

TO SOUND-OUT MUSIC'S ART-FULL POSSIBILITIES UNDER REPRODUCTIVE REPRESENTATION

‘Listen to these violinists: the one who lets true musical harmony be heard is the one who gets close to the brink of catastrophic noise, he pokes around with his bow on this threshold. He is stirring up the flame in which the rosin would melt.’¹

Forget silence! It’s an idea, an abstraction, a golden friction-free fiction that we like to assume lies at the back of relative quietness as the latter’s desirable achievable limit. Yet silence’s completion is held at bay eternally by the sustained hum-and-hiss, chaos’s signal, of a reverberating that is the going-on of everything all-at-once. This noise, *background noise*, is everywhere, unavoidable; it is passing through us even as we, in the rumbling of our embodiment, contribute to it. It is, as Serres writes, ‘the first object of metaphysics... Before language, before even the word, the noise.’² Before, behind, beneath, surrounding, within, and exuded by, us, it is indeed all about us and we are all about it. Just listen to that incessant waving of the charging colliding particles that makes of your embodiment in its inmost intimacy a resounding receptacle-transmitter. What you are hearing is simultaneously chaos and your own hearing’s possibility as its constitutive participation in chaos.

This is not merely a ‘something’ that just happens to be passing nearby: it is our, along with everything else’s, emergent becoming as, through and through, a noising. Recall Kristeva’s *chora*, Irigaray’s gestation and breathing, Lorca’s *duende*, Sebald’s combustion - within and without they show becoming’s inherent uncatchable murmuring. Even the most sophisticated sound-proofing equipment and procedures cannot produce a noise-free environment, as recording-studio technicians well know. Moreover this ungainly unsayable noise is absolutely undifferentiable. Serres again:

‘The *noise* is incapable of differentiation, everything in it is indistinguishable.’³

It is directionless, or rather, it goes in every conceivable direction all at once, thus occupying and defining space as a sounding, but a sounding that, in never passing away (being both beyond disappearance and the receptive absorber of everything that seems to disappear), is also the always already mark of everything we attribute to time - presencing drones. Ever here-and-there, it’s an ever-ready ever-steady reminder of the suffusing chaos that befits us. Thus suffused, our embodied-becoming begins as and never ceases to be an uncontrollably noisy affair some indeterminate way away from the excised fragments that we have learned to re-align as language-as-meaning-bearer. In ‘The Trolley’, Claude Simon offers this background noise as both undifferentiated but also troublingly specific according to its and our situation; it is ‘... that uncertain quantity of sounds, that vast vaguely familiar and vaguely disturbing murmur...’ whose disturbing quality comes to the fore in the city as ‘... the dull roar of the anarchic urban fabric...’ with its ‘... tumultuous fragile chaos...’⁴

But into the gap between this incessant noise and the lines of language falls music. Intricated by Serres with dancing, which can’t do without it, music becomes something on the way to a

¹ Michel Serres, *Op. cit.*, p. 135.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 54.

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 118.

⁴ Claude Simon, ‘The Trolley’, trans. Richard Howard, New Press, New York, 2002, pages 47 and 82.

kind of universality that remains nevertheless the without of meaning, is still not-quite-a-language. It remains on the noise-side, the body-side, of language, for it is ‘an undifferentiated language’, and ‘Music plays just shy of any meaning’.⁵

All this leaves music as the cadence that is falling endlessly within the gap which language has leapt over, left behind, and into which it can never return. For, even when language seems to be carried backwards into that abyss through singing’s articulations (with or without instrumental accompaniment), it is confounded along with poetry by being in the grip of rhythm and the timbres of sounding out something (but what...?) that has never made it into the playing-safe hands of commonsense. And let me assert this as forcibly as possible now (for the remainder of this chapter turns in different ways around this ‘trouble’), the abyssal cadencing that is performing’s way of making-for-art through music, attempts to pitch itself into and hold itself exclusively to whatever that zone demands of it. It seeks to survive by suspending itself in the gap between chaos’s noising and languaging’s meaning. What it wants to expose as its singular re-sounding is precisely a reverberating fragment that is other to, the beyond of, the representing work and machinery which now gathers language up and sweeps it along in its careering techno-chain. Performing’s only hope of holding to its leap out towards Art’s Body will be vested in its ways of suspending representation’s demands for reproductive repetition.

Contrary Overture

Irrespective of genre, whether making-for-art or for something else entirely, the contemporary everyday life of performing music is permeated through and through by, and gathered ever more programmatically around, the process of recording and the ‘objects’ and relations it generates. The ‘reproductive representation’ in the chapter’s title defines modernity’s ‘career’ and embraces the ceaseless mutation and complexification of the machinery for music’s recording, transmission, and amplified playback across multiple sites of both performance and listening. Like all other zones of activity making music has been caught up in and drawn along by the dynamo of digitisation and the insertion of information-processing into every area of social life. The resulting and continuing reductions of scale, together with the increased flexibility and ‘sophistication’ (the widening range of function-controls) of recording and playback equipment appear, *at the level and ‘point’ of consumption* (through portability and price reductions), to have ‘democratised’ access to the latter: for a now relatively small outlay anyone can become a performer-recorder-listener and thus a (re-)producer (of sorts). This carefully monitored general accessibility runs, of course, in parallel to and on the terms of the control which state and institutions maintain, through a complex legal infra-structure, over who can record and transmit what. It is the now near universal availability of this recording ‘facility’ (together with its associated technical-social ‘functions’) that, in defining the taken-for-granted context of the everyday ‘experiencing’ of music, sets the terms on which performing music emerges - how it comes to, learns about, responds to and develops its relations with all genres of music.

I remain in awe of and under the spell of this equipment and what it continues to make possible both for listening-*performing* and for that now almost universally distributed shared performing-*listening* that together constitute music’s current planetary everyday life. And yet, in spite of the marvel of the technoscientific project and the wonders of its representing works and equipment that seem to put it (as our now taken-for-granted and indeed beneficent ‘condition’) way beyond, always out-distancing, any questioning or attempted ‘critique’,

⁵ Op. cit., p. 41.

when it comes to art, *when we try to approach, to get at, Art's Body, through whatever-materials or gests (here, music's being sounded-out)*, if we are to have any hope of staying in touch with and of approaching the neighbourhood of its disappearing Body, we may need to interrupt music's recording-saturated amplified flow-past with a further 'And yet....'

And yet.... when it is a question, a matter, of art, that is of art's mattering, of performing putting itself into question in the course of exploring music's remaining potential for and as art, of making-for-art by way of music, and thus of performing seeking to embody art's becoming by trying to sound-out Art's intangible Body as a musically resonant swarming chamber.... then we may need to tread very circumspectly. Or rather, we may need to try to think-write *right through 'to the end'* (however troubling and bitter this end might turn out to be) the possible consequences for art's life (and thus for performing's fate) of just this now permanent conjunction between performing and recording. Of course, whatever 'end' such thinking-writing, as that here for example, arrives at will always turn out to be only one such end among a multiplicity of other possible 'ends', each of which can only be a way-station on the way to somewhere else. For we know only too well that each 'end', just like each sounded note of music, remains no more than a temporary and to-be-abandoned stopping place (without fixable contours) where thought-write, stranded in the mesh it weaves around itself in the impossible search for the 'reasons' for its own beginning, has ground itself (always, in the end, groundlessly) to a halt for the time being. And it is ever the lot of such out-writing, especially and wherever it seeks to stay with any performing that is itself trying to follow and stay in touch with the vagaries of Art's Body, to end up inevitably not only in dead ends (with no way out except by leaping thoughtlessly yet again towards the elsewhere to which that Body has been leading it), but also to end up doing nothing more than rehearse and reiterate what was already implicit in the terms on which it compulsively and always half-blindly half-deafly set out. In thus trying to pursue performing's involvement with recording to what feels to me like its inevitable end under 'things' as they are now, my concern is only to open onto to some of the ways that the strangeness of this involvement continually confounds and compromises performing's struggle to make-for-art, to keep its embodied-becoming on the track of Art's Body.

Becoming Incidental

Permeating every 'where', passing all around and through us, in whose midst we thus become - wave after airy wave, fold upon invisible fold... a ceaseless programmed multiply-channelled and coded tide... a flowing of instantly disappearing but instantly replaceable, yet also instantly repeatable, sound-products suitable for every occasion and no occasion in particular... *incidental music without end*... essential to the programmed waving only in its being incidental, a nearly integrated aside, to whatever it accompanies and is paid to work in partnership with (sounded words, written words, images, markings, noises, tastes, scents, movements, actions, feelings, all that makes up everyday life as embodied work)... not to be listened to but *to be heard only as an accompaniment*... a stop-gap bridge for covering over disturbing silences, intervals, absences, abysses... sourced by transmitting machinery and receivable (hearable) wherever there is a machine for its selective reception, transformation (decoding), reproduction and amplification... power-dependent, combustion-dependent (still via trees, oil, gas, atoms, with only a dash of wind-water-solar in the mix)... the totality, designed and maintained in the interests of a hearing (necessarily assumed to be carried out by a subject who is subject to a permanently wandering attention) that could be anywhere-anytime, thus to be serviced by an ever-renewable pool of performers able to routinely generate the de-contextualised performances required.

It is as if the musics generated as this back-ground-but-all-around-us stereophonic white noise are produced under the written musical sign of the ‘*acciaccatura*’ (from the Italian ‘*acciaccatare*’ – to crush or to pound): the ‘grace’ note preceding another note that instructs the performer, *through the stroke across its tail that carries the instruction of ‘deletion’*, to play it so briefly and lightly (dying faintly though gracefully away...) that in this self-deletion it is only just hearable. Operating thus *under the sign of erasure*, performing’s ‘point’ is to disclose it, to make it hearable, as the inessential ornament to what accompanies it or follows it immediately - that to which performing is instructed to subordinate it. In the context of its appearance it thus performs as a seemingly inessential supplement, incidental and almost perhaps accidental and really of no consequence to what it precedes or accompanies.

Yet for the composer the point of writing the *acciaccatura* as a readable instruction to the performer is precisely to show this ‘almost’, to reveal its becoming, as nothing-but-supplement. Is this not the defining ‘circumstance’, the unavoidable pervasive context (it ‘is’ everywhere), of music’s contemporary becoming: to be performed in the service of, and thus as supplement to, some ‘need’, a thing-product, that puts it to use in and thus subordinates it to, absorbs it within, its own interest on its own terms? As *acciaccatura*, perhaps performing is being instructed to crush the music (as such...) out of its performance and pound it into that which it is not in itself - an ornamental aside to a whatever-product under whose authority it makes its passing disappearance.

Sounding-out Art’s Possibility While Operating Under the Sign of Erasure

If this is the mark under which music is now normalised, routinely performed and turned out, as ‘music-lite’ that constitutes the background music to current performing, then all attempts to make-toward-art through musical performance, begin unavoidably from within and thus as a response to this ‘condition’, for we all now come to and respond both to music and to art’s possibility on its terms. As with performing across all the arts, such a making-toward is always an attempt to live questioningly (perform) entirely within each medium’s material difference (its conjunctive-disjunction with all other languagings and sensings) in order to expose its potential for living differently, for showing an ‘otherwise life’. The trouble and challenge faced in making-toward-art through music now, whilst immersed within this all-permeating midst of music’s ubiquitous appearance as incidental supplement, is thus *to find out whether music might still be sounded out as such: to sound out whatever might remain of it and for it alone*. And if the searches come up with possible remains, performing challenges itself to find ways of excising them by musical leaps from within this all-permeating midst of music’s routine instrumental servicing of others’ needs in order to set them down, expose them, elsewhere.

But what has made this servicing possible (thus transforming, as a defining condition of modernity’s trajectory, the way all genres of music are now experienced) is the technical facility of representing musical performance through recording for infinite reproduction. In its everyday life, musical performance, whether making for music as such (art) or providing it as a supplement (music-lite), treats its dependence on and acceptance of electronic mediation (and thus its reproducibility as an anywhere-anytime product free of the shackles of performing) as a now absolutely taken-for-granted condition of its cultural ‘placement’ (how, where, on what and whose terms it ‘appears’ and performs its various out-soundings). It seems that, however music’s ‘as- such’, the nothing-but of its in-itself, might now be excavated by performers, this functional electronic dependence implicitly yet indelibly marks

its embodied-becoming. If, towards the end of the nineteenth century, as I noted in ‘To Leap’⁶ Whitman could invoke the still relatively ‘new’ electricity and yoke it to ‘the body’ as his poetry’s theme (‘I sing the body electric’), under modernity’s subsequent electrification of everything it is the ‘singing’ itself (all performing as the embodying of making-for-art) that has been electrified through and through. The body that sings in and as its gests (both instrumental and vocal singing), cocooned within and passed through by currents that pass on its ‘singing’, can only make its way by means of this powered carrier. Across the arts performing is electrically dependent, with music as the defining, exemplary, ‘case’. All music-making, and thus making-for-art by way of music, occurs under the auspices of and is permeated unavoidably by electro-acoustic representation. To approach the relation of performing music to itself in its embodied-becoming and to the context in which it tries to make itself felt, we have to consider what now ‘sources’ it, to what it owes its contemporary ‘beginning’, for I am suggesting that all music now ‘is’ electro-acoustic – it begins from this electronic dependency and representation as its defining ‘condition’ – this is its unprecedented plight.

Even if a performance occurs entirely ‘acoustically’ without any aid or transformation through electronic supplementation, it does so now only as the exception in contrast to the ‘given’ of ‘normal’ music making. It performs under a cloud of ‘lack’ - lack of amplification, lack of playback facility. It is in this sense that we no longer ‘know’ what (or even if) music ‘as such’ is, for it is no longer what it ‘was’. And yet the routine organisation of performing’s everyday life, and thus what is offered to us in the name of music, *including the implicit ‘vision’ of performing’s embodied-becoming on which it relies, seems to pass over in silence this profound over-turning of music’s current (sic...) mode of passing away as that which can always be re-turned provided a power supply is available*. For, as I shall explore shortly, music’s appearance-disappearance now occurs through irredeemable scissions that slice through performing and divide it from ‘itself’ (its potential ‘as-such’) in the very passing through of its occurrence.

The contemporary ‘performing arts’ (music, dance, opera, drama...), as with the gests already considered from other performing zones, face, each in its medium-specific idiosyncratic terms, the defining dilemma of how to cling to and make-toward-art while permeated by the productive-reproductive machinery and interests of technoscience. I suggested that Cornelia Parker’s ‘Cold Dark Matter...’, through the subtlety of both its partial collaboration with and the simultaneous self-distancing of its passing beyond that interested machinery, discloses the way that the ‘other-forming’ demanded by the leap towards Art’s Body has to pass by way of and to find a way out of that machinery’s grip. It has no option, for art’s only possible emergence and survival now is machine-dependent. Her gest, surviving in the tension of the machinery’s challenge while holding to the possibility of otherness, thus draws us in parallel alongside, while maintaining the distance of its singularity, the question facing the contemporary ‘performing arts’: *pinned down within representation, how to cling to the possibility of making-for-without?* I focus on music here because, in the singularity of its medium-specificity (sounding-hearing), it epitomises, perhaps in extreme, almost ‘pure’, form, what all the ‘performing arts’ have to take on in trying to hold to art while carried along by culture’s permeating representing machinery. The others, hybridised in their idiosyncratic mixes of media-combinations, necessarily develop fragmentedly complex relations to the work of representation. But for all of them, precisely in their constitution of the performing as

⁶ Op. cit..See the preceding footnote 386 at p. 429 for details.

the gest, it is in this elision of gest and embodiment that art's possible offer is set forth: the gest is, it arrives and disappears simultaneously as, its being-performed in a respondent's presence. But what happens to this strange relation, and thus to art's possibility, under late-modernity's now taken-for-granted reproductive representing machinery with the specific 'givenness' of its infinitely reproducible product – the recording? What are the all too real challenges performing has to make its way through in trying to hold to Art's Body as its affined destiny?

Certainly the legacy of the pre-modern traditions for contemporary performing, to which the latter has had to adapt endlessly and experimentally in the course of modernity's continuing revolutionary transformations of the terms on which life is lived, was grounded unequivocally in the 'living-presence' of embodied performing as the gest's bearer: for both performer and audience, presence and performance were synonymous - music could only become in and as the becoming-embodied of a 'living present performing'. For music the consequences (to be discussed shortly) of this traditional demand and 'vision' upon its organisation and terms of survival under modernity and its afterwards have been profound. Like all the arts according to their materially specific demands, music has had to try to come to terms with a defining experience of everyday life within modernity: the continuing displacement across every zone of cultural experience of embodied 'presence' and its replacement by other 'things' under the rule of a capitalised and now politically and economically powerful technoscience. Across the human sensorium embodied 'presence' is turned out of 'itself' and into products that 're-present' selected elements of how this 'presence' 'appeared' in its 'being-performed'. As now 'reproducible-transmissible-somethings' such products can 'be' anywhere, including in many places at once. And 'sound', 'sounding-out' as music's embodying process, in the seeming elegant 'simplicity' of its one-ness - the unequivocality, the univocality, of its resonating - appears to be the definitive exemplar of this displacement-replacement.

The substitution (recorded transmittable receivable amplifiable 'whatever-out-soundings') confronts performing with the radical scattering of that which defined its very 'purpose' - its unreasonable reason for becoming. Attempts to cling to the purpose (art's leap away) have generated a 'field' of play of extreme alternations and tensions in the course of the struggle to 'live' musically within the confrontation of irreconcilables. Yet while the 'surface' of that field of play, the dynamics of performing, is constituted through extreme differences in the approach to what music 'is' and 'might be', this dynamic's 'movement' is marked by recurrent and implicit consistencies that focus precisely on the interrelated matters of 'purpose' and 'process', of sourcing and the journeying as itself the 'destination'. And these implicit shaping 'assumptions' turn exactly around the world-defining impact of technoscience through its reproductive technology on what performing is taken to 'be'.

Making-for-art through music has, over modernity's course, generated an extraordinarily diverse range of approaches to performing and its gests. As with the other arts it is the very question of art's (and thus music's) possibility, and thus its relation to its entire pre-history - 'tradition' as a legacy of instructions for 'present' performing - that is at stake. *Making becomes a questioning in which what is in question is precisely the mattering of repetition.* For what every maker-performer has to face up to is the difference between their 'present' making circumstances and those under which past makers (even those of 'just yesterday' ...) made their musics. As modernity is defined by its dynamic of change, the perennial and inescapable question for every performer 'today' is whether 'yesterday's' terms for sounding-

out can still be brought into play ‘today’ in the course of the search for the idiosyncratic not-quite-a-language that marks one’s ‘difference’: what, *if anything*, should be brought over from yesterday and re-incorporated (repeated as a constitutive element) in performing’s embodied-becoming today? And, where art’s ‘otherwise’ is the stake, then everything, every convention and rule for making that the legacy of a ‘tradition’ offers, may, in the course of the questioning, have to be put to the test to sound-out its continuing relevance as a felt response to the always changed circumstances of quotidian becoming.

Further, the question of tradition’s (especially on that site where the residue of the ‘classical’ is gathered) continuing ‘relevance’ (through repetition) takes on a dramatic urgency for all those performing zones which give a central role to scription, *to writing as a set of instructions for repeated future performances*: music’s ‘score, opera’s libretto-score conjunction, drama’s ‘script’, dance’s ‘notation’. Such scription, *as already a form of ‘recording’*, has always already anticipated and proposed answers in advance to the defining question that making-toward-art cannot avoid under modernity’s challenge - how to relate to reproduction under the rule of the machinery of representation. If such reproduction is the now utterly ‘normal’ taken-for-granted condition for both the making of music and its reception (that is for the way it is institutionally sustained), and if reproduction bears, within the shallow depths of its technical dependence, implicit assumptions about what music-for-art ‘is’ and ‘should do’, then performing’s questions to itself and to the past of which it is the legatee would surely have to confront *and sound out in the music it makes* its responses to these implicit challenges. Specifically, if reproduction defines the terms of music’s cultural placement as its without-which-not, does that turn it into ‘simply’ an ordinary resource for, an aid, a boon even, to music-making, *rather than that which has to be confronted and perhaps gone beyond and set aside in the sounding-out?* For if the reproductive machinery’s implicit assumptions about music’s very becoming (its relation to embodiment itself for example) are taken-for-granted, then music’s possibilities for art (and thus for cultural ‘life’) remain fixed and beyond question, a hostage to the terms set by the ontology and epistemologies borne along within technoscience’s machine complex.

Performing’s Post-analogue Plight in the Midst of Irreconcilables

It is exactly this dilemma which, tacitly, defines the real contemporary condition of making-toward-art through musical performance. Performing tries to sustain itself within an irresolvable and largely unaddressed contradiction. Indeed its very irresolvability guarantees the relative silence surrounding it. Under the auspices of a guiding institutional apparatus that seeks to fix and preserve performing’s ‘place’ within the culture’s continuing dynamic, performing’s real life is defined by the tension of trying to survive, to live-on, in the groundless gap between two irreconcilable demands: on the one hand there is a goal which the entirety of its training and institutional support sets for it as its abiding ‘point’ - a technically flawless, thoughtfully interpretive and intensely felt *unaided one-off context-bound live performance*. On the other there is the routine reality of music’s everyday life under the rule of representation - *performing for endless repetition by others in infinitely different contexts through reproduction and transmission of recorded performances*. Does the possibility of art’s emergence disappear in the abyss between these demands? Certainly the intensity sought by performers as the ‘motive’ and reward that they hope to experience and embody in each performance’s ‘becoming’ is shredded and confused in the course of the continuous oscillation between the conflicting demands made by these very different performing zones.

In the course of the institutional maintenance of the ‘classical tradition’, one performer’s trajectory through and response to this contradiction exposed the defining nature of the split and made unequivocally clear some of its implications for performing’s fate. But it is an exposure that goes far beyond the boundaries of the maintained ‘classical tradition’ within which it occurred and to which it was a response. For it was a revelation of performing’s plight across all musical genres under the hegemony of modernity’s contract with machine-driven representation.

In 1975 Glenn Gould, whose international career as a virtuoso pianist had been based on a combination of enthralling live concert performances backed up by carefully marketed studio recordings, ceased live public performing and devoted the few remaining years of his musical life solely to the construction of studio recordings. While this may be interpreted as the purely idiosyncratic response of an already quirky performer wishing to avoid, among other things, the stresses and the tedium of a performing life ‘on the road’, it is simultaneously an era-defining decision whose profound consequences for performing are still largely unremarked across music’s multiple contemporary performing genres. What does Gould’s decision expose about what is now at stake for performing’s life-potential and, by extension, the fate of music within the culture of representation through reproduction?

When music-making makes-toward-art its performing, whether as composer leaving a text-gest for others to bring to life, as inventive interpreter sounding such gests, or as improviser-composer, is also consumed by the task of making-a-difference, the ‘other-forming’ pointed to by Parker. For performing (and also but differently for listening) the potentially seductive euphoria (the hopefully strange charm of its euphonics) and the confounding trouble in sounding-out this not-quite of an as yet unknowable off-language, are borne in music’s defining materiality - the almost immediate disappearance of its resounding vibrations. Performing’s eventing, *as a context-bound but acoustically unaided (no echoes, no amplification, no machined supplementation/ reproduction/ transmission) live performance*, is its bodying-forth of air-borne waves of sound that die away without a trace (*other than in memory*) almost immediately. What it waves over to listeners is, in the words of Eric Dolphy, ‘gone in the air’. In this it crystallises, as a revealed but absolutely temporary experience, not just our ‘relation’ to what in everyday life we take for granted as ‘time’s passing’, but what, in and as the coming-going of performing’s out-sounding, is *our passing away*. Before and aside from any ‘message’ or ‘meaning’, performing performs - *it is* - the sounding out of its (and by extension ‘our’) passing away as nothing but the mattering of intensities. It renders its passing solely as a fleeting-flowing of intensities, as much as to say that, for it, in the end ‘that’s all there is’, or ‘that’s what we are’.

But to begin to move itself (and possibly listeners) toward that other ‘experience’ of this passing away as a passing into and out of language (*that is, eventually, as the by-passing of language*), specifically of our being sounded out by language’s possibility, musical performing has to interrupt and take us out of time as we know and live it mundanely (exemplified in the voicing of everyday conversation or the clock-time measurement of both work and mass media programming). Through its ‘playing-with’ time it takes us out of time and into our own passing. And this also entails taking us out of the familiar conventions of the musical languages that are now routine constituents of our living-working ‘spaces’. To give us a glimpse of Art’s ever-receding Body, performing has to deform ‘time’ into an experience of passing in which language is not yet a form where becoming and ‘sense’

coincide, in which 'sense' is realised as always belated in relation to the forming that becoming-embodied brings off. In its visceral mattering music returns us to our passing in advance of, before, our succumbing to Language; and yet, of course, it only emerges in the wake, the afterwards, of our languaged-becoming. In making for the 'behind', 'before', or 'aside' of languaging (before being absorbed by chaos's background noise) it has to pass through it, a passing through which entails a decreation of language by intensities. Such a musical making-toward, in the brevity of its passing away as the very appearing of form - a sounding on the way to a form-to-come that can never quite 'arrive' because it goes 'in the air' - discloses language's own possibility as a condition of embodiment's multiple resonances, resonances that are the conditions for, the paradoxically belated *avant-garde* of, languaging.

But the contemporary institutional sustenance of almost all genres of musical performance (both in 'the West' and many other cultures) depends on tacit conventions (interpretive understandings) for making sense of what music 'is' and 'does'. Cultural provision for and use of music's performance, the construction and maintenance of traditions of performing, are premised on understandings of this 'being' and 'doing' that are indebted to and rooted in long-lost and no longer recoverable experiencing contexts. What still underwrites and represents music's multiple ways of being sounded-out now (the understanding and placing of its genres, forms, instrumentations, occasions, and so on, as matters for cultural 'work') are products of conditions of performing and hearing abolished forever in the course of technoscientifically-dependent modernity's emergence. We are legatees of ways of understanding and 'knowing' music (under whose auspices its performance and reception are currently institutionally maintained) that persist in an irresolvable tension with its defining condition under modernity and its afterward.

For what the latter instituted, and has subsequently endlessly complexified through its technologies of representation, is the machinery for the transmission and mass reproduction of whatever-sounds. In the act and 'moment' of having his voice recorded on a wax cylinder Brahms silently but all too audibly pronounced the passing away of those conditions of musical performance and its reception to which his own *oeuvre* (and the entire still self-renewing and reinforcing tradition to which it was dedicated) was one of the last committed contributors. From that point on this tradition was transformed into a different kind of 'tradition' under the rule of the ever more complex machinery for the production, transmission and reception of recorded sound. For this machinery, through the recording as its product, not only instituted the tension between the two irreconcilable demands discussed above, but, through the cultural diffusion of this new product, ensured that one of the demands - that stemming from the machine generated product - set the terms on which the other was forced to work. *And it was indeed precisely a matter of 'work'*, of the re-operationalising of music-making around machine production. The everyday life of performing, its relations to its materials, instruments, potential audiences, *and crucially to its own embodied-becoming*, became machine-dependent, a function of the machine as transforming mediator between instrumental performance and the possibilities of sounding-out.

Yet, in spite of this now taken-for-granted transformation of performing's real conditions, the entire highly programmed production of performers, performance, and music reception in 'the West' (music's contemporary multi-media multi-occasion ubiquity) still takes this 'live unaided performance' as its silent model not only for both the formal training and induction

of potential performers into the music ‘profession’ (instrumentalists, composers, arrangers, teachers) and producing the conditions for its reception, but, crucially, for what music essentially ‘is’, what its ideal ‘goal’ is. While emerging largely from and being a response to the ‘written’ ‘classical’ (pre-modern) tradition, it is now the assumed model preparation for entry into most forms of institutionally required music-making (including the music-lite used throughout the closely interlinked industries of entertainment, publicity, information, and general servicing, as well as the ‘pop music’ industry). Unsurprisingly for most such trained performers, whether interpreting someone else’s ‘note-sequences’ or occasionally improvising their own, it is precisely this representation of the ‘live’ lively dying away of music’s unaided sounding that has framed their practical induction into music’s operative cultural possibilities, their sense of their activities, and their emergent ‘taste’. And, by extension, it also constitutes the provocatively charmed challenge to which, in the course of their ‘professional’ music-making, they risk themselves, irrespective of context. They know that performance (from audition to whatever professional contract or musical event-context) will be assessed according to a finally unstatable and unachievable ideal ‘as if’: perform *as if* every performance were a live unaided solo performance of a ‘new’ unknown but technically masterable rule-interpreted composition. For that is the event for which their training has sought to attune their musical embodied-becoming (a tautly relaxed embodied knowing sensitivity consumed by the strictly controlled exploitation of a strange prosthetic - the musical instrument (‘voice’ included as such)).

Yet their ‘professional’ know-how, derived from years of formal training, certificated achievement, and collaboration with other performers, also tells them that, whatever their drive and aspiration, there is, finally, no knowable definable *formal* ‘balance’ between the display of technical assurance and thoughtfully sensuous instrumental rendering. There are no institutionally writable or personally recognizable ‘rules’ for the avoidance of performance-failure. Performing, whatever its hoped-for destination (be it Art’s Body, advertising jingle, or accompaniment to whatever-activity), frames itself simultaneously with its tacit know-how of its endless falling short of what it might have achieved. For, similarly tacit but underlying the entire project of preparation for professional performance is the assumption of a specific kind of virtuosity as performing’s goal - an achievable instrumental ‘mastery’ enabling at the absolute least a technically flawless live unaided solo (including the instrumental orchestral or group ‘section’ as a collaborative ‘solo’) performance of, with rare exceptions (the composer as performer), someone else’s composition under the authority of someone else (conductor, arranger, producer, studio manager, ‘A & R’ personnel, and, very occasionally, composers themselves).

But, under modernity, performers’ real-world musical experience exposes a split in the vision of virtuosity required for such performing. For such are the demands of contemporary training that almost all professionally trained musicians would now be able to offer at the least competent solo renditions of the standard repertoire of the classical tradition. The virtuoso now, in order to ‘stand out’ as such, has to be developed and represented as a ‘character’ (potential celebrity) and perhaps an ‘innovator’ within closely managed institutional limits - someone who can be represented, through the critical judgments of non-performers, as able to find and to reveal, to expose, the presumed so far unheard that, through critical guidance (the technical ‘knowledge’ of the critic-analyst), can be reconciled with the already familiar musical interpretations, made ‘acceptable’. In re-interpreting (representing as critically judged repetition-in-difference) the familiar (the ‘classical’ tradition’s infinitely repeatable - because available in its archive of scores - repertoire), virtuosity is

supposed to reveal itself in the way it both reproduces (repeats) it but simultaneously renders it slightly unfamiliar, but accessibly, pleurably so. The 'flawless' technical rendering is taken for granted but the 'technical' is supposedly rendered irrelevant through the displacement of conventions of interpretation and the revelation of alternative ways of hearing what was presumed to be 'there' in the composition all along, but previously implicit and unnoticed.

Of course professional musicians, whether orienting their performing primarily to Art's Body or elsewhere, know that, in practice, the dividing line between the virtuoso and the rest is a construct set up, brought off, and maintained by the institutions responsible for ensuring audience demand. In so far as musical events are framed within the routine reproduction and programming of 'taste' through the mass media institutions of 'entertainment' they are required to conform to the latter's demands for celebrities, 'stars', as means to market sustenance. Even within the tiny minority of musicians who are selected out (for example through the artifice of the 'pseudo-competitions' discussed earlier) and groomed as such celebrities-to-come, the 'absolute' virtuoso reaching professionally unattainable performance standards, is the rarest of exceptions. And the programming required to maintain a minor mass audience for the continuous resuscitative conservation of the 'classical tradition' needs to recruit a continuing supply of soloists-to-come to perform (record...) that tradition's 'classics'. For, precisely as 'tradition', it necessarily lives on through repetition, continuous reproduction of 'the same'. Yet its compositions were composed and played as specific felt responses to the indexical conditions and contexts of their 'moment' *when the live unaided performance was indeed the only possible model for performing*. The very infrequency and relative exclusivity of such performances meant that only the tiniest minority of performers and respondents would have heard any composition performed before an audience more than once. Occasions for making it to the vicinity of Art's Body were few and far between.

Thus, in the wake of the then live unaided performance, all the performer was (and still is) left with (in addition to the memories of disjointed instrumental 'practice' and rehearsal experiences) were memories of the liveliness (or otherwise...) of the having-performed's disappearance, and this at the very moment when Art's Body seemed almost accessible, when 'being-there' and 'being-taken-in-and-over' by the singular performance offered the only opportunity for feeling out the performance's (the gest's) defining 'difference', the otherness of the Body. What such memories may bear, however fleetingly, are traces only of the performer's transformation of embodied-becoming's temporal passing into a materialised sounding-out: the experience of being so consumed by nothing but this performance's sounding-out (sounding-out's appropriation of embodied-becoming and moving it however slightly toward that distant Body) that the conventional controls of language (both everyday discourse and musical genres) fall away in the movement toward Art's Body.

In the event of performing as this hoped-for 'becoming-consumed-by', embodied-becoming strives to be at one with its instrument (with 'the voice' as its tacit model); it turns the instrument into a prosthetic necessary for music's possibility, an extension of 'itself' through which an 'intimate-something' can pass that might just mark its essential 'difference'. This passing-through effects the active dissolution of the difference between within and without; outside and inside are elided in the sounding out. It is not that something that was inside is 'expressed' to the outside. Performing is not the enactment of an 'ex-pressionism'. But, rather, passing-through, sounding's emergence from no precedent (the literal almost-silence within...Stelarc's electronic amplifications notwithstanding), *from nothing but embodied-*

becoming's consumption by the sounding of 'out' itself and the sounding-out of itself, is the opening out, *the exposing*, of embodied-becoming to a world whose possibility depends upon the sounding-out alone - a 'musical-world-to-come' at odds with all the other worlds we inhabit *because it is nothing-but-music*. And if, as I proposed in the earlier discussion of the relation between performing and improvisation, performing 'is' the decreation, as a fluidifying extending-contracting in seemingly no time at all, of the tenses which we conventionally use to sub-divide and make linguistic sense of embodied-becoming's passing-through, then it is this tense-transformation that consumes performing's embodied-becoming in its sounding-out. In sounding-out music's possibilities performing transliterates the everyday conventions of time passing into an otherwise-experience that cannot be reconciled with the latter. For the performer, and as an offer to potential listeners, passing-through, in displacing the clock-time of everyday operations, already sets about the loosening that is the pre-condition for any otherwise movement, any journey toward the not-yet.

But if performing has been and still is unavoidably 'grounded', by the entire institutional apparatus which maintains it in the interests of 'culture', in the figuring of its destination (its *telos* and true becoming - through which it seeks to come into its ownmost while simultaneously setting forth a very particular social product as its *gest*) as embodied in the virtuosic (technically flawless and revelatory interpretive) unaided live performance, and if it uses this as the all too fluid 'ground' (from which it departs and to which it returns ceaselessly in the course of its meridian journeys) and thus as the sourcing criterion of all assessments (judgments) of its performance, does not the entirety of the real (all too routine) experience of everyday life under modernity confound this model for performing's embodied-becoming?

Surely this certainty is laid waste when performing's lively passing away, its sounding-out, can be both fixed by recording for endless return as *the repetition of its death knell* and transmitted telematically to any global destination with the appropriate receiving decoding equipment? Has not sound-reproduction from its inception (and together now with all the transformative operations enabled by its ever more complex electronic machinery) blown apart the model around which the entirety of musical performing as a separable zone of 'felt' know-how and technical accomplishment has been ceaselessly re-gathered? And is not performing and its reception now thus the site of an absolute schism, an apart-ness, within whose gap are suspended (like the fragments of Parker's exploded shed) the remains of what performing's body used to be without any way of reassembling it as some 'whole'?

Since the aeon of modernity is partially defined by its inauguration, maintenance, and continual transformation of the technical means for ensuring the endlessness of representation (in music as the repetition and transmission of reproducible recorded sound), it seems that the 'vision' of performing's embodied-becoming routinely informing the music-maintaining institutions and their construction of 'taste' (live unaided performance) is in tension with the technical means that set the terms for the utterly routine real everyday life of both performing and audience response.

Glenn Gould's Response to Performing's Defining Tension

Gould recognised precisely the starkness of the contradiction imposed on performing's life and potential by the introduction of the technics of recording and reproduction and their subsequent continuous complexification. While his trajectory-splitting decision to restrict his performing activity to studio-recording was, in the life of the surrounding musical culture,

absorbed easily enough as just one musician's response to a personal vision apparently without the threat of any wider implications, his reason made absolutely explicit the depth of the 'trouble' that now marked every dimension of performing's relation to music's possible life. For he saw with unerring clarity that the technics of recording bore within themselves the offer to performing of a very specific and absolutely unprecedented new *telos* for music-making, a new way of making-toward-art, or perhaps more precisely a different conception of the relation between musical performance and Art's Body. *It offered a precisely framed and structured possibility of a specific sense of 'perfection' that depended upon a transformation of performing's relation to the technical knowledges embedded in the machine and thus to collaboration with the latter's controllers.* It introduced entirely different and seemingly incompatible 'codes' into performing's product, making them integral to performing itself. Each performance, partially now appropriated by the machine, emerged in its product as a strange integration of codes drawn from very different zones of experiencing and embodied-becoming. For in its reproductive sounding it could manifest, expose, only what the technical collaboration had selected out from the still live performance being recorded through its manipulation of its machinery. What remained as product was only the shadow/echo of an eviscerated corpse, revivable only as a permanently reiterable echoing perfectly detached from the body of performing, written all over and through by layered inscriptions that could no longer be translated (for they were rendered almost entirely indistinguishable, and thus unheard, in the reproduced sounding out) back into any of the languages of everyday life. The new product was an amalgam of incompatibles made possible by knowledges quite aside from the practical knowledges underwriting musical performers' instrumental 'mastery'.

Trading off the tradition's established celebration of technical mastery of one's instrument (virtuosity), Gould saw that the performer could exploit the ever-increasing technical complexity and range of recording's possibilities (*with recording itself, in its bravura technical displays of seeming control over 'the natural', implicitly becoming the definitive model of virtuosity...*) to accomplish (to record for infinite subsequent reproduction) performances that were doubly flawless. Not only could even the most subliminal 'faults' of instrumental execution be entirely eliminated through cutting them out and replacing them with repeated fault-free recordings of the 'same' musical moment, but the performer's personal felt interpretive ideal for any composition could gradually be assembled in the studio through repetition and collaged substitution.

Even at that historical juncture (1975-1982), before the subsequent emergence of elaborate computer programmes for the creation of digitally produced electronic sound (both recorded, simulated, and invented *ex nihilo*), Gould's vision for manipulating recorded performances was already an ordinary fact of everyday studio practice. Indeed a wide range of composers and performers with contrasting visions, taking up the challenge of an already established 'modern tradition' of music-making (rather than the continual resuscitation of the pre-modern 'classical tradition') to generate new music that was responsive to its contemporary context, had already experimented with and incorporated electronic reproductive sound techniques into their compositions and performances. But Gould's intervention was a direct challenge *by a performer rather than a composer* to the entire conception of performing that underwrote (and still underwrites) both the maintenance of the pre-modern 'classical tradition', most of the music constituting the emergent 'modern tradition' (despite its experiments with the possibilities of electronically generated sound), and the institutional re-production of a model of performing itself. In opting for the technically aided 'perfection' of the studio production

as performing's goal under late-modernity's systematics of representation, Gould abandons the implicit vision of performing that, for at least the last four hundred years and that is now securely institutionally routinised, has underwritten the supply of performers required to sustain that vision practically in the West.

Perhaps what is exposed and put at risk by Gould's move is that which institutions and their shepherded performers cannot confront explicitly because it threatens the entire model of performing's embodied-becoming (its implicit 'ontology of performance') on which their project is founded: the representing work that defines recording, continually manifesting the endlessness of its technical development (complexification), *bears the promise of performing's disappearance*. This is a double promise for it not only delivers on its short-term promise of substituting 'this' non-presence (the recording in whatever material form) for the performing and technical activities of which it is a record, but it also offers the longer-term (as yet of incalculable length but still audibly 'there' in the recording) 'promise' (threat?) of the eventual elimination of all embodied performing. Indeed we can already hear clearly the first stages of this latter disappearance in the technics of electronic sound-simulation and reproductive-production where transmitted (and storable) sounds are not recordings of pre-existing instrumental soundings but are produced from the machinery. Recording, engineered as supposedly a 'faithful' representative of the overarching systematics of representation, thus delivers its specific 'good' to the market as its product - the death of performing's presence. What it offers (even in the now digitally displaced analogue recording) in place of performing's presence is a 'something' that bears an eternally unknowable, unreconstitutable, relation to the long gone and absolutely context-bound performance(s) *of which, through its selective abstracting, it is only one possible reconstructed transformation and highly partial record*. It lives on in and as its *dissimilarity* to the performance which it-is-not.

And yet Gould the performer experienced an intense elation at the promise of a certain perfection to which he challenged himself (and by extension all performing) to respond. It was an intensity that, aside from all models and conventions for performing, echoes across and between performers as the mark of their visceral involvement with their specific instruments. In the intimacy of this intensity lies, perhaps, performing's always latent propensity to renew itself differently, to take itself beyond the institutional requirements for the programmable and the representable. This 'being appropriated by the instrument', becoming bodily attuned to and in tune with it and eventually allowing oneself, in one's being-at-one with it, to be sounded-out by it, is the necessary mark, the enabling embodying condition, of a performer's potential trajectory into and through performing models that will always seek to re-form it according to their own conventions. It is this attachment that the pianist Charles Rosen points to specifically in relation to the piano in the following terms:

'There has to be a genuine love simply of the mechanics and difficulties of playing, a physical need for the contact with the keyboard, a love and a need which may be connected with a love of music but are not by any means totally coincident with it. This inexplicable and almost fetishistic need for physical contact with the combination of metal, wood and ivory (now more often plastic) that make up the dinosaur that the concert piano has become is, indeed, conveyed to the audience and becomes necessarily part of the music... For all of us, music is bodily gesture as well as sound, and its primitive connection with

dance is never entirely distilled away.⁷

Rosen's general points about embodiment's founding role in the performer-instrument relation (echoing the 'proprioception' proffered by Olson) can be transposed from the piano's specific demands to the different but similarly specific qualities defining each instrument's seductive needs. It is this condition's distinctive relation to embodiment, necessarily partially aside from language, knowledge, and even the 'love' of music (Rosen's 'inexplicable'), that marks the zone of intimacy peculiar to musical performing. It not only sets the terms for any potential turn toward art's elsewhere as a possible destination, but also points to the essential difficulty faced in all institutional attempts to 'make sense' of it, 'place' it, and programme its attractions.

With what hazard and promise, then, might this leap from 'presence' (liveliness) to 'absence' (death) and back again (defining contemporary performing's now quotidian oscillation between the demands of constitutively different relations to performing's plight) confront performing across diverse musical genres if what they share is an intense and compulsive relation to both embodiment and the possibility of making-toward the otherness of Art's always distantly elusive Body? If contemporary performing is now necessarily 'all at sea' in its quotidian struggles in having to oscillate between the demands of conflicting 'models' (presence versus absence) of its sounding-out, embodying, music's potential, might there be alternative ways of responding to the cultural 'power' of recording (technoscience's dominance in ordering the conditions of music's representation) other than survival by permanent oscillation between irreconcilables?

In making-music-toward 'elsewheres' the questions put to themselves by a range of performers have had to pass through and away from the conventions that continue to frame performing's embodiment. And, precisely because the models are irreconcilable, alternative performative explorations of music's embodiment display a comradely affinity with the 'point' of Jarry's *Pataphysique*, in their explorative out-soundings of the rule governing exceptions... each time, of course, differently exceptional. They have to sound-out an emergent unprecedented (and thus exceptional) know-how for setting aside the ruling precedents that continue to define performing's 'field' of action.

The challenge seems to call for a know-how that, already knowing how to sur-vive in the tension of inhabiting performing simultaneously as both the singular passing away of a living-presence and as the delivery of an eternally reiteratable now dead-past-present, wants to show, to test out, how it might still be possible to live in and for music differently - to celebrate music aside from the oscillation. For is it not precisely performing's relation to living (and thus to dying), to how it can hold to the intensity of becoming-embodied in its relations to the tenses through which it gathers itself, that is now at stake for performing? If recording removes it from this dynamic relation to tenses and tensing by fixing it in a singular relation to one tense (each recorded performance's past-perfect), what might this imply for any music-making (irrespective of genre or 'tradition' of attachment) still seeking to explore, to put in question, its relation to its lively involvement with the event of performing under the means of representation? And if recording always seems, following Gould's realisation, to promise a specific kind of 'perfection', how might this promise be shaped through performing's immersion in the routine reproductive activities of a programmed culture?

⁷ Charles Rosen, 'Piano Notes', Allen Lane, London, 2002, p. 10 – 11.

For certainly performing's current destiny, and thus its relation to its own embodied-becoming - its passing away - is bound intimately to the uses to which recording, as a key representative of technoscience's contribution to spectacular representation, is put in this culture. Within the latter's embracing dynamic, the operational 'value' (to political, socio-economic institutional, interests - that is, to the appropriation of the means of power) of recording in its multi-form appearances lies in its fixing and storing, its archiving, of retrievable information-as-evidence. Such 'evidence', in its near-instant availability and interpretability, fuels the accounting work that constitutes the routine functioning of The Law across all zones of everyday life. Recorded and subsequently reproducible music makes its quirky but continuous re-fuelling contribution to this accounting work. It operates both as an accompanying supportive marker of 'occasions' and as the mattering of 'evidence' for 'critique' ('technical' assessment via discourse-specific knowledges) to get to work on when value-judgment is called for to add value to or subtract it from the exchange-value of the recording as product. It is within this latter contribution that Gould's criterial 'perfection' makes its appearance.

But, in a culture that operates under the rule of 'the accountability of everything', we might need to ask, in the wake of Gould's aspiration for 'perfection', whether performing-toward-art (including perhaps Gould himself) might include in this aspiration *precisely that which was unaccountable*. If Art's otherwise Body is that ungatherable swarming-beyond which, as the avoidance of convention's rules, performs The Law's suspension, then such suspension would include the scattering of accountability in the exception that is aside from the rule of exchange-value. 'Perfection', in its hoped-for purity, would depend upon performing's double leap out of both the technical conditions of its generation (including its recording) and the speakable conventions of value-judgment into an unspeakable zone outside accountability. This 'otherwise' takes us up to the challenge of performing's current plight.

