Newsletter of the Society for Music Analysis

Edited by Nicholas Marston

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From the Editor

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A lengthy editorial statement at the head of this issue would be inappropriate in view of the importance of the material on the facing page. Here Robert Pascall, recently elected President of the Society, sets out preliminary details of a newly constituted body which will be dedicated to taking the Society's work forward over the coming years. Like Robert, I wish to express my thanks to Jonathan Dunsby for his efforts in setting up the SMA, and (on a more personal note) for the assistance and support he has given me in my role as Editor of this *Newsletter*. Among the important changes outlined by Robert Pascall, I would like to draw attention to his notice that the *Newsletter* will from henceforth appear in this format only once each year, in the now established May/June period; a deadline for contributions to the next issue appears in the 'Note to Contributors' on page 14 below. Although the *Newsletter* will indeed 'be able to consolidate and develop its role as a review organ', I continue to hope that members will wish to contribute other material, not least of a kind that will invite further comment. In the mean time it remains only for me to thank the present contributors, details of whom appear below, and to apologize to those 'advertisers' in the SMA Diary whose patience was tested and eventually went unrewarded due to the unavoidably delayed appearance of this issue. My thanks also to Sally Britten of the Department of Music at Nottingham University for her prompt administrative help, from which we hope to benefit further in the future.

Contributors to this Issue

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Robert Pascall, recently elected President of the SMA, is Professor of Music at the University of Nottingham and Chairman of the Editorial Board of *Music Analysis*.

Charles Wilson is working on a PhD in the Faculty of Music at King's College London. His research centres on the post-war European avant-garde.

From the President

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I am delighted to greet you as the new President of our Society.

The SMA was founded through the vision and energy of one man, and I am equally delighted to thank Jonathan Dunsby most warmly, on behalf of all of us, for that vision, energy and for all the sustained hard work he and his Committee put in to bringing the Society to its present established and successful position. His will be an impossible act to follow.

The purpose of the Society is singular, but I see it as having four main thrusts: the creation and servicing of an annual programme of events and meetings, the provision of a national focus for all those interested in our subject, the establishment of educational and career-development opportunities for younger analysts, and the enhancement of international collaboration. The new officers of the Society are currently working on the details of next year's programme, and I will write to you during the Summer when these have been finalised. We intend to publish our membership-list and to start an email discussion page dedicated to the Society; electronic experts are looking into this now! Our postgraduate awards programme is ongoing; there are currently four award-holders working at the universities of London, Southampton and Bristol, and it is expected that four new awards will be made during this Summer; also ongoing is our support for analysts reading conference papers or bringing work to publication. Contacts with the SMT and European analysts are well-established and should form the basis of future collaborative ventures. If you have ideas under any of these heads, or more general comments on the development of the Society, please write to me at the address below.

I am glad to tell you that Deborah Mawer will continue her active involvement in the running of the Society, from now on as Vice-President. Nick Marston has agreed to continue his splendid work as Editor of this Newsletter, but we plan to issue it in its present scope once per year, in the Summer, with smaller-scale information letters from me in September and January; in this way the Newsletter will be able to consolidate and develop its role as a review organ for our annual programme and for other significant national and international events. John Rink will take on the role of Events Officer, superintending the annual programme. The Treasurership will be taken over by Jonathan Cross, who is Treasurer of the Journal *Music Analysis*; this move is designed to foster closer links between the SMA and the Journal, as are the excellent new arrangements Blackwells have initiated for making the Journal available to members (on which more below). At this point I would wish to pay tribute to the work of Catherine Dale as former Treasurer: she has overseen the funding of the Society with considerable expertise, and our present finances are extremely healthy.

On the basis of this position we have set the new UK and European subscription-levels for 1997 as follows: full membership of the Society including each issue of the Journal: £29 (students: £26), membership for those not wishing to receive the Journal: £15 (students: £12). These arrangements are made on the basis of strength - there will be no reduction of activities or quality. We hope they will make membership even more accessible and advantageous; please continue to 'spread the word'—it would be very good to keep the membership growing. We are reviewing possible adjustments to the Society's constitution, and I will keep you fully informed of developments. One of the adjustments needed is formal modification of the titles and roles of officers, to reflect this new stage in the Society's development. And this leads me to conclude where I started: I am also delighted to tell you that Jonathan Dunsby has accepted the title of Past President and will continue to offer his wisdom and advice on the best ways forward.

I greatly look forward to serving as President (until January 1998) and will do my very best to develop the Society in all beneficial ways.

