey, in analysing his conception of contemporary avant-garde or 'advanced' art, wrote that Whistler's paintings were "an arrangement in colour without reference to form" and, as such, "comparable with that of a piece of pure music".[613] Dempsey's writing gives a particularly fruitful insight to the contemporary understanding of art for art's sake and musical formalism. Whistler was instrumental in facilitating the more widespread understanding of the analogy between a painting existing for itself and instrumental music:

> His [Whistler's] is the art for art's sake. He is said (and his works, nay, the very titles of them, would confirm it) to expressly disclaim any intention or desire to tell a story or express a sentiment. His pictures are produced as painting merely; and he evidently intends them to fill a place in pictorial art analogous to the place in musical art of variations, caprices, nocturnes, and so forth.[614]

Despite resistance from a number of critics, Whistler did succeed in transmitting this musical model to his audience. His art became "the exact correlative of music, as purely emotional, as released from all functions of representation".[615] As discussed previously, Whistler was well aware of the connotations and impacts of his title use, chromatic and serial. He deliberately problematised and blurred the expected certainties of anecdotal or at least realist reference that his Victorian audience had come to expect of painters. John Welchman placed such a "development, defence, and implications of numerical and serial titles" as a "crucial aspect of the titular discourse of visual modernism".[616] With his titles, Whistler created a system of meaning grounded in the effects of instrumental music, albeit still tethered to the Victorian expectation of representation in the addition of 'Cremorne Gardens', 'Old Battersea Bridge', or 'Southampton Water'.[617] The completely effacing and reductionist titles like *Untitled* or *Composition IX* as Jackson Pollock and Wassily Kandinsky, respectively, would introduce, simply did not exist yet. For his time, Whistler's use of *Nocturne in Black and Gold* or *Harmony in Flesh-Colour and Grey* was avant-garde, radical. It was a bid to exclude "any

[613] Charles W. Dempsey, "Advanced Art", *The Magazine of Art* (January 1882): 395.
[614] Ibid., 359.
[615] Taylor, "Dudley Gallery", 4.
[616] John C. Welchman, *Invisible Colours: A Visual History of Titles* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997), 16.
[617] See also Yeazell, *Picture Titles,* chap. 14, "Whistler's Symphonies and Other Instructive Arrangements", 204-224.

outside anecdotal interest".[618] In the "Ten O'Clock Lecture" of 1885, Whistler advanced this, attacking the very notion of the art critic who only perceived in pictures "hieroglyph or symbol of a story".[619] His statement of 1878, however, was the most revealing:

> Why should I not call my works 'symphonies', 'arrangements', 'harmonies', and 'nocturnes'? I know that many good people think my nomenclature funny and myself 'eccentric'. […]
> The vast majority of English folk cannot and will consider a picture as a picture, apart from any story which it may be supposed to tell.
> My picture of a 'Harmony in Grey and Gold' [fig. 90, *Chelsea Snow*] is an illustration of my meaning – a snow scene with a single black figure and a lighted tavern. I care nothing for the past, present, or future of the black figure, placed there because the black was wanted at that spot. All that I know is that my combination of grey and gold is the basis of the picture. Now this is precisely what my friends cannot grasp. […] if they really could care for pictorial art at all, they would know that the picture should have its own merit, and not depend upon dramatic, or legendary, or local interest.
> As music is the poetry of sound, so is painting the poetry of sight, and the subject-matter has nothing to do with harmony of sound or of colour. […]
> Art should be independent of all clap-trap – should stand alone, and appeal to the artistic sense of eye or ear, without confounding this with emotions foreign to it, as devotion, pity, love, patriotism, and the like. All these have no kind of concern with it, and that is why I insist on calling my works 'arrangements' and 'harmonies'.[620]

From this statement, we can discern three things about Whistler's titling system. First, he clearly rejects the mimetic visual sign in favour of technical content. Second, the painting's formalism becomes paramount: 'my combination of grey and gold is the basis of the picture'. Third, Whistler's relation to temporality – and atemporality – is significant: 'I care nothing for the past, present, or future of the black figure'. Drawn out from musical temporality, Whistler's musical images function simultaneously through and outside of time. Where every glance reveals something new, time is needed to allow the forms and colours to coalesce into something meaningful. These glances induce a specific type of aesthetic experience and contemplation premised on valuing the painting as a painting, an appreciation that takes place within various temporal parameters. The ambiguity of the scene, such as in *Nocturne: Blue and Silver – Battersea Reach*, creates, to use Singletary's phrase, a site "of musical

[618] Quoted in Merrill, *A Pot of Paint,*
[619] Whistler, *Ten O'Clock,* 17.
[620] Whistler, "Red Rag", quoted in *Gentle Art,* 68-70.

diffluence".[621] Every glance is a generative act of meaning, comparable to the experience of a musical piece over time. We, as viewers, are simultaneously transported to the site depicted, suspended at an indeterminate height in front of a vast, fluid and enveloping atmosphere. This suspension kindles a sensation of atemporality, the production of an aesthetic realm located outside of time entirely, in the form of abstracted reality. Duret praised this quality, writing that the Nocturnes pushed at "the extreme limit of figurative painting" and were, for him, reminiscent of "those pieces of Wagnerian music where the harmonic sound, separated from any melodic design and accentuated by cadence, remains a sort of abstraction and provides only an indefinite musical impression".[622] Vibration was one of those qualities that occurred in both painting and music, closely connected to the invisible, undefinable, and immaterial. This relates temporality back to spatiality, as the Nocturnes function as a pictorial acoustic space, the colours vibrating as if musical, sound and colour overlapping. Arthur Eddy concurred, writing in 1903 that "Whistler's art was purely sensuous, as the finest music is sensuous".[623] Just as in both Leighton and Moore's oeuvres there was question of a notion of looking-time, in Whistler it is taken to visual extremes. For all three, however, the idea of looking as a musical act was pertinent and powerful.

Immersive Exhibition Spaces

This action of musical looking within aesthetic contemplation became particularly poignant in Whistler's Nocturnes of fireworks, such as *Nocturne: Black and Gold – The Fire Wheel* (fig. 94, 1875/1877) and the famous *Nocturne in Black and Gold: The Falling Rocket* (fig. 95, 1875). These two Nocturnes were unusual in their more overt concern with ephemerality. As John Siewert has argued, "for all its singularity, the fireworks theme perfectly embodies [Whistler's] effort in all the Nocturnes to preserve the ephemera of perception through the resources of art".[624] Siewert analyses *The Falling Rocket* in comparison with Turner's *The Burning of the House of Lords and Commons, 16th October 1834* (exh. 1835), yet, despite the essay title of "Art, Music, and Aesthetics in Whistler's Nocturne Paintings", Siewert does not analyse the musical qualities present in the representation of fireworks.[625] Using Whistler's

[621] Singletary, *Whistler and France,* 18.
[622] Théodore Duret, "Artistes Anglais – James Whistler", *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 24, no. 4 (April 1, 1881): 368.
[623] Arthur J. Eddy, *Recollections and Impressions of James A. McNeill Whistler* (London: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1903), 180.
[624] John Siewert, "Art, Music, and an Aesthetics of Place in Whistler's Nocturne Paintings", chap. in *Turner Whistler Monet,* ed. Katharine Lochnan, exh. cat. (London: Tate, 2004), 158. Siewert also discusses this idea of an aesthetics of place in relation to suspension of place in "Suspended Spectacle: Whistler's 'Falling Rocket' and the Nocturnal Subject", *Bulletin of the Detroit Institute of Arts* 69, no. ½ (1995): 36-48.
[625] Ibid., 143.

own interest in temporality, music, and abstraction alongside contemporary literature, especially that by music writer H.R. Haweis, I will demonstrate how these Nocturnes dealt more immediately with musical features of rhythm, counterpoint, musical and pictorial motion, ephemerality, and tempo. Teniswood-Harvey has argued in her doctoral thesis for the musicality of Whistler's firework scenes and draws direct parallels between visual musical scores and the Nocturnes.[626] She insufficiently comments on the temporality of the works, however, nor does she relate this to Whistler's intended artistic experience, which is what I will focus on.

Haweis, who has been mentioned before in this thesis, met Whistler around 1874, two years after Haweis had published his influential *Music and Morals*. One issue he dealt with in this work was how colour came closest to sound as "a vehicle of pure emotion".[627] He complained that, as of yet, there was no "colour-art as a language of pure emotion" as painting remains too dependent on "definite ideas".[628] His solution was to propose pictures that would depend solely on colour as symphonies depend on sound *as well as* assimilating the velocity and change of sound in colour. For this, Haweis used fireworks as example:

> I select fireworks as an illustration […] and I select pyrotechny, instead of painting of any kind, because in it we get the important emotional property of velocity, necessarily absent from fixed colouring.
> At such a display as I have mentioned, we are, in fact, present at the most astonishing revelations of Light and Colour. […] But what a majestic Symphony might not be played with such orchestral blazes of incomparable hues! what [sic] delicate melodies composed of single floating lights, changing and melting from one slow intensity to another through the dark, until some tender dawn of opal form below might perchance receive the last fluttering pulse of ruby flames, and prepare the eye for some new passage of exquisite colour![629]

Notably, Whistler had painted fireworks before, in *Valparaiso Bay* (fig. 81) and *Old Battersea Bridge* (fig. 88), and he had experimented with the vibration of lights and reflections of light, both natural and artificial, in others (figs. 68, 69, 70, 85, 87, 88). In these earlier works the fireworks were a decorative element, as in *Old Battersea Bridge*, where a firework races into the sky, attended by a scattering of gold above and below the dividing line

[626] Teniswood-Harvey, "Colour-Music", 219, 226.
[627] H.R. Haweis, *Music and Morals* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1900 [1871]), 30.
[628] Ibid., 31.
[629] Ibid., 33-34.

of the bridge. In *The Falling Rocket* and *The Fire Wheel*, however, the fireworks take centre stage. The allusion to motion, light, and rhythm in fireworks is intriguing. Arthur Jerome Eddy, as friend and reviewer of Whistler, wrote the following in his book on the artist:

> As children and men we enjoy the colour-effects of fireworks against the blackness of night, and we enjoy the darkness and the shadows about us, the sudden light upon expectant faces, the dark-moving figures in the intervals. All this is delight in colour, - colour without sentiment, colour without story, colour without other though or reflection than pure sensuous enjoyment; […] Until we learn to love colour, as we love music, *for its own sake,* there will never be any decorations of homes and public buildings that will be worth while.[630]

In a work such as *The Fire Wheel,* then, the colour effects of the fireworks, couched in velocity and patterning, are both form and content. Equally, fireworks extend over time, revealing themselves only through temporality, indicated by the inclusion of spectators in the foreground. In a way, these foreground figures, partially effaced in *The Falling Rocket,* act as abstracted notions of Whistler's preferred audience. This functioned in a similar way to Leighton and Moore's aesthetic listener. In *The Fire Wheel* and *The Falling Rocket,* however, the spectators are made miniscule in comparison to the 'orchestral blazes' of gold and melodic cadences of gold flecks; they are overpowered but entirely absorbed in the visual performance. The figures are dematerialised enough to not stand out from the picture plane and the overall colour system but present enough to function as a directive. It is a reminder, perhaps, of the *experience* of art over time, their looking-time compounded by ours.

Whistler's striving for artistic immersion prompted by the development of his Nocturnes was further progressed when he held his first solo exhibition, "Mr. Whistler's Exhibition"", at the Flemish Gallery on Pall Mall, London, in 1874. He would organise multiple solo exhibitions in the 1880s and one important one in 1892, most of which Whistler gave musical titles and all of which were tailored exhibitions aimed at an immersive experience based in music. The controlled space of the artist-led private exhibition is self-contained and isolated, as it dispenses with unnecessary distractions and external influences. As a contemporary reviewer wrote of the 1874 show, it was "so different from the ordinary art gallery", a liminal space where "colour and tone have been everywhere harmonised and subdued under the artist's

[630] Eddy, *Whistler,* 198 [my italics].

sensitive eye".[631] External space is eliminated as an atemporal site in limbo functions as a performative space for Whistler's art. Eddy perceived how important this first exhibition was, as "Whistler preferred to exhibit his work under conditions which he controlled", with the pictorial effects being "but an element in a perfect whole".[632] Most important, this was the first time Whistler was able to systematically exhibit his colour-music titles in one place. Duret noted that it combined "pure painting and material beauty" into a musical-aesthetic framework:

> For some time [Whistler] had been in the habit of giving his works descriptive sub-titles borrowed from musical terms. […] In a private exhibition, where he was master and could do as he liked, he was about to make a rule of what hitherto he could only make an exception. Almost all his paintings had as title or sub-title a description intended to denote the sought-out combination of colours, and these descriptions were taken from musical terms, the use of which he systematically extended to the domain of painting.[633]

Not only were his solo exhibitions consistently motivated by his musical framework and titles, hence extending the painting more forcefully into the public space, but Whistler also used them to experiment with creating an immersive space generated by his total control over it. The spaces he constructed had parallels to both theatre and music halls; indeed, one reviewer commented that Whistler "needs a stage" so the viewers "enjoy his performance", referencing the space as much as Whistler's character, while the artist had previously referred to some of his exhibits as forming an "overture".[634] In 1880, following a commission with the Fine Art Society, Whistler exhibited "Mr Whistler's Etchings", followed by "Venice Pastels", in 1881. In 1883, he organised "Arrangement in White and Yellow" at the Society, followed in 1884 by "Arrangement in Flesh Colour and Grey" at Dowdeswell's Gallery, which would become known as the first *'Notes' – 'Harmonies' – 'Nocturnes'* show.[635] In 1886, the second instalment was organised, "Arrangement in Brown and Gold", and, finally, Whistler organised the seminal *Nocturnes, Marines & Chevalet Pieces* at the Goupil Gallery,

---

[631] "Art Notes", *The Illustrated Review* 1, no. 130 (June 1874): 391; "The Fine Arts: Exhibition of Mr. Whistler's Works", *The Observer* (June 7, 1874): 5.
[632] Eddy, *Whistler,* 120, 125.
[633] Théodore Duret, *Whistler,* trans. Frank Rutter (London: Grant Richards, Ltd., 1917), 35-36.
[634] Frederick Wedmore, "Mr. Whistler's Arrangement in Flesh Colour and Grey", *The Academy* no. 629 (May 24, 1884): 372; JW to George Aloysius Lucas, 18 January 1873, Walters Art Gallery, Library, Baltimore, GUW, accessed 16/08/2020.
[635] I use quotation marks to refer to these exhibitions, as in italics they could be easily confused for titles Whistler would use for his paintings.

