Ethnomusicology: Holy Sounds: Music and the Sacred, drawing on Christianity in a European Context.

**The CD playlist is set out at the end.**

Some Quotations on Listening.

"We must never stop asking ourselves what exactly the content of music is, this intangible substance that is expressible only through sound. It cannot be defined as having merely a mathematical, a poetic or a sensual content. It is all those things and much more. It has to do with the condition of being human." **(Daniel Barenboim)**

"In listening to music the same experience takes sound as its object, and also something that is not and cannot be sound – the life and movement that is music. We hear this life and movement in the sound, and situate it in an imagined space, organised, as is the phenomenal space of our own experience." **(Roger Scruton)**

"It is only after the action of striking a chord (a visual, physical act in a single moment of time) that one can really listen to its reverberation, hanging in the air indefinitely (invisible, without physical form, out of time). This is the key to the power of music in its sounding out of modernity, that its physicality as sound is both urgently and bodily of the world, here and now, but quickly vanishes in order to leave an imprint, that survives its own absence. It is precisely into the silence, it the absence that follows it, that music projects the promise of it continuing presence, the resonant space between language and sound." **(Julian Johnson)**

"To be listening is always to be on the edge of meaning, or in the edgy meaning of extremity, and as if the sound were precisely nothing else other than this edge, this fringe, this margin – at least the sound that is musically listened to, that is gathered and scrutinised for itself, not merely as an acoustic phenomenon but as resonant meaning, whose sense is found in resonance." **(Jean-Luc Nancy)**

"Open interpretation is the vehicle of subjectivity in a strong sense, not of private sensation or idiosyncrasy, but of intelligent agency, it is fundamentally the capacity to interpret: subjects make interpretations; interpretations make subjects." **(Lawrence Kramer)**

"Something can ‘speak’ if it is listened to, rather than being something it might say, that one would subsequently attend to ‘by means of listening’. It is true that ‘no genuine human relationship’ exists without the radical and reciprocal openness of listening, this openness exists ultimately not only for the person to whom one listens, but anyone who listens is fundamentally open ….in the dizzy affirmation of our logos there is hardly any ‘logical’ space left for the ‘hidden’ but essential tradition of listening… the problem of listening might be considered the shadow dimension of the epochal development of our culture." **(Gemma Corradi Fiumara)**

Bells were meant to be audible everywhere within the bounds of the community, and it was important that no part of the territory remain deaf to the messages being rung out by the bells. Indeed, it was no accident that bells were positioned at the top of towers, from these heights the sound could travel further, reach more distant ears. There was also a correlation between the loudness of the bell and the extent of the parish’s territory. The bells provided the authoritative auditory signals of daily life, they are the voice of the community, they talk to us (Corbin.)

**Introduction:**

This paper is an exploratory draft exploring the connections between sensory anthropology, its ethnographic methodology, and articulated experiences of the holy, the numinous and the sacred through the medium of music. It also moves towards a practical proposal of exploring a set of relationships between music, experience and liturgy.

There is a significant and growing literature on the relationship of perception through the senses and noesis – interpretive and imaginative creativity which arises through these modes. The relationship between aesthetic experience and spiritual experience is likewise a topic receiving considerable attention, in particular in TheoArtistry at St Andrews.

I am taking an anthropological approach to auditory and musical orderings of the sacred through the approach of sensory ethnography. I am drawing in the main on European and Christian examples. Theologically I am going to refer (in a later text) to the work of Oliver Davies, and Paul Avis. (Refs to insert). In short I am using a framework whereby:

a) The ‘givenness’, the *logos* of creation is imagined as a *prefigurement* of our sensual experience – God’s creation is intelligible and warrants belief grounded in embodied, sensed engagement.

b) That our embodied engagement with creation opens the possibilities for perceptual *transfiguration* – perceiving the gift of grace and as numinous. Sensory experience is potentially spiritually noetic.

c) Drawing upon Christopher Schwobel’s ideas of *Relational Being and Christian Anthropoology* I am proposing a way of developing further participatory engagement with Christian liturgy, through music by the production of meditations produced by listeners to selected pieces of sacred – a *configuring* of shared religious experience. I have already shown ethnographically that listeners when they articulate their reactions and responses to abstract instrumental music do so in such an intelligible way that they can be written as an ekphrastic art-work (Lloyd-Richards & Williams 2018). I have also suggested in a theological/liturgical context that the largest and most enduring example of ekphrasis is the Psalms, a fluid hyper-text that has continued to be re-translated, rewritten as poetic forms. (Vassar, J. 2007. *Recalling a Story Once Told. An Intertextual Reading of the Psalter and the Pentateuch*, Battles, M. 2015. *Palimpsest. A History of the Written Word. W.W. Norton &Co.).* In this proposal the ekphrastic text produced by listeners will be a prayer/meditation that can be performed as liturgy.

Silence……………**CD1.**

**1. Acoustemology: Rainforest**: Steven Feld. Papua New Guinea, interior, where the Bosavi people live. They have forest sound trails which are maps, birds sing paths. Sounds are the world, permeate the social world, not only do they provide present knowledge but also hold the memory of their people. Sound shapes the Bosavi world, we can hear here the Seyak bird, the hooded butcher bird Cracticus cassicus, one of the everyday clocks of the natural world waking the forest, and slowing its call to allow echoing imitation over distance. Not only does this soundworld act as knowledge of the world and acoustemology, it also contains what they call ’gone reflections’ the reverberant spirits of the dead who have passed to the tree tops. The link is that the names of the living are related to bird names, these voices in the forest can be your parents, and they carry not only memory but also the present orientation in time and space in their musical sound. Walking in the forest you can hear the sound of your departed parents.

So we can begin to use our imaginations to enter into a life-world that has a sound as one of its key environing aspects in which we move and orient ourselves, critically in time and space, and in our relational life in community and with our forebears. We can go on from this to recognise that there is a cultural history of the senses and that we need imagination to ‘enter into the sensual world of historical actors’. We can also realise that listening is not as a sense separated out from touch, smell, sight, taste. So we can locate ourselves in embodied knowledge, with tacit knowledge, we can even entertain the idea that the Spirit moves in and though the senses, and that this is a noesis, a kind of knowing, which is not only and always to be processed as it were through the mesh of cognition for its basic validity to be accepted.

So the imaginative leaps to be made in this session are to enter various musical sound worlds, and become aware of how we listen, and how that affects what we think and feel we hear. That is the first challenge. The second is to consider the possibility that our engagement with sound and music in this fashion in our own present repertoire might ne noetic in a particular way that early Quakers called ‘openings’ and ‘leadings’. In today’s anthropological theology we would call these movements ‘perceptual transfigurations’. This is the way our perceptions subtly alter to take in a new dimension of some encounter *and* also continue to be able to see it holistically in the new and the old way. The world becomes creation, it is not transformed, our being in it is. This perceptual ability we all have is sometimes called a ‘gestalt’ and we can illustrate it visually.

We have been immersed in a sound-world that is both nature and culture. As we perceive this world in a sense we experience it with difficulty as an environment for daily life, though that is what it is, but as a human drama other than our own culture. As such I suggest that our responses might be thought of as like those we make to an art-work, and ethnographic art-work in this case. This is important to explore because our encounter with the sacred through the senses has dimensions of the ‘given’ – the gift of creation – and of the ’made’ – our social participation in our construction of our engagements with creation – of discovery and creativity, of facticity and interpretation. For let us imagine that instead of listening to the sound-world of the Bosavi people we take the same approach to the sound-world of a composer, for example Debussy. I am not suggesting here that we do not experience sound-worlds in nature as aesthetic experiences but we are more likely to deploy that perspective when the sound-world is constructed for us. This perspective adds to our immersion in nature another mode of encounter with the sacred, the aesthetic. In so far as aesthetic experience, engagement with art-works can include the whole gamut of human experience we do not want to restrict this aesthetic to the pleasurable and beautiful. This clearly has implications for how we think that ritual works.