Contemporary Music Postgraduate Research Day
Cardiff University, Saturday 23 March 1996

Charles Wilson

The Contemporary Music Postgraduate Research Day, the enterprising brainchild of graduate student Helen Gould, was marked out in a couple of respects from the normal run of one-day student conferences: firstly, by Cardiff's excellent catering and hospitality, unrivalled in my experience of these events, and secondly by the fact that it was devoted exclusively to music since 1945. Despite the title of the concluding round-table session, 'Towards the millennium: a journey of prospect or retrospect', the event seemed motivated less by a desire to provide a scholarly counterpart to the artistic venture currently underway in Birmingham, Cardiff, and on the South Bank than by the recognition that contemporary music scholarship---whether primarily historical, critical or analytical in orientation---poses a number of problems peculiar to itself. The scholar's very proximity to the objects and events under scrutiny not only restricts the purview of hindsight (questionable though its benefits often are), but can also present logistical difficulties, for instance when manuscripts and other primary sources remain the private property of composers or their estates rather than being in the public domain. Hence, while some may regard with envy the postwar specialist's apparent exemption from some of the more vexing questions of dating, authentication and attribution which preoccupy scholars of earlier periods, there remains much that cannot be taken for granted.

The issue of performance practice is arguably a case in point. The fact that, as Philip Thomas (University of Sheffield) noted, 'the often unique interpretative problems of contemporary music have been neglected' in recent studies linking analysis and performance may testify to a tacit assumption that such questions lose their urgency where the music of living composers is concerned. But in his paper 'Interpretative Problems in Berio's *Sequenza IV*", Thomas argued that analysis might help to decide a number of interpretative issues, such as the location of sectional divisions, instances of notational ambiguity (especially involving grace notes and articulation), and the question of which 'levels' of the composition are to be given priority: for example, whether to favour 'pitch over rhythm and tempo, or gesture over accuracy' at a given point. It was with regard to gesture in particular that Thomas suggested the performer might profitably utilise his or her experiences as a performer schooled in the European pianistic tradition, citing in support of this Berio's distrust of 'those who "specialise" in contemporary music'.[1] That such an approach might stimulate a performance refreshingly removed from the familiar hard-edged 'contemporary piano style' was in the meantime amply borne out by Thomas's own delicately judged part-rendition of the piece.

Where notational problems are concerned, there is of course one other option available uniquely to the contemporary music scholar, namely recourse to the composer. But symptomatically, as Thomas reported, Berio's response to his painstaking list of queries concerning the recent revisions of the work consisted merely of the emphatic stipulation that the new version was 'the only one to be performed'. The composer's right to silence may be defended on a number of grounds, just as one might question whether the composer is in any case the best person to ask. Yet Berio's curt one-liner served as a timely illustration of how the information a composer provides or withholds, and the way it is given, often has more power than any other single factor to shape the nature of contemporary music scholarship. Of course the danger of such a dependency on 'privileged' information, whether from composers or their associates, is that it risks making the scholar's work seem merely parasitic or, given an especially talkative composer, verging on the redundant. It was in this spirit that

composer Anthony Powers (Cardiff University) suggested during the round-table session that source study be thought of not as research but as an anecdotal account of the 'real research', that of the composer which went initially into the creation of the piece. Such a characterization would doubtless be apt were sketch study merely a matter of somehow getting inside the composer's head. But the two sketch-based analyses on offer earlier in the day---both devoted to instrumental works of the mid-eighties---had in my view highlighted the more ramified nature of the issues involved.

Helen Gould's own paper 'Carter at work: a sketch-study focusing on *Ésprit Rude/Ésprit doux*' focused on the 'contrapuntal unfolding of [the] twelve-note all-interval chord and its components, upon which the harmonic structure of this work . . . is based'. This immediately raised, for the present writer at least, an intriguing ontological problem, in that within the restricted registral compass of a work for flute and clarinet, such a chord, spanning over five octaves, will never literally appear on the surface of the music. As Gould explained, what Carter does is to employ its intervals in linear formation, presumably in full awareness of the fact that this negates the characteristic registral ordering which is the very feature that gives these twelve-note chords their articulative potency in works like *Symphony of Three Orchestras*. All this served nicely to indicate how sketch study can become as much a matter of deconstruction as of reconstruction, charting not merely a one-way process by which material is carried from the earliest precompositional stages through to the printed score, but also the 'feedback' effect by which later phases in the compositional process can erase or undermine earlier ones.

Such an incessant covering of tracks, a desire to conceal and subvert through the constant reinterpretation and reinvention of objects, is something which Harrison Birtwistle practises if anything more knowingly and consistently. David Beard (Christ Church, Oxford) demonstrated in his paper 'Analysing Birtwistle's instrumental works' how such reinterpretation operates at a global level, for instance when an unfolding background line, providing an initial focus of attention, is progressively interrupted by blocks of contrasting material, this material then gradually assuming centre stage to become a formal 'moment' in its own right. Using his research on the sketches of *Secret Theatre*, now in the possession of the British Library, Beard also illustrated how even the most minute processes, involving random permutational procedures, are subject to continuous displacement and disruption. For instance, the pitch ordering in the opening flute solo of *Secret Theatre*, which weaves a sinuous 'compound line' between the elements of two chromatic tetrachords positioned first an octave then a tritone apart, was seen to be controlled by two independent schemes, one determining the pitch order within each tetrachord, the other regulating the line's oscillations between higher and lower tetrachords. Since each scheme yields a different permutation each time, a highly unpredictable melodic contour is created from a limited repertoire of pitches. Clearly, only a study of the sketches could have hoped to demonstrate this random interaction of equally random low-level mechanisms; but as Beard conceded, the sketches offer less assistance with regard to the high-level decisions which remain a matter of conscious choice. He therefore concluded that sketch study 'must be combined with a close reading of the score and the development of a more relational vocabulary for analysis'.