London, in 1892. Keeping in mind Whistler's desire for "total control" as David Park Curry has described it, how were these exhibition spaces musically inflected spaces?[636] To answer this question, we have to start with the performative connotations of a term like 'overture', the key to which lies in the creation of a subjective aesthetic experience rooted in music.

Sidney Colvin, in his extensive and favourable review of the 1874 exhibition, described the interior as "pleasantly matted, tinted and arranged; with a panelled skirting carrying two tiers of the artist's works, a lower tier of colour sketches, and an upper tier of etchings, and above the skirting some eight or ten oil paintings in quiet keys of colour".[637] This arrangement showed the connectivity between Whistler's individual works and simultaneously exploited their complementarity within a designed space. The tiers allowed the viewer to appreciate a single artwork while being aware of its part in a larger oeuvre, as qualities addressed in one work "occur in a brilliant degree in some of the studies on the lowest tier".[638] The oil paintings Whistler showed all had colour-music titles, ranging from *Symphony in Grey and Green: The Ocean* (fig. 12), three of the *Six Projects,* three Nocturnes and six Arrangements. Critics found them difficult to class and accordingly perceived Whistler's work to reside somewhere between imitation and abstraction:

> Only, while Mr. Whistler forswears those imitative effects of relief, definition, fulness of natural light and shadow, which go to make up the European conception of a picture, he is scarcely master, on the other hand, of that genius for expressive abstraction, […] What art of Mr. Whistler yields is a *tertium quid,* somewhat vague, pale, and incomplete.[639]

As Whistler's exhibition spaces became pictures in themselves, this musical atmosphere generated by his titles and enveloping the viewers prompted one critic to call the exhibition the "Symphony in Pall Mall", where "a 'symphony' is usually defined as a 'harmony of sounds agreeable to the ear', here, at 48 Pall Mall, is a harmony of colour agreeable to the eye".[640] Considering Whistler referred earlier to one of his exhibits as an 'overture', and later

[636] David Park Curry, "Total Control: Whistler at an Exhibition", *Studies in the History of Art* Symposium Papers IV: James McNeill Whistler A Reexamination (1987): 67-82.
[637] Sidney Colvin, "Exhibition of Mr. Whistler's Pictures", *The Academy* no. 110 (June 13, 1874): 673.
[638] Ibid., 673.
[639] Ibid., 673.
[640] Henry Blackburn, "A Symphony in Pall Mall", *Pictorial World* (June 13, 1874), quoted in Robin Spencer, "Whistler's First One-Man Exhibition Reconstructed", chap. 3 in *The Documented Image: Visions in Art History,* eds. Gabriel P. Weisberg and Laurinda A. Dixon (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1987), 35.

deliberately using musical titles for his exhibitions, it is very likely he had a musical model in mind when collating these works in 1874.

In the 1880s, even if the exhibitions themselves had musical titles, there were less works that fit the model. Presenting a number of etchings to the Fine Art Society in 1880, Whistler followed this with "Venice Pastels" in 1881, where only eight of the fifty-four pastels fit the titular model, and "Arrangement in White and Yellow" in 1883, where only a limited number of works carried musical titles.[641] While some followed the original titling, like *Sunset: Red and Gold – The Gondolier* (fig. 96, 1880) or *The Bridge; Flesh Colour and Brown* (fig. 97, 1879/1880), others were becoming more abstract, like *Note in Pink and Brown* (fig. 98, 1880). The title of the exhibition was meant to remind the viewer of music as well as colour. From this excerpt it is evident how total and controlled Whistler wanted that experience to be:

> White walls – of different whites – with yellow *painted* mouldings – not *gilded*! Yellow velvet curtains – pale yellow matting – and Yellow butterfly on white wall – lovely little table yellow – own design – with yellow pot and *Tiger* lilly [sic]! Forty odd *superb* etchings round the white walls in their exquisite white frames […] and finally a servant in yellow livery (!) handing Catalogue in brown paper.[642]

Within this contrapuntal arrangement of yellow on white and white on yellow, the visitor was welcomed to what I want to argue was a musical and performative space. Beyond the visual design, the viewers themselves became living sculptures that participated in Whistler's installation insofar as he treated it like a show, suggesting "that some of his guests dress in harmony with the exhibition colour scheme, and at the private view Whistler presented silken butterflies to a favoured few".[643] The interior space wraps around the viewer, immersive, all-encompassing, *alive* as the viewers become moving pieces in a specifically generated, subjective, and aesthetic experience of Whistler's art.

The *'Notes' – 'Harmonies' – 'Nocturnes'* series of 1884 and 1886, known as "Arrangement in Flesh Colour and Grey" and "Arrangement in Brown and Gold",

---

[641] In 1881, these were *Note in Flesh-Colour and Red* (1879/1880), *The Zattere: Harmony in Blue and Brown* (1879/1880), *Note in Pink and Brown* (1880), *Nocturne – The Riva* (1880), *The Staircase: Note in Red* (1880), *Nocturne – San Giorgio* (1880), *The Giudecca: Note in Flesh Colour* (1880), and *A Red Note* (1879/1880).
[642] JW to Thomas Waldo Story, 4 February 1883, The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, GUW, accessed 26/07/2020 [italics in original].
[643] Curry, "Total Control", 78.

respectively, built on Whistler's experience of 1874. The former centred around one single work, *Scherzo in Blue: The Blue Girl* (1882-1884), a life-size portrait the whereabouts of which are currently unknown. Whistler was very proud of the work, surrounding it with sixty-six smaller works in oil, watercolour, and pastel, creating a veritable constellation in blue. The presentation was captivating; E.W. Godwin perceived the works as "stars of different magnitudes grouped around a blue moon".[644] He lamented the ephemerality of the exhibition, living on only in his memory like a remembered musical experience:

> That these exquisitely lovely arrangements of colour should live as memories only, gives to the very nomenclature our painter has adopted a touch of pathos. The room in Piccadilly and the rooms at the Fine Arts Society have gone, as Whistlerian compositions, quite as effectually as the *vibrations of the last quartette*.[645]

Just as Swinburne in 1868 paid more attention to the effect Whistler's works had on him, so here does Godwin describe his experience of the use of colour. Whistler was clearly successful in setting the stage and, like Wagner or other composers, creating an aesthetic immersion so total and thorough not possible without the appeal to music.

There is a contemporary literary work that provides evidence for the idea that Whistler was purposefully creating a musical and resonating interior space. Lady Archibald Campbell published *Rainbow-Music: Or, the Philosophy of Harmony in Colour* in 1886, written during and after she sat for Whistler for *Arrangement in Black: La Dame au brodequin jaune – Portrait of Lady Archibald Campbell* (fig. 99, 1882-1885). In this elegant and mysterious full-length portrait we see the woman who, heavily involved with theatre and becoming friends with Whistler, argued for "a system of principles on which to found a science of colour analogous to that on which has been founded the science of music".[646] This is fascinating, and instantly brings to mind Whistler's own idea of 1873 that his art rested on his "science of colour".[647] This idea, executed in his exhibition designs, was seen as exemplary – for Campbell, at least – in *Harmony in Blue and Gold: The Peacock Room* (fig. 100, 1876-1877):

---

[644] E.W. Godwin, "To Art Students", *British Architect* 22, no. 2 (July 11, 1884): 13 [my italics].
[645] Ibid., 13 [my italics].
[646] Lady Archibald Campbell, *Rainbow-Music: or, The Philosophy of Harmony in Colour-Grouping* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1886), 16.
[647] See JW to Lucas, 18 January 1873, GUW, accessed 03/08/2020.

> The artist has here translated his subject in scientific method by counterchange of these two colours, that of the device and that of the field – *gold on blue, blue on gold*. The devices are as manifold as the changes in the peacocks' plumage. Whether trailed on the battle-ground or swirling in the air, each shattered feather has its scientific value in the general scheme, as in a fugue. It is, in other words, contrapuntal painting, for under infinite changes, the air, or theme, pervades the whole composition. In the grand result we see enforced the crown of Unity the laws of permutation, combination, variation. The artist himself described it as a Harmony in Blue and Gold.[648]

Dempsey likewise perceived in Whistler's 'science of colour the "modern scheme of colour", and Malcolm Salaman wrote in 1886 how Whistler's colours were "systematically arranged" and, hence, he "puts on canvas at once the absolute form and colour that is before him".[649] Thus, we can understand how Whistler extended this theory of his 'science of colour' compared with Campbell's idea of 'contrapuntal painting' into the public exhibition space. All these developments culminated in the *Nocturnes, Marines & Chevalet Pieces* exhibition of 1892. Here, Whistler retitled a massive number of his paintings to fit into his systematic musical nomenclature. As Whistler wrote two years prior in *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies*, his titles were a "key to my work".[650] With this in mind, his final exhibition was a grand reconsideration and ultimate reaffirmation of his musical titling project. Walter Sickert commented that he felt "the works give to four bare walls an atmosphere of repose and grandeur", and "to move in the atmosphere created by them is to catch involuntarily something of the grace and distinction, of the nobility and dignity they exhale". Here, Sickert becomes a living part of the exhibition, responding to the artworks and his experience of immersion: "Where else in modern work can we see as we see here that paint is itself a beautiful thing, with a loveliness and charm of infinite variety? Does that ever occur to us in any other modern exhibition?"[651] Every glance he directs at a Whistler painting produces a new experience, shows something novel, as when Sickert elegantly wrote about *Nocturne in Blue and Silver – Bognor* (fig. 14, 1874/1876):

---

[648] Campbell, *Rainbow-Music,* 14-15.
[649] Charles W. Dempsey, "'Tone Harmonies', and the Modern Scheme of Colour", *The Magazine of Art* (January 1880): 257-259, 257; and Malcolm C. Salaman, "In Whistler's Studio", *Court and Society Review* (July 1, 1886): 589.
[650] Whistler, *Gentle Art,* 55.
[651] Walter Sickert, "Whistler To-Day", *Fortnightly Review* 51, no. 304 (April 1892): 546.

> You are conscious, at the water's edge, of shadowy figures going about their mysterious business with the night. All these things and a million-fold more are expressed in this immortal canvas, with a power and a tenderness that I have never seen elsewhere. The whole soul of the universe is in the picture, the whole spirit of beauty. It is an exemplar and a summary of all art.[652]

Painting is primarily a visible medium while music is fundamentally one of invisibility. As Simon Shaw-Miller has pointed out, "music has also been characterised as invisible, immaterial, moving through time; the museum, on the other hand, has been characterised as material, concrete (often literally), a vessel for containing the visible, timeless object".[653] This tension between visibility and invisibility is exactly what Whistler appealed to with both his works and the titles, and what attracted Sickert to his art. The museum as an isolated and exclusive space lends traction to the notions of meditation, reflection, and contemplation, yet its basis in visibility is contradictory to music. Shaw-Miller argues that a museum, as an isolated site, can provide a space "in which the eye can gaze silently on art" and linger "in much the same way that the concept of absolute music lingers".[654] With music as painting's paradigm, Whistler capitalises on the ability of music to capture an audience over a length of time and through space, where the attention is focused entirely on painting *as* painting. He compressed time in his carefully controlled spaces, enhancing the invisibility of music through the visibility of colour, simultaneously elevating painting to the status of aesthetic autonomy. For his Victorian audience, this was the attainment of abstraction, stimulating an experience of art *as art*, painting *as painting,* just as music exists for the sounds themselves.

[652] Ibid., 547.
[653] Simon Shaw-Miller, *Eye hEar: The Visual in Music* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 92.
[654] Ibid., 92-93.

CONCLUSION

When Francis Hueffer wrote in 1889 that Whistler's painting was like "'absolute music'", he was actively reflecting on the formal potential of the visual arts when interpreted through the lens of music.[655] By the 1880s and 1890s, harmonies in colour conceived through this parallel had become far more common than at its genesis in the 1860s, to the point that Charles Dempsey referred to "'tone harmonies'" as a "modern scheme of colour" and "advanced art" following the ideology of art for art's sake.[656] I have demonstrated in this dissertation how the roots of these developments lay in the 1860s and, more specifically, in the work of Frederic Leighton, Albert Moore, and James McNeill Whistler. Their engagement with music was, in turn, the result of a confluence of Austro-German theories of absolute instrumental music, French theories of musical metaphor, and Western European theories of art for art's sake. Their approach to music in painting was an appeal to certain desirable characteristics absolute instrumental music inherently possessed: abstraction and autonomy through form; temporality and duration; and aesthetic contemplation or absorption. In this dissertation I have proposed that Leighton, Moore, and Whistler as a subset within Aestheticism worked with these three musical themes in order to enrich their art. In doing so, they subscribed to the aesthetic paradigm of absolute instrumental music.

I have made the first section of this thesis analytical in order to bring the case studies together in Section II in a more synthetic manner. The intersections between Leighton, Whistler, and Moore rest on these three dominant musical-aesthetic themes mentioned above, and I have shown how these ideas and themes worked themselves out in their respective oeuvres. Musical-aesthetic criteria formed a significant component of all three artists' work, and their interest in music as paradigmatic extended over multiple overlapping areas, but all eventually appealed to the condition of music. As Aesthetic artists, all three relied upon artistic mutuality, musical analogies, and aesthetic fluidity to attempt to redefine the boundaries between painting and music as different yet corresponding media. They avoided relying on narrativity in their work, instead opting to seek out autonomy, beauty, abstraction, and self-sufficiency expressed in their work through recourse to an art they perceived to do all this inherently: instrumental music. It was not exclusively a sense of representing music but about the act of enriching painting when interpreted through the lens of musicality.