Honouring the Dead by Quotation : Performing as a Memorial Service for Sacrosanct Remains

To find ways of holding to and exploring music's potential for 'otherness', and thus of committing to performing as a still possible making-toward-art, while suspended within this inescapable fragmenting division, defines the challenge of its contemporary plight-as-predicament. It is what performing has to expose in the course of trying to sound-out, and thus make manifestly 'hearable', whatever it can release of its plight-as-promise. Recovering something of this promise would seem to entail a leap out of the irreconcilable division which currently fixes the terms on which performing's intense instrumental-compositional involvement is drawn into and through the institutional demands made on it by music-making's routine cultural programming.

In the context of the latter it is recorded music that accounts for the vast majority of the occasions of heard music; as offered in the earlier remarks on music's current 'incidentalness', it occurs routinely in its reproduction as an accompaniment, a supplement, to other activities. Music is received, heard-and-desired, as a hybridised 'form' in conjunction with other productive activities; it becomes an accepting and accepted participant in diluted quasi-synaesthetic products in which its contribution is invariably that of contributor to establishing a 'mood' (an instantly disappearing 'atmospherics') for something quite outside its own 'intrinsic' (defining) concerns. And in these other activities (invariably modes of work, including entertainment-as-work) neither the embracing activities that provide the immediate context for performing nor the music-making itself are concerned remotely with the leap

away towards art's otherwise (with the obvious exceptions of 'art-events' - dance, theatre, opera, films, happenings, installations and so on - where music may be integral to the leap out of everydayness). The hybrid events are set up as multi-media products with the specific intention of integrating all the participating media into the service of a 'whole' separate from each of them; each sacrifices the 'whatever-singularity' that may be precisely what making-toward-art's performances seek. In this general dispersal across the world of work, music is radically instrumentalised, appearing most frequently as a subsidiary product whose use-potential is that of contributor to any product's persuasive rhetoric. *It is the continuous streaming forth of these instrumentalised sounds that, permeating the cultural atmosphere, constitutes the context within which all access and entry into performing now occur.* Music's performative potential as art has thus to both emerge out of (to be recognised as such...) and survive within this interminable flood of a not-art whose defining necessity is that facility of infinite repetition provided by recording. And it is the latter's guarantee of a de-contextualised reproducible sounding that ensures every recording's multi-purpose instrumental potential. It can be played back, heard whole or fragmented and according to whatever interest, anywhere where power and machinery are available for its amplified reproduction.

Repetition thus defines the everyday life, the normal condition, of music's place and 'life' (the recording as performing's still resonating echo-tomb) in the culture of representation, and inevitably sets the terms for the 'life' (the production and reproduction of both performers and performances) of performing itself. When it comes to the minuscule appearances of making-toward-art through music, repetition rules: recording has already set the scene for performing's way through culture. For, as its 'point' is to produce products whose promise is infinite repetition, it controls and prepares the 'ground' for performing as the production of reproduction. As what is to be performed routinely is that which has to survive in and as constant reiteration, then the product has to be readable-hearable as a promise of the bearing of comforting familiarity to potential listeners (as well as placing them in an analytical-technical relation to the product via their control over both the play-back context and a range of selectable and manipulable sound qualities (volume, tone, balance, stop-start, fast-forward-backward, and so on)), of that which poses no threat and becomes ever-more reassuringly acceptable in the course of its repetition. *Nothing serves this 'point' better than that which is already familiar.* And, as performing's life occurs within this foregrounding and backgrounding of play-back, it is hardly surprising that the institutionally programmed space-times set aside specifically for the ostensible performance of 'art-oriented' events (necessarily represented and managed as 'art-lite' products in the interests of audience-maximisation) are filled almost exclusively with performances whose point is the affirmation through reiteration of established music-traditions.

Performing, for most professional performers for most of their 'ordinary' productive life (a life largely aside from the performance of art-events' peculiar singularity), is given over to the repeated interpretations of already known and familiar compositions or quickly masterable scores, typically under studio conditions with recording technicians as their only 'present' audience. In the occasional concerts of 'live performance' (including those, even more occasionally, recorded for future marketing) mounted to represent compositions that constitute the so-called 'classical tradition' (including now its faltering extension under modernity), it is rare to hear compositions by living composers, let alone first performances or pieces by young composers. The latter have to construct their own performing occasions in venues almost entirely outside the institutionally controlled performing circuits (such as the

occasional small-scale festivals of ‘contemporary’ music that provide opportunities for the performance of ‘experimental’ music, cross-genre explorations, instrumental combinations outside the programming concerns of the containing concert and recording circuit), but still always within earshot of and against the embracing fore- and back-ground of the surrounding hybridising context. Irrespective of genre, ‘new’ (by definition including ‘improvised’) music is heard idiosyncratically and haphazardly, its occasions and audiences (and its possible recording) being largely dependent upon the shared enthusiasms and imaginative visions of its performers. The very process of chancing performing to an elsewhere-sounding, aside from institutionally managed traditions and any guarantee of destination (the always likely fall away into not-yet-art), continually confronts the risk of its own failure and thus its own wasting away, its self-loss. In chancing itself, its intimacy with performing-composing, to the risk of its performance exposing itself as nothing more than the loss of that intimacy, its display as accomplishing ‘merely’ its wasting away, such performing turns radically away from any sense of tradition-maintenance which is always about conservation and safe-keeping. And this safe-keeping (archiving) is what tradition-as-quotation now survives by. Its survival depends on its endless rehearsal of conventions for the preservation through reiteration of that which is no longer with us through the offer of performances (beginning with recording) as memorial services.

The maintenance of every tradition entails the preservation and symbolic resuscitation, a ‘remembrance’, of ‘a body’. In music it is a body of sounds specific to a musical genre, of ways of sounding out that constitute a repertoire, as an implicit memory-bank, of near-codes⁸ that, in their repetition (quotation), seem to re-invest the genre’s body-as-corpse, however briefly, with a ‘new’ (the supposedly ‘critically different’ reinterpretation) lease of life. Whether in the passing of a single live performance or in the repeatable passings of a recording, the re-combination of repertoire elements reaffirms the tradition through an aligning of resounding quotations that summons listeners (literally *re-calls* as a ‘calling again’ that both casts them back through the tenses and returns them to the present ‘moment’ of listening but now in thrall to, appropriated by, the past tense) into the comforting (loved even) familiarity of the already known.

In approaching such performances as memorial services whose point is the preservation of a tradition, each performance bears witness to and simultaneously celebrates a body that, though having passed away, has left remains (beginning with the written script, the ‘score’, to be read in anticipation of a performance-to-come) which are (relatively) sacrosanct. What remains becomes the origin from which the rejuvenating performance has to begin and is the precedent to which it accedes as the fragment that has to be conserved through its re-sounding. *You must have and reveal (quote) the body*. Of course these celebrated sacrosanct relics are genre-specific. Thus in the ‘classical’ tradition (including its modern extension) the re-remembered body (the body re-jointed and injected with instrumental revivifying ‘fluids’ (the performers’ own embodied-becomings as breathed pulsed energy))⁹ is indeed the composer’s written score. Of course, given both the absolute gap between the written and the

⁸ ‘Near-’ in the sense that none of the groupings of conventions for interpretation, in their complex interplay and the modulatable subtleties available to instruments, may ever be reducible to the finally unequivocal ruled structural relations that mark the conventional understanding and usage of ‘code’.

⁹ The metaphor of injection here recalls the invention of *Canterel* in Raymond Roussel’s marvelous ‘*Locus Solus*’ in which ‘*vitalium*’ and ‘*resurrectine*’ were used to endow corpses (suspended in ‘*aqua-micans*’ with its ‘powerful electrifying force’!) with ‘an impressive artificial life’. See Raymond Roussel, ‘*Locus Solus*’, Calder and Boyars, London, 1970, p. 118.

sounded, the always open interpretability of all writing whether or not set forth as 'instructions', and the absent composer's necessary silence on other matters of composerly intention, performing can both hold onto and seek to 'ground' itself in this origin and make play within the open spaces of its apparent interpretability. Across the sub-genres of jazz (whose edges dissolve as performers engage the musical forms, modes, scales, and instruments from non-western cultures) a tradition continues to be re-echoed and maintained through the return to specific musical structures with their distinctive inter-relating of melody, harmonic or modal structure, pulse and idiosyncratically inflected mood. The offering of wide improvisatory and melodic openness within clearly demarcated constraints is a feature of structures typically employed as conventional resources (notably the 12-bar blues and the many compositions constituting 'The Great American Songbook' (largely resourced by the American music-theatre of the mid-twentieth century) that are gathered around the 'standard' 32-bar sequence with its sub-division into four 8-bar sequences). In both these traditions composers' and performers' desire to display affiliation to and a recognisable (hearable) affinity with them will turn on how they respond to and sound-out these structures; to sound-out a claim for affiliation some crucial relic of the body must be convincingly re-echoed to conserve its sacrosanctity.

But any attempt by performing to re-join a tradition by quotation runs a double risk. On the one hand it risks the charge of failing to achieve 'authenticity', of not showing sufficient at-oneness with the desired tradition to meet the judgment of purist judges. Thus in the 'classical' tradition the movement espousing a return to the use of authentic 'period' instruments (largely hand-made and responsive to the utterly different acoustics of non-amplified performance) was an attempt to avoid this charge by rejuvenating the scores as they might have sounded under the conditions of their emergence. Compositions have to be rendered under an 'as if' - as if performing could make a detour around the real intervening changes defining its current identity, vision and context, in order to re-appropriate the acoustic living conditions of their emergence aside from representation's transforming work. On the other hand, at the other 'extreme', the very process of performative return to a temporally and culturally 'distant' composition risks rejection through a failure to display its performative quotation as necessarily 'parodic'. This is the risk of performing not playing to its supposed 'strengths'. These are presumed to lie precisely in what the musical experience (knowledges, technical 'advances', transformation of work and cultural life...), accumulated in the gap between the composition's origination and its current performance, has taught it about performing's always changing potential. Parody requires the performer to display, through the tactics of performance (how it reveals its 'take' on the composition), both that it knows that it is quoting and that its quotation is the attempt to display its reconciliation of incompatibles - *yesterday's music rendered as if it had been written today*.

Perhaps Gould's response is apposite here. For not only did he embrace reproduction as the necessary means to enhanced performance, but, through his idiosyncratic reading of the relation between a composition, his relation to his instrument and to the specifics of the context of a performance, he re-defined what, for him, was the essence of performing's potential under the conditions of late-modernity. Through parody's slight distancing and altering of the angle of approach to performing's interpretive task, Gould showed that for him the potential of any composition was inexhaustible - the 'perfect' performance would always be beyond whatever virtuosity might bring to a single 'live' performance. For him performing was a perennial falling-short that could, through the performer's imaginative vision in conjunction with the ever-changing technical possibilities of sound reproduction, be

enhanced. Moreover this approach to any specific composition demanded a recognition that performing-as-interpretation had to be approached as an endlessly self-transformative process of becoming-differently through its sounding-out others' compositions. The extraordinary contrast between his early (1955) and late (1981) recordings of Bach's *'The Goldberg Variations'* displays precisely such movement.

Likewise his belief in the absolute advantages of the continuing modifications in instrument technology resulted in his refusal to use period instruments. Indeed his response to a question on just this matter reveals his conception of composing's challenge to performing. For not only does the piano's 'range of articulation far surpass any older instrument', but he argued that Bach 'didn't give a hoot' about an instrument's specific sonority (i.e. contesting the argument that compositions written originally for the harpsichord should always be played on that instrument). Rather, he proposed that what would have counted for Bach (and by implication thus for himself too) in the matter of playing would have been a 'question of attitude' to what was crucial in the composition, namely 'the abstract necessity of the structures'.¹⁰ It was these which he himself tried to search for and sound out in his playing, the over-riding condition for which was to maintain as much control as possible over the performing context as evinced in his switch to performance by studio recording.

In this control it seems from the resulting recordings that he was at pains to preserve and even perhaps enhance an audible sense of his performing's embodiment; for he allows his own accompanying repertoire of vocal sounds to remain as intrinsic to the recorded performances. Even allowing for the less developed technology at the time of his recordings it would have been easy to eliminate these. Clearly more than just incidental accompaniments for him, his preservation of them in recordings under his control reveals them as essential elements of his response to the challenge of performing, constitutive elements of performing's visceral immersion in the 'act' of performing. Nevertheless, in spite of his decreation of the divide between live and recorded performance, in the musical culture to which he contributed Gould was positioned firmly as the very 'virtuoso', albeit a maverick one, which that technicised and professionalised culture set out to continually regenerate: he became the virtuoso whose reputation (established very early in his career) rested on his affirmative re-interpretations of works from historically distant epochs. Although he was known also for his interpretations of selected modern composers (Schoenberg and Hindemith for example), as well as a small number of his own compositions, he remained a product and a reinforcer of institutionally managed tradition-maintenance.

The rupture that he enacted in relation to tradition was 'epistemological' rather than 'ontological', for it was performed within and with an intensely felt dedication to the maintenance of an already carefully managed tradition that sought to define and protect the presumed being, the essence, of music. His scission nevertheless confronted that tradition from within (and through it the embracing context of music's reception as a routine 'product') with its own ontological dilemma: how could it continue to 'be' what it 'was', to hold to the identity its everyday 'working out' endlessly sought to reinforce and renew (live performance's singularity), in the face of reproductive representation's creation of *the fixed dead echo as both the background condition of and the prime and defining goal for musical*

¹⁰ See Gould's discussion with Tim Page of his interpretations of 'The Goldberg Variations' of Jan. 1st., 1982. This is released as an audio c.d. (no. 71) in the Sony release (2007, New York) of 'Glenn Gould: The Complete Original Jacket Collection'.

performance? And, as a performative response to the real currently operative terms of music's survival (how it had to live on), Gould's leap aligned itself at least partially with the vision that making-toward-art under the revolutionary conditions imposed by modernity's techno-representation had inaugurated and sought to live by.

In his aiming for the impossible 'perfection', he began to draw himself, in spite of articulating performing as repetition, towards the sway of the 'elsewhere', the not-yet-here and still not-quite-there either, that has been marked as art's elusive 'point', the disappearing 'where' of its Body, under modernity. Yet, caught within the trajectory of his own performing's 'history', he remained an interpreter, albeit perhaps a revolutionary one, of the already passed away, rather than a musician who, setting out from within music's routine conditions (becoming-traditional), sought to leap out of their constrictions toward Art's Body through a sounding-out of the singular difference of his response to performing's predicament. Through his scission he revealed to the tradition to which he contributed the starkness of the divide between it and the otherwise-oriented approaches to music-making. For the latter, a 'tradition' of making-performing was not something to be taken-for-granted, but, if necessary, turned inside out in the course of exploring one's authentic response to music's embracing and permeating living conditions.

Sounding-out Sounding for Music-as-such

Such explorations, in constituting an 'over-there' parallel to tradition-maintenance, have defined making's challenge as the sounding-out of the fate of 'sound' itself under modernity's continuing exorbitant techno-transformations. And their probings of music-making's potential under these changes have inevitably led them, as in the other arts, to treat any tradition not as a set of constraining rules for good 'adequate' performing, but as an open resource from which they can select (or not) according to whatever the relation between their feelings for and leaps toward art and their current context-bound experiences (recalling the earlier discussions of making-toward-art's response to being-summoned) seems to call for. From the earliest offerings by Varèse and Cage in gests integrating machine-generated (initially through taped and replayable recordings) with instrumentally produced sound, through the very different approaches of, for example, Stockhausen, Nono, Berio, Xenakis, and Boulez's IRCAM (an institute exploring the possibilities of fusing musical composition-performance with research into electronically produced sound) often integrating voices, manipulated recordings and conventional instruments, through to the multiple contemporary 'uses' of the computer (in particular using its speed of response to 'instructions' (seemingly 'immediate' - with delays so minute that they are beyond human perception) to incorporate it into group performance as 'one' 'instrument' alongside others), composer-performers continue in diverse musical contexts to explore the possibilities of electronic machinery directly as a supplementary 'instrument' both alongside conventional instruments and as a transformer of the latter's potential for sounding-out.

Electro-acoustics, as both the machine-context power source for music-making in general and the offer of 'singular' instrumental supplements, thus becomes an 'ordinary' contributor to and is absorbed into the routines of everyday music-making, especially where the music is studio-based and is produced in the form of a 'recording'. That is, it begins with an acceptance of - *it has to take for granted as its founding 'condition'* - the 'presence' of a permanent supply of electric power as its unquestionable 'beginning' and 'limit'. In this it complements perfectly the studio's life and working needs. For this 'beginning' condition is taken as the opportunity for performing to move from treating electricity as a means for

reproduction and transmission of something generated ‘elsewhere’ (the instrumental performance) to its potential as an ‘independent’ source of sound-generation (the electronic-machine-as-instrument - a new ‘voice’). Yet, as this strangest of hybrids, whose productive potential (the technoscientific knowledges which are its ‘condition of possibility’) ‘comes’ entirely from interests and activities that are ‘outside’, in an incommensurable zone to, all existing traditions of music-making, electro-acoustically generated sound throws into disarray precisely what, in the context of musical performance’s relation to embodied-becoming, we take both ‘performing’ and ‘recording’ to be and to be doing. For in its ‘difference’, it is intrinsically both more and less than the recording of a performance by acoustic instruments.

Nevertheless, in its now routine ‘appearance’, it is put to work and seemingly seamlessly integrated with non-electronic instruments in the course of generating what are ‘heard’ as ‘ordinary’ performances that are taken to be recognisably ‘music’. Perhaps it is the gradualism of its emergence alongside and in collusion with acoustically generated music-making that has concealed the radicality of its interruption of the conventional understandings and assumptions about ‘what music ‘is’’, what it ‘might be’, and its relation to what is taken-for-granted culturally about ‘the performing body’s’ relation to a musical instrument. As machinery that is already on the way towards a technical version of the ‘perfect’ simulation and storage of whatever-instrumental (or other) sounds that can be activated, ‘fixed’, and then transmitted in whatever-medium wherever the appropriate machinery of reproduction is available, *its ‘value’ as sound-simulator lies in its displacement potential*. For it emerges as the potentially perfect substitute for whatever-sound source, the gamut of acoustic musical instruments necessarily included. Already participating in the entire range of musical-forms and instrumental combinations, its contributions run from gests composed-performed and produced as ‘recordings’ using electronically generated sound alone, to ‘live’ performance collaborations between performers on traditional acoustic instruments and performers using various electronically generated or aided sounds (all the way from the attachment of amplifying machinery to conventional acoustic instruments, through electric keyboards simulating the acoustic piano in appearance but operating a vast range of electronic variations, to computers functioning simultaneously as both recording machines and ‘instruments’ with a wide range of possible inputs to performance (either ‘alone’ or with other performers) via plural modes of repetition-by-variation (loops and recyclings, multiple tonal/pitch/speed variations, of whatever sound inputs both from other instruments and from the computer itself)).

Faced by this universal sound simulator that is apparently able, under the aegis of controlled machine power, to re-present and infinitely repeat ‘instrumental’ sounds ‘at will’ (thus abolishing whatever lingering ‘presence’ they have managed to cling to), any ‘identity’ around which a tradition of musical performance, with enormous effort over many years, may have gathered and maintained itself, is dissolved. And it is a dissolution operating without the offer of any substitute. Carried along unavoidably within this operation, we (every ‘we’), as both performers and listeners, *if we listen ‘through’ to the simulation that displaces everything*, find that the whatever-music we thought we ‘knew’ is no longer ‘there’. What we hear is still, just like the music we were so ‘attached’ to, ‘gone in the air’, but we begin to realise both that it can be made to return (recording) but also, crucially, that it now comes from nowhere, that it is detached from any relation to a place, a some-where and some-body that is right ‘there’ and whose embodied-becoming is consumed by sounding-something-out, some-times on behalf of nothing but Art’s Body.

Yet the dominant thrust in the way this relation to the machinery's potential for music has developed has been to treat the machine *as if it were just a 'new' instrument* (a new way of producing both different and the 'same' (by simulation) sounds as acoustic instruments). It is as if the machine's role has been defined primarily as a supplement to the existing trusted and established instrumental range and thus offers ways of expanding and transforming the out-soundings on which music-making can draw.

That all performing, whether making-for-art or for music-lite, is now machine-dependent and operates, courtesy of the grip of electricity's maintaining charge, under the sway of the supply (and thus the socio-economic-politico resource-control managed by the partnership of technoscience and capital) of power-by-combustion, is taken-for-granted. As in the other contemporary arts this is the silent but 'grounding' (however precarious) and unquestioned condition of whatever-music-making. Power is transferred slowly, but inexorably and beyond question, from embodiment to the electrical charge and the 'interests' that control its operative machinery. Meanwhile, operating necessarily under this digitised rule, the computer-as-now-a-musical-instrument - *or rather as both all other instruments (simulated), and an 'independent' sound source, and the master-controller-orchestrator of all performing* - dissolves the ties between music, embodiment, and place.

This is the transformed, now electro-acoustically ordered and thus technoscientifically framed, socio-economic context within which all genres of music-making that seek a 'public' response routinely reiterate themselves as unquestioned constituents of 'cultural life'. These framing genres (managed and represented sub-traditions) thus act as powerful constraints because they set forth both the grounding terms within which performers develop their founding relations with music and, crucially, the terms for routine survival (how to live-on within the always approximate 'limits' of the chosen frame that is itself already electro-acoustically framed). Nevertheless they enter the cultural mix as just one 'set' of resources among many others within the vast multi-sonic flux that marks the contemporary 'life' of sounds, sounding, and transmitted music.

Where performing strives to hold to an aspiration for music-as-such (its art-potential), then its sounding-out, seeking to question rather than reiterate a tradition's performing conventions, will situate itself inevitably (finding and losing itself one way or another) at the threshold with 'noise', with all sounds that are not heard currently as integral constituents of music and that would be taken as 'interference' in the course of music's performance and reception. For, in searching for the terms of its almost-a-language in their difference, it may hear and re-constitute sounds that are not-yet-but-might-be-material-for-music into a gest that proposes just such a transformation. And, as the arch-simulator and sound-generator that can take on and become the transformer of all sounding, the computer, in alliance with amplification and transmission systems, offers just this conversion and productive facility. In exploring the sounds' materiality, by taking apart and re-composing whatever-sounds through the digitisation-electronic conjunction, such performing scatters what we (in spite of having 'gone through' the modern tradition that took western music to the 'edge' of its dodecaphonic system) have taken music to be and 'where' we have taken it to be 'coming from' and 'going to'.

Such out-sounding risks what's left of its embodied-becoming (ear-hand-eye-thought coordination of electronic machinery under the rule of breath-and-pulse) in the very gaps, the seeming absences, between recognisable musics, placeable sounds, and noises, where it can

explore (searching for the ways music might still be cajoled into emerging from matter(ing)) the elusive fuzziness of music's difference from but unerasable relation with noise.¹¹ Noising's ubiquity, the passing away of sounds, whether as 'background', as accompaniments to specific activities, or as intrusive interruptions, treated as valueless waste matters and thus of no interest to the operations of power (electric and otherwise) and the institutional settings (the entertainment industry for example) falling directly under power's sway through their absolute dependence on its constant supply, may still be brought towards music on performing's terms alone. For it can become a focus for performing-composing wherever music-as-such is approached as a subject for some kind of questioning exploration. And electro-acoustic sounding, precisely beginning aside from a determining attachment to an instrumentally specific 'sound', approaches its sounding-out as this essential 'lack'.

Beginning thus from its defining emptiness, what it brings to performing through this 'lack' is its potential as converter-simulator - its function is to transform, transliterate, one 'thing' (electric current) into another (sound-as... a re-sounding simulation); in the context of musical performance this conversion can be either the production of a sound specific to the electronic machinery (the continuously sounding 'note' defined by pitch, tone and timbre) or a simulation of a specific sound (a musical instrument or something else). Within both these categories the possibilities for variation are endless. Through the latency 'contained' (in the form of digitised instructions awaiting the signal to 'begin') within its emptiness it offers itself as the universal displacer, the potential substituting simulator for whatever-sounding. The enormity of its potential impact on conventional instrumental performing, irrespective of musical context (*except for the required presence of an appropriate electric current...*) lies in the infinite fullness-to-come of this latent emptiness. It 'possesses' an absolutely different mode of and relation to 'power' to that maintained across all zones of music-making reliant on musical instruments made to be sounded acoustically (even though they may be aidable by electric amplification). And it is of course 'in harmony' with, one set of machine-functions intrinsic to, the systems of electronic mediation that, transforming and transmitting digitised information relating to whatever-sense-zone, are the 'means' for instructing and mobilising all areas of representation and reproduction defining the info-spectacle. The processing carried out by and within this network of machinery passes through and marks embodied-becoming across all those regions of everyday life where it is 'in touch' with productive-consumptive representation (and where is it not...?). And the sheer scale and ubiquity of its functioning seems to cut it off from and confirm that it is of a different order to the subdivisions between the multiple 'technical' functions (the breaking down of work into ever more precise and contained ranges of activities) that now constitute the routine division of labour. Making-music, borne along by all its specific requirements of performers, occupies

¹¹ Much contemporary performing across both jazz and contemporary de-classicised 'classical' music sites itself within the soundable spaces between what we conventionally 'hear' as 'noise' and 'music'. In these exploratory soundings-out it is precisely what music 'is' or might become that is the focus of performance. Thus the composer Jennifer Walshe (who is also a film-maker) says of her string quartet writing that she was concerned 'with taking the instrumental sounds apart. The idea of writing solely pitch-based music for string quartet did not make sense to me; it seemed like trying to think in a completely different language in which I had a vocabulary which consisted only of adverbs.' The resulting composition ':blurt' was a 'noisy thicket of scratches and muffled shrieks, knocks and dim sinister tickings'. The resource becomes whatever-sonic-material whose transliteration occurs through inventing potential elements of musical language through a transformation of both its vocabulary and syntaxing. See the article 'Facing Forwards' by Christopher Fox in the music supplement of 'The Guardian', 12.11.'10, p.12.

just one such small zone within this division; like other such zones, reliant upon its traditions and its largely non-transferable skill-knowledge base, it seems to operate partially independently of this permeating encasing network. Perhaps it is this sense of partial independence that enables it to pass over the ‘life-threatening’ (to the traditional ‘musical life’ that is...) implications that the functioning electronic machinery bears within its every process.

Is this not the juncture where music-making, if it is to take seriously and continually re-animate modernity’s injunction to make its own practices the focus of an intense musical questioning, might be expected to plunge into and open up the cracks in its relations to its past history? To follow through modernity’s challenge to composing-performing in pursuit of a music-making seeking to expose the specificity of its response to its present context, requires it to put music-as-such in question; this will be very difficult for a tradition of performing that is both powerfully institutionalised and convinced that it already has music-as-such firmly ‘in hand’, that indeed it is the arbitrating authority on this very ‘subject’. For such a self-questioning entails confronting, re-thinking, and thus perhaps decreasing the performance of, that legacy of audio-social conventions that seeks to maintain contemporary performing within a vision of music that was a response to a past and socially very different, electro-acoustic free, context. Such conventions turn precisely around the maintenance of the socially organised ways of controlling the whatever-‘forces’ that music is taken to be discharging.

What is at stake here is the power to control, to dispose of, that range of ‘forms’ (the musical forms written for performance by and embodied in absolutely specific instrumental, and thus social, groupings) of embodied-becoming that performs the discharging. In the maintenance of a ‘classical’ tradition dedicated to reiteration, that embodied-becoming is exemplified at the hierarchy’s summit in the figure of the ‘symphony orchestra’ whose performances, in gathering many carefully ordered and hierarchised performing bodies into a ‘single body’ under a unitary authority, symbolise and preserve by continuing re-enactment a very specific model of socio-economic power. It is a preservation premised on alliances with other non-musical zones of power and productivity (political, economic, technical-architectural, leisure-consumptive, and so on) whose collusion is required to sustain this ‘body’ as the bearer of specific reiterative-memorialising performing experiences. Recruitment to and preparation for performing under this model is carried through almost exclusively within the academy where it keeps company both with other zones of making-toward-art and the conventional knowledge-based disciplines. And it is in the academy where both modernity’s questing vision and the late emergence of electro-acoustic music are allowed to survive precariously in their representation as minor off-shoots of and thus passing contributions to a maintained tradition’s tolerant ‘breadth’. As objects-of-knowledge within the academy, such ‘asides’ to tradition are effectively distanced (converted into ‘objects’, curiosities, for no ‘subject’) in the course of the pursuit of those knowledges through which attempts are made to ground and integrate research and teaching. Sub-specialisms cling on through the intensities and compulsions of individuals and small coterie of committed enthusiasts in the face of enormous institutional pressures to represent senses of music-making that may be placeable and measurable according to extra-institutional demands and criteria.

As I suggested earlier, the only way the arts can survive in the academy alongside the rational inquiries of knowledge-disciplines is by operating under an ‘as if’ rule in which the making-process is converted into a (pseudo-, cata-)research process where it is treated as if it is

essentially no different to the analytical, data-gathering, knowledge-cumulating work of the other disciplines. Music, like the other arts, clings on in the academy on this basis, combining its instrumental and compositional training with a model of music-as-research (supported by such sub-specialisms as musicology, music history and philosophy of music). In this context alternative ways of approaching performing can also be incorporated into syllabuses as zones of specialist activity that can be gathered under the sheltering umbrella of ‘music-in-general’ (although this ‘in-general’ always takes the form of an ‘in particular’ interpretation of the relation between a dominant tradition and conventions of instrumental practice geared to the needs of the market for performers). In this setting electro-acoustic music gets its opportunity for survival *as a separate specialism subordinate to an implicit model of what music ‘is’ and ‘is for’*. For it can be represented to funding bodies as a ‘research practice’ that is investigating (for the purposes of generating both analytical and ‘practical’ - ‘how to use’ – sharable ‘knowledges’) the properties and use-potential (and thus the economic value-potential...) of the very machinery which the surrounding culture itself lives by.

Despite the apparent democratisation of access to electronic equipment as consumer goods, to establish a ‘sound laboratory’ equipped with a wide range of technically ‘current’ machinery, thus encouraging extensive collaboration between composer-performers and sound-technician-scientists, demands considerable investment. Apart from occasional private sponsorship or benevolence there are no other institutional settings where this kind of support is available. Thus, by adapting to institutional demands for some sort of ‘return’ through accepting its representation, within the embracing teaching-knowledge frame of an established model of music, as an emergent sub-specialism whose ‘identity’ depends upon its relation to machinery-as-musical-instrument, electro-acoustic music making, self-represented as ‘research’, may get access to sufficient funding to develop ‘project-work’ and associated teaching. Such participation in the everyday life of the academy (via the ‘exchange of ideas-as-information’ through recordings, publications, conferences, and performing) ensures its entry into the archive (registering and thus fixing its ‘place’ in musical and cultural ‘history’) under this identity. But, its maintenance as an esoteric specialism in the relative isolation of the academy cuts it off from the broad streams of music-making that constitute music’s routine ‘presence’ in the culture. And, by contexting itself in relation to art (rather than say music-in-general or entertainment), and necessarily ‘contemporary art’ at that, its opportunities for developing anything other than the tiniest audience interest and support beyond the academy are minimal and confined to rare radio broadcasts, appearances at specialist music festivals, and self-generated recordings.

As a musical activity dedicated to music-as-such, electro-acoustic music-making survives, either alone or in collaboration with conventional instrumental performers-composers, in the grip of an all too predictable irony: the machinery which now sets the terms on which planetary ‘productivity’ subsists and is managed, when removed from its ‘instrumental’ applications in information-processing and put into question under the interests of art, opens onto a world of experiencing (an unheard-of, and still largely unheard - except as a curiosity in the incidental music of entertainment - sounding-out) that lies on the far side of a seemingly irreconcilable gap. This is the abyss between the interests which underwrite the everyday use of electronic machinery and art’s exposure of that machinery’s inauguration of a profound difference.

In turning the machinery’s functions back through themselves in the course of exploring its potential for the journey toward art, the machinery is simultaneously revealed in its offer and

potential as a universal simulator that can do anything, and more, that has previously been the exclusive capability of instrumental performing. *The only problem is that it dispenses with the body...* whereas institutionalised music-making (the reproduction of traditions) relies absolutely on the many model performing bodies it needs to recruit in order to carry out its reproductive performing work. And we have seen that, at the 'level' of performing, the latter is operationalised and maintained through the fixed relations of authority between the composer, virtuoso, conductor, and technician-performer. Within this working conjunction electro-acoustic music makes its awkward and occasional appearances by intervening and interrupting all of these categories. But, because it is represented and brought into play essentially as a single supplementary instrument (whose capacity for 'special effects' recommend it as an occasional but valuably quirky supplement to the conventional instrumental corpus), *its offer of universal simulation is ignored, is repressed as too disturbing to countenance*. Its ground-removing implications for existing models of musical 'identity' and performance, and thus for heavily invested institutional interests, cannot be faced.

Thus, in spite of its extensive earlier and continuing development in this instrumental capacity by the previously mentioned, and many other, composers, it is precisely allocated to the esoteric margins of music-making's institutional life. The unthinkable - that it may have already turned culture's ontology of music (what performing music, whether making-for-art or anything else, and its potential 'is') completely inside out - cannot be thought or thought through because of the threat it poses to the very interests that maintain the 'thinking' behind music's current delivery. And yet the reality of everyday performing now surely shows unequivocally that, whatever the genre, music's 'life' is maintained by and occurs under the control of electronics. All music is electro-acoustic now. It cannot function, cannot be heard or possibly listened to, as a publicly available phenomenon, outside the context both of its routine and ubiquitous reproduction (recording) and its electronic constitution and transmission to every 'where'. Whatever 'presence' it has is already 'representation'. It only 'appears' within these electronic relays. The fact that this electronic technology can also be brought into play under the guise of a supposedly 'single' electro-acoustic 'instrument' (the computer as looping re-cycling 'fiddler') is just one temporary symptom of electro-acoustic's undoing of the relations between performing, instrumental conventions, and listening's interests.

Yet perhaps the power of power's seductive attractions currently renders such concerns as both invisible and of questionable 'relevance' (but to what, to what, to art's 'elsewhere-possibility'...?).

Taking on the 'Intersonic' Context and its Musical 'Division of Labour'

In seeking to question and thus to distance itself from any tradition, performing challenges itself to sound out music's possibilities by searching for its responses to the fate of sound (and thus of music) under techno-representation's 'all-change'. For in the course of the latter's 'development' the conventional boundaries between the dualities within which we routinely order and oscillate our everyday becoming, and which are imposed by the institutionalised histories of knowledge and experience (for example, between culture and nature, thought and feeling, language and sense, space and time, life and death...), are both in question and in dissolution. The multi-sonics that are partial contributors to this dissolution, echoing the plural 'intertext' that marks the fate of writing-voicing and of languaging's daily life now, thus begin to appear as a near-parallel 'intersonic', an inescapable play of

soundings ungatherable under any supposedly founding ‘origin’, identity, rule, or structure. Caught up in this intersonic context, and challenging itself to make-toward-art by way of music’s possibilities, performing’s otherwise-search has to take on and risk itself to the chaotic interweaving of this multiple as its field of play - that which it is both ‘within’ and is ‘within’ it, yet which it is responding to as if it could site itself, at least temporarily, ‘outside’ it. And, as with all such questing projects across the contemporary arts, the search risks itself to and subsists within the threat of failure, of ending up with something whose ‘otherwise’, the hoped-for exposure of art’s difference to everything ‘cultural’, may not (yet) be heard and shared by others. No longer having to defer to or memorialise the authority of any sacrosanct remains, such exploration commits itself to make-for the not-yet, the ‘to come’, of Art’s unruly Body, aside from any institutional sponsorship or guarantee of representation.

Yet, in spite of the emergence of a now enormous variety of such apparently tradition-suspending (and thus self-alienating) responses to the institutional maintenance and representation of the west’s ‘classical tradition’ (including its shifts under modernity with their now global distribution and influence), these responses, have occurred largely within and on the terms of one of the defining institutionally managed and *still absolutely traditional* divisions organising performing’s life. For the most part they arise out of and continue to uphold a fundamental condition of the division of labour through which this culture’s placement and ‘use’ of music-making is endlessly re-founded, irrespective of whether or not Art’s Body is a gest’s hoped-for destination. Within the world of work (music-making as an ‘operative’ in the culture’s routine reproduction) music is institutionally divided and maintained almost exclusively through the split between ‘composers’ and ‘performers’. This split structures music’s cultural life and defines the qualities of the experience it offers to all who engage it - composers, performers, audiences, technical specialists in reproduction, and all institutionally based operatives responsible for music’s cultural dissemination.

To arrive at the point where one can participate in music’s life ‘professionally’ one has to have become a specialist on one or other side of this ‘occupational’ divide. Given the previously mentioned routine cultural requirement for music that is drafted into service as a supplement or accompaniment to the production and distribution of other products, together with the attachment of such usage to familiar conventions of music-making (instrumental combinations, melody/harmony relations, mood reinforcement and so on), the institutional work-force requirement is for two specialist groups. Firstly, such services need a large renewable pool of instrumentalists with singular skills on one of the conventional ‘orchestral’ instruments (including a number who can ‘double’ on a small range of often related instruments), and secondly, a much smaller group of composers and ‘arrangers’ many of whom will develop reputations in sub-genres of music-writing. *For the division’s ‘basis’ is precisely a matter of writing, and writing has always been a defining constituent, an essential material component, of the means of implementing and maintaining orders of power. The latter turn on (and never more so than now under the rule of bureaucracy) the question of who writes (the orders, the instructions) and who reads (carries out and/or passes on the instructions).*

This division of labour is thus underwritten (literally) by the implicit line of authority that has structured the production of the specific forms of music developed in the west over centuries. These forms emerged under the twin patronage of the different but closely interrelated sites of institutionalised power - the political (court-centred) and the religious (church-centred with its integration of ‘spiritual’ and material powers). As significant contributions to

occasions of ritual, and thus symbolic, displays of these powers, the musics produced for and integrated into such occasions served both to reinforce the powers but also, through this reinforcing, to assure their own institutionalisation within these orders. The demand was for the performance of music that would affirmatively integrate displays of the untouchable wealth of the instituted interests of power (including the literal buying power able to call up at will ever larger and more complex musical ‘forces’ (the large(ish) orchestra for example) as symbolic affirmations of their authority) with the music’s innate ability to control and direct its listeners’ ‘emotions’, thus drawing them into a hoped-for fervent affirmation of those powers’ interests. And the key to this music’s emergent self-integration into these power networks was writing itself - scription as composing’s means of control, as both archivable and multiply publishable ‘instructions’. It was this that underwrote both music’s internal division of labour by privileging the composer over the performer, and simultaneously allied it absolutely with the twin ‘seats’ of power that kept writing almost exclusively amongst themselves as the routine means of documenting and thus appropriating control of all zones of social activity.

Performing and the Written Record

The emergence of a seemingly infinitely elaboratable and transferrable written system of musical notation provided both for western music’s developing complexity but also, as the set of *written authoritative instructions* that each composition then became, positioned it within the archives of power enabling its transfer and reproduction to wherever it might be ‘needed’. And in this form of recording it became the critical instrument in music-making’s practical construction of itself as a site of specialised (and thus privileged esoteric and exclusive) ‘knowledge’ which it has preserved throughout its subsequent history. As a scription that cannot be translated *except into its other* (its being sounded-out) it seals itself off from other modes of languaging and coding. And this untranslatability continually serves to reinforce the internal division between the composer who writes the instructions and the performer who reads them off in the only way they can be directly translated - through an instrumental (or vocal) sounding out (with all the leeway for the vagaries of interpretation such translation, which is after all a mode of transliteration, invites). Status (reputation - celebrity, notoriety, or failure) accrues to the originating scriptor not to the reader-interpreter (instrumental performer), except in the case so dear to the culture and which it does so much to try to foster (the competition...) of the virtuoso whose temporary celebrity (now seemingly extendable via the recording... but only as a corpse’s echo) may vie briefly with that of the composer.

Music’s daily life is thus a survival ordered in terms of this division, a survival now dependent absolutely on the institutional orders (education and training) within which music is formally introduced, culturally positioned, and promoted as an esoteric form of ‘experientable knowledge’. The ‘vision’ of and for music’s possibility that informs the placement of this ‘knowledge’ is worked out and formally structured in the construction and practical enactment of syllabuses, instrumental tuition (with its hierarchies of progression through acquisition of skill levels), formal qualification awards, and the intrinsic construction of ‘taste’ that these structures bear. The entire edifice is designed to reproduce and reinforce the division between writers and readers, originators and interpreters. And this is in spite of the living presence, though barely visible-hearable, of sub-genres of music-making in which no such division operates, in which instrumental performing is simultaneously a composing.

Improvising's Passing Away Confounded

Thus, wherever improvisation is a constituent of the music performed the distinction is actively dissolved. Individual and collective improvisation is the defining passion in jazz, although its extent and placing in any performance can vary from complete 'freedom', to responses improvised within precisely demarcated musical 'spaces' and 'forms'. While earlier forms of 'classical' music occasionally gave performers opportunities for personal inflections of the form (the *cadenza* in a concerto or the keyboard continuo providing sympathetic harmonic/rhythmic accompaniment to other instruments or voices), in the contemporary exploration of alternatives to the 'classical' tradition's legacy of musical forms composers may allow performers freedom to interject their own response, either by following instructions whose vagueness gives them considerable leeway in response to the musical context, or by leaving them free to improvise within a demarcated musical zone. Non-western traditions, such as the musics of the Indian sub-continent and various African cultures, integrate improvisation as the performers' freedom to construct variations within strict musical forms or modes. And, of course, because of the now routine global availability of these various culturally different musical forms and approaches, hybridising performances that draw selectively on the resources of different cultures not only thus get under way through their improvisatory assembly of disparate forms and ways of sounding, but may also integrate some 'space' for improvisation into their hybrids.

Yet it is the machinery of reproductive representation that provides both for this now routinised hybridisation and for the 'saving' and reiteration of improvised performance. Indeed, as that which transforms passing performance into a material product, the effects of its work set the terms of the context of both performing and reception. It ensures that all the improvisational and hybridised musics are drawn back under the sway of the dilemma through which I introduced this address of music's plight. Jazz is the extreme manifestation of, and thus epitomises, that dilemma, for it survives (this is the defining reality of its cultural 'life' under reproduction) only through embodying its own denial. Because it can only survive by participating in the systems of representation that constitute its context, every performance - even the majority which are not recorded - is marked, defined, by its embodiment of this contradiction. The 'live' performance that passes away is sandwiched, trapped, within that sequence of recordings that are taken as the mark of all performers' musical contribution. They are represented by eternally reiterable echoes, ghosts, of that whose point (beyond reason) was to have passed entirely away. And in the working out of this contradiction it is precisely a matter of recognising how 'work' undoes and re-constitutes embodied-becoming, *how the embodiment of disappearance is transformed as the product of reproductive work into its opposite.*

To become, to embody, nothing more nor less than the 'moment' of performance, the performer has to be consumed by unrepeatability - the moment's 'difference' as other-than what preceded and follows it: this 'difference', as scission of the moment and of every moment's merging into its sequence, thus becoming its promise of otherness, its leap out of 'things as they are' (repetition) toward art's possibility. In this 'difference' performers materially embody their 'own' (though it never belongs to them...) becoming-as-disappearance, for the sounds (including their 'silences' and their passing 'mistakes' - the sounds they were striving for but could not quite 'bring off'...) constitute the coincidence, the 'moment' of fusion, of that embodiment's coming-and-going as nothing but this music: *embodied-becoming embodying itself exhaustively in its passing away as only music in its idiosyncrasy, this passing away thus becoming, exposing, its 'point' as its literal 'end'.* In

the thirteenth of his second group of *'Sonnets to Orpheus'* Rilke, marking this defining passing-away as poetry's 'singing' too, offers a remarkable figure for that which disappears in its appearing:

'Among the fleeting, in the realm of declination,
be a resonant glass that shatters while it is ringing.'¹²

In a sense this is the very figure of 'presencing' itself in all performing, *of performing's 'relation' to timing as the always uncapturable (unrepresentable) 'moment' of an appearing that 'simultaneously' destroys itself*. It is the unspeakable charge of performing - the attraction that it cannot tear itself away from.

And of course the emergence of jazz as itself a strange hybrid of very diverse musical forms (African rhythms/scales/chants/instruments, military/brass band music and instrumentation, evangelical Christian church music, popular 'parlour' music of the late nineteenth century) that congealed into a distinct approach to music making that celebrates and makes its 'point' as just this self-shattering 'gone', coincided almost exactly with the development of recording. The contradictory terms of its life have been set by this coincidence. It has thus survived within a defining irony, for, as a relation to the performance of music that lives as improvisation only in its dying away, the fixing and thus halting of this defining disappearance appears to be the denial of the singularity of its life's 'point' and potentially joyful exposure - passing away instantly.

Yet of course its cultural survival, and thus its fate (the kind of life it has led), like that of every other making-toward-art under modernity, has been absolutely dependent upon its dissemination as a product under the rule of reiteration through representation. It has survived through living this strange contradiction as its routine condition. This meant an early if highly selective entry into the cultural archive, and thus its developing recognition as *a writing as yet unwritten, a writing-to-come*. For, in its rapidly developing complexity and its integration into larger instrumental ensembles, not only were there written scores but the improvised passages within these ensembles could, once recorded, be transcribed within approximate limits and brought into the writing of the western canon. Such transcription offered a kind of compositional authority in reverse *by producing a set of written instructions after the event*. Neophyte performers could recover aspects of the ways performers had constructed their improvisations and try to feel-hear themselves 'backwards' into the music through a combination of copying and retrospective repeated listening; in other words the recording, in its relatively easy availability as a storable product that carried 'writing' latently within itself, set the terms for the performance's transformation into a site of information storage and retrieval, and thus as a knowledge-constructing facility.

As a writing-to-come the recording provided the basis for the music's formalisation and absorption by other interests and other zones of music-making. And, echoing every other site of mechanical and electronic representation, the product's facilities (its reproduced multiplicity and its instant and repeatable play-back) *inducted it, as a now materially fixed and thus graspable 'thing', into the frame of critical analysis*. Its status as a consumer product, while promising certain satisfactions, thus also bore within itself its resource as a tool for and an object of 'technical' analysis and thus its recruitment, eventually, to the academy (and thus to testing, grading and 'qualifying'...).

