Intégral 39 (2026)
pp. i–ii

Editors' Note

The editors of *Intégral* are excited to present our latest volume! Its four articles, one analytical vignette, one conference report, and two reviews showcase the variety of musical study that can gather under the banner of music theory. The repertoire investigated ranges from J. S. Bach's Inventions to popular-song adaptations of a Frédéric Chopin melody; from folk revival songs to video game music. And this volume's authors explore various relationships with this music: navigating flow states and interactive storytelling, drawing intertextual connections, cognizing unique moments, and listening through historical theoretical models.

Two of this volume's entries explore lyric-driven manipulations of song forms. In "Freewheeling Strophic Form," **Nancy Murphy** introduces a song form that features verses with a variable number of repeated melodic lines. Murphy argues that the irregularity of this form animates modes of musical storytelling, intensifying political narratives and, in her final analysis, reflecting the flight of Buffy Sainte-Marie's "little bird." Her article is part hermeneutic, drawing meaning out of the form's use in 1960s singer-songwriter music, and part historical, locating this form's precedents in cumulative and enumerative folk music.

John Y. Lawrence considers the role of lyrics in determining formal structure. In an analytical vignette titled "Three Forms of 'Tristesse,'" Lawrence analyzes two popular-song adaptations of Chopin's Étude, op. 10, no. 3, one in French and the other in English. This Étude's ambiguous and asymmetrical form is clarified in divergent ways by contrasting rhyme schemes, which suggest their own patterns of segmentation and association.

Gui Hwan Lee and Joon Park explore the role of music in the boss battles of FromSoftware's famously challenging video games in "Music as Solution for 'Hard' Game Design: A Cross-disciplinary Study of Boss-Battle Music in *Bloodborne*, *Dark Souls III*, *Sekiro*, and *Elden Ring*." They argue that this music invites players to enter into a flow state, a state that may otherwise seem challenging to reach in the context of such difficult gameplay. Lee and Park attend to narrative and formal correspondences between boss battles and their scores, drawing on product design scholarship to make connections between these correspondences and player immersion.

In "Once upon a Time: One-Time Occurrences as Structural and Formal Markers," **Ram Reuven** introduces a powerfully flexible analytical category: the one-time occurrence. Reuven identifies a variety of such occurrences—strings of rare harmonies, changes in contour, and even silences—and observes that they frequently punctuate important structural moments in tonal repertoire, ranging from Baroque fugues to late Romantic operas.

Jeffrey Scott Yunek proposes an adjustment to the common understanding of historical Russian music theory in "Sergei Taneev's Place in the Russian Functional Harmony Tradition." In this article, Yunek argues that Taneev, although best known for his counterpoint pedagogy, played a significant role in the dissemination of functional harmonic theory in Russia. To support this argument, Yunek references Taneev's diaries and other rarely cited Russian-language sources, and he uncovers traces of Hugo Riemann's functionalism in Taneev's unpublished harmonic theories.

In a report on the 2025 Harvard Graduate Music Forum Conference, **Stephen Tian-You Ai and Christina Misaki Nikitin**, two of the conference's co-organizers, provide insight into the guiding questions behind the conference's theme, "TRANS∗Media." Ai and Nikitin frame their discussion around the tension between "trans-as-method" and "trans-as-identity," providing a compelling account of the papers presented and the emergent themes. Through this framing, they also highlight the importance of the conference as an affective space that included many queer and trans attendees.

We are also pleased to present two reviews of recent books: **Aldwyn Hogg Jr.'s** review of *Atomic Tunes: The Cold*

War in American and British Popular Music by Joanna and Tim Smolko (2021), as well as **Bryan J. Parkhurst's** "Historical Materialism: Normative and Applied," a double review of *Toward a Materialist Conception of Music History* by Stephan Hammel (2024) and *Hearing Double: Jazz, Ontology, Auditory Culture* by Brian Kane (2024).

As ever, we express our deep appreciation to Intégral's staff, editorial board, and typesetters for their diligent service, to the many scholars who provided thorough and insightful reviews, and to you for your readership and support.

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