---

[655] Francis Hueffer, *Half a Century of Music in England, 1837-1887: Essays Towards a History* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1889), 236.
[656] Charles W. Dempsey, "'Tone Harmonies', and the Modern Scheme of Colour", *The Magazine of Art* (January 1880): 257-259; Dempsey, "Advanced Art", *The Magazine of Art* 5 (January 1882): 358-359.

The congruence of art for art's sake and the aesthetic paradigm of absolute instrumental music was particularly fruitful in altering ideas of subjectivity, formalism, and abstraction in art. The goal of this thesis has been to demonstrate that Leighton, Moore, and Whistler engaged with this paradigm much more than has previously been acknowledged. The significance of Austro-German music aesthetics has been underestimated, and I have attempted to show that the legacy of absolute music and its theoretical ideals was of great significance for these avant-garde artists in Victorian Britain. The 1860s through to the 1890s saw a change in how the function of painting was understood under the aegis of art for art's sake. The formidable influence of music on this doctrine, synthesised as a precursor to formalist modernity, was important for Leighton, Moore, and Whistler to the extent that it aided them in dissolving boundaries, extending artistic expression, and abstracting their art in the search for autonomous pictorial beauty. The importance of such artistic interchanges between music and painting, then, led to a re-evaluation of how we attribute meaning to artworks in general. More than once did these three artists echo Austro-German aesthetics, particularly the formalist and abstract potential of Hanslick's *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen* of 1854. They rejected the reduction of painting to narrative or utilitarianism, instead promoting their art, through art for art's sake and their engagement with music, to be capable of instigating certain aesthetic experiences that could unfold over time and space. As Leighton noted in the *Addresses* of 1879:

> Art is based on the desire to express and the power to kindle in others emotion astir in the artist, and latent in those to whom he addresses himself. […] The channels through which the several Arts gain access to our feelings are various: - Poetry and Music, twinborn sisters and long undivided, play on a sense of rhythm and melody universal in men. Painting and Sculpture appeal to other sides of our aesthetic sensibility: the perception of Form and Colour, which latter has in its action upon us much in common with melody, of proportion, which is to intervals of space what rhythm is to intervals of time, and of light and shade.[657]

Equally, Whistler noted in *The Ten O'Clock Lecture* (1885) how "Nature contains the elements, in colour and form, of all pictures, as the keyboard contains the notes of all music". As such, "the artist is born to pick, and choose, and group with science, these elements, that

[657] Frederic Leighton, *Addresses Delivered to the Students of the Royal Academy* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1879), 14.

the result may be beautiful – as the musician gathers his notes, and forms his chords, until he bring forth from chaos glorious harmony".[658]

Differently from other artists, Leighton, Moore, and Whistler did not simply represent music or refer to it; instead, they appealed to its condition. It was not an act of merely copying specific musical pieces, but it was an action of lending their visual art qualities that absolute instrumental music inherently possessed. Experiences of music became the benchmark of all artistic experience, capable of rendering viewers immersed and captivated. Such experiences then provoked visualisations of abstract realms of thought, of harmonies in colour, rhythmic lines, intangible tones, and invisible resonances. As Charles Dempsey wrote in relation to Moore and Whistler in 1882, "although an arrangement in colour with reference to form may be a beautiful one, it possesses, and can possess, only a sensuous and inarticulate beauty, comparable with that of a piece of pure music". He continued that, as such, we have "a striking functional analogy between these sister arts" as we see what "music does by the ear, colour does by the eye".[659]

The insistence on the autonomy of art was borrowed from music; after all, "When music is spoken of as an independent art, does not the term properly apply only to instrumental music, which scorns all aid, all admixture of other arts (poetry), and gives pure expression to its own peculiar artistic nature?"[660] As Eduard Hanslick contended in 1854, instrumental music "is already a self-subsistent beauty; it is an end in itself".[661]

One of the primary points of intersection between instrumental music and painting, and one most often acknowledged in interdisciplinary scholarship researching the (pre-)modern period, is that of form and formalism. By virtue of its independence from narrative, instrumental music's meaning shifts from an external factor to an internal one. Rather than using a storyline to provide this meaning, it is then furnished entirely through inherent formal features: sound, tempo, rhythm, melody, harmony. This would develop into formal and pictorial abstraction through an analogy that remained influential and relevant throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. I have demonstrated, however, that there are pre-modern painters who, as early as the 1860s, already explored the formalistic common ground between instrumental music and non-narrative painting. As instrumental music manages to be

---

[658] James McNeill Whistler, *"Ten O'Clock": A Lecture* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1888), 14.
[659] Charles W. Dempsey, "Advanced Art", *The Magazine of Art* 5 (January 1882): 359.
[660] E.T.A. Hoffmann, "Beethoven's Instrumental Music", repr. in Hoffmann, *Hoffmann's Musical Writings: Kreisleriana, The Poet and the Composer, Music Criticism,* ed. David Charlton, trans. Martyn Clarke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 96.
[661] Eduard Hanslick, *On the Musically Beautiful: A Contribution Towards the Revision of the Aesthetics of Music,* trans. Geoffrey Payzant (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1986), 28.

abstract, autonomous, and self-sufficient, through the models of analogy and appeal painting might be able to do the same. An appeal to music became an alternative to emphasise the sensuous parts of painting, those impacting the emotions and not the intellect as an avenue towards finding pictorial beauty. Indeed, Tom Taylor described Whistler's pictures in 1872 that way, writing of his work as "the exact correlative of music, as vague, as purely emotional, as released from all functions of representation".[662] Whistler himself argued in *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies* (1890), using an analogy with "pure music", art "should be independent of all clap-trap – should stand alone, and appeal to the artistic sense of eye or ear", thereby echoing Swinburne's description of art for art's sake in *William Blake* (1868).[663]

While Whistler undoubtedly went much further into the realm of pictorial abstraction as understood from a twenty-first-century perspective, cognizant of twentieth-century modernism and abstraction, Leighton and Moore similarly pursued formalism and autonomy through the lens of music. Even if their work remained representational, a Victorian viewer would experience a painting like *Dreamers* by Moore or *Idyll* by Leighton as partially abstract by virtue of its non-narrativity. Indeed, the meaning of the work is no longer furnished by an exterior narrative, but by its own formal features of colour, form, and line, in simulation of a piece of instrumental music. For Moore, this crystallised into complex colour systems dependent on his use of grids and matrices in order to map out precisely how paintings would visually function. For Leighton, this developed into an emphasis on impastoed light, the use of gold, the formal interplay between drapery and skin, and the pure, sensuous delight a viewer can experience of rhythmic and harmonious formal elements. Furthermore, as I have demonstrated, Moore and Whistler's approach to colour eventually became one of finding a system or science of colour premised in the use of musical-aesthetic criteria.

The formal and formalist dimension between painting and music has always been helpful in understanding Western modernist artists who became more involved with music to work towards artistic abstraction. Notable painters in this development were of course Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, but also Gustav Klimt, who reached out to Whistler in 1897 to invite him to join the Vienna Secession.[664] Equally, Paul Signac commented in 1935, following his fascination with Whistler:

---

[662] [Tom Taylor], "Dudley Gallery – Cabinet Pictures in Oil", *The Times* no. 27531 (November 11, 1871): 4.
[663] James McNeill Whistler, *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies* (New York: Frederic Stokes & Brother, 1890), 69-70; Algernon Charles Swinburne, *William Blake: A Critical Essay* (London: John Camden Hotten, 1868), 91.
[664] Gustav Klimt to JW, MS Whistler S150, GUW, accessed 16/06/2021.

> Would it not be preferable that a painter, instead of being burdened with a subject or title, should call his works 'Opus no…', like a musician? In this way, his repertoire could remain infinitely varied, his freedom no longer constrained by subject-matter. Whistler was daring enough to entitle certain of his works 'Harmony in…'[665]

Alongside a promise of formalism and self-sufficiency, instrumental music provided a rich opportunity for exploring temporality as well as spatiality. With this came ideas of duration, extended looking-time, suspension, and unfolding over time, all of these connected to a temporal experience of form. Even though there are a number of temporalities already present in painting – conception, execution, handling, implied temporalities in depicted scenes – painting is often understood as an art lacking any direct temporality. Emphasised by Lessing in *Laocoön,* music was clearly demarcated as a temporal art and painting as a spatial art. Ideas of temporality were explored by Leighton, Moore, and Whistler through, firstly, their representations of musical experience. Moore explored the temporality of viewer experience and an extended looking-time sustained through the decorative, while Leighton and Whistler explored more fundamentally ides of suspension and duration in landscape. Crucially, ideas of memory, duration, suspension, and musical frozen time is what would inspire the Neo-Impressionists and Symbolists, while musical temporality equally led to explorations of kinetic and dynamic compositions such as in the work of František Kupka. For Leighton, musical temporality and its interactions with spatiality were artistic experiences he drew from his own personal experience of instrumental music. The synergy between texture, light, touch, sound, sight, and emotions became a wellspring of artistic invention, leading him to explore depictions of musical experience and, later, quasi-musical landscapes. Whistler did something similar, using his elaborately conceptualised series of Nocturnes to generate a musical experience of his visual art, extending this beyond the picture frame and into physical space with his solo exhibitions. There was common ground in how Leighton and Whistler approached the musical quality of landscapes, where expanses characterised by specific temporalities – sunsets in Leighton, mist, night-time and snow in Whistler – could generate a musical response on the part of the viewer. A response, moreover, typified and framed by the aesthetic paradigm of absolute instrumental music. This led to an extended looking-time for the viewer, as Henri Bergson argued with his concept of

[665] Paul Signac, "Le sujet en peinture" (1935), quoted in Peter Vergo, *The Music of Painting: Music, Modernism and the Visual Arts from the Romantics to John Cage* (London: Phaidon Press, 2010), 57.

la durée, which led to an experience that can be construed as musical. This helps explain the common critical response to all three artists by their critics that their works contained harmonies in colour, symphonies in colour, or provoked an experience that necessitated musical description. Moore, of the three, was the only one not to delve into landscapes this way, but the idea of temporality equally applies to his interior scenes from a formal perspective. While landscape could prompt an unfolding type of reverie, so could the meditation on decorative elements provoke reverie and prompt questions of suspension within and outside of time.

Which leads me to the third theme that has run like a red thread throughout this dissertation: that of aesthetic contemplation or absorption. This concerns the temporally bound experience of art, especially its formal features, when interpreted through the lens of music as paradigmatic. This was particularly poignant in the work of Whistler when his use of musical titles could more directly lead his viewers towards a musical experience by prompting a specific mindset. With Leighton and Moore, this experience was ground more in new aesthetic criteria to analyse visual features through musical ones. It also developed in their work, as I have demonstrated, into what I call the 'aesthetic listener', or a figure represented engaged in the private experience of listening to music. This figure then acted as an ideal, preferred type of aesthetic experience for the painter and provoking a similar experience on the part of the viewer, as was particularly successful in Moore's *A Quartet* and Leighton's *Golden Hours*. All three, however, created harmonies in colour, melodies of form, visual and pictorial rhythm all construed through the lens of absolute instrumental music in order to provoke a musical experience of the visual arts. Here, it was no longer just the practice of music, but the *condition* of music that could, through models of appeal and aspiration, furnish an enriched experience of painting. This led, as I have demonstrated, to an increased emphasis on subjectivity in the viewer, particularly when confronted with either the aesthetic listener or when visual features were coupled with temporalities, whether that of suspension or duration. Meditation, introspection, absorption, and reverie, as representational liminal states in and of themselves, became valid and valuable subjects for painting once couched in musical terminology.

I have made the case in this dissertation for the significance of absolute instrumental music not merely as an enjoyable pastime, but as a theoretical and aesthetic paradigm for Leighton, Moore, and Whistler. Their experimentation with form, formalism, autonomy, abstraction, temporality, and contemplation tie together their oeuvres in a communal approach towards

the exploration of musical intersections and, at its roots, artistic meaning. After all, instrumental music's self-reflexivity prompts the question, what makes empty instrumental music meaningful? Equally so we can ask the question, what makes art, art? There is immense value in considering Leighton, Moore, and Whistler as a subset within Victorian Aestheticism, especially when considering that musical references go beyond the mere representation of musical subjects. Such associations can be layered in and through the works these artists created, generating quasi-musical experiences in their viewers on the grounds of formalism and autonomy. Their oeuvres invite us to explore all the ways in which nineteenth-century artists were engaged in referencing but also incorporating music into their work. Music and painting become inextricably and delicately intertwined in a communal search for abstract beauty. Their connection is not only interesting because of this shared approach, but because they represent a development towards the congruence of art for art's sake and absolute instrumental music within a much wider constellation of ideas. As such, this dissertation can be seen as an investigation on its own into Leighton, Moore, and Whistler and their inter-art relations, but also as a study uncovering some of the foundations of Aestheticism and art for art's sake as nineteenth-century artistic movements. Moreover, the interdisciplinary approach I have taken in this dissertation has uncovered how beneficial it is for the study of the history of art to broaden our perceptions and push past disciplinary boundaries. If we do so, we are able to actively and accurately uncover how and why music was important to Aestheticism as a whole, and Leighton, Moore, and Whistler as a subset within it. Such an analysis would demand even deeper connections than I have undertaken in this dissertation but would provoke fascinating and far-reaching questions.

How does music compare to the other arts of poetry, sculpture, and dance as analogical model for Aesthetic artists? Is an association with music an act of appeal and aspiration towards the aesthetic paradigm of music, as I have argued here, or can this be reversed? Can musicians and composers take equal inspiration from Leighton, Whistler, and Moore as they did from music? This would extend into material reception, cultural history, material history, poetry, literature, and other fields, demanding a much wider base and reach but nonetheless posing incredible relevance. As Section I has demonstrated, the origins of such musical-artistic developments were not an isolated phenomenon nor was it a localised one. This suggests, above all, that there is a much bigger picture, reaching far beyond Aestheticism and its subsets. Most importantly, perhaps, is what an appeal to the paradigm of absolute instrumental music can tell us about the nature of art and its value for the

humanities, both physically and digitally in our globalised age. It appears that instrumental music, an art dismissed as empty, can yet reveal so much.

