

# *Newsletter of the Society for Music Analysis*



*Edited by* Nicholas Marston

No. 9: December 1995

## *Contents*

From the Editor	2
Montpellier 1995: An open letter to Jonathan Cross	3
Some thoughts on teaching analysis in schools	5
<i>Conference Report:</i> Newcastle University International Tippett Conference 1995	9
SMA Diary	12
<i>Conference Announcement:</i> Gender Theory and Analysis 1996	13
Notes and advertisements	12, 14

## From the Editor

*Editorial address:* Dr Nicholas Marston, St Peter's College Oxford OX1 2DL. Tel: 01865 278908/278900 (messages). Fax: 01865 278855. E-mail: nick.marston@spc.ox.ac.uk

'Brief life is here our portion . . .': since the last issue of the *Newsletter* appeared some six months ago there has been a considerable amount of professional movement among SMA members, including several members of the Executive Committee. The concomitant domestic upheaval that usually accompanies a change of job has also had its inevitable effect on deadlines and schedules. Nonetheless, it is a great pleasure to report that Deborah Mawer, our Honorary Secretary, has moved from Newcastle to the Department of Music at Lancaster where she joins a staff led by Anthony Pople, the distinction of whose work in music analysis has been recognized by the recent award of a personal chair. Further south, John Rink (editor of and contributor to a recently published CUP volume of essays on analysis and performance) has moved from a Senior Lectureship at the University of Surrey to the same post at Royal Holloway; replacing him at Surrey comes (from *much* further south) Christopher Mark, who is one of the contributors to this issue. Liz Garnett has commenced lecturing at the Colchester Institute, and Ken Gloag, author of a recent Exeter PhD on Stravinsky analysis, has begun at Cardiff. Finally (with apologies to anyone whose migration has gone unnoticed by my SMA twitchers), Jonathan Cross, Assistant Editor of *Music Analysis*, is to leave his post at the University of Sussex in the new year in order to replace the *Newsletter* Editor, who exchanged Bristol for Oxford during the summer; new numbers and addresses for correspondence appear at the head of this page. Changes of job may of course be motivated by more than purely professional considerations; but it is good to see the SMA broadening its institutional base in this way, and very welcome to see the place of music analysis being strengthened in Departments across the country.

Looking outside the country, it is a pleasure to welcome Nicolas Meeùs as a contributor to these pages; his reply to Jonathan Cross's report on the Montpellier conference (Issue no. 8) is offered as an invitation to debate further the issues raised by both authors. Christian Alexander's thoughts on teaching analysis in schools continues an occasional series of such pieces begun by my predecessor, and should certainly stimulate comment. As I type, the annual Conference of Music Research Students is preparing to meet at Royal Holloway; a report on that event will appear in the next *Newsletter*, scheduled for Spring 1996. Meanwhile, SMA members who did not attend the Tippett Conference at Newcastle last July may see out the last days of this anniversary-laden year with Chris Mark's informative report to hand.

## Society for Music Analysis Executive Committee

Jonathan Dunsby (Chairman)  
James Ellis (Vice-Chairman)  
Deborah Mawer (Honorary Secretary)  
Catherine Dale (Treasurer)  
Nicholas Cook  
Liz Garnett  
Nicholas Marston (Editor, *SMA Newsletter*)  
Robert Pascall  
Anthony Pople  
John Rink  
Alan Street  
Arnold Whittall

Peter Foster (Membership Secretary)

## Montpellier 1995: An open letter to Jonathan Cross Nicolas Meeùs

Dear Jonathan,

Your report on Montpellier 1995 in the last issue of this Newsletter, while expressing your 'general dissatisfaction', makes a passing mention of my own 'greater sense of hope'. This deserves a comment. As the issues may be of interest to SMA members (especially if, as you suggest and I hope, the SMA may get involved in the organization of the Fourth European Music Analysis Conference), kindly allow me make that response a public one. Even though you recognize that what continental analysts said 'neither made [you] hear music nor read analysis any differently than [you] had done before', it is your statement that 'it will take more than the Eurostar to link the British and continental analytical traditions' that I want to consider here, and it is the implied difference of approaches (possibly including a Continental 'resistance to theory') upon which I'd like to comment. Indeed, the basic purpose of European conferences is, in my opinion, to confront ideas, approaches and traditions; and the confrontation will be the more fruitful to the extent that these three differ.