Lest either Birtwistle or Carter (who have both now deposited the majority of their sketches at the Paul Sacher Stiftung in Basle) be made to appear unnaturally friendly towards the enterprise of scholarship, David Beard pointed out that a good deal of Birtwistle's material---an intriguing sixty pages of purely verbal material in the case of *Secret Theatre*---appears to be missing altogether, while for her part Helen Gould quoted Carter's deprecating comment that his sketches tend to restrict themselves to the 'little problems'.[2] Christopher Dingle (Sheffield University) similarly highlighted a vein of secretiveness in a composer who would

appear to have been almost unduly forthcoming concerning his compositional methods, whether in the wartime treatise *Technique de mon langage musical* or the mammoth, posthumously published *Traité de rythme, de couleur et d'ornithologie.* Dingle's paper 'The problem with Messiaen: a reflection upon inconspicuous interpretational and analytical difficulties in the music of Olivier Messiaen' argued that Messiaen's theoretical pronouncements 'raise more questions than they answer and, in some cases, . . . actually obscure the true nature of his music'. Concentrating on 'Candor est lucis aeternae' from *La Transfiguration de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ*, Dingle asked why Messiaen had kept silent on its apparently simple underlying formal scheme, simply dismissing the movement as a 'hotchpotch of birdsong'.

Dingle seemed to suggest in conclusion that this was ultimately all part of the magic: theoretical mystification as a metaphor for theological mystery. While not all twentieth-century composers have shared Messiaen's religious convictions, much of their reticence seems likewise grounded in that familiar species of 'pre-formalism' which holds that aesthetic appreciation can be hampered by an excess of technical understanding. Yet as Ken Gloag (Cardiff University) was later to point out, gauging the extent of the intersection between our technical and aesthetic responses to a work remains as problematic as ever, especially with the loss of the ideological reference points formerly provided by modernism. Works which completely elude all our cherished categories do, of course, end up in a peculiar canonical no man's land. For instance, the paper 'Fruits of the Indian summer: two late works of Kaikhosru Sorabji' by Brian Inglis (City University), describing how in later life Sorabji became more preoccupied with the look of his music on the page than with its actual sound, prompted a response from the chair, Jonathan Cross (Bristol University), which queried its appropriateness as a topic for musicological discussion. But does this mean that scholars generally harbour more admiration for those works which fall easy prey to the analyst's armoury than for those which put up more of a struggle?

The 'outsider' on the round-table, Cardiff Professor of English Christopher Norris, was convinced that they do. Not only, he suggested, did conferences like the present one seem to be dominated by the kind of music (generally belonging to the more 'complex' stream of contemporary composition) which lends itself to technical explication, but composers of such music seem moreover to want to 'repay the critic', constructing their works in a manner that preempts the way they will be talked about. The symphonies of Maxwell Davies were cited as a case in point, Nick Jones (Cardiff University) having earlier demonstrated this music's handy susceptibility to analytical discourse ('A Neoclassical Complexity: Maxwell Davies's Third Symphony'). Taking his cue from Davies's own references, in respect of his music since the mid-seventies, to 'tonic' and 'dominant' functions (generally accorded to tritone-related pitch classes), Jones suggested that Maxwell Davies's use of such 'functional gestures . . . in quotation marks' might relate to a neoclassical or even 'post-neoclassical' ideology, albeit in the absence of any attempt to copy the 'techniques and sound-world' of the neoclassicists earlier in the century. No apparent controversy—indeed, not a little admiration---was elicited by Jones's interpretation of the outer movements as an archetypal 'meta-sonata- form' structure which is 'interrupted' by the second and third movements in the context of the whole work. There was, however, some dispute as to whether the symphony was truly 'post-neoclassical' rather than (more mundanely) 'neoromantic' or 'postromantic', an argument which appeared to hang on whether one accorded primacy to Beethovenian or Sibelian and Mahlerian symphonic precedents. One was left to reflect that while Max has certainly done his bit to help the music 'talk its way in' to the scholarly canon, sharing with analysts his personal vocabulary of 'tonics', 'dominants', and 'transformation processes', the resultant structural narrative remains so rich in historical resonances that the composer

stands little chance of similarly containing the multiplicity of hermeneutic strategies it might promote.