ABBREVIATIONS

JW: James McNeill Whistler.

GUW: Margaret MacDonald, Patricia de Montfort, and Nigel Thorp, eds. *The Correspondence of James McNeill Whistler, 1855-1903,* including *The Correspondence of Anna McNeill Whistler, 1855-1880,* edited by Georgia Toutziari. Online edition, University of Glasgow, https://www.whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk/correspondence/.

YMSM: Andrew Young, Margaret F. MacDonald, Robin Spencer, and Hamish Miles, *The Paintings of James McNeill Whistler,* 2 volumes, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1980. Digitised by MacDonald and Grischka Petri, *James McNeill Whistler: The Paintings, A Catalogue Raisonné,* University of Glasgow, 2020, http://whistlerpaintings.gla.ac.uk. The latter used the YMSM ordering to number and order all of Whistler's works.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Airy, George Biddell. *On Sound and Atmospheric Vibrations, with the Mathematical Elements of Music.* London and Cambridge: Macmillan, 1868.

A., J. "Music and Painting." *The London Reader* 5, no. 118 (August 12, 1865): 476-477.

Alford, Lucy. *Forms of Poetic Attention.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2020.

Alperson, Philip. "'Musical Time' and Music as an 'Art of Time'." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 38, no. 2 (Summer 1980): 407-417.

Ameriks, Karl, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to German Idealism.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.

"A New French Revolutionary Manifesto." *New York Daily Tribune* (October 19, 1858): 3.

"Are the English a Musical People?" *Fraser's Magazine* 43, no. 258 (June 1851): 675-681.

Arfini, Maria Teresa. "Musical Landscape: The Correspondence between Music and Painting in Early-Nineteenth-Century Germany." *Music in Art* 39, nos. 1-2 (Spring-Autumn 2014): 125-144.

Armstrong, Walter. "Study. By Albert Moore. A.R.W.S." *The Portfolio* 19 (January 1888): 147.

"Art and Artists: Royal Academy." *The Critic* 15, no. 365 (June 16, 1856): 307-308.

"Art Chronicle." *The Portfolio* 13 (January 1882): 130-133.

"Art. II. – Scènes de la Vie de Bohème." *The Quarterly Review* 103, no. 206 (April 1858): 328-346.

"Art Notes." *The Academy* vol. 3, no. 46 (April 1872): 148.

"Art Notes." *The Illustrated Review* 1, no. 130 (June 1874): 391-394.

"Art. VI. – Études sur la littérature française au XIX. siècle." *London Quarterly Review* 5, no. 10 (January 1856): 431-454.

Ashton, Algernon. "Are the English Musical?" *The Musical World* 71, no. 3 (January 17, 1891): 45-46.

Asleson, Robyn. *Albert Moore.* London and New York: Phaidon Press, 2000.
——. "Nature and Abstraction in the Development of Albert Moore." Chap. 5 in *After the Pre-Raphaelites: Art and Aestheticism in Victorian England,* edited by Elizabeth Prettejohn, 115-134. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999.

Atkinson, Beavington J. "English Painters of the Present Day: No. XVI. – Frederick Leighton, R.A." *The Portfolio* no. 1 (January 1870): 160-166.
——, Sidney Colvin, P.G. Hamerton, W.M. Rossetti, and Tom Taylor. *English Painters of the Present Day: Essays by J. Beavington Atkinson, Sidney Colvin, P.G. Hamerton, W.M. Rossetti, and Tom Taylor.* London: Seeley, Jackson, and Halliday, 1871.

Bacher, Otto H. *With Whistler in Venice.* New York: The Century Co., 1909.

Bajou, Valérie. "Fantin-Latour et ses musiciens." *Revue de Musicologie* 76, no. 1 (1990): 45-76.

Baldassare, Antonio, and Tatjana Marković, eds. *Music Cultures and Sounds, Words and Images: Essays in Honour of Zdravko Blažeković.* Vienna: Hollitzer Verlag, 2018.

Baldry, A.L. "Albert Moore: An Appreciation." *The Art Journal* 65 (February 1903): 33-36.

Barlow, Paul. "Transparent Bodies, Opaque Identities: Personification, Narrative and Portraiture." Chap. in *Frederic Leighton: Antiquity, Renaissance, Modernity,* edited by Tim Barringer and Elizabeth Prettejohn, 193-219. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999.

Barnard, G. William. *Living Consciousness: The Metaphysical Vision of Henri Bergson.* Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010.

Barnes, W. "Thoughts on Beauty and Art." *Macmillan's Magazine* 4, no. 20 (June 1861): 126-137.

Barringer, Tim. "Art, Music, and the Emotions in the Aesthetic Movement." *Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century* no. 23 The Arts and Feeling (2016): 1-32.
—— . "Burne-Jones's *Le Chant d'amour* and the Condition of Music." Chap. 13 in *Rival Sisters: Art and Music at the Birth of Modernism, 1815-1915,* edited by James H. Rubin and Olivia Mattis, 249-271. Farnham: Ashgate, 2014.
——, and Elizabeth Prettejohn, eds. *Frederic Leighton: Antiquity, Renaissance, Modernity.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999.

Barrington, Mrs Russell. *Life, Letters, and Work of Frederic Leighton.* 2 volumes. London: George Allen, and New York: The Macmillan Company, 1906.

Barrow, Rosemary. "Drapery, Sculpture and the Praxitelean Ideal." Chap. in *Frederic Leighton: Antiquity, Renaissance, Modernity,* edited by Tim Barringer and Elizabeth Prettejohn, 49-66. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999.

Bartel, Dietrich. *Musica Poetica: Musical-Rhetorical Figures in German Baroque Music.* Lincoln, Nebraska, and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1997.

Bashford, Christina. "The Late Beethoven and the London Press, 1836-ca. 1850." *The Musical Quarterly* 84, no. 1 (Spring 2000): 84-122.

Baudelaire, Charles. *Art in Paris, 1845-1862: Salons and Other Exhibitions, Reviewed by Charles Baudelaire,* edited and translated by Jonathan Mayne. London: Phaidon, 1965.
——. *Les Fleurs du Mal.* Paris: Poulet-Malassis et de Broise, 1857.
——. *Oeuvres completes,* edited by Claude Pichois. Paris: Gallimard et Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1975.

——. *The Painter of Modern Life: And Other Essays,* edited and translated by Jonathan Mayne. London: Phaidon Press, 1964.

Bell-Villada, Gene H. *Art for Art's Sake and Literary Life: How Politics and Markets Helped Shape the Ideology and Culture of Aestheticism, 1790-1990.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998.
—— . "The Idea of Art for Art's Sake: Intellectual Origins, Social Conditions, and Poetic Doctrine." *Science & Society* 50, no. 4 (Winter 1986/1987): 415-439.

Bendiner, Kenneth. *Introduction to Victorian Painting.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985.

Benedetti, Maria Teresa. "Whistler, Moore e 'Art for Art's Sake'." *Paragone* 32, no. 375 (May 1981): 21-39.

Bent, Ian, ed. *Music Theory in the Age of Romanticism.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Bergson, Henri. *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience.* Paris: Félix Alcan, 1889.

Berlioz, Hector. *À travers chants: Études musicales, adorations, boutades et critiques.* Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1862.

Berndtson, Arthur. *Art, Expression, and Beauty.* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1969.

Bernstein, J.M. *The Fate of Art: Aesthetic Alienation from Kant to Derrida and Adorno.* Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992.

de Bértola, Elena. "On Space and Time in Music and the Visual Arts." *Leonardo* 5, no. 1 (Winter 1972): 27-30.

Bhogal, Gurminder Kaur. “Visual Metaphors in Music Analysis and Criticism.” Chap. 22 in *The Routledge Companion to Music and Visual Culture,* edited by Tim Shephard and Anne Leonard, 191-199. London and New York: Routledge, 2019.

Billcliffe, Roger, ed. *The Royal Glasgow Institute of the Fine Arts 1861-1989: A Dictionary of Exhibitors at the Annual Exhibition of the Royal Glasgow Institute of Fine Arts.* 4 volumes. Glasgow: The Woodend Press, 1991.

Blanc Charles. *Grammaire des arts du dessin.* Paris: Librairie Renouard, 1880.
——. *Les artistes de mon temps.* Paris: Librairie de Firmin-Didot, 1876.

Bonds, Mark Evan. *Absolute Music: The History of an Idea.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.
——. “Idealism and the Aesthetics of Instrumental Music at the Turn of the Nineteenth Century.” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 50, nos. 2/3 (Summer-Autumn 1997): 387-420.

Bowen, José Antonio. “Mendelssohn, Berlioz, and Wagner as Conductors: The Origins of the Ideal of ‘Fidelity to the Composer’.” *Performance Practice Review* 6, no. 1 (Spring 1993): 77-88.
——, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Conducting.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Bowie, Andrew. *Aesthetics and Subjectivity: From Kant to Nietzsche.* Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1990.
——. “German Idealism and the Arts.” Chap. 15 in *The Cambridge Companion to German Idealism,* edited by Karl Ameriks, 336-357. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.
—— . “Music and the Rise of Aesthetics.” Chap. 2 in *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music,* edited by Jim Samson, 29-54. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
——. “Romanticism and Music.” Chap. 15 in *The Cambridge Companion to German Romanticism,* edited by Nicholas Saul, 243-255. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Brake, Laurel, Lesley Higgins, and Carolyn Williams, eds. *Walter Pater: Transparencies of Desire.* Greensboro, North Carolina: ELT Press, 2002.

Breakspeare, Eustace J. "Formal Design in Music." *The Musical Standard* 31, no. 1164 (November 13, 1886): 310-311.
——. "Musical Aesthetics." *Proceedings of the Musical Association* 9th Session (1882-1883): 39-58.

Bucknell, Brad. *Literary Modernism and Musical Aesthetics: Pater, Pound, Joyce, and Stein.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
——. "Re-Reading Pater: The Musical Aesthetics of Temporality." *Modern Fiction Studies* 38, no. 3 The 'Politics' of Modernism (Autumn 1992): 597-614.

Burford, Mark. "Hanslick's Idealist Materialism." *19th-Century Music* 30, no. 2 (Autumn 2006): 166-181.

Bürger, Peter. *Theory of the Avant-Garde.* Translated by Michael Shaw. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, and Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984.

Burnham, Scott. "The Four Ages of Beethoven: Critical Reception and the Canonic Composer." Chap. 16 in *The Cambridge Companion to Beethoven,* edited by Glenn Stanley, 272-291. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Calloway, Stephen, Lynn Federle Orr, and Esmé Whittaker, eds. *The Cult of Beauty: The Aesthetic Movement 1860-1900.* London: V&A Publishing, 2011. Published in conjunction with an exhibition of the same title, organised by and presented at the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, 2 April – 17 July 2011; the Musée d'Orsay, Paris, 13 September 2011 – 15 January 2012; and the Legion of Honor Museum, San Francisco, 18 February – 17 June 2021. Exhibition catalogue.

Campbell, Lady Archibald. *Rainbow-Music; or, The Philosophy of Harmony in Colour-Grouping.* London: Bernard Quaritch, 1886.

Campbell, Louise. “Decoration, Display, Disguise: Leighton House Reconsidered.” Chap. in *Frederic Leighton: Antiquity, Renaissance, Modernity,* edited by Tim Barringer and Elizabeth Prettejohn, 267-293. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999.

Campbell, Ronald. “Photography for Portraits.” *Art Journal* 45 (September 1858): 273-275.

du Camp, Maxime. *Les Beaux-Arts à l’Exposition Universelle de 1855: Peinture, Sculpture.* Paris: Librairie Nouvelle, 1855.

Carew, Derek. “The Consumption of Music.” Chap. 9 in *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music,* edited by Jim Samson, 237-258. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Carr, J. Comyns. *Some Eminent Victorians: Personal Recollections in the World of Art and Letters.* London: Duckworth & Co., 1908.

Cascelli, Antonio, and Denis Condon, eds. *Experiencing Music and Visual cultures: Threshold, Intermediality, Synchresis.* Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2021.

Cobbe, Frances Power. “The Hierarchy of Art: Part I.” *Fraser’s Magazine* 71, no. 421 (January 1865): 97-108.
——. “The Hierarchy of Art: Part II.” *Fraser’s Magazine* 71, no. 423 (March 1865): 334-346.

Champa, Kermit S. “Painted Responses to Music: The Landscapes of Corot and Monet.” Chap. 5 in *The Arts Entwined: Music and Painting in the Nineteenth Century,* edited by Marsha L. Morton and Peter L. Schmunk, 101-117. New York and London: Routledge, 2000.

Chapin, Keith, and Lawrence Kramer, eds. *Musical Meaning and Human Values.* New York: Fordham University Press, 2009.

Cheetham, Mark A. *The Rhetoric of Purity: Essentialist Theory and the Advent of Abstract Painting.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Chevreul, Michel-Eugène. *De la Loi du Contraste Simultané des Couleurs.* Paris: Pitois-Levrault, 1839.

Chua, Daniel K.L. *Absolute Music and the Construction of Meaning.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Citron, Marcia J. *Gender and the Musical Canon.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Colvin, Sidney. "English Painters and Painting in 1867." *Fortnightly Review* 2, no. 10 (October 1867): 464-476.
——. "English Painters of the Present Day. II. – Albert Moore." *Portfolio* no. 1 (1870): 4-6.
——. "Exhibition of Mr. Whistler's Pictures." *The Academy* no. 110 (June 13, 1874): 672-673.

Compton, Michael, ed. *Towards a New Art: Essays on the Background to Abstract Art, 1910-1920.* London: Tate Gallery, 1980.