One point that you raise is the European representativity of such a Conference: you write that 'Montpellier struck [me] as being more a meeting of the Société française d'analyse musicale than a pan-European event'. This probably was true of the audience, but the organizers have little control over that. If, however, your comment concerns the speakers, it deserves closer consideration. But for last-minute changes of which I may not have been aware, there were about 36 speakers in Montpellier: about 15 French, 7 Italians, 6 Brits, 5 Belgians, one each from Spain, Germany, Austria, Canada, and one unclassified. The reasonably larger French representation seems acceptable, considering that France was the host country. For the rest, these figures give quite a fair picture of the present situation in Europe (one might argue about an oversized Belgian representation,

considering the area of the country, but that is a criticism that I, as a Belgian, will leave to others). Europe today counts four countries--France, Great Britain, Italy, and Belgium---with an active society for music analysis (in Italy's case there are actually two societies). Spain nominally has a society, but its activity, for complex reasons on which I won't comment here, is not what one might wish. More surprisingly, there is no society for analysis---or, at least, none with which we have been able to develop contacts---in Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Switzerland or the Scandinavian countries, among others.

If these countries do not join us, we must query whether they have their doubts about what we do---or, to put it more crudely, whether the fault may be on our side. You state that 'nearly all the major developments in theory and analysis since the Second World War have come from the USA'. Are you sure of that? What about Dahlhaus? What about possible recent developments of Riemannian functional theory? Riemann's theories are actively ignored in the US (some of them form, in my opinion, an important but unacknowledged source of the GTTM<sup>1</sup>), and the *New Grove* devoted no more than an unsigned entry of twelve lines to harmonic functions which, nevertheless, remain the foundation of the daily teaching of tonal harmony and analysis in German-speaking countries. What about Jacques Chailley, who published in 1951 an analytical treatise which, whatever one may think of his theories, was pioneering? (None of Schenker's major writings had been translated by then.) What about the important developments in musical semiotics in Helsinki, Edinburgh, and Paris? And what do we really know of theories of analysis in Eastern Europe? What I want to stress here is that we

---

<sup>1</sup>The Generative Theory of Tonal Music, as should be clear to anyone, is not unrelated to the American theory industry: see below.

cannot hope to convince colleagues to join us if we do not accept their own approaches to theory and analysis. Also, I believe that before attempting to get in touch with the Eastern European countries, we should develop contacts with neighbour countries in Western Europe and, more urgently, that we should make sure to be more or less representative of the various theoretical and analytical approaches in our own countries.

In many European countries, musicology is restricted to universities, and music performance to conservatories. Theory and analysis are taught in both, but the aims, methods, and traditions differ. It is one of the merits of conferences on music analysis and, more generally, of societies for music analysis (as compared, for instance, with societies for musicology), that they provide forums where both university and conservatoire people can meet and exchange ideas; but these contacts are often not devoid of tensions which may give way to bitter polemics. For instance, you mention in your review that more than once in Montpellier, 'description was seen to be masquerading as analysis'. This is a problem which can arise anywhere, but which I take to be more frequent in the analytic tradition of the conservatories. In France at least, it may be due to the considerable influence of Messiaen's teaching, based on (genial) description rather than on the type of 'decomposition' to which we are more accustomed. And the alliance that you felt between the British and the Belgians may be due to the fact that the Belgian delegates were mainly university people.<sup>2</sup> It is perhaps less a matter of quality than one of style. Some of our colleagues, however, might feel less comfortable if our work were to take a more overtly academic style. I am fully aware that the situation in Great Britain is different; but that is precisely one of the reasons why exchanges between Great Britain and the Continent may be of such importance at a moment when, I am told, the European Commission is showing signs

---

<sup>2</sup>Though this is not meant to slighten their individual value: who am I to criticize Belgians?

of concern for the means and methods of music teaching in Europe.

The point that you make about the colonization of our discipline by the American theory industry is important; but I believe that the Continent as a whole has resisted the pressure better than Great Britain. What is wrong with American theory is not that it is American, but that it is an industry, that it functions more on competition than on emulation, that it tends to produce fully operational packages which (not unlike those of Microsoft) leave as little as possible to individual initiative. If Europe can claim a stance of its own, it may (or should) be its resistance to orthodoxies and dogmatism. I am convinced that one of the main reasons for the Continental resistance to Schenkerism is that it came back from the States as an orthodoxy. Similarly, Babbitt's ideas on pitch-class sets were dogmatized by Allen Forte, Meyer's ideas on implication and realization by Narmour. Theories become articles of faith, with their bibles, their esoteric language (often consisting of abbreviations or figures) and obligatory references to such *à la mode* doctrines as generative grammar or deconstruction. I hate this all the more because I believe that all of the theories mentioned have important things to say; I wish I could read them without getting so infuriated. You state that the French react to Nattiez' *niveau neutre* much as the Americans do to their favourite pitch-class sets. This, I hope, is true only in appearance. Nattiez' and Molino's tripartition is so general an idea that I would hardly call it a theory: it is little more than a triviality and, as such, it is rather difficult to avoid. My own paper at Montpellier was intended largely as a criticism of tripartition, and I hope that it was as such that it aroused discussion. In any case, I really don't think that Nattiez' and Molino's tripartition is considered a dogma on the Continent.