Chairing the day's concluding discussion, Arnold Whittall (King's College London) sounded an appropriately millennial tone by quoting from Pierre Boulez's IRCAM manifesto. Weighing up the respective merits of 'prospect' and 'retrospect', Whittall noted how Boulez comes down, predictably, in favour of the former, 'forsaking all memory to forge a perception without precedent, . . . renouncing the legacies of the past'.[3] If this has proved a tall order for Boulez himself, amnesia has proved still less attractive to composers more ambivalent toward the high modernist cause. For the scholar, meanwhile, it is hardly an option. After all, where would the theorist or analyst be without memory or, as Whittall himself put it a decade ago, without a sense of history? 'For the theorist', he suggested, 'having a sense of history means knowing something of the past, and being able to interpret that 'something' in ways which may be judged uncontroversially orthodox or wildly idiosyncratic, but which in the end enable theorists to make worthwhile contributions to the state of the discipline in their own time'.[4] For some the contributions at Cardiff had fallen decidedly in the 'uncontroversially orthodox' category, Anthony Powers voicing his regret that contributors to the main sessions had focused exclusively on single composers and works in isolation, paying insufficient attention to the 'big questions'---those of language, reception, audiences, politics---which help to set music 'in the context of other human activities'. This criticism could indeed be extended to analysis of postwar music in general, in that single-composer studies remain the predominant genre by a considerable margin, and the epistemological upheavals which have affected other areas of musicology over the last decade and a half appear, at least until fairly recently, to have had less of an impact.[5] Yet the day's proceedings did demonstrate that questions of politics, reception, and canonicity have a habit of surfacing in spite of their ostensible absence from the agenda. And as such issues start to be addressed with the explicitness they properly demand, the particular 'prospect' of 'worthwhile contributions to the state of the discipline' seems as strong as ever, even as the music of this century prepares itself to become that of the last.

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[1]Luciano Berio, *Two Interviews*, with Rossana Dalmonte and Bálint András Varga, trans. and ed. David Osmond-Smith (London: Marion Boyars, 1985), p. 91.

[2]Jonathan W. Bernard, 'An Interview with Elliott Carter', *Perspectives of New Music* 28 (1990), 180–214 (p. 205).

[3]Quoted in Paul Griffiths, 'Avant garde', in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 1980), I, 743.

[4]Arnold Whittall, 'The Theorist's Sense of History: Concepts of Contemporaneity in Composition and Analysis', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 112/1 (1987), 1–20 (p.1).

[5]Though included in an anthology issued last year by University of Rochester Press (*Concert Music, Rock and Jazz since 1945: Essays and Analytical Studies*, ed. Elizabeth West Marvin and Richard Hermann) are a number of essays which profitably draw issues of gender and cultural politics into the analysis of music of this period.

More Thoughts on Teaching Analysis in Schools

Simon Brown

Christian Alexander's 'Some thoughts on teaching analysis in schools' (SMA *Newsletter* No. 9 [December 1995]) raises a number of interesting questions. I am sure that many teachers of GCSE- and A-level music will share some of his worries and concerns, although, like myself, they may be less willing to treat analysis as a discrete entity within the subject as a whole.

For the last decade I have been an 'academic' music teacher at one of England's four

specialist music schools. The vast majority of my pupils are performers first and foremost, and while generally happy to accept the need for analytical skills (just as they accept the need for Czerny or Sevcik), they require guidance that is sympathetic to their own specific needs. They prefer their 'academic' teachers to have practical interests, whether as performers or composers; they like a practical input into academic lessons---singing a chorale, say, or performing pieces which are to be analysed; they are suspicious of lessons in which the teacher gives the impression that the analysis is more important than the music itself. In my classroom there is a rule that no more than twenty minutes may go by without music being played or sung, whether live or on CD.

Students are often uncomfortable when they find that their 'academic' and instrumental teachers have differing views on the value of analysis. There are few instrumental teachers these days who ignore analysis completely---particularly as the Associated Board is beginning to integrate it more openly into its practical examinations---but most will want to use it as a means to an end rather than as an end in itself. 'Academic' teachers must be prepared to accept that for many students this is the most suitable level of study.

On the other hand, it is easy to underestimate the abilities of musical seventeen year-olds to make their own decisions concerning the importance of analytical study. As a teacher at a specialist school, I have had to come to terms with the fact that all my pupils have skills and knowledge which I do not possess. Every teacher knows the mutual satisfaction which can arise when the positions of teacher and pupil are reversed; I find this potential reversibility an important aid to my teaching of analysis. I have no hesitation in asking the big questions: 'What is analysis?', or 'What is it that we are analysing?', because I do not doubt that at best their answers will be no less valid than my own. Equally, I am always ready to discuss with them the vexed question of 'analytical *versus* emotional response', because many students will not begin to accept analysis as a valid performance discipline until they have done so. Not knowing the answers is a poor excuse for not asking the question.