Another issue raised by the Bosavi example is the relationship of listening to other senses. A discussion of these relationships can be found in Sterne, J 2015 *Hearing* (p66ff.) in Novak & Sakakeeny 2015. Here he cites an *audiovisual litany* of the ways the binary division of hearing and seeing has been promulgated: hearing immerses its subject: vision offers perspective; hearing tends towards subjectivity: seeing to objectivity; hearing is concerned with interiors: vision is concerned with surfaces etc. So we can see here also a supposed connection between the work of senses in ‘enclosure’ and ‘dis-enclosure’. Interiority and exteriority. However Tagg sets out clearly (Tagg, P. 2013. P65ff. *Music’s Meanings*. MMMsp.) the case for synaesthesis, that is the simultaneous perception in more than one sensory mode, as the normal and essential part of human cognition. So we hear sounds and ‘see’ colour, word-pictures and images, we feel vibtaions and experience bodily resonance, and so on.

So to summarise: The nature/culture soundworld of the Bosavi allows us to imagine the way in which our senses, particularly listening/hearing orient us spatio-temporally, in space and time, provide vital information about our place in the environment, link us to other actors within in and also to the past tradition still animated and alive in the naming of, and relationships with, the birds of the forest and their sounds. This acoustemology, this noesis, this knowing, is auditory and also synaesthetic – implicating our other senses. This noesis is interpretive not just factually communicative. These interpretive acts are perceptual transfigurations, some feature that appears is changed as it is interpreted and taken in. The birds sing and the meaning emerges from engagement with the sound in the environing context. When we make our own imaginative ‘thought experiment’ (our own perceptual transfiguration) and think of sound-worlds created by music composers we also understand the way in which our aesthetic sensibilities are also in play.

So with those challenges in mind let us listen like Pythagoras, Boethius and Augustine.

**2. Music of the Spheres, the sounding of the divine order in the environing world.**

**Pythagoras/Boethius/Augustine, Bells, Cries and Calls.**

The grand metaphysical tradition that imbued music for centuries was the notion that musical sound, especially musical harmony, coincides with, and gives expression to, cosmic order, derives from the legendary figure of Pythagoras, finding its way into the West through Plato, and passing into Christian music theory through Augustine and Boethius.

This is the idea that music is part of and also sounds the order of the universe. Music was a mathematical discipline that explores the proportional relationships within this order. Henry Chadwick wrote: *‘music is a penetration of the very heart of providence’s ordering of things…a central clue to the hidden harmony of God and nature’* (Chadwick H, 1981. Boethius: The Consolations of Music… see Begbie p29). We have seen in our vicarious knowledge of the rainforest that we can read the book of nature through our ears, and this is real knowledge not just sentience or perception it counts as a cognition, a knowing of our dwelling in the world and being pat of it. So the metaphysic of the ‘music of the spheres’ is not some dry philosophy but situates us within both nature and the divine cosmic order and points to a medium through which we can participate in it. We will see later in the universalism of John Tavener that this idea is still very important, and also finds later reference in the work of Jean-Luc Nancy and his ideas of bodily ‘resonance’. Let us see how the voice **Chanting the sound of the world can lead to calls to prayer, and plain song.**

**CD 2. Om/ Islamic Call to Prayer.**

**Om** Chanting the world, sounding this eternal sound, God never stops sounding, God sustains the very existence of the universe by continuing to make sound, by speaking the world (Word) and we can simply key into this eternal sustenance and glory….Om….and as cries, sighs, sounds begin to form into incantation, recitation, chant, they are honed and polished by repetition (round the fire?) and are used for calls. We hear the bird-calls across the rainforest and after the Om chant (God’s tinnitus!) we will hear a call, these calls are to come, to a space, a clearing, (in Welsh Llan…) (I will have more to say about enclosure of sound it ritual later, and the gathered ‘harmonies’ of co-presence) but the call here is to prayer. What you will hear is..the Om chant and an Islamic call to prayer (notice the use of echo), followed by

**CD3./CD4.**

a Zoroastrian Chant and a Jewish Hannukka Prayer, then an Indian Chant and finally western plainsong.

**Insert section on the human voice, sounds of words, understanding through sounds of words, on not knowing the meanings.**

**Bells.**

**CD 5.**

Bells sound out across the landscape, sounding creation in the air, under the sky and on the weathered earth. We live for several months a year on a hill facing a small French village, St Michel. I can see the Eglise Haut right at the top of the village opposite.

Joyce is digging in the vegetable garden when she hears the bells form the church. She might stop for a moment. They are ringing repeatedly and the sound carries across the fields for a considerable distance on a still day. They mark time Noon or dusk at 6pm. They indicate for a farm labourer a break, lunch, possibly with others, and in the village workers will make their way to the local Bistrot du Pays, at the end of the day tools are downed and similar journeys made homeward. For others this is the call to prayer, even to Mass – here we have a trace of historic monastic temporality and liturgical rhythms of the Offices. If thee bells are sounding on August 15th one might be reminded that the day is The Feast of the Assumption, but have little idea of what that is or was. The unenclosed sound is in the public soundscape, emanating from a building owned by the French State (as are all churches under the laicite of the French constitution). I heard a resident in the local café complaining about the noise of the and bells saying they were just retained for the tourists.

What are we hearing here? Synchronically, the time of day, an invitation to pause – the sound paradoxically marks a moment of reflective silence in the pause of the daily routine –

The French historian Corbin notes: “Listening to a bell conjures up a space that is by its nature slow, prone to conserve what lies within it, and redolent of a world in which walking was the chief mode of locomotion. Such a sound is attuned to the quiet tread of a peasant.”

The bell is a pleasing resonant sound, the bell itself vibrates the air for a whole environing wound world. Vicariously we might enjoy the sense of order and continuity that it represents with the past, traces of which are just still available to us, and it also has the romantic association of sounding over the ‘pays’, the ‘terroir’ the hard and rocky soil of the parish that still yields its harvest to those who work it. We may have other associations with public sounding bells, Big Ben or the call to some activity at school. Here we can see the intertwined nature of our sentience (the sounds of the bell), our judgement of what the sound means (the marking of time), our interpretive knowledge of its cultural history (its cultic associations) and the sound is potentially sacred.

We may not know that the bell that we hear is chiming the Angellus. But diachronically our hearing has some of this history implicated in the sound.

The ringing of the Angelus in the 14th century and even in the 13th century was common practice. The number of bells belonging to these two centuries that still survive is relatively low, but a considerable proportion bear inscriptions that suggest that they were originally intended to serve as Ave bells. Many bear the words *Ave Maria*; or, as in the case of a bell at [Helfta](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Helfta&action=edit&redlink=1), near [Eisleben](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eisleben), in Germany, dated 1234, the whole sentence: *Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum*.

Bells inscribed with *Ave Maria* are also numerous in England, but there the Angelus bells seem in a very large number of instances to have been dedicated to [St Gabriel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gabriel), the angel mentioned in the prayer (Luke 1:26–27). In the [Diocese of Lincoln](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diocese_of_Lincoln) alone there are nineteen surviving medieval bells bearing the name of Gabriel, while only six bear the name of [Michael](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_%28archangel%29), a much more popular patron in other respects.

