

Heideggerian Thought in the Early Music of Paul Hindemith (With a Foreword to Benjamin Boretz)

Author(s): Martin Scherzinger

Source: *Perspectives of New Music*, Vol. 43/44, Vol. 43, no. 2 - Vol. 44, no. 1, Perspectives on and around Ben Boretz at 70 (Summer, 2005 - Winter, 2006), pp. 80-125

Published by: [Perspectives of New Music](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25164591>

Accessed: 17/05/2013 21:51

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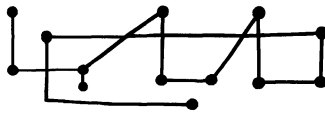
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HEIDEGGERIAN THOUGHT IN THE EARLY MUSIC OF PAUL HINDEMITH (WITH A FOREWORD TO BENJAMIN BORETZ)



MARTIN SCHERZINGER

FOREWORD TO BENJAMIN BORETZ

THOUGH THERE ARE MANY SIDES to Benjamin Boretz's critical poetics, two are central. On the one hand, there is a body of insights into and intuitions about how certain stretches of music actually go. His comments on music are always illuminating, often dazzling. I doubt that Mahler, Schoenberg, Babbitt, and all the other composers he considers could find a more sympathetic, attentive, and particularly cocreative listener–reader. But it's what happens along the way that seems to linger when Boretz's songtexts are ended: an invitatory quest to maximize awareness of music's non-coercive specificity. It is an invitation that sur-

faces repeatedly and in no way superficially throughout his writings. This, on the other hand then, is Boretz's meta-discursive journey: an adumbration of "primary creative activity" (2003, 95) through which listening might become "primal composition" (190); an act of discovery, as deeply personal as it is anti-authoritarian, which resists programmatic closure or constraint in even its most intimate syntactic details (95, 190).

Reductive music-speak (whether formal or ideological), becomes, for Boretz, shouting without resonance. It is damaging to the ear: "hearing analyses, hearing serial structures, hearing complex time-pattern relationships, hearing motivic transformations, hearing adumbrations internally and intertextually and historically, hearing ideologies, hearing anything which is ontologically in the verbal—or symbolic—referential-linguistic domain rather than hearing music in its own fully ontologized experiential-intellectual language, is not only to freeze and paralyze the cumulating evolution of a person's inner music-experiencing history, but threatens to annihilate the entire intuitive music-experiencing history a person may have already accumulated" (351–2). This kind of "ascriptive" discourse institutes the passive foreclosure of what could become active with invisible and mysterious design. We are encouraged to probe "thought *in* music" (in the double sense: to probe thought in musical terms no less than to probe music's "creative content," which is also its "ontological reality"); an activity sometimes described as experiencing (music) "with no names" (277, 351, 338). What Boretz means by maximum musical awareness, primal composition, unlabeled experience, etc., is revealed in page after magical page.

I will not attempt to disclose these insights today. Neither will I attempt—as I have done elsewhere—to suggest their philosophical limits, nor—as I have done elsewhere still—to elaborate their surprising historical acuity.¹ This is a time for congratulation and celebration. I offer these reflections to celebrate Ben's birthday; to celebrate his unique genius. Instead of more critique and reflection on it, I will therefore offer an excursion inspired by his musical thought-patterns. Though Boretz may not recognize his positions in the object of my reflections, I offer a way of listening to a particular historical moment of music-making that may go as a response to an invitation: to make *creative* hearing (in my musico-logical inquiry) *primary*. My personal doubt about the philosophical viability of unfettered non-ascriptive thought (at least in the context of public utterance), as well as my personal interest in music's relevance to aspects of the social, historical, philosophical and political arenas, leads me to rein in my analytic flight with contextual categories. Though it will become clear in what follows, I announce my speculative position in advance: Strenuous musical engagement (like Boretz's), especially in

times of political crisis (like these), contributes to social upliftment. My aim is to probe its limits.

Of course there is also a theory of politics at work in the Boretzian text. But, though he intermittently alludes to it, Boretz does not, except in an inconclusive way, address politics pure and simple. At the risk of oversimplifying, one might say that Boretz despairs of politics and looks to music for redemption. There is also, more prominently perhaps, a philosophical/metaphysical superstructure in which Boretz's language-Muse speaks. His thought converses and resonates with the highest philosophical achievements of romanticism, modernism and post-modernism (from Hegel and Schopenhauer through Adorno and Heidegger to Deleuze and Derrida). He addresses the ontology of music itself, and, in the spirit of this continental philosophical tradition, the American maverick does so in a way that could count as a training ground for the "ontology of experience" (303).

Reflecting on the topic of "musical expression," for example, Boretz's writing becomes *worldly*; it carries overtones of Heidegger (155–212). Resisting a methodologically outside position, in favor of inhabiting music as a function of one's own primal experience and need for identity, Boretz writes "As long as I view the objects of thought and the processes of music as exterior to myself and exterior to the interactions of people, as something other than the palpable emanations of intense human identity-seeking expressive activity, the authentic perception that I need of my real needs, of my real interest in the activities I pursue, of the real nature of the expressive objects, intellectual and musical, that I create and experience, will be unavailable to me; and I will be obscured from a clear understanding and an authentic consciousness regarding the nature of these objects, and the essential thrust of these matters" (164–5). Far from compromising the objectivity of the matter, Boretz argues that our subjectivities, ineluctably dwelling within the world of real needs and interests, are the very path to "clear understanding" and "authentic consciousness."

Heidegger argues in similar terms. Noting, for example, that any 'subjective' point of view was already reckoned with in a context of 'being-in-the-world', he wrote, "Dasein is with equal originality being-with others *and* being-amidst intraworldly beings. The world, within which these latter beings are encountered, is . . . always already [the] world which the one shares with the others" (1982, 297). Thus, our understanding of the world was in place before we engaged it philosophically. We dwelt in its practices, concerns, and equipment without noticing them or trying to spell them out. "The world as already unveiled in advance is such that we do not in fact specifically occupy ourselves with it, or apprehend it, but instead it is so self-evident, so much a matter of course, that we are com-

pletely oblivious of it" (165). *Being and Time* took as its task an examination of ways to 'unconceal' this systematic forgetfulness of practical being. Boretz too seeks to unveil ontological truths in the context of practical being (about music); he also seems to illuminate practical being in the context of engaged musical thought. In "Talk: If I am a musical thinker . . .," for example, Boretz describes how our "primal expressive energy" needs "release into purpose . . . to fulfill itself by creating palpable realizations shaped and contoured and articulated to return to us, from without, the sense of being, the sense of being something in particular, the sense of being something significant, the sense of being in the world, the sense of being in the world with other beings" (2003, 172–3).

It is tempting at this point to outline the kinship (and its limits) between Boretz and Heidegger. As it is with Heidegger, we find in Boretz the language of privileged disappearance ("In music, as in everything, the disappearing moment of experience is the firmest reality"); the effort to open questions from within the matter at hand ("The question, then, is: does music *need* a 'music theory'?");² and the systematic inflection of being with time ("For music, going is being") (241, 560, 363). The collected textworks (along with J.K. Randall) could themselves be read as a kind of tribute: *Being About Music*—at once a mundane address to our practical interactions (with music) *and* a fundamental ontological inquiry; even the title's partial sentence seems already to be practically underway: "Being about music, . . . [*x*]." Instead of elaborating possible conceptual resonance, however, I harness Heideggerian thought to a different, but related, purpose in my essay to follow. Instead of musicalizing *theory* by way of strenuous cocreative listening, I want to musicalize *history* by way of strenuous cocreative listening. This is my response to the Boretzian invitation: Without relinquishing a cultural-historical mandate, as might a genuinely non-ascriptive mode of listening, my analytic excursion attempts to be attentive to the particular social thought *'in'* a music at a particular historical juncture; an excursion that tries to open into its unguessed-at dimension, to free musical thought into open space, to make history relevant to freedom today.

I dedicate this piece to Ben, with gratitude.

INTRODUCTION: ON ADORNO ON HINDEMITH

The idea that Arnold Schoenberg was a 'dialectical composer'—elevating his musical ideas by, at once, radically negating the musical past and conservatively preserving it—is fairly widespread and well-known to writers on modernism; but the idea that Hindemith's music was dialectical is

not.³ And yet it is. The dialectical dimension of Hindemith's early *Gebrauchsmusik* is closer to the thought of Heidegger (which, it might be argued, was its chief philosophical support) than to that of Adorno. At the same time, as I will show, these contemporaries share common philosophical ground. Heidegger's affinity with Adornian dialectics does not, however, make their philosophical stances the same; still less does it equate the work of Schoenberg and Hindemith. One of the key differences, for instance, between the general pattern of calculated dialectical tensions in Schoenberg's twelve-tone music of the 1920s and Hindemith's *Gebrauchsmusik* of the 1920s, lies in the radically different attitude their respective works took to music history. For Schoenberg, the music of the past was absorbed into the integral, organic sanctity of the musical idea, while, for Hindemith, music of the past was cut and pasted, like items of removable clothing, on the musical surface. In fact, the "mechanical objectivity" of Hindemith's technique of stylistic pastiche was the major reason for Adorno's strident critique of the former in a 1922 article, "Paul Hindemith" (1982).⁴ Here Adorno wrote, "The works from Hindemith's 'classicist' epoch make their entry with the claim to play among the forms, and in fact merely play with forms. For this reason he only has the choice of given forms, as form is not given to him, just as little as it is to anyone else" (in Paddison 1997, 41; Adorno 1982, 221).

For Adorno, Hindemith's "new objective" juxtapositions of styles precluded the autonomous subjectivity that would render the formal play authentically dialectical. Indeed, this was merely music for 'use', which, for Adorno, meant it was useful only as a commodity in exchange (1982, 228). Thus, Hindemith's music of the early 1920s did not embody the 'immanent dialectic' of musical material, which, for Adorno, was music's critical praxis. In his critique of Hindemith, however, Adorno arguably failed to take into account the fact that the *position* of the dialectical *agon* was negotiable. There is a productive dialectical tension in Hindemith's early work, for example, between the general practical context of music-making and the particular formal configuration that disrupts this context. Even in traditional dialectics, the dialectical *agon* was not obliged to confine itself to the wholly immanent dynamics of the autonomous work. In fact, in an effort to disengage from just the kind of pre-emptive strategy later exercised by Adorno, Hegel inaugurated his levels of evolving contradictions in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* through what he termed a "chance" encounter with a "second object" of consciousness (*italics mine*, 1977, 55). The second point Adorno probably failed sufficiently to acknowledge was that there was no assurance that the supersession (*Aufhebung*) within traditional dialectics did not, in fact, involve independent,

non-immanent, criteria. In other words, it is not self-evident that the dialectical contradiction that raised consciousness to a higher dialectical level could appear without irreducible recourse to extraneous (supplementary) knowledge, which, in turn, was not itself under critical scrutiny at that dialectical juncture.⁵

Indeed, the singular achievement of Hindemith's early musical surrealism may lie in its very lack of faith in the wholly immanent aspirations of dialectics. In other words, by juxtaposing diverse musical figures, the surrealist approach provided new kinds of dialectical oppositions/juxtapositions; ones that did not subscribe to the naive claims of an immanent historical dialectic (and its residual promise of progress).⁶ Instead, this music simply plugged into a gamut of distinct musical situations which, in turn, could establish only discontinuous, cracked, and stubborn relations to one another. Heidegger's reflections on broken equipment were crucial in this respect. By situating the moment of knowledge in the fractures and protrusions of *practical* life, Heidegger located the "non-identical" aspect in less immanent terms than did Adorno. For Heidegger, knowledge did not transcend the contours of our 'being-in-the-world'. Still, this did not produce a philosophical method any less "dialectical" than that of Adorno; Heidegger simply framed the latter in different, indeed useful (*gebräuchlich*), terms. Unlike Schoenberg then, who (in Adorno's view) grappled with the "objective spirit" of music's immanent dialectical history, Hindemith simply provided an attitude that demanded the insecurity of constant stylistic re-creation. In order to explain this different kind of dialectical movement in Hindemith, let me analyze some of his early work in historical context.