Like Christian Alexander, I use the ULEAC A-level course, with its famous [notorious? (Ed.)] book of one hundred and twenty extracts. In choosing an A-level music course, teachers have to decide between the breadth offered by ULEAC and the depth offered by the set works options of other boards. I have no doubt that breadth is the more sensible choice, since teachers can themselves easily add depth. As at GCSE, the course works best when the syllabus is regarded as a springboard rather than as a final hurdle. The wide-ranging nature of the extracts can also act as a balance for those single-minded performers whose knowledge of music is otherwise bounded by their instrumental studies.

GCSE has also made a significant difference to the perception of music analysis among students. Those who take GCSE Music become composers in the process, and may have as much experience of analysing their own works (and those of their peers) as those of the so-called classical masters. It is therefore important to realize that students beginning an A-level course may already be capable analysts, while not understanding the subject in the terms favoured by their teachers. The same may of course be true of a student's entry into tertiary education.

I entirely agree with Christian Alexander's view that there is a dearth of high-quality analytical publications designed specifically for the 14-18 age range. A major failing of such material as is available is its bias towards providing answers while failing to ask the right questions. We must ensure that we teach our students to ask those questions, even if we know that they may come up with answers different to our own.

Analysis, Early Music, and History:
RMA Conference on the Analysis of Early Music
King's College London, 27 January, 1996

Elizabeth Leach

After a long day which had left time only for contributory one-liners rather than for the detailed questions and discussion that the papers merited, Jeanice Brooks posed one question, aimed at all speakers, which struck me as addressing central theoretical issues. Having defined the 'analytical project' as requiring a composer and his intentionally produced work, she asked whether, rather than pondering how early music may be analysed, we ought to be looking at ways in which aspects of early music may be used to challenge this project. Replies were regrettably brief and although arguably dealt with implicitly in the speakers' presentations, the problematic nature of the relationship between institutionalized analysis and 'early music' was, as the question suggested, one with which no speaker had engaged directly.

As far as it was possible to discern without taking a straw poll, the large audience at this RMA study day consisted primarily of those whose chief area of interest is the music of the middle ages and renaissance, rather than those who might consider themselves analysts. Whether demography reflected or formed the theoretical underpinnings of the day is debatable. The conference title connected analysis and early music, perhaps suggesting their interaction as material and technique. Rather than directly addressing the question of what the analysis of early music might actually entail, each speaker tackled related issues: Margaret Bent dealt with 'pre-analytical issues', chiefly the understanding of fifteenth-century musical grammar as encoded in contemporary treatises and musical pieces; Susan Rankin discussed 'Ways of Looking at Chant' , her title avoiding the word 'analysis' and suggesting instead an examination of a more empirical kind; Joshua Rifkin drew parallels between the motets of Willaert and post-Raphaelite art; and John Milsom presented what was the day's most recognizable analysis of a single piece, namely Josquin's *Salve Regina*. Those who mentioned analytical techniques (almost synonymous, it seemed, with Schenkerian analysis, especially Salzer's application of it to early music) saw the results as at best partial or uninteresting, and at worst a distortion, an anachronism.

The sense of anachronism is partly a result of the score-dependence of modern analytical methods which in turn depends on a fairly fixed work concept. For music composed prior to 1600, as for the music of other cultures, the concept of the work is more fluid than it later becomes. This is due in part to the process of transmission. The idea of a piece's being a more or less fixed entity is certainly present in Tinctoris and is applicable much earlier, especially in the case of motets. The difference lies in the nature of the elements that are fixed and the nature of such fixedness itself. In general the pre-1600 piece is a far more plural entity, both in terms of trace and of authorship; yet this greater plurality does not in itself destroy the piece's individual identity since its defining features are more basic.

Although the text-status of some early music may be much more fluid, the work concept might well be invoked even if the context of musical practice later causes its collapse. It is of course difficult to generalize about so many genres and local centres active over such a long period of time---chant especially carries no concomitant sense of being a work---and it went completely unremarked that the very title of the conference perpetuated that casual lumping together so typical of record shops whereby anything pre-1600 is included as 'early music'. It would seem to be our relative proximity to the last two centuries that allows us a more refined sense of time passing within them: we sense the distinction between one decade and the

next, while the odd century or two before about 1200, and the odd half-century thereafter, seems little to worry about. In short, we have little comprehension of the enormous temporal span subsumed in the title of this conference. 'Early music' as a catch-all term is counter-productive and seems to imply homogeneity or generalizations of method, aim or assumptions---although all speakers argued for a recognition of the extreme diversity between types of musical practice, between genres within a musico-socio-(religious) practice, between composers, and between individual pieces.
It is arguable that most speakers' presentations had *implicitly* challenged the 'analytical project' described by Brooks either by not engaging directly with analysis as commonly thought of or by not simply analysing individual pieces. Instead, the speakers investigated aspects not normally thought of as falling within the province of 'analysis': text, singers, theoretical and pedagogical culture, other compositions, genre norms. As Bent put it, 'we can't get close to the individual work without some knowledge of its general principles, and we can't adopt general principles that do not have a foundation in the works'.