¹² See 'Rilke : Sonnets to Orpheus', translated by C. F. Macynntyre, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1960, p. 81.

Strangely, then, the inevitable acceptance of recording as a necessary condition of the everyday life of an improvising music reproduces the two tensions that mark performance in the 'classical' tradition, firstly between the live and the dead performance, and secondly between composers and performers. But in the case of jazz, and indeed all improvised musics, *the division occurs firstly within each performer*. It is the performer who, retrospectively through the recording, is transformed into the composer and whose performances are thus transformed into 'things' to be 'transcribed' and then 'read' (as sets of instructions...), 'objects' to be approached ('read' and listened to) from an attitude of separation, that self-distancing re-alignment towards its 'object of knowledge' required by the technical stance of critical analysis. In this process even jazz, as an approach to music-making that seemingly celebrates a performer's 'free' relation to the 'moment' of improvised 'creation', recurs upon the model of knowledge that underwrites the taken for granted division between composition and performance. The recording, as the everyday condition of the way the music 'presences' (is routinely hearable and available), in its contribution to an ever-expanding archive sets forth the 'means' for a formal 'classicising' ('becoming-traditional') of that 'form' which seemed to exclude in principle any such preservation. The archive enables lines (narratives) of 'development', of 'influence', of 'styles', of 'whatever-is-of-analytic' interest to knowledge machines, to surround and infiltrate performance. Such processes then become intrinsic to the re-constitution of performing, of what it 'is' and 'should be' - that is, through archiving and the subsequent analytic frames and stance, *performing is represented in and through the same terms as every other form of knowledge-grounded 'work'* (what one has 'to know' and reveal in performing in order to be recruited as a competent 'operative' within the 'accepted tradition').

The Recording as a 'Detached Apartment' : Putting the Listener in Control

As a latent readable text that, via its passage through two levels/modes of coding (the digital and the music-notational) can be transcribed 'back' (more or less...) into a legible known and shared pre-existing code (most commonly now the universally conventional graphically representable dodecaphonic 'language' of western music), every recording thus now functions, for it has no option, *like a book*. The recording operates, is put to work as, a para-book, or better perhaps, a cata-book. And in so becoming, a recording, in its infinite repeatability as supposedly 'the same' (though now under digitisation, just like the visual image, infinitely manipulable into the multiple 'different'), turns hearing into a joint operation - listening-reading - in which the listener, via the recording, enters, constructs and begins to take control of *a completely different 'world' to that within which the performer(s) generated the recording*.

For what the recording offers the listener is control over disappearance; every repeat-listening defers the disappearance of the abstracted machine-constituted 'echo' of *that which has already disappeared for good*. And so conscientious are we now at archiving 'information' as an ordinary process of the culture's self-monitoring, and such is the demand for preserving the potential for repetition, that all marketable recordings are routinely stored somewhere, a somewhere under constant expansion under the planetary distribution of the home-computer and its offsprings, the lap-top and the i-phone. This provides the clue to the ways music now functions 'culturally', and thus to recording's significance for music's potential, that is for how the performer's embodied sounding-out of music's possibilities is appropriated and placed (set to work) in the embracing culture.

Even in its rudimentary beginnings, mechanical recording's construction of a new product enabling infinite repetition of 'the same' already inaugurated the inexorable displacement of the authority of every performing's singularity, its becoming as the embodying of a context-bound exception. *And in this displacing work the recording, inverting the relation between performer and listener, handed authority (control over the deferral of music's disappearance) to the listener-audience.* Listeners could decide, from that point on, what they wanted to become intimately familiar with through infinite repetition. In this shift of authority they have been aided by the continuing technical complexification and emergent universal availability of multiple hybrid and easily portable machines enabling both playback and recording. For these technical changes have made a recording's transformation ever more book-like by increasing the range of operations that could be carried out on the now digitally-coded recording. They facilitated the mutation of the recording into a bearer of latent 'knowledges', to be constructed and set forth (in 'ordinary' language...), through the working out of an analytical-critical relation to it as an object of the most minutely detailed *but necessarily distanced* scrutiny.

Once a recording's coded signals are inserted into a computer it is available for manipulation, variation and transformation according to whatever interest a listener brings to bear on it. Analytical-critical-listeners (and the 'ordinary' listener is always on the way to this 'model expertise' simply through repeated listening to 'the same'), aided now not just by sophisticated reproduction equipment but also by the computer's information-storage-search-and-retrieval programmes, can do 'anything' their analysis 'needs' to the recording-as-product: every 'hearable' element and process 'fixed' in the recording can be manipulated, 'varied', toyed with, in the service of both the analytical (invariably 'comparative') operation and the play-back of a recording for supposedly 'ordinary' listening. This 'ordinary' becomes ever more extraordinary. In its ability to defer an abstracted transliterated 'element' of the 'gone' of the sonic's disappearance 'in the air', 'ordinary' listening closes in on the Faustian pact. It does not, of course, 'tarry awhile' (open up an interval in passing away), but, under recording's 'over-and-over-again' rule, it passes through 'the same' at will, enabling it to remember elements selectively (singalong...) *and thus to transform its affective relation to the sounds.* As itself embodiment, listening becomes a continuous process of re-embodying a relation to the music under the sign of a familiarity that, bearing within itself the possibility of increasing disaffection from the 'same' music (through boredom, satiation...), is no guarantee of increasing intimacy. Rather, irrespective of musical genre, it may convert the particular recording into disposable waste, thus provoking (with the market as explicit *agent-provocateur* of consumption-to-excess) its replacement by another 'product'.

But all this 'takes place' (while being simultaneously the evacuation of every particular place) within the taken-for-granted assumption that anything (image, text, sound, and so on) caught, registered, saved and represented by a supposedly 'neutral' machine is constituted in a direct relation of 'truth' to the event of which it is offered as a record, as the event's 'representative'. For all practical purposes (the bringing off of a self-reassuring 'commonsense') a record of whatever-music is treated *as if it were, in all 'essentials', the thing-itself*, an authentic reproduction that bears at least some of the 'event's' truths within itself (and thus the liveliness of its disappearance...). Whereas my submission is that the record (on and of whatever material - score, transcription, wax, vinyl, tape, chip/memory-card) - is *an absolutely foreign object*, an unknowable product-construction bearing an untraceable unreconstructable relation to its sourcing disappearance. Further, while there may be a traceable 'causal' relation, explicable in terms of a machine's ruled functioning, between

the sourcing performance and the materialised ‘marks’ (a wax record’s grooves for example) that enable the reproduction and amplification of specific and repeatable sounds, ‘musically’ (beyond-ontology (even...), affectively, bodily, ‘aesthetically’ even...) *the relation remains ‘a closed book’*. It remains effectively as an independent but trapped potential-to-become (but only on terms - available current and equipment - it has no ‘say’ in), detached from and thus in a non-relation to its claimed source.

We have the record securely in hand, registered, archived, played-back, and we ‘feel’ absolutely ‘at ease’ with it, but, still, *we do not know ‘what ‘it’ is’*. Is it an ‘it’, a singular something, or is it only fragments strung together as the artifice of a code to make a sequence for a repetitive de-coding whose outcome will always sound ‘the same’ until we start fiddling with the playback controls? What is ‘going on’ in those little embodied frissons we listeners may experience (for the ‘n’th time and thus come to anticipate...) in repeated play-backs? We do not know! Nevertheless we continue to behave resolutely (technically, knowledgeably), commonsensically, as though we know exactly what it is, what it can and should be doing, and thus what we should be doing with it (listening semi-analytically...). Even though it may be represented to us as, and thus appear to be, a potential leaping trajectory making-for-Art’s-Body that hopes to disclose music-as-such, *we have no idea what it is (doing) nor what we should do with it (in the name of Art...)*.

Recording, as detachment, opens an abyss (between itself and the event it seems to remember) across which only faulty pontoons can be erected temporarily (in advance and in theory) by fantasising all-too-seduced ears. These quirky structures then dissolve the moment we try to put our ‘weight’ on them, to trust our acoustically sensitive but ‘knowing’ embodied-becoming to their care. For the record is an object (whose very materiality is becoming increasingly elusive under the virtuality of digitisation) of a completely different ‘order’ (the order of engineered representation productive of infinite mechanical-electronic repetition of fixed coded signals), whereas the performance is (was...) a matter of risking oneself (as performer, as listener) to nothing but the sounding-out of passing-away, of appearing’s disappearance: the becoming-disembodied of performing’s embodied coming-going, *that which can never return*.

If the recording ‘works’, is put to work, as such a cata-book memorialising past writing and reminding us of the implicit instructions of a writing-to-come, it does so aside from any embodiment and even as it is sounding, repeatedly, the death knell of performing’s disappearance. Within representation’s archive, functioning in readiness as one of its machines, it lies in wait, as the bearer of latent instructions awaiting the charge that will enable its fixed code to be re-activated, to sound out, go through, its instructions yet again. *It does not represent ‘a body’ nor does it re-embody anything outside itself*. Whilst it seems to be positioned ‘on the side’ of what has passed away, the definitively lost pulsing of performing’s coming-going, what it bears, what awaits its becoming-charged, is only that pared down abstracted code through which it has converted and reduced the passing performance(s). And yet, in its reception as a hearable-whatever, it is indeed treated as if it were a still resurrectable (Canterel’s *resurrectine*...) remnant of the body, just as I suggested the ‘score’ was so treated in the maintenance of the ‘classical’ tradition. It is offered (routinely represented through the manifest rhetorical skills of the publicity machine that gets it to market) to listeners, and taken-for-grantedly received, as just that resurrectable corpse whose lost pulsed breathed exposition can once again be resuscitated and brought to performance, and thus treated as if it were nothing but *the very performance*.

As this seemingly resurrectable fragment (a body assumed to have been reduced to its essentials), not only is it given the intense scrutiny live performing attracts, but this intensity is integrated with the detachment (however slight - the 'lateral move' to another 'listening position') that characterises the analytical-critical relation to becoming – its conversion into an object for distanced but still acute attention. And this is *an 'attention' that knows in advance that it can repeat its listening at will*. This partial constitution by anticipatory knowledge radically reconstitutes listening's relation, as a 'matter' of listening's presencing (its embodied-becoming in the 'presence' of disappearance), to what and how it listens to 'live' performance. As I suggested earlier, the very possibility of its repetition carries this detachment as a defining condition of recording. Somehow for listening it is simultaneously both dead and alive, an object of knowledge and an apparently 'live' thing exceeding the codes 'found' in its knowledge-hunt and its conversion of the unfamiliar into the familiar and reassuring. Listening thus establishes its 'own' embodied-becoming as an utterly distinctive (nothing to do with performing...) but equally utterly unpredictable and untraceable oscillation between these different modes of relating and attending.

But whether this machined-thing that listening repeats to itself can, or should, be brought into relation to Art's retreating Body (and, if so, on what and whose terms) is quite another matter. For it is never fully 'not-the-performance', nor yet the performance's 'negative' (whatever that might be...) either. Rather, it seems to make its appearance as a 'something' that, while being both of and from the performance, detaches itself from the latter through the sourcing and qualities of its material constitution. The 'character' (quality, significance, value, whatever-criterion...) of a recording's relation to the performance it appears to have registered and fixed remains unknowable; this renders irrelevant any assessments of it that trade off assumptions about this relation. Of course as the recording circulates primarily as an economic product with multiple values attached to it, it may be that none of this matters beyond the concerns of performers. But when the assessments concern the performance as a making-for-art, then the unknowability of the relation between performance and recording intervenes in and collapses the grounds for any such judgments.

For when performing takes on the challenge of the leap out of the everyday in making for Art's vague but, for performers, very real Body, it is precisely a matter of the very real relations between its embodied-becoming (the thought-full-feelings of its being-on-the-move-towards) and the materials through which it courses and seeks to trace this being-moved. For performing, art's possibility is invested entirely in these absolutely specific transliterating transformations of its prime materials. And in music-making these materials are, one way or another (voice, instrument), the out-soundings (the transforming of material into the music-to-come) that performers generate at the sensual thresholds of their embodied-becoming, at those surface zones and points where embodiment feels its way into and through the unavoidable and confrontational demands, the demands on its relation to its materials, that its encasing context faces it with. And for performing in music, especially in relation to art's exploratory demands, it is always a matter of playing with, *of risking oneself to being played by* (and thus of varying infinitely through a decreasing re-making), sounding's possibilities for art: performing moves in and through its play-full relation to what matters to and for it with failure's threat as its constant haunting companion. In this movement performing (embodying 'itself' and its 'not-self' (that which 'takes it over') as this striking out towards...) seeks to be on the way towards the eternal 'not yet' of Art's Body. Yet it knows all the while (through its unstatable 'know-how') that it will never 'know' unequivocally

whether, as the performing dies away, its leaping has managed to land it in the zone of this elusive retreating figure that is always up ahead pulling it on. It moves always within this hopeful uncertainty trying to project itself into that imagined future perfect of the not-yet.

In contrast, recording (whether of music or anything else), as a technically designed and managed process, has an utterly different relation to the materials that it works with and operates upon. It thus puts listening into an absolutely distinctive relation to what it has recorded; this has nothing to do with performing's relation to its embodied-becoming in the course of the performing event (whether recorded or not). Whatever transformations its processes have undergone in modernity's course, for recording it is always a matter of a defined and strict mode of mattering and matter-dependency. Its relation to matters and mattering - that is, how it matters and thus how and where it positions itself in relation to any zone of activity which it operates on (art/music included) - not only effects a decisive cut with performing's embodied-becoming, *but simultaneously re-attaches it elsewhere*. The ambiguous hybrid thing that is the outcome of the recording process seems to float freely between 'interests', authorisations, and forms of possession and control. Yet the specific forms of its material dependence (the interests that went into its production) fix it within a 'no longer' that prevents its movement toward any 'not yet'. A recording is never on the move anywhere. For performing, committed to movement, *to moving itself towards whatever it is moved by*, it is, quite simply, something that it has left behind *and put definitively behind itself*. Its permanent movement 'away-from-this-here' also entails, as intrinsic to this movement, 'away-from-this-now': it performs abandonment.

In contrast, listening's relation to a recording is constituted in its being entirely consumed by and suspended within the 'no longer' of the recording's past tense; in spite of listening 'in time' to the passing of the recording's sounding it cannot even locate itself within the imperfect tense, for it is locked up within the 'given' of the something that once happened. Whereas performing, in committing itself to make-for-art, seeks to sustain itself, to subsist however precariously, precisely within this tension that 'is' its possibility of being-moved and moving toward that which is felt for as its always-future, its becoming 'up-ahead'. But when it is abstracted, re-constituted, and fixed as a 'given' in the course of recording, turned into and out as alien matter and processes, then the performing body, the body that is moving 'now' (a 'now' that perhaps, as I suggested, draws all the tenses through each other in a play of indeterminacy, a play of the infinitive) through, in, and as just this 'music', simply disappears.

The recording, then, doesn't re-embodiment, re-enliven performing's body in an alternative 'form', it disposes of it and substitutes an estranged remnant that is then circulated (culturally, economically...) under the pretence that it preserves a direct line of access 'back' to the sourcing performance. Whether or not the performer(s), technicians, and entrepreneurs, in their mutual production of the recording together had 'art' 'in mind' as its hoped-for destination (as opposed, say, to entertainment, celebrity, money...), for performing, as an activity that takes up and is absolutely absorbed by the challenge of making-for-art, it is always a matter of movement. Seeking to embody a movement toward art's otherwise, what is at stake for performing is the challenge of cajoling, persuading, its materials to become at-one with it in this movement. In contrast, back there, appropriated and hemmed in to a fixed position by its machinery, the recording operation seeks to transform every performance that confronts it into a compound-thing (matter and fixed inscription) that is absolutely dependent upon an available electric current and precisely programmed reproduction machinery for its

sounding. The recording-as-thing, detached decisively (and fatally for any lively relation) from the-performing-body, thus returns unknowable charge-ready transformed (re-coded and eternally re-codable) fragments of the latter unequivocally to the interests that, in sourcing and powering the machinery, already suffuse the recording-products that are the recording process's outcome.

But this thing, in the course of modernity's 'meantime' (a 'timing' that describes its transition from cylinder to virtuality and its being pumped, evermore artificially and subtly, through culture's veins), has become a compulsively collectable cult 'object', invested through and through as both product and resounding symbol by affects and values that sustain its peculiar trajectory. And, as I have implied, it is a trajectory whose directions are guided and modified endlessly (monitoring and opinion feedback...) *according to its monitored appeal to listeners*. The preservation and reinforcement of the thing's cult status thus turns on how the space-time of its reception can be manipulated according to and organised around *the interests of listeners rather than performers*. This is 'where' the recording is turned into, becomes, a managed 'event', a potentially 'desirable' listening 'experience'. And this is what any performing that seeks to make-for-art has to confront as its defining challenge and 'trouble', for performing is already unavoidably a routine participant in, a partial contributor to, and thus itself partially constituted by its participation in this very trajectory. Where art, Art's Body, remains the defining compulsive fixation for performing, given that it now has to 'start' from within the electronic circuits through which it is caught up in providing a 'service' for listeners, it has somehow to find the wherewithal within itself (searching and releasing the routinely submerged compulsions) to tear itself out of this operational nexus and make, idiosyncratically, for art's elsewhere. For the continual complexification of this electronic context, bound to the productive servicing of listeners' (as consumers) interests, makes the abyss between performing and listening ever wider and deeper.

A difference in ordinary language, a difference between languages and their distant roots, reveals the way recording's context-defining power enmeshes performing and stretches its embodied-becoming out between different 'demands' that serve to withdraw it continually from its attachment to making-for-art. Trying to keep moving (sometimes to an elsewhere) in the face of, but inevitably now caught up within, recording's mesh, performing is forced to alternate between irreconcilables. In English, 'to record' and 'to register', among their various references and associations, share the sense of setting something down in writing for remembrance; but in English usage it is the present participle of the former - recording - that is used to name the mechanical process of producing a 'record' of a musical performance. Such a 'record' is a product of a 'recording' process that, while it can be carried out anywhere with the appropriate equipment, is conventionally, professionally, performed in a 'recording studio'. Derived from the Latin for 'heart' (*cor*) and from the phoneme 're-' that marks a sense of back/again/repetition/return, 'record' thus maintains a strong but very specific reference to the body's significance in the matter of preserving a physical reminder of something; to make a record of something is for the safe-keeping of a re-membrance, a reminder of something no longer occurring or available. It is a taking something (back) to heart, establishing and storing the to-be-remembered X right there in what we take for granted as our defining pulsing 'centre', ready to be brought back (again) on demand. At the cor(e) of our becoming, it couldn't be closer to us. And the heart, beating away quite aside from 'the mind's' activities, seems both to come from way back and be in advance of and thus a kind of foundation for the mind that emerges to consider it subsequently. Remembering through a 'recording' thus inscribes (and thus recalls) a deeply visceral sense

of what remembering is and does. ‘To record’ seems to hint at a deeper darker place (perhaps even pre-pleistocenian...) for memory than ‘to register’ which, in English, is largely used to refer to setting something down in writing, or less strongly, making a mental note of it. *But a ‘recording’ is made for embodied-listening*, a listening the ‘recording’ hopes to make ‘all ears’ as the way to its heart. Its ‘end’, its point, is the seduction of listeners, so that they can take to heart (again and again...), learn off by heart, that which by definition they can never recall from the performance that gave rise to it.

By contrast, in French it is the present participle - *enregistrement* - of the verb *enregistrer* that names the material process/object that constitutes the machinically fixed trace of the past musical (or whatever-sounding) event. Whilst thus aligning itself clearly with the English ‘to register’ and echoing the latter’s sense of registering as the written record of an event (as a more reliable form of remembering than just ‘keeping it in mind’), its etymology preserves (remembers...) ‘the body’ too, but differently. Where ‘record’ recalls the fixed, though moving pulsing, place as centre – the heart of things – the ‘gist’ of ‘register’ is derived from the Latin verb *gerere* which denotes many forms of bodily movement, and in particular the action of carrying or bearing something. Rather than the heart, then, it seems to imply the hands handling of things, and perhaps thus of the pen-holding hand that writes into the register whatever has to be remembered. The *gesta* of its past participle also functions as a noun that names the things that are or have to be borne.¹³ And, with the *en* and the *re* as a doubled prefix, this carrying is both a going towards or in and a going back. *Enregistrement* thus makes reference to an embodied (here an embodiment in a ‘material’) bearing of something back from the past into a material place of safe-keeping (the archive’s register), while simultaneously naming that which enables others in the future to go back to that ‘same place’ (the performing site transformed into a recording ‘studio’) to recover what has been registered. As with the ‘recording’, the ‘enregistering’ is done for listeners-to-come.

Performing thus finds itself stretched out between and put to work routinely in the service of these two divergent senses of what it might be doing through its participation in registering/recording. Is it, as a ‘recording’ agent, facilitating the production of something that could go back to the ‘heart of things’ in its own performing? Or is it rather trying to win the hearts of listeners-to-come? Is it an act of portage for itself on its journey of making-for-art? Or is it a carrying forward for others of a written transcription, an informational note, into the cultural register about a past and lost something-or-other? ‘Recording’ certainly seeks to affine it with a core action (the setting down of something from, of and for ‘the heart’) but, under the machinery of technoscience in the service of consumptive production, it is someone other than itself that is the core target. Likewise, ‘enregistering’ offers it as portage of an inscription on behalf, not of the performers, but of whatever-anonymous-others-to-come.

This linguistic ‘double vision’ of the representing process points up the ways that the latter seeks to bind the performing body to its own needs and machinery. Within this operating zone - the managed machine-defined current-powered scene of the activity of recording - the chances of finding ways of making-for-art as ‘publicly available’ occasions or events *are going to be dependent on the emergence of a quite different set of performing compulsions*. The latter, having nothing to do with serving institutional interests and needs, bind

¹³ *Gerere* is, as noted earlier, also the source of the verbal ‘gerund’ tense which adds the force of ‘should’ to a verb, of ‘having to’.

performing to an endless search for ways of setting the latter aside, of drifting through their mesh towards their other. Inevitably caught up in the flows of electro-circuitry (its current plight), performing-for-art tasks (plights...) itself to the challenge of re-siting its embodied-becoming precisely beyond the boundaries of the machinery of institutional control. But, given representation's now ubiquitous permeation of all living conditions, this may be a beyond-too-far for performing in its all too pressing mode of everyday survival. Perhaps such a circumstance-bound living-on, while trying to keep Art's Body in view over there, ties performing to an endless exploration of art's possible materials, of what (if anything...) can and must still matter for it, of what it might be able to resuscitate for art through these materials, in spite of its condemnation to and subsumption within institutional control. Such a material-searching entails the tension of living through a partial acceptance of hybridity whilst simultaneously seeking to undermine, interrupt and fracture this very hybridising process, always in the hope (and on the off-chance) that fragments of performing will slip away through the fracture into their 'own' unrepresentable almost-language zone.

In spite of the radical explorations that have characterized the modern 'movement's' 'sounding out' (its testing of music's material constituents and their possible limits) of the legacy, the received 'tradition', of 'western' music's resources, it is striking that the repertoire of instruments constituting that legacy has remained virtually unchanged since well before the movement's emergence. Since the inventions of Adolph Sax in the 1840's (the entire sax-horn family that subsequently enabled the development of 'the brass band' with its specific affiliations to industrial, military, and communal institutions) following the industrial revolution's transformation of the processing of metals, and long pre-dating the emergence of the modern movement, there have been very few additions to the instrument-repertoire.¹⁴ With this exception (and brass instruments were designed to mime in tuning and timbre the existing 'families' of orchestral instruments) and that of the planet-occupying guitar (drafted into general use from largely 'folk' and diverse cross-cultural origins) the instruments played today are essentially those that constituted the classical-romantic symphony orchestra. The subsequent 'technical developments' applied to instrument manufacture have been almost exclusively devoted to strengthening instruments (in response to changed conditions of use) and to improving performance through refining precision of construction to the benefit of things such as accuracy of tuning.

As I have implied in relation to the emergence of electrically powered recording machinery, for the music that is conventionally distributed throughout culture (routine 'everyday' music-making providing materials for reproduction across the mass media) technical research and productive resources have been devoted to the interests of reception via sound reproduction; they are oriented almost exclusively to facilitating the terms and conditions of 'listening'. In this permeating context, when the technological input has been applied to instruments its focus has been on amplification, on the development of supplementary machinery enabling the transmission (and thus transformation) of an instrument's sound qualities (volume and tone). It has been a matter of making, *on behalf of listening*, 'the same' instruments reach

¹⁴ There are exceptions to this generalisation, such as the early 'noise instruments' of Russolo, the 'theremin', the electronic 'Ondes Martenots' used by Messiaen, or the later inventions of Harry Partch. But none of these have been picked out and developed by industrial production to enter the standard repertoire of instruments in general use. The many instruments from non-Western cultures (Middle Eastern, African, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, and so forth), in spite of the 'World Music' movement, remain largely attached to and differentiating definers of the music of their cultures of origin. Only exceptionally have they been adapted for participation in and use in conjunction with the instruments of 'Western' music.

further and differently. And these 'same' instruments are in turn tied to, designed and machined to meet the needs of, a specific system of writing-as-instructions for performing. The instruments have remained the servants (in terms of the carefully designed interrelations between tuning and pitch across instrument-families) of the dodecaphonic system of musical notation - a 'writing-centre' around which composition, performance (and thus the acquisition of instrumental skills) circulate. Such instruments articulate the sounding foreground and background of the routine experiencing of music, of its cultural 'life', of what it is 'taken to be'. They remain the almost exclusive 'route' into music-making, defining its seductive attractions and its performative challenges. This is the taken-for-granted instrument-context within and in response to which the culturally barely audible explorations of the post-serialist modern 'movement' seek to sustain themselves as the out-soundings of 'difference'. Their searches survive, as noted, largely under the protection of the academy where 'questioning', as the motif of 'research' and knowledge-production, defines scholarship's everyday work. But such sounding, inevitably esoteric and technically 'specialist' in terms of its interests and compulsions, is necessarily aside from music's everyday cultural life. And it is largely within this zone of separation that the implications of electronic sound production for music's relation to its conventional instrument-legacy are explored and performed.

Yet performing music entails, it exposes itself through and as, embodied-becoming's finding, composing, and releasing precisely those elements of its 'becoming' that can only be sounded-out, that cannot be 'got at' in any other way. And this way entails a becoming-at-one with an instrument in the course of which (either with others or alone) this at-oneness simultaneously appears and disappears as music's irrecoverable passing away, that which is precisely other to recording's eternal reiteration (playback) of 'the same' in its fatal compromising of music's 'little death' as its real life. But if electronic power is introduced into music-making in the form of a specific 'musical instrument' (such as the 'Ondes Martenots' or 'theremin'), rather than as supplementary machinery (amplification/recording) for existing instruments (such as the transformation of the xylophone into the vibraphone), might it be reconcilable with the relation that continues to define every performer's visceral involvement with their specific instrument? Could whatever it performs be taken as a sounding-out that affines it with embodied-becoming's at-oneness with its instrument? Could it, for example, perform in real-time in a way that would allow it (through its performer) to participate in music's essential passing-away in forms of 'playing' that 'match' both the 'expressive' qualities of conventional instruments and the intensity of relation (the felt-thoughtful skills constituting the viscerally embodied attachment of being-at-one-with) they demand of the performer?

Perhaps, eventually maybe, but not necessarily yet... or at least only, so far, when such an invention is playable in ways that simulate the performance possibilities of an (or many) existing instrument(s), thus 'keying' it into existing conventions of musical composition and performance. This adaptive process is exemplified by the technically engineered electronic-sound-studio experiments that transformed the 'moog', through the synthesiser, into the now easily portable and thus ubiquitous electric keyboard/'piano'. For this electricity-dependent instrument, through the complexity of its memory-circuitry and its multiple modes of sound transformation, is designed, amongst many other things, to mime the sounds of many instruments; with its simulated piano-keyboard as its musical control centre it can generate, given its attachment to the necessary speakers, multiple sound-worlds. On a more mundane level, Roger Linn's 'drum-machine' (whose functions can now be incorporated into the

electric keyboard), with its percussion-simulating and loop-cycling repetitive functions (di-dum-dum-duuuh...) enabled popular music groups to dispense with drummers...

The enormous range of self-questioning composition and performance that has characterised post-‘classical’ post-serialist music-making’s responses to the problem of ‘tradition’ (how to respond to that of which it is the legacy) includes a multiplicity of approaches to the role of electronic power (and thus technologies of representation) in music-making.¹⁵ But the technical common denominator across the range has been the continuing reliance on and uses of the process of recording. The realisation of electronic sound’s potential as an ‘instrument’ was facilitated by the development of sound-recording onto magnetic tape after the second world-war. Yet until well on into the life of modern computing and the production of small-scale, relatively light-weight, and very ‘fast’ machines (the lap-top computer), the enormous complexity, scale, and still relative slowness of the sound-recording and sound-producing machines precluded their operative use as instruments in real-time performing alongside other performers. The contribution of these pre-computer machines entailed constructive studio-work in advance of any insertion of the constructed sounds into a ‘performance’. Thus, whatever the composer’s interests (electronic music has largely preserved the hierarchic distinction between composer and performer, though the composer becomes a quasi-performer in generating a composition-as-recording), whether recording ‘extra-musical’ sounds alone or in combination with musical sounds for electronic transformation and combination (‘noises’, voices, instruments, from Varèse, Cage, through Berio, Nono, to Harvey and many others), or producing and recording sounds generated purely electronically through the studio machinery (*musique concrète* - Stockhausen, Xenakis etc.), the electronic ‘output’ had to be constituted in the form of some kind of recording. This could then be played back on its own or in combination with material written for conventional instruments. Its possibility and its trouble in relation to music’s becoming-life as a ‘passing away’ thus lay in the fixity of its reiterability, its already having passed away (in the studio only to be fixed in the recording-as-sepulchre) and its consequent return as ‘the past’. Even though the production of electronic sounds enabled the most extraordinary shifts in the quality of the sounds that could now be incorporated into a ‘performance’ (through electronic and mathematically precise control of every aspect of sound production, including pitch, duration/continuity, intensity, microtonality, glissandi, pulse variation, and so on), thus apparently expanding the available ‘field’ of sounding materials on which music might draw, the reliance on the process of recording places every such ‘performance’ within the fold of representation.

When such recording is combined with real-time performance on conventional musical instruments the ‘product’ is a strange hybrid in which the music’s seemingly ‘advanced’ component (the power-machine-dependent elements) actually returns the performing event to the very centre of the mediatised culture by displacing music’s ‘presencing-passing’ with a fixed representation of its inertia. Even where a performer may use a lap-top computer in a real-time performance, irrespective of its ‘output’ (recycled/looped sounds from the current performance, self-generated sounds, etc.) the performer’s actions (choices) are absolutely dependent upon and can only be mediated through the pre-coded fixities of the computer’s programmed ‘language’. The performance is dependent upon the pre-interpretations of a

¹⁵ For a wide-ranging survey of the serial and post-serial explorations of music’s limits, materials and possibilities, see Roger Sutherland, ‘New Perspectives in Music’, sun tavern fields press, London, 1994.

digital 'language' that has nothing to do with music 'as such', with embodiment's sounding out its potential for becoming-musically.

In thus trying to 'live on' while held fast within and hybridised by the representing machinery, performing confronts itself inescapably and directly with the question and overriding problem of its own possibility: how to hold onto and gather together (compose...) its materials - whatever it has to sound-out - and its way of 'processing' them through its pulsing viscerally intense embodied relation to its instrument(s) and context. For the life of both materials and their rendering, and thus their potential for making-for-art, are endlessly re-shaped by having to pass through the operations of representation. Performing's 'way' toward art thus has to be through a leaping out of at least some of the processes and effects of representation, including both those that brought it to music 'in the first place' and those within which it now seeks to survive mundanely. The alien centre (everyday life...) around which performing now circulates endlessly, *and to which it has to 'attune' its already seduced embodied instrument-attachment*, is the ordering machinery of electronic recording together with its supplementary array of simulating machines that effect the routine maintenance of representation.

If Art's Body remains its obscure guiding-dark-light, that to which it is responsible and responsive, performing's recording-damaged body has to search for ways of sounding-out and exposing whatever sounding fragments that, consumed entirely in their passing through and away (a 'gone' presencing), *want nothing of reiteration: self-exhausting sounds desiring - trying to manifest - nothing but their dying away*. Performing's know-how reminds it that, irrespective of the 'form' in which the work/machinery of representation fixes and appropriates it (the recording that, brought to market and placed within the infinitely repeatable memory of the power-net-circuitry, generates through its reiterations the nostalgic comforts of familiarity), *it is the strangeness of its out-soundings, their becoming-disappearance (the 'life' of the 'live-performance' as a dying-away), that 'defines' it*. This is the strangeness of the uncanny inflecting that cannot (even though it may begin in response to the reading of a 'score') be brought to book, cannot be 'transcribed' or turned retrospectively into a text. Only if a recording preserves fragments of such peculiarly resistant inflections can the out-soundings it deposits in the archive hope to be markers of a way toward art. And, even so, the frequency of their reiteration - recording's very 'point' - is likely to dull their strangeness and provide for their inexorable eventual induction, through the 'poring over and over again' that constitutes the compulsive *fort-da-fort* rhythm of analytical work, into the register (tradition as the bearer of decoded event-texts).

In listening to a recording one hears art's past, where art was, where its fleeting might just have touched and have been touchable on the occasion of the recording, but where for performing, except in the strangest cases (via the elsewhere-inflections), it can no longer become. In endemically damaging times such sounding fragments might be no more than strange interjections from nowhere, 'voicings' aside from repetition, resonances insisting on nothing more than their being unassimilable *for the time being* into any known musical language. These are the out-soundings through which the inflecting-inflected body goes missing for analysis, for critique, for whatever forces of appropriative registration are set to work on it. Somehow, performing has to risk its visceral instrument-attachment to this inflecting 'play' - to integrate embodiment with attachment in the service of an uncodable particularity that hurls the gest, however momentarily, outside culture but into a still open music: music-making showing itself as the necessity of exposing its openness to the

releasing (sounding-out) of its founding and confounding difference - that which makes it unassimilable to anything (any inscribing) outside itself.

But is this not the challenge facing all performing across the arts now wherever it seeks to reach out towards and stay in touch with Art's Body? Such attempted saltations may occur in many situations of live musical performance. And, here and there perhaps, in the residues of performing deposited across modernity's declining years, fragments of recordings, awaiting their inevitable assimilation, may also strand us temporarily beside ourselves in states of non-plussed euphoria. In the following discussion such dispersed fragments are not offered to exemplify either something (a principle, a theory, a whatever-demand...) outside themselves or recommendations of 'what has to be done'. Rather I hope they will be hearable as gestures that have managed to cling to, and expose, however slightly, in their difference that which, up to that 'point', is other to what music has been taken 'to be'. For, condemned like all making-for-art to trying to survive under representation, and thus having to pass by way of recording, they nevertheless open up and onto music's potential in their sounding-out of as yet unwritable differences. This is brought off through the always idiosyncratic intimacy of the ways their 'materials' (the soundings) are drawn through and out of the specific inflections of an embodiment under way 'in play'.

The Strange Case of the Player Piano Unbound

Perhaps Conlon Nancarrow's 'Studies for Player Piano' show, in their utter idiosyncrasy, what can still happen on art's behalf when composing, performing, and electric power are integrated by a machine-paper-combine and passed through an 'ordinary' acoustic instrument (a piano with ordinarily tuned and strung keyboard mechanism) in something like a 'performance' that ends up represented by a recording.¹⁶ Yet what has been recorded is something that in relation to our senses of performing, while being absolutely 'concrete', stands outside, is unplaceable within, the terms we use to 'place' performances in an 'appropriate' context of interpretive response (knowing-listening). For what the 'Studies' offer us (as undoubtedly 'music' of some kind...) *is not being, has not been, and indeed for the most part cannot be, performed.*

The recorded 'Studies' can not be gathered as 'performances' in any conventional sense of 'playing a musical instrument'. Nancarrow's development of the player piano (as a 'medium' for music-making on the way toward art) confounds and collapses the taken-for-granted distinctions we rely on in deciding that an event is a specifically *musical* event (distinctions, for example, between composer and performer, performer and instrument, the event's temporal tenses, the productive roles of the electrical, the mechanical and the acoustical, writing and sounding). The composer is simultaneously the performer in the preparation of the paper roll that provides the piano with its (electrically-driven) instructions. But this coinciding of composing and performing is not the simultaneity of improvisation (though the music's debts to modes of improvisation are acoustically obvious). And what is *heard* as a 'performance' only occurs after the composer-performer has finished 'preparing' the materials (paper-roll and aided piano) for subsequent activation. The composer-performer's 'performance' occurs in the stages of the transcription of writable music onto the piano roll.

¹⁶ A complete set of recordings of the 'Studies' is available on the Wergo label, no. LC 6907 2; they were recorded in 1988 on Nancarrow's custom-altered Ampico reproducing pianos. The recording is accompanied by James Tenney's valuable detailed notes on both Nancarrow's procedures and each of the studies.

What defines the project here is the transformative converting of the ‘music’, as a written but still only anticipatable (unhearable) sounding, through a process - absolutely ‘measure-dependent’ - of meticulous ‘punching’ of the to-be-sounded sequence onto the paper roll. After this preparatory ‘pre-performing’ the performer, having started the prepared piano’s electric motor, ‘steps back’ and listens to the first real-time (electrically and simultaneously acoustic) performance of his ‘own’ already completed pre-performance. And the roll of ‘instructions’ (as an almost-composition that can only be fulfilled ‘pianistically’ through the application of electrical power to the roll-machinery) cannot be equated with a composer’s ‘score’, for, as ‘rows’ of punched holes indicating the ‘notes’ to be simultaneously and sequentially sounded, it operates only as machined instructions that are carried out by the aided piano with absolute precision. The punched roll has already transliterated the composer’s score; it becomes the activating mediator, via the intervention of the piano’s electric motor, of the score. Indeed each of the ‘Studies’ ‘internal’ relations of ‘musical time’ (the multiple variants of tempi, acceleration-deceleration, rhythms, syncopations, etc.) are ‘determined’ (created) by, are manifestations of, the composer-pre-performer’s near-mathematical working-out of the conjunctions and disjunctions of the musical ‘lines’; these are often dependent upon precise ratios, repetitions, conjunctions, retrogrades, and so forth. In other words the transition from score to roll is a transformation of codes in which the immeasurable musical interpretability of a composer’s score (its final unpredictability if produced for ‘live’ performance by instrumentalists) is converted by calculation into a set of measure-dependent, and thus unequivocal, mechanically ‘readable’ fixed instructions.

Clearly there is no role for any intervening ‘interpreter’ (conductor, instrumentalist, singer...) to inflect the composition according to whatever extra-compositional criteria performers are called upon to bring to their interpretive inflections of a composer’s ‘score’. Just like Hollerith’s punch-card counter-sorter machine that preceded the computer as an information-recording-and-analysis tool, what you punch is what you get. It is the electrically-powered machine that finally ‘delivers’ the music’s ‘eventing’ through its unwavering control of the constant speed at which the roll passes through it and thus activates the piano’s keys.

What Nancarrow thus offers is a radical and inimitably ‘personal’ re-convening and ‘turning around’ of a productive but now ‘anachronistic’ ‘technology’ *that had already long fallen into disuse by the time of his performative-composing*. It was a technology that had been developed not in the cause of making-for-art, but in the interests of home ‘entertainment’, and it worked within the fixed mechanical facilities of perhaps the most familiar and ‘accessible’ (though not in ‘price’) of acoustic instruments - the parlour piano. It was Nancarrow’s extraordinary insight of the potential that this strange combination of the acoustic, the mechanical, and the electrical, held for the transformative sounding-out of specific musical limits and boundaries (of, for example, what a piano could be made to sound-out) that enabled him to create a sequence of ‘Studies’ unlike anything else. Because Nancarrow’s de- and re-creation of this combination (turned by him into something utterly different from its previous usage) looked both backward, forward, and aside simultaneously in terms of the musical sound-worlds his ‘Studies’ drew upon and made reference to, they offer musical events that, neither groundable in any familiar musical ‘place’ nor transcendently detached, cannot be assimilated to existing categories or traditions.

Rather they suspend themselves in a unique in-between region of sounding, bound absolutely to the ‘givens’ of the acoustic piano and its keyboard but taking these ‘givens’ way beyond anything previously imaginable or (being almost entirely *humanly* unplayable) hearable

subsequently by any other instrumental means. In his ‘looking back’ to and adaptation of an existing technology (the parlour piano reformed as, echoing Duchamp, a ready-made *aidé*) he is not allying himself with some vision of technological development as applied to a sound-world-to-come (like the electronic sound-labs developed from the 1950’s onwards). What Nancarrow ‘heard’, through his unique composer-performer’s ‘anticipatory-hearing-before-listening’, and then invented ways of realising, was a strange latent musical potential that lay unequivocally, but submerged, *within what we already possessed*. This buried instrumental potential is precisely what his unassimilable studies drew out and allowed to flower. Whilst they can only be shared, heard, almost exclusively given the specificity of their machine-dependence, through their representation via recording technology, it is one of their splendid virtues that they offer something that is the ‘outside’ of this technology.

For what they discover and expose in purely musical terms are the absolutely hidden (but just dormant) attributes and potential of an acoustic musical instrument that the surrounding culture both took for granted and assumed it already knew (until the ‘prepared piano’ came along...) all there was to know about it. Nancarrow released these previously unrecognized possibilities by substituting the combination of electric-motor power and punched instructions for that human touching which, apart from the pianola in the parlour, had been (and continues to be...) the sole means of access to the piano’s (and now the electronic keyboard’s too) performing potential. This body of work for a specific acoustic instrument thus points way beyond itself, inviting us to consider whether there are other acoustic instruments whose ‘inhuman’ (post-touch, post-embodied-performing) potential might be taken machinically into sound terrains currently inaccessible to embodied performing. Perhaps, in terms of current technology, only the organ, technically so close to the piano and already in most cases electrically dependent, could be similarly adapted. Most other acoustic instruments are dependent on the complex interplay of a multiplicity of embodied processes whose subtle conjunction at the ‘point’ of sound delivery are, unlike the piano, not subject to a mechanical transmission of energy (key striking strings). Their musical potential lies precisely in the infinite inflections renderable in the course of embodied (live...) performing. And under the rule of representation, it is the surrounding context, now dominated by and ordered around the focus on the production, development and control of systems of electronic information transmission, that, as discussed, sets the terms of both interest and support (music-making as knowledge research).

The everyday life of acoustic instrumental performance is currently ordered around serving these systems, and virtually all routine performing, whether in a supposed ‘art-context’ or not, is electricity-dependent, is mediated, supplemented, and thus represented by and through electricity’s facilitating machinery. And it is precisely the character of this context that was the focus of my earlier introduction of the player piano in the consideration of the writings of William Gaddis. For him, the player piano was the defining ‘figure’ through which he explored the plight of making-for-art in a technoscience-dominated culture. His perception of and response to this figure sets a provocative context for Nancarrow’s interruptive musical interventions.

Gaddis returns repeatedly across his writings to the player piano as the icon of performing’s ‘fate’ across the arts under the technology of imitative programmed reproduction (‘you push the button, we do the rest’...). His vision of making-for-art’s self-sustenance as the tension of its living between a celebrative love for its materials (*Agapē* – the Christian love-fest as the organising metaphor) and its acceptance of the necessity of failure (every gest as a falling

short by the performer who could do more...) turned around this figure.¹⁷ For him, to maintain Art's Body (my term not his...) as making's *telos* in the culture of programmed reproduction, such performing has to come to terms with the ways that the 'history' of technology is bound up with the development of machines that substitute for human functions by imitating them. He notes that the earliest machines were mechanical toys constructed to give pleasure and entertain, and he proposes that this 'entertaining' function (offering the satisfactions, for example, of enjoyment, amusement, comfort and reassurance) remains a, *if not the*, dominant motive force in culture's development of and reliance on machinery. The implication of Gaddis's tracing out of this history is that the productive drive to the mechanisation of everything (the integration of capital and technoscience in and as the 'forces of production' constituting the 'means' to industrialisation and its afterwards) is grounded firmly, it seems, in the pleasure principle and its continuous re-realisation by imitative machinery!

The player piano exemplifies this drive to substitute the machine for human effort (no more years of tedious practicing, just sit back in the comfort of the parlour and let the machine play itself for you). Needless to say player piano sales declined steadily following the rapid, and since then, ceaseless emergence and mass-production of the machinery of representation. The productive drive aimed at the mass consumer market is focused on the machinery that itself is being continually developed to manufacture ever more complex and multi-functional machines for everyday consumption: the personally possessable machines for recording, receiving, playback, and transmitting whatever human functions can be transformed into digitally transmittable information. These machines do indeed continue to centre on an ever-expanding zone of 'entertainment' *into which art is treated as institutionally gatherable*. In the now inter-netted world of i-pods, i-pads, i-'books', i-phones, and home- and vehicle-entertainment systems, the player piano feels like a quaint long out-dated cumbersome anachronism. Nevertheless, as Nancarrow's composed-punched inventions display, it remained, in spite of its electrical modification, a true acoustic piano, retaining those unique sound qualities through which it had already been given a prime place in the constructed and maintained tradition of western music.

Yet while the ineradicable memories of what the piano could sound-out, what it could do, were preserved in the 'Studies', the latter also carried them over to an utterly different and strange sound-world that hovered between the human (touch - the haptic) and the out-of-touch. And, in this leaping-beyond, what kept it 'in touch' with its roots in tradition, with everything the acoustic piano had been persuaded to stand for from Franz Liszt through to Art Tatum (including the detours of Chopin, Rachmaninov, Busoni, Bartok, Meade Lux Lewis, Ellington, Powell, and Taylor, to name but a few) was Nancarrow's emergent location of his audible-world in the 'canon' - composition/performance through successive 'imitation' of a whatever-musical-'event' (melodic, rhythmic, harmonic, and so on) by repetition / variation / overlap and whatever juxtaposition and integration a composition 'called for'. The 'canon' became Nancarrow's 'motif', the mode of musical development, through which he explicitly aligned and affined himself with precedent modes of music-making. After the first twelve of his fifty published 'Studies' (the earliest dating from 1949) he referred to them explicitly (often in their sub-titling) as canons. It seems that his making-for-art was enacting a performative real-isation of that which was already 'there' (audibly but

¹⁷ See the discussion of Gaddis's writing in 'To Leap Fictively'.

awaiting release) in the lilt of his own name: the sound and graphics of his name opened onto the very sound world that he constituted.