PROBING THE AESTHETICS OF *NEUE SACHLICHKEIT* AND *GEBRAUCHSMUSIK*

Eclectic, brash, and experimental, Hindemith's music adopted a wayward, anti-Romantic, and parodistic stance towards musical history, resonant with the paradoxical mood of both relief and asphalt cynicism in Germany during the Weimar Republic.⁷ This was music designed to fade after a year or so; the perishable nature of its style was built into the architecture of its composition. His infamous Piano Suite "1922," opus 26, for example, was organized around various popular dances of the day, some of which he may have played during his military service. The drawing on the cover of the suite reflected a snapshot of chaotic city life. The movements of the suite were based on modish jazz and popular music and included a march, a boston, a shimmy (conjuring a vivid picture of flappers with their sequined cloches), a nocturne (*Nachtstück*)

(reflecting, perhaps, Hindemith's uniquely sparse and poignant expressive style, despite the provocatively objectivist performance instruction: "With little Expression" (*Mit wenig Ausdruck*)), and a ragtime.

Music that grafted together fragments from the everyday entertainment of a product-oriented consumer society (popular dances, variety shows, etc.) offered a direct affront to the quasi-religious realm of autonomous art, which was cut off from lowly society and promised to transport the listener beyond the commonplace. Hindemith's was a kind of high art music that had entered the speedy circuit of commodity production and destruction. In order to critique it, this music inhabited the capitalist economy of planned obsolescence and wastefulness. About his new approach to composition, Hindemith wrote: "I have 'tilled' the following fields of music: all sorts of chamber music, movies, cafés, dance halls, operetta, jazz band, military band." Hindemith turned the popular aspect into a selling point for his publisher, "Can you also make use of foxtrots, bostons, rags and other kitsch? When I cannot think up any decent music, I always write such things. They turn out well and I would think that you could do better business from one of those pieces than from my best chamber music. (Good kitsch is indeed very rare.)" (in Hinton 1989, 162) Written against the grain of canonized music, this music passed with the changing fashions of passing time. In May 1922, Hindemith urged Schott Verlag to publish the suite as soon as possible, assuring them that many pianists would play it immediately.⁸

Let me focus on the opening March of the Suite, opus 26 (Example 1): The words "5 Hutchinsons 5, Luft Akt" that appear in the top right-hand corner of the score refer to the trapeze artists, the "5 Hutchinsons," who performed at a variety show at the Schumann Theatre, Frankfurt, in September 1921. Hindemith allegedly scribbled the piece on a program note during one of their performances. The movement is noteworthy for its non-traditional approach to tonality. Although the opening rhythmic/melodic figuration of left and right hands (taken alone) is innocent, almost banal—the square rhythms, repeated notes, diatonic arpeggiations, and chromatic riffs are swiftly grasped and catchy—their juxtaposition yields some bizarre combinations. For example, the opening arpeggiations are not arpeggiations of the same chord. Despite the unison repetitions, each hand is 'just off' the other, like the short chromatic riff in measure 6, where left and right hands share the same basic phrase a seventh apart (as if they occupied different transpositions of the same piece). Here the interval of a seventh is not harmonically motivated and sounds more like an octave/unison gone-awry. Likewise, in measures 6 and 7, chords with no traditional relation are grafted onto one another in straightforward rhythmic pat-

SUITE

5 Hutdinsons 5 Luft=Akt

I
MarchPaul Hindemith
Op. 26

Vorspiel

Musical score for Paul Hindemith's Piano Suite, Op. 26, I. March. The score is in 2/4 time and consists of three systems. The first system is labeled "Vorspiel" and "March" and includes dynamic markings *f* and *mf*. The second system continues the piece with various rhythmic patterns and dynamic markings. The third system shows a close-up of a specific measure with a dynamic marking of *mf*.

Hindemith PIANO SUITE (1922)
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EXAMPLE 1: HINDEMITH, PIANO SUITE (1922), MEASURES 1–11

terns. After landing on two augmented triads separated by a half step in measure 9, as if to herald a polytonal playing field, the next rhythmic motto eccentrically topples the music onto the medieval bareness of an open fifth on E (measure 11). Thus, not only are these harmonic blocks (spliced together in a kind of filmic montage) withdrawn from traditional tonal consequences, but Hindemith avoids granting them a harmonic consistency, however assembled, on their own terms as well. The March seems to be manufactured from cuttings and splicings with almost no thematic evolution. While its gestures are vivid and insistent, they appear in almost arbitrary fits and starts. In line with Schoenberg's pejorative description of Hindemith's music (in his essay "Linear Counterpoint"), Robert Morgan calls this kind of abstract constructivism in Hindemith's

compositional conception “severely linear” (1991, 222). In fact, “severely vertical” might be equally appropriate as a description. While it is true that the voices sound forth in a kind of irascible and calculated indifference to one another, they only do so in the domain of pitch. In contrast, the voices unfold mostly in rhythmic unison (or at least rhythmic coordination). With voices that are curiously responsive *and* unresponsive to each other, the March becomes a montage of assembled mottos and events, cooperating rhythmically while sparring harmonically in a kind of prankish nonsense. Like a hexed machine, at once overly efficient and perilously malfunctioning.

Hindemith’s interest in the mechanics of musical production was another key feature of his musical aesthetic. By emphasizing the physicality of the instrument—the piano’s percussive aspect, for example, and the tangible distribution of its black and white keys—Hindemith challenged the disembodied self-sufficient sounding forms of absolute music. In contrast to expressionism’s agonizing choices of pitch movements, Hindemith’s harmonies are dictated by the contingencies of the instrument’s physical structure. In the exuberant cascade of notes that opens the Ragtime, for example, the left hand plays only black notes and the right hand only white ones. (The opposite occurs in measure 8.) Thus, a material, instead of ideal, consideration dictates the choice of tone collections.⁹ The notion that musical work required its performance to complete its aesthetic identity earned Hindemith the scathing title of “*Musikant*,” a mere musician of amateur ambition. In 1925 Paul Bekker wrote, “Hindemith does not compose at all, he makes music” (in Hinton 1989, 181). Thus, his music puzzled the divide between autonomous sounding forms and heteronomous production as well as that between composer and performer.

The fourth movement of Hindemith’s Sonata for Solo Viola, opus 25, apparently written in a buffet car from Frankfurt to Cologne and performed by the composer on arrival, is a striking document to the viscerality of sound production. This movement contains the famous performance direction: “Tearingly fast. Wild. Beauty of tone is secondary.” (*Rasendes Zeitmaß. Wild. Tonschönheit ist nebensache.*) In this movement, open string quarter notes race forth in a kind of *perpetuum mobile*, articulated by jerking double stops in the upper register, now with downbow, now with upbow.¹⁰ Twice this (almost convulsive) texture is interrupted by lengthy descending patterns with no clear harmonic direction. The pitch structures are entirely produced by technical considerations. In Hindemith’s words, these tones are produced by “plucking [or bowing] forbidden fruit from the tree of insufficient harmonic knowledge” (Hinton 1989, 163). Hindemith relinquished the Edenic principle of

independent musical organization and brazenly indulged the instrument's peculiar physical character. The result in the Sonata for Solo Viola was a sound that was no longer an expressive music and not yet a technical study. It was as if Hindemith was discovering new life in the physiology of the instrument itself. Temporary, immediate, objective and plain, modernism's *musica instrumentalis* had arrived.¹¹

The physical structure of musical instruments, and a musical style enmeshed in the way instruments were used, became life-long concerns for Hindemith, culminating in a socio-politically inflected philosophy of music called *Gebrauchsmusik*, or 'Music for Use'. The concept of *Gebrauchsmusik* also involved a practical, communal dimension, which was consolidated in Hindemith's later works, notably the six *Kammermusiken* for mixed ensembles composed for various musical festivals throughout the 1920s. However, the social dimension of the aesthetic of *Gebrauchsmusik* was informed by more than Hindemith's interest in music's "social purpose" (Eisler's description for Hindemith's occupation with the amateur aspect of music-making, the concrete context of performance, and the practical mechanics of musical production), namely, social *critique* (Adorno 1973, 258). Indeed, Hindemith's works of the early 1920s provide a key illustration of this critical aspect. For example, the montage-like splicing that engendered unexpected polytonal combinations was an early version of Brechtian 'defamiliarization' (*Verfremdung*). Take the *Tanzstücke* for solo piano, opus 19: In the first movement, left and right hands appear to operate independently of each other in a kind of maverick detachment. Each hand has its own dissociated series of figures. These appear in apparently unmotivated transpositions and exert no influence on one another. When the voices do coordinate their effort—with unison passages either at cadence points or in overly naive linear motion—the result is an exaggerated sameness. This carnivalesque juxtaposition of complex polytonality with unison bareness, of iconoclastic invention with an almost bored plainness, produced the kind of surreal estrangement effects that Kurt Weill, in collaboration with Brecht, would later bring to notoriety. By radically ambiguating the tonal context of the popular dance (signaled in the fragments of the dotted-rhythm figure), this *Tanzstück* renders its dance strange. This, in turn, alerts us to the arbitrary nature of the musical 'second-nature' to which the fragments point. Unlike the neo-classical fragment found in Stravinsky, Hindemith's fragments also draw attention to the contingencies of popular music. Hindemith's passion for popular music does not uncritically affirm it.

In later years, Hindemith distanced himself from this kind of surrealism, and insisted in his *Unterweisung im Tonsatz* (*Craft of Musical*

Composition) that “the listener cannot follow the separate tonalities, for he relates every simultaneous combination of sounds to a root” (in Hinton 1989, 164). He developed a well-known system of music theory that raised to a principle the premise that listeners grasp all verticalities in terms of a root. Hindemith held the view that his theory applied not only to tonal music but also to all music, and he considered music that did not conform to it with suspicion. Accordingly, he criticized Schoenberg, Stravinsky as well as his own earlier works on these grounds. In turn, Hindemith’s theory has been scrutinized and questioned from perspectives ranging from Norman Cazden’s extremely negative critique of Hindemith’s use of acoustics and mathematics, no less than his flawed theory of art, to Johannes Paul Thilman’s Marxist-inspired critique of Hindemith’s arbitrary and inconsistent dependence on nature and musical practice for his theory (Cazden 1954; Thilman 1973). In his *Craft*, Hindemith claimed that every harmonic combination contained within it a “natural force, like gravity,” and that all possible intervallic relationships were graded according to their “absolute” degree of consonance and dissonance (in Morgan 1991, 226). The debate between the absolute, as opposed to context-sensitive, musical perception of intervals still rages today. In the United States this is an argument not only between defenders of tonal music who believe in a ‘gravitational force’ to which our perception is bootlegged (Fred Lerdahl, William Thomson, etc.) and defenders of serial and other non-tonal music (Milton Babbitt, Joseph Dubiel, etc.), but between theorists of the latter persuasion as well. Analytic set theory, for instance, broadly divides into the approaches set forth by, on the one hand, Allen Forte and, on the other, David Lewin. Forte’s set-classes tend to resemble Hindemith’s absolute degrees of consonance and dissonance, albeit without the value judgment. His sonorities have distinctive characteristics in their own right. For Lewin, in contrast, even the simplest interval is a symptomatic fallout of a complex music-transformational situation. Lewin’s sonorities have Schenker-like linear origins; they represent a musical movement from one place to another. Paradoxically, Hindemith’s early experiments with (‘dissonant’) harmonic combinations that were *not* linearly motivated (but assembled instead in a surreal montage) may have *encouraged* the conservative view about harmony’s absolute degree of consonance and dissonance, even though he rejected these works in the name of that theory.¹² The question is: Should we reject the works on the same grounds?