Cooper, Suzanne Fagence. "Aspiring to the Condition of Music: Painting in Britain 1860-1900." Chap. in *Nineteenth-Century British Music Studies,* edited by Bennett Zon and Jeremy Dibble, volume 2, 251-277. Aldershot: Ashgate Press, 1999-2002.
——. "Liquefaction of Desire: Music, Water, and Femininity in Victorian Aestheticism." *Women: A Cultural Review* 20, no. 2 (2009): 186-201.
——. "Picturing Music in Victorian England." PhD dissertation. Brunel University, 2005.
—— . "Representations of Music in the Art of Burne-Jones." *Apollo* (May 1998): 9-14.
——. "The Musical Ideal in Aesthetic Art." In *The Cult of Beauty: The Aesthetic Movement 1860-1900,* edited by Stephen Calloway, Lynn Federle Orr, and Esmé Whittaker, 84-87. London: V&A Publishing, 2011.

Crowest, Frederick. *Phases of Musical England.* London: Remington, 1881.

Curry, David Park. *James McNeill Whistler: Uneasy Pieces.* New York: Quantuck Lane Press, 2004.
——. "Total Control: Whistler at an Exhibition." *Studies in the History of Art* Symposium Papers IV: James McNeill Whistler A Reexamination (1987): 67-82.

Dahlhaus, Carl. “E.T.A. Hoffmanns Beethoven-Kritik und die Ästhetik des Erhabenen.” *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 38, no. 2 (1981): 79-92.
——. *Nineteenth-Century Music.* Translated by J. Bradford Robinson. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989.
——. *The Idea of Absolute Music.* Translated by Roger Lustig. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989.
——. “Wagner and Program Music.” *Studies in Romanticism* 9, no. 1 (Winter 1970): 3-20.

Dakers, Caroline. *The Holland Park Circle: Artists and Victorian Society.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999.

Daly, Nicholas. “The Woman in White: Whistler, Hiffernan, Courbet, Du Maurier.” *Modernism/modernity* 12, no. 1 (2005): 1-25.

Dannreuther, Edward. “The Musical Drama.” *Macmillan’s Magazine* 33, no. 193 (November 1875): 80-85.

Daverio, John. *Nineteenth-Century Music and the German Romantic Ideology.* New York: Schirmer Books, 1993.

Davison, Alan. “Woven Songs and Musical Mirrors: Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s ‘Symbolic Physiognomy’ of Music.” *British Art Journal* (Winter 2012-2013): 89-94.

Dayan, Peter. *Art as Music, Music as Poetry, Poetry as Art, from Whistler to Stravinsky and Beyond.* Farnham: Ashgate, 2011.

Dempsey, Charles W. “Advanced Art.” *The Magazine of Art* 5 (January 1882): 358-359.
—— . “‘Tone Harmonies’, and the Modern Scheme of Colour.” *The Magazine of Art* (January 1880): 257-259.

Denney, Colleen. *At the Temple of Art: The Grosvenor Gallery, 1877-1890.* London: Associated University Presses, 2000.

Deroy, Ophelia, ed. *Sensory Blending: On Synaesthesia and Related Phenomena.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

D., H.A. "Summer-Moon: A Picture in the Royal Academy, by Frederick Leighton, R.A." *St. James's Magazine* no. 9 (April 1872): 272.

Dolan, Therese. *Manet, Wagner, and the Musical Culture of Their Time.* Farnham: Ashgate, 2013.

Dolman, Frederick. "The Story of a Picture: 2. Albert Moore's 'The Dreamers'." *English Illustrated Magazine* no. 15 (June 1904): 223-231.

Dömling, Wolfgang. "Reuniting the Arts: Notes on the History of an Idea." *19th-Century Music* 18, no. 1 (Summer 1994): 3-9.

Dorment, Richard, and Margaret F. MacDonald. *James McNeill Whistler.* London: Tate Gallery, 1994. Published in conjunction with an exhibition of the same title, organised by and presented at the Tate Gallery, London, 13 October 1994 – 8 January 1995, the Musée d'Orsay, Paris, 6 February – 30 April 1995, and the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 28 May – 20 August 1995. Exhibition catalogue.

Dowden, Edward. "French Aesthetics." *The Contemporary Review* 1 (January 1, 1866): 279-310.

Downes, Stephen, ed. *Aesthetics of Music: Musicological Perspectives.* New York and London: Routledge, 2014.

Düchting, Hajo. *Paul Klee: Painting and Music.* Munich, London, and New York: Prestel, 2016.

"Dudley Gallery." *Art Journal* (December 1871): 285.

Duret, Théodore. "Artistes Anglais – James Whistler." *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 24, no. 4 (April 1, 1881): 365-369.

——. *Critique d'Avant-Garde.* Paris: G. Charpentier, 1885.
——. *Whistler.* Translated by Frank Rutter. London: Grant Richards, Ltd., 1917.

Eastham, Andrew. "Walter Pater's Acoustic Space: 'The School of Giorgione', Dionysian 'Anders-streben', and the Politics of Soundscape." *The Yearbook of English Studies* 40, no. ½ The Arts in Victorian Literature (2010): 196-216.

Eatock, Colin. "The Crystal Palace Concerts: Canon Formation and the English Musical Renaissance." *19th-Century Music* 34, no. 1 (Summer 2010): 87-105.

Eddy, Arthur J. *Recollections and Impressions of James A. McNeill Whistler.* London: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1903.

Einstein, Alfred. *Music in the Romantic Era.* New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Ltd., 1947.

Ellis, Katharine. "The Structures of Musical Life." Chap. 13 in *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music,* edited by Jim Samson, 343-370. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Fauser, Annegret. "Wagnerism: Responses to Wagner in Music and the Arts." Chap. 13 in *The Cambridge Companion to Wagner,* edited by Thomas S. Grey, 219-314. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Findlay, L.M. "The Introduction of the Phrase 'Art for Art's Sake' into English." *Notes and Queries* 20, no. 7 (July 1973): 246-248.

"Fine-Art Gossip." *The Athenaeum* no. 1809 (June 28, 1862): 859-860.

"Fine Arts: Fine-Art Gossip." *The Athenaeum* no. 1895 (February 20, 1864): 270-271.

"Fine Arts: Royal Academy." *The Athenaeum* no. 1947 (April 29, 18675): 591-593.

"Fine Arts: The Royal Academy." *The Athenaeum* no. 1905 (April 30, 1864): 615-617.

Finger, Anke K., and Dannielle Follet, eds. *The Aesthetics of the Total Artwork: On Borders and Fragments.* Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 2011.

Flaming June: The Making of an Icon. London: Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Leighton House Museum, 2016. Published in conjunction with an exhibition of the same title, organised by and presented at Leighton House Museum, London, 4 November 2016 – 2 April 2017. Exhibition catalogue.

"Flinging Paint in the Public's Face." *New York Times* (December 15, 1878): 6.

Fournou, Marie. "L'écriture picturale dans les Nouvelles de Théophile Gautier: Entre dialogisme et interference." *Postures: critiques littéraires* no. 7 (2005): 138-157.

"French Literature." *Saturday Review* 11, no. 288 (May 4, 1861): 457-459.

Fried, Michael. *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot.* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980.

Frisch, Walter. *German Modernism: Music and the Arts.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.

Fubini, Enrico. *A History of Music Aesthetics.* Translated by Michael Hatwell. London: Macmillan, 1991.

Gantes, Amalia Cross, and Juliet a Ogaz Sotomayor. "James McNeill Whistler. De Valparaíso a Venecia: Un Viaje de Ida y Vuelta." *Revista 180* 44 (2019): 29-38.

Gautier, Théophile. "Art in 1848." In *Art in Theory 1815-1900: An Anthology of Changing Ideas,* edited by John Harrison, Paul Wood, and Jason Gaiger, 315-320. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998.

——. "Du beau dans l'art." *Revue des deux mondes* 19 (1847): 887-908.

——. "Feuilleton: de la composition en peinture." *La Presse* no. 112 (November 22, 1836): n.p.

——. *Mademoiselle de Maupin.* London: Gibbings and Company, 1899.

Giddings, Robert. “Wagner and the Revolutionaries.” *Music & Letters* 45, no. 4 (October 1964): 438-458.

Goddard, Joseph. “On the Principle of Dramatic Composition.” *The Musical World* 40, no. 20 (May 18, 1861): 309-310.

Godwin, E.W. “To Art Students.” *British Architect* 22, no. 2 (July 11, 1884): 13.

Goehr, Lydia. “‘All Art Constantly Aspires to the Condition of Music’ – Except the Art of Music: Reviewing the Contest of the Sister Arts.” Chap. 6 in *The Insistence of Art: Philosophy and Aesthetics after Early Modernity,* edited by Paul A. Kottman, 140-169. New York: Fordham University, 2017.
——. *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music.* Oxford Clarendon Press, 1992.

von Goethe, Johann Wolfgang. *Zur Farbenlehre.* Tübingen: Cotta’schen Buchhandlung, 1810.

Gombrich, Ernst H. *The Sense of Order: A Study in the Psychology of Decorative Art.* London: Phaidon, 1979.

Gordon, Paul. *Synaesthetics: Art as Synaesthesia.* New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020.

Grant, Roger Matthew. *Peculiar Attunements: How Affect Theory Turned Musical.* New York: Fordham University Press, 2020.

Grey, Thomas S. “Absolute Music.” Chap. 3 in *Aesthetics of Music: Musicological Perspectives,* edited by Stephen Downes, 42-61. New York and London: Routledge, 2017.
——, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Wagner.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
——. *Wagner’s Musical Prose: Texts and Concepts.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

"Grosvenor Gallery: Second Article." *The Manchester Guardian* (May 31, 1878): 6.

Guégan, Stéphane. "Gautier et l'art pour l'art 1830-1848." *Quarante-huit/Quatorze* no. 5 (1993): 63-68.

Guenther, Beatrice. "Trading on Cultural Capital: Madame de Staël's Politics of Literature." *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* 40, no. ¾ (Spring-Summer 2012): 203-221.

Gurney, Edmund. *The Power of Sound,* London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1880.

Hackney, Stephen. "Colour and Tone in Whistler's 'Nocturnes' and 'Harmonies' 1871-72." *The Burlington Magazine* 136, no. 1099 (October 1994): 695-699.

Hallé, Charles. *Life and Letters of Sir Charles Hallé: Being an Autobiography (1819-1860) with Correspondence and Diaries,* edited by C.E. Hallé and Marie Hallé. London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1896.

Hamerton, P.G. *Contemporary French Painters: An Essay.* Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1895.
——. "Pictures of the Year." *Saturday Review* 23, no. 605 (June 1, 1867): 690-691.
—— . "Pictures of the Year." *Saturday Review* 25, no. 650 (April 11, 1868): 486-487.
——. "The Artistic Spirit." *Fortnightly Review* 1 (June 15, 1865): 332-343.
——. "XXIII. – Thomas Armstrong." *The Portfolio* 2 (January 1871): 64-67.

Hamilton, Andy. *Aesthetics and Music.* London: Continuum, 2007.

Hamilton, Walter. *The Aesthetic Movement.* London: Reeves & Turner, 1882.

Hammerschlag, Keren Rosa. *Frederic Leighton: Death, Mortality, Resurrection.* Farnham: Ashgate, and Abingdon: Routledge, 2015.
——. "The Deathly Sleep of Frederic Leighton's Painted Women." *A Cultural Review* 23, no. 2 (2013); 201-215.

Hanslick, Eduard. "Hanslick and Wagner." *The Musical World* 56, no. 13 (March 30, 1878): 218-220.

——. *On the Musically Beautiful: A Contribution Towards the Revision of the Aesthetics of Music.* Translated by Geoffrey Payzant. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1986.

Harrison, Charles, Paul Wood, and Jason Gaiger, eds. *Art in Theory 1815-1900: An Anthology of Changing Ideas.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998.

Haskins, Casey. "Kant, Autonomy, and Art for Art's Sake." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 48, no. 3 (Summer 1990): 235-237.

Haslett, Carrie. "Discussing the Ineffable: Colour in the Paintings of James McNeill Whistler." PhD dissertation, Bryn Mawr College, 1999.

Haweis, H.R. "Gluck and Haydn: Part I." *The Contemporary Review* (April 1868): 535-544.
——. *Music and Morals.* London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1872.
——. *My Musical Life.* London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1898.

Hay, David Ramsay. *A Nomenclature of Colours Applicable to the Arts and Natural Sciences, to Manufactures and Other Purposes of General Utility.* Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1846.
——. *Proportion, or the Geometric Principle of Beauty, Analysed.* Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, and London: 22 Pall-Mall, 1843.
——. *The Natural Principles and Analogy of the Harmony of Form.* Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1842.
——. *The Science of Beauty: As Developed in Nature and Applied to Art.* Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1856.

Heffernan, James A.W. "Space and Time in Literature and the Visual Arts." *Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal* (Spring/Summer 1987): 95-119.

Hegel, G.W.F. *Hegel's Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art.* Translated by T.M. Knox. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975.

von Helmholtz, Hermann. *Die Lehre von den Tonempfindungen als Physiologische Grundlage für die Theorie der Musik.* Braunschweig: Friedrich Vieweg und Sohn, 1863.

Helsinger, Elizabeth K. “Listening: Dante Gabriel Rossetti and the Persistence of Song.” *Victorian Studies* 51, no. 3 Papers and Responses from the Sixth Annual Conference of the North American Victorian Studies Association (Spring 2009): 409-421.

Hepokoski, James. “Beethoven Reception: The Symphonic Tradition.” Chap. 15 in *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music,* edited by Jim Samson, 424-459. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
——. “Programme Music.” Chap. 4 in *Aesthetics of Music: Musicological Perspectives,* edited by Stephen Downes, 62-83. New York and London: Routledge, 2017.

Herzog, Patricia. “The Condition to Which All Art Aspires: Reflections on Pater on Music.” *British Journal of Aesthetics* 36, no. 2 (April 1996): 122-134.