For eighteenth- and nineteenth-century musics, analytical approaches have provided detailed insights into the tonal workings of individual pieces and, by accumulation, broad overviews of entire repertoires. Might such techniques, suitably adapted if necessary, offer the same or parallel insights into medieval and early modern musics? Or might the insights they afford to tonal and post-tonal music be somehow inappropriate or irrelevant to the many and varied repertoires of early music? The potential---already minimized by the absence of many who might have disagreed with the speakers or called for theoretical clarification---for an exploration of these fundamental issues was denied because nearly everything about the day ran late from the outset.

In reporting this conference I have struggled to tease out theoretical bases or assumptions from the presentations. All four papers exhibited the high quality naturally associated with the work of these eminent speakers; had time allowed, they would doubtless have had many more interesting and thoughtful comments, explanations, and maybe even refutations to make to those points which the rest of this report extracts from their presentations.

* * *

The morning session contained papers by Margaret Bent and Susan Rankin which argued for the acceptance of certain fundamental concepts as a basis for understanding medieval polyphony and chant respectively.

Bent's paper, 'The Grammar of Early Music: Preconditions for Analysis', was concerned with preconditions grounded in her readings of fourteenth-century music theorists and could be understood as a polemic aimed at readings of fourteenth-century music which do not respect as a fundamental given the general principles of counterpoint contained in discant treatises. Using analogies from language Bent addressed the 'grammar' of late-medieval harmony and counterpoint, affirming its underlying dyadic pedagogy as expressed in contemporary theoretical writings which, contrary to their frequent characterization by modern scholars, are inconsistent neither with each other nor with the musical witness. She provided corroboration by diagnostic analyses of composed music.

Bent's plea that we train our understanding as we understand that of the late-medieval theorist and composer to have been trained, even if our knowledge of this is partial and basic, was central to her theme, as it is indeed to her work as a whole. She argued that although medieval compositional process may always remain opaque, discussion starts only when we can agree on such fundamentals. It is from this 'grammar', rather than from allegedly neutral theories (or anachronistic triadic harmony), that more complex hierarchical analysis of the musical language can most validly be envisaged. But although she

wished us to re-educate our ears in line with an understanding of counterpoint, Bent warned that our eagerness to understand medieval music too often short-circuits to a description of what, armed with our post-Webernian hindsight, we hear in it---a point she has recently debated in print with Christopher Page.[1] The modern ear, unversed in medieval theory, cannot always distinguish a point of tension from a point of rest because medieval music is fundamentally 'other'. The limitations to understanding this music imposed alike by anachronistic formalist analytical methods and presumed 'innocent' listening could be seen as analogous to geographical limitations: 'the past,' as L P Hartley put it in *The Go-Between*, 'is a foreign country'.

Discernible as a subtext to Bent's argument was the broader shift in what interests us in history. No longer do we seek for the continuity of all that is familiar in a progressive linear sequence linking us to our ancestors. Instead, we pursue a post-modern perspective on pre-modern music, highlighting the strange, the unfamiliar, the 'other', in a non-linear, non-sequential and fragmentary manner.

Susan Rankin's paper 'Ways of Talking about Chant' also argued for the recognition of medieval music's 'otherness', but an 'otherness' informed by historical knowledge. She began with two recent discs of chant, one entitled *Tranquility* [sic], the other *Quietude*. The first contains chants for Passiontide; the second, jubilant Christmas sequences whose very lack of tranquillity and quietude respectively show that medieval *spirituality* is here seen as 'other'---an example of the blanket perception of chant as a body of universally meditative music whose texts and function are unimportant. While Rankin used this misappropriation and misunderstanding of chant as a springboard to enter a discussion of chant analysis from a historicist perspective, these two CDs which ignore such a fundamental perspective misunderstand and misappropriate only in medieval terms. In (nineteenth- and) twentieth- century terms, they can be understood as a type of reinvention of the middle ages that has been theorized by Katherine Bergeron and Umberto Eco.[2] In effect, to interpret chant in terms of what we think important is also to re-invent the middle ages, although along very different lines to those pursued on Rankin's two CDs. Not to recognize this can only produce the moral undertone that medievalism is one thing and a real study of the middle ages another---collapsing what *is* important into what *was* important (but only in so far as we can discern what *was* important). The medievalism of the medievalist is thus one informed by apparently rigorous notions of historicism and authenticity.

In pursuing a text-based analysis of chant, Rankin allies herself with what she sees as an essentially continental tradition in chant scholarship whose practitioners extend from (Peter Josef) Wagner to Arlt. Recognizing that no medieval document describes how a chant is made, the historically grounded idea of a chant 'reading' a sacred text becomes the starting point for subsequent empirical enquiry. In this she agrees with Bent, who argued that an historical perspective, far from limiting what we can say about a piece, in fact serves to place our subsequent enquiry on a more appropriate or valid path. For Rankin, music's reading of the sacred text may then itself be read by us in a sophisticated manner. She demonstrated this using examples which began simply---with the placement of melismas, the shape of lines and their connection *vis-à-vis* the grammatical structure of the text---but included a comparison of two settings of the same text in different chant traditions in which 'the actual notes don't matter' but the patterns of notes that articulate the text do, and were seen to share common features. Chant is, however, a diverse practice, and even within one tradition a genre such as the *Alleluia* may exhibit a differing relationship to its text since the single word 'alleluia' is set to long melismatic passages. Rankin showed in one example that the verse and the *alleluia* constitute an interesting pattern structured by repeating sections of music and text.