Or can we approach the music in a way that draws the ear outside the logic and grasp of absolute degrees?¹³ I think that we can, and that we should. Let me explain. Hindemith’s performance directions for the first movement of opus 19 read: ‘Moderately fast. Execute somewhat

Tanzstücke

Paul Hindemith, op. 19

I

Mäßig schnell. Etwas unbeholfen vorzutragen

Hindemith TANZSTÜCKE, OP. 19

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EXAMPLE 2: HINDEMITH, *TANZSTÜCKE*, OP. 19/1, MEASURES 1–16

clumsily' (*Mäßig schnell. Etwas unbeholfen vorzutragen*). (The transliteration for "unbeholfen," namely "unhelped," captures the peculiarities of the music better.) The piece begins with dancing dotted-note figures in the right hand that harmonically and melodically emphasize the interval of a perfect fourth (Example 2). The left-hand figure enters on the second beat—as if too late—with jumpy octaves that start on the wrong note (F instead of F \sharp). But the jumpy figure is not entirely unrelated to the upper part. It seems to recognize the 'perfect-fourthiness' of the upper figures by leaping up by that interval, and then even registers the minor third transposition of the upper figure on the third beat, and copies that move downwards. Of course, the left hand activity has landed on all the wrong notes, so it tries again in measure 2 to right itself, but (with perfect fourths still on its mind) transposes itself clumsily by a fourth instead. Indeed, in the next measure, it attempts a transposition by a third, but at this point the top line has moved on to a scalar perfect fourth, and then, realizing that the motion it hears is step-wise, takes a melodic step to D \flat . The new step ushers in a kind of 'fourth-plus-half-step' motive (or motto), which, in turn is elaborated in measure 5 by the right hand in scrambled retrograde diminution. The right hand experiences the same difficulty in coordinating harmonic sense in measure 5 and both parts simply sequence away into the next measure, still tilted and awry. In measure 7 they solve the difficulty via an overstated unison. Both voices skip forth in a mundane descent that lands on C—the center of practical tonality—before genuflecting to one another, as it were, in measure 9 and again in measure 11. Even the genuflections are 'just off'. It is not only that they seem polytonal in themselves, but that the right hand seems to register the low D of the left hand in measure 9, and, as if in an effort to sound a unison next time around, copies it in measure 11. But the left hand heard the same problem in the same way from below, and gives up its D for an E. Like two characters that both hesitate as they motion each other through an open door, and then clumsily walk through at the same time, bumping noisily along the way, these musical parts turn up in Charlie-Chaplinesque bungling.

What I am suggesting is that despite the 'severe linearity' of this music—the independence of its parts and the shrieking harmonic clashes—the manner in which the parts *do* relate to each other, however 'unhelped', is musically significant. Verticalities that are 'just off' are expressive at least in just that way. In their effort to correct themselves with limited resources—to listen to each other from different coigns of vantage—these two parts twist and sway in the rhythm of eccentric currents. At the opening, they proffer a bagful of perfect fourths and a minor third—

some light, some leaden—to a distorting hall of harmonic mirrors that upsets all calculations, contradicts gravity, makes guarantees worthless. Do we want to reduce these ungainly imitations to mere harmonic nihilism because of their disrespect for the ‘absolute-degree theory’, which Hindemith was to invent a decade later—a time when absolute theories of politics were closing in?

The key point is that this music, literally conceived in the making of physical sounds (on the fingerboard, at the keys, etc.), retains a formal aesthetic aspect that is readily overlooked in recent discussions of *Gebrauchsmusik*. While the technical considerations of the various instruments’ physical structure may be compositionally prior, some dimension of the resulting sounding forms exceeds the contingencies of that practical attitude. Also, while the communal context of the music’s performance may be inextricably mired in the fabric of these sounding forms, some degree of intellectual detachment remains irreducible. Indeed, *Gebrauchsmusik* (Use Music) resided in a space between, on the one hand, *Eigenständigemusik* (Autonomous Music), which was associated with the idealist tradition of art for art’s sake, and, on the other hand, *Verbrauchsmusik* (Used-up music, Consumed Music), associated, in turn, with commercialized mass music. It could be reduced to neither. To adapt a phrase from Heidegger, the music’s ‘having-to-do with the world concernfully’ does not wholly remove the decontextual elements that beget its autonomous stance. Let me explain this point, first, with reference to the historical and philosophical background of the concept of *Gebrauchsmusik*, and, second, with an analysis of Hindemith’s *Kammermusik* No.1, opus 24 in light of this philosophy.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND OF *GEBRAUCHSMUSIK*

The term *Gebrauchsmusik* originated with the musicologist Heinrich Bessler, who coined the term in his doctorate on the fourteenth-century motet, submitted to the University of Freiburg in 1923.¹⁴ Bessler attended Heidegger’s philosophy lectures at a time when the latter’s *Being and Time* was nearing its completion and incorporated many of its central motifs into his own work. Bessler’s concept of *Gebrauchsmusik* was an attempt to describe the worldly, practical nature of music’s authentic condition in contrast to the autonomous hermetic object of contemplation it had become under various mistaken philosophical assumptions of classical and romantic times. Bessler’s historical perspective was geared towards grasping “the condition of music before the division of art and ‘*Dasein*’ and therefore to a more primordial form of life,

whose collective energy was able to support music within everyday life” (in Hinton 1989, 12). In the spirit of disenchanting enlightenment figures (beginning perhaps with Jean-Jacques Rousseau), Bessler put in doubt the validity of the modern music concert (whose music he associated with a “type of reproduction”), via an anthropological inquiry into the origins of music-making (1989, 9). Using this originary context of music-making as a reference point, Bessler’s rejection of the passivity of modern listening, in turn, paved the way for an alternative modern account of active music-making in concrete new musical situations. He wrote, “The fact that music has to be performed, that only in real music-making its mode of existence can be adequately fulfilled and endlessly renewed, determines the basic structure of *musical life*” (1989, 7).

The central category of ‘use’ (*gebrauch*) involved two aspects. First, this was music that resisted the growing individualism and isolation of professional concert life, and instead grew naturally out of the community. Bessler wrote:

One would not presuppose fundamentally different approaches to music where the . . . essentially concert-determined characteristics were missing. Perfection of reproduction would count as inessential, the listeners would not constitute a limitless crowd taking in what is performed in passive devotion, but would approach the music as a genuine community of like-minded individuals with an active attitude and in active expectation. Such art would therefore always correspond to a concrete need, it would not have to find its public but grow out of it. Such an art is *Gebrauchsmusik*. (Hinton 1989, 10)¹⁵

Second, *Gebrauchsmusik* was a kind of music considered to be irreducibly mired in a context of practical utility. One of the characteristics of the many new music festivals that sprung up in post-war Weimar was the emphasis on music as an active *doing* (instead of a passive contemplating). The motto for the 1929 Baden-Baden festival, for instance, was “making music is better than listening to it.” At this festival Hindemith (in collaboration with Bertold Brecht) presented his *Lehrstück*, a radical piece intended for amateurs, in which the audience was brought into the musical action as participants. The aspect of *Gebrauchsmusik*’s ‘use’, then, was concerned with the physical activity of making sounds within a concrete social context. Like a useful tool, Bessler’s concept of *Gebrauchsmusik* approached Heidegger’s concept of ‘equipment’ (*Zeug*) in *Being and Time*. In the words of Bessler:

Gebrauchsmusik represents for the individual something of equal rank to his other activities, something with which he has dealings in the way that one has dealings with things of everyday use, without having to overcome any distance beforehand, that is, without having to adopt an aesthetic attitude. Bearing this in mind, one might define the basic characteristic of *Gebrauchsmusik* as ‘umgangsmässig’ [pertaining to ‘Umgang’ or ‘dealing with’]. All other art . . . in some way stands in contrast to Being as self-contained, as ‘eigenständig’ [autonomous]. (Hinton 1989, 14)

Music, for Bessler, was an integral part of living praxis and did not belong in a sealed-off domain of human endeavor. Like the ready-to-hand (*zuhanden*) condition of Heidegger’s equipment, Bessler reinscribed music’s authentic character in terms of physical acts of manipulation and utilization. In contrast to objects of pure cognitive reflection, which were ‘present-at-hand’ (*vorhanden*), music was always-already practically underway—an action of the bow, a motion in the hands. In fact, this productive dimension was its authentic being. Likewise, for the philosopher Emil Utitz, “The aesthetic dimension cannot be the central value [of the *Neue Sachlichkeit*] . . . because its essence is a value of expression and because it is aimed at the ‘appearance’, not at full, whole being. . . . In the end, what matters is not how we ‘express’ ourselves but how we ‘are’” (Hinton 1989, 94). In short, artistic ‘expression’ had become artificial and philosophically limited. Instead, the ‘thingliness’ (*Sachlichkeit*) of artistic craft showed the way beyond artistic craft and towards its essential being. Like Bessler on *Gebrauchsmusik*, then, Utitz grounded the new objective aesthetics in the terms of Heidegger’s fundamental ontology.

Heidegger rejected the traditional orientation of metaphysics, which, he maintained, was suspended between two untenable and ultimately pessimistic views: Idealism and Empiricism. On the one hand, he rejected the subjectivism of the former (which artificially carved the subject out of the world and held it at the center of philosophical inquiry) because it produced the (dogmatically) pessimistic corollary that the first-person lurked behind all knowledge. On the other hand, he rejected the objectivism of Empiricism/Materialism (which assimilated human knowledge entirely to its empirical conditioning grounds) because it produced the (pessimistic) dogmatic corollary that the world of objects, the first and last instance of knowledge, wholly constrained thought. Heidegger observed that both positions took something more basic for granted, namely the practical world in which we always-already dwelled: ‘being-in-the-world’.