In [France](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/France), the *Ave Maria* seems to have been the ordinary label for Angelus bells; but in Germany the most common inscription of all, even in the case of many bells of the 13th century, is the words *O Rex Gloriæ Veni Cum Pace*("O King of Glory, Come with Peace"). In Germany, the [Netherlands](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Netherlands), and in some parts of France, the Angelus bell was regularly known as the *Peace bell*, and *pro pace schlagen* (to toll for peace) was a phrase popularly used for ringing the Angelus.

In Italy the three recitals of the Angelus are referred to as *avemmaria*, hence *L' avemmaria del giorno*, *L' avemmaria del mezzo giorno* and *L' avemmaria della sera*. It was customary at one time to calculate hours of the day from the evening Angelus, or *avemmaria* for short. Hence the origin of the phrase that appears in Leoncavallo's opera [*Pagliacci*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pagliacci): "venti tre ore"' ("the twenty-third hour") refers to one hour before the evening Angelus.

So we can now understand the complex history of the sounds that we hear today.

We also have some more layer to add to the nature of listening, for behind and in the sound are these elements. We appreciate the materiality of the bell itself, the making of it for a specific purpose and its naming, the bell bears the words. It sounds what it says on the bell. The ‘ave’ the call, the sounding of time, the dedication to Marie, and the ‘toll for peace’ seem cultural variants across Europe.

These cultural traces are not uncontroversial. Sounds can be caught in the sacred-secular debate.

**At 12 noon and six in the evening the Angelus bells ring out across Ireland's air waves.**News bulletins must wait until a minute past the hour to allow for the devotional Catholic prayer, recited in memory of the Incarnation of Jesus.The bells have been a regular feature of state broadcaster RTE's schedule since August 1950 - when they were introduced to mark the Catholic Holy Year.Father Dermod McCarthy, the former head of religious programmes in RTE remembers that RTE Radio "began to broadcast the Angelus with the blessing - and I am not sure, possibly the request of the then Archbishop of Dublin John Charles McQuaid". When RTE television began transmitting just over a decade later, the Angelus appeared on the television schedule too. Ireland remains the only European broadcaster to transmit the Angelus bells, although Fr McCarthy does point out that a Finnish broadcaster relays the bells of Turku cathedral every day.But the broadcast has attracted a good deal of criticism from some quarters.

**If it is exclusive for Catholics, then what's wrong with that? Muslims have their prayer call and it is exclusive for themAli Selim, Islamic Cultural Centre of Ireland**Sitting in his home office, surrounded by piles of books on faith and atheism, Michael Nugent wages his campaign against what he sees as the lack of secularism in Irish society. He's a member of Atheist Ireland which takes the Irish government to task on issues such as the recent blasphemy laws, the lack of a secular Constitution and the presence of religion in the school system. For him and others like him, the Angelus is a relic of a time gone by. "I think in many ways we have moved past it," he said."I think now public opinion has changed and the challenge is to get the legislature to recognise that opinion has changed and to make our laws and the institutes of state to reflect the reality of a pluralist Republic."Mr Nugent is quick to point out that, for secularists in Ireland, the transmission of the Angelus by the state broadcaster is a symptom of what they see as a wider problem in Ireland. "There's a whole load of background noise in religion that we are almost used to because it has been there so long," he claimed. "In the Republic of Ireland, in order to become president or in order to become a judge, you have to swear a religious oath to ask God to direct and sustain you in your work. "If you go to court... you are handed a Christian bible to swear your oath on... the Angelus is another example of these type of things."Another criticism of the Angelus broadcast is that it is by its very nature Catholic, and therefore excludes other faiths, a criticism that Ali Selim doesn't take on board.He's based at the Islamic Cultural Centre of Ireland; the five-acre campus in South Dublin hosts Ireland's largest mosque. He arrived in Ireland from Egypt in 1999, and said the fast-growing Muslim community in Ireland doesn't have a problem with the Angelus. "We see it as something that belongs to people of another faith," he said. "If it is exclusive for Catholics, then what's wrong with that? Muslims have their prayer call and it is exclusive for them. "I don't speak on others' behalf but you'll find each religious community has its own religious matters and this is because they have willingly chosen to embrace one religion or another".The debate about the Angelus in Ireland then, is not necessarily a debate between religions as to whether or not broadcasting the Angelus bells is appropriate. It's part of a wider debate on what kind of society Ireland should be - a secular or a religious one.That debate will continue in Ireland, but meanwhile the Angelus bells continue to ring out across the airwave, at twelve and six each day, just as they did sixty years ago.

***Ruth McDonald's report on 60 years of the Angelus was broadcast on***[**Sunday Sequence**](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b007cphf)***on BBC Radio Ulster on 22 August.***

(See Bells refs. Also in Hirschkind C.*Religion* 2015 in Novak Duke UP.)

So we have begun our exploration at the left of our diagram, in the open, feet upon the earth, looking at skies and horizon, dwelling in the earth and in the resonance of the world. Ref to Ingold, Feld, etc. We see how sound/music and our engagement with it is noetic, and that our sensual experience is also interpretive, and transfigurative, we may feel blessed by it.

I now want to turn to more formal ritual sacred music. The enclosure of sacred sound can also be linked to the creation of liturgical music which used the interior volumes, space, and reflective surfaces, particularly of Romanesque architecture (in France, (L’architecture du Silence (ref)) which creates the resonant musical acoustics required for polyphonic music. Of course sacred music continues outside, in the Beating of the Bounds processions, in Whitson Walks, in performances of Mystery Plays, and with bells.

**3 The formation in sound and music of ritual liturgy in enclosure church space.**

**The Human Voice/The Sounds of Words & their felt auditory meaning: Plainchant and the Kyrie.**

How do words ‘make sense’? Do we need to know what they mean?

**CD6**. Plainchant and Responses

**CD7.** Kyrie beyond plainsong to polyphony in liturgy.

**4. Perfection**: **Emanations of Divine Order**

**The Beauty of Holiness: Polyphony/Euphony**

**Expressing an ordered cosmos and the demons of the inner world.**

**CD 8.**

Tallis: *O Nata Lux de Lumine* 1.44

The false realtions, imperfections, dissonance as the nature of human predicament in the spiritual order. Let us consider how that cosmic order is expressed musically and how it contribution to the construction of a liturgy places the listener as worshipper in a creaturely relation to it. The Mass is the central musical form. In it the participants relationship to God is situated. There is of course always the human existential predicament, from the penitential Psalms onwards which asks questions of how this relationship goes and what needs are being met and what due homage is due. The whole of this story of music and the sacred could in a sense be framed as the way music provides the changing sound-world within which our human relationship with the divine is played out.

In the Mass the liturgy maps for us our emotional and psychological journey, from calls for mercy, penitence, (Kyrie) to affirmation and forgiveness (Credo), to reverence in presence (Sanctus), to blessing (Benedictus), to praise and thanksgiving (Gloria). Charles Taylor speaks of this conceptual shift, from a stress on living according to a pre-existing order external to the self, where we discover our place and vocation, to an order that we construct internally and as discovered within our own minds. What we need to imaginatively grasp is that the ritual works through the music in this ordered divine economy and constitutes the relationship of the participant both within the cosmic order, its God-ordained social forms and in its ritual efficacy.