Both Rankin and Bent advised scholars to work from extant evidence and then within that framework to proceed empirically

with the musical trace(s) in order to pursue those questions and issues which, because they are not addressed in the existing medieval or renaissance literature, we must assume to have been either implicitly understood (as a child understands grammar without being able to articulate linguistic principles) or simply not addressed. It is clear that in the *nth* century composers, performers, and listeners (groups more interconnected than in later times) had concerns different to ours. (Rob Wegman has written eloquently on this issue with respect to fifteenth-century polyphony.[3]) As stated above, Rankin's paper shared with Bent's its fundamentally historicist perspective; but while Bent's paper defined the pre-analytical historical perspective which might inform an enquiry, Rankin's, because of the relative paucity of theoretical writing on chant compared to fifteenth-century polyphony, illustrated ways in which empirical enquiry could proceed. As every medievalist knows, finding and inventing are the same thing (*invenio*) and 'empirical' enquiries are notorious for finding by inventing what they seek. Why, then, demand that these enquiries be informed by historical knowledge at all? Maybe because, as Haijo Westra has written, 'one need not have bought into any particular metaphysic to be able to conclude that some interpretations are of value, and others questionable on the evidence provided'.[4] However, even if one holds that there is pure, pre-interpretative material, the very decision to 'look' is already a form of interpretation, and the 'objectivity' provided by historical evidence is really 'subjective authenticity'.[5]

* * *

Following these papers exemplifying general principles for two different repertoires, the afternoon session offered two papers focused on individual pieces---Josquin's *Salve regina* for John Milsom and Willaert's *Videns dominus flentes* for Joshua Rifkin. These two highly concordant papers dealing with the craftsmanship of renaissance polyphony thus moved the proceedings forward to a later repertoire than those investigated in the morning.

Milsom began by re-subtitling his paper [title?] not as a response to Cristle Collins Judd's analysis in the volume *Models in Music Analysis: Before 1600*, edited by Mark Everist, but rather as a complement or compliment (or both). What Milsom found interesting in Josquin's motet was not how it reflected aspects of mode, of contemporary theory (ours and theirs), and of motive (all covered thoroughly by Judd), but instead what he chose to call the motet's 'genius'---that which makes it different and individual and gives it its unique identity. Milsom uncovered the motet's genius (a term which, depending on one's point of view, either muddies the field with its transcendent baggage or neatly explodes such romantic accretions by recovering a meaning closer to the etymological origins of the word) through a close reading which proceeds 'by stealth'.[6] The idea of proceeding by stealth identified Milsom's interpretation of analysis as essentially modernist and epistemological, the kind whose quintessence in literature is the detective story---a whodunit. This embodies the idea of a causal chain with the hero (analyst) as the cognizer of the chain, orientated by historicism but proceeding empirically beyond to achieve the 'deep insights' that modern musicology requires. The historical starting point here is presumably that *varietas*, rather than the traditional analytical criterion of coherence, is taken to be the most important aspect. Milsom commented that the analyses in Everist's volume---presented explicitly by the series title as 'models'---lacked statements of aim or self-reflection on the methods used, these features occurring only in the editor's preface. In rejecting the concept of analytical models relying tacitly on modernist ideas of unity and coherence Milsom did not, as he might well have done, quote Tinctoris on *varietas;* though it may well be that his own dealing with music of the twentieth century has been equally responsible in forming his views on this matter.

Milsom began by establishing the compositional limits framing *Salve regina*--- its chant paraphrase and the repeating motto in the second voice. For Milsom,

these limits form an arena within which the composer plays games aimed primarily at the singers. Thus Milsom rejects the modern analytical emphasis on analysis of the sonorous object, either as written or as performed, since renaissance polyphony (again, arguably like that of the twentieth century) is often concerned with things besides sound. In Josquin's *Salve regina*, for example, the concern is with the repeating motto 'hidden' in the second voice and with the social production of music, especially the singer's training as a feature to play with. The singer's sense of how to solmize tones according to the rules for the placing of *musica ficta* makes an aural difference between E and E^{b}. Some instances force a decision one way or another, and a wrong decision is soon shown up by a spiralling of *ficta* leading to an impossible situation, retrospectively showing that the right way was the other way.

These ideas Milsom termed 'pre-analytical', and he presented the analysis itself as a schematic representation of the motet which revealed a large degree of repetition while also showing that much of this repetition is shifted with respect to the fixed repeating element of the motto in the second voice. In addition, the different types of E necessitated by the solmization game complicate the pattern still further, thereby obscuring the fact of repetition.