One phenomenon that prompted a process of unconcealment was an experience of missing or malfunctioning equipment in our ordinary dealings with/in the world. Some way into his classic text *Being and Time* (1927) Heidegger reflected on the “obtrusiveness” that resulted when an everyday piece of equipment, like a hammer, broke down. Heidegger observed that those isolated features that were *not* missing in the broken equipment lost their available—“ready-to-hand” (*zuhanden*)—character and revealed themselves “as just present-at-hand and no more” (1962, 79). A malfunctioning object, in other words, could illuminate something about various “within-the-world” dimensions in which we were otherwise overly absorbed. And this interruption of absorbed and ongoing activity opened up space for a certain epistemological reflection: “If knowing is to be possible as a way of determining the nature of the present-at-hand by observing it, then there must first be a *deficiency* in our having-to-do with the world concernfully” (88). So, deepening our understanding of what it was for things in the world to *be* entailed decontextualizing elements from the practice of everyday use. This kind of withholding of the practical attitude issued forth an *autonomous stance*, whence we could look at “the ready-to-hand thing which we encounter . . . ‘in a new way’ as something present-at-hand” (412). Since we ‘always-already’ dwelt within the world, disturbances in our routine dwelling (such as an encounter with malfunctioning or missing equipment) became privileged situations for theoretical reflection on what was hidden in so dwelling: “To the everydayness of Being-in-the-world there belong certain modes of concern. These permit the entities with which we concern ourselves to be encountered in such a way that the wordly character of what is within-the-world comes to the fore” (102). In short, various deficient modes of involvement (conspicuousness, obstinacy, obtrusiveness, disturbance, etc.) produced the desired disinterested contemplation of that by which we ineluctably dwelt in the world.¹⁶ Thus, equipment had a twofold character. Like Wittgenstein’s duck-rabbit, it was either concealed in the fullness of its practical being (function) or unconcealed in its compromised non-being (form). In short, unconcealment could never yield a whole picture (or a full revelation); its workings were inherently dialectical.

ASSESSING CURRENT INTERPRETATIONS OF THE HEIDEGGER/HINDEMITH NEXUS

Stephen Hinton argues that Bessler’s use of the Heideggerian framework was based on “a fruitful misunderstanding” (1989, 24) because,

first, *Being and Time* did not address aesthetics, and second, because Heidegger's account of art in a 1935 essay was "diametrically opposed" to Bessler's account and thus "in contradiction to what might be seen as his initial influence on the philosophy of art" (24). Whereas Bessler obviously had in mind Heidegger's notion of 'Zeug' (as opposed to 'Ding') when he described *Gebrauchsmusik*, and had furthermore given music thus defined a preferential place in his aesthetic system, Heidegger's analysis was at pains to come to terms with the individual work of art as something distinct from 'Zeug' (24). Hinton goes on to argue that Heidegger, far from 'relativising' the idea of autonomous art as Bessler had done in the name of Heideggerian categories, in fact emphasized the artwork's 'standing-in-itself' (*Insichstehen*) and thus remained entrenched in a romantic paradigm of the arts (24–5).

Richard Taruskin agrees. He encourages the belief that Bessler was misreading the dimension of use into Heideggerian categories in response to different historical pressures. "[Heidegger's aesthetics] remained firmly tied to the autonomy principle; for him, the music-Thing would always be something to stare at and sacralize. But Bessler's misreading of his philosophy professor was overdetermined, responsive not only to the perceived implications of Heidegger's thought but to many other stimuli from what we now call 'Weimar culture'" (1993, 295). Is this so? Taruskin vividly opposes "music as Zeug: music-for-use" with "music as Ding (*eigenständige*), or autonomous, *Musik*" (295). I want to suggest that this is a misreading of Bessler and Heidegger at least because, in the words of Heidegger, "'Zeug' has a peculiar intermediate position between the 'Ding' and the work, provided, that is, that such a calculating list is possible" (Hinton 1989, 24). Not only was Heidegger tentative and doubtful about the phenomenological status of the *Ding* at this point in his argument, but, if it was opposed to anything at all, it would have to be the artwork. They cannot be simply affined (in response, perhaps, to different historical pressures and stimuli today). In fact, *Zeug* mediated between *Ding* and artwork. Already in *Being and Time*, the character of *Zeug* is paradoxical and antithetical. On the one hand, when equipment was considered as *Ding* it concealed its being: "Equipment can genuinely show itself only in dealings cut to its own measure (hammering with a hammer, for example); but in such dealings an entity of this kind is not *grasped* thematically as an occurring Thing, nor is the equipment structure known as such even in the using" (13). On the other hand, when equipment was encountered as malfunctioning, say, it paradoxically approximated the autonomous stance that unconcealed it. In other words, the phenomenological effort to grasp the totality was compromised by both movements.

Pace Taruskin, Bessler seemed to grasp well the dual character of Heidegger's central categories. On the concept of 'life', for instance, he wrote:

'Life' is not used here in a naturalistic sense, for example as the object of biological or psychological tests, nor in a metaphysical sense as the object of historical-philosophical speculation; it does not have a thing-like quality at all, nor is it to be understood as a continuum in an objective sense. The clarifying notion of 'actual [*faktisch*]' life points rather to a *nexus*—continually present and experienced in different ways—of tendencies, confrontations, knowledge of oneself and of the environment, and the like. (Hinton 1989, 10 (*italics mine*))

Thus, in step with Heidegger, Bessler read the living practical context of *Gebrauchsmusik* as negotiable and multi-faceted. Indeed, the 'actual' was a confrontational meeting point of extreme tendencies. Likewise, Uitz's writing was pervaded with dialectical antipodes. For example, Uitz argued that the "establishment of man's full being through insight into his essence [entailed] . . . neither idoli[zing man] as a god nor brutali[zing man] as an animal" (Hinton 1989, 92). On the nature of the *Neue Sachlichkeit* he wrote, "Neither the spiritual nor the purely instinctive possesses full autonomy," and oriented his study towards the historically negotiable material values [*das sachliche Wertsein*] embodied in art at any given time (93). Kurt Weill too insisted on the dialectical aspirations of *Gebrauchsmusik*, arguing that "the boundaries between 'art music' and 'use music' [*Verbrauchsmusik*]' must be brought closer together and gradually erased and transcended [*aufgehoben*]" (83). Weill wrote, "In no way is it the aim of these efforts to compete with composers of hit-tunes [*Schlagerkomponisten*], but rather merely to bring our music to the masses" (84). In short, *Gebrauchsmusik* occupied an intermediate dialectical space between the false extremes of modern musical life.¹⁷ Its "central impulse" then did not quite "rest . . . in an *opposition* to artistic autonomy," and its "aesthetic" was not quite an "*anti-aesthetic*" (94–5, *italics mine*).

It is also not quite true that Bessler's conclusions were "diametrically opposed" to those later developed by Heidegger in his 1935 essay entitled "The Origin of the Work of Art" (Hinton 1989, 24). It may be true that Heidegger recognized the autonomous [*Insichstehen*] nature of the artwork "in its 'sacred' Being" (to quote Hans Georg Gadamer), but this 'sacred' aspect did not exhaust his analysis. Heidegger was not "addressing himself to the question of autonomy" in the Kantian sense of "*wholly*

disinterested pleasure” (24, 29). On the contrary, his account was launched in the practical context of art’s current worldly situation:

Architectural and sculptural works can be seen installed in public places, in churches, and in dwellings. Artworks of the most diverse periods and peoples are housed in collections and exhibitions. . . . The picture hangs on the wall like a rifle or a hat. A painting, e.g., the one by Van Gogh that represents a pair of peasant shoes, travels from one exhibition to another. . . . Beethoven’s quartets lie in storerooms of the publishing house like potatoes in a cellar. All works have this thingly character. (1977, 150)

Heidegger’s method involved taking what was most familiar, or readily available (*zuhanden*), in order to get to the primary claims about its essential being. Thus, ontology did not reside independently of our experience, but within it. Being was disclosed in beings. And the being of art emerged in a living context of fashioning and preserving—that is, it emerged in a specific context of *Gebrauch*.¹⁸ Furthermore, Heidegger maintained a role for the practical dimension at deeper levels of his analysis as well. For example, Van Gogh’s painting, reducible to neither an autonomous thing (in the sense of a noumenal ‘thing-in-itself’) nor a useful thing (in the sense of a phenomenal object), presented a pair of shoes that we encountered in a way that “depend[s] on the use to which the shoes are to be put” (162). Like Wittgenstein, for whom the ‘use’ of language revealed its primary meanings, Heidegger argued that their ‘use’ revealed the essential nature of things. And like Kracauer and Benjamin, for whom the faculty of ‘distraction’ yielded insight into the world, Heidegger argued that close reflections on the artwork brought things to light “almost clandestinely” (1977, 165).

Not surprisingly, Heidegger launched a stinging critique of the purely autonomous contemplation encouraged by the autonomous sphere into which art had been (falsely) projected in modern life. He wrote, for instance, “The Aegina sculptures in the Munich collection, Sophocles’ *Antigone* in the best critical edition, are, as the works they are, torn out of their own native sphere. However high their quality and power of impression, however their state of preservation, however certain their interpretation, placing them in a collection has withdrawn them from their own world” (1977, 167). The idea that art ‘torn out’ of its anthropological context annulled its essential worldly aspect is consistent with Bessler’s view of the questionable nature of modern concert life. To reduce Heidegger’s obvious concerns with practical being to Gadamer’s charge of ‘sacred Being’ is to distort the dialectical nuances of the inquiry. Like

Bessler, Heidegger emphatically rejected the romantic subjectivism (even the subjective willing to power of the Nietzschean sort) associated with, on the one hand, contemplative connoisseurship and, on the other, artistic genius. In short, Heidegger's phenomenological approach to the origin of art involved, in Jean-Paul Sartre's formulation, "mak[ing] something of what we were made into" (in Safranski 1998, 150).¹⁹

This is not to say that there was no autonomous aesthetic aspect at work in Heidegger's reflections on art. As I have argued was the case with Bessler and Uitz, this aspect entered Heidegger's phenomenological scene in a dialectical way. For example, on the subject of listening (which, at this point in the text, was also a critique of the philosophies of David Hume and Bertrand Russell), Heidegger wrote, "In order to hear a bare sound we have to listen away from things, divert our ear from them, i.e., listen abstractly" (1977, 156). Thus, to hear a sound was not to encounter a bundle of sensations, or mere acoustic blasts, but to have already understood what one was given to understand in order to hear that sound.²⁰ More importantly, the artwork was also able to interrupt the habituated domain of practical use in order to bring it thematically into focus. By artistic means then, it broke the spell of the structured concealment of practice to disclose its essential truth. About equipment, Heidegger observed, "The more handy a piece of equipment is, the more inconspicuous it remains that, for example, this particular hammer is, and the more exclusively does the equipment keep itself in its equipmentality" (182). About the artwork, in contrast, Heidegger wrote, "*Art . . . is a becoming and happening of truth*" (183). The autonomous moment precipitated 'alertness' in the context of a systematic forgetfulness of our practical being. It revealed something that was recalcitrant to that world.