I was rather puzzled by the combination of your statement that 'the Continentals [are] more interested in metalanguage than analysis' with the one that, on the Continent, 'the resistance to theory is alive and well'. It must be that the French word

*théorie* is not an exact translation of the English 'theory'. To me, a theory is by definition a metalanguage, a language about a language. You probably mean, and I would tend to agree with you on this point, that we Continentals are more preoccupied with theories as such than with their practical application in analysis. We tend to believe that analysis can be considered to supersede description if and only if it is founded on a theory: Schenkerian theory, pitch-class set theory, or Riemannian functional theory, for example. Several of the British delegates in Montpellier gave us examples of what we Continentals would call 'applied analysis', that is, the practical application of an analytical theory or method to a particular work; some of my Continental colleagues felt that the Brits did not question their own theoretical assumptions enough. The point, of course, is not whether one attitude is better than the other, but that the confrontation of these attitudes is precisely

is what our European venture is pursuing.

\* \* \*

When I look back at the evolution of our project since the First European Conference in Colmar, I begin to wonder whether we did not take too many things for granted. We have assumed that there were no important differences between our countries with respect to the systems of music education, their aims and their methods. We believed that when we spoke of analysis or of theory, we all understood one and the same thing; we assumed that our words had the same meaning. We were too confident in our beliefs. It is now urgent, in my opinion, to confront the teaching methods in use in our countries, to record theories and practices, and to get to know them in depth. Such an inventory might form one of the aims or challenges of the coming European conferences on analysis. Diversity is our treasure: let's cultivate it.

### Some thoughts on teaching analysis in schools Christian Alexander

If GCSE and A-level music candidates find themselves studying analysis, this means that a teacher of 'academic' music at these levels will be teaching it. In some cases this is where the foundations for studying at a tertiary level are laid. Candidates receive their first tuition in the analytical skills which will subsequently figure in their undergraduate work and beyond. The very term 'academic' music seems to conjure up impressions of things unpractical, things merely theoretical or excessively formal, in the more average A-level students: certainly, things at odds with their own more immediate perceptions of music. There is rarely room for instrumental studies under the perceived 'academic' umbrella. (Perhaps it all stems from Plato being a bit of a musical snob?) Whether or not the students go on to study music beyond A level, analysis is an important and integral part of the schools' curriculum, and rightly so. Like all studies in secondary education, GCSE and A-level music should reflect the wider world and prepare the student for moving into it. These examinations should elucidate, broaden, and,

stimulate the student's knowledge, instigating and nurturing an intellection of what music is about. It would be pleasing to think that having completed an A-level course in music, a student could leave school with a desire to expand his or her awareness of music's expressive means and possibilities, whether at university or college or through constant broadening of the musical experience. But there are, and probably always will be, flaws in the system.

Accepting that A-level analysis should reflect and bring about an understanding of the wider field of music analysis, one might well ask what this is in the first place. I do not believe an A-level student should have to tackle questions such as 'what is analysis?' or 'what is it we are analysing?', but I do believe the teacher should have tackled these questions. Besides which, a more interested pupil may well *ask* why he or she is analysing, and that could be a vexing question for the teacher.

*The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*

defines 'analysis' as 'the resolution or breaking up of something complex into its various elements; the exact determination of the elements or components of something complex'. The definition must be broadened when being applied to music, for there are such a variety of approaches and aims in analysis (with the act of analysing being an end in itself). I think one examines a piece of music (whether purely from the score, through listening, or both) in order to extract and reveal the music's essential elements and principles and to understand its structure. To some extent, one is attempting to discover how it was put together originally. This is a somewhat inward-looking exercise; and while that statement is in no way intended pejoratively, I am in no doubt that A-level analysis must include a more outward approach which points towards the reception of music. In my experience, school children find it particularly difficult to accept analysis for its own sake as more than a rather sterile preoccupation with the 'nuts and bolts' of the language. As a composer I would say that music is about more than its structural form and surface components as these may be expressed in technical language. In analysing the score of a piece of music one describes, among other things, the music's harmonic movement and structuring, proportions, motivic relationships, tempi, and minutiae such as consonance, dissonance: in other words, the composer's tools. In a way what is being described is everything but what one perceives, in terms of emotional reaction, upon hearing the music. One could strip down Bach's B-minor organ fugue to thematic schemes, spatial fractions and momentum, modulations, harmonic relationships and some mathematical trickery, but that is not really what 'comes across' in a good performance of the piece.