Surely, with the acuteness of a musician's hearing allied to the *witz* of his inventiveness, he had heard the phonic implications offered him in the sounding of his own name pointing precisely towards the musical 'canon'? Certainly he only had to pronounce (and thus to imitate, to canonise...) his own name to himself to hear, to be reminded of, the promise of the canon for his composing as a kind of self-canonising. For the name audibly tips its bearer already towards the canon. Through the consonance of its rhyming echoing phonemes, it already performed 'internally', sequentially, interruptively and reversibly, the repetitive elements of 'canon' and their imitative variation. All the canon's elements are condensed in the 'Con' and the 'Nan', the 'lon' and the 'ca'; indeed the letters of 'canon' itself occur in reverse, slightly out of order and with a superfluous 'n' in the 'on (n)anc', thus becoming a prod to his musical use of the retrograde! These letters are followed by an 'arrow' which includes 'a row' – both the line of flight and the note-row sequence that mark the form of all musical activity. When, in addition, we realise that a 'carrow', in the Irish etymology of his family name, is the word for an 'itinerant gambler', and that in some Celtic languages a 'nan' can be a 'stream' (or a valley), then it seems that, as the wanderer (there is, after all, no place in our culture, where player piano studies, let alone their composer-puncher who exiled himself from the U.S.A. to Mexico in the face of political harassment, can feel entirely 'at home'...) who gambles on art (always long odds as an outsider...) with his stream of canonic studies (they are his bet, his pledge, on and to art), Nancarrow definitively enacts the promise of his name.

Among the multiple musical resources from which Nancarrow drew, the explicit references to jazz (specifically blues inflections, harmonic progressions, and rhythmic interplay) were stated in the early 'Studies; the repetitive drive of boogie-woogie bass lines is stated and developed in 'Study number 3 – Boogie-Woogie Suite' and points ahead to his later much more varied approaches to the use and exploration of ostinato 'underpinnings'. What may appear initially as 'slight' units, brief musical 'phrases', are combined as their canonic interrelation develops in ways that generate the most extreme transformations of these units and forms. Thus across the five movements of 'Study number 3', not only is the conventional repetitive bass-line of a boogie transformed and brought at points to an incredible pitch through the inhuman speed of its rendition, but the density of the sound wave achieved by the super-position of multiple contrapuntal 'voices' (via elaboration of the 'phrases' and multiple interjections of other materials) over this more-than-boogie bass envelops the listener with a feelable but barely comprehensible texture that carries one far away from the comforting and familiar.

What the mechanism of the player piano makes possible, demands even, is the mathematically precise interrelation of all musical motifs and materials, most obviously, for example, in the case of different tempi within the same composition being juxtaposed via calculated ratios; one musical 'line' can be slowing down and another precisely coordinated with it that is speeding up. As a feature of the roll-punching process the interrelations have to be measured and thus coordinated exactly; or at least, this exactitude is the actual effect of the punching process. Whatever the foci of the musical materials, the key to the passage of the sounds is the relation between the absolutely steady, *because electrically controlled*, passage of the instruction-carrying paper roll through the machine and the precisely measured (minute or large) spatial (where 'spatial' coding, accomplished through the relative positions of the

punched holes on the roll, is the precondition of the resulting music's 'temporal' gradations) divisions that constitute the relations between the notes that are heard. Essential to the composing-performing process here is thus the challenge of finding out and working out how to achieve the specific musical effect desired through this process of the absolute synchronisation (because mechanical) of what 'goes on' musically between the beginning and the end. Anything can be done (cross-cutting of 'lines', interruptive interjections, extraordinary glissandi, for example) but the doing (punched coding) occurs through the fixed instructions that determine exactly what is heard.¹⁸ Thus when, in some of the very late 'Studies', two player pianos are programmed to perform simultaneously as a perfectly coordinated 'duet', the acoustic effects can be orchestrally dense and complex in ways that could never be achieved by two 'human' piano players playing 'live' together. The machine's displacement of 'touch' generates sound-worlds that are absolutely 'pianistic' but do not emerge from anywhere with which we are familiar, let alone 'know'.

Thus, in 'Study 41', a 'complex double canon, there are three movements involving two rolls; the first two movements are the separate playing of these rolls on each of which the tempos of the 'multi-voiced strata' are, Tenney reports, irrationally (they work according to musical demands and not an external mathematical formula) related. The third movement consists of the two rolls played simultaneously in which 'the average density of activity begins fairly low and steadily increases through the first two-thirds of the movement, reaching a peak at the point of synchrony of the canon, then decreasing again toward the end.'¹⁹ At this 'peak' the interplay of sonorities, rhythms, and mixtures of 'melodic' languages generates an unearthly storm of sound that, while only approachable as (some kind of) music, is a music from beyond anything that we are familiar with from conventional acoustic instruments. Recorded or not, it can have no home, no dwelling place, *other than this machining*.

In contrast, a seemingly 'simple' musical idea is explored in 'Study 21' (entitled 'Canon – X' because of the way the musical lines cross each other). A bass line and a treble line are juxtaposed but at very different tempos, the bass line beginning very slowly and the treble joining it at a very fast tempo. The 'progress' of the piece, exploring the musical effects and consequences of different kinds of decreasing and increasing, is described by a steady reversal of the tempos between the two lines, with the study concluding when, across this reversal, the slow starting bass line concludes at a phenomenal 111 notes per second. Coordination of the two 'lines' as they 'pass' each other in contra-motion is organised around note duration which requires the rate of change of tempo to be, as Tenney shows, itself a function of tempo: 'the faster the tempo, the faster the rate of change of tempo'.²⁰ Both 'voices' are constituted by a cycle/series of 52 tones in which each decreases by one tone every time they cross each other, thus each decreasing eventually to one element (tone), having along the way also passed through various transpositions 'according to a separate group of four 12-tone sets' as well as octave doublings!

What emerges from this play with multiple forms of precisely coordinated decreased and increased crossings and transpositions is a unique harmonic and melodic near-language (its only 'formal' rulings being the precision of the calculations required for running the musical

¹⁸ James Tenney's detailed notes accompanying the Wergo boxed set provide much fascinating information on the structuring of the individual 'Studies', including Nancarrow's explorations of integrating contrasting but absolutely precise temporal ratios.

¹⁹ James Tenney, op. cit., p.13.

²⁰ See Tenney, op. cit., p. 31-32, for this and the other quotations relating to 'Canon – X'.

events together) that Tenney calls *'pantonal'*. But this is not a play with serial relations that follows the serialism of the second Viennese school. Rather it puts in play within the repeated and varied canonic series a sound world that, in the strangeness of its conjunctions of tonal and atonal elements that are made to get along with each other (while seeming to come from different zones of musical becoming), is closer, as Tenney suggests, to that earlier American maverick Charles Ives. Nancarrow's crossing here, recalling my earlier remarks on performing's gests as crucibles in which different worlds are inter-fused both euphorically and troublingly,²¹ itself performs a kind of exposure of some of the musical differences constituting the unique and evolving 'mix' that defines music-making in America. In this and the other 'Studies' Nancarrow coalesces seeming musical immiscibles. And this in-mixing draws us towards the ways every performing leap, in trying to reach out towards what is most intimate in the course of its becoming, has to engage the matter of distance, of the constant recession from its grasp of what matters crucially to it. This is not only the question of 'how far' it has to move in the course of getting out of culture in making for Art's Body, but also a matter of the ways every gest is constituted through the literal proximate juxtaposition of elements that may, in any other context, seem to be so distant from each other as to be irreconcilable.

Intimacy and Distance in Music's Almost-Syntactics

As I suggested in the earlier discussion of Mallarmé as syntaxer, irrespective of its medium or media, all performing performs, in assembling its gests, a setting forth of relations, simultaneously conjunctive and disjunctive, between disparates - the different 'elements', fragments of materials, constituting each gest. The almost-syntax of this setting forth (the para-language specific to each gest) defines the gest's space-time as a necessarily tautly arranged, framed, and thus limited compression; in laying down its own limits (edges, thresholds, margins, 'interior' relations - beginnings, endings), the relations that comprise every gest are, in real-time-space terms, necessarily in close proximity. 'Within' the gest all relations are relatively close neighbours. But, as relations whose point is to embody, and thus expose, an affinity with Art's Body, their literal proximity is veiled through the ways their conjunctive-disjunctive syntactic (in music's case the aligning that juxtaposes the soundings and silences that constitute its hearable passing away) *brings into play as performing's very mattering a specifically musical distancing - the making hearable of musical relations of relative affinity through their resounding nearness and farnesss*. This entire play of sensuously thoughtful movement, through which performing assembles the gest's relations (as well as respondents' possibility of movement), is only that, having just passed away, are already infinitely distant yet still nearby through their slight retention in memory's tracery), and of anticipation (the way the musical lines-blocks' syntactic drive in their passing away seem to point to, to hint at, to be preparing the way nearby for the not-yet but possibly just about to arrive). The gest's world-sounding is offered in the aural movement that conjoins and compresses as intrincating relations, a gamut of differences (ways of sounding - pitching, toning, timbring, rhythming, inflecting...) that sequentially and 'together' perform their closeness to and distance from - *their affinities for* - each other and Art's Body. It is in the assembling of this syntactic drive that performing hopes to expose the intimacy of its relation to, its involvement with, that receding Body. As written instructions in a score or punched piano roll the readable graphic relations are fixed in visible 'physical' proximity to each other. But it is the musical distances set forth in the interweaving and alternating movements

²¹ See the brief discussion on 'crossing' (in relation to Arthur Miller's 'crucible' metaphor) in 'To Perform', p.19.

(canonic, contrapuntal, assonant-dissonant, for example) constituting the sounding ‘lines’ that generate each gest’s resounding relations of nearness-farness. In such movements music is materialised as the sensuous mattering compression of a distancing that might just provide for the possibility of performers and listeners becoming ‘at one’ with with the performing in its passing away. For such a ‘passing away’, *performing’s sole offer*, occurs as and in the appearing-disappearing of relations of closeness and farness whose hearable relative affinities hope to provoke an absolutely sensuous absorption *in advance of all scriptio*. And we know that response to the sound-worlds of musical performing can span extremes from the near-swoon (a ‘being-carried-away-by’), through indifference (a ‘hearing-nothing-in-it’), to aural-visceral distaste and distress (a ‘can’t-stand-it’).

Thus the peculiar intimacy of ‘becoming-at-one’ with this passing is constituted in the transformation through which this coming-going withdraws, always absolutely temporarily, the coherent embodied-becoming of the one-self from clock-time (from the ‘givens’ of cultural hearing) and, immersing it in its flowing away, dissolves it into the measurelessness of its disappearing. For the ‘point’ of performing’s passing away is to call forth this synaesthetically suffusing sense of becoming-beyond-measure. Held up within this compressed measurelessness, performers and respondents might just be carried along and away (though differently) within the gest’s flowing near-syntactic musical relations. The latter expose themselves as the playfully sensuous movement through aural conjunctive-disjunctions that perform distancing - the ‘doing-showing’ of affinities and tensions experienced in the transitions between multiple sounding-out combinations, from the very close (pure harmony) to the seemingly irreconcilably distant (sustained discordance). The singular performing-embodied world-sounding that defines each gest in its near-instant disappearance is, *in virtue of its absolute untranslatability into the terms of any other world that we believe we already know*, the outside chance of making it to the vicinity of Art’s Body’s absolutely distant elsewhere.

Each gest thus substitutes for clock-time (work) an idiosyncratic playfully charged passing by way of a sounding-out that implies embodied-becoming’s (living’s) presencing-absencing, just for the ‘now’ of its passing, as a pitching-toning through combined variations of pulse, meter, syncope and silence. It is a passing that occurs through making spacing - the near and the far - hearable. And it is as this ‘withinness’, the gest’s ‘interior’ exposed as the surfacing of its syntactic charge through and away, that it exposes its intimacy: on the way toward art, music’s inmost is to be heard in the ways it shows music’s passing *as inextricably entwined with distance, with becoming-over-there, yet a becoming that is still included within the experience of a graspable context, a setting of affecting affining relations*. It is this contexting which is precisely the founding condition and offer of a gest’s live performance. For, in the latter, the gest’s inmost is complemented by the synaesthetic combination of senses entailed in the experience of becoming-right-there, being within earshot of and thus an embodied-becoming proximate to, a participatory constituent (however small) in, the bringing-off of the event.²² To get ‘to’ and ‘at’ the gest’s intimacy, as its dependence upon and exposing of its involvement with both passing and proximity, is performing’s defining requirement; but, complementing this condition, if responding is to approach and be touched, moved, by the gest’s *real conditional offer*, *it has to be there too* to catch, to hear the sounding-out of, its

²² For the performer this ‘becoming’ might be something like ‘I put everything I had into it’, while for the listener it might be ‘I was totally absorbed by it’. For both, though differently, the controlling ‘I’ of everyday rationality is placed in suspension by the gest’s sensuous waving-through, and is substituted by the release and interplay of otherwise suppressed fragments of ‘the self’s’ multiple.

dependence upon distancing in the course of setting forth a resounding context. Performing's liveliness is both dependent upon and partially constitutive of this always specific emerging context-in-transformation.

But what happens to distance, to a gest's passing away through its distancing, under representation, especially now electronic representation, that apparent conquerer of all distances that seems to bring the farthest closest and dispatches the nearest (at least for seeing and hearing if not yet quite for touch, taste, and smell...) to whatever- dispersed receivers? How might it transform our experience of performing's intimate ties to space, spacing, closeness and farness, and thus to its passing-away-in-a-context? And if 'distancing' is a constituting feature of a musical gest's 'internal' relations, a condition of its grant of intimacy's possibility, what about the 'effects' of its reciprocal dependence upon, its suffusion by, supposed 'external' relations to the surrounding context within which music is both performed and listened to? Surely this enabling context is also an infinitely variable transformer of the musical experience?

While music's relation to 'time' may seem to have precedence in our responses to it, the performing of music's passing is thus intricately spatially dependent: performing's 'internal' distancing relations are always both performed and listened to under contextualising conditions that participate in, become part of, performers' and listeners' experiences of each gest. For performers its enabling condition, how it comes to matter, is the absolutely particular distribution of bodies in a real place - what performing embodies is its 'own' becoming right-here. That is all that matters for it. In such live performing, not only do the real spatial distances between performers and between performers and respondents, together with the embracing acoustics of the place of performance, set the conditions for the music's eventing, but the embodied-becoming of being-present at and in (becoming-*through*) the music is indeed thoroughly synaesthetic. How we perform, hear, and perceive the event depends upon exactly where we are and what and who surrounds us. Atmosphere (recalling the earlier discussion of the relation between 'spiration', 'inspiration' and 'atmospherics') is, if not 'all important', then definitively transformative of whatever we 'bring' to it as individuals. And the qualities of 'atmosphere' for most live performances and for all studio recordings are now matters for technical, electronic, manipulation and thus transformation.

We know that under the current rule of electronic representation it is now rare, across all modes of music-making and seemingly irrespective of the 'size' of the performing venue, for a live performance not to be 'aided' (transformed and thus mediated...) by some form of electronic representation (amplification and lighting being the supposedly 'simplest', now absolutely taken-for-granted, transformers of what we hear and how we listen). Mediation by amplification changes radically, according to the disposition of microphones and speakers, the experiences of both performing and listening. And it is precisely the matter of 'distancing', how the gest's 'internal distances' are mediated 'externally' through an 'atmosphere', that undergoes a radical transformation in even the simplest of amplification systems, let alone the complex audio-mixing desks now used in most 'professional performance' venues. Even live performances are thus ordinarily borne across their whatever-contexts through the mutations wrought in the course of their electronic transfer. Relations of nearness and farness to what is being sounded-out both among performers and between performers and listeners undergo changes specific to each performing-context's technical apparatus. The terms of the gest's living intimacy are suspended, reassembled, and re-presented as now a 'product' of technicising operations and an electricity-dependent delivery

quite independent of performing's drive to make-for-art. These operations, in spite of their mediation-controlling and distance-transforming work, are treated routinely as subsidiary but necessary aides, beneficial helpmates, to the listening experience.

Recording and Performing's Intimate Distancing

But when the gest is subject to the next stage of transformation - its representation by a recording for subsequent relay and playback in whatever-context - something much more radical happens to the play of distancing that constitutes the gest's intimacy. For what the recording achieves as its defining 'effect' through its unequivocal and irreparable scission is *the production of an absolute distance, a distance that cannot be overcome, that no-one can cross*. It severs forever the possibility of establishing any kind of connection between all subsequent hearing-occasions and the contextually specific passing away of the performing's only life. It may thus be the bearer too of an obvious truism, but it is one that bears an absolutely vital truth that remains veiled in the culture's current relation to and use of musical performing, especially that which desires to be heard as making-for-art: what one hears when listening to a recording of music is just and only that - a recording, *a technical transformation that has turned the performing's singular life (its passing away) into something completely different; however close or far the hearer is from the speakers, and whatever the play-back volume selected, the recorded sound-as-music remains forever at an infinite distance*.

The relation listeners have with it is founded on this distancing that 'places' them in a relation of absolute authority over the hearable. I can switch it off, take a break from it and then return to exactly the 'same place' (or anywhere else) at which I left it at a time and under conditions of my choosing. It is obvious that none of this has anything to do with the activity or conditions of performing. Moreover, whilst what I hear are recognisably the instruments and the music with which I am becoming or am already familiar with they sound nothing like 'the same instruments and music' do when I am with them (either as performer or listener). Recording is not a miming, an imitating. It does not perform and has nothing to do with performing other than holding it at this infinite distance. Rather, *it represents*, and what it represents is a technical achievement for which we are all (I think) profoundly grateful and truly enjoy (perhaps with an irony-tinged sadness) *even as it takes us further and further away from Art's ever more elusive Body*.

So this technical transformation leaves us with an alien object, a 'something' free of accountable hearable relations (lines of contact and affinity) to anything other than its technical production process and the forms of power through which this is delivered. This hearable-something is not only severed from the embodied-becoming that constituted the gest that is both its target and starting point, but is also delivered as this unknowable stranger to listeners whose only resources for response are the learned conventions comprising the tradition of response to live performance. The judging valuing placing discourses responsible for the terms through which this stranger is circulated culturally treat it, with only minimal concessions to its technical constitution, *as if it were no different to something heard in the course of their attendance at a live performance*. In spite of having sheared off performing's embodied-becoming and substituted for it a fixed structure of measured coded transformations entirely dependent for its activation upon a constant electronic charge ('music'-via-combustion), the recording process, far from being treated as performing's disaster (the burning off of embodiment...), is welcomed as the gest's saviour and enhancer.

It is as if, *approached from the region of response and immersed in the latter's everyday concerns (how to align aesthetics with performing's strangeness ...)* rather than in the *activity of performing*, what a record represents to the listening-situation is taken to be the preservation of music-as-such, a saving-gathering of performing's remains that are taken to be music shorn of its inessentials (the sensuously material specificities of contextually-bound-bodies). Whereas, *approached from performing's region*, this sleight of listening (now the absolutely dominant ordering rule for response to music's cultural appearance) exposes through its trust in these very remains, at the very least, both what is paramount for performing's relation to its emerging-disappearing gest and what it loses simultaneously in being gathered under the now utterly ordinary rule of the telematic machinery's recording operations - its embodied-becoming-right-there. In this loss lies the entire fate of performing's emergent plight under modernity's transformations in its attempts to keep on making-for-art, to try to stay within an ear's shot of Art's receding Body. For performing, its recordings-as-remains become, recalling the fate of Kafka's 'hunger-artist' and the matter of wasting explored earlier in 'To Risk...', that which is detritus to be cast off, passed over in silence, and moved beyond under the Gaddis rule of 'could have done more' ('Garbage, ladies! Stick out yer can...', to recall the 'Call of the Freaks!').

Whatever the desire, interest, or occasion-context of the activity of listening to a recording, from treating it as background or incidental music, through listening for various pleasures (rememoration, relaxation, being 'carried-away' through intense attention to its passing...), to the repetitive but necessarily self-distancing intensity of academic analysis-critique, the recording has to be recognised as an independent technical production whose materialised relations (what it represents to hearing - the time-and-again reiteration of 'the same') cannot be traced back to, let alone translated back into, the terms of any performing's passing. Standing on this side of the abyss effected by the recording process itself, every copy of this recording goes forth as an 'unknown-something', an unplaceable 'thing', as distant from the performance that gave rise to it as it is from Art's eternally elsewhere Body. Any one such recording (through its multiple copies...) may indeed be taken culturally (institutionally promoted) as an exemplary 'art-gest'; but this occurs only under the complicit rule of the representing organisations through which art is brought under control (archived, coded, managed, and disseminated), *and, as far as performing is concerned in its making-for-art, has nothing to do with 'what goes on' in performing's course*. For it is only in the operations of these organisations that values accrue to object-products as they are put into market-circulation in the construction of generalised cultural 'tastes'.

The absolute transferability of the recording in its reiterable 'sameness' is a defining condition of this constructive transforming and de-contextualising work. And, in the precision of this non-musical operation, *it thus brings off exactly what musical performance, knowing that its occasionality defines its embodied-becoming as never-the-same, as nothing but the doing of difference, neither desires to nor could ever achieve*. Recording's transformations and coded representation of selected audio-events (sound-waves treated as fixable through its measuring transforming transcribing machinery) deliver *something* to the future (the hearings-to-come) that is completely alien to what has passed definitively away, something indeterminate and aside from 'place' and real distancing. Yet it manages to achieve this dismantling and re-appropriation of the world of performing under the guise of an orienting vision, and thus a practically constructed relation to 'its' world, of technical truth-to-its-matters (sound-waves). This world-relation rests entirely on measurement's conversions of its selected matters into something else entirely - materially encrypted

‘marks’ that can be read by another machine as instructions for reconversion into transmittable sound-waves. Although culturally it is taken as a selectively fixed and reactivatable offer to ‘the present’ of an authentic ‘memory’ of what has gone, the recording is, *it circulates and is put to work as, a representative and a representation of this technical world*. Whilst appearing to have cut out and to have ‘held on to’ something from what has disappeared, its excising operation effects an unbridgeable gap between it and the long passed away performing whose transformation it has re-produced via the defining authority of its technical instructions.

Perhaps what each record-hearing occasion thus marks and exposes *precisely in its taking it for granted*, is a celebration of the superb technical achievement of play-back itself, of infinite repetition of the same - this is firstly and lastly its founding-maintaining condition. This is the ‘how’ of the recording’s mattering that is commemorated in its being-heard. What it celebrates in its memorialising is thus the comfort of a reassurance that it will always be there, as available as the nearest current of electricity, for the eternal return *and the eternal switching off* of its coded cycle.²³

Is not this reassurance of repetition exactly the obverse of the entire drive of making-for-art under modernity and its afterwards and of how musical performing seeks to ‘position’ itself through this making? For performing knows as a founding constituent of its know-how that with a musical gest *nothing lasts*: nothing of performing can be made to last because, *for it, there is absolutely no way back*. In its incompletable task of making-for-art, there is only ever its next performing-occasion. And this can occur only and always in a specific context by way of its embodied-becoming leaping away from and opening up a gap between itself and the timing-spacing of the everyday world, in which it continues to go-forth-embodied, in order to engage, be absorbed into, explore, and thus expose - make hearable - the distancing ‘internal’ to music’s intimacy. Yet performing also knows that the elsewhere of this distancing, to be approached through and as its own other-worlding movement, is utterly dependent upon its intense this-worldly instrumental absorption, its becoming-instrumentally-embodied right-there in whatever context-bound conditions permeate its every performing occasion. Performing cannot but be context-responsive; it is absolutely immersed in, takes on, plays with and against, the compressing context whose material (acoustic, atmospheric...) and social (relations with both the performing-collective, who listens-responds, and of course the technical ‘state of play’ in the on-rolling forces of production) conditions synaesthetically frame, permeate and inflect everything that it tries to do in making-for-art.

Messiaen’s ‘*Quatuor Pour La Fin Du Temps*’: Performing Challenged to Embody Disembodiment

The challenges and dilemmas that performing-toward-art is now plighted to face define the peculiarity of the strand on which it is marooned. As implied above they ‘occur’, that is they have to be faced and responded to precisely in and as the matter of the music-making itself,

²³ Perhaps this reassuring comfort, the safety of listening within which the recording holds the listener up, is what the pianist Alfred Brendel is referring to when he contrasts the playing and listening conditions of the live concert performance with the listener’s relation to a recording in the following terms: ‘But when you listen to a record you can turn the music off, savour it in instalments or try bits here and there; you can move, talk, eat and groan – in a word, *you feel at home*.’ (italics added) There is little chance of art’s *unheimlich* emerging under such conditions of authoritatively relaxed but entirely *homely* control and disengagement. See Alfred Brendel, ‘On Music - Collected Essays’, JR Books, London, 2007, p. 346.

at the conjunction of its becoming-musically-embodied (instrumental performing) and that performance-permeating context which is now, under representation's rule, that of a globally electronic telematics however it manifests itself 'locally'. For performers it is what 'goes on' at this conjunction - how their performing opens up a way through its defining tensions - that generates each gest in its specificity. And each gest's possibility of an emerging relation to art, to that Body-beyond up-ahead that is the felt-for focus sustaining performing's compulsive leap, turns without respite through the unavoidable with which this Body confronts all performing. Olivier Messiaen's 'Quartet for the End of Time', though emerging and being performed initially as his response to extreme contextualising conditions that pre-date this pan-global telematic rule, nevertheless already realises and anticipates in its extraordinary compressions and surfacings, precisely the depth and extent of the challenge confronting performing now under this rule.²⁴

In its presentation the 'Quartet's' score, in advance of the rendering of any hearable performance, already opens onto and reveals the unavoidable matters that challenge making-for-art through music.²⁵ Whilst these are set down in utterly personal and idiosyncratic terms, they draw us directly into those fundamental tensions that, ever more explicitly under late-modernity, have come to define the challenge of holding to art, the otherness of its difference, as music-making's goal. His gest's score both crystallises these tense dilemmas and, in its offer to performers-listeners, makes readable Messiaen's singular way through them; the tensions turn around how performing, as an earth-bound instrumentally consumed embodied making-for, makes for the intimate distancing of art's other-world difference - its becoming-*unheimlich* as a becoming-untimely - through a feeling-out and transliterative interweaving of resonating affinities between the vastly divergent multiple sound resources of the 'cultural' and 'natural' worlds in all their taken-for-granted and assumed familiarity. These tensions, founding and inescapable for all performing, are succinctly 'available', though necessarily in utterly personal terms, at and as the surfacing of the score's text. Music's possibility, as an 'elsewhere' of such compounding, is precisely what the score proposes and makes legible as 'guidance' ('*Conseils...*') for its performers-to-come.²⁶

Messiaen's score offers to performers (and to readers) not only the formally conventionally graphicised sequence of notes, rests and dynamic markings for the four instruments, aligned and conjoined in the usual way by staves according to the passage of an implied pulse common to all the instruments, but also his written annotations, including brief remarks about each of the 'Quartet's' eight movements and his instructions to performers. These notes, forming a kind of figurative framing for both the 'Quartet' and for his personal musical 'vision', point the reader (performer or listener) towards both matters of instrumental interpretation but also to the precise tense conjunctions of the different impulses to which his composing responded. They open explicitly onto the crux of the tensions generated in making-for-art that every gest seeks to reconcile.

²⁴ It does this just as the catastrophe of the surrounding world war (with its unequivocal global revelation of the new bio-politics characterising modernity's quotidian dynamic), exposure to which it was partially a response, anticipated the information revolution to come by the urgent acceleration of the technical means for its subsequent accomplishment. The 'Quartet' was first performed on January 15th, 1941, at Stalag VIIIA at Görlitz in Silesia where Messiaen was being held as a prisoner of war.

²⁵ It is also apposite here to recall Derrida's remarking of the 'rich equivocation' of the word 'for' that I noted in 'To Assemble' in relation to 'making-for-art'. Messiaen's '*pour*' in the Quartet's title keeps open a variety of possible senses both of what music is 'for' and of this music's dedicated flow and its hope for what is to come.

²⁶ See 'Olivier MESSIAEN, QUATUOR POUR LA FIN DU TEMPS', Durand, Paris, 2008. Messiaen concludes his preface with a brief '*Conseils aux exécutants*' (p. IV).

Messiaen's verbal and visual renderings of these conjunctive-disjunctions, in advance even of any audible performance, thus seem to map the very terrain of music-making itself as performers now experience it. They show a zone in which music's possibility turns on the transformation of embodied-becoming into becoming-embodied *instrumentally*, where this embodiment enacts a transformation, as a going-beyond, of the singing 'voice'. As I shall show shortly, singing, song, approached by Messiaen in an utterly personal way, 'founds' this re-sounding transformation as its exploratory celebrations are re-soundingly developed. This, perhaps for Messiaen key, re-sounding transformation can be assimilated to and is a specific exemplification of the 'transliteration' process that I explored earlier in relation to literature and the other arts as a way of approaching performing's movement from its 'sourcings' to the syntax of a gest's almost-language. Taken together the score's renderings take us both 'back' to music's earliest emergence in rhythmized conjoinings of chanting-singing-dancing, and 'forward' to the ways these tensions confront performing now under representation's rule. They begin by suspending the performing body in its originating project precisely in between three partially independent 'worlds': the 'natural' world, the 'human' world (with its vastly different 'cultures'), and a 'transcendent' other-world (and thus a realm that is not-quite-a-world or is perhaps an other-than-world). The gest's title - quartet-for-the-end-of-time - already contains these worlds by implication; the four instrumentalists, while very much of this human world in their passage, along with the things of the natural world (sound's vibrations), through time, are to play 'for' (together to be both dedicated to and to make for) something yet to come - something that Messiaen hopes the 'Quartet' will re-soundingly (pre-)figure - time's ending (a transcendent world beyond and without time).

In his preface Messiaen points to the subject of this gest, implying that this is also his embracing musical 'vision', as the challenge to offer a visionary experience, however briefly, of immaterial transcendence, of something that makes a definitive break with embodiment's material embeddedness in the space-time relations of this-world. While this aspiration was, for him, bound up absolutely with his devout Catholicism, nevertheless it was making-for-art's drive for 'elsewhere', the peculiar 'beyond' to which art seemed to offer access, that he chose for his singular experiential route to this transcendental possibility. His inspiration for the 'Quartet' came from the words figuring the vision of the 'Apocalypse of St. John' in which the Angel of the Apocalypse, astride the sea and earth, declares that 'there shall be no more Time' (in Messiaen's transcription: *Il n'y aura plus de Temps*²⁷). Messiaen then says of his 'musical language' in the 'Quartet' that it is *'essentiellement immatériel, spirituel, catholique'* ('essentially immaterial, spiritual, catholic' (my translation!)).²⁸ Yet it is this language's 'modes' that are there to realise, *'mélodiquement et harmoniquement'* through a 'tonal ubiquity', a carrying of the listener 'nearer to eternity in space or infinity' (*'...y rapprochent l'auditeur de l'éternité dans l'espace ou infini.'*)²⁹ In other words the aspiration for the spiritual immateriality of eternity's timelessness can only be approached by Messiaen, rendered as a visionary performance, *through the very real this-worldly materiality of his modes of musical languaging*. The 'point' (as nothing more, nor less, than the music's pointless passing-away) of performing the 'Quartet' is *to really materially re-sound the unrealisable immaterial as a hearable possibility*. Whatever the strength of Messiaen's personal untimely vision of an eternal life, he knows that, condemned to pass by way of this

²⁷ Op. cit., see the 'Préface', p.I.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

material world's real material offerings, St. John's apocalyptic vision can for him only be exposed as a *potential* 'real' through an absolutely this-worldly musical reality: eternity as the timelessness to come, *but not right here*, for here there are only the all too timely materials of whatever-modes carry us through (and, circumstantially in the 'Quartet', what was materially available to him in the prison camp, including, crucially, other musicians). Messiaen knows well enough that music can only open onto the untimely by passing through, exploring and perhaps finding ways of suspending, the conventions binding performing to musical time.

His wager is that, from within its immersion in its materials' unavoidable timeliness, music might just be able to offer, to expose itself and us to, a displacement of time as we routinely live by it. Messiaen chances himself to the possibility of music revealing this difference through its suspension of the equal-appearing intervals (in our time-pieces – clocks, watches...) that we use to measure time's passing right here. His ways of approaching musical 'time' (time-signatures, pulse, rhythm, syncopation...) in the 'Quartet' make it very clear that for him performing music is to be a making for an 'Away-from-here' by opening, *in the absolutely peculiar and inimitable way it passes through us and we pass by way of it*, onto a possible experience beyond-measure. This is indeed the condition of making-for-art for which Art's Body is the envisioned aspired-to 'beyond' which performers, even as they seek to sustain themselves right-here through their making-for-it, know is eternally-not-here but over-there-elsewhere. And Messiaen acknowledges that his attempt to articulate a vision, through his music and his words, of this possibility - this otherness of no-more-time - can be no more than a 'trial and a stammering' (*essai et balbutiement*) as one dreams of the subject's 'overwhelming grandeur'.³⁰ *Such stammering attempts are what art is left with in the 'face' of that which cannot be represented.* And, as such a stammering attempt, the 'Quartet's' score offers itself as a performative of Messiaen's own name in its near-elision with the 'messianic' (*messianique*) around which his musical vision turns - the inspiration that enacts his hope for and belief in the other-than-time eternity to be inaugurated by the Messiah-to-come. Messiaen makes for this 'transcendent' knowing well enough that it is an offer that can only ever be taken up in the eternal present. The score makes patent, exposes, the hope that his name almost speaks. The *'Messiaenique'* wants to cast us out of ourselves into the *'messianique'*.

It enacts a specific shaping of the 'same' hope that is a vital constituent of making-for-art's know-how and desire; in trying 'to begin' aside from representation, performing pledges itself to and bets on some kind of limited transcendence - an outlasting and an escaping. The hope is infused, in part at least, both by feelings for gests that have, by design or chance, already been preserved by cultures, and by the sensed possibility of its present gest achieving a similar, however temporary, withdrawal from passing-away: hence the absolute paradox faced by all music-making that 'lives' only in this passing-away. In its material disappearing lies its only chance of immaterial transcendence, a paradox that recording, by its sleight-of-ear, is confidently represented by its institutional backers as apparently (though quite mistakenly as I have argued) having managed to side-step. Making-for-art binds itself to strive for some kind of transcendence; this is a constituent of its pledge to itself and to its people-to-come, though the senses of the 'how' of this transcendence - the terms of its achievability - will vary widely between performers. Thus the painter Alex Katz, in contrast to Messiaen's 'eternity', humanises making's hope for temporary atemporality, the aspiration

³⁰ Ibid.

for the otherness of that beyond, in offering a sense of making's approach to eternity that is without explicit religious-spiritual attachments (though it may be reconcilable with such):

‘There is no other eternity, other than the immediate present which has to do with total consciousness. And so from that, you start with trying to get the immediate present... and it takes years and years before the thing becomes clear.’³¹

Yet, in spite of its seemingly radical difference from Messiaen's aspiration for the immaterially eternal, the two visions are reconcilable through their acknowledgment of materiality's unavoidability; Katz's 'thing' in its clarity (the painting, the print, the cut-out...) and Messiaen's 'modes', though in obvious senses 'worlds apart', are in their sourcing and material emergence utterly 'of' this world. For both, the possibility of a brief atemporality (the glimpsable beyond-this-world) hinges on what the thing and the modes manage to render in the course of their being performed in, for, and about this world. Indeed Katz's 'immediate present', as what we live in, through and by, is an untouchable not-something on the way somewhere else with us in 'its' grasp. His excision of this un-mediatable tensing (in which we enact the infinitive of 'to become...'), as the 'eternity' that already holds us and bears us along, by cutting 'it' off from any relation to other tenses, puts it irrecoverably beyond measure and representation. It is precisely 'in' the im-mediacy of this present without either point or extension that both the 'Quartet' and a Katz gest seek to affine themselves with Art's Body aside from any possibility of measurement, but still as things with a chance of transcendence in this world. Performing's pledge, the hope that it wants its gest to figure, is the offer to us and other performers of a suspension within the the gest's excision of our embodied-becoming from life's circumstances: to be held up, at least temporarily (outside of the temporal), within the gest's in-between. Again we are reminded of the destination of Kafka's horseman whose 'Away...' comes back to us in W. S. Graham's 'Listen. Put On Morning', where the poem distills and enacts history's (and thus memory's) legacies as

‘One voice to talk to us.
Yes listen. It carries away
The second and the years’³²

The poem's distilled voice that, *like music, has to be heard*, is what might carry our time's measured span, from a 'second' to the indefinite but temporally precise 'years', away. And Graham offers the non-place of this 'away' for him and perhaps for poetry too in another poem, 'The Dark Dialogues', when he writes,

‘There is no other place
Than where I am, between
This word and the next’³³

Who- or what-ever this poem's 'I' is as a text-voice-subject-multiple, it seems, then, that a gest's potential for transcendence is vested for Graham precisely in the suspension that defines its becoming-in-between. If, in the poem it is the transitional abyss between word and word where, in the tension of an upheld falling, the one (subject) is withdrawn fleetingly from the time of a this-here into a beyond, then in the musical performance the withdrawing surely 'occurs' in and as the music's dissolution of lived-time and its substitution of something else altogether. For, while music passes away in part through the 'gaps' constituted in its breaks, rests, syncopations, and harmonic leaps, unlike the 'silences'

³¹ 'Alex Katz : Prints', ed. By K. A. Schröder and M.M.Markhof, Hatje Cantz, Ostfildern, 2010, p. 40.

³² W.S. Graham, 'Collected Poems 1942-1977', Faber and Faber, London, 1979, pp. 48-49.

³³ Op. cit., p. 165.

between the words of a re-sounded verbal text, the becoming-carried-away its passing invites is dependent also on continuities and persistencies. *The 'interval' that its passing shapes is the strange conjunctive-disjunctive of an enharmonic movement.* And it is, perhaps, this very movement, music's passing-through-and-away, that bears within itself what Nancy calls the 'imminence of a deferred presence'. Its performers are responsible for instilling this 'imminence' into what they sound out and making it available to listeners. In its very presencing performing seeks to promise (this is its plight) and deliver as anticipation this 'deferred presence' that is soon to come. This is a 'presence that is not future, but merely promised, merely present because of its announcement, its prophecy in the instant'. And this seems to confirm Messiaen's conviction that music offers us 'eternity' in its presencing. Returning us to the apparent combination of tenses (past, present, future) that I offered as a constituent of improvisation, it is a prophecy that in its very announcement seems to perform its own accomplishment. Nancy characterises it thus:

'Prophecy in the instant and *of* the instant: announcement
In that instant of its destination outside of time, in an eternity.'³⁴

What catches us out, holding us up and carrying us off, is the arrival-departure of reverberations sounding-out irreconcilable differences that turn out, at that 'very moment', to be entirely at-one with each other. This at-one-ment, suffusing us as nothing but the play of music's differences, is the dispersion of the time we count on in everyday life as the key index of our living through things and circumstances. If we could do the impossible, stop the music in its passing and fix it as a 'point', it would be exposed as the smoothest imaginable compounding of audible differences, *no matter how far apart or close their musical relations*, heard simultaneously as a riveting sameness. Absolutely aside from clock-time's measuring work, this compounding is the music's rhythming, the beating-pulsing specific and internal to each gest. And it is precisely in and through this compound, already latently legible if not yet audible in his score, that Messiaen's 'Quartet' seeks to draw us towards his glimpse of an after-time.

I have already proposed the 'Quartet' as a 'crystallisation' of making-for-art's challenge to performing music now. The figure was not incidental for it seems to under-write the 'Quartet' itself. The 'clear' that Katz (a great experimenter, as his prints manifest) proposes as the aim of making's long-term search (its 'years and years' compressing an endless immediate present) harmonises precisely with Messiaen's 'crystal' in the title of the 'Quartet's' first movement. Whether as the crystal-clear of cut-glass, of the transparent mineral, of the product of a crystallisation process that precipitates something into a definite shape, the crystal is both something in itself, something through which one can see something else, and a distilled form without extraneous residues. While each of the 'Quartet's' eight movements have titles (some being splendidly figurative), *Liturgie de cristal*, as Messiaen titles his first movement, might itself be taken as a performative statement, a pointing towards and a laying out of the terms for the gest as a whole. And as this movement unfolds it does sound-out and thus expose many of the materials that came to characterise Messiaen's distinctive musical 'world', his committed vision, and which recur in various forms across the 'Quartet's' remaining movements. The sequence of the movements' musical rendering itself performs a kind of liturgy, a formalised sequence that together constitute for Messiaen an utterly singular event of public worship *through music alone* (in which music is 'worshipfully' questioned as his way of opening towards a spiritually transcendent timelessness).

³⁴ J-L. Nancy, 'Listening', Fordham University, New York, 2007, p. 66.

Approached in this way, perhaps the ‘crystal’ that names this liturgy is precisely something to see *through*, allowing us to see (to hear...) with greater clarity the defining ‘modes’ of the ‘Quartet’s’ musical language, the materials whose ‘tonal ubiquity’ Messiaen hopes will broach an audible vision (Messiaen himself experienced sounds synaesthetically as colours) of eternity’s timeless immateriality. Key foci of Messiaen’s approach to composing as well as much of the ‘Quartet’s’ source material are indeed broached in this first movement. Thus in terms of my interest in this gest as a musical exposure of art’s contemporary plight this movement alone offers sufficient material to show how the ‘Quartet’ compresses performing’s current defining challenges, the tensions between and within which it is suspended, in its quest to hold to Art’s Body as destination. Though my concerns here are very different to his, as an adjunct to my brief interpretation of aspects of the score I also draw on Anthony Pople’s superb detailed and very accessible musical and contextual analysis of the ‘Quartet’.³⁵

In his preface to the score Messiaen introduces the ‘*Liturgie*’ in two sentences that seem to figure his entire composing project. The first offers a scene - it is the early hours of the morning (between three and four o’clock) when the birds awaken and a bird, either a blackbird or a nightingale, can be heard high up in the trees improvising a solo that sounds a ‘halo of lost trills’. The second invites the reader (performer or listener) to ‘transpose’ this onto a religious plane where you will have the ‘harmonious silence of heaven.’³⁶ A performer or listener is *thus asked to hear double - to undertake a double listening on two planes at once*, to be effected by the presumably im-mediate and thus simultaneous ‘transposition’ (my earlier transliteration...) of the heard real sounds of the passing music, figured through the ‘halo of lost trills’ of the early bird, into, strangely, the oxymoronic ‘harmonious silence’ of heaven. Surely if the liturgy of this opening movement is approached as a performative introduction of the entire gest’s defining materials then it is being proposed in this prefatory note as the crystal through which the gest as a whole is to be listened to: it seeks a double hearing, perhaps an allegorical hearing (though apparently without the melancholy overtones characterising Benjamin’s concept of allegory), whose desired destination is a silence that is the outside of earthly, worldly, time. But one can only approach this outside by getting inside and passing through the utterly material instrumental sounds by which Messiaen has transcribed and thus transformed the inhuman bird’s improvisations into a humanly legible playable musical script. For the composer it appears that the performer-listener’s hoped-for response is to pass along in and with the gest’s sounding, to hold on to it for some kind of worldly support, while at the same time being suspended without support on its far side in an unearthly silence. That this invites a seemingly abyssal experience to be continued throughout the remaining movements may be confirmed by the title of the third movement ‘*Abime des oiseaux*’, which is an instrumental solo for the quartet’s clarinet. Music, this music’s point, is to remove us as far away as possible from this world by immersing us in the flow-past of the absolutely particular intensities (as the composer has felt them out) of this world’s material re-soundings. Distancing as a specifically experienceable musical phenomenon, the ‘doing-showing’ of distance by a re-sounding, is thus precisely what the ‘Quartet’ is ‘about’, what it seeks to intimate about intimacy’s dependence upon it.

³⁵ See Anthony Pople, ‘Messiaen ; Quatuor pour la fin du temps’, Cambridge University, Cambridge, 2003.

³⁶ See the ‘Score’, op. cit., p. I, and also Pople, op cit., p. 17, for a full translation of these sentences.

As accessible visual scription the score itself is set out according to the ordinary spatial conventions (a ruled graphic mapping of musical relations by a fixing of legible distances) for coordinating the instruments' performance (here, violin, clarinet, cello, and piano): the performing 'lines', printed on five staves (two for the piano and one each for the other instruments), are aligned vertically to represent spatially the passing of musical time so that the notes to be sounded at the same musical 'moment', according to the time signature indicated at the beginning of the staff (in this first movement this is formally given as three-four time - three crotchets to the bar), lie on the same vertical line/axis. The guide to tempo and 'mood' at the movement's start is given as '*Bien modéré*' ('with appropriate restraint'...?)³⁷. But this is elaborated immediately in smaller print by a remarkable figure of speech quite aside from musical conventions: '*en poudroiemment harmonieux*' ('in a harmonious dust haze'). The instruction as a whole might thus be interpreted as, 'play this with appropriate restraint as if you were experiencing (seeing and hearing) it through, or from within, a hazy cloud of harmonious dust'... The players are thus encouraged *to imagine themselves as radically elsewhere at an immeasurable distance from the real site of their performing*, perhaps, returning to Messiaen's introductory note to the liturgy, high up in the trees in the hazy light of early morning, close to the improvising bird. At the least the phrase proposes a charged atmosphere that is somehow receptive (via the 'harmonious') to the music's passing. The encouraged leap into such an imagined setting is reinforced by the unequivocal instruction to both the violin and the clarinet at their first entries (the movement is started by the clarinet) - 'like a bird'! In the score itself the one bird of Messiaen's prefatory note, that might have been a blackbird or a nightingale, thus becomes two, for the musical lines of the two bird-like instruments re-sound very differently via their distinctively transcribed phrases and habits.