THE NEED FOR BOTH 'WORLD' AND 'EARTH'

The character of the artwork was twofold: First, it "[set] . . . up a world," by which Heidegger meant that it focused an outlook, outlined the important distinctions in life, established a community, and stipulated normativity (1977, 171). In the words of Heidegger, "Wherever those decisions of our history that relate to our essential being are made, are taken up and abandoned by us, go unrecognized and are rediscovered by new inquiry, there the world worlds. . . . By the opening up of a world, all things gain their lingering and hastening, their remoteness and nearness, their scope and limits" (170). Heidegger's 'world' provided the referential structures of intelligibility governing a community. Its essential being, however, was concealed in everyday practice: The world "is never

an object that stands before us and can be seen” (170). This is where the second aspect of the artwork played a role.²¹ The artwork “lets the earth be earth,” by which Heidegger meant that it *illuminated* the world’s all-governing totality. The ‘earth’ showed the points of resistance, recalcitrance, anomaly, and crisis in the world. It marked the ground upon which the intelligible outlook of the world rested. In sum then, the work of art laid out a world *and* made conspicuous that which did not allow it to be incorporated into that world. In practical life, the earth ‘retreated’ to make possible the open relational context of intelligibility of the world. But in the artwork, the earth was brought into the open in its ‘strife’ with the world. This was the autonomous moment in art; this was the excessive moment that was not wholly absorbed in the all-governing practices of the world; this was the pre-worlded moment; the critical moment. In Heidegger’s view, when art failed to set up a world, it became a falsely autonomous (or “world-withdrawn”) object of the “art industry,” and when it failed to set forth the earth it became wholly “used-up” (*verbrauchen*) by the world (167–8, 172). The artwork failed as art in both these cases.

Written almost a decade after *Being and Time*, the essay on the work of art illuminates and expands upon the philosophical principles already circulating in Heidegger’s thought of the 1920s. This, in turn, resonates with the philosophical background of *Gebrauchsmusik*. As it is with the Heideggerian artwork, *Gebrauchsmusik*, in its dialectical elaboration, straddled antithetical positions. Besseler was concerned about forging a *nexus* between the extremes of philosophical objectivism and idealism; and this is why Weill advocated superseding the opposition between the extremes of used-up music and wholly autonomous music. For Besseler, *Gebrauchsmusik* provided a third term that straddled the divide between ‘high’ and ‘low’ music: *Gebrauchsmusik* “becomes a lasting necessity and joy of life instead of rare revelation or entertainment” (Hinton 1989, 17). In their broad outlines, these views were essentially consistent with the phenomenological framework elaborated in both *Being and Time* and “The Origin of the Work of Art.” Heidegger’s view of art, it seems, is substantially closer to that elaborated by the founders and executors of *Gebrauchsmusik* than Hinton, or especially Taruskin, will allow. To disclaim that Heidegger ‘remained firmly tied to the autonomy principle’ is to sever ‘world’ from its companion term ‘earth’. As Heidegger or Besseler might say, it gives in to the exaggerations of both terms. Under this mistaken reading, *Gebrauchsmusik* risks reduction to an, ostensibly Besselerian, hermetic niche—a music used-up by its equipmentality—which is opposed to an, ostensibly Heideggerian, hermetic niche—a music subsisting in blue-eyed autonomy. This view dichotomizes the

debate more rigidly than seems justified by the source texts. As suggested by Heidegger's reminder of the irreducible structural ground upon which all inquiry rests, perhaps this dichotomizing tendency reflects less the reality of the historical debate and more the dichotomy between 'historical hermeneutics' (whereby the musical object is figured as irreducibly part of the social arena) and 'autonomous formalism' (whereby the musical object is figured in terms of the notes themselves) that structures Anglo-American music studies today.

It is true that Gadamer (upon whom Hinton's belief that Heidegger's philosophy of art addressed itself to 'art's sacred autonomy' seems to rely) locates an unthought moment within Heidegger's thought. Adorno and, more recently, Jacques Derrida (in his book *The Truth in Painting*), perform a similar deconstruction of the Heideggerian text. But, as Derrida and others are at pains to point out, deconstructive readings also recapitulate the terms they scrutinize. In other words, Adorno, Gadamer and Derrida also read through what is revealed in Heidegger in order to register what is concealed there. Their methods are not entirely un-Heideggerian. Through a kind of circular double-reading, these critics locate the unthought dimension in Heidegger (namely, *Being* itself) that sources the revelatory one. But this is akin to the way Heidegger critically approached Nietzsche's notion of the 'will to power', and this is akin to the way Albrecht Wellmer approaches Adorno's notion of 'non-identity', and the way Derrida approaches Jacques Lacan's negatively transcendent '*objet petit a*', and the way Michel Foucault approaches Derrida's '*différance*', and so on. All of these arguments run on surrogate absolutes that destabilize the world they place under critique. As Lydia Goehr might say, the truth in deconstruction is always 'somewhere somewhere else'.

Now, this history of philosophy may not be the gyiring maelstrom of ever more radical critique that it seems from this surveying height. On the contrary, each of these writers is mired in the exigencies of a different historical context upon which their usefulness depends. For example, Heidegger was writing at a time when the old Wilhelmian monarchy had collapsed in an earth-shaking world war, which prompted him to thinking about modes of beginning anew, to reflect on historico-metaphysical origins (*Ursprünge*) and future communities (*Völker*). The uncritical fascist elaboration of these categories puts them in radical doubt today.²² Fascism biologized the metaphysical *Ursprung*, and ignored the dimension of 'earth', which was the *Volk's* resistance. Indeed, the support Besseler and Hindemith showed for the emerging 'Youth Movement' (*Jugendbewegung*) and its role in transforming communal music-making might seem chillingly similar to Heidegger's support of the brownshirts on the Freiburg campus in the early 1930s. The danger was that, instead of insist-

ing on the essential plurality of communities, *Gebrauchsmusik*'s envisaged *Volk* (whether appraised by politics on the left or right) threatened to reduce to the collective singular. In other words, the sense of 'communal belonging', toward which Weill and Uitz strove, risked becoming overwhelmed by the unrestrained modalities of identification and empathy that so disturbed Horkheimer and Adorno in their *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Thus Heidegger's critique of the contemplative autonomous mode, which he described as a "holding-oneself-back from any manipulation or utilization," also casts an ominous shadow on the 'use' (*gebrauch*) to which non-autonomous art could be put (Hinton 1989, 13).

But, to uncritically narrow Heidegger's reflections on art into the opposite ('autonomous') side of a seemingly frozen early-twenty-first-century dialectic, is to reduce his account to a 'thing-like Thing' that it was not. In this interpretation, we risk ignoring the dimension of 'world', which was art's referential structure of intelligibility. In fact, Heidegger's lesson that we cannot think beyond the historical horizon encircling us, is dramatically revealed by the disastrous ends to which his thinking could be put. But that drama leaves something concealed as well. The question is how to probe it. Perhaps, then, *Gebrauchsmusik* was less a "relativisation of traditional aesthetics," and more a dynamic dialectical encircling of them (1977, 6). And, perhaps, it behooves us to dynamically engage the dialectical antinomies of this historical aesthetic, no less than those of our own thought, lest we allow the category of 'history' to assume the unfettered autonomous stance it hopes to challenge. It is a matter of making resistant memories of what we are made into.

LISTENING TO *GEBRAUCHSMUSIK* IN HEIDEGGERIAN TERMS

This philosophical account encourages a particular hearing of *Gebrauchsmusik*, and I would like to turn now to this music. There is no doubt that Hindemith's *Kammermusik* series (written between 1922 and 1927), the locus classicus of *Gebrauchsmusik*, put Heideggerian categories to musical work in a much less heavy-handed way than Heidegger's philosophical tomes did. Suspended as it was between *Verbrauchsmusik* and *Darstellungsmusik*, *Gebrauchsmusik* expressed a kind of mischievous *esprit*. To retroactively apply Heidegger's terms in the 1935 essay on the artwork, one might say *Gebrauchsmusik* straddled the divide between the autonomous sounding form in motion (which had detached itself from its irreducible grounding in the 'world'), and the commercial pop tune (which had detached itself from all critical aspirations). *Gebrauchsmusik* indulged in the 'popular' while making an attempt to show up the 'earth'

upon which its assumptions about form, tonality, etc. rested; and it indulged in the ‘serious’, but without granting the music its traditional ‘other-worldly’ hermetic claims. This blend of ‘earthing’ the ‘popular’ and ‘worlding’ the ‘autonomous’ encouraged a peculiar musical humour. Let me examine these kinds of dialectical tendencies in the context of one of Hindemith’s *Kammermusiken*.

The *Kammermusiken* Nos. 2–7 were works written for different soloists, namely piano (No. 2), cello (No. 3), viola (No. 4), violin (No. 5), Baroque *viola d’amore* (No. 6), and organ (No. 7). The organ was a kind of icon of the Baroque and reflected a resurgence of interest in restoring Baroque organs in Germany at the time—an early form, perhaps, of ‘early music’. In fact, Hindemith’s *Kammermusik* series elaborated a kind of neo-pre-classicism that was reflected in his use of Baroque instruments, his use of Baroque formal types (like fugue, da capo, and chaconne forms) and his use of Baroque figuration (especially in his later *Kammermusiken*). *Kammermusiken* Nos. 5 and 7 are based on Baroque models. For example, Hindemith began his *Kammermusik* No. 5 with a terse motto by the soloist followed by a *tutti* group. This, typically Baroque concerto technique, was routinely employed by J.S. Bach, G.F. Handel, Antonio Vivaldi, and others. Also, Hindemith often treated the musical detail in a Baroque fashion. His conception of the bass part, for example, was often continuo-like.²³ In the first movement of *Kammermusik* No. 7, for example, a rhythmically active and continuous melody is set against a rather static accompaniment in repeated quarter notes. The resulting texture is strikingly akin to the first movement of Bach’s *Brandenburg Concerto* No. 6.

I would like now to focus on a single work in order to confront the philosophical dimensions of *Gebrauchsmusik* in the context of close musical listening. In particular, I want to mark the ‘autonomous’ critical moments, when some aspect of the musical flow seems to malfunction—it is interrupted, say, or inflected by an alien reference—and thereby illuminates something else. In the *Kammermusik* No. 1, Hindemith’s referential field included both neo-classical (or pre-classical) allusions (such as Baroque figurations and formal types) and quotations from contemporary musical reality. These contrasting fields of music provided the first layer of dialectical interplay between, on the one hand, the autonomous music (which had become, so to speak, ‘world-withdrawn’ in its museologized twentieth-century incarnation), and, on the other, the living modern music (which partook in ‘worlding the modern world’). The second layer of dialectical interplay was given in the twofold nature of the latter category. On the one hand, Hindemith referenced the modish jazz and popular dances of the day. For example, the last movement of the

Kammermusik No. 1, entitled “Finale 1921,” quoted a then-fashionable foxtrot by Wilm Wilm. On the other hand, Hindemith made references to contemporary concert music that aspired to art for art’s sake. For example, it is likely (as Taruskin has noted) that the opening of *Kammermusik* No. 1 was modeled on Stravinsky’s burlesque ballet *Pétrouchka*. Thus, within the terrain of the work’s contemporary allusions, Hindemith also dialectically contrasted music that was ‘used-up’ with music that was ‘autonomous’. And, since the allusion to *Pétrouchka* was already complicated by the fact of its own eclectic source material, these levels of dialectical activity could be extended even further. Finally, this multi-capillaried juxtaposition of stylistic forms taken as a whole constituted another dialectical pole against which the utilitarian aspect of physical performance strove.