Rather like the written language of music, the language of analysis is an exclusive one that is unavailable to the untrained; and yet it is perfectly possible to comprehend and appreciate form and structure in music without knowing how to couch that appreciation in technical idiosyncrasies. It is likely that everybody reacts to music in very similar ways on an emotional or chemical level. We are all aware of harmonic and rhythmic movement, repetition, and shifts of

tempo when we listen to a piece of music. Obviously, linguistic differences exist in our lives and it may be that we hear the same intervals in different ways depending on broad cultural factors; nonetheless, music is the only language that can make a diverse group of people feel the same way simultaneously. Does a training in music and a knowledge of how to analyse it formally alter our perception of music, or our emotional response? It may well be true that the ability to describe music in an analytic manner opens the door to a fuller level of appreciation, but I am not persuaded that it affects our emotional response. I do think, however, that if GCSE and A level are to develop the musical appreciation and dexterity of students fully, analysis must be an integral part of the curriculum. Obviously composers, conductors and (I would argue) performers need to know how to analyse music in this way. That, coupled with experience (which develops into intuitive knowledge), is the most important way in which we hone our skills.

In the wider field of musical analysis there are many schools of thought and different approaches. For Boulez it is the 'serious study of the scores themselves' [Boulez, 1975] and a loathing of the 'record sleeve journalism' school of analysis. We all know that Boulez is first and foremost a composer, and as far as I am concerned the musician who wrote *Dérive* knows what music is about; at the end of the day he is probably right about analysis too. However, it is not within the scope of the A-level syllabus to take analysis to the quite 'purist' heights of Boulez's analytical maxim. Attempting to understand the reception of music and how its expressive qualities work in the concert hall is also important; it is certainly undesirable to negate the value of these central elements to a young student. That student may subsequently analyse music from a more refined perspective, but at A-level it must be tackled on the broadest plane. The nature of our secondary education system, with all its confines and sometimes misguided priorities, makes the erudition of young minds in music something of a juggling act in which selective compromise is a necessity.

In many ways, Hans Keller stood at the

opposite end of the spectrum to Boulez. He wrote that 'class teaching will all too easily promote music's degradation into a subject' [Keller, 1984]---heaven forbid! I am no ardent pragmatist, and am certainly not opposed to proselytizing on behalf of the ethereal beauty of music; but Keller's claim is, from start to finish, very silly. In the same article he went on to say that 'analytic or descriptive introductions to music the student doesn't know . . . in preparation of Music A-levels are, simply, a psychotic delusion: music which isn't part of your experience does not, for you, exist, and cannot, therefore, be analysed' [Keller, 1984]. Keller was hardly an unintelligent man (indeed, he frequently wrote with immense wisdom, clarity and wit), but these sentiments are so exaggerated and reactionary that they don't really warrant attention. The tenor of Keller's article does, however, ring true to a degree: he writes that 'unless theory concerns itself with the student's own specific experience, it inevitably obscures instead of clarifying' [Keller, 1984]. I disagree with this *per se* (as might Boulez), but with regard to GCSE and A-level music it is a thought worth dwelling upon, and possibly a useful aphorism.

Thus I arrive at my central question: as a musician teaching analysis to schoolchildren in the last years of the twentieth century, against the backdrop of a wide range of analytical approaches and *apologiae*, what should I be teaching my A-level students? Firstly (and I do not wish to be patronising), it should be understood that an A-level student is studying various compositions and analysing them rather than studying analysis itself; that is a fact of the curriculum. While I accept this point, there is a fine line here which needs to be comprehended thoroughly by GCSE and A-level teachers. At A level it is imperative that the teacher remember (exceptional circumstances aside) that the student is not an analyst, just as he is probably not a composer either. This, of course, is the reason why analysis at A level must be approached from the broadest perspective. Analysis at this level needs to be linked to what is actually happening in the music, related to the human response, and to music's expressive capacities.

To offer an analogy with another subject, there would be no point in an A-level English teacher describing the rhythmic and rhyme structures of Yeats's poem 'He wishes for the Cloths of Heaven' (or in teaching a student to describe them) in virtual abstraction. In the work of any good poet, structure and message are intertwined, the structure reinforcing the emotional content. Structurally, Yeats's poem is a quite straightforward piece of writing, *but*---'Tread softly because you tread on my dreams'---it is also potent, emotional, and highly communicative verse. On what level is it relevant that this is a 'curtal sonnet' with a slightly beguiling *ababcdcd* rhyme scheme, in the week when the nation voted it into the Top 10 on National Poetry Day? I guess it boils down to that rather hackneyed adage 'more than the sum of its parts'. Hackneyed or not, the point holds good and may be applied just as appositely to music. At A level I attempt to teach my students to analyse great music, and it would be a crime to teach them to analyse in such a way that this wonderful music did not seem in the end to amount to more than the sum of its parts. I realise that it is not quite as simple as my Yeats analogy might imply; a poem is far less abstract than a string quartet, in that it is perhaps impossible to disentangle cleanly the meaning, emotional content, and form of the words used. Music cannot convey a message in the same sense that poetry does. Were I to try and delve into what, in a given work, Haydn was actually exploring beyond form, key, harmony, texture and the like, I would find myself substantially beyond the remit of A level, and of the capacity not only of my students but of myself (which is not to say that I find the question any the less fascinating).