As with the earlier 'harmonious silence' the two closely juxtaposed figures (dust haze and bird) provoke immediately that sense of the music as doing allegorical double duty, generating an emerging experience in which one feels one's way through, embodies 'in an instant', two (or more...) 'places' fused into an 'at once': first, the 'right there' of each performing's real setting (conditions, terms, atmosphere...) in which one plays-hears, experiences, nothing but the instruments' passing notes, but secondly (simultaneously), in this very passing one is 'right there' only to be also withdrawn as this passing away into somewhere else altogether, heavenwards with the birds. Indeed the interplay between these two instruments occurs by both repetition and variation of the elements through which Messiaen has transliterated specific bird sounds into musical phrases and interlinked 'lines'.³⁸ The 'natural' is thus brought into 'culture' through his ways of transliterating these sounds into, thus reconciling them with, the writing-performing conventions developed over the course of Western music's emergence as both a rule-governed and rule-guided (for some of its terms in their inexactitude ('*bien modéré*' for example) give the performer considerable interpretive latitude) writeable language. But perhaps we need to remind ourselves continually that these transcriptions, however 'faithful' they were in Messiaen's personal

³⁷ Not too fast, not too slow... A speed of about (*environ*) 54 crotchets to the minute is indicated above the piano staff as an addendum to the 'harmonious dust haze'. See Durand, op. cit., p. 1.

³⁸ We know that bird sounds were a defining and founding resource for Messiaen's composing, especially from the 1950's onwards. They were often the focus of whole gests (see, for example, the long piano cycle '*Catalogue d'oiseaux*' for the enormous range of birds whose transcribed sounds provided the material for his extraordinary musical inventions.). See too the frequent references to this resource in Pople, op. cit., including especially pp. 44-45, and 93-94.

terms to their sources, were always more than just transcriptions.³⁹ They were transliterations developed precisely to be integrated with other vastly different materials into emergent gests that sought to expose in performance music's defining difference, its otherness, to everything else. Such radical transformative abstractings and encryptings cannot be taken as accurate reproductions - mimes or copies - of specific bird sounds by a musical instrument aiming to get so close (the question of distancing again...) to its motif that a listener could not tell the difference.

Rather the point of their natural world derivation was precisely to excise, transform, and reintegrate them into a musical journey that, in its compressions and transitions, passed through and held together the three worlds implied in Messiaen's prefatory notes: the 'natural world' brought through and with the 'cultural world' right upto that unearthly other-beyond-world. The performer-composer's hope was surely that, in the writerly-auditory leap back through a cultural world, the natural re-soundings would be so transformed that the emergent 'new' but now encoded written materials could be reconciled with Messiaen's post-serial vision of music's potential. And in the 'Quartet' the relevance of his hearing of bird sounds' potential for otherness is to be found in his belief *that they were already outside of Time* as a taken for granted 'dimension' of human becoming. If Time is the abyss for us as humans, the birds are its contrary (*'Les oiseaux, c'est le contraire du Temps'*).⁴⁰ The assumed timelessness of the birds' sounds seems to propose them, recalling Prynne and Sebald, as pre-pleistocenians, re-cycling endlessly their more or less unchanging returning refrains that simply 'go on' irrespective of the changes defining the 'becoming' of the surrounding world (the now socially transformed 'natural world' for example). As 'the same', they return us to and maintain in their re-soundings that 'world' which still silently defines us in ways we can never quite grasp and which perhaps only art can evoke. At the 'same time', for Messiaen, as the contrary of time, they open onto, provide a way in to, the 'eternity' which he espoused as music's to-be-stammered- right-here *telos*.

But, despite the extreme otherness that this contrariety proposes, Messiaen continues his prefatory note to the third movement by asserting that the birds 'are our desire for light, for stars, for rainbows and joyful songs'.⁴¹ It seems that in this assertion Messiaen, and Pople follows him in this, has already humanised that which is apparently our absolute other - bird sounds as Time's contrary - by characterising birds' sounds as *already 'song', as 'birdsong'*. It is as if, through Messiaen's anthropomorphic substitution, these birds-as-songsters (sounds, noises, treated as if they were 'singing') are already really 'in' culture, perhaps 'there' already as cultural foundationers in advance of us, leading us on by drawing us towards a music, that, now pre-pleistocenian thanks to them, must have begun long before us. Such 'song' disintegrates the distinction between nature and culture. Just as perhaps Messiaen hopes that music, in its playing with the measured passage of everyday time, may similarly begin to dissolve the boundary between culture and its timeless afterward. It is as if music (making-for-art), in the essayed stammering of its out-leaping performances, might just be making fuzzy the boundaries between the three worlds that culture's mundane thinking lives by and routinely maintains. Again, through figuring 'song' as an activity common to

³⁹ Pople quotes Messiaen as saying about his transcriptions of bird sounds, '...I'm the one who hears, and involuntarily I inject my reproductions of the songs with something of my manner and method of listening.' Op. cit., p. 27.

⁴⁰ See the prefatory note for the 'Quartet's' third movement, '*Abime des oiseaux*', in the score. Op. cit., p. I.

⁴¹ Ibid., and see also Pople, op. cit., p. 40, for this translation.

birds and humans, the gap, the apparent absolute distance, between worlds, is ambiguated in the music's attempt to supplant the far-apart with the offer of intimate relations.

Certainly in Messiaen's musical vision his unique affinity for, his sense of a closeness to, even perhaps an identification of music with, many of the sounds birds make, generates transmutations across the humanly-creaturely divide that seem to render the creaturely as an open potential for art. And Messiaen appears to take his cue for this move from commonsense itself where the conventional reference to bird-sounds as either 'songs' or 'calls' already coopts birds as our vocal ancestors, peers, and perhaps even superiors.⁴² This contrasts markedly with the commonsense conventional figures of speech for describing animal sounds (all of which could, quite aside from 'Carnival of the Animals', be at least partially 'placed' within and absorbed by music according to pitch, timbre, sustainability, emotional resonance, through similar transliterative operations) which tend to pitch them towards extremities of human sounding other than music: wolves howl, donkeys bray, lions roar, pigs grunt and squeal, mice (recalling 'Josephine' exemplifying the disappearing 'voice of art...') squeak, and so on. Clearly there are exceptions, such as the elephant, typified in 'Nellie's' 'trumpety-trump', and even among the birds there are the screamers, shriekers, wailers, hooters and hissers, terms underwritten perhaps by a tacit distinction that divides 'songbirds' from those that only perform 'calls'. Perhaps the derivation of such terms already hints at an implicit and insatiable human need to assimilate, within language-conventions for making sense of familiar human actions, the absolute otherness of material functions marking 'meaning's' beyond. Messiaen's particular affinities and the selections he makes within the spectrum of bird-sounds thus emerge out of and respond to an unboundaryable context of common cultural experiences of, lore about, and affections for the lives and habits of birds. His specific transliterations, incorporated through their transformation into music's formal language, hover strangely between this commonality and the high academic seriousness and complexity of post-serial music-making. And this very in-betweenness puts them into the play of music's relations to distancing and intimacy. The score thus invites, needs, precisely the particularities that every performer brings to its interpretation to set its passing away (its 'doing' of the distancing of intimacy) into real motion. One such sense of distancing that performing can bring to a score's realisation is pointed to by Brendel in his remarks on the different 'colours' available 'inside' a chord that a pianist can give to its sounding through the way that its internal relations are articulated by the finger-arm movement:

'...even with chords in the same position it is imperative to see which colour is required, which atmosphere, which distance (I mean that space-like quality which music can convey).'⁴³

If every score in its graphic conventions sets forth a spatial arrangement of relations awaiting transformation into a resounding passing out of time, then the 'Quartet's' score allows us to see-hear how this distancing, its offer of intimacy, is accomplished. In the '*Liturgie*' the music's movement, its passing away, occurs through the musical juxtaposition of, on the one hand the lines of the clarinet and violin that render their counterpointed variations of

⁴² This is certainly the convention in 'guide' books. See, for example, amongst many others, 'The Shell Easy Bird Guide', Macmillan, London, 1997, and D. Avon and T. Tilford, 'Birds of Britain and Europe', Blandford Press, Poole, 1975, where such sounds are described interchangeably as 'song' and 'calls'. In 'Birds Britannica' (R. Cocker and R. Mabey, Chatto and Windus, London, 2005), where the focus is on the cultural experience of and response to bird-life rather than 'recognition', there is a wide range of figurative terms used to mark people's placement of birds' sounds in relation to human experience.

⁴³ See Brendel, op. cit., p. 392.

transliterated birdsong, and on the other the seemingly ‘independent’ lines and harmonies of the cello and piano that are instructed to enact the ‘harmonious haze of dust’.⁴⁴ While the cello may appear to both mediate and be trapped between the two ‘birdsongs’ above it and the piano, it repeats a fifteen-note melody that, like the piano that surrounds it with its own repeated fragment, cuts across the bar lines without reference to the ‘common’ three-four time in which the movement superficially seems to be written. The piano repeats what Messiaen, in a prefatory section describing aspects of his ‘rhythmic language’, calls a ‘rhythmic pedal’. This ‘pedal’ is a specific rhythm whose numerous repetitions also ignore the bar lines that in the score’s text appear to hold the movement together. It becomes clear as the movement unfolds that the time signature does not mark a single conjoining regular pulse, but performs as a purely textual (and thus spatial) indicator for the help of performers enabling them to locate immediately the ‘vertical’ (harmonic) conjunctions that are to be sounded at each ‘moment’ of the music’s passing-through. Certainly the ‘*Liturgie*’ as it is *written* requires the instrumentalists to share a common sense of the ‘speed’ of the music’s passage so that, by counting-feeling in common, they can conjoin their ‘lines’ with the precision the written score indicates. But the disjunction between the apparent written pulse (the three-four time signature) and what the instruments sound together is made unequivocally clear by Messiaen when he writes that the piano’s rhythmic fragment is independent of the rhythms of the other three instruments.⁴⁵ Thus the literal visible close spatial proximity of the instruments’ lines on the page is countered aurally both by the strangeness of the two independently transliterated birdsong-lines and by the disjuncted relations, already legible and audible by bar eight of the movement, between the cello’s and the piano’s rhythmically and temporally different fragments.

Perhaps it is this aural conjunctive-disjunction, the temporal coincidence as a mutual passing by each other, of non-coincident and utterly differently sourced melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic fragments, that is indeed the gest’s organising ‘motif’. For Messiaen’s desire of realising the ‘tonal ubiquity’ - the being-everywhere-all-at-once - that he sought as his way of drawing listeners aside from Time towards a feeling for eternity, seems to turn around the hoped-for effects to be induced by this disjunction. ‘*Liturgie*’ surely enacts, through this intricating of pulsing via the simultaneous coursing and repetition of independent rhythmic fragments, a suspension of time’s passing as we are accustomed to hearing it under the rule of ‘regular’ time signatures. Whilst for a listener it may be almost impossible to hold onto these different rhythms simultaneously, in attentive listening the music’s passing draws one across and suspends one between the different instrumental ‘voices’. One is ‘held up’ within the flow and the disjunctions, in spite of the steadiness of the ‘*bien modéré*’, aside from any sense of the measurable.

In the course of the movement’s opening bars what begins as a legible and to-be-heard sense of extreme distance between the bird-sound affinities of the clarinet and violin, and the seemingly dissociated under-pinnings of the cello and piano, is transformed into an emergent sense of a shared musical zone. As with all music as it passes, the only ‘real’ meeting (of each ‘line’ or ‘voice’) can occur in the coinciding ‘moments’ of their passing. These are what is represented visually-spatially in the score’s text by the vertical integration of the written notes that, *as they coincide*, are heard as the music’s harmonic - the voices becoming-

⁴⁴ This instruction is positioned between the cello staff and the treble clef staff for the piano. See Messiaen, op. cit., p. 1.

⁴⁵ Op. cit., p. IV.

together as a being-harmonised in ways that may be quite aside from the comfort of the resolving harmonies of everyday music-making. The compaction that occurs in this coincidence generates, perhaps thus unavoidably forcing on performers-listeners, a sense of absolute closeness that is at the other end of the aural spectrum to the separations of the movement's beginning. As they pass, the compounded differences seem to scintillate together without giving up anything of their absolute independence. And this momentary pointed togetherness reveals Messiaen's grasp of and commitment to modernity's insistence that making-for-art must give absolute primacy to the appearance of the gest's 'presencing', how it 'handles' the 'pointedness' of its passing in 'a' present that is both specific but also unstoppable, ungraspable, unfixable, *and thus utterly pointless*, aside from all punctuality. Performing's challenge is precisely how to make its point (this passing compaction of instrumental voicings): to 'hold up', as its 'bearing' (gesting...) operation (its becoming-carried-away), this pointless appearing 'present' whose particularity is defined by its simultaneous disappearance. It may be that this 'separation' of the music's 'moment' (its passing as nothing but its harmonic appearing-disappearing), that I have characterised as its scintillation, is what Messiaen is referring to when he says,

'It is a glistening music we seek, giving to the aural sense voluptuously refined pleasures.'⁴⁶

For 'to glisten' is to shine fitfully, a shining that breaks down into a myriad passing scintillations. And the continuous passing away that constitutes such a fragmented shining, if it is to shine 'voluptuously', can only be accomplished in the conjoining of intensities. The fixed readable 'points' of coincidence in the score that instruct the players how to pass through together simply disappear in performing's course. For music only emerges through a reverse transliteration, a transmutation, of the written text into a becoming through pulsed out-forcings, out-pouchings, that are the only traceless 'marks' of intensity's disappearing trail. Music's 'momentary' is nothing but the intense reverberation that embodies the becoming of this passing away. That such intensity was indeed its point is affirmed in the score's instruction to performers to render several of the 'Quartet's' movements '*extatique*'. Music becomes ecstatically.

Apart from the disjunctions through which Messiaen conjoins the rhythmic and the harmonic in the '*Liturgie*' as his way of opening onto Time's dissolution, my emphasis on the role of the disjunctive in his performing is also supported by his attraction to and use of sources for his metres that diverge dramatically from the metre-conventions generally found in the classical-romantic traditions and their afterwards. The diversity of his sourcings and his interest in combining and aligning different metres can certainly be related to his recourse to mathematics and specific number sequences (such as prime numbers) that are brought into play in his compositional development of the interrelations between metres and note sequences. But more extreme disjunctions occur in his turn to and selection from historically and culturally divergent resources.

Long before something represented as 'world music' became a common media-category for popular musical forms drawing together inputs from different cultures, Messiaen was exploring the possibilities for such cross-cultural musical integration. Specifically in the 'Quartet', he drew from and inter-related metres and rhythms drawn from vastly different cultures - ancient Greek poetic metrics and Indian rhythms from a thirteenth century treatise.

⁴⁶ This is quoted by Pople in his discussion of the '*Liturgie*', and is part of a passage translated by him taken from Messiaen's writings on his approach to 'technique'. See Pople, op. cit., p. 26.

In their interruption of and leap away from the metre-conventions to which musical attention was accustomed in the West, his intrication of these metres appears to be closely related to his interest in changing performing's and listening's relation to the sense of Time he wanted his music to invoke. Pople provides detailed descriptions of these culturally disjunctive resources following Messiaen's own documentation of their derivation and his adaptations. Noting that Messiaen was drawn to the idiosyncrasy of Greek metre's 'interplay of long and short values', and that this became a characteristic of his 'style' from the mid-1930's, he points out that, instead

'... of the even beats and bar which are the traditional basis of Western musical metre, Messiaen worked, in effect, with beats of irregular length: not, for example, regular crotchets, but groups that are three, four or five semi-quavers in length, all juxtaposed in apparent freedom.'⁴⁷

He shows, for example, that Messiaen's fondness for the 'non-retrogradable' rhythms (rhythms that, palindrome-like, sound the same when reversed, thus exposing his music's relation to Time as a matter of cyclical return-of-the-almost-same), brought into play throughout the 'Quartet' and much subsequent composing, was indebted to his reading of the Indian treatise and realisation of the possibilities it opened up for the development of his musical vision.⁴⁸ When added to his preference for the seven 'modes of limited transposition' (each being a 'small cell of a few notes, giving a characteristic repertoire of melodic configurations')⁴⁹, the idiosyncratic divergence of his approach to composition from the strict serialism of the received modern tradition is both clear and exemplary. For his recognised contribution to that tradition (via, for example, his influence on Boulez, who along with Stockhausen and Xenakis, was a student of Messiaen, and thus indirectly on the emergence of IRCAM and the role of electronics in music with which he himself also experimented) is *itself a display of disjunction, in the shape of a unique affective divergence, such diverging being precisely what that tradition 'demanded' for its own survival.*

Thus the 'Quartet's' score, with '*Liturgie*' as its exemplary lead-in and guide, suspends us at the brink of performing. Likewise this movement's final three notes enact a similar suspension for both the performers and listeners-to-come. As the 'final' very quiet fade (*ppp*) of the violin-as-bird, sounded on their own after the piano's final chord, their pitches align them with both the 'octatonic' and the 'hexatonic' modes among his seven 'modes of limited transposition'. But, when sounded together the resulting three-note chord 'contains' a tritone (tonic to augmented fourth) and two minor thirds whose equal appearing intervals exactly span the dodecaphonic scale's octave; they constitute one of the three diminished arpeggios that do not, under the West's harmonic conventions, resolve comfortably into another chord. Played as a broken chord they interrupt resolution, hanging in-between, and, indeed, within the tradition, they are often called upon to enact just this sense of suspension and irresolution. As a conclusion that leaves us hanging and awaiting that which never arrives to resolve the movement conventionally, they in fact provide a platform for and a lead in to, the start of the second movement ('*Vocalise, pour l'Ange qui annonce la fin du Temps*'), for that begins with a four-note chord on the piano that includes the same three notes, sounded two octaves lower, that left the first movement in suspension. Through this repetition, effecting a disjunction which also doubles as a conjunction, they thus join the '*Liturgie*' to what follows.

⁴⁷ See Pople, op. cit., p. 4, and elsewhere throughout the text.

⁴⁸ Ibid., and elsewhere in his text. Messiaen includes examples of his rhythmic language in a section in his introduction to it entitled '*Petite théorie de mon langage rythmique*'. See Messiaen, op. cit., pp.II – IV.

⁴⁹ See Pople, op. cit., p. 20 and his 'Appendix'.

And what follows is a ‘*vocalise*’, a singing exercise, that takes us directly into music’s defining significance for Messiaen.

In characterising the ‘Quartet’s’ language (already exemplifying his emergent musical vision) as ‘immaterial, spiritual, catholic’, it seems from the ways that his score sets forth this language, that Messiaen sees these qualities as unavoidably bound to and circling around, *irrespective of the particular instruments in play at any moment of its passing*, the singing voice as its key figure. It seems that, for him, music’s possibility, as a defining dimension or zone of human becoming, is indissolubly bound up with song. He exposes music-making as an occasion for celebrating human embodiment as that dimension of becoming for which singing is a defining founding and extreme possibility, a possibility open for multiple exploratory extensions: irrespective of instrumentation music is the ‘singing’ of embodiment itself, the bringing of embodiment to itself through a voicing that sings out the unavoidable inmost that art tasks itself to make manifest. In this vision of music’s potential it is the voice-as-singing in its inmost becoming, perhaps, as the sing-song of a calling-to, even in advance of speech, that draws forth and conjoins embodiment’s other musical possibilities (through spiration, pulsion, gesture, and affective thinking, towards instruments, dances, and a total embodied immersion in performing’s whatever-context). And art’s musical task, in taking on embodiment’s potential for singing and being-sung, is to find the threshold, the outer edge, at which this manifestation of embodied-becoming breaks onto that which is entirely other - the beyond which Messiaen marks out as the contrary of time as we live it mundanely and which performing can only open onto stammeringly: the spiritual-eternal elided with and as Art’s Body in a performed gest that might just offer and achieve an always temporary transcendence from its present contextual predicament (now manifest as info-tec-representation).

Performing Finds and Defines its Voicing as a Stammering Subsong

Perhaps Messiaen’s self-deprecatory diagnostic of his own project as a ‘trial’ and a ‘stammering’ opens explicitly onto contemporary performing’s plight-as-predicament, onto the challenge it faces and the risks to which it exposes itself in making-for-art, whether by way of music or any other material relation. Considered in conjunction with what the ‘Quartet’s’ score has revealed about his real relations with music’s potential materials, his self-assessment takes us right upto the threshold where performing seeks to leap through its circumstances. For Messiaen recognised that, no matter how overpowering a performer’s belief in music’s, in art’s, moving possibilities (its potential for turning one out of culture into the multiple of an elsewhere), its gests could only begin to broach this potential right here, permeated by the all too real circumstantial matters at whose thresholds they sought to perform and expose themselves - their clash with the powers of the everyday world. The conjunction of the specificity of every maker’s emergent ‘vision’ and the differences in the circumstances faced on each performing occasion called forth, demanded of the performer, a trial, a self-testing essaying, *that could only ever end in a gest that stammered*. For performing knows from the beginning that its desire for its gest to be a part of, to be absorbed by, Art’s Body, is absolutely outside its control. Everything it does, as Gaddis’s ‘one who could do more’, is a falling short, becomes a passing ‘moment’ in the never finally realisable ‘vision’ that drives it on its way towards, but only ever towards, that Body.

Performing’s becoming is thus embodied in and as this stammering try-out. And we need to remember that to stammer and to stutter are activities of and emerge as qualities of the voice, of attempts to bring something to and through the voice. This is the ‘dimension’ of

embodiment to which Messiaen holds and around which he gathers his music in qualifying his composing as a stammered trial. Making its way as the cadencing in between noise and language, and *invariably closer (none literally more so than music) to noise than to language as we live it mundanely*, the gest that emerges from its transliteration of this strange leaping-falling-away (from culture) can only ever offer and be exposed as a stuttered essay. For it is in the nature of stammering to never quite make it into a language, to be voicing's falling-short of language. Each gest's not-quite-a-language, in the idiosyncrasy of its rhythmic-arhythmic syncopations, hiccups its stuttering way to a halt well short of anything like 'a meaning'. Which is why 'culture', condemned absolutely to only ever circulate as 'meaning', and in spite of the whip-hand it holds over all its 'objects' through its techno-knowledges, is so frequently left scratching its head in the face of the gests' cadences which remain absolutely recalcitrant to 'meaning'.

Thus every attempted leap-out from culture's thresholds toward an elsewhere has to be made as an opening up and slight stretching out of a gap, a blank interval, as a minuscule zone for making's manoeuvres situated at and within performing's chosen cultural threshold. This opening-for-art, like the precise materiality of the vague not-quite-a-landscape within which Picasso set his *saltimbanques*, has to be a temporary clearing where, *for performing's time being alone* the remnants of culture remain absolutely 'there' but simultaneously veiled and operationally suspended, pushed out of the way by performing's emerging gest. Perhaps the 'threadbare carpet' ('forlornly lost in the cosmos' but 'Laid on like a plaster') on which Rilke, in his earlier discussed fifth 'Duino Elegy'⁵⁰ and taking off from Picasso's painting, imagines his leapers continually landing in their 'everlasting upspringing', figures the zone that performing always tries to lay down for itself as a temporary covering over and blanking out of the culture swarming beneath. Every performing's temporary cover-up constitutes and occupies, however briefly, its own waste-land-in-the-midst (its mat-carpet-platform-canvas - its blank-spot) where it can turn out and expose its gest as the separated situated exception that it seeks to be. It resigns itself to brevity, knowing all too well that such a clearing-covering rarely lasts for long in a culture where the speed of the sumptuary's disappearance of everything is machine-controlled and -driven.

On performing's terminal abandoning of its task the remnants of its performance, ever reliant on others (the representatives-to-come), are moved on to try their luck elsewhere in that landscape's churning chaos. Performing's attempted blotting out of culture as it sets forth its groundless spot, its temporary cover-job effected in the unfolding and laying out of Rilke's imagined disintegrating mat ('as though the suburban sky/had injured the earth there'⁵¹), can only ever occur right there definitively in the midst of things. But its entire venture - its potential for making it into the vicinity of art's beyond in some unknowable not-yet - turns simultaneously *on its becoming-embodied solely in-between these very things*. Performing challenges itself to somehow set itself up in the obscurity of the darkness that is the clearing, the tight spot-in-between, that it makes in its efforts to prise apart the things of culture, the very things that culture through its everyday activities simply runs together without a thought as tangential conjunctions essential to securing the on-flowing lines that are its continuity. This in-between comes about precisely in the stammering by which performing splits the tangents apart at their points of contact and inserts itself right there in and as the strangeness of a being-in-the-midst that is simultaneously an apart-from.

⁵⁰ Op. cit., p. 55.

⁵¹ Ibid.

Situated in the dire circumstances of the ‘Quartet’s’ emergence, Messiaen saw absolutely clearly that, no matter what their yearned-for telos, performing’s gests can only ever be essayed stammerings trying to point beyond themselves while entirely enfolded within the world’s troubles and, where findable, delights. Even in its halting beginnings performing realises in its inmost know-how that it is not ‘there’ to ‘make sense’ but only to voice its stammered findings about how it becomes-embodied in amongst *but never quite with, on the side of, things in their ordinary relations*. Each gest thus seeks to find its material- and media-spanning voice (as its ‘*essai*’) to make it felt (heard-seen-touched-scented-tasted) as a cadencing that sounds itself out in an intrication that moves about continually between culture’s whatever-things. And, precisely in its falling short of sense, and thus making its appearance as an exception aside from any rule, its stammering will appear from culture’s vantage point, far closer to noise than to the latter.

In the driving distractions that reveal to nascent performers their latent but irresistible potential for making-toward-art it is, as I offered in ‘To Listen Out For’, a synaesthetic silent ‘calling’ whose voicing invites and entices a potential performer to get performing under way by stammering its way out of culture through the materials for which it feels a defining affinity. For the voicings that break through becoming’s ordinary surfacing do inexorably gather themselves around and seek their release through those specific materials and processes that have already drawn the performer-to-come into an erotic relation with Art’s felt-for Body. And if the voice’s calling manifests itself somewhere in-between noise and language and insists on remaining there, then, with Serres and irrespective of medium, we can site the emergence of art’s bodying-forth as a pre-singing that reaches out to, stretches across, and gathers all media together in attempts to sound-out ways of re-marking and marking out tracks toward Art’s Body. The affined materials dictate the mode of this almost-singing as they pass by way of a transliteration into and through the strange differences that bear the marks of each performer’s tracking down of that which might just except them. In this synaesthetic singing that follows embodiment’s multiple rhythming, colours are heard, sounds are seen, and stone, wood, dust, atmosphere, sounds, gestures, and whatever-provocations make themselves felt as a summoning sing-speak. It effects a meeting ‘point’ between mattering’s multiple offers and each performer’s attempted alignment of the way they feel out what really matters for them.

What emerges is a kind of song, a contestatory stammered rhythming, that is called forth in advance of any language but that is attempting to make a definitive break with noise even as it celebrates what it owes to the latter, just as, for Messiaen, the sounds of birds were already achieving the pre-predicative articulation of music-as-a-singing in advance of but as the promise of all the music-to-come. As the extracting of this voicing (through whatever reverberating ‘means’ - voice, body, instruments, materials) from noise through a transliterative re-sounding of noise’s latent potential (for it already holds within itself implicitly the provocation of everything from sheer terror to delirious joy), music takes us ‘back’ to and celebrates this emergence even while it remains surrounded and permeated by the universal background noise that includes the white noise of culture. Every performance of music that makes-for-art thus enacts a recalling of such a singing; its passing through and away memorialises this likely pre-pleistocenic, certainly pre-historic, emergence. And in this memorialising poetry and music elide as the cadence of a memory that can never quite be brought to everyday speech, but which making-for-art insists on taking responsibility for and turning out as its ‘own’ offering.

In making for Art's Body, then, performing seeks to set down its gest as a performative whose 'doing' is its 'saying'; the gest's movement-potential, the *poesis* that carries us through it, enacts a requiem, a memorialising, that looks-and-listens backwards and forwards simultaneously: it re-sounds its feeling out of the dark matter (Lorca's *duende*) of its origination in ways that it hopes will send the gest on its way towards that Body-beyond as a re-remembering of its sourcing. Realising that, as Blanchot puts it, 'Song is memory' and that the 'singer sings from memory, and grants the power to remember'⁵², it transliterates the echo that comes from afar (back...) according to the sensually specific demands of the language-medium and -context through which it seeks to project its singular path towards the Body-unknown. *Irrespective of medium each performance is a singing-that-remembers*: effecting its own cut between an unknowable origin and entirely unpredictable destination, it casts itself into this self-constructed abyss in an attempt to re-call and to re-sound, and thus to bring to the fore, what is voiced, reverberated, to it from that background *as it clashes with and falls under the sway of the terms of the performer's present context*. What emerges as the peculiar 'song' of performing's gest, its becoming as an exception (its Jarry-song...), turns on the unruliness of this clash. But to become this forward-looking-requiem-'song', and thus to embody such an exception, the emergent 'song' has to confront, take on, pass through and out of the languages of the present as they operate under the rule and machinery of representation.

Perhaps the offer of the term 'subsong' by the poet J. H. Prynne resonates harmoniously with the above sense of poesis. In his challenging exploration of Wordsworth's poem 'The Solitary Reaper' he opens, among many other matters, onto the complexities of making-for-art's interplay between sourcing-remembrance, voicing-singing, and performing's embodied relations to 'work', 'nature' (specifically bird-song), and the site of performing itself.⁵³ In its conventional usage 'subsong' refers both to the sounds, as not-quite or not-yet singing, being developed by young birds in imitation of their parents' 'songs', and *to the parts of a song-bird's song that are softer and less well defined than its characteristic series of notes*; they are believed to have no territorial significance. If the 'sub' denotes 'less than', 'slight', 'partial' or 'incomplete', it also seems to point, perhaps, to a kind of undercurrent of sounding that is idiosyncratic: something that is within or underneath, *and thus intimate to*, the singing that, while having nothing to do with territory-marking, nevertheless is distinctive to each bird, definitive of its unique 'voicing'. It is a kind of accompaniment, perhaps *an almost hidden essential supplement*, within that which we listeners take to be the bird's actual song. If, as Prynne suggests, for Wordsworth the solitary reaper, singing as she works in the field, enacts 'something like the very origin of human speech and song, its first location as it emerges directly from the relation between nature and human kind' (the seemingly 'meaningless' syllables of many work-songs as possible memory-bearers of a 'now-erased layer of once-signifying cultural practice'⁵⁴), then this opens too onto the performer-poet's own vocation as it 'derives from this primal expression of that bond'.⁵⁵

⁵² M. Blanchot, 'The Infinite Conversation', trans. by Susan Hanson, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, 1993, p. 314.

⁵³ See J. H. Prynne, 'Field Notes: 'The Solitary Reaper' and Others', Cambridge, 2007, distributed by Barque Press. See also his volume of poems 'Sub Songs', Barque Press, London, 2010.

⁵⁴ Op. cit., p. 86.

⁵⁵ Op. cit., pp. 74-75.

Could we draw out from Prynne's writing here a sense of 'subsong' as those self-defining elements that, 'right there' but conventionally unheard, are precisely the object of every performing's search across the arts? *Is this not the intimate idiosyncrasy - the embodied 'real' defining inflections, imperceptible and unspeakable in performing's course - that performers hope their transliterative gests will bear as the constitutive matters of making-for-art: the leap into the difference of 'nothing-but-art'?*

Like the endless 'river song' of the Derwent that Wordsworth celebrates, marked by Prynne as a 'sub-vocalic susurrus',⁵⁶ it seems to echo the 'primal mother tongue', a kind of pre-position that is both within and without language. Whatever the performer's medium, the transliterative challenge is to bring this 'subsong' to the surface in a way which holds to its 'withinness' (its intimate specificity) and 'withoutness', showing it as a coming right up to language while managing to remain not-quite-a-language – the gest's conjunctive disjunction. In its very archaic 'sub-ness', its apparent yet vital inconsequentiality, preceding any audible readable structuring, it flows along haltingly interruptedly as a kind of pre-singing that can still only stammer.⁵⁷ Makers-for-art hope that the surfacing of each gest will attract and engage respondents through elements that are almost immediately graspable and can be given some kind of partly narratable 'meaning'. But the hope also is that they have instilled something else, a nothing-gesture, that is 'going on' alongside or 'within' the narratable almost-relations, something that, shadowing the half-recognisable relations, defers narration or the satisfactions of recognition (the comforts of memory). It is this hoped-for ungraspable 'in-between' that, throwing 'the present' (the clock-time of our everyday experiencing) out of joint, performs the passing of the unnameable. It is the defining 'particular something' (that is nothing we can ever quite pin down, put our finger on) peculiar to the gest that can be felt for only in the charm of its receding disappearance. Right there at and defining the 'life' of the surface, the 'subsong's' way of becoming is to remain attached - the congealing element of the gest's relations - while in the very process of detaching itself: the semblance that performs distinction.

Without reference to 'subsong' Silliman poses a question that points to the same issue of pre-position, of what might lie 'within' what birdsong sounds out. For him it may be an intimation of language-to-come: 'The idea of the line is in birdsong – do the birds hear it?'⁵⁸ 'Subsong's' offer to performing 'now' might thus be found in its call to search out those embodied intimacies that, withdrawing performing from representation's frame in a backwards (memory) and aside movement (saltation), might just take it towards both art's elsewhere and, simultaneously (if Silliman is 'right'...), the lining up of some kind of almost-language.

Perhaps we can take this intimate journey with its performed 'within' the gest with its almost concealed supplement (a journey hoped for by all gests performed across the arts...) as the language-bonding hinted at by Prynne in 'As Mouth Blindness'' as,

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Perhaps Prynne's 'chatter sideways' in his poem 'Accept on Probate' can be taken as hinting at such a stammering voicing. See his 'Sub Songs', op. cit., p.14. Some bird names specifically identify them as chatterers (stone chat, whin chat, for example).

⁵⁸ Ron Silliman, 'The Alphabet', University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, 2008, in 'Vog', p. 686.

‘... fitting the race
to birthright and natal place, our lingo’⁵⁹.

And there is an echo of this too in the following poem (‘Creosote Damping’) with, ‘lost signal considerate passive link,’⁶⁰. Whatever the medium, some sense of ‘language’, as both desired destination and bearer (a kind of bonding transporter) to that originating destination, is implicit in the movement that making-for-art performs.

This double movement, implied by Blanchot and developed in Prynne’s offer of ‘subsong’, thus seems to formulate precisely the peculiar conjunction of modernity Messiaen confronts in the ‘Quartet’ and characterised by him as his project in its score. It opens explicitly onto performing’s entanglement with and dependence upon voicing. In his self-deprecatory constitution of his path’s singularity as the essaying of a stammering that, falling out of chronological time, aims to enact and to figure a different relation to our passing by opening towards ‘eternity’, Messiaen succinctly sets down the terms of his vision of performing: *making-for-art, in making for the outside of time as we routinely experience and know it, can only embody its relation to art through the trials of a stammered relation to language.* Whatever scissions it makes in language (in trying to get to this outside (his ‘eternity’)) constitute each emergent gest through, and thus expose it as, a stammering. This being stammered-forth is the gest’s mode of becoming. Thus irrespective of the materials or media it makes its way out in, what it retains of ‘voicing’ at its abandonment by the performer, is a shaped gathering of stammerings that, as such, resist and explicitly strive (this is their trial) to fall short of the languages of everyday life and knowledge. Each gest is *for art* precisely by being *of language* while remaining simultaneously *inassimilable to any language we know and try to live by*. Stammering is its way of holding to this short-fall; it is how it decreates its way away from language-in-use. And if we co-opt stuttering to this embodying of art’s falling short, then the pair together mark out how voicing makes itself felt in, leaves its marks on, and sets up the gest’s possible elsewhere leaping.

Stammering is the halting articulation of speech, especially with rapid repetitions of the same syllable, while the closely related stuttering is the continual repetition of parts of words, very often of the initial consonant, in the effort to articulate. Although of differing etymological derivation they share the emphasis on interruption and repetition. They also draw attention, indirectly perhaps, to the urgency of desire as the compulsion to articulate something that cannot quite make it through to speaking’s ‘surface’; the idiosyncratic rhythms of stammering ‘speak’ to this compulsion. The active voice here both interrupts itself continually while simultaneously keeping itself going in pursuit of that which it is compelled to try to articulate. But might it not seem perverse to gather performing’s gests (frequently so carefully composed and assembled through multiple angst-driven abandonings, deletions, substitutions, re-draftings over long time periods) under the apparently minor ‘speech-pathologies’ of stammering-stuttering? Only, perhaps, if the latter are approached on the same terms as their routine use in the diagnostic naming of everyday speech patterns. But if we begin from art’s gests and consider some of the qualities to which both performers and respondents attend (modes of attention that in themselves are partial constituents of what come to be recognised as ‘art’s things’) in feeling out what might just differentiate them from objects in the everyday world, *then we immediately find that stammering-stuttering’s traits of voicing are*

⁵⁹ Prynne, ‘Sub Songs’ (in ‘As Mouth Blindness’), op cit., p6.

⁶⁰ Op. cit., p.7.

explicitly invoked as the traces of art's 'presence'. Not only do they emerge as ways of shaping a gest's 'content' (the liveliness of performers' relations with their 'materials', the 'forces' at play across their surfaces which carry our movement through them), but they seem to be crucially under way in the emergence and recognition of the gests' margins, those zones where something is 'going on' that cuts gests off from their allocation to and containment by 'external' forces and categories (culture's machinations with art).

Making-for-art consistently marks itself out by the compulsive desiring which drives performers to keep performing, to repeat the gest-constituting processes through self-interrupting cycles of abandonment and beginning-*anew*, often in the absence of response from others. As with stammering, the process of start-stop-start-on-and... enacts a repetition that is entirely 'internally' generated; although always contextually defined, the 'form' of its dynamic seems to arise from and be shaped by irrecusable internal intensities. Performing's life-rhythm is surely a stammered casting of itself toward Art's Body through a jerky trajectory of spasmed makings and breakings-off. And if we move from this life-rhythming to the specific gests that are its upshots, then surely too *poiesis*, as a making-process that seeks to frame itself, to shear itself away from the other-than-*poiesis*, is consumed by the sounding out and laying down of the rhythms that characterise each gest (irrespective of materials and medium).

The gest's embodiment occurs precisely through the reverberating repetitions (whether regular and smooth or disjointed and syncopated) that constitute its 'internal' relations: metre, rhyme, alliteration, echoings, euphonies and aphonies, aural and visual affinities and disjunctions, and so on, all play off repetition and interruption - a gest's potential for the 'continuity' of movement through it is in the strange patterned agglomeration of its interruptions. In whatever ways it plays on and with 'meaning' through signification, what carries us through and holds us to a gest are precisely those modes of rhythming (the play of repetitions and interruptions) that, in the midst of the very process of bearing signification across to us, are performing the idiosyncratic excess of its Saying that might just carry it off toward art. Performing offers them as its constituent stammering through which it displays its irresistible affinities for its materials and for others' precedent gests in order to make its strange leap away. For respondents to get on the 'same wavelength' as the gest, to be embodied by it, is precisely to be absorbed by and borne away in the singularities of a gest's stammered surfacing. And once again it is Mallarmé who inaugurates a relation between making-for-art (writing as a sounding out of literature through its affinities with music) and stammering by way of the 'sentence' as the site where 'syntax' is the guarantee of 'intelligibility'; to construct a sentence is, it seems, to stammer:

'A stammering, which the sentence seems to be,multiplies, takes on form, and rises into some higher equilibrium with a deliberate balance of inversions.'⁶¹

But even though the gest has nothing other than its surfacing to offer, and this surfacing is what it exposes and hopes to make absolutely clear, it is only when response goes through this apparent clarity (the thing set out in its pristine finishedness) and enters into the play of the repetitive interruptions constituting the stammered dynamic of its final assembly - its being made to make a way toward art, that it will release one into the obscurity of its

⁶¹ S. Mallarmé, in 'Mystery in the Art of Letters', in 'Mallarmé', trans. by Antony Hartley, Penguin, London, 1965, p. 203.

becoming-in-between. For it is in the oscillations of this movement-through that something of the reverberations of the voicing that summoned it forth may still be caught. Taking on and plunging away from the languages, the representations, of the present, it hopes to confront them with the traces of the song that it memorialises. And in this it stammers again by performing another repetition, for all gests resound with an infinity of variations of almost the 'same' song as they hover around Art's Body. But each is inflected anew by the trials it put itself through in trying to come to terms with the permeating languages that defined the context of its performance.

In my earlier consideration of the fiction of Brooke-Rose I took up Blanchot's discussion of a 'narrative voice' that, suspended within a text's syntactic assembly and identifiable with no 'I' or 'subject-voice', 'speaks clearly' as an 'unqualifiable Saying' in the course of a story that 'says all it has to say in saying it'. For Blanchot this saying 'announces itself as the clarity that comes both before and as a condition of the serious or ambiguous meaning it also transcribes'.⁶² Every gest, irrespective of medium, seeks just such a clarity, for performing's struggle to say all it has to say (and, remembering all the trouble caused by a certain 'pound of flesh', *no more and no less*) ends with the abandonment and offer of a gest laid out in and exposing itself as a fixed set of unequivocally aligned relations. *It surfaces as and in just this clarity*. This 'voice' is not that of the 'author-composer' or any other subject but belongs solely to this specific gest. It is this voice as almost-song, as (recalling Prynne and the birds) its subsong, memorialising its unspeakable sourcing (both long ago and right here), that, being a near-song on the way to art, I am characterising, with Mallarmé as mentor, as necessarily a stammering: *to make-for-art is to Say through the clarity of an unequivocal stammer*.

And thus the *poiesis* that reminds us, through remembrance-songs, of the source, the summons, and the muse, intertwines poetry, music, and dance through their shared permeation by rhythming's repetitive interruptions. They make explicit the detour through Saying that all performing takes in making-for-art.

In music's transitions through oral traditions, scription, and the transcriptions and transmissions of mechanical and electronic representation, the challenge has been to ensure the remembrance and transmission of 'the same' Saying through preserving the clarity of its gest's 'narrative voice'. As we have already seen, Messiaen's score for his 'Quartet' follows the conventions for music's contemporary scription. In this it exemplifies performing's attempt to set out, to expose as aligned surfacings 'all it has to say' in the form of legible instructions for every actual saying of it - its performances-to-come. It is obvious that without the clarity of these alignments any possibility of the performers-to-come finding and re-sounding a 'narrative voice' specific to that composition would evaporate. But the formal clarity of its surfacing, the elegant simplicity of the geometry through which the aligned notation is spaced to make the music's temporal passing unequivocally legible, seems to have nothing to do with anything like stammering or stuttering as they are used in relation to speech. If, however, we suspend the latter usage and approach stammering as a halting articulation that moves compulsively on through interruptive breaks with specific rhythmic qualities (akin precisely to the absolute breaks between each word (and between each letter in each word) in Mallarmé's sentence), then the score reveals that it is precisely these latter that its formal alignment is designed to generate. The score's spatial geometry is 'there' to enable

⁶² Maurice Blanchot, 'After the Fact', op. cit., pp. 67-8.

the readability, and ultimately the emergent re-sounding, of a voicing whose very point is to sound out, to make audible another world altogether than that from which the formal ordering derives.

For Messiaen, music's 'point' is to generate an ec-static experience, to offer an audible experience of a sound-world that is other to, that stands one out of, the world of everyday life. The challenge to performing is how to be unequivocally clear (musically) about that which is unspeakable, especially when this definitively 'outside'-our-world is for him the paradisiac eternity of his religion's post-world. As his notes in the preface to the score show, he intends his music to show materially, and thus to open onto, the very phenomena the terms for which mark that which is culture's 'beyond' (abyss, apocalypse, the angelic, catastrophe, time's end, the immaterial, the impalpable...). But as a composer, feeling his way through the dramatic shifts in musical practice that the various modern movements have enacted, it is always a matter of performing, according to its sensual affinities and vision of the delirious, confronting, taking on, and possibly attaching his gests to the often systematic residues and emerging conventions of these movements.

Partaking of language, through both voice and the emerged scription to whose role I have already drawn attention, music also continually verges on, edges up to, veils over, or suddenly reveals, the chaos of noise which is the background to all we live through. But it enacts this conjunctive-disjunctive sounding, especially in the traditions of the West to which Messiaen is an heir, through highly formally organised material means that, having to pass by way of language, nevertheless end by figuring something that escapes in crucial ways from the language(s) with which we are familiar. The score's unequivocal legibility, its superficial clarity as a set of instructions to potential performers, is to provoke a musical performance that might transform the formality of the written instructions into a resounding event that seems to come from and go to somewhere else altogether. This mutation of substance, writing into sounding, hints at the alchemical change in materials that making-for-art seeks to effect in trying to turn the reasoned matters of everyday life into charged sources of affective intensities. For the point of the latter is to scatter the reasonableness which gives those matters their everyday places.

To try to make explicit the compulsion, to which each gest's near-language is the driven response, is precisely to seek to mark and expose that potential for delirium, the deviation away from the furrow's straight line, which language's lines seek to outlaw and resist right up to the point where, under the intensities of art's forcing bent, they are turned back through, against, and out of themselves: a Saying that seeks to stammer its way out with the utmost clarity. In offering music's delirium as its being sounded as a stammering towards the ec-static, Messiaen could be heard as re-invoking and echoing a founding text of modernity, Rimbaud's 'A Season in Hell' where, under the title 'Deliriums', he offers his writing as enacting an 'Alchemy of the word'⁶³. If poetry effects alchemical changes in language's words, then perhaps music has to do something similar to the 'means' of music. Its timed sounding-out of aligned notes has to transmute them from the base metal of their routine significance (as soundings of given measurable pitch-frequencies) into the (almost pure...) gold that sites them in and as art's ec-static elsewhere. Elaborating on this process Rimbaud writes that,

'Old tricks of poetry played a large part in my alchemy of the word.

⁶³ A. Rimbaud, op. cit., p. 77.

I became habituated to pure hallucination.⁶⁴
 And in applying this hallucination to his 'words' he invokes the time that is to come,
 'May it come, may it come,
 The time of which we'd be enamoured.'⁶⁵
 This 'time' is soon named in a following verse,
 'It is now found once more!
 What? eternity.
 It is the sea commingled
 With the sun.'⁶⁶

The alchemy enacted in this figure generates eternity as that 'enamoured' time formed in the impossible bonding of absolute heat-light with water. But the delirium is 'in' the words' resounding of the figure, in the careering figured leaps back and forth between verse and disjointed prose fragments. The performer's ec-static removal presumably occurred in the coming together of the hallucinations and their transliterating words; if it is to occur anywhere for respondents, it will be in the course of an out-sounding reading of the writing in which the reader is taken over by the worded imagery in its resounding. Likewise, Messiaen's hope for the music to resound an out-of-time 'eternity' can only come in the temporal brevity of its resounding disappearance. An alchemy of the notes would be to effect this passing disintegration of time. It relies absolutely on provoking a strange listening that dedicates itself to the strictest attention while simultaneously giving itself up to the sound's passing. Perhaps this is something like the delirium pointed to by Deleuze when he writes,

'Delirious formations are, as it were, the kernels of art.'⁶⁷

To get to such a kernel in any gest-for-art relies on both performer and respondent passing through, out of, and scattering whatever formal remnants of its language of origin still cling to it. This is what its leaping trajectory hopes to suspend on behalf of the elsewhere it reaches out for.