The *Kammermusik* No. 1 begins with a kind of equivocating quiver of music, at once filigreed and unmoving (Example 3). On a formal level, it is harmonically peculiar: All the notes of the B-Major collection are sounded, except for D \sharp . It is metrically ambiguous with constant changes of meter. Rhythmic activity at a micro-level is complex. There are two layers of polyrhythm. For the violins, the rhythmic figures grouped in threes could divide the $\frac{3}{4}$ measure into two $\frac{6}{16}$ measures, while against this the violas articulate figures grouped in twos, which could divide the measure into three $\frac{4}{16}$ measures. To complicate matters further, the piano plays a cross rhythm against the basic pulse of the other two instruments (namely, six ‘in the time of’ four). This sounds almost like a trill. Hindemith may be polemically gaming with traditional music’s rhetorical devices of beginning and ending. By sounding a gesture of closure at the beginning of the piece, as Stravinsky was to do a year later in his first truly neo-classical work, the Octet, Hindemith lays bare the arbitrary face of these naturalized devices. But it is a double estrangement because the trill is mechanized and stiff, as if it had become snarled in the cogs of a production line.

Already within the opening measures of the *Kammermusik*, then, certain pertinent philosophical categories are brought thematically to the ear. First, by sounding out a limited pitch collection lacking certain notes, the opening draws attention to a musical grammar that has fallen into disuse. If the music is in B Major, it is a malfunctioning B Major. The equipmental (or ‘useful’) character of B Major has been interrupted, leaving it exposed in a brutish stasis. As an autonomous formal lump, it unconceals its historical character as functioning equipment. Its second nature is revealed in a denaturalized context. Second, the overly active rhythmic dimension, almost vertiginous in movement (in which binary rhythms run agilely alongside three-beated ones, for example) brings a

KAMMERMUSIK No.1

I Paul Hindemith, Op.24 No.1

I

Sehr schnell und wild

The musical score is arranged in a standard orchestral format. The instruments listed from top to bottom are: Große Flöte, Clarinette (in B), Fagott, Trompete (in B), Schlagzeug, Klavier, Harmonium, Violine I, Violine II, Bratsche, Cello, and Contrabaß. The tempo marking 'Sehr schnell und wild' is placed above the first staff. The piano part (Klavier) is particularly prominent, featuring a dense, repetitive rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The woodwinds and strings have more melodic and harmonic lines, with some dynamic markings like *ff* and *mf*.

Hindemith KAMMERMUSIK NO. 1, OP. 24

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EXAMPLE 3: HINDEMITH, *KAMMERMUSIK* NO. 1, OP. 24, MEASURES 1–13

kind of traditional Baroque motoric figuration into strife with itself. Neither rhythmic grouping assumes ascendancy over the other, and yet both are in full *fortissimo* flight. Thus, rhythmic layers are both preserved and annulled resulting in a negation of propulsive rhythmic movement. A complex stasis remains. Third, the quasi-Cubist rendition of the trill in the piano unmasks the claimed ‘naturalness’ of its ornamental eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century form. It is removed from its felicitous world (where it was associated with cadences that marked music’s formal divisions) in order to reveal the assumptions of formal balance and

A complex musical score consisting of two systems of staves. The top system contains five systems of staves, and the bottom system contains five systems of staves. The notation is dense, featuring various rhythmic patterns, melodic lines, and dynamic markings such as 'p' (piano) and 'f' (forte). The score is written in a traditional Western musical notation style with treble and bass clefs.

EXAMPLE 3 (CONT.)

The image displays a musical score for Example 3 (Cont.), consisting of two systems of music. Each system contains six staves. The notation is complex, featuring various rhythmic values, accidentals, and dynamic markings. The first system begins with a box containing the number '10' in the upper left corner. The second system concludes with a double bar line and a final measure containing the number '9'. The score is presented in a traditional Western musical notation style.

EXAMPLE 3 (CONT.)

symmetry on which that world rested. In short, the trill has morphed into its exchangeable commodity form, at once denaturalized and denatured. Finally, these three interpretative points themselves make a detour through another work, Stravinsky's *Pétrouchka*. Like a Heideggerian wood path (*Holzweg*), or blind alley, the swerve through the obstructing *Pétrouchka* gives these interpretative layers, however dialectical in themselves, the slip. (And so the *Pétrouchka*-derived texture unconceals the untruth about the sound of these (less mediated) historico-formal moments. It is as if the complex referential layers of these sounds were already somewhere somewhere else: Playing at becoming wooden puppets on a wood path, perhaps?)

Notice that this kind of listening is also a Heideggerian "listening away" from that which we are given to know in order to listen (1977, 156). By this I mean that the shimmering texture of woven sound that is then offset by the syncopated neighbor-note shrieks in the other instruments (flute, clarinet, accordion, and cello) does not simply announce its world as much as set it up in strife with its conditioning grounds. The Baroque-like figuration in the violins (typical of a quarter-note figure in, say, a Baroque sequence) is torn from its historical domain of practical use by the fact of moving nowhere at all. In becoming repetitious it denies the sequence (which would use it up), and comes to shine forth its peculiar character. Interestingly, the sequential aspect is reinstated by the sporadic, irregular interjections of the shrieking three-note figures. These figures gradually crank upwards as the movement progresses over measures 1–8. Again, the function implied by one figure (a Baroque figuration) is not realized, but given instead to another figure, whose function (a neighbor-note turn) is not normally associated with sequential passages. In other words, the music instigates an *agon* between what is set forth by a musical figure and what is presupposed in hearing that musical figure. Like a cubist painting, the music pries open the immanent disjunctures in its happenings and events and relocates them to other happenings and events. It 'cuts out' the events' auras, as it were, and 'pastes' them elsewhere. Their relocated non-belonging interrupts their referential structures of intelligibility, which, in turn, vividly illuminates their being. Analogously, one might say of Cezanne's paintings, the multiple perspectives break the continuity of three-dimensions by painting in two-dimensions, which, in turn, issues four dimensions. Our alertness to what has not become of the artwork's objects brings those objects into renewed focus. This 'new objective' focus reveals them for the historically contingent objects they are: *Art objects*.

For all the spasmodic shrieking of the rising neighbor-note figure, the shimmering equivocation of strings and piano remains indifferent to the

figure's gradual rising. Like a malfunctioning machine, strings and piano simply shimmer forth at the same pitch levels. But, just when we settle for this quality of linear disalignment, nearly all sounding voices (trumpet and piano are absent) are thrown into a unison scale (measure 9), which descends into a shimmering-again a twelfth below. Suddenly wrenching the wrench, then, the music shatters its previous space via exaggerated linear alignment. This is a parody of the traditional modulation to the dominant; a malfunctioning mimesis. Where modulation is traditionally prompted by the gradual encroachment of non-felicitous tones in a functioning pitch collection, the move in measure 9 is prompted by the gradual encroachment of a sense of felicity about a malfunctioning collection. The flatly narrow-minded scale is a willful simplification of tradition. It simply *asserts* what tradition *achieves*, and thereby paradoxically achieves a better sense of what tradition simply asserts. We are given a profile-perspective of tradition's transparent frontal-perspective. Its simple essence is simplified into complicated accidents. The flatly narrow-minded distorts a habit in order to disclose the habitual side of the habit. The narrowing suddenly becomes active with concealed possibility. An old truth becomes a constructed happening and a new construction becomes a happening of truth. Like a mask that unswindles, to paraphrase Brecht.

In the new pitch space that follows the unison descent in measure 9, the neighbor-note figures remain old. Deaf to the change of harmony, they shriek out on the same pitches as before. It is as if Hindemith had excised this event from the opening measures and grafted it onto a new background. Perhaps, with the obstinate deafness of measures 1–8's quiver still in mind, the neighbor-note figure turns its own deaf ear here (the deafness of a keen hearing?). Then, towards the end of this passage, the sequences, registering once more their failure to move the quivering voices, suddenly stop. As though someone flicked a switch, we get a drastically new section in the dorian mode, which is entirely in unison (but for the dissonant bass pedal). This *B* section (measures 17–30) unleashes a forgotten chant in fast-forward, which is sporadically interrupted by the neighbor-note figure (now continuous with the unison unfolding), and by polytonal outbursts in the piano and accordion. These recombinations invoke the traditional development idea, albeit by way of static montage. The unison passage tries itself out on a number of scale degrees, as if to indulge the impossible task of modulating via unmoving blocs.²⁴ The neighbor-note figure becomes a kind of travesty of traditional motivic 'fragmentation' technique by repeating itself again and again until the dorian unison passage is burst, and the music goes back to the opening material (via an ascending C-Major scale in measure 31—a humorous, upside-down version of the scale in measure 9).

Measures 31–40 elaborate a kind of mutant return of the opening material, interrupted, once more, by the dorian-mode music. This texture, in turn, is interrupted by even more repetitions of the three-note figure than before, and leads to a cascading glissando that slides the music into a *finis* on F#. (The glissando prefigures the last movement, which is put to a halt with the scream of a siren.) By abruptly halting without accomplishing closure, the movement has learned to smile. (Laughter proceeds from a sudden conception of some unexpected ability within itself: Like the Thracian maid—who laughed when her master, the philosopher Thales of Miletus, fell into a well while gazing at the stars—the glissando laughs at the music plunging into unaccomplished closure.)

For all the graphic contrast of the music's textural blocks, the form of the movement is mistakable. Perhaps it is a *da capo* (ABA') form under a kind of constructivist erasure; or perhaps it is a *rondo* form (ABA' B') that menaces the distinction between theme and episode. Perhaps it is the inorganically achieved hybrid of these forms, which thus transforms the transcendental aspirations of formal synthesis to the eccentric measure of clock time. It is as if the form sets forth secret wood channels and trapdoors toward the ground that sets up organic formal wholes. The classical ideal appears, as though returning from a great distance (to quasi-normalcy), only to discover the earth upon which it stands with astonishment. That earth seems a different thing now (without its animals, trees, breezes), making it forget what it had set out to look for in those strange channels. Under the erasure of brutal constructivist mimicry, then, music's natural forms appear as manufactured conventions of a world withdrawn. This is the hard touch that reveals the presence of the composer behind the shimmers and figures. In the third movement, Hindemith performs a similarly Nietzschean/Heideggerian 'destruction'/'deconstruction' of the fugal form. It is a scene of unmotivated subject entries (indifferent to all tonal implications) and lost counter-subjects (occasionally behaving as if they had become the subjects), which circle around a muted expressive axis as slowly as the earth around itself. In circling thus, the world's ground gives way to giving way.

The *Kammermusik* mockingly reorganizes patterns, figures and forms of the commonplace to magnify their organizing source. It becomes autonomous from them. That is, it uses found musical objects without the guidance of their governing practice. The *Kammermusik* becomes a counterfeit simplification in quest of revelatory precision. "The more solitary the work," to use a maxim from Heidegger, "and the more cleanly it seems to cut all ties to human beings, the more simply does the thrust come into the open that such a work *is*, and the more essentially is the extraordinary thrust to the surface and what is long-familiar thrust

down” (1977, 183). This autonomy is ‘more-or-less’ autonomy, more than a site of all-governing worldliness, and less than a site of otherworldly Being. This is an oscillating autonomy, at once doubling its assertiveness and modesty, at once freeing and constituting its subject, at once forgetting the memory of its systematic forgetfulness. *Gebrauchsmusik* was not music meant to be used-up; it was not the uncritical world-bound *Gemeinschaftsmusik* or *Blockflötenkultur* that Adorno would call it. Nor was it music to be hermetically contemplated from aesthetically appropriate distances; it was not this world-less *eigenständige* music. It was music that encouraged listening away from its worldliness to the sound of the ground upon which it rested, which, in turn, did no more than reveal the contingent, conventional nature of the world it had set forth to set up. . . .