I teach A-level music from the University of London School Examinations Board. The History and Analysis paper centres around an anthology of one hundred and twenty examples (some entire pieces, movements from larger works, and excerpts from movements) of which each year-group studies thirty for their final examination. For this year's candidates, Haydn is represented by a complete *Sturm und Drang* symphony. In teaching this I would cover quite a lot of background in preparation (Haydn's life and career, social context, and

the concept of 'sonata form') before listening to the piece and finally turning to the score. In analysing the score we will study the form and structure of the piece, use of key, Haydn's harmonic language, pacing and momentum, modulation, orchestration and surface details or hallmarks (specific chords, rhythmic devices, and things peculiar to the work). As I stated earlier, this is clearly more of an introduction to analysis through studying, from a broad perspective, a specific work; ultimately, I am teaching a Haydn symphony rather than analysis itself.

A-level History and Analysis tends to start with the late renaissance and move with considerable celerity through to the present day, (although studying most late renaissance music is going to require a circumspect explanation of modes and probably a brief mention of Pythagoras). As Keller might have put it, this prescribed syllabus concerns itself with the students' musical experience, and I think this is wise. Therefore, when an A-level candidate studies a madrigal by Monteverdi he or she will study the philosophy behind Monteverdi's approach to the text, the renaissance attitude to music in general, and something of Artusi and the public debate concerning harmonic and musical styles. He or she will study the score, examining consonance, dissonance, spacing, imitation, word-painting, and structure. The candidate is being introduced to music (and its place in history) that is close to his or her own experience of both music and history. The analytical devices being espoused from a partially historical point of view probably represent the student's first exposure to analysis. The foundation is being laid for future development. Because analysis at A level is being approached in this basic and broad manner, it is especially important to get it right. I might add that in doing this it is equally important, on occasion, to start with an analysis of the score, then to hear the music, and finally place the piece in an historical context.

Recently I read an analysis of the slow movement of Mozart's Clarinet Concerto. Written specifically as an aid to teaching the work to schoolchildren, the analysis took the form of a sort of guided tour of the score,

broken here and there by rather meaningless descriptions of the music's emotional impact upon the listener. Musical examples were quoted and labelled with the traditional x, y, and z, and bar numbers were referenced avidly. Tonality, harmonic structure, cadences, motivic construction, phrasing and orchestration were all touched upon, and rightly so. But it seemed to me that the writer had forgotten to mention the device that imbues the music with one of its most striking characteristics, and one that is integral to any discussion of the music's momentum: the quaver 'motor-rhythm' instigated at the outset by the violins. This is scarcely a great insight on my part; but in explaining to school students the movement's shape, and the beautifully crafted sense of hiatus and resolution in the final bars, this detail is vital. For one thing, the quaver rhythm is something tangible that the students can see in the score and hear in the music. There seems little point in familiarizing them with the jargon to describe and the ability to discover underlying structures in music if one is to sever all of this from the more palpable elements of a piece which they can actually experience.

To take another example from Mozart, what is the point of enabling an A-level student to identify a certain theme from the first movement of the Piano Concerto in C, K. 467, as merely the second subject, in the dominant, consisting of arpeggio figurations on the main chords of G major? This barely touches on why the theme sounds as it does in its context. It would not require much more insight on the teacher's part to elucidate in a more valuable way.

When teaching analysis in an historical context it is important constantly to emphasise the linear development of musical thinking. My hope, of course, is that learning formal music analysis will encourage people to appreciate music more fully. On one level, however, it would be a dreadful waste of time if, attending a recital of violin sonatas by Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert, the educated analyst could not hear a direct lineage weaving through the three composers' music. The University of London School Examinations Board does encourage

candidates to nurture this ability---the examination includes a section in which they are asked to compare and contrast (in analytical terms) music by various composers, or to discern certain consanguinities in the anthology. What analysis should be enabling us to do is to understand the way in which Beethoven perceived Mozart's music.