As I have already noted, Messiaen's 'Quartet' script, like most scores, is set forth, printed, according to the common conventions for aligning the 'lines' of instruments that are to make music together through a shared sense of a time-in-common. How and what its four instruments are to sound together, that is - 'at the same moment', is made unequivocally clear by the score's lay-out and scription; for the composer and performers alike this legibility is the music's grounding condition, possibility, and unquestionable point. Finished and ready for all performances-to-come, it makes available, readable (even partially hearable in advance for sight-readers with perfect pitch!), the very patterned repetitions and interruptions (conjunctive disjunctions) that bear witness to its performative character; that is, we can 'see' that the taken for granted clarity of its scription is the offer of a narrative voicing, a 'silent' Saying that, emerging stammeringly from the abysses (like Mallarmé's 'whites') between the notes to be sounded, accomplishes the movement of the music's passing as a matter of continuous aural relating. And, as the details of the aligned notation are explored, we begin to realise that this continuity (how the gest draws us into and rivets us to its relating) is precisely the 'doing' as performative of the stammered-stuttered other-time that Messiaen offers as his defining project.

⁶⁴ Op. cit., p. 81

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Op. cit., p. 87.

⁶⁷ G. Deleuze, 'Essays Critical and Clinical', op. cit., p. 54.

He brings off this continuity of relating through his exploratory interplay of the ways that his principle aural resources (the afore-mentioned Greek and Indian rhythms, the modes of limited transposition, and the transcribed bird-sounds) can be brought into conjunction with the formal constituents of the West's writable dodecaphonic sound-world. I have already proposed that the 'Quartet' displays its unique sound-world through offering itself, and the vision of music it seeks to make hearable, as an out-of-time experience induced through musical relations of intimacy and distancing: the interrelation of seemingly distant materials to open up a singular experience of intimacy with the absolutely strange - an aural figuring of 'eternity'. To expose the possibility of this intimacy Messiaen recognised that music's figuring had to go by way of an attempted (his '*essai*') disfiguring of language that he named as a stammering. But, in the context of performing's relation to music, his lifting of the stammer out of its seemingly intrinsic ties to the speaking of ordinary language and its reincorporation into the performing process effects a radical transformation in its value. Dissociated from speech, it is turned on its head, on the way losing its identity as a diagnostic mark of an impediment or hindrance to proper speaking, and is re-positioned as a, *perhaps the*, guiding definer of what music-as-a-voicing seeks to become and expose as the value of the performing-responding experience. This trans-valuation is immediately readable in the score's notation which, through Messiaen's idiosyncratic conjunction of his material resources, makes absolutely explicit the way that music not only relies on but makes its defining singular virtue, perhaps its supreme value, the very interruptive repetitions of a stammering-stuttering that in its application to speaking would mark a troubling dysfunction.

The peculiar character of the interruptive repetition whose rhythms define music's cata-languaging as a stammering is laid bare from the very beginning of the 'Quartet's' first movement, the '*Liturgie de cristal*'. The printed notation, signifying to performers the 'what' and the 'how' of the notes to be 'voiced' on their instruments, displays specific modes of repetition as music's 'means' of movement (how in its moving passing away it might just move us elsewhere). And it is clear that the immediately legible varieties of repetition characterising music's self-presentation are nothing like, are not imitations of, the repetitions constituting the speaking and writing of ordinary language. Geared precisely to the passage of time and the assertion of common, but always variable, times and speeds (and thus to felt-counting) through which pulses and rhythms emerge, music shares much with the turns (the versings) of poetry *but in these very turns enacts a turn away from, a leap out of, speaking's ways*. Its allure, absolutely aside from any signification or 'meaning-production', depends on the intensities of the out-soundings that surround and weave their aligned ways through the various rhythmical repetitions and variations marking a musical gest's temporal passing.

One composing convention of repetition was noted earlier in the discussion of Nancarrow's exploration of the canon. In the canon a musical line (phrase, melody) is repeated, either as it first appeared or with a slight variation, through a kind of hiccupped delay that generates a sequence of overlapping counter-pointed lines that invites continuous development through variation. But the process of repetition can embrace and be applied to every element of music's sounding, from the pitch of a single note, through timbre, tone, volume, harmony, note clusters and sequences, phrases, melodic lines, instrumental voicing, lengthy passages, rhythms, time-signatures, speeds, up to and including the implicit repetitions that can be heard echoing through variations in all of these. The 'Quartet's' development across its eight movements employs many of these.

But perhaps its most obvious legible manifestation is found in Messiaen's aligned repetition of specific notes resounding their way through as elemental markers of a gest's phrased pulsing. The *'Liturgie'* begins with just such a simple brief repetition. The lone voice of the clarinet broaches the movement (*'comme un oiseau'*) with the repetition of a G in the treble clef as the first two notes (a semi-quaver and a quaver) of a fifteen-note phrase that concludes with another repetition of two semi-quavers on the Eflat an augmented fifth above. Meanwhile the piano and cello have entered sequentially in accompaniment; their different rhythmic patterns only emerge as repetitions some bars later when the cycle of returns gets under way. But the most dramatically visible repetition occurs in the form of a pure stuttering at the end of bar three when the violin makes its first entry with the repetition (*'comme un oiseau'*) of 3 semi-quavers and 8 demi-semi-quavers on the Eflat above the staff. No less visible is the F in the bass clef that underpins the first ten slightly differently voiced chords of the piano's left-hand.

These very different but overlapping and interwoven repetitions recur, but with different effects because of their different temporal and rhythmic alignment, across the movement. They define the quality of its movement through the transitions effected by their changing placement, the disappearing zones where they simultaneously meet and interrupt each other harmonically and rhythmically.⁶⁸ Through these patterned repetitions, Messiaen's precise and very clear conjunctive-disjunctions, the movement's Saying is generated as a moving alignment constituted by and as the performance of a stammering-stuttering. And could it be that Messiaen, offering music-as-stammering partially through his captivation by and transformation of bird-sounds, is memorialising his affinity for, perhaps even his indebtedness to, a specific composer who also, through a figure interrelating bird- and human-life, made utterly explicit music's delirious embodiment-as-stuttering?

Perhaps 'Papageno', the be-feathered bird-catcher with his cage and his Pan's pipe in Mozart's 'The Magic Flute'⁶⁹, who is led-on, almost bewitched, by the eponymous flute, could be taken, in his compressing of eros, pathos and humour and his sounding out of all of them together, as a surrogate figure for the 'embodying spirit' of music (how it fits into the human *genome*... with Papageno as its 'papa', its pope' even...) as both Mozart and Messiaen themselves sought to embody it. Or rather, perhaps, Papageno should form such a composite figure with Papagena; for Papageno has already promised to marry her in her disguise as an old woman. When her real identity is finally revealed she too is adorned in bird-feathers. And to pronounce the names together - *papagenopapagena* - is already to have stuttered out music's (still fatherly, through the 'papa', at this historical juncture, in spite of the 'a' at the end) *genesis*. As the old woman she had almost given the game away by saying Papageno's name in answer to his question about her sweetheart. At that point, Schikaneder's libretto, through both the dialogue and the stage directions, hints at something to be made fully explicit later in the opera as its *and music's* very performative: that music, exemplified here in opera's integration of music-as-voicing, singing instruments together with singing-as-speaking and *vice versa*, *embodies itself as a stuttering*:

'OLD WOMAN: Papageno.

⁶⁸ An even more explicit and insistent exemplar of such repetition occurs in the fifth movement, *'Louange à l'Éternité de Jésus'* in which the piano part (alongside the cello) is based on an almost continuous repetitive pulsing of chords of clustered semi-quavers that frequently repeat the same harmony. Thus bars 31 and 32 consist of 26 re-soundings of the same four-note chord.

⁶⁹ During the opera's action Papageno also receives a chime of bells whose sounding has a hypnotic effect on those who hear it.

‘rests’ on feeling out and finding ways of exposing these conjunctive-disjunctions as music’s sole reason, its audible embodying of a quite other relation to time, one that seduces us into experiencing our own passing as our being sounded-out in no time, no time at all that we know or can count on. Messiaen names this other-than time as ‘eternity’; for him music’s ‘point’ is surely to transport us in no (countable) time at all to the ‘out’ of that time that we live now and have to take for granted. Making-for-art is the interruption of this taking for granted through experiences that, in splitting it open, split us off from it. Its hope is to offer an intimate experience, a passing almost tangential touching that might just enable an audible ‘glimpse’, of that which, as our most distant unspeakable beyond, only ever recedes from all pointing and grasping.

This recession, Agamben proposes, is the retreat of an origin (the archaic) the perception of which defines what it is to be contemporary. One who embodies contemporariness (perhaps seeking to follow Rimbaud’s injunction to be ‘absolutely modern’), the true contemporary, is ‘he (*sic*) who perceives the indices and signatures of the archaic in the most modern and recent...’.⁷² Perhaps Messiaen’s conjunction of the rhythms of Ancient Greece and India with specifically modern modes and harmonies enacts a discovering of the way the archaic can inhabit and transform our experience of modernity’s moment, its appearance as a passing away. To be contemporary is to fracture the ‘present’ and, inhabiting the caesura which the fracture opens, to experience the ‘now’ in both its nearness and distance, for it finds traces of the most distant in that which is nearest. And Agamben cites the affection for the primitive among artists of the avant-garde as just such a gathering of the archaic and the present. So perhaps it is through performing’s relation to proximity (the terms on which it experiences distance and distancing) that it makes its way to the inmost of the intimacy that I discussed earlier as the mark of its transliterative relation to its materials and sourcing.

If becoming contemporary entails living in and as the split between distancing and nearness, it is because the latter ‘have their foundation in this proximity to the origin that nowhere pulses with more force than in the present.’⁷³ Perhaps it is precisely this pulsing that Picasso’s *Les Femmes d’Alger* and Stravinsky’s *Rite of Spring* sought to expose. Nevertheless, in spite of such proximity, it is the recession of this ‘now’, its being, though absolutely proximate, always out of reach, which marks the contemporary’s experience of holding to this split. For access to this ‘present’ is blocked by something that, because of its excessive nearness, ‘we have not managed to live’. Art’s gests can only ever figure this hidden un-lived and unlivable element of the present for us in and as its obscurity: pleistocenian - those residues of our absolutely distant origin that, *still originating and animating us right here and now*, elude us as we live them out. ‘To be contemporary means in this sense to return to a present where we have never been.’⁷⁴

And is not this what Messiaen seeks to figure as ‘eternity’, as the ‘Quartet’s’ search for and sounding out of an origin that originates his music, through the perfect clarity of a hearable Saying that recedes without cease into absolute obscurity? Agamben suggests that ‘messianic time’, the Pauline ‘time of the now’ as a ‘being-contemporary with the Messiah’, epitomises the contemporary’s split of the present as a ‘meeting place, or an encounter between times

⁷² See the chapter ‘What is the Contemporary?’, in G. Agamben, ‘What is an Apparatus?’, Stanford University, Stanford, 2009, p. 50.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Op. cit., pp. 51-52.

and generations'.⁷⁵ And it seems that Messiaen, in his hope of offering an out-of-time musical experience that might open onto 'eternity', would like to elide Messiaenic with messianic time. But, held up within its own contextually specific fracturing of the present, each performance condemns itself to a musical pulsing right here in a present in which, while lived through as the fracture via an attentive performing that looks and listens both ways (to both the proximate right-here and the utterly distant archaic), it has to remain blind and deaf to that which in its own present passing away, in Agamben's words, it has 'not managed to live by'. It cannot catch the excessive nearness of its own passing. It is, perhaps, the compulsive embodied attentiveness of its attention that, in driving it on, simply passes it by. It cannot attend to the short-falling of its attentiveness while it is wholly wrapped up in attending to what has caught its attention. Thus eternity's out-of-time, that becoming contemporary with the Messiah which is Messiaen's musical goal, can only be figured for him in a Messiaenic voicing that will always be rooted in and subject to the contextual vagaries of every performance's this-world 'here and now'.

Messiaen's search is instructive. A performer leaps away stammeringly to sound something out, a gest, that shows art's difference as a material embodiment and enactment of a move into time's outside. The gest makes itself felt through the movement of a voice the clarity of whose Saying can only emerge through the particularity of its stammering ways. But this voicing is not something known by the performer in advance; it is not something he or she 'possesses' and can insert into the gest as a kind of armature around which the gest is then built. It bears the possibility of movement, of being moved by the gest, but as, in Blanchot's terms, a neutral voice that issues not from any subject but from within the fractures through which the gest's 'inner' relations, its syntax, are assembled, it is both beyond control and without any presence of 'its own'. It comes from, continually 'sounds' (silently...), within the midst of the gest, but only from the gaps that are in-between every gest's material elements, the conjunctive-disjunctive zones that are where these elements meet, contact, each other: subsong as essential supplement.

For the idiosyncrasy of every gest's stammering forth, the hindered articulation that is peculiar to it, offers itself in the course of movement across these often indiscernible minuscule gaps where the material elements tangentially brush up against each other. It is the specificity of this syntactic alignment that provides for such a halting but near-continuous movement as a syncopated rhythming. And, no matter how 'strong' the force of the leaping-away that compels the emergence of this movement, and eventually a re-animation by respondents immersed in the different specificities of their 'own' context, the leaping always entails a return to earth; like Rilke's and Picasso's up-springing *saltimbanques*, it starts from, hovers over, and returns to the demands of a specific context, a representation-saturated context. The figuring of an 'out-of-time', Messiaen's 'eternity' for example, can only ever take the form of an oscillation of brief 'outs' and 'returns' in which both the performer's and respondent's movements, though utterly different, describe such a back-and-forth in which neither the leap nor the context can escape each other. Context leaves its traces in the leaping and *vice versa* through a multiplicity of 'effects' and processes, in particular all those 'things' for which memory is, in some recognisable but still unknowable ways, 'responsible' - associations, affinities, images, voices, breaks, questions, fumbings, multiple 'feelings' from joy through pained irritation to distressed anger, and so forth.

⁷⁵ Op. cit., p. 52.

At work across all such affective zones is the permanent infiltration of the processes of representation whose machinery is managed to generate just such persuasive entryism. In the face of the latter's powerfully manipulative processes, performing's first, last, and perhaps only hope is that something in the clarity of its voice's Saying, precisely through the anarchy of its stuttering syncopation, disrupts and temporarily displaces the smoothness of representation's programmed rhythms. The possibility of brief and fractured openings onto an 'out-of-time', or even an extremely time-truncated 'eternity' (whether in the figure of an 'after-life' or a 'forever infinity') may depend upon whether a gest can turn aside some of the light through which representation seeks to reveal everything as the appearance of a clear surfacing. For are not the in-betweens and fracturings in which performing puts its faith, as both its sites of suspension and the immaterial matters it tries to open itself to, precisely those ciphers of the mystery of becoming and the 'world's' retreat into inexpressibility that drive it to distraction and thus constitute its unreasonable reason for its continuing explorations? Is it not the making manifest of the obscurities (of both the archaic Pleistocenian and the inscrutable 'now') which become us, thus both troubling and delighting us, that might just give making-for-art its possible brief but almost unsustainable edge over everything else?

If so, then performing's attempted disclosures across all media come about through its multiple fracturings of the languages through which we routinely sustain our life-trajectories across all the zones of our sensuous becoming. It generates its medium-specific voicings⁷⁶ from within the dis-languaging fissures it finds itself in and where it has already dissociated itself from the lived time of everyday life. What else could it generate from these sense-disintegrating 'spaces' other than the stutterings whose Saying it seeks to release as cata-syntactic makings-toward-art? If, as Messiaen offers, music splits itself off from everyday time through a stammering that opens onto an 'out-of-time', and performing across the arts seeks to situate itself in between the archaic and the inscrutable present to show its contemporariness, then it seems that making-for-art gathers itself around the task of trying to expose its embodied-becoming as bound absolutely to time and timing. What 'matters' to it in its beginning (as a response to its being summoned to make-toward-art) and its ending is to release something that discloses its relation to timing - its embodied-becoming as a passing through and away: how it wants to be taken - 'cepted - in its reception as an exception. That is why the present participle of 'to voice' - epitomised in and by music's multiple ways of elaborating and transforming the life of 'the voice' and 'voicing' - can be taken as the exception, a voicing alone (voicing-as-such), common to all performing that makes-for-art. For such making is always the little trial, the testing-out (Messiaen's '*essai*' again), of a sounding-out of its materials, an exploration of what they can be persuaded 'to voice', to reverberate stammeringly through and from us as performers and across to us as attentive respondents.

Yet even in music's case, this *primary voicing* sought by performing, as the emergent clarity of the silent Saying of that unheard and unknowable in advance 'narrative voice' pointed to by Blanchot (as crucial to music and the other arts as it is to writing in its exposing of the performer's idiosyncratic undoing of the 'certainties' of language-conventions), *turns out to be absolutely silent*. In music's eventing its silence only issues forth from the gaps between

⁷⁶ I treat 'voice' and 'voicing' here as the guiding figures across all material zones of making-for-art because, as music itself epitomises, 'voice' confronts us at the limit (music's manifesting this as nothing but the disappearance of a sounding-out) with the absolute ephemerality of the 'experience' of relating to art's things, whether as a performer or a respondent. This experience 'becomes-embodied' only in and as our hearing its passing away in no time at all (with which we are familiar). It remains 'with' us only in its ungraspability, and perhaps as a recalcitrant memory-trace of what might have been.

the resounding notes that allow for its absent hearability; a gest's voicing, its distinctive way of embodying its relation to time, appears out of the particularity of its rhythmized breaks, the patterned interruptions enabled by its sounds' disappearances; voicing is stutter-dependent and stutter-shaping. The notes it puts forth as its actual out-sounding, while seeming to be 'first', turn out to be 'secondary' to performing's goal, which is to find and release the absolute clarity of its attempted Saying, to make it appear through whatever welter of sounds constitutes its performance. It searches for the clarity of the stammer-stutter that is music's way of finding its way through and out of the performer in an unique aside from language. Perhaps this echoes Glenn Gould's point, in commenting on his interpretation of Bach's keyboard pieces, that the composer-performer's defining interest is in locating and revealing 'the abstract necessities of the structures' that course through, within, a gest's surfacing.⁷⁷ Nevertheless it is precisely this stutter-dependency that maintains music's contentious relation with the ordinary language, the speaking-writing, of everyday life, through reminding us that music is always a re-membering (as both a memory trace and a re-articulation) of the potential latent in the voice. It is this beginning from the voice's sounding that maintains music's tenuous link with ordinary language through adapting the speaking-writing 'voice's' intrinsic potential for the affective intensities pointed to by Deleuze.

For Deleuze the interesting writers are those who put the system of language, in its ordinary usage, into a state of 'perpetual disequilibrium'; such writers make the 'language as such stutter' by passing 'each of its terms through a zone of continuous variation' which makes it 'begin to vibrate and stutter'⁷⁸. No writer makes this more of a constitutive feature of their 'voicing' than Celan whose poems circulate (as their meridian) unceasingly around the 'catastrophe's' unrepresentability (its destruction of 'representation' as we had known and used it). Celan's intimate probing relation with language moves through multiple forms of 'stammering' – including repetitions, echoes, phoneme-separation, word-compounds, interruptive line/word/letter spacing. All are in the service, like Messiaen's musical casting to ward 'eternity', of a leap out to an unreachable 'beyond' – the afterword, afterward, of representation, on behalf of a memorialising memory trace that nevertheless could, for him, only be exposed and offered through language. Indeed he uses the word '*lallen*' (German.) in 'Tübingen, Jänner' which has been variously translated as both 'babbling' and 'stammering'.⁷⁹

But music, having leaped out of and left behind such language, already takes the perpetual disequilibrating manifest in its vibrating and stuttering as its starting point; the not-quite-linguaging of musical performance takes this stuttering for granted as its very potential for the affective intensities Deleuze sees as marking the 'poetic operation'. It carries some things over from ordinary language (its aligning of notes might be described as a quasi-syntax), but, because its signifiers signify sounds and not 'sense/meaning' (their 'meaning' is the qualities of their sequential sounding), very little of the 'knowledges' we have about language's functioning can be transferred over and mapped onto it. Rather what music-making does is to

⁷⁷ See the earlier discussion at p.591.

⁷⁸ G. Deleuze, 'He Stuttered', in 'Essays Critical and Clinical', op. cit., p. 107 and p. 108.

⁷⁹ P. Lacoue-Labarthe introduces his discussion of Celan's relation to 'catastrophe' via this poem by referencing the 'stammering' it both 'says' and performs. See his 'Poetry as Experience', Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1999, p.41. Aris Fioretos also emphasises this as a defining feature of Celan's poetry which, he proposes, '...comes into being as the pain of language itself: a syntactically wounded stutter breaking down language into its smallest elements: *Buch-staben*'. See his 'Nothing: History and Materiality in Celan', in Aris Fioretos, 'Readings of Paul Celan', Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, 1994, p.331.

take aspects of the body's resoundings (voicings and pulsings-beatings), turn them out of their everyday functioning, and perform extraordinary conversions on them that generate a world of alternative out-soundings. The voice-ear combine retains its primacy both through singing and through its being the root resource and sound-model for the development of instruments that engage the body's potential for making other than voiced sounds. Right up to modernity, in spite of enormous cross-cultural variations in the uses of materials, notational systems, and scales and modes in the making of musical instruments, these instruments' contrasting sounds nevertheless retained very close relations with the way voices and voicing were integrated with instrumental music. Despite music-making's universal suspension of language-as-sense-bearer as a model for its re-soundings, its outward leap (with the possible exception of percussion instruments) stayed proximate to and retained the voice as its guide and model for the kinds of sounds that performers discovered receptive ears wanted to hear and gather as music.

Instrument-Body-Intensity-Voicing

Instrumental soundings began from the variety of registers and pitches characteristic of the human voice that already contained the differences from which different cultures assembled their consistent modes. The culturally widespread development of the pentatonic scale, with its easily sounded and remembered pitch differences that could be relatively easily reproduced on 'simple' instruments, exemplifies this voice- 'centered' approach to instrument construction. In the proliferation of instrumental music-making (obviously dependent on complex context-specific conjunctions of existing musical and cultural traditions, availability of materials, levels of technology and energy-use, knowledge and skill archiving, and so forth) it is the voice's heard potential, across all its separable dimensions, for radical extension-transformation through a transfer into other materials that echoes across instruments' multiple resounding.

But instrumental development is never a matter of imitating the voice (though most instruments can be persuaded to mime some vocal sounds) but rather of taking specific vocal qualities, tearing them out of the mouth, passing them through other materials and embodying practices, and in the process removing them entirely from the mouth's experiential limits. In the radicality of these material exaggerations, shrinkings, twistings, stretchings, contractings, compressings, swellings, the voicing-mouth's repertory is exploded into multiple other-soundings; they pass out through drawing on other zones of embodiment and focusing these on the specific physical demands each instrument makes. Whatever the instrument, the challenge to performing is to make it appear as a perfect prosthetic, as if it had been designed precisely to function without barriers as an extension of that performing body - a machine through which it would be the body itself which was 'singing' to make itself felt beyond its literal boundaries. Each instrument, in being sounded-out, remembers, aurally recalls, the voice while simultaneously carrying it way beyond itself and severing it definitively from the bearing of 'meaning', of 'sense-in-common'. In suspending the mouth as the bearer of sense, each instrument opens onto a different world of sounding-out in which this re-figured mouthing is given over entirely to something just as potentially 'sharable' but, possibly, much more elusive: the bearing over of reverberating intensities whose potential for affective response depends entirely on their relation to their timing, on how, in their passing away, they insist on a different relation to time from that in which sense is generated in common in everyday life.

And this timing that is other-than the time we live by (Messiaen's stammered interruption into something like a temporary 'eternity' that can only be experienced right here in the closest proximity to the music's passing-away), perhaps, gives a prime role to, literally counts on, a pulsing-beating-rhythming that, whatever its gest-specific vagaries and complexities (a likely strange dynamic combination of explicit countable beat and and 'internal' implicit oscillating wave), it hopes can be felt-heard as a sharable 'in-common'. The challenge such voicing faces in establishing this other time as a time-in-common, this interval between times that performers hope to shape as a togetherness not just with other performers but with an audience, arises surely from the break that music-as-voicing makes with voicing-as-speaking. In voicing itself out of ordinary language, performing abandons 'meaning' and gives itself over to sounding out intensities whose potential sharability is dependent on gathering others within the resonance of the aligned soundings that constitute its coming-going. The intensities have to be suspended within, strung out along, these alignments through conjunctions and disjunctions, persuasive relations, that seduce others into allowing themselves to be diverted out of their own timed passing and be carried along solely within and on the terms of the resounding lines. A music-gest can only secure itself 'as such' by definitively interrupting and displacing the on-streaming of reflexive consciousness's fragmenting meaning-strings, inserting itself into the gap it makes and assuring its 'possession' of this gap for the 'eternity' its passing takes up.⁸⁰ Such seduction's possibility seems to depend on the way all such gests rely on the interrelation between two of its own attributes and one of its listeners.

Firstly it relies on the instruments' voicing preserving audible links with the human voice as both speaker and singer. Despite the dramatic contorsions which instruments' perform on the human voice, they retain unmistakable affinities with it that arise not only from their own specific debts to the vocal qualities that gave rise to their emergence, but also and crucially from the continuing close collaborations across all musical zones between singing and instrumental accompaniment. Cross-culturally, and quite aside from my concern here with the compulsive performing that makes solely for art, such collaborative events are probably the commonest form of music-making.⁸¹ And in these collaborations the singing voice, with rare exceptions, is singing words that, however they are aligned to 'fit' their musical accompaniment, are both drawn from ordinary language and aligned in conventional (or at least audibly accessible) ways that allow them to bear and reveal the significations that mark their routine functioning. Singing's words are 'there' to bear 'sense', meanings that, however musically enhanced (intensively inflected), reproduce their use in everyday life. Across the gamut of musical settings from folk-song, popular song, ritual song (the near universality of singing in religious rituals), choral and solo singing in the classical tradition, through music-

⁸⁰ In proposing 'listening' as hearing's 'intensified extremity', Nancy makes the point that music, as a 'syntactic' without a 'semantic', requires a listening that listens 'to something other than sense in its signifying sense'. He figures the body as 'a resonance chamber or column of beyond-meaning'. Music is the 'art of the hope for resonance... its resounding in itself'. See J-L. Nancy, op. cit., pages 34, 32, 31, and 66.

⁸¹ The music that I characterised as 'incidental' (background music) at the beginning of this chapter, and which is a routine constituent of the programming of the machinery of representation (all the electronic mass media), is performed not only in an intimate relation to the mass of ordinary language (speaking and texts) that surrounds and permeates it, but in this intimacy it performs an unequivocally subsidiary role to the languaging which rules its use.

theatre to opera, singing is the ‘medium’ that maintains ordinary language in an intimate indissoluble relation with instrumental music.

The second attribute, characteristic of almost all vocal and instrumental collaboration, is repetition, whether directly or through modes of variation which allow that which is repeated to be heard ‘within’ the variation. Many forms of repetition characterise musical performance across all genres and I have already drawn attention to the role specific repetitions played in Messiaen’s ‘Quartet’. But where singing and instruments are performing together, and none more so than in the varieties of popular music, the repetitions (of, for example, the intertwining of melody and harmony with the words constituting the verses and refrains) are the performance’s ‘point’; *the joint performance enacts a celebration of repetition itself*. Its potential seduction lies precisely in its accessibility as ‘repeatedly’ reinforced through its various repetitive motifs. And this opens onto the attribute brought to a performance from the other side of performing by its listeners, and which, in turn, is closely related to the impact on making-for-art of the electronic revolutions in the machinery of representation, and, as I have already discussed in relation to music, the digital proliferation of the means of recording and transmitting it.

Performing as and for Remembrance

Because the life of every musical performance, whether making-for-art or whatever else, is its becoming-embodied as an almost immediate disappearance, the plurality of musical genres and forms rely on drawing listeners into their out-soundings through a simultaneous seduction of attention and *an appeal to memory*. The enormous range of conventions for formally structuring musical compositions and performances play off patterns of repetition and variation that they anticipate will be heard and will form the music’s ‘appeal’. Remembrance is the key to the recognition of what ‘returns’ as repetitions and variations. In folk and popular music the words and meanings may develop as a rhythmically and melodically revealed ‘narrative’, but what returns insistently, what delivers this narrative, is the usually relatively brief melodic harmonically patterned line with its accompanying rhythmic ‘phrasing’. In much longer performances, whether purely instrumental (symphonies, concertos, suites) or collaborative voice-instrument gests (operas, masses, requiems, choral gests), the structured repetitions and multiple variations may be temporally distant and more elaborately ‘disguised’ but still available in differing forms. Performance, precisely because it seems to disappear in ‘no time at all’, relies absolutely on these procedures for attracting and holding (seducing) attention, for establishing the difference of its other-than time.

If, as listener, one can’t discern as attractive (and, perhaps simultaneously and more ‘strongly’, surprising, shocking, delightful, erotic, or whatever...) and then remember and maintain in one’s latent memory (very ‘close’ to the sounding surface that passes one by even as it insistently seeks to hold one in its grip as just this passing away) at least some of the elements as they return in a variety of shapes, then the music’s passing will at the least lack any sense of the gest’s motivated shape, its aligned intensive contours. If music’s attraction lies in the strangeness of this disappearance and the necessarily frustrated ‘longing’ that it seems to provoke (for that which can never return), the memory activated in and as the course of its passing is surely crucial to this attraction. But once recording, as the agent of infinite repetition, took over music and became responsible for its everyday life, irrespective of genre, performing’s relation to listening was utterly transformed with consequences that, as I have tried to show, we are still coming, haltingly, to terms.

In this undoing and re-siting of music (as a matter for performing-composing), remembering's 'role', for both performers and listeners, has also necessarily been transformed. For under the rule of infinite playback of an abstract of a dead performance, the seduction of disappearance (of loss) itself begins to disappear and be displaced by other more 'distanced' and context-loose relations. The ease of endless repetition facilitates remembrance at the same time as it may induce incipient boredom and a fall away in the erotic attraction of that which (no longer) dies away. If remembrance through repeated playback enables listeners to be able to voice (at least elements) of a dead performance (to sing, hum, or murmur aloud or to oneself either along with or after listening to the recording), then the recorded dead voicing itself (seemingly captured for all 'eternity'...) all too soon comes to voice nothing other than its simple death. Or at best it offers a sense of frustrated nostalgia through the disturbing recognition that this thing that now seems so close, so present-to-hand, is as far distant and just as inaccessible as the most ancient archeological findings. A dead voicing is just that, no matter when the living-death of which it is an abstract was sung-played - material for stock-piling in the archive.

It may seem that, in drawing on Messiaen's description of his 'Quartet' as a stammering and offering this as the defining 'difference' of all musical performance as it makes-for-art, I am implicitly tying this performing to a specific interpretation of ordinary language that, in giving primacy to the speaking voice, seems to ground music in something outside itself. And certainly, as I hope the above discussion has shown, I want to affirm that stammering is indeed music's mode of becoming-embodied, how it has always exposed itself materially and continues to do so under a modernity that has generated both a multiplication of hybridised musical genres and ways of representing these that have revolutionised the life of performing and response to it. But I want to emphasise that, despite the undoubtedly intimate ties between language, voicing and instrumental music, performing not only effects a defining scission between itself and the practices of ordinary language but also can be taken, through where this scission 'situates' it, as reversing this possibly grounding relation. By opening up and performing in the gap between sense (language signification) and non-sense (the noising of chaos) it can equally be taken as the ground, the impossibly archaic (pleistocenian) sourcing, of language.

At the least, the zone in which performance seeks to establish itself ambiguates this very question of origin. The collaborative oscillations between and fusions of musicking and languaging render such questions of definitive originating beside the point, for the 'two' remain both inextricably linked by affinities and associations but, simultaneously, *definitively other to each other*. Nor can we attribute such an 'origin' (voice as origin/originating) to some knowable unified 'subject'.⁸² Indeed, the question that a sensitively reflexive performing has to continually confront under the conditions of late modernity concerns precisely the demands that this interlinking makes on it. For, as I argued earlier, performing's defining 'condition' now is its being surrounded and permeated by the ways language makes itself felt under the institutional rule of the machinery of representation. The latter's interest in

⁸² In his commentary on J. H. Prynne's poetics, and specifically his poem 'Again in the Black Cloud', Stone-Richards suggests that the poem proposes that no answer can be given to the question 'what is the source for the voice in action?'. The question leads 'to the question of the absence of subject. Actions (not persons) seem to occupy the grammatical position of *active* voice...'. Such actions arise in what Prynne calls 'the open voice gap'. See Stone-Richards in Dobran, ed., op. cit., p. 226.

its 'use' of musical performance centres on recording and distributive transmission systems that seek to guarantee rapid and infinitely repeatable play-back anywhere.

Modernity's emergence across the arts seemed to promise the release of performing from its traditional dependency on powerful extra-art interests which had fixed performing's terms (the what, how, and where of its making). With the gradual dissolution of these traditional controls performing's defining 'question' turned around what it could and should do if it became responsible for its own 'end'. What it could not have anticipated was that the vacuum, created by the erosion of the sites of traditional control over the arts, would be steadily filled not by its own self-management but by entirely new modes of institutional control that emerged in the course of capitalised technoscience's development of the machinery of mass representation. Whatever performing now does can only make its public appearance on the terms (its interpretive languaging, programming, and marketing) of this machinery. Let us not imagine that occasional ephemeral appearances on the world-wide-web can compete for attention and response with the controlled 'effects' of the machined institutions that manage the representation of the arts. While performing's relation to its own past (the weight of the conventions for performing's activities) has indeed been revolutionised, what the 'industrialisation' and different 'politicisation' of performing required, in its taking over of the business of inserting the arts into the market place as complexly valued goods and services, was precisely the maintenance of key traditional 'markers' of what art 'was' and 'did'. In the co-optation of music-making in all its genres into the machinery of representation, with its promise of a minor-mass market for performing and a hoped-for guarantee of continuities of output and response, the machinery represents itself as the universal master-controller, archiver, and narrative-constructor, of all zones of 'cultural activity'.

'Saved' Tradition and Repetition

This conglomeration of inter-locked institutions has indeed undertaken (this is the point and thrust that defines its continuing everyday operations) a re-valuing, and thus a re-invention, of 'tradition' as that which it had to save and incorporate into its archive. 'Saved tradition' has thus been represented and endlessly re-mounted, not merely alongside whatever contemporary performers are offering, but, crucially, as their sheltering umbrella under and within whose overarching insinuating narratives they may be allotted a temporary place and protection. In this re-assertion and carefully controlled steady release of tradition, the representing machinery has obviously been aided enormously by the development of both recording and modes of telematic transmission during the twentieth century. Tradition re-appears as 'text' - its social life re-constituted in the course of the machinery's routine interpretive work. The textured veil emerging in this work, eliding 'value' with meaning-as-information, is that through which we come to perceive tradition in its now unequivocally clear narrative clarity. What used to be the hazy, indefinable, and above all, silent hidden 'content' of a gest, its unreflexive accepting participation in a back-ground texturing in whose weave every emergent gest is stitched (or not...), is displaced by the veil's self-confident and intelligible narratives whose point is to put every thing in its allotted place.

In the case of performing music the means of this re-assertion and maintenance of tradition have turned around the preservation of the traditional forms and means through which music's intensities were exposed. And the overarching value, now developed to double as both the means for and the content of the institutional representation of performance itself, is 'repetition'. The patterned repetitions that I discussed above as defining constituents of

music's 'internal' structuring, its formal means of re-sounding as a stammering, have been lifted 'out' and applied as the organising 'rule' for its 'external' representation and cultural distribution. This practical insistence on the necessity of preservation by re-sounding occurred across performing's critical constituting zones. I noted above that, in spite of the fervor of invention and experimentation that characterised modernity's cultural emergence, the repertoire of instruments used in western music-making remained almost completely static; instrument production was refined and industrialised to meet the changing conditions of out-sounding under an emerging mass market, but the collection of instruments responsible for music's re-sounding affirmation of a 'given' (dodecaphonic) tonal system has remained effectively static for several hundred years.

This invariant continuity is the complement to the emphasis placed at all levels (education, training/certification, employment) on creating a musical work-force whose acquired musical vision and skills centred on repetition of gests that comprised the now long precedent and carefully archived tradition of western music. The intensities of the forcing that 'is' music's passing were shaped in ways that insisted on the primacy of repetition, through the existing repertoire of instruments of the gests constituting tradition. What was being represented as the object of desire was that, echoing the 'known', with which one was already familiar and whose possible satisfactions thus turned around the comforting pleasures of familiarity - return of the known; the gests taken to be bearers of culturally transcendent 'values' (a listening experience supposedly linking one with that 'past' in which the gest was generated and, through this, all other pasts) were those that had been developed in and as a response to utterly different socio-economic and cultural experiences. And both the structural formations of these gests and the instrumental groupings for which they had been composed came to mark a centre ground and thus a kind of standard and a set of implicit guides for contemporary music-making.

The collaborative relation with ordinary language in music-making maintained the same pattern of repetition. The 'presence' of ordinary language within gests, from large choirs to solo singers, offered such language in the form of songs and librettos that preserved the texts, whatever their origins, as the bearer of 'meanings' to be complemented and enhanced by their musical settings. Through the interpretive work characterising the expanded role of the academy in reproducing a musical work-force in the twentieth century, the formalisation (abstraction and distancing) of speech and text could not but permeate the experience of nascent performers as they were being prepared to continually re-generate an established repertoire and construct the formally repetitious 'incidental' music that became the staple output of the now well-established studio-recording system. The system for reproducing music that is represented as definitive of 'art' is thus geared to offering an experience of music in which what is repeated (and thus confirmed and consolidated in this very process) is 'repetition' itself. Under this regime it is the familiar repeatable that marks the centre from which judgments about art, its intensities, affinities, thresholds, and edges, are made. Within this organisational regime it is hardly surprising that the constructing and performing of 'new' music responding to its maker's context and contemporary moment ('the time of the now'...), is marginalised and effectively represented as a troublesome aberration which has to be represented in concert programmes now and again to affirm the 'true democratic judgment' and 'tolerance' of the system.

Of course there is an enormous range of such music being made, but the representing context in and perhaps against which it has to feel its way out and insinuate itself, operates 'rules' of

quality and value that take music-as-potential-art ever closer to the programming of entertainment (itself living by and epitomising the experience of repetition as an abstraction that has been made precisely concrete in its being raised to a primary market value) that now encases all making-for-art. What happens to the reconstructed, re-valued, 'tradition' under this rule, because of its proximity to and overlap with the mounting of entertainment, is a hybridisation in which its own boundaries become ever harder to maintain. Its own traditional prime instrument-machines for reproduction (symphony orchestra, chamber orchestra, string trio/quartet, wind quintet, choir, soloist and so on) find themselves endlessly subject to the controlling rhetorics, the representing voicing, of publicity and marketing discourses that are responsible for placing them and maintaining their repetitive work.

Any performing that now seeks to make-for-art on its own terms, that is, to put in question the conventions through which music is represented and performers are brought into a relation with it, is confronted with the encasing machinery that preserves and seeks to show 'saved tradition' through the repeated celebration of repetition itself. This 'saving' project can only be brought off through the ordinary language practices, the representing rhetorics and knowledge discourses that together mount and disseminate this project as the defining matter of institutional work; the endlessly elaborated programming of 'saved tradition' is what performers confront and have to make their way through in trying to sound out their idiosyncratic response to their situation. For this representing work sets up the culture's terms for the supposedly now defining 'secure ground' on which 'art' is being endlessly established. Self-questioning performing finds itself caught up in (this is its everyday life) an endless oscillation between its felt intensities and the knowledge-discourses and representing rhetorics enabling the programme to be sustained as a 'rational' and practically achievable 'cultural vision'. And what confronts it, what it has to engage as the taken-for-granted 'condition' of its own attempts to make-for-art's elsewhere, *is precisely 'repetition' itself*, both as it manifests itself practically and routinely in the bringing off of the programme (the 'programme' as the perfection of repetition) and, crucially, as the operative ontology, the seemingly transcendent 'idea' of what music (as art) 'is' and how it is to keep on 'becoming' this 'is'. It has to search out that which has become conventional and thus powerful in setting out the 'time-space' in which 'art' is assumed 'to happen'.

Is this not what the commitment to take on one's 'present' under modernity (from Rimbaud on) has required of performing? The difference now, of course, is that this 'present' in its obscure mystery, having been coopted by the machinery of representation, becomes absolutely elusive as it disappears into the seeming clarity of this machinery. Surrounded and preceded by the latter, *the 'present' that performing seeks in and as its disappearance is already 'something' whose destiny is to be transformed, seemingly in no time at all, into a concrete-abstraction for play-back to infinity*. It 'arrives', appears-disappears, now as this promise of an indefinite 'repeatability' that seems to abolish its disappearance. For is this not the practical guarantee that is promised in technoscience's now routine transformation of everything, not just into calculability but into machine-readable representing languages across all dimensions of embodied-becoming? 'Late'-modernity is now the practical gathering-up of 'the modern' under and as representation.

Thus situated 'in the midst' (where we all are...), performing's self-probing of its own potential for music has no option but to pass by way of this machinery and make for its far side with something that has attempted a suspension of the conventions of repetition that programmed representation lives by. Certainly it is not, as we saw with the precedent

response of Messiaen in the midst of the crisis out of which the representing machinery emerged, a matter of 'going beyond' repetition as if this were remotely either possible or desirable. Rather it has to seek those threshold sites where the programmed conventions of representation that seem to have already fixed an identity and boundaries for music-as-art ('saved tradition') might be dissolved in the course of taking on repetition's constituents. And, as 'tradition's' 'saving' has been accomplished through complex collaborations between music's many ways of out-sounding and the language-work of the organising appropriating institutional interests, performing has to slash holes in the mesh of this collaboration through which it can flow away into what might still distinguish it. It is in the course of sounding-out this potential difference peculiar to it that performing has to pass by way of, and thus take on, repetition, in order to expose what might still be left for it in its attempt to make-for-art.

Becoming-Intense Between Speech and Noise

The defining challenge for performing, in its search for music's potential voicing-for-art, thus arises out of the specific terms on which music's permanent proximity with the voicing of language are now set; its problem is how to acknowledge its real proximity to this voicing while simultaneously sounding-out the absolute distance that cuts it off from language-as-speech. For, if music always makes its way by seeking to establish its relative independence through leaping away from the voice's ties to language-as-speech, it can only do this by opening up and trying to expand a time-space for itself between the outer edges of language-as-meaning and the chaos of noise. But to remain bound to and wrapped up in its difference while suspending meaning's hold, its out-sounding has to fall convincingly (seductively challenging to the permeating conventions that seek to fix music's current boundaries) short of noise. It has to seek to release the intensities which are peculiar to it, that arise in and as its absolutely peculiar mode of embodied-becoming - its way of passing-through-and-away as nothing but the resounding disappearance of stammeringly aligned sounds.

Performing reserves its character as just-music when the time-enclosed alignments it coaxes out of its whatever-instrument/voice combinations generate affects (movements of becoming) other than those available to speech's out-sounding ways. If it collaborates, as happens frequently, with voices (singers) its driving concern has to be the unequivocal subordination of the voice's 'text' (its good sense as unaccompanied writing-speaking) to the transformation wrought by the music's aligned encasing of the text. Thus music has to be heard performing a definitive cut in the text's relation to a speaking voice; and crucial to this cut is the singular mode of stammering-stuttering through which it resounds. What the music seeks to Say in its alignments are precisely the affects denied to speaking-reading. But the complexity of the challenge performing faces under late-modernity - to find and perform those alignments which might release such affects - arises precisely from the infiltrations of representing interests into all dimensions of music's emergence. In its routine, programmed, re-sounding, music issues as the vehicle for the representing machinery's requirement to hold up 'saved tradition' as the criterion for judgments about art's presence-absence. Whatever its genre of music, performing's stage has already been set on representing's carefully managed ground. To voice difference, to align soundings that assertively stammer forth intensities denying the authority of this centre-ground, is to court at best indifference and and at worst simple dismissal. *Voicing's leap has somehow to by-pass what it is that the centre represents.*

If both speech and music find their possibility in the human voice, sharing it as their common sourcing but making off in very different directions (the former splitting off into and being

embraced and used (together with writing) by language as the means for making sense together, and the latter splitting off into a rhythmized pitching out of which song (vocal and, by transformative extension, instrumental) emerged as a site of specific affective intensities (aside from sense), then a consideration of some of the ways voicing-for-music effected its move away from sensible speaking under the demands of modernity may open onto the defining challenges faced by contemporary performing-for-art. For is not performing's struggle across the arts continually engaged at the always unboundaryable threshold where 'making sense' (spoken and written intelligibility) and 'affective feeling' (distinct or synaesthetic emotive responses to sensuous experiences), crossing each others' paths, both move the other while resisting their respective absorptive seductions? And is not a defining perennial question performing puts to itself that of how its *gest* might draw out and expose, at and as its conjunction of its context's pressing demands with its exploration of 'what goes on' at the 'sense-feeling threshold', that which might just enable it, on the way toward Art's Body, to resist its appropriation and absorption by 'good common sense'?

The abyss, the awaiting near-emptiness of the open 'passing-spacing', that hovers between the commonsense world of speaking together and noise's chaotic background hum, seems to offer a variety of potentially different zones for music's out-soundings. Wherever performers engage music some kind of leap out of languaged sense is entailed. But in the vast majority of popular music genres singing is co-present with the music - performing generates a hybrid through the attempted combining and fusion of a speakable-writable text with a range of musical components (melody and harmony as the common elements). Verbal language as the 'bearer' of hearable and interpretable 'meanings', though modified through modes of alignment (pitch, versing, sequencing, and repeating), remains as an ordinary and defining constituent of the performance whose point is to render meaning in and as song. Certainly the leap into music via song seeks a difference but, far from entailing the abandonment of linguistic (vocalised) meaning, this difference remains bound to and dependent upon the languaging voice. The musical elements perform a complementary role as possible enhancing emphasisers of the moods and affects that are already, implicitly, 'there' in the sung text, for it is the rendering of such meaning-through-affect that is at stake for the singing-as-meaning-something. Wherever voice(s) bear(s) 'sense' in conjunction with a music that is both ordinary 'accompaniment' and 'excess' to accompaniment (its preceding and following of the voice(s)), the music tries to inhabit and generate a para-linguistic world, in which its prime role is to be voice- and meaning-responsive, *in other words to end up making sense*. It binds itself to sense, to the expected desire for intelligible interpretation, and thus to the aligning ways of speaking-writing (the construction of 'stories', however brief, through a syntax that assembles relations ordered through the continuities of reasoning's reasons). In this zone music-as-voicing remains under the spell of ordinary language use.

