state of fragmentation or even disintegration, it seems to have an uncanny capacity for self-regulation and renewal over time. Thus, as we see in the future new intellectual tributaries feeding music theory, as we discover new configurations and trajectories of research, I think we will still detect a regularizing "main stream" of theoretical activity (to borrow Tovey's apt metaphor). This main stream of music theory will never remain static, of course (streams rarely do); nor will it be defined by strict allegiance to particular doctrines or methods. Instead, it will be a dynamic flow of ideas, one constituted by a community of citizens in conversation—with one another, and with thinkers of the past. Herein, I think, lies the cohesion and identity binding the music-theoretical enterprise and endowing it with such vitality.

Music theory has thrived as an intellectual activity almost from the moment humans began making music, and I have no doubt that it will continue to thrive—provided at least that there are those committed to contemplating and understanding an art form that engages both mind and heart, that there are those who will joyfully struggle together to answer that unanswerable question posed so long ago by the Scholastics: *Quid sit Musica?*

Thomas Christensen

Revisiting the Future

"I have utterly failed at divination", Claude Palisca wrote in 1982, referring to his earlier prediction that a principal focus for musicology in the 1970s would be ethnomusicological approaches to the study of Western music.[1] Like Palisca, I have found it an uncomfortable experience to reread my previous attempt at

[1] From the Introduction to D. Kern Holoman and Claude V. Palisca (eds.), *Musicology in the 1980s* (New York: Da Capo, 1982).

prediction in a 1989 collection entitled "The Future of Theory."[2] I wrote then that the concept of unity was in need of critique, that one of the agents of this critique might be a reconceptualization of music as performance, and that a result of this might be to undermine the disciplinary identity of theory. I still think much the same. But, of course, that means these things didn't happen in the 1990s, and so I utterly failed at divination, too.

Well, maybe not *utterly*. The concept of unity was certainly critiqued throughout the 1990s, for instance by Rick Cohn, Fred Maus, and Jonathan Cross. Cross argued that traditional concepts of unity should be expanded to encompass the balancing and controlling of oppositions, resulting in "a new analytical awareness ... which acknowledges the validity of opposition as a central and positive constructive principle".[3] And I suppose that is just what I had in mind when, in my 1989 contribution, I argued that Schenkerian analysis was "predicated on the concept of unity...but *about* tension, conflict, disunity....[W]hat is being demonstrated is not some abstract quality of musical unity, but rather the conflict and contradiction that animates the musical experience." But in that case I misconstrued the effect of this kind of critique. As long ago as 1989, Robert Samuels was complaining that theorists treated deconstruction as little more than a new kind of analytical technique, deploying it within the traditional paradigm of the autonomous musical work and thereby stripping it of its critical potential;[4] in the same way, enlarged concepts of analytical unity have become a means whereby, even under changed circumstances, music-theoretical business can be transacted as usual. (Cross's new analytical awareness represents a means of enlarging the domain of autonomous music, and thereby securing a disciplinary practice identifiable as music theory.)

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[2] "The Future of Theory," *Indiana Theory Review* 10 (1989): 70-72.

[3] Jonathan Cross, "Music Theory and the Challenge of Modern Music: Birtwistle's 'Refrains and Choruses'", in Anthony Pople (ed.), *Theory, Analysis, and Meaning in Music* (Cambridge University Press, 1994): 193.

[4] Robert Samuels, "Derrida and Snarrenberg," *In Theory Only* 11/1-2 (1989): 42-58.