Ultimately, it is extremely important that a GCSE or A-level student of analysis learn to approach a piece of music through the written score, and that serious study of that score be a key that unlocks an intellection of the work. The student's analytical account should not be divorced from his or her emotional response to the music; and the understanding acquired should lead to a better appreciation of the music when heard subsequently. What GCSE and A level must not be is a reinforcement of the perception of

analysis as dry and academic. For most students, analysis is likely to provide their first conscious foray into understanding music. It may be the first time that they have thought of great music as something other than the voice of God speaking through a 'vessel' (recall Stravinsky on *Le Sacre*, or Schaffer's Salieri observing young Wolfie romping bawdily beneath a table fit for a Prince or Archbishop). If analysis is not taught well at GCSE and A level, insurmountable walls may be constructed around the more maladroit students; walls that may prevent them from the further pursuit or even enjoyment of music. Analysis, composition, performance: each is a vital component of musical activity. And while none needs the support of a school music-curriculum to survive, the curriculum, and the children it seeks to serve, needs all three.

**SMA Session at the  
Newcastle University International Tippett Conference 1995  
29-31 July 1995  
Christopher Mark**

Compared with most prominent living composers, Tippett has done reasonably well in recent times in terms of public discussion. There has been a steady trickle of books and articles about his life and music, and the Newcastle University International Tippett Conference held this July in celebration of his ninetieth birthday was the third Tippett conference in fifteen years, the other two being the Tippett Symposium at Snape in 1980 and the Manchester University Tippett Conference in 1985. Serious public discussion has, however, tended in the past to involve a handful of senior scholars, so one of the express purposes of the Newcastle Conference was to interleave contributions from those 'longstanding authorities' with a variety of 'new thinking'. A key rôle in encouraging new thoughts on perhaps the most problematic area of Tippett scholarship---analysis---was played by the SMA. The Society sponsored the opening session, 'Analytical and Technical

Perspectives', though no session went without some kind of technical discussion. Four papers were given in the SMA session, three on Tippett's Piano Sonatas Nos 3 and 4 by scholars who, as far as I know, had not spoken or published on Tippett before. Proceedings began, though, with a keynote paper by Arnold Whittall, 'Is There a Choice at All?'. This took as its starting points Tippett's essay 'Too many choices' and perhaps the boldest example of new thinking in Tippett's musical output, *King Priam*---in particular Paris' monologue, 'Carried on the wind' (I. 3, fig. 179). Like several of the ensuing speakers, Whittall confronted the analyst's problems in the face of music which apparently resists consistent analytical strategies. As he put it, Tippett is not the kind of composer we have come to expect to work systematically with the differences between collections and pitches, but this doesn't mean that he doesn't work with these things at all. As Whittall demonstrated, there is an 'extraordinary set-class consistency' in the

opening seven bars, which see [0,1,3,6] being employed almost exclusively in each of the three lines (cellos, violas, and voice) and various sub-sets occurring as the most important simultaneities. Finding support in key moments elsewhere in the work, he identified an opposition between the tritone (interval-class 6), symbolizing war, death, and doubt (as at 'Is there a choice at all?'), and the fifth or fourth (interval-class 5), symbolizing love (as at 'Carried on the wind of love' and 'We love'), beauty, and hope. Interval-classes 6 and 5 are, of course, embedded within the [0,1,3,6] collection, and their polarity delimits, Whittall suggested, a 'field of forces' within which the music moves. In some ways this may be said to reflect the dramatic 'field of forces' of the work: there is a given set of circumstances in response to which the characters are impelled to make moral choices. But Whittall warned of the dangers of maintaining exact parallels between music and text, and while it is clear that, as he put it, the tragedy flows and the dramatic field of forces evolves (circumstances change), it is by no means clear that the musical field of forces does the same: as Whittall mentioned, the music is often concerned with a 'lack of flow', and the same polarities exist at the end of the work. He didn't pursue the possibility of some kind of higher synthesis of drama and music. I would suggest that discontinuity acts as a metaphor of perhaps the central character in *King Priam*, namely 'Fate': the rationale for the ordering of the various 'blocks' of material lies outside the impulses of that material, so that there is a strong sense of external control.

Choice was also a central concern in Kirsty Kirkpatrick's paper, 'A Piece of our Time: Tippett's Sonata for Piano No. 4', which focussed on the choices made by the listener in response to the field of forces encountered when listening to the first movement of Tippett's Sonata No. 4. These forces include previous experience of piano textures, knowledge of formal archetypes (assumptions regarding Tippett's use of the word 'sonata'), and, not least, the listener's strategy when the expectations arising from Tippett's choice of pitches are not

fulfilled---when, as Kirkpatrick writes in her abstract, 'equivocal harmonies toy with traditional polarities, certain parameters are unusually highlighted, [and] formal allusions are resistant to formal integration'. Her touchstone was Tippett's comment that 'the whole sonata is chiefly lyrical; a continuous flow of sound which sweeps up the constructional procedures into itself'. Discontinuity is certainly less conspicuous than in the output stimulated by *Priam*, and Kirkpatrick's notion of the listener's 'gradual shift from processing musical events to assimilating them within a dynamically evolving framework' certainly chimes with the overall impression, despite numerous changes of texture and interruptions like the bar of silence at b. 41, of increasing lyrical expansion. But I wonder whether Kirkpatrick was identifying a process that is unique to the experience of listening to this piece or (late) Tippett in general, or simply what happens when a piece with familiar gestures is heard for the first time: doesn't the listener respond in the same way when listening for the first time to, say, a classical sonata-form movement?