CD 9

Byrd: *Tu Es Petrus* 2.13

Note: Lotti: *Crucfixus.* The shape of the subject matter.

CD 10.

However a glimpse of the fractures in this whole world can be seen in the work of Carlo Gesualdo, Prince of Venosa. 1612. The personal relationship with the divine becomes problematic in the music, it begins to include a personal drama as well as an ordered ritual. A psychological expression of conflict, guilt and shame seeking forgiveness. Seeking to atone for misdeeds in the form of musical feeling. A cuckolded male could murder his unfaithful wife in the codes of the day. He found his wife in adultery and killed her with horrifying violence. He was not held to any judicial account for this but it remained a haunting act. His music became a tortured expression of the psychological effects of his actions. He pours out his desolation and his need for forgiveness in his sacred music bringing to it his own tortured conscience and the drama of the liturgy of Holy Week. His harmonic structures and shifts are unsettling, the melodic lines seem to lose themselves, lost voices crying out for some resolution. This is far from the early sublimity of ordered euphony, this is religiously morbid polyphony plagued by psychological demons. We do not find evocative depictions of nature here.

Here I show this movement into the tortured inner world, the chromatic movement is quite disturbing.

*Sacre Canciones 1603 Trubulara Sciencian,* ‘ May the Father have mercy on my soul …”I do not wish the death of a sinner but that he should repent and be converted”. Gesulado is obsessed by the nature of the inner world of salvation and we hear the torture in his music. Here is his *Reponses for Holy Week* and the Tenebrae Service where candles are slowly extinguished, the title predictably is *Tristis est Anima Mea.* What is being only just held together here is not the ordered universe but the human psyche.

The three-decker universe or order, is elaborated and filled out and it tensions are beginning to show.

Pause: Key date: 1607 Monteverdi: *L’Orfeo*, the creation of opera, story, narrative, character. Two years before Galileo was observing the sky at night and the centrality of earth was put into question, Monteverdi was telling a story which has as it centre a catastrophic moment of loss, Orfeo in trying to rescue Euridice ‘looks back’ to the underworld and in doing so loses her. Julian Johnson suggests that this is ‘the emergence of a new attitude that defines musical modernity – the representation of the finite temporality of human experience over the infinity of the divine.

The understanding of the cosmos/ creation was changing, as was the representation of the human subject in it. The Protestant Reformation’s emphasis on preaching as the main vehicle for communication Christian teachings Paul’s words ‘faith comes from hearing (Rom 10:17) became influential in creating more of an emphasis on audition.

**5. Congregational participation.**

Psalms.

CDs: 11/12

The Psalms/Psalters; the relationship between text and chant; personal devotions in Books of Hours; authoritative text and social/regulatory functions as in Coverdale and the C17th Book of Common Prayer. The psychology of private devotion assisted by the Psalms and the roles of both memory and reading are interesting avenues as is the relationship between Shakespeare the Psalms and the enrichment of the English language in the early C17th. There has always been creative space around the Psalms for poets. Allegre Misere uses the text from Ps. 51. Patterns of dissent in metrical psalm singing, the New Model Army in the English Civil War, Sternhold and Hopkins. The key role of metrical Psalms in Scotland and Calvin’s view of psalmody and Hugenot Psalms. (CD11) The art of contemporary Psalm singing in the Anglican tradition. (CD12).

**6.The post Reformation ‘Self’ as part the liturgical drama/self-making and salvation.**

**Bach 1734:**

**CD13.**

**Christmas Oratorio: Aria/Chorale.**

Bach is thought by Begbie to span both pre-modern and modern sensibilities, whereas Butt considers that in doing so Bach reconfigures elements of the pre-modern. What do they mean by these comments? Modernity is characterised in Butt’s view by ‘subjectivity, and there is in it a conception of the individual and the self as being ‘a disembodied centre of individual consciousness’. The image of the self is one of self–construction, self-making, and also therefore as a potential new entity waiting to be discovered. The Lutheran stress is on ‘responsibility to cultivate faith internally as the means to salvation (Begbie 44), so Bach is thought to express in his musical forms ways in which the ‘severing with the natural order’ can be compensated for by a surrogate musical order. In early modernity the inward turn of the human self whist having these emancipating features also entail a loss of confidence in the wider order of things, in the cosmos as being our home. Charles Taylor speaks of this conceptual shift, from a stress on living according to a pre-existing order external to the self, where we discover our place and vocation, to an order that we construct internally and as discovered within our own minds. New orders of the holy/sacred emerge (ref). Music moves from being an artistically respectful engagement with a God-given order embedded in the physical world at large but the self as the constructive interpretive listener emerges. Bach is true to, faithful to the God-given materials but is highly constructed, and this has its effect on a sense of religious truth, for here in the weaving of musical forms emerges ‘the tensions between artifice and nature,’ what is given to be discovered and what is made by creativity and imagination. (Begbie p.49 for theological comments here) The norms for what counts as religious truth develops, and new truths and the conditions for what counts as true emerge. Bach becomes not only an imitator of nature but the author of nature. So we have a critical point of connection and development whereby Bach both works with the sense of the grounding of music in the invariable cosmic order but also creates an unfolding seemingly organic emergence of musical forms. For the listener therefore we encounter both a world of certainty and interconnectedness, but this is not simple predictability and as fugues and interweavings, and the apparent infinity of variations emerges we find directions that are unexpected and transformative. In musical forms in the example here we hear an Aria, a deeply personal dilemma, echoing a penitential Psalm, the single plaintive voice, in the presence of and speaking to God. The Recit, a narrative formal device, has already situated us in the drama within which we are a thinking, listening, worshipping? participant. These Evangelists are angels out of time, narrating as it were a timeless dilemma. The narrated story of the Passions is both a memorial and a question of its embodiment in the heats of the listeners, we enter the story as participants in this thwarting of time. We are certainly engaged in a different form of encounter with the sacred than participation in liturgy. This is a new ritual form. The Chorale form seems to be the collective voice of the Church as Chorus, it enveloped us in its harmonic structures taking up the individual pleas and dilemma and offering the power of redemption in its harmonic solidarity of voices. It also retains a musical sounding of the intelligibility of God’s creation. What Bach straddles and holds together he also makes tense, personal and open. This is rooted in Bach’s selection of texts where the centrality of faith-union in Christ is central, this is not a state to be achieved but and eschatological encounter and communion with Christ as we embody the incarnation…the final chorale from the Cantata 70:

Not for the world, not for Heaven

Does my soul desire and yearn;

I desire Jesus and his light.

He who has reconciled me with God,

Who frees me from judgement;

I will not let my Jesus go.

Here we feel the listening entanglement of the participant in a drama, the aesthetic power of the music resonating at perceptual levels and the text articulating deep trust.

**Christmas Oratorio**

**Section IV: Feast of Circumcision.**

Aria.

O my saviour, could thy name

Instil even the slightest grain

Of that dread fear?

No, thou thyself dost say no (No!)

Shall I then be afraid to die?

No, thy sweet word is there!

Or should I rejoice?

Yes, my saviour thou dost say yes (Yes!)

Choral

May Jesus guide my beginning,

May Jesus always be at my side,

May Jesus curb my desires,

May Jesus be my sole longing,

May Jesus be in my thoughts

`O Jesus, let me never falter!

**7. Mozart: The Divine Child. Turning sorrow into joy.**

Karl Barth had a dream about Mozart according to Thomas Merton.

 Wondering why he was not amore devout Catholic. He also noted that Mozart is ‘the divine child in all of us’ and who saves us. What did he mean by this?