And perhaps there is an adjacent zone whose contours and content are defined by the multiple forms of music-making in which, despite there being no literal vocal participation 'within' the *gest*, the ties to languaged sense are almost as strong. For surely where the musical *gests*' out-soundings live through taking for granted and reproducing those known and theorised conventions of musical 'knowledge' established in the course of analysis and the theory and practice of music education, *as is the case with 'saved tradition' as a constantly re-gathered object of knowledge*, then any offer by performing of the infinite 'variations' that can be developed to exercise and illustrate this knowledge are tied unequivocally to speaking-writing's languaged sense. The possibility of music's difference being sounded out, of performing embodying its becoming-as-such (and thus of making it over to Art's Body), are

eternally deferred where performing operates within and under such conventional knowledge. For what it makes hearable are the reiterated conventions (sounding's now taken-for-granted code) that have already been given a 'life' as the spoken-written texts of knowledge; and it is precisely such knowledges that are now the means and the 'contents' of the info-representing machinery permeating all areas of 'performance'. The bearer of this code is still the speaking voice that, in informing the performing's texture, can be 'heard' (silently) resounding through and within such gests as their secure prop. Almost all of the music that is institutionally mounted (programmed reproduction) reiterates this speech-informed voicing of the reassuringly familiar; the instruments' 'voicing' bears within itself a silent unison 'singing' in perfect harmony with the spoken text that both justifies and accounts for its out-sounding. Such performing enacts an explicit refusal of art's demand that it seek the terms of an out-sounding that might just register the singularity that marks its relation to every performing-context. Surely to make-for-art is to search out and materially realise the intimate qualities that make each of these relations the exception that it is?

It seems, then, that to make in hope toward this awaiting exception, through which a fragment of music-as-such might just be exposed, performing has to leap beyond those zones remarked above in which music-making's voicing maintains intimate ties to the voices that are at work in everyday language-use as a making-sense-together. If performing in these zones is characterised by the doubleness of the 'speaking voice', as simultaneously both music's 'sourcing' (as bearer of pitched sounds) and its 'trouble' (as bearer of 'meaning'), then in order to make for music-as-such this 'trouble' (meaning - ordinary language) has to be confronted and either diverted or leapt beyond. Across the multiple ways of trying to expose responses to this search for music-as-such under modernity, there has been a variety of performers who, recognising music's debt to and continuing relations with the voice, have approached this 'threshold' problem by maintaining 'the voice' as an active participant with the instruments in their gests' performances. For such vocal-instrumental combinations enable the performers to make the question of music's relation to the voice as meaning-bearer the gests' defining focus. The music's performance becomes the occasion for exploring and putting into question the primacy conventionally given to the voice as the bearer of sense. In its appearing-disappearing, music offers the possibility of ambiguating this primacy and disclosing the voice's potential for other-than-meaning on music's distinctive terms. In the course of retaining the voice as an essential participant in the gest's passing, 'meaning' might just be made to pass away, be transformed into something else.

The entwinement of the human voice with the speaking of sense can be suspended in pursuance of the voice's other possibilities, not the least being its putative involvement with music's sourcing as other-than-sense. And as, under late-modernity, the machinery of representation has steadily enveloped music-making with speech, performing's attempts to take the voice elsewhere can mark music's potential for opening onto the inescapable and seductively delightful problematic of its own sourcing. A gest's passing, as the appearance-disappearance of 'presence' is a passing through presence that is in advance of and quite aside from either the work of representation (entailing the abolition of 'presence' under the reiteration of play-back) or any vision of meaning's 'primacy' (knowing over feeling). To focus on sourcing's possible components is to attempt to reveal as intrinsic to its gest some of performing's difficulty in maintaining its drive toward art through music-as-such in the 'face' of representing's work.

Sprechstimme

In *'Pierrot lunaire'* (1912), during the period of modernity's self-conscious development across the arts (and thus long before music had fallen under the joint spells of either the representing machinery's play-back or the archive's knowledge-as-information), Schoenberg, already immersed in and exploring the possibilities of non-tonal music, interrupted the traditional relation between music and sense (the conventional voice-as-song-singer). With the *Sprechstimme* ('speaking-voice') that he introduced in this gest he opened up and focussed attention explicitly on 'meaning' as an, perhaps the, abiding problem for the performance of music. In this composition for voice and instrumental ensemble the ordinary language text is performed by a voice that, though embedded in the music's passing according to conventions of musical time (time-signature, speed, etc.), *is no longer 'singing'*. But it is not yet 'speech' either (as we 'know' it in everyday life). In *Sprechstimme* the voice articulates the text within the modulatable dimensions (pitch, speed, intonation, emphasis, rhythm) of the speaking rather than the singing voice; it performs this 'neither-one-nor-the-other' by approaching the pitch at which the words are articulated as variable. What 'emerge' are the voice's words as sounds that may extend slightly the range of the ordinary speaking voice but whose variable pitches rarely seem to coincide precisely with the given musical pitch of the notes comprising the western dodecaphonic system of notation. Yet, through both the ways it is interwoven with the surrounding instruments and the heightening of these dimensions in the course of the text's dramatisation under performance conditions, this voicing distinguishes itself both from singing and from the speech of everyday conversation.

It enacts a speaking that, while drawing attention explicitly (and certainly more clearly and thus accessibly than singing conventionally manages) to the 'meaning' of the recited words, is not gatherable to extant models of sense-articulation. Neither singing, chanting, recitation, dramatic monologue, nor 'just speech', it points up not only its own strangeness but, simultaneously, the strangeness of the context, the 'musical event', in which it is a defining constituent. It thus performs a complex role in which it conjoins and compresses incompatibles by making the words' meaning (seemingly purely verbal and thus extra-musical) acoustically clear and accessible, but it does this through a mode of sounding that cannot be assimilated to the categories ordinarily used to place and make sense of the voice's own ways of making sense. It moves towards the musical sounds that surround it. In this shift it effects a partial suspension of its originating context (ordinary speech) while resisting any unequivocal absorption by the 'formal' requirements for music's 'sounding'. And it enacts this peculiar voicing in a musical context itself constituted through the strangeness (then, and even, perhaps, still...) of Schoenberg's non-tonality. Paradoxically it draws meaning to the fore, but in an alien manner that seems to align it, in the peculiarity of its liting involvement (itself para-tonal in its resistance to absorption within defined musical pitches) with the accompanying instruments, with the latter's non-tonal strangeness as their co-conspirator. Each strangeness doubles the other while managing to maintain its independence.

In this doubling, the gest, confronting traditional acoustics, makes explicit its distance from the conventions for aligning music's out-sounding with the articulation of sense. Yet it offers the performance of this near 'one-off' (*Sprechstimme* appeared again in Schoenberg's unfinished *'Moses und Aron'* (1932)) not as some kind of 'general solution' to the problem of 'meaning's' co-presence with music, but as a singular way of exposing this co-presence as a, if not the, defining drama, and challenging but finally unanswerable question, of how music presences for and to us. It opens out onto the terms on which performing seeks to make music's presence *felt*. It as good as 'says' (performs) that this is music's abiding 'problem',

that ‘meaning’ as performing’s troubling question will never just disappear. The implication surely is that no matter how far ‘away’ from commonsense music appears to have leaped, it will always find the ordinariness of meaning (ordinary language’s good sense) hovering so close that it obstructs music’s turning away. And, if this is music’s plight, then performing may need to keep to the fore the challenges this presents in its explorations of its own potential difference, through continually trying to reveal both its debt to its voiced sourcing *and its necessary aversion to it. It may have to take on voicing without end.* For what that difference has to ensure, if it is to emerge and hold to its own, is that it is not absorbed by meaning and thus turned into a ‘vehicle’ for the latter.

‘*Pierrot lunaire*’s’ goad to performing-to-come is thus to incite it to keep ‘meaning’s’ ways of insinuating itself into music firmly in view while seeking to take music towards its elsewhere. What it definitively undoes is that basic rule of ‘tradition’ (including ‘saved tradition’) that requires sense to enter into relation with music solely on the terms of singing’s voicing. For this carries the permanent threat of subordinating music to the ways of ordinary language. Ironically, music’s very willingness to co-operate with ordinary language and adapt to the demands of voice and text, its developed ways of ‘fitting’ words in among and accommodating them to the elements of its own material passing, may actually leave it at permanent risk of appropriation by ordinary language. In granting words this proximity, making them feel thoroughly at home amongst all those notes, music lays itself open to language’s will-to-possess (as knowledge) whatever it can lay its words on. Like the cuckoo nourished so committedly by its adopted ‘parents’, language can soon grow to dominate the nest-gest (or, at the least, maintain a very firm hold over the way its accompanying musical instruments sound-out music’s passing).

But Schoenberg’s gest, through the seemingly ‘slight’ shift embodied in its re-siting of the music-words relation, shows that *‘sense’ can be made to come and go in whatever way the music demands in the course of trying to hold to the possibility of its difference.* While apparently insisting upon the necessity of emphasising the articulatable hearable clarity of its spoken language components, ‘*Pierrot lunaire*’ effects a scission that dissociates the music-language relation from tradition’s rule. It inaugurates the moderns’ move into the exploration and de-creation of that which music had taken for granted about its affiliation with language. Both in spite of and because of the very clarity of its emphases and modulated exaggerations, the *Sprechstimme* at play in the gest, through the intimacy of its intertwining with the music that surrounds it, offers itself as conjoint with music’s stammering. It is no longer just speech but a co-participant and sharer in the music’s out-stammering of language, its stammering of its way to one side of language. From that point on music could treat the voice’s languaging of sense as an open field of multiple possibilities which its performing could take up according to its, and not language’s, demands.

Nevertheless, in the course of the emergence, steady expansion and eventual proliferation across the twentieth century of ‘saved tradition’ under the auspices of the global representing machinery, it has been the traditional modes of combination that have ruled in collaborations between voice(s) and instruments across all genres. The voice remains as a vehicle for sung texts around which the instrumental music hovers as a complex support. Whatever the combination of instruments and voice (from solo singer, through multiple choir variants, to opera/music-theatre), the convention that dominates the ‘centre ground’ of music’s performance is for the music to accompany the sung-texts as a ‘positive’ foil to those interpretable elements (meaning and mood) of the aligned words to which the performer(s)

choose to give prominence. The entire sustaining operation turns around the organisational need to create an at least mini-mass audience for the musical events it promotes. The latter's familiarity is continually developed through the carefully marketed machined objects generated in the processes of recording, play-back and telematic transmission.

Performing's Relation to 'Origin' Challenged by Electro-acoustic Machinery

In marked contrast to this reproductive work, there are, of course, multiple sites of music-making where the performers seek to preserve the moderns' commitment to make-for-art through the exploratory turn toward their own sourcing - to sound out, transliterate, source as song through treating the intimacy of the relation between voice and music as a site of exploration and experimentation. But such performances are, as I have already emphasised, peripheral to the institutional development of 'saved tradition'. Yet, whilst much of this performing offers itself as an alternative to and an aside from the controlled programmed output that now dominates all 'channels' of the 'air (sound) waves', it has nevertheless tended to adopt an openly positive attitude to the technical developments of the representing machine. It seems that performing's orienting interests under modernity and its afterwards persuade it to approach such developments as opening up new opportunities for exploring and expanding music's own transformational possibilities. In this explicit alliance with the technical-calculative work and productivity of the machinery of representation (perhaps echoing the celebration of technology by the earlier modernists of Italian and Russian 'futurisms') an implicit distinction seems to be drawn between the machinery's structural processes (the application of energy use to the production of new machines for audio-reproduction and transmission for example) and its actual present 'content' under current systems of socio-political and economic control.

Even under the auspices of a self-questioning (post-)modernist commitment to the exploration of music's boundaries and possible 'difference', performers have largely approached the emergent technological developments as if they were the offer of isolatable and essentially 'neutral' processes (and products) that could be cut away from their own contexts of production and use (representation). The tacit assumption seems to be that, once drafted in as aids to performing's own projects (presencing of passing away), such modes of machining would lose all their defining ties (their relations to the processing of the matters, interests and values of representation that, like the eponymous text in 'Blackpool' rock, mark them through and through) to their originating contexts of purpose and use. Unless its own borrowing of the means of representation (its putting itself under the sway, the seduction, of its controlling apparatus) becomes the question that performing takes on, that is, *unless its defining 'reason' for allying itself with technology is precisely to find a way of leaping beyond, of decreating it and undoing its hold over the routine 'life' of auditory perception, then performing remains entangled in the very matters of representation that are anathema to its passing away.*

This opens onto the now pressing (given the pressures to try to make-for-art within the ubiquitous and encasing machinery of representation) question of whether the leap towards art's 'elsewhere', the attempt to show, in and as the very movement of its being-performed, art's difference to what passes for 'the way-things-are', can be carried out from within the means of the very 'thing' that sets up this 'way-things-are' as its given. Is it not the point of these means - the machinery for the representation of everything - to seek to appropriate and tie up *indifferently* all practical projects and modes of embodied-becoming, *including making-for-art*? If the 'worlds' that we hear and see are worlds-in-representation not merely

in ‘ordinary language’ but in and as machine-constituted formats, then, under the rule of electronic digital representation it is no longer ‘just’ a matter of relating to machines that record and transmit a ‘voice’ that has a ‘life’ independently of the recording machinery. For machines can now constitute, ‘invent’, voices (and whatever other sounds) through simulation; such ‘voices’ refer to nothing outside their own means of processing. The machine-modelling of voice-characteristics that can be passed through multiple modes of modulation and transformation allows the production of digitised simulated voices ‘from nothing’. That is, as a result of analytical procedures that entail the disappearance of imitation (analogue) and the substitution of digitally generated models, ‘voices’ that refer ‘back’ to no-one can be ‘produced’ according to whatever selection criteria and coding categories have been programmed into the data-generating machinery.

In earlier remarks on the relation between memory, origin, and the art-gest I noted, through Blanchot, the possible (‘art-defining’) intimacy of the ‘voice-as-song’ (the poem) and ‘origin’. Blanchot elaborates on this relation in his consideration of Rilke’s attachment to the figure of Orpheus in its holding together the ‘song as origin and the origin of song’⁸³. Is not this entire relation, as the song’s, the poem’s, the art-gest’s, defining intimacy, scattered, or, at the least, cast adrift in the course of the translocation of ‘origin’ to the machinery of representation? However ‘far back’ into our Pleistocenian emergence we might journey (recalling both Lorca’s ‘dark beforehand’ and Brooke-Rose’s ‘Subscript’ here) in the course of tracing performing’s meridian, under the force of representing’s machinery, ‘voice’ (and thus all the voicing that ‘it’ might release) is mutated from the rhythmized calling-singing of situated context-bound embodied voices into context-free analytic abstractions without origin. Or at least the ‘origin’ is always re-defined and re-situated anew in and as whatever the particular machinery assembles as the artifice of voice’s coded sounding. Each ‘voice-out-of-nothing’ is machine-specific and detached from any embodied-becoming (except perhaps, and then only indirectly, the embodied-becomings of the machine-makers and -minders (perhaps we are all now, at the least, such -minders...!). The ‘origin’ that sounds out, tonelessly, under representation’s regime, in which all others are subsumed, is that of the machine and the machining of origin. And ‘meaning’ (the speaking-writing of language following the ways of commonsense) is always already at work in this machining. The only ‘voice’ that it houses, its unheard but all-consuming *vox ex machina*, is the voice of calculating-planning that has already put aside all questions of becoming, embodiment, terrestrial rootedness, and the liveliness of originating in, at, and as, any ‘right there’.

Thus when many of the later moderns do take up and begin to sound-out (with great but apparently suspicionless passion) the facilities which the continually self-monitoring and self-complexifying machinery of representation makes available, their focus is largely on the machinery’s potential for supplementing and transforming the range and quality of ‘sounds’ available to them. The machine appears initially as a ‘single’ extra musical instrument to be incorporated into performing for specific sounds previously unavailable through the existing instrument collection. Subsequently, with the diversification, complexifying, and changing scale of the machinery, the machine-as-musical-resource expands to become the multiple that, under the auspices of digital manipulation and the speed of electronic processing, can simulate (represent, stand in for) whatever-sounds in an expanding open field of musical

⁸³ In his ‘dialogue’ with Rilke, Blanchot elaborates the figure of Orpheus as the movement of a metamorphosis which entwines ‘song’, ‘origin’ and disappearing (‘dying’). See ‘The Space of Literature’, op. cit., p. 142, et seq.

‘operations’. Yet its appearance as a suitable (ideal?) companion for performing, despite the enthusiastic welcome given to it by a wide range of performers with very different interests, may be deceptive, troubling even, in the shady but all too dazzling light of its operative affiliations.

For the representing machinery can only constitute such a field of possible ‘art-dedicated operations’ for musical performing through its own absolute dependency upon a very different system of ‘operations’ that under-write and are written into its routine functioning. These define and mark the machinery’s use-potential which lies in its ability to transform and transmit in coded form and at inhuman speeds whatever ‘raw materials’ (images, texts, sounds...) are fed into it. Of course the development of the machinery (both material and social) through which systematic representation is mounted occurs through the practical application of calculative reason to real problems of material transformation and use. The entire process of productive design, machine maintenance and monitoring, in its necessary focus on ‘means’, draws on knowledge-discourses that seek to exemplify the application of calculative rationality to the problems they set up and seek to solve - the productive transformation of matters for use. In this sense, through their application to concrete problems of ‘use’, they are anything but ‘neutral’; they bear within themselves the complex values of a ‘world vision’. Indeed the absolutely concrete problems met in the generation of the programmatic production of representation (or anything else...), *that is the transformation of one thing into another*, demands nothing less. Transformation is always ‘about’ the differential valuing of the relative ‘states’ (the before and after) of the matters transformed. Further, in the very changes it induces it displays the power, as an assertion of its value, that it takes to effect its transforming work. For representation’s abiding and defining concern is how to mark out, secure, and intransigently defend, its ‘place’ within the derivation, ordering, and control of real powers. It is not merely a participant in the systematising of the ways in which power operates and appears, but a key constituent in its routine maintenance.

Obviously the representing machinery’s intrinsic involvement with the bringing-off of power has nothing to do with the project of making-for-art, except as trouble and challenge. For it is the defining frame-fix which performing, in seeking to make its commitment to art coincide with its life-potential, hopes to undo and slip away from. Yet, in making-for-art through music, performing has tended toward a collaboratively adaptive relation with the machinery’s transforming processes. In focussing almost exclusively on the sounds and the processes of manipulation which became available to them, performers simultaneously turned away from the speaking-writing which, in underwriting the machinery’s developing operations, enabled their ever more complex intrications with the ‘bringing off’ of power in its distribution across institutional interests. The ‘voice’ of calculative reason and its empirical applications, the ‘inner’ voice informing everything that the machinery is ordered to do, treats all its potential materials (terrestrial and social - organic and inorganic earthly matters and human relations) as ‘things’ indifferently, as nothing but the potential objects of knowledge necessary to its operations of exposing everything as controllable ‘surfacings’ of information. This is the voice that performing has to shut out and pass over if the machine is approached in awe and wonder at its extraordinary transformative powers. When responded to as a fundamentally beneficial supplement to the musician’s ‘armory’, a transforming provider no longer of voicings coming from somewhere in particular, but of disembodied sounds lying in wait for their operations (eye-hand coordination confronting keyboard-mouse-cursor-button), has not the representing machinery already in practice coopted performing to its own implicit

interests and operations? And if so, do not such operations abolish, or at the least set aside as a matter of no further interest music's circling of 'song', 'origin', and intimacy?

How did those later moderns, who have treated the developments in the machinery of audio-technology as a potentially positive and constructive aid in music's making-for-art, confront this matter of the intimacy of song-poem and origin? With what did they have to come to terms in their attempts to sound-out music's difference, to probe its potential for moving us away from that which we have taken for granted about our embodied-becoming, and with which we were already familiar as the legacy of 'saved tradition'? What confronted them was meaning's inseparable entwinement with that very zone of embodiment for which they themselves felt the greatest affinity, and which they felt was both music's source and its still infinitely open elaboratable potential - voicing's promise of its separation and purity-to-come. But to get to this separate zone of sounding they had to persuade voicing to put meaning aside, to become something else altogether, to sound-out possibilities of voicing that 'saved tradition', constrained within its anachronistic legacy of familiar and constricting rules, could never stomach or understand. They thus had to begin from within their and music's entwinement with voicing.

It is in the course of this singular focus, this attention riveted to voicing's possibilities for sounding out zones of experiencing specific to music (the out-of-time, Messiaen's 'eternity' right here), that they focused their attention almost exclusively on the machinery of representation's potential for the production of 'content' (specific sounds). Devotion to this focus meant that they were turned away from that machinery's disembodied 'embodiment', from what it might 'represent' through its continuing routine enactment of both a 'world vision' (the calculative thought of technoscience) and an associated language practice (ordinary language as the vehicle for the coding of unequivocal information). Their focus was on the machinery's fabulous potential for sound-conversion and -generation and not on its constructive means of processing everything (the rules that governed what and how it re-constituted everything according to the interests, the powers, the relations-to-world, embedded in these rules). It is through the passionate attention devoted to this singular focus on voicing, with its turn away from the operations (work) in which machined representation constructed its relation to 'world' and embodied-becoming, that they welcomed the machinery's powers of sound-mutation and meaning-dissolution. They still had to pass by way of voicing to arrive at the transformational potential the machinery seemed to promise. To get to a zone where music might sound out what (if anything...) was peculiar to it required it to take on and perhaps re-constitute precisely the terms on which intimacy, song, and origin were or could be convened.

If voicing is that through which the intimacy of origin and song is preserved through their mutual 'appearance' as a conjoint reverberating, then this intimacy, sounding-out through the rhythmized stammering of the song-poem, is still the bearer of 'meaning'; the poem-as-inspired-singing offers meaning's 'origin' as this invisible pre-text, *a voicing that is aside from all writing*. The poem-song makes itself felt as meaning's emergence in the stammer's reverberating drive. But when music-making enters the scene, seeking to participate in and respond to the conjoining of song and origin, meaning is still in play through what the poem-song's words bear in their reverberating invisibility. This is where music-making's challenge begins. For if it is to display its affinity with and debt to voicing, while at the same time striking out on its own by performing that mode of invisibility which is peculiar to it, it has to find a way of suspending, laying aside, or at the very least relativising, meaning's power, *the*

sense which words carry of their grasp of things outside themselves. If the meanings are only available in the words' invisible sounding then the poem-song-*sprechstimme* has already cut itself off from writing's visibility. The meaning of the written text emerges in its difference precisely through a visible fixing that allows us to go back to it time and again. With the singing of the poem-song the meaning coincides with its reverberating passing away. And it is the invisibility of this passing away that opens up the opportunity for music's entry; for music, *if only it can set meaning aside*, is surely the 'purest' mode in which this invisibility is reverberatingly embodied. This is the difference whose audibility it seeks to disclose, explore, and celebrate.

To sound out its affinity with and its debt to the invisibility of voicing's origination it has to begin with and respond to its sharing of this 'same' zone - it disposes itself to take off from the rhythmized stammering through which the voice delivers itself as this invisible generation and passing away of meaning. Music thus seeks its beginning in this sharing of meaning's possibility as a sounding-alone. But in order to go it alone, to undertake the exploratory disclosure of what it begins to feel it is all about, it has to do something about its apparent ties to meaning through the voice's involvement with words. It thus seeks to leap away, to open up a gap between itself and meaning, by committing itself to that which it has picked up from the voice - pitch. It pitches itself elsewhere, taking with it that which it deems to be essential to voicing (toned pitching), but, in the course of its journey, sloughing meaning off. It can hear that the potential exorbitant expanding-contracting mutations of the voice offered by pitching will enable it to leave meaning far behind. It thus realises that what it can do with pitch is to engage other matters of embodied-becoming than those which are gathered around words' offer of both sense-in-common and the rules of 'saved tradition'.

This juncture, where voice's pitching can be severed from meaning, marks the 'point' at which the representing machinery's potential aid to performing is recognised. For performers can see multiple ways in which voicing's intimacy with origin can be preserved (as pitching) while, simultaneously, performing withdraws it from its participation in ordinary language. Performing opens up and begins to stretch out a transitional zone in which language's functioning as a meaning-vehicle, through the syntactic relations between its words, is audibly 'undone', de-formed, in the very course of holding on to voicing's offer. Music-making's seemingly intransigent bond with meaning, within whose terms it has been held throughout its life to date and which has defined its socially organised mode of embodiment (as an ever-changing balance between accompaniment and subservience to speakable-writable rules of 'good' form), is undone and other possibilities emerge. In the collaboration with electronic machinery the potential for expanding the sound-horizons within which music's thresholds could be explored, aside from any subservience to the voicing of commonsense, was immediately apparent.

But perhaps what was not so obvious nor foreseen in the course of this displacement of meaning's role in performing's life, was that the seemingly amicable collaboration with machine-processing might simultaneously constitute a new bind with whose different but potentially similarly life-defining consequences performing still has to come to terms. The collaboration begins from within the midst of and builds on the already institutionalised recording-play-back process, some of whose effects I have considered. But once the continuing revolutionary changes, in both the processes of recording and the ease and flexibility of access to them, are taken for granted as now just routine constituents of performing's 'life', then the bind silently but inexorably tightens its grip. Through what it

comes to rely on, music is hybridised machinically; and in the process it is returned, or rather, perhaps, it returns itself paradoxically, to meaning, but in ways that may have little to do with maintaining its affinity for and affiliation with the voicing which has been the goal of music's unending searches.

Across many contrasting gests and musical commitments, a range of later-modern performers, focussing their music-making on voicing's involvement with ordinary language in the course of their attempts to sound-out music's difference, set aside the traditional ways of combining the voice with musical instruments: the sung rendering of 'texts' either by solo singers or choir accompanied by one or more musical instruments. 'Stylistically' very different, and without remotely forming any kind of a 'group' formed around some shared vision of music's possibilities, many performers nevertheless converged practically around a recognition that electronic machinery might help them in their explorations of music's debt to and involvement with voicing and meaning. This recognition emerged, of course, out of extensive involvement as practicing musicians with performing's now taken for granted dependence, as a publicly accessible art, upon the machinery of recording, reproduction and transmission. And within this recognition it was the machinery's 'gift' of repetition that was the defining enabler and focus of their performing concerns. For the ability to 'fix' and 'store' a sound in electronically activatable materials (initially on 'tape' that could be cut up and spliced) that could then be repeated, manipulated, and re-sited on whatever terms an emergent gest required, enabled performers to experiment with new ways of exploring voicing's extendable relation both with the 'material' components of music (pitch and tone differences for example) and with conventional musical instruments and voices. The resulting gests thus range over an open multiple of sound-source combinations, from electronic machinery alone through to the complex interplay of electronic sound with 'live' voices and instruments. At stake for performing is art's quest for a voicing that seeks to sound out the idiosyncratic terms of its intimacy with a sourcing origin in those reverberations of embodied-becoming that have let meaning go.

It is the speaking-singing-chanting voice, the voice releasing sounds that come out as an audible 'shaping' of meaning-bearing words, that defines the focus of a range of gests in which the sound-transforming and reproductive functions of electro-acoustic machinery are exploited to open out a transitional zone between spoken language and music. In these gests it is the voice or voices as articulators of spoken words that provide the materials for transformation. Just as the making of music by conventional means requires a move away from many of the voice's seemingly 'natural ties' to the verbal articulation of sense, so in the electro-acoustic projects the performer-composers have to 'position' themselves differently in their listening project. At the least, 'composing-performing' becomes a back-and-forth itinerary between two stances in order to generate gests in which meaning and sounding have been pulled apart from each other, only in order to be 're-united' in and as an ambiguously autonomous sound-zone partaking of both but identifiable unequivocally with neither. In such projects it is as if the defining condition for their transformations is the necessity of a forced split, the opening up of a caesura, in the 'natural' intimacy between the voice's sounds and meaning. This, of course, is the precise 'space' in which, recalling Blanchot's discussion of the Orphic project, *poiesis* seeks to immerse itself in sourcing as fusion rather than splitting.

But in this re-siting (making for music differently) spoken words are heard not in their 'unity' but as the offer of an invisible double, two dimensions that can be analytically separated according to the listener's standpoint. For it is the hearer who has to decide both on 'where'

to 'stand' as a listener, 'what' to listen out for, and 'how' to listen, to the now analytically separable dimensions of sound and sense. The voice has to be approached, *and then held at a distance*, as a voicing that bears and displays, however it sounds forth, a double potential to be simultaneously both sense-carrier and sound-reverberator. It is, of course, precisely this near-analytic stance toward sounding (the performer-becoming-para-linguist) that lends itself so well to the systematic functioning of the electro-acoustic machinery whose every component matter and process is a product of the rational constructive stance of technoscientific analysis.

Origin, Voicing and Electronic Transformation

This complementarity was exactly what Stockhausen made use of in his project of constructing every analysable dimension of the voice's (and whatever other sound sources) sounding as a pure continuum of 'smooth' sound. Once separated and sonically analysed, each constructed continuum could then be endlessly transformed according to whatever interests the composer brought to bear on the machined concrete (absolutely audible through the machine's amplification procedures) abstractions. The performer's composition process entailed the systematic analytic breakdown of the array of potential sound-materials into their component parts, and their selective reassembly (re-composition) according to an anticipatory audio-'vision' of the sounds to come that emerged in the course of the analytic operation. Re-composition is thus also a process of invention, for the precise qualities of the sounds-to-come cannot be 'known' definitively until the machinery's functional possibilities have been tested out and listened to attentively from the site of and according to composing-performing's desiring interests. This process entails a demanding experimenting 'dialogue' between the latter 'forces' and the machinery's functional potential which he pursued across a range of gests.

Thus in '*Gesang der Jünglinge*' (1956) Stockhausen recorded a boy's voice singing and reciting a religious text onto tape. Allying his working familiarity with the machinery's amplificatory sound qualities with his procedure of breaking down all the recording's sound components and their reconstitution as continua, enabled him to generate a huge repertoire of potential material. The resulting gest - a composite recording - offered a soundscape whose aural passing, in its interlinking of sounds referring to multiple contexts (language-sense, music, nature, electronics), constituted a hovering aural threshold where sound and sense passed back and forth through and across each other. It remained 'musical' in its responsive manipulation of music's defining dynamics (the gest's movement combining variations in qualities of pitch, tone, pulsing, speeding, and so on) while, in its ordering according to continua, being unplaceable within the existing conventions of music's 'linguaging'. However, as its 'founding' material was the boy's sung-recited text, it is precisely in its audible foregrounding of voicing's strange 'double life' - its invisible compounding of sense and its felt other - that it discloses both music's possibility and its founding dilemma: to retain or dispose of meaning. For this is what the gest's journey performs. Its passing away (already 'denied' in the repeatable recording that gives it its 'only' life) occurs as a drama of alternations, as listening is drawn through the piling up of the compounded continua and the words' (and thus sense's) audible dissolution and fragmentary re-appearance. It is as if the transliteration process that I offered earlier as common to performing across the arts (and specifically in relation to the poem's double life its meaning-differently through its versing-rhythming) is itself here the gest's 'theme' in question. It is the process of composing as inventing that is exposed, audibly elongated before us. For what the soundscape draws us into through this stretching is an audible undoing and re-forming of meaning-as-surface. *But it is*

constituted without ever offering us a possible 'ground' where meaning could be given some security. Sense only returns in barely recognisable shards. In its passing, the soundscape thus tends towards the provocation of a shifting displacing movement of moods and tensions through its seeming to offer meaning (in its hints and pointings) in soundings that always refuse it any unequivocal presencing. It is, perhaps, in this sounding-as-withholding, by still alluding (to meaning), that the gest manages to hold on to voicing as possible sourcing, while simultaneously stripping it of all its conventional authority.

Stockhausen was far from alone in his practical celebratory exploration of music's entwinement with voicing through the constantly developing machinery of electro-acoustic representation. Many composers, experimenting with the machinery's music-potential, took voicing and its ties to meaning's invisible surfacing as music's defining challenge. Perhaps the common key to their practically different performing concerns was (and maybe necessarily still is) that residual element in the speaking-hearing of words-as-meaning-bearers which, conventionally both articulable and hearable in ordinary conversation, can be analytically isolated as the smallest sounding 'unit' in the enunciation of meaning (primarily through and 'in' words) - the 'phoneme'. For this separable minimum sound (the basic building-block for the ordinary vowels and consonants of articulated speech), on whose taken for granted recognition and remembrance of its passing 'moment' (as the implicit emergence - the 'eventing' - of speech) the entire invisible 'apparatus' of language seems to rest, is what voicing makes available simultaneously to both speech and to music. And, like speech, music's movement is linear. The musical phrase or motif, whatever its 'vertically aligned' harmonics, is constituted in this moving alignment of pitched sounds, while the spoken phrase is similarly constituted in the conjoining and interrupting (the stammering forth) of aligned phonemes that are also pitched.

It is precisely this 'in-common' that was the focus of the Italian composers Nono, Maderna, and Berio. In *'Omaggio a Joyce'* (1958) Berio, drawn to James Joyce's play on and experiments with words' sound qualities, abstracted his thematic material from the 'Siren' section of James Joyce's 'Ulysses' and drew out those elements of a word's sounding that offered him scope for their electronic transformation and reintegration into a musical aligning of sounds. The multiple modes of such transformation enabled the composer both to preserve elements of the words' sounding as they 'appeared' in Joyce's text and to recontextualise them in an absolutely distinctive sound-world that, hovering like *'Gesang der Jünglinge'*, in the caesura between sense and sound, constitutes there its idiosyncratic 'take' on this threshold condition. In this context, meaning, while (through the coming-going of recognisable words and their elements) never withdrawn entirely, is displaced in favour of the primacy of unspeakable sounds with multiple affinities, sounds on their way to both music and to the disintegration of both meaning and music into the dispersed but background compound murmuring that points, always ambiguously, to 'nature-culture-cosmos': the echoing of that universal sourcing sought by *poiesis*.

I have considered the above projects precisely because they took the relation between voicing and music's sourcing as their critical and defining focus. In the wider rapidly developing field of musical collaboration with electro-acoustic sound production this was simply one area of exploration among many. And with the subsequent complexification of the available computer technology that continue to produce rapid changes in speed, scale and accessibility, the possible modes of collaboration between this machinery and modes of music-making have expanded dramatically to include, amongst other things, the real-time

participation of computer-use in live performance alongside instrumentalists and singers. Most of such composing-performing has thus given primacy to the use of the technology as a means for extending the sounding-possibilities of the conventional range of musical instruments; as I noted earlier, such projects, sensitive to constant changes in the available technology, tend to cohere around what sound-simulation can offer to music-making. The founding questions of music's 'emergence', 'identity', and relation to performers' embodied-becoming, recede, are perhaps taken for granted as no longer pressing in the face of more 'practical' matters of invention, supplementation, and combination. But perhaps there have been other responses to the question of sourcing.

Rather than the zone of transition explored by Stockhausen, Berio and others, who generated gests offering music as an emergence from and a response to the plight of the human voice - music's defining problem being how it could escape from meaning - the other already explicit (heard always in advance) source is the ever-present 'noise' marked by Serres. And certainly the *musique concrète* (fore-runner of and opening onto electro-acoustic music) that emerged from the much earlier explorations of Varèse, who had recognised and begun to theorise the musical potential of emergent recording technology, took the physical qualities of 'sound' itself as defining music's possibility. The purity of sound reproduction seemingly made possible by electro-acoustic machinery, together with the micro-precision of the interventions and control it enabled, opened a vast field of both research and constructive sound composition that has resulted in the current real-time collaborations for machinery and musical instruments. In the vast majority of such gests, whatever the kinds of sound-sources and construction processes, *it has been hearing and not voicing that has ruled the composer-performers' interests.*

This constructive process began by leaping out of the defining everyday conditions of music-making in order to try to open up an absolute gap between itself and the cultural conventions that marked music's identity and boundaries. This re-definition of music's sourcing material and thus its 'operating' parameters (the physically definable and materially locatable air-reverberations experienceable in their passage primarily into the ear, though also felt by the body-at-large) is closely tied to and dependent upon the analytically distancing stance intrinsic to the knowledge-productive work of technoscience. Certainly air is the indisputably necessary medium for terrestrial embodied-becoming, but most of the time it is experienced not as separable reverberations but as an ear-gathered sounding that is dispersed to many bodily zones in no experienceably countable time. Whereas *musique concrète* and its electro-acoustic offspring begin not from this human experience but from the distance of an analytical construct derived from technoscience's analytic-constructive world-view (biophysics). The idea of 'purity' (of sounding) remains as a conceptual abstraction that cannot be assimilated to a becoming that always experiences its 'own' embodiment in and at a 'right (t)here'.

Whatever the emergent hearable qualities of the sounds constituting the gests arising out of the now commonly distributed and available resources of electro-acoustics, and however seductively provocative their re-soundings, the analytical-typical abstractions on which they rest neither re-open the question of music's relation to origin nor take us any closer to its concerns. If anything they tend to align themselves with and gather themselves around questions concerning operative problems of control and a sustainable productivity; they gravitate to sites of work (the 'places' where questions of power are resolved) rather than those of performance (where power is dissolved as making-for-art, taking its chance on what

might or might not take it over, gives itself over to abjection). The ‘forces’ that ‘drive’ performing toward art, that, filling it to the brim with diverse ‘charges’, draw it through its multiple detours, dissolves, scatterings, losses, and re-gatherings, before allowing it to abandon an idiosyncratic-whatever-gest, cannot be assimilated to the smooth continua that ensure the appearance, the surfacing, of technoscience’s analytical abstractions. Perhaps this ‘ear focus’ makes the acoustic technology primarily attractive, in the conventional division of labour that defines music-making in the West, *to composers* (as always partially analysers and organisers of sound’s possibilities in advance of the event of performance), rather than to performers (musicians who define and offer themselves first of all as ‘players’). Unlike non-performing composers, who may begin with a vision of gathering sounding’s possibilities that is independent of attachments to particular instruments, players have to adapt to the technology, to find ways of ‘incorporating’ it ‘within’ their attempted maintenance of a visceral becoming at-one with their instrument. And certainly to ‘start’ from somewhere other than voicing, than embodiment, is already to have effected a displacement on the site of performing of music’s ‘involvement’ with becoming’s intensities. Can ‘noise’, then, be approached musically on other terms than those of analytic abstraction? Might it offer itself as a different resource in relation both to music and to the latter’s relation to the voice’s invisible sounding out of meaning in languaged speech? Are there gests that, steering clear of the abstract purities of electro-acoustics, might draw us in this other direction?

Performing Voicing in between Noise and Speech: Scelsi and Harvey

In *‘La nascita del Verbo’* (1948)⁸⁴, in the wake of both the early sound experiments of Varèse and Cage on the one hand, and the by then established serialism on the other, but before the take-off of electro-acoustically oriented projects from the 1950’s on, Scelsi offered a rather different ‘take’ on the relation between source, sound, voice, and music. This four-movement piece for orchestra and choir performs ‘the birth of the word’. But what it seems to sound-out, through the transliterative mutations and progression of its movements, is a different sequence of origination, an alternative zone of sounding, to that zone of transition I proposed above through the gests of the electro-acousticians in which music emerged from (and often returned to) speech’s languaging of meaning. For them (and perhaps for virtually all ‘popular’ and ‘entertainment’ music) meaning is the ‘given’ from which music might temporarily escape before falling back into its comfort and support. In Scelsi’s gest the dynamic of emergence, and thus the relation between music and the word (‘meaning’), is reversed. For what it performs is ‘the word’s’ emergence from music’s sounding-out of its own possibilities from ‘noise’. It is as if music is being shown as both bearer of the word to be delivered, and the midwife that enacts the delivery out of itself. ‘The word’, as an emerging fragment of sound that might, through repetition and supplementation, begin to bear meaning in its being spoken out, is, in its elemental form, transformatively released from noise by music, enacted by this specific combination of instruments and voices.

It could of course be argued that the ‘means’ Scelsi chooses for this release are simply the classically tried and tested combination which attach music to and thus display its affiliations with the apparatus of socio-economic power - a conventionally large orchestra (though brass- and percussion-heavy) combined with a many-voiced choir constituted by the full range of gendered pitches. But the sounds he launches follow no convention for either

⁸⁴ The rarity of this gest’s availability in public live performance may require a resort to recording... a rendering by the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra and the Wiener Kammerchor in 2005 is available on Mode Records, New York, 2006, no. 176.

musical structure or role-limitation. What the movements' transitions enact is the mutation from truncated vowel sounds, through phonemes and words, to singable-speakable sense-bearing phrases. In the first movement the nascent vowel sounds, sung by the chorus, emerge from a sequence of slowly moving chords that, pitched predominantly in the lower register and moving harmonically across the dodecaphonic range, are pulsed along in steadily increasing intensity by a range of percussive beats and interruptive explosions. We are invited to hear this throbbing chordal sequence as music's slow selective emergence from noise's compounding of everything (from the most cataclysmic thunder to the merest whisper) into the blank chaos that is the background to everything experienceable. In taking what it needs from this background sound, music thus already holds within itself the word's possibility. And, passing through the movements, the music slowly releases, through the choir's sung articulations (a huge double fugue in the third section and a multi-part canon inter-linking instruments and voices in the final section), words and phrases (for example, *'Deus, Amor, Lux'*) that offer music and speech together as a fusing celebration of this world and the other. At the least, the reversal enacted in this gest complexifies our hearing of music's entwinement with language and disrupts conventions of source attribution. It invites us to 'place' ourselves (and thus to 'hear') differently within the tumultuous in-betweens where music and language seem to dissolve into each other and noise's chaotic compounding is never far away.

In a later gest opening onto the same unavoidable questions for music that makes toward art (its sourcing as a spiralling reverberation through voicing, noise, and language), Scelsi performs, if not a reversal then at least a leap into a very different zone of sounding. From the giant orchestral and choral resources required for *'La nascita'* he moved to a single voice and an idiosyncratic, necessarily unrepeatable, collaboration. His *'Canti del Capricorno'* (1962 – 1972)⁸⁵ is a cycle of twenty 'songs' for solo voice with some minimal instrumental accompaniment on seven of the 'songs'. It depended for both its emergence, elaboration and performance on a unique collaboration with Michiko Hirayama, a singer 'at home' in both Japanese and Western music. Her recording of the cycle at the age of eighty two in 2006, long after Scelsi's death (1988), could be the piece's final performance, for the apparently scant notation of the score gave her the privileged role in defining both the cycle's emergence and its performative possibilities. Indeed the notes' original transcription into something like a score began from a process of collaborative improvisation requiring the transcription of what she sang. The resulting 'text' required her to 'fill in a lot myself what he had conceived musically. Scelsi authorised me to do that.'⁸⁶ Indeed, because part of her vocal attraction for Scelsi was the microtonal inflections of her interpretation of Japanese songs, such transcription is likely to have left open precisely this matter of tone-pitch as being un-writable within the Western notation schema. It seems that this recording (any recording!) could only be an interpretive re-improvisation of what she had contributed 'originally' to the score's emergence. And what she sings (like Josephine it is both much less and much more than 'singing') can not be gathered to any extant 'tradition' of singing let alone score-following.

Rather her performance is an intervention that casts itself between the very zones where culture conventionally seeks to 'ground' music by tying it to some kind of 'code', be this musical-instrumental, speech-writing, or abstractable analysable noise. These are not just 'songs without words' in which the voice substitutes for instruments, nor can her articulations

⁸⁵ Hirayama's rendering from 2006 is available on Wergo: WER 6686 2.

⁸⁶ This quotation is from an interview with Jurgen Kanold in the booklet accompanying the CD; see p. 20.

be gathered around some linguistic unit such as the phoneme, although the latter may seem to put in passing appearances. All such conventions for formalising or placing reproducible (analysable, writable) boundaries round her vocalised sounds have to be suspended, for what is being sounded out simultaneously, as if they did indeed emerge together in some ecstatic ‘moment’, is the mutual reverberating flowing forth of voicing-as-potential, the advance guard that releases an all-at-once-now in which we already hear both the music-and-meaning-to-come in the ‘one’ sounding.

What Hirayama’s voicing releases almost on its own (it is punctuated, supported, accompanied, only here and there by instruments) in this extraordinary performance is neither ‘the birth of the word’, nor ‘the origin of music’, nor ‘abstract noise’; it is perhaps voicing that, in putting its own repertoire to the test and through its paces (the murmurs, gurgles, whoops, dips, falls, surges, stutterings, stretchings, cryings, crooning, slides, jumps, compulsed repetitions, fixings, twistings), pitches itself into that indefinable unfindable gap between what we have become and what we cannot possibly remember about what we had to go through in our post-pleistocenian journey. Yes, the singing recurs through experiments with ambiguous near-phonemes that, while they could be participants in many languages, seem ungatherable to any ‘one’, let alone one with which we might be familiar. Little bursts of crazed syntactic remind us that meaning is probably hovering very close by, but, both despite and because of the precision of the voicing’s soundings, we know it is never going to surface here. And in searching for itself the voice exposes the vastness and malleability of music’s material repertoire, in the process offering us a taste of reverberations which rarely if ever surface within the agreed and endlessly rehearsed musical codes. Strangely for a gest that appears under a composer’s name it discloses, enacts, the absolute primacy to music of performing’s occasioned idiosyncrasy. Hirayama offers us the defining necessary condition of music’s emergence as performing’s unknowable unspeakable-in-advance intensity, a forcing along that entirely fills, is sufficient to, its passing away. And, being message-less, this is all that it leaves for us to try to grasp. We are grasping at straws of course. For by then performing is long gone. In Scelsi’s name, Hirayama takes over the caprice, embodies the goat leaping through his Capricorn songs, spearing them on the horns of her own voice as she saltates them off and away.