Kirkpatrick saw this process, which she named an 'increasingly lyrical perception' as being interrupted by 'moments of formal revelation reflecting where listening becomes retrospective as well as prospective'. This involves the meeting of 'top-down prior expectations' and 'bottom-up moment-to-moment knowledge'. She cited b. 30 as an instance of this: the D-A-E-F#-D-F chord is a 'moment of arrival', with the preceding C# being heard retrospectively as a leading-note preparation. This, again, is not really a procedure unique to Tippett, or even to the twentieth century. But its identification by Kirkpatrick suggests an avenue for exploring how Tippett creates the 'visionary' or 'transcendent' moments like b. 30 that are one of the most impressive aspects of his post-*Priam* output.

The two remaining papers, by Stephen Collisson and Alastair Borthwick, were more orthodox in technique. Like Kirkpatrick, Borthwick, in his paper

entitled 'Tonal Elements and their Significance in Tippett's Piano Sonata No. 3', was concerned with the rôle of archetypes, isolating various melodic and voice-leading figures associated with tonality and noting, inevitably, that they didn't function in the traditional manner. In his search for ways in which they might actually function he introduced the interesting concept of 'higher melodic consonances', derived from Whittall's harmonic 'higher consonances', but seemed in the end to abandon the notion of the extension of traditional tonal practices that this suggests, maintaining that syntactical coherence was to be found in stylistic allusion rather than 'in the piece'. His summarizing description of the work as triumphing over its historical material was evocative, but I'm not convinced that this is reflected in the work's rhetoric: there simply isn't a high enough degree of confrontation between 'old' and 'new'.

Meanwhile, in his paper 'Theme, Form and Variations in Tippett's Third Piano Sonata', Collisson concentrated on the variation cycle of the work. Prompted by the successive transposition of the variations through the cycle of thirds and by a comment by Ian Kemp, he analysed the sequence of seventeen chords on which the variations are based in terms of Lendvai's Axis Theory, assigning each chord a 'tonic', 'dominant', or 'subdominant' label from the evidence of its bass note. I have always found the notion of, say, any of E, G, B<sup>b</sup>, or C# functioning as dominant to any of A, C, E<sup>b</sup>, or F# rather dubious, and comments during question-time doubting the presence of the tensions associated with those functions suggest that I am not alone. The attempt to trace 'motivic contours' and 'interval-class successions' was, on the face of it, less problematical. But as with the variation chords, I wonder if we might understand Tippett better if we simply acknowledge that, since the music won't 'add up' in terms of our habitual concentration on pitch, we need to broaden our approach---perhaps (as I suggested in my own paper, 'Tippett and Sequence', given in the 'Musical Language and Rhetoric' session) by taking the composer's writings as a cue and treating various

aspects of the music as iconic or intramusical metaphors.

Later in the day delegates had the luxury of being able to test the contentions of the latter two papers against an exhilarating performance of Sonata No. 3 by Nicholas Unwin. The next day saw the Kreutzer Quartet playing Tippett's Fifth Quartet, which was the focus for Peter Wright's paper on 'Decline or Renewal in Late Tippett', designed as a rebuttal of the more critical parts of Derrick Puffett's January *Musical Times* article. Other analytical contributors outside the SMA session included Kenneth Gloag ('Tippett and the Language of Neo-Classicism'), Philip Thomas (who presented one of five posters, 'Kaleidoscope or Mosaic? Structural and Thematic Unity in Tippett's Piano Sonata No. 2' and also contributed to the round table session on 'The Art of Performing Tippett'), Geraint Lewis ('Tippett's Sonata Synthesis'), and George King ('Images of the Past, Shapes of the Future: Rhetorical Figures in Tippett's Solo Vocal Music'). David Clarke, the conference director, whose energy throughout the proceedings seemed as boundless as his organisational abilities, gave the final paper, 'The Significance of the Concept "Image" in Tippett's Musical Thought: A Perspective from Jung'.

In 1972 Arnold Whittall wrote of the first movement of Schoenberg's Second String Quartet: 'From both the structural and harmonic viewpoints the movement is endlessly fascinating, though it will prove endlessly irritating to those who prefer inflexible statements of "fact" to a discussion of possibilities'.<sup>3</sup> The same can be said of the study of Tippett as a whole, and of the post-*Priam* music in particular. With current trends in analysis and theory moving away, as Kirkpatrick observed, from the pursuit of 'final judgements', we may perhaps look forward to a burgeoning of analytical studies, and an even larger SMA rôle in the next---centenary?---conference.