CONCLUSION: ON ADORNO ON HEIDEGGER (AN UNCANNY ALLIANCE)

How did Hindemith’s Heideggerian musical production differ from that attributed to Schoenberg by Adorno? As is becoming clear, Heidegger’s aesthetics were not that different from those of Adorno. Speaking generally first, both owed an allegiance to a trope of negativity, which, in turn, inaugurated a dialectical play between contradictory extremes. In the words of Rüdiger Safranski, for both philosophers the “Whole was the Untrue” (1998, 416). Moreover, the recalcitrant particular that resisted absorption into the ‘Whole’ had a formal and autonomous character in both cases. For Heidegger the autonomous moment disturbed our routine practical life and thus revealed something “undiscoverable” in it, and for Adorno the autonomous moment exploded the historical sedimentations of our “delusional context” and thus illuminated something “totally different” (in Safranski 1998, 298, 416). Yet, Adorno never publicly agreed with Heidegger. On the contrary, Adorno described Heidegger’s philosophy as fascist and folkloristic. Safranski writes, “Heidegger’s [dialectical] statement that ‘to grow means to open up to the expanse of the heavens and, at the same time strike root in the darkness of the ground’ immediately earns itself Adorno’s accusation of fascism and ‘*Blubo* [blood-and-soil] ideology’” (416). In step with his critique of Hindemith, Adorno aimed to trace fascism within Heidegger’s fundamental ontology.

Heidegger’s ontology, like Hindemith’s music, was at once too heteronomous and too homogeneous for Adorno. On the one hand, it was too heteronomous because Heidegger was overly preoccupied with particular *beings* that floated free from considerations of the social totality.

Owing to his partial attachment to the dual Marxist principles of base and superstructure, Adorno was uneasy about Heidegger's narrow engagement with isolated phenomena. For Adorno, Heidegger thus betrayed a "readiness to sanction a heteronomous order, removed from justification by consciousness" (in Safranski 1998, 411). In his *Jargon of Authenticity*, Adorno hyperbolically wrote, "In the name of contemporary authenticity even a torturer could put in all sorts of claims for compensation, to the extent that he was simply a true torturer" (411). For Adorno, analyses of heteronomous phenomena should be allied to a historical analysis of their emergence, which, in turn, should be linked to general questions of truth and ethics. Adorno's critique of Hindemith's compositional use of the musical past resembled his critique of Heidegger. By dealing with musical material (however fragmented and strangely juxtaposed) as if it were historically intact, Hindemith risked instituting (instead of undoing) the 'given' determination of that material. Like Heidegger's philosophical exploration of the 'being' of heteronomous entities, Hindemith's musical exploration of the nature of heteronomous musical fragments deflected attention from the whole and amounted to "merely playing with forms" (in Paddison 1997, 41). In musical terms, Adorno charged Hindemith with positing "empty schema not grounded in the [musical] material," by which he meant the substitution of naturalized musical forms, or 'schema', for the historically already pre-formed (*bereits Vorgeformtes*) 'material' (1997, 43). Instead of mediating between musical subjectivity and musical material, Hindemith's music objectively secured the latter. Dissociated from the inevitable historical sedimentations embedded in the musical material, Hindemith's 'historical' musical schema thus paradoxically constructed an 'objective' history—unhinged, that is, from contemporary questions of truth and ethics.

On the other hand, Heidegger's ontology, like Hindemith's music, was too homogeneous for Adorno. Where Heidegger *did* elaborate a notion of the social whole, Adorno felt it was in terms that were idealized and non-contradictory. Heidegger's description of art's role as a provider of a center of reference around which a community meaningfully organized itself betrayed a narrow conception of society that marched in step with the Nationalist Socialist revolution. Adorno spotted this desire to reduce the *Volk* to a homogeneous collective in Hindemith as well. Hindemith's concept of *Gebrauchsmusik* evaded the complexity of social relations and yielded to a homogenized notion of community. According to Adorno, when the collective was presupposed in this way, "one deifies the existing powers as such, and persuades the collectivity, which is in itself empty of meaning, that its very collectivity is its meaning" (Paddison 1997, 42). By

legitimizing itself through an appeal to a mythical sense of shared community, *Gebrauchsmusik* thus inclined towards an authoritarian political principle. It was “stabilized music,” seeking accommodation with society via notions of ‘community’ (*Volk*) and ‘authenticity’ (*Eigentlichkeit*), in the Heideggerian sense (1997, 46). Predictably, Adorno dismissed the *Craft of Musical Composition* as “nothing but a superstructure for reactionary compositional tendencies” (1984, 33). For Adorno, Hindemith’s attempt to ground a highly particular system of harmony in elemental natural law was a desire to evade, in the service of a like-minded *Volk*, a genuine engagement with history. In short, like his music, Hindemith’s *Craft* was a justification for totalitarianism.

For all its virulent critique of Heidegger’s irrationalism, however, Adorno’s aesthetic theory had more similarities than differences with Heidegger’s theory than Adorno would admit. This stands to reason in light of the fact that both philosophical orientations were mediated by the same historical crises. But because of his Marxist persuasions, Adorno tended to exaggerate the small difference between them. He emphasized Heidegger’s apparently totalitarian metaphors of ‘authenticity’, ‘community’, and ‘earth’, but underplayed the fundamental philosophical affinity that Heidegger’s “thinking on Being” shared with his own “thinking of nonidentity” (in Safranski 1998, 414). While Heidegger’s quest for Being was an undisguised metaphysical operation, Adorno’s negative dialectics recapitulated such metaphysics on a subterranean level of argument. For example, in *Negative Dialectics* Adorno noted that nonidentifying cognition “seeks to say what something is, while identitarian thinking says what something comes under, what it exemplifies or represents, and what, accordingly, it is not itself” (1973, 149). It is true that Adorno never positively elaborated what that something *is*, but to know that all identitarian thinking falsified this thing was already to have sequestered it to some extent, and thus to have recuperated its ‘being’ in a predetermined integration. Not only did Adorno engage in metaphysical activity then, but this activity resonated with the ‘thinking on Being’ of the Heideggerian sort. Both types of thinking claimed to open space for that which *is* to reveal itself without violating itself. Both promised to illuminate something beyond the practical context of the commonplace—Heidegger’s “becom[ing] perplexed” by the ordinary (1962, 19); Adorno’s discovery of radical alterity amid the general delusional context (in Safranski 1998, 416). This is because both shared an essentially pessimistic diagnosis of the modern age—Heidegger’s modern world as “a disposable object, a picture, an idea for producing”; Adorno’s modern world as “alienat[ed] from [those who] exercise . . . power over [it]” (1998, 413–4). Both had utopian aspirations without yielding to the

Hegelian idea of inevitable historical progress. Likewise, both approaches were exercises in Hegelian dialectics without the supersession (*Aufhebung*) of consciousness. Thus, both also failed to take a firm philosophical stand on succeeding forms of political life. Instead, both turned to art as a site of fundamental truth—Heidegger’s art as the “becoming and happening of truth,” (1977, 183) Adorno’s art as a “revelation of truth” (1970, 207). Indeed, in the words of Adorno, “The forms of art reflect the history of man more truthfully than do documents themselves” (1984, 43). In short, for all the differences in the details, Heidegger and Adorno shared not only similar topical interests but also fundamental philosophical ground.

When I mark the affinity between these historical figures, however, I do not mean to reduce their positions to variations on a single theme. It is important not to minimize the differend between them. Most obviously, their political allegiances point in opposite directions. And this difference can be traced, to some extent, in the key concept-metaphors that drive their respective philosophies. In *The Memory of Thought* Alexander Düttmann identifies the variable ways *names* function metonymically to capture abstract totalities in the thought of Heidegger and Adorno. For Düttmann, because they aspire to indifferently communicating a given content or event, moments of naming are the blind spots that evade conceptual thought. Both Adorno and Heidegger betray various moments of unmediated naming in their writings, but these are not mere conceptual failures. They also reflect political commitments, which in turn illuminate the practical contexts with which their respective dialectical excursions are engaged. For Adorno, the inevitable advances made by man over nature tend toward catastrophe; he thus gives to history the name *Auschwitz*. In contrast, Heidegger, who calls upon the German people to undertake a transformative mission of recovery and self-assertion, gives to the historical-spiritual undertaking the name *Germania*. The practical decision to think in terms of either history’s descent to hell (*Auschwitz*) or its ascent to heaven (*Germania*) irreducibly conditions the (dialectical) undecidability in the respective inquiries of Adorno and Heidegger. It is therefore the moments when both philosophers fall victim to the power of surrogate absolutes in their arguments that paradoxically attest to the possibility of a profoundly different politics. The unthought illuminates the chasm between them.

Still, for all the important differences, the modernist conception of art for both philosophers was inherently dialectical; and both took seriously art’s claim to aesthetic autonomy (or partial autonomy) within this dialectic. It is important to recognize these structural affinities between Heidegger and Adorno in the context of the philosophy of art lest we

recapitulate false binaries that simply reflect the exaggerations of our own times. This recognition also puts us in a better position to assess the limits of dialectics today. Despite his explicit distaste of Heideggerian categories, for instance, Adorno's critique of these categories to some extent pointed to the undoing of his own position as well. For example, the charge that Heidegger's reflections on heteronomous 'beings' tended to float free of considerations of both a social totality and history applied equally to Adorno's figuration of music's "immanent law of form" (1970, 222), while the charge that Heidegger's self-identical concept of the "collective" was idealized and mystified applied equally (albeit inversely) to Adorno's overdrawn figuration of the "culture industry" (Paddison 1997, 120–67). Perhaps it is time to conclude that, for all its apparent diversity, European modernism *in general* sought to heighten the tension between various extreme dialectical tendencies in an effort to arrest critical space in an increasingly administered world. While it insisted on its self-sufficiency and its ability to disclose truths about the world (principally in negative terms), modernism's adversarial impulse also claimed art as an agent for social change (or rebellion against unwanted change). As Nietzsche might say, both Adorno and Heidegger were hanging in the illusionary dreams of a better society. The question is, was this illusion a productive blemish in the wheels of administered historical development, or was it the residual promise of a false utopia?