If Hirayama’s performance constitutes an interim zone that, in its defining in-betweenness, refuses to point to any resolution of the question of sourcing, then Jonathan Harvey’s *‘Speakings’* (2008) perhaps sounds out something similar but on very different terms. For this gest, too, is a collaborative piece, but a collaboration that seeks to integrate the sound-power of the conventional live orchestra with the live use of electronic power; the computer-programmed modulations of the latter are used to establish a meeting ground between speech fragments transformed into musical ‘lines’ and instrumental sounds modified in live performance to resound as or imply voicings. As the last part of a trilogy composed around the theme of ‘purification’, *‘Speakings’*’ ‘subject’ is the purification of speech. But despite its extensive and complex employment of electro-acoustics, the concern with ‘purity’, while it may share some of the interests electro-acoustic music has in the possibility of machining ‘pure’ sound, turns around the musical exploration and evocation of the Buddhist idea of ‘a pure and original speech’ (symbolised in mantras pitched between speech and song).

The gest, which is for orchestra, eleven soloists, and a live electronic ‘part’ (as the instant transformer of multiple instrumental soundings, the electronics function as much more than ‘a’ part), comprises three ‘movements’ that figure the evolution of language as the passage

from infancy (crying, babble), through moods of adult speech, to a redemptive dying away. What we hear is an orchestration derived from the transformation and transcription of a range of speech fragments into ordinary musical notation. In turn the orchestral writing confronts the challenge of how to make the instruments evoke the moods and stammered rhythming of spoken language; this is performed through the ‘voicing’ of the soloists’ lines which are relayed live by microphone through a computer that recasts them with speech-like qualities. Operating in a now very different technical context (the programming was carried out under the auspices of the computer expertise of Gilbert Nouno and Arshia Cont at IRCAM) to the previously cited guests by Stockhausen and Berio, Harvey confronts the ‘same’ question of sourcing’s intertwining with the voice.

Meaning is again, if not the focus of music’s ‘problem’, that which has to be excised in a way that leaves the sound ‘forms’ (pitching, rhythming, timbre, and so on) as matters that can be given over to music’s ‘purely’ acoustic intensities. The point is to find and preserve, ‘save’, the ‘purely’, the intrinsically, musical attributes of the human voice’s speaking of language and offer them to music alone as its basic, defining matters, matters that preserve within their being musically re-sounded, a voicing able to wander freely through the possible zones of meaning’s emergence, *or perhaps even to re-sound a meaningless voicing*. The voice is to be echoed back through the instruments and the computer as nothing but itself freed of any verbal encumbrance. Yet this ‘take’ on voicing’s possible relation to the emergence of both music and speaking, as what holds the ‘ground’ between them, opens onto an irresolvable ambiguity, and one that cannot be ‘resolved’ by resort to either the analytics of technoscience or a musico-practico demonstration.

Perhaps it does not matter that the sinuous shaping-sounding of conversation’s ordinary speaking, its syntactic aligning of broken continuities as mutual matters for the relation between mouth and ears, *may only take the forms it does precisely because it is the bearer of sense*. Once stripped of its sense the speaking voice has no ‘existence’; it can do many other things without words (scream, sob, murmur, moan, hiccup, chuckle, laugh, and so on) that undoubtedly are context-specific bearers of implicit ‘meanings’ to attentive hearers. But these, in turn, gain their ‘significance’ (as interruptions in, detours around, meaning) precisely from their participation ‘within’ and ‘among’ speaking’s fractured lines. Music that seems to represent (in the case of Harvey’s ‘*Speakings*’ through a quasi-mimesis) speaking’s sounding as a kind of formal armature, one that might be placeable around anything (around nothing meaningful) but that, in the case of speaking, just happens to bear meaning, risks proposing speaking as an abstract function, just one process among many possible ones for which the armature could be adapted. And this may indeed be reinforced by its close association with and dependency on, as in ‘*Speakings*’, the analytical stance, intrinsic to computer programming and the associated machine power, for both its compositional materials and its ‘live’ performance. For what this process risks in the course of its process of extraction (the evisceration of words’ sense that seems to leave us with a passing but now abstract sound) is the simultaneous, if implicit, transformation of both sound-as-armature and words’ meaning-carrying into abstract functions.

At the least ‘*Speakings*’, in spite of its reverberating forth intensities through computer-manipulated (and thus speech-like) instrumental sonorities that may imply emotions characteristic of speaking and conversing, leaves us with the seemingly intractable but open question of music’s sourcing, of whether, and if so how, it may be absolutely bound up with

voicing. However, although this gest may be celebrating the mutual involvement of music and speaking in voicing, by detouring through the computer's analytic frame and allowing its machinery to de-form the instrumental soundings, it performs as hybrid to one side of any 'pure and original speech' on whose sourcing music-making might seek to open. It might even be suggested that such machine-conversion ironises the possibility of such an ecstatic speaking. Precisely through the quasi-mimesis enacted in the course of the computer's manipulated interventions, the mode of music's passing away offered in the gest forefronts its unspeakability, paradoxically (and perhaps parodically), *through a shorn speakability (the instruments' computer-accentuated soundings as now supposed 'analogues' of speaking voices) that has been stripped of its reason for living*. And both performers and listeners become participating witnesses of the re-affirmation and strengthening of that model of music-making as a power relation in which the composer is the master to whom the performer-servants (instrumental musicians) willingly cede control of their intensities. In this instance it is the composer too who cedes some (perhaps even a performance-defining) authority to the collaborating programme designers and operators. But for the performers what they cede are the very instrument-specific sound qualities that they have devoted their performing lives to acquiring and embodying. At the very processing 'moment' of their devoted delivery of these qualities to the gest's emergence, their sound-embodied intensities are removed for distortion and transformation by the programmed machinery into something else altogether.

The now-machined sounds that constitute the performance's passing away in effect excise the performers from the performing's re-sounding; for what is hearable as this re-sounding, by both performers and audience (composer and computer-collaborators included), can now bear only unknowable traces of the intense sounds that the performers cajoled from their instruments. In the course of this transformation the intimacy of the performers' relation to their instrumental sounding is entirely displaced; it is replaced by sounds whose constitution (the overall 'body' of sound listeners hear as the gest's passing) is entirely dependent upon both the analytic abstractions that set up the possibility of the information-processing machinery and the institutionalised power-sourcing that ensures the latter's smooth delivery. In the very 'becoming' of its context-bound performing, the orchestra's traditional symbolic representation, its corporate 'embodying', of a system of power relations external to it, is dramatised, strengthened, and exposed unequivocally in this transfer, this gift of itself as a sounding resource, to the machinery that is the contemporary avatar, the defining figure, of technoscience's domination of 'relation' itself. In spite of its manifest 'appearance' in the gest as a simulation, voicing itself is displaced as sourcing by the machine's digitised abstraction.

Clearly all the gests which result from a collaborative relation with the now exorbitant powers of electro-acoustic machinery necessarily declare their performers' approach to performing as 'beginning' from an acceptance and positive valuation of the machine's provision of the means of sounding-out infinite manipulable repetition. Such a 'beginning' thus seems to implicate the productive machining of repeated-sound with sourcing itself. Whatever the 'content' of each such gest, the zone which their gests constitute together is framed by this commitment to the 'virtue(s)' of machined repetition and an absolute reliance on the reproduction of the recorded manipulated whatever-sounds through electricity-dependent amplification and audio-speakers. By starting from, *taking for granted*, recording and what it offers to music-making (an offer that institutes and makes endemic music's radical hybridisation), performing's apparently founding intense focus on voicing, its

attempt to release the voice's implicit promise to and for music by leaping away from and de-creating meaning, is itself transformed into a dependency upon the necessarily rigidly structured meaning(s) embedded in and enabling that machinery's routine functioning. Such implicit meanings maintain the entire apparatus, music included, in a subservient relation to the systematically organised and forcefully maintained system of power, within which the provision of electrical power is simply the most obvious and explicit sub-system. And it is, of course, that sub-system upon which the means of systematic representation - the machinery of the info-spectacle - depends absolutely. But could there be ways of approaching performing that, recognising performing's limit in and as the passing away of the music its movement constitutes, commit themselves to the exploration of this limit without treating it as an obstacle to be overcome or transformed (technoscientifically hybridised)? And, if sourcing, the mattering out-sounding of *poiesis*, is performing's perennial plight (the pathos of being caught between 'problem' and 'joy') and inescapable question, are there musical approaches to voicing's entwinement with origin (its strange doubling of sound and meaning) that hold themselves to the question of this limit? Perhaps recording can mark an edge to performing's relation with the machinery of power, rather than an invitation to allow its weakness to be absorbed by and transformed into a 'moment' of power's technoscientific functioning.

Louis Armstrong's Scat-ology

While singing the lyrics of '*Heebie Jeebies*' during a recording session with his Hot Five in 1925, Louis Armstrong forgot the words. He continued without a break, substituting audibly literal but meaningless near-phonemes for the forgotten words as he developed the melody. In '*Skid-Dat-De-Dat*' on the same recording session, a performance organised around each of the musicians playing without accompaniment across a sequence of 'breaks', Armstrong moves back and forth between cornet and vocal improvisations-without-words employing a variety of phonemes sung as phrases connected through sustaining and slurs between the pitched notes. By this improvised 'scat' (a word that 'sounds' the first two and last two letters of this latter title) singing, with whose invention he is credited, Armstrong converted his voice into a quasi-instrument.⁸⁷ It quickly became an addition to his musical repertoire, acting as a bridge between his singing and trumpet playing through his adaptation and accentuation of elements of the latter's phrasing and rhythmic approach.

Scat was soon picked up and developed idiosyncratically by other jazz musicians and singers as a way of displaying their improvising credentials through a voice-conversion that enabled the singer to perform alongside other instruments as a participating near-instrument. For what Armstrong, apparently inadvertently, had initiated was a mode of voicing breath-controlled melodic-rhythmic lines which, by abandoning (scat-tearing...) meaning, enabled the singer to radically extend the singing voice's performing possibilities. He intertwined sounding's becoming-music with voicing as that which was aside from meaning.

⁸⁷ At the least, Armstrong is the first to have used this form of vocal improvisation in the course of a public commercial recording. 'Scat' and 'to scat' bear a wide range of meanings and may have diverse etymological sources. Thus, apart from its emergence as a term for the voicing considered here, 'scat' can be a 'treasure', 'tax', 'droppings', 'a blow', 'a spell of weather', 'whisky', 'heroin'; while 'to scat' can be 'to oppress by exaction', or 'to shatter/break in pieces' (Concise Oxford English Dictionary). Clearly the last sense embraces what 'scat' does to 'meaning' in a jazz context; and, as 'droppings' dropped into the otherwise musically 'clean' performance, the vocalisations offer themselves as explicitly scat-ological. But perhaps we should note Clarence Major's comment, added to his confirmatory attribution of it to Armstrong, that 'scat' is 'a kind of spontaneous "sound" poetry that may sound like "doubletalk" to unreceptive white ears.' See Clarence Major, 'Black Slang; a Dictionary of Afro-American Talk', Routledge, London, 1971, p.101.

Scat-singing's out-sounding of musical lines, through phrase combinations articulated in mainly discrete and short but still, for the most part, clearly transcribable letter-shaped syllables, affirms the 'musical voice's' debt to vocable language by retaining some of its elements, while simultaneously not just dropping meaning but aligning itself with the instruments' approach to improvising; this dissolves the sense of supplementation marking singing's relation to its accompanying instruments in every performing context. Neither singer nor instrumentalists can be seen as supplementing the other. The singer-as-instrumentalist no longer needs lyrics or a libretto, for vocal lines can be invented to 'fit in' with any instrumental combination, either to phrase already composed melodies or to improvise variations of their own across any composition's given harmonic and rhythmic patterns. As with both Josephine and Hirayama but very differently, scat, confronting us with the question of what singing is, declines to answer.

Thus voicing-as-singing is transformed into an 'instrument' in a definitive abandoning of meaning that nevertheless, by inventing on the spur of the improvising moment an extended rhythmically, melodically, and harmonically connected sequence of phonetically lettered syllables, exposes the matter of Orphic sourcing as an open question. For in scat the mattering of source - *poiesis* as originating song - is enacted as a performative; in its very embodied-becoming it performs sourcing's hearability as an undecidable oscillating, a becoming that passes away in between the materials of language (whatever can be decoded from its near-lettered out-soundings into language elements that might also bear meaning-elements) and the materials of music (voicing's offer to instruments of its almost infinitely open repertoire of pulsable pitchable tone-variable sounds). In this strange 'take' on music's possibility, scat sounds-out music's (and perhaps meaning's) limits in an undecidable becoming-in-between. Perhaps it is precisely in passing by way of this in-between that the elsewhere-otherness of Art's Body-beyond is exposed as the outside of any 'this-is'. Performing's intensities are drawn out of performers, *and nowhere more so than in music's passing disappearance*, precisely by that over which, within performing's drive, they have no control - that which 'arrives' from elsewhere. Whether a performance manages to offer, to sound-out, hearable fragments of this alterity that, like the clarity of Blanchot's silent narrative voice, remains entirely beyond the performers' control, can be left to the aesthetics of reception.

Perhaps, then, for performers (and sometimes for respondents too) scat sets the question of what singing 'is' aside and resolves it into the mattering of intensities whose specific 'pull' can only ever be felt in the embodied-becoming of music's and performing's event-specific passing away. Precisely by its living within the question, scat seems to propose that it is only ever decidable 'for the time being' in the course of a specific event's seductive but temporary pulling of one toward a conviction about what is primary in sourcing. Such a performance in any of the *literal* arts may persuade one that, after all, voicing's turn through languaged meaning is the well-spring of all modes of becoming, including its transliterative renderings of what it 'receives' from elsewhere: specific language events can only be attributed to and taken as conversions of something already offered by an embracing Language. In contrast, seduction by a particular word-free musical performance may draw one towards attributing its unspeakability to voicing's release of sound prior to any eruption of worded sense; here there is no Language-all-about but only embodiment's sounding-out a way of becoming *through the commingling of its own out-soundings with those sounds all around it - including noise's permanent background*. And both these withdrawals, echoing Messiaen's

‘eternity’, maintain the possibility of the withdrawal, passing one way or another via voicing, into Art’s alterity, the out-of-time not-yet that will not be right-here. On course for this alterity, it exemplifies, through the rhythming of its often rhymed onomatopoeic syncopated aligned phonemes, the art-full stammering that excises it from the sounds and meanings of commonsensing.

Thus scat, itself emerging as a contingent event in the course of jazz’s becoming-public, constituting a leaping bridge between language and music by retaining a memory of language in its nearly-decodable quasi-phonemes, opens directly onto what contemporary improvised music engages.⁸⁸ The latter, as a now open zone constituted by the inter-play of desires and skills from many music-making zones, is definitively marked by what it receives from jazz and the life of the voice within it that makes explicit, unavoidably hearable, the indissoluble ties between instrumental sounding and voicing. But, hanging in between, it refuses resolutely any answers to the question of the primacy of music’s sourcing. Improvising as motif, as compulsively desired goal and performing process, thus encourages and embraces multiple approaches to sounding’s material resources. Each project seeks to mark its own extremity, to take on and expose (resoundingly) what it comes up against (and with) in its sounding-out of its relation to the otherness of music’s unknown limits (Art’s Body-beyond). In some performing zones the thrust may be toward music’s threshold with noise.⁸⁹ In others it may reverberate at music’s edging with language.⁹⁰ Language may also be introduced and revealed as itself an open site where, through the undoing of dodecaphonic parameters of pitch and the detour into microtonality (the mutual concern of both the vocable and the musical), it is expansively and humorously explored.⁹¹ In Joe Maneri’s ‘Rohnlief’, this music-language play (voicing embodying a becoming-with-language, but as neither scat nor sense) enacts an intermingling where, through the ways of *poiesis*, meaning is felt as very near but entirely out of reach.

Jazz, Improvising, Entertainment, and the Ephemeral

As jazz slowly emerged from its early relative obscurity in America’s deep south and began to receive limited representation (‘air time’ via recording and broadcasting initially in almost exclusively race-specific directions) within the rapidly developing machinery of mass communication, it was confronted by the life-shaping dilemma under whose auspices it has subsequently struggled to survive. For it was positioned on the institutional edges of the

⁸⁸ In his exploration of the conceptual context of improvisation, Gary Peters focuses on open improvisation (as a kind of limit case), the challenges it sets itself, and the claims made for it. In taking ‘beginning’ (and thus sourcing) as improvising’s (and, by implication, all making-for-art’s *and philosophy’s*) unavoidable founding question (...how to begin...), he draws the philosophy of aesthetics into an intimate engagement with the interests of performing that has long eluded writers in this field. See Gary Peters, ‘The Philosophy of Improvisation’, University of Chicago, 2009.

⁸⁹ For example, the open projects of AMM (see/hear, e.g., AMM, ‘Sounding Music’, Matchless, 2009), and John Butcher (see/hear, e.g., John Butcher and John Edwards, ‘Optic’, Emanem, 2003).

⁹⁰ For example, the various singing (often with minimalism-influenced instrumental accompaniment) projects of Meredith Monk in which phrases, texts, phonemes, put through variations and repetitions, are disintegrated, collapsed, or re-formed in the course of the voice(s) testing out its extremities in music’s company. See/hear, e.g., Meredith Monk, ‘Do You Be’, ECM 1336, 1987, where the words of the title are already ‘plays’ on conventional elements of scat-singing.

⁹¹ For Joe Maneri “the next five centuries will be microtonal”, and in ‘Rohnlief’ he mingles his coded near-poem in a lilting recitation whose timbres are wonderfully close to the sounds he coaxes from his tenor saxophone. See/hear Joe Maneri, Barre Phillips, Mat Maneri, ‘Tales of Rohnlief’, ECM, 1678, 1999.

entertainment industry as a racially-specific, and thus problematically marked, minority fringe interest. Given this industry's insatiable and ever-enlarging demand for multiple forms of 'popular' music production (dance music, popular songs, show tunes, easy-listening 'background' music, music to accompany other activities) jazz musicians' professional survival depended on their participation in this system of mass musical reproduction. Opportunities for playing jazz occurred in the intervals between this commercially oriented work as there were only occasional outlets for it within the panoply of routine popular music output. Even for those individual jazz musicians and groups who had established some kind of public reputation, and who might occasionally be given niche outings (brief solo features) within the programming of popular music, the context of their music-making was demandingly commercial; the forms of its public appearances (records, broadcasts, dances, small clubs) largely dictated the materials it adopted as musical vehicles (short compositions inflected towards recognisability and danceability, already familiar popular songs from music theatre, the emerging hit parade medley). Such materials were and continue to be constituted through their easily memorable repetitive motifs and structures.

Thus their musical challenge to jazz performance, as a collectively improvised projecting of the strange pathos of black-becoming through this music's pulsing celebration of itself, was to turn these essentially commercial ephemeral musical objects out of themselves and into something else entirely. What the performing event of collective improvisation discovers, and seeks to display, make hearable, in the teeth of this very ephemerality-without-consequence, is a different relation to the ephemeral. It seeks to offer (whatever the mood-substance of its specific composition-vehicles) this music as an opening onto the essential relation between its (and thus our...) passing and ephemerality - to show as a matter of bravura concentrated pulsing the music *as the laying bare of the necessity of ephemerality*. Collective improvising challenges itself to leap out of the ordinary drifting away of clock-time and to expose, through the difference that its absolutely concentrated focus on its own passing hopes to make, the necessity of abyssal disappearance. Of course the other soft little pleasures that it may induce along the way (excitement, laughter, nostalgia, and so on), in meeting a variety of other interests and needs, may serve to camouflage the hardness of performing's embodied-becoming's sustaining itself at and as the edge of ephemerality's nothing-vortex.

But, caught up in the contingencies of the entertainment industry to which it is in part a response, collective improvisation lives within the irreconcilable tensions, the oscillations, that this becoming-in-between entails. In its all too real necessary affiliations it both is and is not 'popular'. Performing's oscillations thus turn around the demands of trying to sustain its 'drive' at this edge (teetering just beyond the brink of time as we live it ordinarily), but constantly pulled back into the orbit of entertainment's demands for banal repetition - amusement without any hint of movement into another zone of becoming, temporary release from the pressures of work but without any undoing of work's routine becoming. Whenever the occasional opportunity arises (little chinks within the programming of popular entertainment) it tries to hold to improvising's implicit theme: to make hearably explicit, in whatever it might invent, something that might expose the difference between the demands made by the sites of its gests' social and musical sourcing (in its early history, entertainment programmed around the 'interests' of the white majority audiences), and the gests' contingent performance as a compulsive drive to alterity, to recall these origins while taking them elsewhere.

In its emergence and for an extended period following, the context-driven challenge to maintaining an improvising project coming out of such traumatic origins has been to resoundingly re-voice the man's white-lite burden into something unspeakably darker. Under the rapid development of the global entertainment industry that now dominates the means of representation, the challenge to improvising is complexified without any radical shift in its necessary affiliation with this apparatus. Through its now planetary diaspora, jazz may have extended its network of musical affiliations and reciprocities of interests through engaging with and negotiating relations with the musics of diverse cultures,⁹² but it still has to seek to sustain its project around the edges of and in collusion with the machinery of organised entertainment. While its re-voicing may now draw on multiple resources, in consequence of its continuing structural placement, it doesn't need much reminding about its own dark origins. It remains endemically 'coloured' by these and renews itself endlessly in musical re-memorations that re-explore the implications of its sourcing in response to the ever-shifting contextual pressures and demands. Such re-voicings seek to perform anew, to re-memorialise, those originating conditions that have remained implicitly ever-present. Caught within its structural trap, every performance cannot but recall and re-live the origin that traps it. But, in its adaptive responsiveness to contextual demands (the collective performing situation), it simultaneously tries to show its commitment to the necessity of *its 'own'* ephemeral as precisely other-to-what-is. It wants its memorialising to embody the difference of what is not-yet, to perform the eternally-not-here right here right now.

Of course, at the most practical level of everyday music-making, throughout this project's emergence and subsequent cross-cultural expansion, its real and utterly routine performing-situation was not just close to but was surrounded and permeated by the all too meaningful voice of America, the voice of a culture driving towards the popularisation of everything through the means of consumptive representation and reproduction. What thus remained to it, as its only available resources and terms of response, were the remnants of its 'own' voice and whatever it could generate through the mysterious coalescence of its own voicing's potential (its many latent voices - largely unheard and unhearable within the means of popularisation) with its musical implements (instruments and learned adapted conventions of music-making). Together they bore and re-shaped whatever fragments of the forcibly suppressed memory of very real not-so-distant origins managed to force, to pulse and stomp, their way back into contention by breaking through the entertainment barrier at their music's surfacing disappearance. And, in this twisting of voicing's potential, through a compounding of each performer's specific voices with their particular instrument (the cajoling forth of resounding differences), into a collaborative project, jazz has continued to re-form its embodiment as a matter of voicing together in-between. It strives to hold itself to

⁹²No-one exemplifies this engagement of and creative response to diverse musical cultures more than the improviser Trevor Watts, a founding voice in the emergence out of the jazz mainstream of the free/open/spontaneous music movement in Europe. He has continuously renewed his improvising project through collaborations with musicians from very different cultural traditions out of which he has uncompromisingly elaborated a still open vision of improvising's possibilities. The following recordings document some of these transitions: Spontaneous Music Ensemble, Emanem 4218; Moire Music, 'Live in Karlsruhe' (1989), FMR 232-0307; 'Reunion' (with Peter Knight, 1999), HFH 007; 'Six Dialogues' (with Varyan Weston), Emanem, 4069, 2001; 'Live in Sao Paulo', HFH 005, 2006; 'dialogos intestinales', Urukungolo, Mexico, 2007. What Watts drew out of these collaborations in developing his musical 'vision' can be heard in two solo performances: 'World Sonic', HFH, 004, 2005; and 'The Deep Blue', jazzwerkstatt, 084, 2009, in which, through multi-tracking, Watts renders his own compositions (often in complex time signatures) by playing saxophones, percussion, piano and synthesizer.

and within that gap, between, on the one hand, the memory and still live undercurrents of that beyond from which it had been torn, and on the other, the unspeakable not-yet of that beyond-to-come that will not arrive (Messiaen's 'eternity', Art's Body...).

Perhaps this acceptance of voicing's vitality, its unavoidability for jazz's shaping of the improvising project's multiple ways out, draws us towards its performers' idiosyncratic affinities in the ways they shape their relations with their instruments. For what is at stake in the main stream of jazz performances' renderings of the (relatively fixed) melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic patterns of specific compositions, both for the ensemble as collective improviser and the soloing improviser emerging at intervals from the ensemble, is the surface transformation of these underlying 'givens' into idiosyncratically inflected fractured 'lines' (music-as-stammering). While retaining an acute memory of the 'givens' as the springboard from which to leap into something else, the lines' very 'point' is to de-create them in a re-voicing that, uprooting them from the seemingly fixed limits (however subtle their harmonic and melodic interplay) marking the inconsequence of their context-bound ephemerality, sends them off somewhere else, towards an altogether different 'down home'. Apart from their own compositions, the multiplicity of popular songs that jazz musicians take as vehicles for shared instrumental improvisations makes patent the intimacy between voicing and musicians' ways of relating to their instruments.⁹³ For, in the purely instrumental rendering of these 'songs', it is precisely what is substituted for the excised words (the songs' defining meaning-bearers), that projects the performing as at once both an unequivocal remembrance (a celebration) of 'the voice' and a conversion that takes 'singing' way beyond itself by using multiple voice-guided inflections; it remembers the voice's infinite variability by an open-ended extension of its possibilities that remains in voicing's proximity.

In continuously evoking vocal qualities, through its play on micro-variations in timbre, pitching, intonation, rhythming, and phrasing, that would be regarded as distortions and mistakes within programmed music (read from a score), performing stays within singing's ambit, *but only on the stammered terms of instrumental sounding*. It is 'still' singing, but not as we know it. And the corollary of this voice-conversion is that the process necessarily entails a complementary undoing and re-doing of the instrument's 'capabilities'. In the musician's re-voicing it is the musical instrument itself that is turned out of itself (out of the conventions that routinely mark the strict limits placed around its 'useful' sound-world) and into an idiosyncratic sounding extension of the musician's embodied-becoming as nothing but a performer. Improvised performing 'occurs' in and as this double conversion.

In this main stream of jazz-performing (the 'ground' from which other approaches take off), in which, as mentioned, the players *collectively* improvise their responses to a specific composition's fixed structuring elements, the drama of voicing's double conversion is made absolutely explicit in the contrast between the requirements of rendering the composition's formal arrangement and the improvised soloing emerging from and responding to the arrangement. The participating musicians lead a double life of out-sounding in their

⁹³ The consistency of the conception of sounding as a coalescence of voice and instrument underlies the transitions that mark jazz's internal shifts in musical and technical focus since its recorded emergence. In the treatment of popular songs, as conventional familiar vehicles for improvising's exploratory defamiliarising search for alterity, I pick out (*almost* at random...) from the cornucopia revealing both this consistency and the remarkable transformations wrought by the instruments' word-displacing alternatives, the album, 'Ballads', by the John Coltrane Quartet with McCoy Tyner, Jimmy Garrison, and Elvin Jones, recorded in New York in 1961-62 and issued on Impulse (Verve), 0602517036970.

oscillations between ensemble playing and soloing. For the latter requires a leap out of the 'straight' (conventional/pure/clean) and a lapse into the 'bent' (inflected/idiosyncratic/dirty). The blending, the sounding-together, demanded by ensemble players' necessarily precise adherence to the voicing of the arrangement/score, requires a regression to the conventional 'mean' of each instrument's sound qualities (time/tone/pitch/volume). Sharing the sounding requires suspension of the idiosyncratic. Nowhere is this more obvious than in that very small number of large ensembles whose 'life' (often occasional rather than continuous) is organised around the performance of jazz (rather than a hybrid mixture of musical genres aimed at attracting as broad an audience as possible). In these 'big bands' (each essentially a wind-band plus rhythm section) the compositions and arrangements are organised around the interplay between the sections and the opportunities for soloists to emerge from and retreat back into the ensemble. As predominantly wind-bands, their breath-dependent sound qualities retain a direct attachment to the life of the voice, and the arranged relations between sections is approached, described, as a matter of voicing; the blending and contrasting of the sound qualities of the different sections rely on the musicians within each section developing absolutely common senses of time, dynamics, volume, phrasing, pitching, and vibrato to generate the section's 'singular' sound.

But the interspersed solos, performed by players released from their sectional responsibilities, can go in utterly different directions according to each composition's mood and harmonic challenges and the immediate musical context of a solo's placement. The solo becomes an occasion for dispersing, toying with, and exploring the limits of, the very elements of sounding-out that define the sections' adherence to conventions of voicing. And how this re-voicing occurs, as the diverting of an instrument's possibilities into the unconventional (its plunging alternation into an idiosyncratic inflection offering, through the quirky syntactics of its phrasing, a melding of line, harmonic reference, and rhythm), is precisely a matter of the soloist's feeling out and sounding forth, via the goading and support of the accompaniment, an interruptive relation to the surrounding musical context. The soloist stammer-sings paradoxically both in concert with and counter to the ensemble; to solo is to accept the accompaniment as an occasion for making, for forcing through, a difference, a dragging of the conventions represented by the sections' sounds out of themselves and into a different zone. In this way soloing is offered the chance to expose an ever-present constituent of music's embodied-passing: through its interruptive voicing, to enact, as and at music's surfacing, the tension that every body-dependent and interpretation-specific performing bears implicitly between the preservation of the understood friendly convention (repetition), and the errant leap into the difference of an otherwise-timing. This is the chance that the performer, who responds to the call to make-for-art by trying to feel out the difference it might make, is always waiting for.

Duke Ellington's Offer of Music-Making as a Togetherness of Irreconcilable Differences

Nowhere is this 'vision' of music's possibility, as the struggle of holding to, living through, this tension by combining and confronting the voices of togetherness and saltatory interrupting, more inventively confronted than in the music of Duke Ellington (together with his long-time collaborator, the composer-arranger Billy Strayhorn). That he managed to sustain his 'orchestra', in the face of intractable economic problems with only brief breaks over several decades and with a remarkable continuity of personnel, bears witness to his unique combination of musically inventive *witz* and a committed vision of music's necessity. From small beginnings as a superior jazz/dance band playing club gigs and small halls, through continuously experimenting with the musical forms possible for his group, he

developed an expanded and unique conception of ‘big band orchestral music’ that came to include large-scale concert pieces, suites, and church music. The explicit focus across his many projects was on developing musical responses to the African-American experience. And his response emerged musically as a matter of and for voicing. The defining key to his composing concern, what his music always turned around, was the specific play between the written interpretable elements of performance and the singular ‘voices’ of the musicians that he both employed and nurtured. For it was what these musicians could bring to his compositions, both as soloists and as ensemble players, their very different idiosyncratic improvising voices, that determined his music’s ‘sound’ as a singular integration of the radically different. He selected musicians precisely in terms of the singularity of their ‘voice’ whose performative distinction could not be reconciled with or made subservient to an encasing musical authority.

What was crucial across the range of irreconcilable voicings whose ‘excess’ he encouraged, was the exacerbated ‘difference’ they could make to the band’s sounding under the benevolently loose ‘control’ (Ellington as the *de-maestro* whose mastery lay in his benign withdrawal from the operative displays of conventional authority) whose terms the musicians were asked to both respect but also push to their limits in performance: his music as a togetherness of multiple differences through tenuously precise self-interruptive combinings. And the quality of this paradoxical togetherness defined Ellington’s ‘orchestral’ voicing as something separate from his instrumental ‘voice’ as a piano player. *For it was the array of soloists’ responses to his compositions that came to constitute his ‘voice’*; the soloists’ contributions became his ‘mouthpiece’, thus shaping ‘his’ voicing by virtue of their difference both to him and each other. His orchestral performances thus effected a strange process of ‘delegation’ in which, in the very process of giving himself away to, allowing the proceedings to be taken over by, his soloists, he actually enlarges ‘his’ musical vision through this display of concrete differences that make their appearance through his musical settings; his featured soloists become ‘themselves’ as alterities in the course of performing, bringing off, a purely Ellingtonian togetherness. It is ‘his’ voice that is the voicing of the play of differences that are precisely not his.

As forcefully independent musicians who are developing immediately distinctive approaches to improvising, they simultaneously gain some of this force from the utterly idiosyncratic settings provided by Ellington for this very development. At the same time, as accompanists themselves (section players), they perform as absolutely dependable collaborators in bringing Ellington’s offerings to fruition. He propels them towards independence even as they collaborate, obviously encouraging their development of idiosyncratic inflections (in the orchestra’s early period, the brass players, Miley, Williams, and Nanton, clearly modelled their inflections and timbres explicitly on the human voice). Indeed all his collaborating musicians led complex musical lives outside the ambit of Ellington’s orchestra; but many of them were long-term collaborators consistently present across his diverse musical journeyings. Thus, Carney (perhaps the first musician to use circular breathing routinely...), Hodges, Bigard, and Williams remained with Ellington from the late ‘twenties; ever sensitive to shifts in the music that surrounded him, Ellington continued to bring in musicians reflecting these shifts thus adding to the array of musical differences in play in his music. Among the reeds, Webster, Gonsalves, Hamilton, and Procope, offered widely contrasting colours to the orchestra’s palette, while in the brass sections, Brown, Tizol, Jackson, Stewart, Nance (who doubled on violin), Anderson (a high-note specialist), and Terry (another silky smooth fleet circular-breather who in his singing doubled as a master scat-ologist) brought

radically different tones and stammered syntactics to their solo-features. What Ellington effected through these slightly shifting gatherings was an excess beyond all of them as individual performers. His music displayed, in the very process of its disappearing passing, the difference that jazz could make to music's sounding by going through individual 'voices', not towards some 'self' they are assumed to 'express', but towards a zone of sounding-passing that was aside from each's idiosyncratic sounding.⁹⁴

While Ellington's signal precedent may now seem like music from another era in the light of subsequent digital electronic developments in music-making, its pertinence to other ways of making music together is brought out by the American composer Robert Ashley. Discussing his opera 'Perfect Lives', he notes the resonance of Ellington's musical vision for his own approach to composition and performance. He contrasts his interest in 'story-telling in music' to the European tradition of 'musical theater': 'I guess I owe more to the idea of, say, the Duke Ellington orchestra. *Perfect Lives* is a kind of jazz narrative. In big-band jazz there were characters in the band and people would go to see the bands in order to follow those characters. I've always regarded those bands as proto-operas, and very American in form. *Perfect Lives* comes out of that tradition. ... when I compose music I can't go on very long without some way of relating what I'm working on now to what's gone on before, and what I think is going to happen at some future point. The only way to have a comfortable sense of improvisation is to have things as well mapped-out as possible. ... It's like when Duke Ellington sets up his band. It's a collection of characters, and Ellington understands it that way. Ellington's music is not written in the way a symphony, which can be played by anybody, is written. If you pull out a player in Ellington's band, you have to rewrite the part. *Perfect Lives* is based on that model.'⁹⁵

But I have certainly not sketched here elements of Ellington's signal contribution to the shaping of the relation between organised ensemble playing and individual improvising as some sort of model to be copied, to be rehearsed again (as if such were possible...!) in the light of changed times. As performer, Ellington is certainly exemplary, but for the mode of approach to musical performance and his negotiation of a tense relation with the machinery of mass representation, rather than for the un-reproducible particulars of his music's 'delivery'. The constancy of his vision and practice is witnessed in his organisation of the play of voicing itself, as collective improvising's *leit-motif* on the way towards what only music can expose of the voice's original offer: *this music as abandoning the word in order to open onto what is still left for the voice to sound-out*. This possibility opens up when performing transfers all its allegiances away from meaning and gives them to the voice's inmost, that intimate potential latent in the voice that is only releasable from it collectively through musical instruments. His music-making coincided with the rise and rise of the machinery of mass electronic representation and its emergent dominance of the entertainment industry, around the fringes of which Ellington's music made its detours. For what defined his musical commitment and vision for a music turning around improvisation was the primacy of live performance. The recordings, radio and t.v. appearances were simply necessary supplements to this primacy; they helped to keep the band 'on the road'.

⁹⁴ For contrasting recordings of Ellington's consistent but continually developing concerns, compare the compilation 'Duke Ellington and his Orchestra, 1927-1930', Giants of Jazz, MC JT 35, with 'Historically Speaking – The Duke', London Records, LTZ N 15029, from 1956.

⁹⁵ See Robert Ashley, 'Perfect Lives', Dalkey Archive, London, 2011. This text includes both the opera's libretto and Ashley's own notes. Material from the opera is available in cd, MP3, and dvd formats. See 'YouTube' for excerpts.

Thus in terms of performing's relation to the electro-calculative context of his music's survival, the contrast with Glenn Gould, with whose career there was a partial temporal overlap, is instructive. For Gould, the available technology culminated in his transferring his performing to the recording studio as a search for getting as close as possible to the 'perfection' he believed electronic reproduction could realise. For Ellington, the relation to the machinery of representation was utterly different; the necessary 'condition' for his music to keep moving towards its potential was the live performance. He took on the endless struggle that maintaining this vision entailed. For what distinguished the live performance of his unique offer of organisation and improvisation *was a necessarily flawed imperfection*. His music was 'there' precisely to display the necessity of holding to the challenge of showing music's (and especially improvised music's) infinitely variable and brief passing as a response to the very real and different demands of its playing conditions. Ellington knew that, in improvised music, response to context is all; its qualities, its potential for finding and releasing the musical differences latent within his ensembles, were always context-specific, contingent responses to the challenge of performing's conditions. The voices had to vary by the night. That was their point.

Bluesing the Source

Of course Ellington recognised the closeness of his music to words-meaning-language; a wide range of his song-compositions were given lyrics and he occasionally used singers with his band. In addition he not only composed music for both film and theatre where the music contributed to the settings of the gests' words, but, as a defining contributor to African-American music, his music is steeped in the blues; he takes the legacy of this seemingly musically simple (structurally and harmonically) zone and continually draws on its elements and moods in his constructive development of its possibilities. And most contemporary approaches to improvising, in spite of their diverse commitments, are caught up in elements of this zone's legacy. Because the 12-bar blues, while being one of the defining musical structures around which jazz, as an essentially instrumental music, coalesced, is also, perhaps primarily in its emergence, a vocal form (as were many of the gospel chants (as well as the above-mentioned popular songs) on which jazz frequently drew for its materials), the relation between instrument and voice in the music's out-sounding has been foundational. Despite the earlier mentioned variety of musical genres contributing to the emergence of jazz, what sounds through every performance's surfacing is this mutual interplay, influence, and affinity between instrumental inflection, voicing, and rhythmic accentuation. The movement of the voice towards instrumental inflection characterised in scat-singing is, as I have noted, only the most obvious way of pointing up instrumental improvisation's self-alignment with voicing. Many singers whose careers have been closely bound up with jazz frequently switch, in the course of a performance, out of a song's ordinary language lyrics and into the stammered phoneme-filled lines of scat (from Armstrong through Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Bobby McFerrin, to Norma Winstone, and the free-form vocalisings of Maggie Nicols and); this and their relation to timing-rhythming aligns and integrates them with their accompanying musicians. And pentatonically-derived blues-inflected sounds, echoing instrumental qualities, characteristically suffuse these vocalised lines.

The sourcing for such inflections arises in the course of singers turning directly towards the musical legacy of the blues singers and musicians who, through their alternating modes, harmonic substitutions, passing notes, microtonal inflections, and rhythmic phrasing, provide the clearest link with the African origins of African-American jazz. And in spite of the now

global diaspora of the latter, the intonable memory of this origin has persisted across its multiple transitions and journeying. Wherever it occurs, such inflected playing-singing re-enacts, as indebted memorial, an alignment with this legacy. Voices (with blues and gospel singers as paradigm cases) intone in ways drawing them close to instrumental sounds, and instrumentalists form their sounds with inflections that are absolutely indebted to and often modelled on the enormously varied but carefully controlled characteristic vocal qualities of singers 'schooled' in the blues. Yet, from neither direction, can this mode of seeming mimesis be taken as some kind of supposedly faithful copying; it is, rather, an attempt to display an indebted sharing that, to be convincing in context as an opening onto otherness, can only display the worth of its affinity through the idiosyncratic qualities of its own inflecting. Each performing will seek to show, through what is particular to its inflecting, the 'depth' and quality of its feelings for and driving affinity with those art-defining gestures-beyond (gone and to come - the always felt-for and obscurely contoured array of art-gests and -processes staking out each performer's otherwise-zone of affinity) that source its compulsive making-for-art. The entire 'thrust' of the inflecting is to reveal performing's affinity for and attempted movement towards an unspeakable elsewhere whose attractions draw it compulsively away from any recognisable 'here'.

An obvious characteristic shared by vocalists and instrumentalists, in feeling their way toward a composition's specific pathos, is the microtonal inflecting, through bending, slurring, and re-pitching, that takes notes away from their 'given' pitch within the dodecaphonic system (particularly the slight flattening of thirds, fifths and sevenths which pushes major harmonies towards, without ever quite coinciding with, a 'straight' minor or diminished tonality). And the breath-bound wind instruments (woodwind and brass) that, apart from the instruments comprising the 'rhythm sections' of the early jazz groups, dominated in both the emergence and the subsequent transformations of this music, lent themselves precisely to those inflections that were already embodied givens for breathing's coming and going.

As the vision of improvisation's possibilities emerged from musicians' experiences as both collective players and soloists in small ensembles, the challenge to each player as potential soloist has been to feel out and make hearable in the course of improvised performing those distinctive but unspeakable qualities of sounding which pulse them into and rivet them to this approach to music-making. This is only partially dependent on the level of technical instrumental skill, for what it demands is a way of de-creating and re-creating one's relation to one's instrument, how it sounds through one (as already more-than-one) in the course of the performing event itself. The performer's drive is towards a personal sound-conception (the clarity of that silent narrative voice...) that might emerge as, be embodied in, an idiosyncratic mode of stammering-forth whose 'arrival' could neither be predicted in advance *nor recognised by the performer in the course of the performing event*. For, emerging from regions of embodied-becoming that are aside from a self's self-consciousness, they are traces of the sourcing that rivet the performer to the otherwise-task - the leap away, always passing by way of traces of the affined sourcing gests, toward the not-here from where Art's Body silently summons. As ever with making-for-art, the 'goal' is known only in its over-there-ness, but its arrival is always beyond comprehension, a matter of unknowing surprise. To be questioningly but unknowingly on the way toward that idiosyncratic silence that any performance's surface might point to, requires a 'point' of security, of reference, that will sustain one within and through the hiatus-present that is 'where' music arrives and falls away: the challenge is how to realise the music's passing in

the performance-event as a leaping out of the known familiar towards the unspeakable alterity of Art's not-yet.

The 'gap' of this hiatus-present, across which performing has to maintain itself, keep itself 'aloft', is boundaried on every side by failure - the flawed imperfection to which all performing condemns itself in advance (echoing Beckett's 'to fail again...' and Gaddis's 'one who could do more'). This gap is where performing can die at any moment of its attempted stammered aligning. The maintenance of collaborative performances depends upon all performers establishing and sharing a sense of musical time, including the terms of its variance. For to sound-out the relations between this time and the players' responses to the composition's other components (melody, harmony, rhythm, felt-mood, and so on), while sustaining the performance's continuity through the gap, requires a seemingly instinctive, probably unlearnable, relation to 'musical time' (the times-speeds-rhythms specific to each performance in its emerging composing). Every player's contribution to the ensemble's resulting performance implies, beneath the fractured alignment of its surfacing notes, the grasp and maintenance of these times; it is what is going on silently in the gaps between the notes. These times are affirmed even as the players 'play' with them, inflect them, depart from, and return to them, thus producing a kind of doubling in the relation between the times that skip-stammer along 'within' the improvised line and the regular pulsings that it both implies and that continue 'underneath' it. Along with the passing harmonies, the time has to be constituted in a togetherness that cannot be controlled by anything outside the collective relating that brings off the performance.

Through this inner sense of harmonic-time, a foundationless 'foundation' of sharing, each performer might at the least construct recognisably idiosyncratic improvisations turning around the impassioned interplay of melody, harmony, and rhythmic phrasing (its peculiar syntax). In this eventing the conjoint activities of improvising and accompanying merge into the peculiar oneness that is the sharing of an unspeakable time that seems, as I proposed earlier, to straddle or gather together the three prime tenses simultaneously. And the key to the flowering of a performer's defining 'sound' (most obvious in the case of wind-instrumentalists through their inflecting opportunities), its emergence within and from the ensemble, would be the gathering up of the syntactic interplay in the musician's singular way of sounding, the peculiarity of its inflected timbre in the variations possible in the intensely focussed attention on the muscular control and interplay exercising the mouth-breath-tongue-lip relation. It is always a matter of embodying the sounding, of making the sound display an unspeakable at-oneness with the performer's embodied-becoming. The enormous variations (however subtle) in mouthpiece construction and reed qualities, as well as differences in response-qualities of instruments, add innumerable alternatives into the array of aural possibilities through which every musician chooses to direct their intense feelings for their instrument. And where a distinctive improvising conception emerges, its instant hearability turns around its finding and shaping forth a peculiar re-inflection of voicing-in-general's offer that is absolutely aside from vocable language; simultaneously, in its context-bound response, it is dependent for its realisation on the playing of the collaborating musicians. Unavoidably this is an inflecting, a sounding-out, that, continually bending and twisting itself through and away from voicing's speaking-singing meaning-loaded elements, compulsively tears sounding itself away from any recognisable relation to languaged meaning. Thus, approaching performing's plight, its troubled promise, through the collaborative inflected voicing that, I am suggesting, constitutes making-music-together, makes explicit the unavoidable ever-presence of embodying.

For those genres of music-making that hope to pitch themselves into a relation with art and its otherwise-promise, but that have to subsist through an oscillation between live performance (adhered to as performing's ideal) and the re-production of recorded performances, it seems that we are returned unavoidably to the now taken-for-granted tensions and contradictions that structure this subsistence. It is precisely these tensions that define the terms of the challenge performing confronts in trying to embody, to keep alive by a questioning sounding-out of its body's potential for music-as-such, its commitment to art's possibility. Everything turns on how this sounding-out engages, takes on as a matter of felt-tactic, ways of slipping away from the constricting tension into another zone of sounding. Whatever transformations, through reproductive representation, performing's out-soundings are passed through, performing's routine life (including taking on the challenge to out-fox this life's routines...) is bodily-grounded and bodily-defined. This, like all performing across the arts, situates it in the midst of the common fate of bodies under the self-proliferating techno-politics that organise everyday life within the info-machinery of global electronically-dependent digitised representation.