---

<sup>3</sup>Schoenberg *Chamber Music* (London, 1972), p. 20.

## SMA Diary 1996

The Editor will be glad to print details of forthcoming events which may be of interest to SMA members.

### 27 January

King's College London

**RMA Conference: the Analysis of Early Music**

Chaired by John Milsom, speakers include Wulf Arlt, Margaret Bent, Susan Rankin, and Leo Treitler. The conference begins at 11 o'clock.

Contact: Dr John Milsom, Christ Church, Oxford (01865 276150)

### 18-21 April

King's College London

**British Musicology Conference**

Contact: Dr Mark Everist (0171 873 2354)

### 27 July-1 August

Puy de Bost Conference Centre, Dordogne, France

**Gender Theory and Analysis Conference**

For further details see the Call for Papers opposite.

### TAGS Days 1996

It is expected that there will be two TAGS days this year, in May and November. The May meeting is likely to be held at the Department of Music, University of Southampton; further details will be distributed in the New Year.

## Paul Sacher Foundation

The Editor acknowledges with thanks the gift of the following two catalogues in the series 'Inventare der Paul Sacher Stiftung':

No. 14: *René Leibowitz: Musikmanuskripte*, ed. Ulrich Mosch and Sabine Hänggi-Stampfli (Amadeus Press, 1995)

No. 15: *Kaikhosru Shapurji Sorabji: Musikmanuskripte*, ed. Felix Meyer and Sabine Hänggi-Stampfli (Amadeus Press, 1995)

The Foundation is a member of the SMA; its correspondence address is Paul Sacher Stiftung, Auf Burg, Münsterplatz 4, CH-4051 Basel, Switzerland.



# GENDER THEORY ANALYSIS 1996

## CALL FOR PAPERS

Abstracts of no more than 500 words are invited for this year's meeting which is to be held in the Dordogne, France from 27th July - 1st August. Accommodation is limited and is likely to be restricted to those presenting papers only, although local off-site accommodation can be arranged on request.

For further information please contact:

LIZ GARNETT  
(Chair of Programme Committee)  
Music School,  
Colchester Institute, Sheepen Road,  
COLCHESTER, CO3 3LL.  
Tel: (01206) 718655 Fax: 763041

VICTORIA VAUGHAN  
(Local Arrangements)  
Music Department,  
Southampton University, Highfield,  
SOUTHAMPTON, SO17 1BJ.  
E-Mail: vrv@soton.ac.uk

## The Ernst Oster Collection

The Ernst Oster Collection, comprising the major part of Heinrich Schenker's scholarly *Nachlass*, is preserved in the Department of Special Collections at the New York Public Library. In addition to a vast wealth of unpublished analytical material, the collection includes Schenker's collection of scores, many of them heavily annotated in his hand. A microfilm copy of the entire collection, along with the accompanying 500-page catalogue, is available for study at the Faculty of Music, University of Oxford. SMA members interested in consulting these materials are invited to contact Dr Nicholas Marston at the address given on page 2 above, or at the Faculty of Music, St Aldate's, Oxford OX1 1DB (tel: 01865 276130; messages: 276125; fax: 276128).

## Contributors to this Issue

Christian Alexander read Music at Bristol University and now teaches at Radley College, Oxfordshire.

Christopher Mark has recently taken up an appointment as Lecturer in Music at the University of Surrey. He has published articles on the music of Britten in *Music Analysis* and the *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*.

Nicolas Meeùs is Professor of Music at the University of Paris IV--Sorbonne and at the Catholic University of Louvain at Louvain-la-Neuve. He is President of the Belgian Society for Music Analysis and chairs the Comité de Liaison des Sociétés Européennes d'Analyse Musicale founded after the First European Music Analysis Conference in Colmar in 1989.

## Note to Contributors

The Editor welcomes contributions to the SMA *Newsletter*. All material should be sent to Dr Nicholas Marston, St Peter's College Oxford OX1 2DL. Tel: 01865 278908/278900 (messages). Fax: 01865 278855. E-mail: [nick.marston@spc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:nick.marston@spc.ox.ac.uk)

Material for inclusion in the *Newsletter* may be submitted in hard copy, but it will greatly facilitate the production process if contributors supply material on disk for use with AppleMac hardware. The present issue of the *Newsletter* was produced using *Word* version 4.0 on a Power Macintosh 7100. Font: Palatino.

Material for inclusion in the next issue should reach the Editor not later than 30 April 1996.