Hobsbawm, Eric. *The Age of Revolution 1789-1848.* London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1962.

Hoffmann, E.T.A. *Hoffmann’s Musical Writings: Kreisleriana, The Poet and the Composer, Music Criticism,* edited by David Charlton. Translated by Martyn Clarke. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Hosler, Bellamy. *Changing Aesthetic Views in Eighteenth-Century Germany.* Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1981.

Huckvale, David. “Wagnerian Visual Imagery from France and Germany (1860-1940).” *RIdIM/RCMI Newsletter* 18, no. 1 (Spring 1993): 17-25.

Hueffer, Francis. *Half a Century of Music in England, 1837-1887: Essays Towards a History.* London: Chapman and Hall, 1889.

Hughes, Meirion. *The English Musical Renaissance and the Press, 1850-1914: Watchmen of Music.* Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002.

le Huray, Peter, and James Day, eds. *Music and Aesthetics in the Eighteenth and Early-Nineteenth Centuries.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

Inman, Billie Andrew. *Walter Pater and his Reading 1874-1877: With a Bibliography of his Library Borrowings, 1878-1894.* New York: Garland, 1990.

Jankélévitch, Vladimir. *Music and the Ineffable.* Translated by Carolyn Abbate. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003.

Jansen, Leo, Hans Luijten, and Nienke Bakker, eds. *Vincent van Gogh – The Letters.* Amsterdam & The Hague: Van Gogh Museum & Huygens ING. Digital database. http://vangoghletters.org.

John, Eileen. "Beauty, Interest, and Autonomy." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 70, no. 2 (Spring 2012): 193-202.

Johnson, Henry. "Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Japan: The Musical Instrument Depicted in *Blue Bower* and *A Sea Spell*." *Music in Art* 30, no. ½ (Spring-Autumn 2005): 145-153.

Johnson, James H. *Listening in Paris: A Cultural History.* Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1995.

Johnson, Julian. *Out of Time: Music and the Making of Modernity.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.

Johnson, Ron. "Whistler's Musical Modes: Numinous Nocturnes." *Arts Magazine* 55, no. 8 (1981): 169-176.
——. "Whistler's Musical Modes: Symbolist Symphonies." *Arts Magazine* 55, no. 8 (1981): 164-168.

Johnson, Stephen. "The English Tradition." Chap. 13 in *The Cambridge Companion to Conducting,* edited by José Antonio Bowen, 178-190. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Jones, Stephen, Christopher Newall, Leonée Ormond, Richard Ormond, and Benedict Read, eds. *Frederic Leighton 1830-1896.* London: Royal Academy of Arts with Harry N. Abrams,

Inc., 1996. Published in conjunction with an exhibition of the same title, organised by and presented at the Royal Academy of Arts, London, 15 February – 21 April 1996. Exhibition catalogue.
——. "Leighton's Debt to Michelangelo: The Evidence of the Drawings." *Apollo* 143, no. 408 (1996): 35-39.

Junod, Philippe. "The New *Paragone:* Paradoxes and Contradictions of Pictorial Musicalism." Chap. 2 in *The Arts Entwined: Music and Painting in the Nineteenth Century,* edited by Marsha L. Morton and Peter L. Schmunk, 23-46. New York: Routledge, 2000.

Kagan, Andrew. *Absolute Art.* St Louis: Grenart Books, 1995.

Kandinsky, Wassily. *Concerning the Spiritual in Art.* Translated by M.H.T. Sadler. New York: Dover Publications, 1977.

Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of Judgement,* edited by Nicholas Walker. Translated by James Creed Meredith. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Kapp, Reinhard. "Schumann in his Time and Since." Chap. 11 in *The Cambridge Companion to Schumann,* edited by Beate Perrey, 221-251. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Kauffman, Nelson. "Aesthetics of the Veil: Conceptual Correspondences in the Nocturnes of Whistler and Debussy." PhD dissertation, Ohio University, 1975.

Kestner, Joseph. *Mythology and Misogyny: The Social Discourse of Nineteenth-Century British Classical-Subject Painting.* Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989.

Kosinski, Dorothy M. *Orpheus in Nineteenth-Century Symbolism.* Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1989.

Kottman, Paul A., ed. *The Insistence of Art: Philosophy and Aesthetics after Early Modernity.* New York: Fordham University, 2017.

Kramer, Lawrence. “The Devoted Ear: Music as Contemplation.” Chap. 3 in *Musical Meaning and Human Values,* edited by Keith Chapin and Lawrence Kramer, 59-78. New York: Fordham University Press, 2009.

Krauss, Rosalind. *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths.* Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London: MIT Press, 1995.

Lamb, Charles. *Essays of Elia.* London: F. Moxon & Co., 1869.

Lamont, L.M., ed. *Thomas Armstrong: C.B. A Memoir, 1832-1911.* London: M. Secker, 1912.

Langer, Susanne K., ed. *Reflections on Art: A Source Book of Writings by Artists, Critics, and Philosophers.* Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1968.

Langley, Leanne. “Music and Victorian England: A Tale of Two Myths.” Talk given at the IMS Study Session ‘Nineteenth-Century Musical Life, the Contemporary Press, and Musical History’, 15th Congress of the International Musicological Society, Madrid, April 1992, digitised at https://www.leannelangley.com/site/assets/files/1063/taleoftwomyths.pdf.
—— . “The Musical Press in Nineteenth-Century England.” *Notes: Quarterly Journal of the Music Library Association* 46, no. 3 (1990): 583-592.

Leighton, Frederic. *Addresses Delivered to the Students of the Royal Academy.* New York: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1879.
——. “The Management of Art Galleries.” *British Architect* (September 5, 1890): 179.

Leighton House Archive. *The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Archives and Museum Catalogue.* Digitised archive. https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/CalmView/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=LH.

Leonard, Anne. “Musical Metaphors in Art Criticism.” Chap. 24 in *The Routledge Companion to Music and Visual Culture,* edited by Tim Shephard and Anne Leonard, 209-217. New York and London: Routledge, 2019.

——. “Picturing Listening in the Nineteenth Century.” *The Art Bulletin* 89, no. 2 (June 2007): 266-286.
—— . “The Musical Imagination of Henri Fantin-Latour.” Chap. 11 in *Rival Sisters: Art and Music at the Birth of Modernism, 1815-1915,* edited by James H. Rubin and Olivia Mattis, 203-221. Farnham: Ashgate, 2014.
——. “Time in Fin-de-Siècle Painting.” Chap. 3 in *From Liszt to Riot Grrrl: The Musicalization of Art,* edited by Diane V. Silverthorne, 67-84. New York and London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2019.

Leppert, Richard. *The Sight of Sound: Music, Representation, and the History of the Body.* Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1993.

Lessing, Gotthold Ephraim. *Laocoön: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry.* Translated by Edward Allen McCormick. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1962.

Lewes, George Henry. *Problems of Life and Mind.* London: Trübner & Co., 1879.

Liv, P.J. “Letters to a Young Photographer of Art – No. 20.” *Humphrey’s Journal of the Daguerrotype and Photographic Arts* 11, no. 15 (December 1, 1859): 233.

Lochnan, Katharine, ed. *Turner Whistler Monet.* London: Tate Publishing, in association with the Art Gallery of Ontario, 2004. Published in conjunction with an exhibition of the same title, organised by and presented at the Art Gallery of Ontario, Canada, 12 June – 12 September 2004, the Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais, Paris, 11 October 2004 – 17 January 2005, and Tate Britain, London, 10 February – 15 May 2005. Exhibition catalogue.

Lockspeiser, Edward. *Music and Painting: A Study in Comparative Ideas from Turner to Schoenberg.* London: Cassell, 1973.

MacDonald, Margaret F., and Grischka Petri, eds. *James McNeill Whistler: The Paintings, A Catalogue Raisonné.* University of Glasgow, digital catalogue, 2020, http://whistlerpaintings.gla.ac.uk.
——, Patricia de Montfort, and Nigel Thorp, eds. *The Correspondence of James McNeill Whistler, 1855-1903,* including *The Correspondence of Anna McNeill Whistler, 1855-1880*,

edited by Georgia Toutziari. Online edition, University of Glasgow, https://www.whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk/correspondence/.

MacFarren, G.A. “No. I. Symphony in A Minor of Dr. Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy.” *The Musical World* 17 (June 16, 1842): 185-187.

Macleod, Dianne Sachko. “Rossetti’s Two Ligeias: Their Relationship to Visual Art, Music, and Poetry.” *Victorian Poetry* 20, nos. 3-4 (1982): 89-102.

Mantz, Paul. “Salon de 1863: Peinture et Sculpture.” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 5, no. 15 (July 1, 1863): 32-64.

Mazaron, Armel. “Le lisible et le visible selon Lessing.” *Methodos* 20 (2020), https://doi.org/10.4000/methodos.7121.

McClary, Susan. *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality.* Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1991.

McGann, Jerome. “Wagner, Baudelaire, Swinburne: Poetry in the Condition of Music.” *Victorian Poetry* 47, no. 4 ‘A hundred sleeping years ago’: In commemoration of Algernon Charles Swinburne (Winter 2009): 619-632.

Menpes, Mortimer. *Whistler As I Knew Him.* London: Adam and Charles Black, 1904.

Mercer-Taylor, Peter. “Mendelssohn and the Institution(s) of German Art Music.” Chap. 1 in *The Cambridge Companion to Mendelssohn,* edited by Peter Mercer-Taylor, 9-25. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
——, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Mendelssohn.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Merrifield. “On the Harmony of Colours in its Application to Ladies’ Dress.” *Art Journal* 4, no. 162 (January 1852): 13-15.
——. “The Harmony of Colours.” *Art Journal* (January 1851): 1-8.

Merrill, Linda. *A Pot of Paint: Whistler v. Ruskin.* Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press in association with the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1993.
——. *The Peacock Room: A Cultural Biography.* New Haven: Yale University Press in collaboration with the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1998.

Michaelis, Christian Friedrich. "Ein Versuch, das innere Wesen der Tonkunst zu entwickeln." *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* 8 (July 20, 1806): 691.
——. "Ueber das Idealische der Tonkunst." *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* 10 (1808): 450.

Millais, John Guille, ed. *The Life and Letters of Sir John Everett Millais.* 2 volumes. New York: Frederick A. Stokes, 1899.

Mitchell, W.J.T. "The Politics of Genre: Space and Time in Lessing's Laocoon." *Representations* 6 (Spring 1984): 98-115.

"Monday Popular Concerts." *Saturday Review* 25, no. 648 (March 28, 1868): 419-420.

Monkhouse, Cosmo. "Albert Moore." *The Magazine of Art* 8 (January 1895): 191-196.

Moore, Albert. *Albert Moore to Felix Moscheles, March 28, 1890.* Letter. Private collection. https://www.historicalautographs.co.uk/autographs/moore-albert-joseph-16943/ (accessed 10/11/2020).

Morice, Charles. *Quelques Maîtres Modernes: Whistler, Pissarro, Fantin-Latour, Constantin-Meunier, Paul Cézanne.* Paris: Société des Trente, 1914.

Morrow, Mary Sue. *German Music Criticism in the Late Eighteenth Century: Aesthetic Issues in Instrumental Music.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Morton, Marsha L. "'From the Other Side': An Introduction." Chap. 1 in *The Arts Entwined: Music and Painting in the Nineteenth Century,* edited by Marsha L. Morton and Peter L. Schmunk, 1-22. London and New York: Routledge, 2000.
——, and Peter L. Schmunk, eds. *The Arts Entwined: Music and Painting in the Nineteenth Century.* New York and London: Routledge, 2000.

"Mr. Albert Moore." *The Athenaeum* no. 3440 (September 30, 1893): 459.

"Mr. Whistler's Etchings." *Saturday Review* 32, no. 824 (August 12, 1871): 223-225.

Murphy, Marguerite. "Pure Art, Pure Desire: Changing Definitions of 'l'art pour l'art' from Kant to Gautier." *Studies in Romanticism* 47, no. 2 (Summer 2008): 147-160.

Musgrave, Michael. "Leighton and Music." Chap. in *Frederic Leighton: Antiquity, Renaissance, Modernity,* edited by Tim Barringer and Elizabeth Prettejohn, 295-314. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999.
——, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Brahms.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
——. *The Musical Life of the Crystal Palace.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
——. "Years of Transition: Brahms and Vienna 1862-1875." Chap. 2 in *The Cambridge Companion to Brahms,* edited by Michael Musgrave, 31-50. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

"Music and its Relation to the Other Fine Arts." *The Musical World* 67, no. 34 (August 25, 1888): 666-667.

"Music and Painting." *The Musical Monthly* 1, no. 2 (February 1864): 19.

"Music Hall Art." *Musical Standard* 5, no. 126 (December 19, 1866): 395-397.

"Music." *The Reader* 3, no. 56 (January 23, 1864): 116.

Neubauer, John. *The Emancipation of Music from Language: Departure from Mimesis in Eighteenth-Century Aesthetics.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986.

Newall, Christopher. "Leighton and the Art of Landscape." In *Frederic Leighton 1830-1896,* edited by Stephen Jones, Christopher Newall, Leonée Ormond, Richard Ormond, and Benedict Read, 41-54. London: Royal Academy of Arts and Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1996.

Published in conjunction with an exhibition of the same title, organised by and presented at the Royal Academy of Arts, London, 15 February – 21 April 1996. Exhibition catalogue.

Newton, Isaac. *Opticks; or, A Treatise of the Reflexions, Refractions, Inflexions and Colours of Light.* London: Royal Society, 1704.

Niecks. "Aesthetical Notes." *The Monthly Musical Record* 13, no. 150 (June 1883): 128-130.

"Notes and News." *The Academy* no. 221 (July 29, 1876): 119-121.

"Notes on Art and Archaeology." *The Academy* no. 471 (May 14, 1881): 363-364.

O'Gorman, Francis, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian Culture.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Ormond, Leonée, and Richard Ormond. *Lord Leighton.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press, in association with the Paul Mellon Centre for British Art, 1975.