Barth says…’It is a child, even a divine child who speaks in Mozart’s music to us. Some considered Mozart always a child in practical affairs….at the same time Mozart the child prodigy was never allowed to be a child in the literal meaning of that word, he gave his first concert at the age of six. Yet he was always a child in the higher meaning of that word. Fear not, Merton continues Christ remains a child in you…there is a Mozart in us who will be or salvation. (Williams 2011. p72. *A Silent Action. Engagements with Thomas Merton.* SPCK.)

Jukia Kristeva notes in her Essay *From Jesus to Mozart*, (Kristeva *The Drive to Belief* (REF?) that the latter is able to move us from sorrow to joy and she quotes a musical example:

Insert.

**8. Sacred Music in the concert Hall.**

Sept 12th 1741: Handel’s Messiah.

**Non-Liturgical Mythology and Syncretism.**

Wagner: Parsifal: *The Communion Theme* of the Prelude.

CD14.

The Christian leitmotifs have been established from the archetypal features of the Christian story – miraculous birth, heroic and antiheroic struggles, the wounded healer, the wilderness, the journey, sacrifice, death, redemption, and we have seen how these have been played out in musical contexts that create different conditions for the exploration of our human relationship with the divine – the formal Mass, to the participative liturgical drama of Bach.

*Parsifal* musically cites basic sacramental experiences: the celebration of the Eucharist, the washing of the feet, the sorrow of Good Friday, confession and funeral rites. But Wagner releases these traditional situations from the context of the church, and they become fro him isolated elements upon which he could build a new interpretation or devise a different experience of spirituality. This is what always disturbed devout Christians about Parsifal, individuals who lack strong religious beleifs, on the other hand, are annoyed by the superfluous ‘liturgischer Schutt’ – liturgical garbage.

(Kienzle, Ulrike. 2005. Parsifal and Religion: A Christian Music Drama? In KInderman & Syer 2005.)

Wagner is raising several important basic issues here. Not only is this undoubtedly scared music outside the church and outside liturgical drama, but it is syncretistic and proposing a spiritual engagement as powerful and as valid as that of the liturgical context. Wagner places leitmotifs in new orders and combinations – the Grail is the chalice of the Last Supper, filled with Christ’s blood at the cross. In Wagner the ‘eucharistic’ motif has Christ’s body changing into bread and wine as opposed to the Christian orthodox reverse, yet a transubstantiation takes place in the drama. The chalice is filled, a blinding shaft of light descends from the dome of the Grail Temple, the Grail holds the ‘essence’ of the soul of Christ, the light is a hierophantic revelation giving eternal life. The human aspects of redemption are also created (p.93) – by following Christ, who is the mythical archetype of the redeemer, who suffered for mankind (an implicit Pauline theology of the ‘forensic’ atonement evident) human beings can become redeemers of the world.

There is also entailed the fundamental question of perception and experience. Wagner was influenced by both theological trends and by philosophical ones. In the first instance he had read David Friedrich Strauss (1808-74) and his work *Das Leben Jesu* (1835) which treats the Christian tradition as nothing more than a collection of symbols and an elaborated mythology and Feuerbach’s view that faith is merely human projection. Wagner was also influenced by the philosophy of Schopenhauer and his dependence on Kant.

According to Kant we cannot perceive things as they really are, as the ‘thing in itself’ (Ding an sich) which is forever hidden from us, but we can instead only experience phenomena within the categories of our thinking – time, space and causality. There is no alternative for us, except to view the world with our own eyes, hear it with our own ears, or to feel it with our own hands. Thus the world is different for every individual, and therefore it becomes fragmented into a series of endless perspectives, with truth itself remaining hidden from us. ‘Die Welt ist meine Vorstellung’ – the world is my representation, is the first sentence of Schopenhauer’s most important work.

(Kienzle op cit.)

He also believed that the experience of art can transform consciousness, at least temporally. In aesthetic contemplation one is freed from the state of willing, and enters the realm of eternal ideas…music is an immediate expression of the world’s will…translated into a sensuous portrayal. (K p89)

Thus our participation in the reality of the artistic dramatic creation in which we are situated is itself a potential transfiguring spiritual experience. This expectation of a ‘concert’ event is significantly more heightened in terms of spiritual challenge that perhaps is the anticipations of going to church. It is as if dramatically church liturgy is done ‘for us’ and art is done ‘with us’ an interesting paradox concerning the tension between representation and participation.

Thus Wagner (from Schopenhauer) as it were ‘solves’ the Kantian problem of the philosophical separation of ‘the thing in itself’ from its appearance by ‘radical introspection’. We can experience our own selves in our dichotomy of corporality and self-consciousness, and do so also in the drama of music.

(There is ref. here to Merleau-Ponty, and particularly to the perceptual theories of Gibson (see Pink p30) where these ‘categories’ are generated by perceptions, and to the work of Tim Ingold on ‘movement’. These approach challenge the linear movement as it were from some inchoate perceptual sentience (as a paradoxical non-experience see Maggie Ross) to a cognition that can only arise and be shared in language (see the Wittgenstein eg. Of the impossibility of ‘private language’ and therefore by implication of private/non linguistic experience). For silence and music the same paradox presents itself, we sign up to a contradiction, that what is ‘experienced’ cannot be fully expressed or represented, yet we are bound to speak of it and bring it into a shared discursive community in order to have any understanding of its meaning and import for us. These articulations will be heavily influenced by the discourse of the community in which it arises, ie. the tradition, and also be subject to practices of discernment.)

What I play here is the Communion Theme from the opening of Parsifal which informs many of the later motifs. There are two basic themes here, the rising one of triads, then we have harmonic density and the emergence of a leitmotif of ‘pain’ associated with Amfortas. Several musical factors work to create the aura of the sacred in the Communion theme. The unison intonation that rises from the mystical darkness of silence, the recollection of Gregorian chant, the incessant movement upwards which dissolves into pure sound.

**9. Art, Aesthetics and its close relation to worship in Modernism.**

**Here we have to note The Secular Age.**

CD15.Herbert Howells. *Requiem.* *I Heard a voice from Heaven Sing.*

**7. Hymns**

**CD16**

I noted earlier the importance of the Psalms in congregational participation. The classic congregational aspect of sacred music is the hymn.There are volumes written on this subject. Hymnals are a product of the late 19th C. when collections were made. Vaughan Williams often adapted folk tunes, for example the tune ‘Our Captain Calls All Hands’ was collected and written down by some field gleaners and they gave it to Cecil Sharp who also got the tune from Mrs Ware in 1904, Mrs Kemp of Somerset had also given it to Williams in 1907. The original words concern going to war and how preferable it would be to stay at home. Williams took words from Bunyan’s Pilgrims Progress and the famous hymn ‘He Who would Valiant Be ‘ was born. Other examples would include John Ireland’s tune to the words of *‘My Song is Love Unknown’* words that come from the 1640s and reflect meditations in the book of Galations. John Ireland had an unhappy childhood and one can hear the yearning in his setting of the words ‘love to the loveless shown’. It is sobering to realise that the descant was invented during the WW1 because there were so few men’s voices available in church choirs. I can’t leave the subject of hymns without reference to my Welsh childhood. In the cold, wet, dark valleys of S. Wales where I grew up the hymn singing was the centre piece of participative liturgy. Just as Wales produces great rugby fly-halves so it seemed to produce wonderful light ‘sunshine’ tenors, there were several in my fathers’ church choir. Hymn singing in Wales as elsewhere was a class based activity and related to high levels of congregational patticipation and the dissenting tradition. Wales and Welshness can never really be understood without a gasp of certain concepts and words, hierith often to do with homesickness, cariad my beloved, but the hymn Calon Lan written in 1890 expresses the lilting joy of a life where one asks for no gold and pearls but for a ‘clean and joyful heart’, echoes of Ps. 51 again. It also entails the sounds of words as it folds back on itself and sings of singing: the pure of heart sing purely.