Some theorists, like Alan Street and Kevin Korsyn, engaged more fundamentally with the critique of the autonomous musical work mounted in the 1990s by the (then) "New" musicology (which, by the way, could be characterized as an ethnomusicological approach to the study of Western music, so that in the end Palisca got it right after all). But they never fully translated this into a critical practice of analysis, and there is a sense in which it is hard to see how they could have, because—as I put it in my 1989 contribution—"The theory of music is the theory of *autonomous* music." There are historical reasons for this: the modern practice of analysis has its origin in nineteenth-century aesthetic controversies, which explains its basic aim to demonstrate the unity and coherence of autonomous music. This has resulted in an anomalous situation by comparison with literary studies or art history, say, where in recent decades "theory" has been the hotspot where interdisciplinary influences are first felt, where traditional paradigms are problematized and dissolved. It has been in short the principal source of what Lawrence Kramer calls interpretive mobility—and, understood in this sense, Kramer is about as close to theory as the study of music has got. And yet, in terms of the musicological politics and institutional structures of the 1990s, Kramer represented the opposite pole from the theorists; he was, after all, one of the instigators of the "New" musicological attack on close analytical reading. That at least is an area where things have changed since the early 1990s, not only in Kramer's own work (though his personal accommodation with analytical method is an uneasy one) but also in that of many critically aware musicologists who select and combine analytical methods with an eclecticism that is more pragmatic than principled.

Yet this only adds to the sense that music theory sat out the 1990s. At the beginning of the decade the "New" musicologists at least thought theory worth attacking, whereas their present-day counterparts are liable simply to bypass it. I think that, for music theorists, the way out of this situation is not to give up on the unity and coherence of autonomous music, as I put it, but on the idea of *demonstrating* it, and I also think that this holds out the promise of a more symbiotic relationship with musicology. The basic aim of

musicology ("New" or otherwise) is, I suppose, to understand music as an agent of worldly meaning. Music can acquire personal or social meaning through simple association, just as anything else can, but it becomes an *agent* of meaning when there is (to put it loosely) an interaction between music and meaning.[5] Under such circumstances (the paradigm case of which is the TV commercial), music shapes, reshapes, and transforms associative meanings, creating connections that would not otherwise exist and so becoming a source of new meaning. It follows that understanding music's role as an agent of meaning depends on understanding its morphological properties—which is to say, precisely the traditional subject matter of theory and analysis. But the analysis is no longer undertaken with the traditional aim of demonstrating the music's autonomy, in other words how it makes sense. Rather the aim is to investigate how the music literally *makes* sense by (re)structuring the situation within which meaning is generated. And that means forming a view on the extent to which musical processes are to be understood as autonomous, as generated through "purely musical" means of elaboration or prolongation (and so forcing themselves upon the associated meanings), as against the extent to which they are inflected, subverted, or disrupted by the imperatives of "extra-musical" content.

'Purely musical', 'extra-musical': these hoary terms are discredited because of the historical baggage they bring with them. But if we can prise theory firmly apart from its traditional role of aesthetic demonstration, then the autonomy of music—its propensity for certain continuations as against others, its empirical resistance to certain interpretations as against others—ceases to be something taken for granted in the very act of analysis, and becomes instead something which analysis can chart, locate, measure, *quantify*. In this way the principle that it is (as Scott Burnham has put it) "precisely because music is musical [that] it can speak to us of things that are not strictly musical"[6] becomes the basis of an analytical practice that is fully engaged with issues of

[5] I offer a more careful discussion in "Theorizing Musical Meaning," *Music Theory Spectrum* 23/2 (2001): 170-195.

[6] "Theorists and 'The Music Itself'," *Journal of Musicology* 15 (1997): 326.

worldly meaning while retaining the heuristic power of formalism—and we should not forget that formalist approaches retain a credibility in music theory that is hardly paralleled in any other field of cultural study. And in this way, starting off from the same issue of musical unity, I have ended up with a more positive conclusion than I did in 1989 about the disciplinary identity of music theory.

But what of my most overt 1989 prediction, of "a reconceptualization of musical performance that will result in a new accommodation between theory and musicology"? I suppose I got it wrong. Certainly the relationship between analysis and performance was a growth area throughout the 1990s; Wallace Berry's *Musical Structure and Performance* (published in 1989) stimulated a substantial literature on the way in which analytical understanding could (and should) be realized in performance, which was complemented by work aiming to shift the centre of music-theoretical gravity by subjecting (recorded) performances rather than scores to analysis. To that extent my prediction was good. What did not happen, however, was any fundamental reconceptualization of music as performance. The Berry approach was predicated on a one-way relationship between analysis and performance: in essence it was analysts' job to say how the music was, and performers' to translate that into action. By contrast, the analysis of performance seemed like a good way to reverse the direction, enabling analysts to learn from performers' insights, but in retrospect I do not feel that is what happened: by analyzing music in the usual way and then mapping the performance onto the analysis, theorists ended up reinforcing the very presupposition (that music is in essence a text reproduced in performance) which studying music as performance was meant to interrogate.