Østermark-Johansen, Lene. "'The Primary Colour of Delight': Walter Pater and Gold." *Polysèmes: Revue d'études intertextuelles et intermédiales* 15 (2016): 1-14.
——. *Walter Pater and the Language of Sculpture.* London and New York: Routledge, 2011.

"Our Weekly Gossip." *The Athenaeum* no. 1810 (July 5, 1862): 22-24.

"Our Weekly Gossip." *The Athenaeum* no. 1812 (July 19, 1862): 85-86.

Paddison, Max. "Music as Ideal: The Aesthetics of Autonomy." Chap. 12 in *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music,* edited by Jim Samson, 318-342. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Parker, Roger. "The Opera Industry." Chap. 4 in *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music,* edited by Jim Samson, 87-117. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Pater, Walter. *Appreciations with an Essay on Style.* London: Macmillan and Co., 1889.
——. "Art. II. – Poems by William Morris." *Westminster Review* 34, no. 2 (October 1868): 300-312.
——. *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry,* edited by Donald L. Hill. Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1980.

Pederson, Sanna. "Defining the Term 'Absolute Music' Historically." *Music & Letters* 90, no. 2 (May 2009): 240-262.
——. "Romantic Music Under Siege in 1848." Chap. 4 in *Music Theory in the Age of Romanticism,* edited by Ian Bent, 57-74. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Pennell, Elizabeth Robins, and Joseph Pennell. *The Life of James McNeill Whistler.* 5th edition. London: William Heinemann, and Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1911.

Perrey, Beate, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Schumann.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Phillips, Claude. "Fine Art: The Royal Academy. I." *The Academy* no. 1044 (May 7, 1892): 450-451.
——. "Fine Art: The Royal Academy. II." *The Academy* no. 838 (May 26, 1888): 364-365.
——. "The Summer Exhibitions at Home and Abroad." *Art Journal* (July 1892): 215-224.

Piotrowska, Anna G. "Modernist Composers and the Concept of Genius." *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 38, no. 2 (December 2007): 229-242.

Poueymirou, Margaux Lynn Rosa. "The Sixth Sense: Synaesthesia and British Aestheticism." PhD dissertation, University of St Andrews, 2009.

Prettejohn, Elizabeth, ed. *After the Pre-Raphaelites: Art and Aestheticism in Victorian England.* Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999.
——. *Art for Art's Sake: Aestheticism in Victorian Painting.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005.
——. *Beauty in Art 1750-2000.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

——. “Introduction.” In *After the Pre-Raphaelites: Art and Aestheticism in Victorian England,* edited by Elizabeth Prettejohn, 1-14. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999.
——. “Morality Versus Aesthetics in Critical Interpretations of Frederic Leighton, 1855-1875.” *The Burlington Magazine* 38, no. 1115 (February 1996): 79-86.
——. “Walter Pater and Aesthetic Painting.” Chap. 2 in *After the Pre-Raphaelites: Art and Aestheticism in Victorian England,* edited by Elizabeth Prettejohn, 36-58. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999.

Prinsep, Valentine. “Reminiscences of Millais, by Valentine Prinsep, R.A.” Chap. 23 in *The Life and Letters of Sir John Everett Millais,* edited by John Guille Millais, 276-402. Volume 2. New York: Frederick A. Stokes, 1899.

“Proceedings of the Society: Cantor Lectures, Decoration, by Professor G. Aitchison, A.R.A. Lecture II. – Delivered May 7, 1888.” *Journal of the Society of Arts* 36, no. 1860 (July 13, 1888): 919-930.

Pyne, J.B. “Nomenclature of Pictorial Art.” *Art Journal* no. 39 (March 1865): 65-67.

Quilter, Harry. “The Art of England I: The Royal Academy.” *The Universal Review* 7, no. 25 (May 1890): 23-48.

Richardson, Margaret. *George Aitchison: Lord Leighton’s Architect.* London: R.I.B.A./Heinz Gallery, 1980. Published in conjunction with an exhibition of the same title, organised by and presented at the Heinz Gallery of R.I.B.A., London, 18 January – 1 March 1980. Exhibition catalogue.

Richmond, W.B. “Lord Leighton and His Art.” *The Nineteenth Century* 39, no. 229 (March 1896): 465-476.

Richter, Simon. “Intimate Relations: Music In and Around Lessing’s ‘Laokoon’.” *Poetics Today* 20, no. 2 Lessing’s Laokoon: Context and Reception (Summer 1999): 155-173.

Riegl, Alois. *Gesammelte Aufsätze*. Augsburg-Wien: Benno Filser Verlag, 1928.

Robbins, Daniel. "'No Weakness or Wavering': Leighton at Work, 1894-1896." In *Flaming June: The Making of an Icon,* 50-61. London: Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Leighton House Museum, 2016. Published in conjunction with an exhibition of the same title, organised by and presented at Leighton House Museum, London, 4 November 2016 – 2 April 2017. Exhibition catalogue.

"Robert Schumann on Music and Musicians." *Musical Standard* 4, no. 92 (March 10, 1866): 287-289.

Robertson, Lynn C., and Noam Sagiy, eds. *Synaesthesia: Perspectives from Cognitive Neuroscience.* Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Robertson, Walford Graham. *Time Was: The Reminiscences of W. Graham Robertson.* London: Hamish Hamilton, 1931.

Robins, Anna Gruetzner. "Leighton: A Promoter of the New Painting." Chap. in *Frederic Leighton: Antiquity, Renaissance, Modernity,* edited by Tim Barringer and Elizabeth Prettejohn, 315-330. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999.

Rosen, Charles. *The Romantic Generation.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1995.

Rossetti, W.M. *Fine Art, Chiefly Contemporary: Notices Reprinted, with Revisions.* London: Macmillan and Co., 1867.
——, and A.C. Swinburne. *Notes on the Royal Academy Exhibition, 1868.* London: John Camden Hotten, 1868.
——. "The Fine Art of the International Exhibition." *Fraser's Magazine* 66, no. 392 (August 1862): 188-199.
——. "The Royal Academy Exhibition." *Fraser's Magazine* 67, no. 403 (June 1863): 783-795.
——. "The Royal Academy Exhibition." *Fraser's Magazine* 70, no. 415 (July 1864): 57-74.
——. "The Royal Academy Exhibition." *Fraser's Magazine* 71, no. 426 (June 1865): 736-753.

——. “The Royal Academy Exhibition: Second Notice.” *The Academy* 7, no. 158 (May 15, 1875): 513-514.

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. “Essai sur l’origine des langues.” In *Music and Aesthetics in the Eighteenth and Early-Nineteenth Centuries,* edited by Peter le Huray and James Day, 92-105. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

“Royal Academy. IV.” *Saturday Review* 27, no. 710 (June 5, 1869): 743-745.

“Royal Academy of Arts.” *The Observer* (May 4, 1856): 5.

Rubin, James H., and Olivia Mattis. “Musical Paintings and Colourful Sounds: The Imagery and Rhetoric of Musicality in the Romantic Age.” Chap. 1 in *Rival Sisters: Art and Music at the Birth of Modernism, 1815-1915,* edited by James H. Rubin and Olivia Mattis, 1-34. Farnham: Ashgate, 2014.
——, and Olivia Mattis eds. *Rival Sisters: Art and Music at the Birth of Modernism, 1815-1915.* Farnham: Ashgate, 2014.

Rumph, Stephen. “A Kingdom Not of This World: The Political Context of E.T.A. Hoffmann’s Beethoven Criticism.” *19th-Century Music* 19 (1995): 50-67.

Sager, Jo. “Whistler’s Application of Musical Terminology to his Paintings: The Search for a Synaesthetic Response.” PhD dissertation, Ohio University, 2004.

Salaman, Malcolm C. “In Whistler’s Studio.” *Court and Society Review* (July 1, 1886): 588-590.

Salmen, Walter. “‘Eine Bande von Musikanten’: Die Genese eines Gemäldes von Moritz von Schwind.” *Music in Art* 26, no. ½ (Spring-Autumn 2001): 113-121.

Samson, Jim. “Music and Society.” Chap. 1 in *The Late Romantic Era: From the Mid-19th Century to World War I,* edited by Jim Samson, 1-49. London and Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press Limited, 1991.

——, ed. *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
——, ed. *The Late Romantic Era: From the Mid-19th Century to World War I.* London and Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press, Limited, 1991.

Sandberg, John. "Whistler Studies." *The Art Bulletin* 50, no. 1 (March 1968): 59-64.

Sanguinetti, Gustavo Cataldo. "La Armonía de lo Invisible: Lo Música como Movimiento Puro en Schelling." *ÉNDOXA: Series Filosóficas* no. 26 (2015): 181-194.

Santarelli, Cristina. "From A Musician to A Quartet: Albert Moore between Classicism and the Aesthetic Movement." *Music in Art* 40, nos. 1-2 Neoclassical Reverberations of Discovering Antiquity (Spring-Autumn 2015): 245-254.

Saul, Nicholas, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to German Romanticism.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Sauvage, Micheline. "Notes on the Superposition of Temporal Modes in Works of Art." In *Reflections on Art: A Source Book of Writings by Artists, Critics, and Philosophers,* edited by Susanne K. Langer, 161-173. Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1968.

Schawelka, Karl. *Quasi una Musica: Untersuchungen zum Ideal des 'Musikalischen' der Malerei ab 1800.* München: Mäander, 1993.

von Schelling, Friedrich Wilhelm Josef. *Philosophie der Kunst.* In *Music and Aesthetics in the Eighteenth and Early-Nineteenth Centuries,* edited by Peter le Huray and James Day, 274-281. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.
——. *System des transzendentalen Idealismus.* Tübingen: J.G. Cotta'schen Buchhandlung, 1800.

Schiller, Friedrich. *On the Aesthetic Education of Man.* Translated by Keith Tribe. London: Penguin Classics, 2016.

Schmitz, Oskar A.H. *Das Land ohne Musik: Englische Gesellschaftsprobleme.* München: Georg Müller, 1914.

Schmunk, Peter L. "Van Gogh in Nuenen and Paris: The Origins of a Musical Paradigm for Painting." Chap. 8 in *The Arts Entwined: Music and Painting in the Nineteenth Century,* edited by Marsha L. Morton and Peter L. Schmunk, 177-207. New York: Routledge, 2000.

Schopenhauer, Arthur. *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung: Vier Bücher, nebst einem Unhange, der die Kritik der Kantischen Philosophie enthält.* Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1819.

Scott, W.B. "Dudley Gallery Winter Exhibitions of Cabinet Pictures in Oil." *The Academy* 2, no. 35 (November 1871): 493-494.

Schumann, Robert. *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker.* 4 volumes. Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1891.

von Schwind, Moritz. *Moritz von Schwind Briefe,* edited by Otto Stoessl. Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, 1924.

Scott, Derek B. "The Sexual Politics of Victorian Musical Aesthetics." *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 119, no. 1 (1994): 91-114.

Shaw-Miller, Simon. *Eye hEar: The Visual in Music.* London and New York: Routledge, 2013.

——. "'Deeds of Music Made Visible': Wagner, the *Gesamtkunstwerk,* and the Birth of the Modern." Chap. 2 in *Rival Sisters: Art and Music at the Birth of Modernism, 1815-1915,* edited by James H. Rubin and Olivia Mattis, 37-51. Farnham: Ashgate, 2014.

——. "Synaesthesia." Chap. 2 in *The Routledge Companion to Music and Visual Culture,* edited by Tim Shephard and Anne Leonard, 13-23. New York and London: Routledge, 2019.

——. *Visible Deeds of Music: Art and Music from Wagner to Cage.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002.

Shephard, Tim. “Leonardo and the Paragone.” Chap. 26 in *The Routledge Companion to Music and Visual Culture,* edited by Tim Shephard and Anne Leonard, 229-237. New York and London: Routledge, 2019.
——, and Anne Leonard, eds. *The Routledge Companion to Music and Visual Culture.* New York and London: Routledge, 2019.

Sickert, Walter. *Walter Sickert: The Complete Writings on Art,* edited by Anna Gruetzner Robins. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
——. “Whistler To-Day.” *Fortnightly Review* 51, no. 304 (April 1892): 543-547.

Siewert, John. “Art, Music, and an Aesthetics of Place in Whistler’s Paintings.” Chap. in *Turner Whistler Monet,* edited by Katharine Lochnan, 141-147. Published in conjunction with an exhibition of the same title, organised by and presented at the Art Gallery of Ontario, 12 June – 12 September 2004, the Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais, Paris, 11 October 2004 – 17 January 2005, and Tate Britain, London, 10 February – 15 May 2005. London: Tate Publishing, in association with the Art Gallery of Ontario, 2004. Exhibition catalogue.
——. “Suspended Spectacle: Whistler’s ‘Falling Rocket’ and the Nocturnal Subject.” *Bulletin of the Detroit Institute of Arts* 69, no. ½ (1995): 36-48.

Silverthorne, Diane V. “Introduction: A Work in Two Parts – Continuities and Discontinuities from Romanticism to Postmodernism.” Chap. 1 in *Music, Art, and Performance from Liszt to Riot Grrrl: The Musicalization of Art,* edited by Diane V. Silverthorne, 1-26. New York and London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2019.
——, ed. *Music, Art, and Performance from Liszt to Riot Grrrl: The Musicalization of Art.* New York and London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2019.
——. “Wagner’s *Gesamtkunstwerk*.” Chap. 28 in *The Routledge Companion to Music and Visual Culture,* edited by Tim Shephard and Anne Leonard, 246-254. New York and London: Routledge, 2019.

Singletary, Suzanne M. *James McNeill Whistler and France: A Dialogue in Paint, Poetry, and Music.* London and New York: Routledge, 2017.
——. “Music as Magic Architecture: Immersive Environments in Baudelaire and Whistler.” Chap. 5 in *Rival Sisters: Art and Music at the Birth of Modernism, 1815-1915,* edited by James H. Rubin and Olivia Mattis, 93-114. Farnham: Ashgate, 2014.