Calon lan yn llawn daioni

Techach yw na’r lili dlos

Dim ond calon lan all ganu

Canu’r dydd a chanu’r nos

A pure heart full of goodness

Is fairer than the pretty lily

None but a pure heart can sing

Sing in the day and sing in the night.

**10. Iterations and Echoes, the Pluralist Store. Return to Universalism and formalism in the midst of pluralism and minimalism: the rise of “Experience” of art….. of spirit.**

**I return to the nature of sensing, perception, and perceptual transfigurations, and use an example to show how these can happen.**

Creative Listening/Perceptual Transfiguration Exercise.

MU 1006.Introduction to Ethnomusicology.

CD17.

Steve Reich: *Electric Counterpoint* 4.43

Minimalism is the main vantage point that we have in the period following Romanticism, with atonal serialism having failed to create a new paradigm. One of its key features is the focus on pulses and rhythms. We have an impoverished sense of rhythm in the west, always trying to fit pulses into our structures to grasp them. Opening up these musical features creates a focus on time, timing, lapsed time, breaks, and ‘out of timeness’, and of course timelessness. Minimalist repetition becomes the eternal surface upon which can be inscribed changes and where we ourselves can imagine changes where none exist, where we can wander in the texture with our attention and inattention to find new places of orientation. We could talk of Drumming but I will play you a short piece, Electric Counterpoint.

There are four sections to *Drumming*. At the start we find a simple foot-tap single beat rhythm. We get with that beat easily enough, we can even elaborate on it ourselves filling in the gaps. We feel the do-DAH, do-DAH, Steve (do) and us (DAH). So quite quickly we are participating in the sound in time, and a time we feel we can make some sense of. We start to enjoy the elaborations, and can even imagine some of our own. Our body has also independently started to move ever so slightly, and we may be finger-beating or foot-tapping along. The texture starts to become denser and the beats more complex. Even at this early stage with a two-beat figure we can hear and feel the way in which we listen the emphasis onto a particular beat. We can go do–DAH, or we can make a shift and go DO–dah. We are already at play. An image of someone falling behind, out of step might appear to us.

It is interesting to know that this is called a ‘phasing technique’ which Steve Reich used, and that this is the final culmination of his use of this technique. He stops using it after *Drumming*. Phasing is when two or three indentical instruments play the same repeated melodic pattern and gradually move out of synchronisation with each other. So we start by following the beat and rhythm, filling in gaps with our off-beats, and enjoying the elaborations. We also get a sense of the control of the playing, the tightness of the score and that this is not loose drumming. As the piece develops the complexity of the beat and the cross-beats becomes more difficult to simply follow as beats. We seek aural anchor points or shapes.

A small transfiguration takes place – we can perceive a bigger longer pulse, a wave, as it were under the faster surface complexity. We also begin to have some choices of where our attention might rest and what we allow just to fly by. This finding of an emergent, fractal pattern within the overall dense texture and fast complexity might also go with bodily movement, the slow underlying pattern seems like ‘mine’ and the fast complexity ‘his’. This is a kind of orientation listening, we feel we have some purchase on the beats by feeling an implicit pulse or wave.

I want to digress to note the use of the word ‘transfiguration’. By this I mean the way in which our listening shapes what we hear, how we foreground certain aspects, how we shift the beat emphasis etc, as I noted above. This goes on at the same time as the sound/ music is transforming itself. We open to the sound/music experience when these two processes are so interpenetrating that any notions of inside/outside, subjective and objective become elided and fall away as understandings. The outcome of this dynamic of listening transfigurations and sound/music transformations has the outcome of creating bodily resonance, we let the sound/music inhabit us and we live also in the sound/music – the dancer is the dance.

So to return to the listening experience, as the piece progresses we are introduced to timbre and some pitches. These are difficult to articulate but ‘click’, ‘blurp’, ‘blup’, ‘tinny’, ‘skin’, ‘rasp’ are some words that suggest these qualities. At one stage in Part 1 three drummers are playing the same pattern, but one quarter note out of phase with each other. Three marimba players enter softly with the same pattern also out of phase, but these timbres are quite different to the drums. Slowly the drums fade and the marimbas play high to the pattern and the three glockenspiels play the same figure low. The result is that the rhythm pattern is maintained, it is the same beat pattern, but the timbre becomes the change agent.

We find we are sometimes making timbres with sounds we are making in our mouths, ‘tutting’ and making ‘clopping’ sounds. In deed when Reich was composing the piece he found himself imitating the sounds with syllables like ‘tuk’, ‘tok’ and ‘duk’ and he did this loudly by amplification to find and bring out a sub-pattern. So as well as finger-tapping, bodily movement in slow dance-like gestures in the trunk of the body, swaying and nodding we can add these pre-linguistic mouth sounds. Our bodies are already well engaged in listening.

This also gives rise to transfiguration. This movement between what is in the sound and what I focus on will as I have noted cease to be a binary or a subject-object relation but become apparent as being a single figural gestalt aspect of listening. We can ‘come’ and ‘go’, oscillate between these modes of one big shape. It can sometimes be difficult to be sure what is ‘in’ the music and what is my imaginative participation in the sound by the way I hear patterns, timbres and pitches. Sometimes I am confident, what I hear is surely in the sound patterns. Yet this confidence is undermined by the realisation that I am perceiving patterns in the sound and that these might be ‘mine’. This is an endless impossible process in which we can never wholly distinguish between what we are discovering and what we are inventing as we listen.

As the piece progresses the beat bounces off the underlying ‘structure’, it is of course felt as a structure because of the coalescing of the fast complexity of the movements of the players making it sound as it were like some solid surface. It feels like someone running very fast whilst keeping some object very steady resting in their palm. However fast and complex the sounds we seem always to be able to find a fractal pattern, or shape that emerges. We find a listening ‘pace’ of that we can relate to as a measure, we imagine walking or counting. We are drawn to measure. We grow up with bar lines, we like to chop time up into manageable and often equal segments. And so we can here until we become aware that this too is an illusion, and the beat has moved on.

We now start to listen for those changes, the beat out of place, that heralds a shift to a new pattern. We begin to yearn for that unexpected surprise that is, of course expected. Sometimes when this happens there is a third transfiguration, which is when we precisely notice that the patterns has changed but we are not sure how or when it happened even though we might have been listening for it. It is not precise at all, and has simply colonised the soundscape and we have now noticed it. It is as if the piece has a reproductive capability, it seems to be able generate its own future shape – a kind of autopoesis. It shape-shifts in front of our ears.

Suddenly the beats and pulses of drums is joined by high pitched marimbas arriving like a flock of birds into the soundscape. Now the beat has a pitch, tonality and a sweetness come with this arrival. And so the piece continues…..

BREAK------------------------

Recap about aesthetics as the basis of spiritual experience, quotation from Oliver Davies pp194.