Elsewhere[7] I have tried to outline what I think studying music as performance might mean—in other words, where the reconceptualization I have referred to might start—but at this point I am getting close to confusing the future of theory with my personal publication plans. So let me just point to one direction

[7] "Between Process and Product: Music and/as Performance," *Music Theory Online* 7/2 (April 2001).

where I think relevant ideas might come from. One of the most lively areas of music-theoretical activity during the 1980s and 90s was on the border with cognitive psychology: an initial pattern of sporadic and sometimes inadequately informed raids across the border (in both directions) eventually gave way to sustained cross-disciplinary and often collaborative activity. Important work is still emerging in this area (such names as David Huron, Lawrence Zbikowski, and Anthony Pople indicate its variety), but if there is to be an equally invigorating cross-disciplinary liaison in the 2000s, then I suspect it may be with sociology.

Many of the principal trends in musicology have been either anticipated or reflected in sociology (here one might mention T. W. Adorno, Georgina Born, or Tia DeNora). But what I particularly have in mind is a tradition of analyzing social interaction that might be traced back through Erving Goffmann and Ray Birdwhistell to Alfred Schutz. Schutz is known within the musical community for his phenomenological writings, but an essay originally published exactly fifty years ago under the title "Making Music Together: A Study in Social Relationship"[8] suggests an approach to music that addresses precisely its performative dimension. Following Schutz's lead, one would understand ensemble performance as a process of interpersonal negotiation (of rhythm, tempo, texture, dynamics, articulation, and intonation), the outcomes of which may be in some respects scripted by a score but remain fundamentally emergent. Put another way, music is the audible trace of a process of social interaction, so that to study performance—or even better the process of rehearsal through which it develops—is to study an interaction not only between individual performers, but also between them and the complex of expectations constituted by the act of performing, say, Mozart's "Dissonance" Quartet. On the one hand highly amenable to empirical investigation but on the other addressing classic music-theoretical issues, work of this kind suggests the possibility of reconceptualizing music as performance by finding ways of analyzing it that are at the same time

[8] In *Alfred Schutz: Collected Papers II. Studies in Social Theory*, A. Brodersen, ed. (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1964): 159-178.

musicological *and* sociological. Given that music is a social practice, it's hard to see why we should settle for less.

So that's my prediction for something that has as yet barely come over the horizon but could become quite normative if musicologists and theorists started seriously thinking of music as what everyone else thinks it is: a performing art, that is to say one that is not reproduced but rather *created* in the act of performance. But please note I am not giving a timescale. That way, when it doesn't happen, I won't have utterly failed at divination. It will just be taking longer than I expected.

Nicholas Cook

Music(s), Science(s), and Post-Positivist Pluralities

In the interpretive, postmodern, or even post-postmodern ("post^{2}modern") view, any approach to music that embraces science must be suspect, it seems. A reliance on science stands revealed to the interpretive and postmodern gaze as positivist, monolithic and hegemonic, reductive and oppressive, enforcing its tenets by suppressing, neglecting or disdaining the "otherness" of the objects of its discourse.

And something approximating to a postmodern view now appears to be the musicological norm (see, e.g., Cook & Everist 1999); the universal slogan is now "Plurality and Performativity," whether or not the players are willing to wear the postmodern team colours. And rightly so: the idea that a unitary and all-weather theory can account for all the musics and musical ontologies that have crept out from the conceptual undergrowth of the last half of the twentieth century is surely ludicrous. Plurality has had to become a fact of musicological life. Plurality in the Bakhtinian heteroglossia that can be read as constituting the "works" of the Western "canon," from the *Roman de Fauvel* through "Louie,