"Sir F. Leighton Among the Musicians." *The Musical World* 59, no. 8 (February 19, 1881): 115.

"Society of Art." *The Athenaeum* no. 1219 (March 8, 1851): 272-273.

Solie, Ruth A. "Music." Chap. 6 in *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian Culture,* edited by Francis O'Gorman, 101-118. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
——, ed. *Musicology and Difference: Gender and Sexuality in Music Scholarship.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.

Souriau, Étienne. "Time in the Plastic Arts." In *Reflections on Art: A Source Book of Writings by Artists, Critics, and Philosophers,* edited by Susanne K. Langer, 122-141. Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1968.

Spencer, Robin. *James McNeill Whistler.* London: Tate Gallery, 2004.
——. "Whistler's First One-Man Exhibition Reconstructed." Chap. 3 in *The Documented Image: Visions in Art History,* edited by Gabriel P. Weisberg and Laurinda A. Dixon, 27-50. New York: Syracuse University Press, 1987.
——. "Whistler's 'The White Girl': Painting, Poetry, and Meaning." *The Burlington Magazine* 140, no. 1142 (May 1998): 300-311.
——. "Whistler, Swinburne, and Art for Art's Sake." Chap. 3 in *After the Pre-Raphaelites: Art and Aestheticism in Victorian Painting,* edited by Elizabeth Prettejohn, 59-89. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999.

Spielmann, M.H. "Current Art: The Royal Academy. II." *The Magazine of Art* (January 1890): 253-260.

de Staël, Madame. *De l'Allemagne.* Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1852.
—— . "Of the Fine Arts in Germany." In *Music and Aesthetics in the Eighteenth and Early-Nineteenth Centuries,* edited by Peter le Huray and James Day, 300-302. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

Staley, Allen. "The Condition of Music." *The Academy: Art News Annual* 33 (1967): 81-87.

——. *The New Painting of the 1860s: Between the Pre-Raphaelites and the Aesthetic Movement.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011.

Staley, Edgecumbe. *Lord Leighton of Stretton, P.R.A.* London: The Walter Scott Publishing, Co., 1906.

Stanford, Sir Charles Villiers. *Pages from an Unwritten Diary.* London: E. Arnold, 1914.

Stanley, Glenn, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Beethoven.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Statham, H. Heathcote. "The Grosvenor Gallery." *Macmillan's Magazine* 36, no. 212 (June 1877): 112-118.

Stelzer, Otto. *Die Vorgeschichte der abstrakten Kunst.* München: Piper, 1964.

Stephens, F.G. "Mr. Humphrey Roberts's Collection: Modern English Oil Pictures." *The Magazine of Art* (January 1896): 41-47.
——. "Fine Arts: Mr. Rossetti's Pictures." *The Athenaeum* no. 1982 (October 21, 1865): 545-546.
——. "Fine Arts: Royal Academy." *The Athenaeum* no. 1957 (April 29, 1865): 591-593.
——. "Fine Arts: Royal Academy." *The Athenaeum* no. 2064 (May 18, 1867): 666-667.
——. "Fine Arts: Royal Academy." *The Athenaeum* no. 1749 (May 4, 1861): 599-601.

Stevenson, R.A.M. "Art in France." *The Magazine of Art* 7 (January 1884): 461-467.
——. *Velasquez.* London: G. Bell & Sons, Ltd., 1912.

Stirling, A.M.W. *The Richmond Papers.* London: Heinemann, 1926.

Sully, James. "The Perception of Musical Form." *Fortnightly Review* 14, no. 81 (September 1873): 371-381.

Sutton, Emma. *Aubrey Beardsley and British Wagnerism in the 1890s.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Swinburne, Algernon Charles. *William Blake: A Critical Essay.* London: John Camden Hotten, 1868.

Taylor, Benedict. *The Melody of Time: Music and Temporality in the Romantic Era.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Taylor, Tom. "Among the Pictures." *The Gentleman's Magazine* 1 (July 1868): 144-154.
——. "Dudley Gallery – Cabinet Pictures in Oil." *The Times* no. 27531 (November 11, 1872): 4.

Temperley, Nicholas. "Xenophilia in British Musical History." Chap. 1 in *Nineteenth-Century British Music Studies,* edited by Bennett Zon, 3-19. Volume 1. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999-2002.

Teniswood-Harvey, Arabella. "Colour-Music: Musical Modelling in James McNeill Whistler's Art." PhD dissertation, University of Tasmania, 2006.
—— . "The Piano/Fountain Association: From Franz Liszt to Salvador Dalí." In *Music Cultures and Sounds, Words and Images: Essays in Honour of Zdravko Blažeković,* edited by Antonio Baldassare and Tatjana Marković, 603-618. Vienna: Hollitzer Verlag, 2018.
——. "Whistler's 'Six Projects' and Schubert's 'Moments musicaux', Op. 94." *British Art Journal* 15, no. 1 (Autumn 2014): 27-34.

Teukolsky, Rachel. "The Politics of Formalist Art Criticism: Pater's 'School of Giorgione'." Chap. 12 in *Walter Pater: Transparencies of Desire,* edited by Laurel Brake, Lesley Higgins, and Carolyn Williams, 151-169. Greensboro, North Carolina: ELT Press, 2002.
——. "White Girls: Avant-Gardism and Advertising after 1860." *Victorian Studies* 51, no. 3 Special Issue: Papers and Responses from the Sixth Annual Conference of the North American Victorian Studies Association (Spring 2009): 422-437.

The Exhibition of the Royal Academy of Arts. The Ninety-Ninth. London: William Clowes and Sons, 1867.

"The Exhibition of the Royal Academy: Second Notice." *The Manchester Guardian*

(May 21, 1867): 5.

"The Fine Arts: Exhibition of Mr. Whistler's Works." *The Observer* (June 7, 1874): 5.

"The Grosvenor Gallery Exhibition." *The Manchester Guardian* (May 17, 1880): 5.

"The Grosvenor Gallery Exhibition: Second and Concluding Notice." *The Athenaeum* no. 2793 (May 7, 1881): 629-630.

"The Grosvenor Gallery: Third Notice." *The Manchester Guardian* (June 2, 1884): 6.

"The Philosophy of Music: A Series of Essays." *The Athenaeum* no. 1814 (August 2, 1862): 144.

"The Philosophy of Music." *The Musical World* 38, no. 50 (December 15, 1860): 791-792.

"The Private Collections of England." *The Athenaeum* no. 2394 (September 13, 1873): 342-344.

"The Royal Academy and the Water-Colour Societies." *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 90, no. 550 (August 1861): 201-221.

"The Royal Academy and Other Exhibitions." *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 102, no 621 (July 1867): 79-98.

"The Royal Academy." *Art Journal* (July 1874): 197-201.

"The Royal Academy." *Art Journal* (June 1864): 157-168.

"The Royal Academy: Exhibition of the Eighty-Eighth: 1856." *Art Journal* (June 1, 1856): 161-174.

"The Royal Academy: First Notice." *The Athenaeum* no. 2323 (May 4, 1872): 563-566.

"The Royal Academy Exhibition." *The Manchester Guardian* (May 2, 1882): 8.

"The Royal Academy. III." *Saturday Review* 41, no. 1073 (May 20, 1876): 649-650.

"The Royal Academy. IV." *Saturday Review* 27, no. 710 (June 5, 1869): 743-745.

"The Royal Academy. IV." *Saturday Review* 31, no. 813 (May 27, 1871): 666-667.

"The Royal Academy." *Macmillan's Magazine* 4, no. 21 (July 1861): 205-215.

"The Royal Academy Exhibition: Third Notice." *Saturday Review* 19, no. 501 (June 3, 1865): 665-667.

Titus, Barbara. "The Quest for Spiritualised Form: (Re)positioning Eduard Hanslick." *Acta Musicologica* 80, no. 1 (2008): 67-97.

Townsend, Joyce. "Whistler's Oil Painting Materials." *The Burlington Magazine* 136, no. 1099 (October 1994): 690-695.

Treitler, Leo. "Gender and Other Dualities in Music History." Chap. 2 in *Musicology and Difference: Gender and Sexuality in Music Scholarship,* edited by Ruth A. Solie, 23-45. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.

Tsui, Aileen. "The Phantasm of Aesthetic Autonomy in Whistler's Work: Titling *The White Girl*." *Art History* 29, no. 3 (June 2006): 444-475.

Tyndall, John. *Sound.* New York: P.F. Collier & Son, 1867.

Valance, Hélène. *Nocturne: Night in American Art, 1890-1917.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018.

Van Dyke, John C. *Art for Art's Sake: Seven University Lectures on the Technical Beauties of Painting.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1893.

Veldhorst, Natascha. *Van Gogh and Music: A Symphony in Blue and Yellow.* Translated by Diane Webb. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2018.

Vergo, Peter. "Music and Abstract Painting: Kandinsky, Goethe and Schoenberg." In *Towards a New Art: Essays on the Background to Abstract Art, 1910-1920,* edited by Michael Compton, 41-63. London: Tate Gallery, 1980.
——. *The Music of Painting: Music, Modernism and the Visual Arts from the Romantics to John Cage.* London: Phaidon Press, 2010.

Viardot, Louis. "Ut Pictura Musica." *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 1, no. 1 (January 1859): 19-29.

Victorian High Renaissance. Minneapolis: Minneapolis Institute of Art, 1978. Published in conjunction with an exhibition of the same title, organised by and presented at the City Art Gallery, Manchester, 1 September – 15 October 1978, the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 19 November 1978 – 7 January 1979, and the Brooklyn Museum, 10 February – 8 April 1979. Exhibition catalogue.

Wagner, Richard. *Gesammelte Schriften und Dichtungen in Zehn Bänden,* edited by Wolfgang Golther. 10 volumes. Berlin: Bong 1912.
——. "The Art-Work of the Future." In *Art in Theory 1815-1900: An Anthology of Changing Ideas,* edited by Charles Harrison, Paul Wood, and Jason Gaiger, 471-478. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998.
——. "The Revolution." In *Art in Theory 1815-1900: An Anthology of Changing Ideas,* edited by Charles Harrison, Paul Wood, and Jason Gaiger, 323-325. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998.
——. *Über das Dirigieren.* Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1869.

Weber, Max. *Essays on Art.* New York: W.E. Rudge, 1916.

Wedmore, Frederick. "Mr. Whistler's and Mr. Whistler's Art." *The Nineteenth Century* 6, no. 30 (August 1879): 334-343.
——. "Mr. Whistler's Arrangement in Flesh Colour and Grey." *The Academy* no. 629 (May 24, 1884): 372.
——. "Some Tendencies in Recent Painting." *Temple Bar* 53 (July 1878): 334-348.

Weisberg, Gabriel P., and Laurinda A. Dixon, eds. *The Documented Image: Visions in Art History.* New York: Syracuse University Press, 1987.

Welchman, John C. *Invisible Colours: A Visual History of Titles.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997.

Whistler, James McNeill. *Mr. Whistler's 'Ten O'Clock'.* London: Chatto and Windus, 1888.
——. *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies.* New York: Frederick Stokes & Brother, 1890.

White, Gleeson. "Albert Moore." *The Bookman* 7, no. 39 (December 1894): 82-83.

"Why Are Not the English a Musical People?" *The Mirror of Literature* 12, no. 330 (September 6, 1828): 146-148.

Wilcox, Jonathan. "The Beginnings of l'Art Pour l'Art." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 11, no. 4 Special Issue on the Interrelations of the Arts (June 1953): 360-377.

Wilkes, Robert. "The Hidden Pre-Raphaelite: The Art and Writings of Frederic George Stephens from 1848-1870." PhD dissertation, Oxford Brookes University, 2019.

Wilton, Andrew, and Robert Upstone, eds. *The Age of Rossetti, Burne-Jones and Watts: Symbolism in Britain, 1860-1910.* London: V&A Publishing, 2011. Published in conjunction with an exhibition of the same title, organised by and presented at the Tate Gallery, London, 16 October 1997 – 4 January 1998, the Haus der Kunst, München, 30 January – 26 April 1998, and the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam, 15 May – 30 August 1998. Exhibition catalogue.

"Winter Exhibitions." *Saturday Review* 32, no. 835 (October 28, 1871): 559-560.

"Winter Exhibitions." *Saturday Review* 34, no. 889 (November 9, 1872): 600-601.

W., P. "Artist and Critic." *Fraser's Magazine* 12, no. 68 (August 1875): 255-269.

de Wyzewa, Téodor. “Wagnerian Art: Painting.” In *Art in Theory 1815-1900: An Anthology of Changing Ideas,* edited by Charles Harrison, Paul Wood, and Jason Gaiger, 1001-1011. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998.

Yeazell, Ruth Bernard. *Picture Titles: How and Why Western Paintings Acquired Their Names.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015.

Youens, Susan. “Mendelssohn’s Songs.” Chap. 11 in *The Cambridge Companion to Mendelssohn,* edited by Peter Mercer-Taylor, 189-205. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Yuen, Karen. “Bound by Sound: Victorian Masculinity and Dante Gabriel Rossetti.” *Critical Survey* 20, no. 3 Victorian Masculinities (2008): 79-96.
——. “Fashioning Elite Identities: Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Edward Burne-Jones, and Musical Instruments as Symbolic Goods.” *Music in Art* 39, nos. 1-2 (Spring-Autumn 2014): 145-158.
——. “Music’s Metamorphosis in the Life and Creative Works of Dante Gabriel Rossetti.” PhD dissertation, Royal Holloway, University of London, 2008.

Zilczer, Judith. “‘Colour Music’: Synaesthesia and Nineteenth-Century Sources for Abstract Art.” *Artibus et Historiae* 8, no. 16 (1987): 101-126.

Zon, Bennett, ed. *Nineteenth-Century British Music Studies.* Volume 1. Aldershot: Ashgate Press, 1999-2002.
——, and Jeremy Dibble, eds. *Nineteenth-Century British Music Studies.* Volume 2. Aldershot: Ashgate Press, 1999-2002.