11. Universalism.

But in minimalism there is also the ‘return’, music is full of iterations, references backwards, adaptations, and appropriations. Two contemporary pieces that do this in different ways. Tavener uses plainsong to establish a meditation on death. It moves through the voices of men and women. Each verse end with four Hallelujahs. It culminates in a unison plainsong verse, and the final rendition of the Hallelujahs transforms them into and offering of praise, of thenks and a celebration of life itself, and the life to come it almost takes us there, as a crossing, as movement, as a passage.

CD 18.

Tavener. Funeral Ikos. 7.46

CD19.

O Radiant Dawn

***O Radiant Dawn* (2007) James MacMillan.**

This as it were fulfils the promise of the Annunciation in the ‘splendour of eternal light’, ‘the people who have walked in darkness have seen a great light’ (Isaiah 9”1). James M said “Music allows us to see, like Mary, what lurks in the crevices of the human-divine experience”. Interestingly there is a reference to *O Natal Lux* by Tallis on the opening bars, which we listened to earlier

**12. What touches us? Deep Perceptual and Spiritual Transfigurations:**

**Throughout this presentation I have suggested that music has been the space in which the changing relationship between us and the divine has been dramatized and played out. I have shown the ordered formalism of renaissance polyphony shaped the individual’s relationship with God and the cosmic order through the musical ritual. I have shown how the personal existential elements always present, from the penitential psalms, begins to become more prominent in Bach, the possibilities of the relationship become more dynamic. Redemption becomes more a matter of how I have the right relation with God. In the secular age this central question – my relationship to God in music – is displaced, not just by the move to the concert hall but by our listening. What becomes dominant is whether the aesthetic experience of engagement with music and in some cases its use of Christian motifs enables me to have a relationship with the divine at all. Aesthetics in some cases replaces faith, for others this represents a renewal we rediscover from our embodied being-in-the-world, seeking though the senses a noetic relationship with the divine as creation itself. I think that sensory anthropology has part to play in this.**

**Let us not forget though that some of the most challenging sacred music of the C20th comes from the terror of war and conflict. Messiaen wrote his** *Quartet for the End of Time* **in a prisoner of war camp where it was premiered. The opening of the Quartet takes us back to the rainforest:**

Between three and four in the morning, the awakening of birds: a solo blackbird or nightingale improvises, surrounded by a shimmer of sound, by a halo of trills lost very high in the trees. Transpose this onto a religious plane and you have the harmonious silence of Heaven.

So absence, silence, desertion and become part of music’s vocabulary.

I want to finish with three examples of miniaturist retrospectives. By this I mean the selection of a specific defined drama in the Christian story, with clear characters and a dynamic of encounter with the divine. In each case we see not just this source but also the musical forms and styles which are brought to this drama, and where in two cases words are important.

**The Theme of Encounter and Disclosure: Annunciations:**

CD20

Tavener 5.49

Bingham 6.37

Harvey 4.28.

***Annunciation:* John Tavener**

‘The further we advance upon the road of metaphysics the greater the sense of ‘not knowing’, we wonder ‘how can this be?’ Here Tavener takes Luke 1:26-38 and creates a kind of text palindrome in which the repeated questioning by Mary of ‘how can this be…? Is taken up in the strong ‘Hail’ of the whole choir, this reflects the musical shaping of aria and choral we heard in Bach, the personal struggle and the redemptive hosts.

Text: Luke 1:26-38.

How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

Hail, Hail, Hail, Hail, Hail.

Hail, thou art highly favoured.

How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

Hail, Hail, Hail, Hail, Hail.

The Lord is with thee.

How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

Hail, Hail, Hail, Hail, Hail.

Blessed art thou among women.

How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

***Annunciation* (2000) Judith Bingham**

This takes the same theme but does so with only sound. It explores the anticipatory moment before the Archangel Gabriel, the most powerful and avenging of all the angels, arrives before Mary, it is scary, exciting, ecstatic. Judith Bingham says it expresses ‘a profound connection to her sense of herself as a composer’. The Annunciation is a powerful symbol of female creativeness and power. She refers to the paintings of Georges de la Tour – the night-time candles flickering, apprehension and shadow. Here is the atmospheric drama of transfiguration….something changes and will never be the same again.

***Annunciation (2011) Jonathan Harvey.***

This is the last piece written by Jonathan Harvey and sets to music Edwin Muir’s poem by the same title. The music tracks the encounter with the ebb and flow of anxiety, curiosity, wonder and apprehension whilst centrally placing the image of two people looking into each other’s eyes, as if their gaze would never break in terms of sound. The transfigurative nature of the encounter expresses the intermingling of the divine and the human. It focuses not on ‘the girl’ but on the way in which we can enter the experience that she has of being held and sustained in this endless relationship. The Annunciation is an especially visual topic in Christian art and in the light of this, as we will no doubt be holding some of those images in mind, Harvey is making Muir’s reference to sound and music

Rolls its Sound’s perpetual roundabout

numbered octaves out

And hoarsely grinds its battered tune.

Palpable, synaesthesis in art.

The Annunnciation

Edwin Muir (1887-1959)

The angel and the girl are met.

Earth was the only meeting place.

For the embodied never yet

Travelled beyond the shore of space.

The eternal spirits in freedom go.

See, they have come together, see,

While the destroying minutes flow,

Each reflects the other’s face

Till heaven in hers and earth in his

Shine steady there. He’s come to her

From far beyond the farthest star,

Feathered through time. Immediacy

Of strangest strangeness is the bliss

That from the limbs all movement takes.

Yet the increasing rapture brings

So great a wonder that it makes

Each feather tremble on its wings.

Outside the window footsteps fall

Into the ordinary day

And the sun along the wall

Pursue their unreturning way

Rolls its Sound’s perpetual roundabout

numbered octaves out

And hoarsely grinds its battered tune.

But through the endless afternoon

That neither speak nor movement make,

But stare into their deepening trance

As if their gaze would never break.

***Playlist:***

1. Rainforest: Steven Feld. Papua New Guinea,

2. Om chant. Islamic call to prayer Creative Listening `exercise (MU 1006 I

3. Zoroastrian Chant

Jewish Hannukka Prayer

4. Indian Chant

Western plainsong.

5. Angellus Bell.

Temple Bell

6. Plainchant and Responses

7. From plainsong to polyphony in liturgy : Kyrie

Guillaume de Machaut, Johannes Ockeghem, Hildegard Von Bingen

8. Tallis: *O Nata Lux de Lumine*

9. Byrd: *Tu Es Petrus*

10. Gesualdo*: Reponses for Holy Week Tenebrae Tristis est Anima Mea*

11/12. Psalms. Hugenot and Contemporary.

13.Bach: *Christmas Oratorio: Aria/Chorale.*

14. Wagner: Parsifal: *The Communion Theme* of the Prelude.

15. Herbert Howells. *Requiem.* *I Heard a voice from Heaven Sing.*

16 Hymn: *Calon Lan.*

17. Steve Reich: *Electric Counterpoint* 4.43

18.Tavener. *Funeral Ikos.*

19*.* James MacMillan. *O Radiant Dawn.*

20 John Tavener*: Annunciation*

Judith Bingham: *Annunciation*

Jonathan Harvey: *Annunciation*

“For millions of years, mankind lived just like the animals. Then something happened which unleashed the power of our imagination. We learned to talk and we learned to listen. Speech has allowed the communication of ideas, enabling human beings to work together to build the impossible. Mankind’s greatest achievements have come about by talking, and its greatest failures by not talking. It doesn’t have to be like this. Our greatest hopes could become reality in the future. With the technology at our disposal, the possibilities are unbounded. All we need to do is make sure we keep talking.”