Joshua Rifkin's paper proved a perfect companion piece to Milsom's and dealt with the notion of varied repetition---or what he called 'motivicity'---and the diffraction of the norms of Josquin's generation (surface regularity in entries, expected textures at certain textually climactic points, tones of entries and rhythms) in the generation following. In each of the text segments of Willaert's *Videns dominus flentes* some parameter was stretched: 'balanced pairs' were altered, either motivically or in the temporal distance of their entries; entries occurred in almost impossibly close imitation despite the rhythmically quick subject, or entries occurred on hexachordally 'unlikely' tones. It seemed that where one parameter was stretched others were kept strict, providing a normative point of reference. Rifkin ended by comparing this type of motet composition to the mannerism of post-Raphaelite painting, with the sacred motet (and not the later madrigal) providing a musical parallel to the artistic proving-ground of the large-scale religious painting. His belief was that the complexity of posture for human figures in the latter can be seen as mirrored by the complexity in presentation of the musical figure in the former.

* * *

Reviewing the speakers' papers in the light of Jeanice Brooks' question can provide some answers. John Milsom engaged with the 'analytical project', challenging its emphasis on coherence (specifically tonal/modal coherence) by his focus on variety in repetition. Susan Rankin chose to look at chant in the light of the text that it 'reads', implicitly challenging the idea of 'the music itself' as an available object of study since the chant is inextricably bound up with a religious practice. This perspective has led to the question of whether chant is music at all.[7] Rifkin and Bent strove to historicize the music they considered, Rifkin within the context of other arts and Bent through the use of contemporary theory in conjunction with musical diagnoses.

In the questions which followed, the swift recognition of so-called ahistorical or objective modern analysis as in fact historically situated was not matched by a parallel recognition of the historian's or analyst's own subjectivity. Perhaps this was not explicitly theorized because it seemed obvious, a truism; but the suspicion persisted that history, contemporary theory, and empiricism were being espoused as in some way more objective and ideology-free than any analytical methodology. The recognition that the subjective dimension is a necessary and creative part of scholarship does not mean that 'anything goes', or that we have to harp on endlessly about ourselves; but it might enable us to approach Brooks' question more closely.

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[1] Margaret Bent, 'Reflections on Christopher Page's *Reflections*', *Early*

Music 21 (1993), 625-33 , and Christopher Page, 'A Reply to Margaret Bent', *Early Music* 22 (1994), 127-32.

[2]Katherine Bergeron, 'A Lifetime of Chants' , in *Disciplining Music: Musicology and its Canons*, ed. Katherine Bergeron and Philip V. Bohlman (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 182-96; Umberto Eco, 'Dreaming of the Middle Ages' in *Travels in Hyper-Reality* (London: Pan, 1987), 61-72.

[3] Rob C. Wegman, 'Sense and Sensibility in Late Medieval Music: Thoughts on Aesthetics and 'Authenticity', *Early Music*, 23 (1995), 298-312.

[4]Haijo Westra, 'New Philology and the Editing of Medieval Latin Texts', in *Towards a Synthesis? Essays on the New Philology*, ed. Keith Busby (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1993), 52.

[5]ibid., 51.

[6]From Philip Brett, 'Facing the Music', *Early Music* 10 (1982), 347-50.

[7]Katherine Bergeron, 'Chant, or the Politics of Inscription', in *Companion to Medieval and Renaissance Music*, ed. Tess Knighton and David Fallows (London: Dent, 1992), 101-103.

SMA Diary 1996

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

1 June
Department of Music, University of Southampton
TAGS Day
Contact: Dr Julie Brown, Department of Music, Southampton University, Highfield, Southampton SO17 1BJ. Tel: 01703 594564. Fax: 01703 593197. Email: jab3@soton.ac.uk

15 June
Department of Music, University of Surrey
Postgraduate Study Day
Contact: Dr Chris Mark, Department of Music, University of Surrey, Guildford, Surrey GU2 5XH. Tel: 01483 259317. Fax: 01483 259386. Email: C.Mark@surrey.ac.uk

11-14 July
Department of Music, University of Nottingham
Ninth International Conference on 19th-century Music
Contact: Mrs Joyce Encer, Conference Administrator, Department of Music, University of Nottingham, Nottingham NG7 2RD. Tel: 0115 951 4764. Fax: 0115 951 4756

27 July-1 August
Puy de Bost Conference Centre, Dordogne, France
Gender Theory and Analysis Conference
Contact: Liz Garnett, Music School, Colchester Institute, Sheepen Road, Colchester CO3 3LL. Tel: 01206 718655. Fax: 01206 763041; Victoria Vaughan, Department of Music, Southampton University, Highfield, Southampton SO17 1BJ. Email: vsv@soton.ac.uk

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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. 00e on a Power Macintosh 7100. Font: Palatino.

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