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NOTES

1. See my "The Return of the Aesthetic: Musical Formalism and Its Place in Political Critique," *Beyond Structural Listening? Postmodern Modes of Hearing* (ed. Andrew Dell'Antonio). Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004, 252–77, and "Feminine/Feminist: In Quest of Names with No Experiences (Yet)," *Postmodern Music/Postmodern Thought* (eds. Judy Lochhead and Joseph Auner). New York: Routledge, 2002, 141–73.
2. Relatedly, see J.K. Randall's quest to question the question from within itself ("What Is It about About?") (Boretz 2003, 540).
3. In sync with the general thrust of Adorno's 1934 essay "Der dialektische Komponist," Schoenberg himself spoke about music in terms of cultural critique and truth telling. Schoenberg's polemical writings included the essays "About Music Criticism," "Problems in Teaching Art," "A Legal Question," and "The Music Critic" (found in *Style and Idea*) as well as the 1911 *Harmonielehre*. Schoenberg also subscribed to the Hegelian idea of the historical progress of art and situated his music at the cutting edge of modernity. For Schoenberg, this progress involved a dialectical encounter between conflicting tendencies, such as 'tradition' and 'innovation', 'heart' and 'brain', or 'style' and 'idea'. Like Adorno's dialectic between musical 'material' and subjective 'composition', Schoenberg's elusive concept of 'idea' (*Gedanke*), for example, involved a dialectical struggle between preservation and negation, old and new. A musical idea was the establishment of "sheerly musical" relations "between things or parts between which no relation existed before that establishment" (in Carpenter and Neff, 1997, 157). An idea was therefore always new. Following a lightning-like moment of inspiration (*der blitzartige Einfall*), the composer set out to realize the conception materially. Schoenberg described the compositional process in terms of reckoning with an inherently unstable scenario: "The method by which balance is restored seems to me the real *idea* of the composition" (1975, 123). Schoenberg's emphasis on the unique manner in which organic unity is achieved was an endorsement of the notion of originality as a sign of artistic autonomy, which, for Adorno in turn, was analogous to the emancipation of the bourgeois subject. But, for Schoenberg, to be genuinely original involved a persistent consciousness of tradition. According to Hermann Danuser, Schoenberg's paradoxical paradigm is best understood if we "take as our point of departure the idea of a

dialectical form of art production, one that favors the unorthodox and in which the rationally deducible is found alongside the unexpected, and recourse to compositional and genre tradition alongside bold inroads into new musical and music-historical territory” (Danuser 1997, 181).

4. Adorno’s negative assessment of Hindemith constitutes, what Stephen Luttmann calls “a special case in the history of Hindemith criticism” (2005, 125). This is because Adorno’s influence on the post-War avant-garde in Germany contributed significantly to the rejection of Hindemith’s music and ideas in new music circles. The criticism spanned the domains of music, politics, and philosophy. In 1967 and 1968 Adorno prepared a collection of his essays on Hindemith under the title “Ad vocem Hindemith: Eine Dokumentation.” Wolfgang Lessing’s *Die Hindemith-Rezeption Theodor W. Adornos* (1999) critically traces Adorno’s increasingly negative evaluation of Hindemith as well as its effect on twentieth-century composition. See also Luttmann’s *Paul Hindemith* (2005, 125–30).
5. The two points are intimately related to—but in tension with—one another. On the one hand, traditional dialectics attempts to elude the diminished claims of tautologous logic by appealing to *independent* terms, which make possible the appearances of “determinate negations” (Hegel, 1977, 51). On the other hand, recourse to such independent terms, already materially conceived, risks diminishing the *immanent* claims of dialectical logic. That is, these terms risk entering the dialectical scene in an unmediated way, as if by chance. Adorno’s vivid resistance to the chance encounters of surrealism is overdrawn in the context of this methodological tension in dialectics.
6. It is instructive that Adorno softened his stance towards surrealism in music in the 1960s. While he did not engage the work of Hindemith in this period, he did propose a revision of his interpretation of Stravinsky in an essay of 1962, “Stravinsky: Ein dialektisches Bild.” The terms of the argument apply equally to the case of early Hindemith. As Peter Bürger points out, for the late Adorno, “Stravinsky’s music is not the reconstruction of a binding musical language but an artist’s sovereign play with pre-given forms of the past.” (in Paddison, 1997, 269) Adorno’s revision reflects a different historical context, when the catastrophe of the Second World War no longer exerted the same kind of pressure for political commitment on the writer.

7. The following sections of my essay grapple with Stephen Hinton's outstanding dissertation, "The Idea of *Gebrauchsmusik*: A Study of Musical Aesthetics in the Weimar Republic (1919–1933) with Particular Reference to the Works of Paul Hindemith" (1989). Hinton's monograph, especially the involvement of *Gebrauchsmusik* with Heideggerian thought (albeit misconstrued), is regarded as essential to Hindemith studies today. (See, for example, comments by Stephen Luttmann in Paul Hindemith (2005, 169)). Through a revised reading of Hindemith's contemporaries, this essay offers a different characterization of the philosophical dimensions of *Gebrauchsmusik*.
8. Not surprisingly, in 1940 Hindemith lamented the success of the suite and urged the London branch of Schott not to reprint it. This music was supposed to have passed with the times and, instead, was threatening to become canonized. In comparison with Schoenberg's *Erwartung*, which was self-consciously burdened by historical progress and the Austro-German spirit of developing variation that destined it for the canon, Hindemith's suite received a plethora of performances. *Erwartung* was written in 1909 but received no performance until 1924 in Prague, while the two-year-old suite had already been performed dozens of times. Hindemith gradually changed his style and recalled an earnestness of purpose that distilled a compositional practice that superseded the *Gebrauchsmusik/Kunstmusik* binary in an apparently less oppositional and provocative way. His composition treatise *Unterweisung im Tonsatz* (*The Craft of Musical Composition*) put expression to this later aim. Today, of course, *Erwartung* has entered the canon—such as it is—and the Suite is only a historical curiosity.
9. Hindemith's materialism is less overtly Marxist than it is humorously resonant with the world of commodity production. In the Ragtime, for example, Hindemith provides a zany set of instructions for the performer—"Mode de emploi—Directions for Use!"—as if these were instructions on how to use a new product on the market.
10. The wildness of the double stops is partially the result of alternate bowing. That is, Hindemith's bowing on the double stops indicates that he intends every pulse in the flow to alternate upbow and downbow. (The exception to this is in measure 20, after the repeat, where the violist will likely play two upbows on D and D \flat to make the following C come out as a downbow.) Alternate bowing probably best facilitates the "tearingly fast" tempo, but it also implies an accentual regularity that is contradicted by the actual double stops. The irregu-

larity of the double stops is thus heightened by their unpredictably articulated tone production. (I would like to thank Scott Gleason for pointing this out to me.)

11. In “The Idea of *Gebrauchsmusik*” Hinton argues that Hindemith’s instrumentally derived works foreshadowed the *Sequenze* that Berio wrote in the 1950s.
12. The point I make here is not to be equated with that made by commentators like Eberhard Zwink (1974), who argue that *Craft* derives directly from Hindemith’s compositional practice. What I am suggesting is that Hindemith’s a-contextualism partly results from his early montage-based bitonality, whereby transformational processes are minimized. Degree progression (as articulated in *Craft*) seems to follow naturally as a guide to musical qualities over extended time-spans in such settings. Adorno’s critical observation regarding the detached play of forms in Hindemith’s music takes on added resonance in the context of Hindemith’s theory of harmony. The risk of surrealist montage, one might say, is the sedimentation of its parts into second nature.
13. The effort to redeem Hindemith’s early music from his own views of it should not be construed as a rejection of his late works. In “Paul Hindemith–Hans Eisler. Zweckbestimmungen und gesellschaftliche Funktion,” Wolfgang Molkov, for example, argues that the critical ambitions of Hindemith’s music before 1927—its parody of ossified musical norms—was superior to that written after 1927, which had become domesticated and generic.
14. For a slightly differently nuanced account of Bessler’s concept of *Gebrauchsmusik* and its connection to Heideggerian philosophy, see Hinton’s dissertation “The Idea of *Gebrauchsmusik*” (1989). Hinton’s important dissertation traces the origins of *Gebrauchsmusik* to Heidegger’s philosophy. This section of my essay aims to revise Hinton’s assessment of the conceptual affinity between the two.
15. Hinton observes that this view became fairly widespread for advocates of the *Neue Sachlichkeit* in the Weimar Republic. The cultural philosopher Emil Utitz emphasized both “communal belonging” (*Gemeinschaftsgefühl*) and the “communal idea” (*Gemeinschaftsgedanke*) in his theories; Weill also proposed that music should arise “from some sense of communal belonging”; and the Bauhaus circle felt that “the artist should consciously experience his social responsibility towards the community” (1989, 97–8).

16. As we shall see in the discussion of Hindemith, Heidegger's work of art also partially detached itself from a local, practical context the better to illuminate it. It is as if the disinterested aesthetic stance (once elaborated by David Hume, Immanuel Kant and others in the eighteenth century in terms of an appropriate distance from the object and a contemplative serenity of mind) increasingly presupposed vigilance about man's *failed* relation to the world in the early twentieth century.
17. Kurt Weill distanced himself from the false spirituality of autonomous music as well as the reified commercialism of commodified music. In similar fashion, after World War II Bessler bemoaned the "commercial overtones" that *Gebrauchsmusik* had acquired, in the context of a non-dialectical opposition to autonomous music (Hinton 1989, 19). Even where contemporaneous composers had a stake in starkly dichotomizing *Gebrauchsmusik* and *eigenständige* music, we find sensitivity to their dialectical relation. With Weill on his mind, Berg for instance wrote, "Perhaps such a lack of detachment in judging art can hardly be surprising at a time when even the likes of us cannot make up their minds in favor of a 'Drei-Groschen-Oper' or a 'Zehntausend-Dollar-Symphonie'" (97). As Hinton points out, Berg "conceded that Weill was to be included among 'the likes of us.' Berg did not assume their opposition, even as he tried to associate Weill's music with commodified music" (97). Still, Berg's view was insightful in light of Weill's later commercial success in the United States, then in the context of a Cold War, which probably produced a dichotomy between autonomous (high) art and commercial (low) art in a less dialectical way than did the Weimar Republic of the inter-war years. That is, in the United States music on both sides of this opposition had a funding base with very different agendas and ambitions.
18. Heidegger distanced himself from theories of truth that severed the mutual imbrication of thinking and doing. He argued that previous theories of truth, including the theory of 'truth by correspondence' upheld by traditional philosophy, 'truth by coherence' upheld by Hegel, and 'truth by agreement' upheld by Edmund Husserl, presupposed the 'truth by unconcealment', towards which his philosophy was oriented. (For example, the logic of correspondence presupposed the given-ness of the corresponding thing.)
19. Heidegger observed that the ancient Greeks advanced no notion of private, subjective experience to ground their philosophical under-

- standing of the world. This construct was therefore peculiar to European modernity.
20. This critique of the philosophical ‘bundle theory’ followed a critique of the Aristotelian idea that objects were comprised of substances with properties. Here, the logic of Heidegger’s refutation took an almost opposite stance.
 21. In his essay, “The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking,” Heidegger advanced the Greek word ‘*aletheia*’ (which has an etymological link with the river Lethe, the river of forgetfulness) to capture his notion of ‘truth by uncovering’ in the context of the world’s structural concealment (1977, 369–92).
 22. For an account of Heidegger’s uneven and paradoxical relationship with the National Socialists, see Rüdiger Safranski’s *Between Good and Evil* (1998, 225–352).
 23. The figured-bass concept is consistent with Hindemith’s evolving ideas about harmonic theory, as they were later elaborated in his *Craft*. For example, it can be seen how Hindemith’s Rameau-like interest in harmonic verticalities and their connection could have quite different musico-ideological significance at different times. On the one hand, the constructivist spatialization of the musical flow in his early compositions ruptured the continuity of traditional temporalities of the past, and, on the other hand, the spatialization of harmonic theory in the context of the *Craft* upheld various naturalized ideas of the past.
 24. It is possible to hear a ‘motive’-like dimension in the attempt to propel both the opening material (measures 1–16) and the dorian-mode material (measures 17–30) out of stasis. In both cases, the music is cranked upward, then downward, and then upward again twice, before the effort is given up—a kind of ‘motive’ by failure.