Stephen Hawking

**Reading List:**

Agamben, G. 2017*. Taste.* Seagull Books.

Boddice, R. 2018. *The History of Emotions*. Manchester University Press.

Davies, O. 2004. *The Creativity of God. World, Eucharist, Reason*. Cambridge.

Gavrilyuk, P, & Coakley, S. 2013. *The Spiritual Senses. Perceiving God in Western Christianity.* Cambridge.

Pink, S. *Doing Sensory Ethnography*. (2nd Ed) 2015. SAGE.

. Gestalt: “shape” (German) implies ”unified whole”

The cognitive processes involved in making sense of the world – the brain’s capacity to infer whole structures from partial data. Why do we ‘notice’ particular sounds as ‘shaped’?

Nb music organises sound events over a timeline – phrases, sections, verses, movements, etc. Listeners infer ‘form’ and structure using 5 gestalt cognitive principles:

**Closure** – perception of a whole rather than disparate parts – e.g. a musical scale, a ‘home note’, based on some notes.

**Continuity** – inferring cause-effect from sounds happening before and after each other, or sounds that happen after a visual cue

(watching musicians play or sing or move)

**Figure Ground** – isolating forms from ‘background information’ – sounds that are strongly contrasting in sGestalt: “shape” (German) implies ”unified whole”

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**Figure Ground** – isolating forms from ‘background information’ – sounds that are strongly contrasting in sound, e.g. louder or accented, or played with a distinctive instrument, or using a distinctive rhythm or set of gapped intervals, etc (why do some sounds appear as ‘tunes’ and others as ‘accompaniment? Melody rather than harmony?)

**Proximity** – sounds that happen around the same point in the timeline are seen as ‘related’

**Similarity** – sounds that are suddenly different from most of the sounds before, during or after, are noticeable; repetition is always read

as significant.

**In addition to the above**, musical meaning is also constructed using memory and conventions shaped by memory of what we have heard before, in each piece, and across all our listening.

 

Temporal Gestalt: Musical Cognition is Narrative

Stories have a beginning, middle and end; many music cultures perceive pieces of music as similarly having a ‘temporal gestalt’. (Is this necessarily true of all human cultures?)

What cues the start and end of music? A transition from one unit to the next unit in a musical sequence? (Refer back to cognitive principles in previous slide - importance of similarity and proximity?)

Temporal ‘gestalt’ may work at the level of a small unit of ’music’ (e.g. a unit of rhythm or melody) as well as at the extended level of a whole work, or an event comprising a sequence of works.

 

The Challenge of Simultaneity

Unlikespokenconversations–which,tobemeaningful,needtobesequential– music can involve many things happening at once. How do we ‘make sense’ of the potential chaos of many simultaneous sounds?

**Segregation**–amusical‘voice’or‘part’maybedistinctfromitswidercontext because it is played by an instrument / voice with a particular timbre, or has a distinctive repeating rhythm (drum), or exists in a particular pitch range (high, middle, low voices) etc. This is how listeners make “sense of” musical forms such as fugues.

**Integration**–toperceivesimultaneousnoiseasformingawhole,themusical sounds are normally fused in some way using the gestalt principles – perhaps all moving together (using a shared pulse) (similarity), or sharing similar melodic patterns, or occurring at the same time in a social context that gives this event a conventional ‘boundary’ (e.g. a ritual, in a ritual space, with ritual participants) (proximity)

 

Listening is Creative

Listeners’ brains interpret sound as forming ‘music’ - an aesthetic experience

Similarity and proximity appear to be particularly important in understanding sound as ‘music’

**Emotional entanglement**: how does the simultaneous experience of particular emotions associated with musical events shape musical cognition, both during the event, and in the future?

 

Further Reading Benamou, Marc, *Rasa: affect and intuition in Javanese Musical Aesthetics* (Oxford: OUP, 2010), e-book

Berkowitz, Aaron, L.. *The Improvising Mind: cognition and creativity in the musical moment* (Oxford: OUP, 2010), e-book

Deutsch, Diana (ed.) *The Psychology of Music* (London: Academic Press, 2013) – (2012 is ebook)

Margulis, Elizabeth Hellmuth, *On Repeat: How Music Plays the Mind* (Oxford: OUP, 2014) – e-book

Sloboda, John A, *Exploring the Musical Mind: Cognition, Emotion, Ability, Function* (Oxford: OUP, 2005), e- book

Thompson, William Forde, *Music, thought, and feeling: understanding the psychology of music* (Oxford: OUP, 2009)ound, e.g. louder or accented, or played with a distinctive instrument, or using a distinctive rhythm or set of gapped intervals, etc (why do some sounds appear as ‘tunes’ and others as ‘accompaniment? Melody rather than harmony?)

**Proximity** – sounds that happen around the same point in the timeline are seen as ‘related’

**Similarity** – sounds that are suddenly different from most of the sounds before, during or after, are noticeable; repetition is always read

as significant.

**In addition to the above**, musical meaning is also constructed using memory and conventions shaped by memory of what we have heard before, in each piece, and across all our listening.

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Temporal Gestalt: Musical Cognition is Narrative

Stories have a beginning, middle and end; many music cultures perceive pieces of music as similarly having a ‘temporal gestalt’. (Is this necessarily true of all human cultures?)

What cues the start and end of music? A transition from one unit to the next unit in a musical sequence? (Refer back to cognitive principles in previous slide - importance of similarity and proximity?)

Temporal ‘gestalt’ may work at the level of a small unit of ’music’ (e.g. a unit of rhythm or melody) as well as at the extended level of a whole work, or an event comprising a sequence of works.

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The Challenge of Simultaneity

Unlikespokenconversations–which,tobemeaningful,needtobesequential– music can involve many things happening at once. How do we ‘make sense’ of the potential chaos of many simultaneous sounds?

**Segregation**–amusical‘voice’or‘part’maybedistinctfromitswidercontext because it is played by an instrument / voice with a particular timbre, or has a distinctive repeating rhythm (drum), or exists in a particular pitch range (high, middle, low voices) etc. This is how listeners make “sense of” musical forms such as fugues.

**Integration**–toperceivesimultaneousnoiseasformingawhole,themusical sounds are normally fused in some way using the gestalt principles – perhaps all moving together (using a shared pulse) (similarity), or sharing similar melodic patterns, or occurring at the same time in a social context that gives this event a conventional ‘boundary’ (e.g. a ritual, in a ritual space, with ritual participants) (proximity)

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Listening is Creative

Listeners’ brains interpret sound as forming ‘music’ - an aesthetic experience

Similarity and proximity appear to be particularly important in understanding sound as ‘music’

**Emotional entanglement**: how does the simultaneous experience of particular emotions associated with musical events shape musical cognition, both during the event, and in the future?

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Further Reading Benamou, Marc, *Rasa: affect and intuition in Javanese Musical Aesthetics* (Oxford: OUP, 2010), e-book

Berkowitz, Aaron, L.. *The Improvising Mind: cognition and creativity in the musical moment* (Oxford: OUP, 2010), e-book

Deutsch, Diana (ed.) *The Psychology of Music* (London: Academic Press, 2013) – (2012 is ebook)

Margulis, Elizabeth Hellmuth, *On Repeat: How Music Plays the Mind* (Oxford: OUP, 2014) – e-book

Sloboda, John A, *Exploring the Musical Mind: Cognition, Emotion, Ability, Function* (Oxford: OUP, 2005), e- book

Thompson, William Forde, *Music, thought, and feeling: understanding the psychology of music* (Oxford: OUP, 2009)