

The "Something to Hold on to Factor" in Timbral Composition

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A great deal of today's electroacoustic music has been found to be highly complex and difficult to penetrate for the listener, yet no one likes to get lost during a work. In my experience offering the first time listener a helping hand is one of the great ways of making contemporary works more accessible.

In this article I attempt to describe a tool, illustrate it and to an extent categorise applications relevant to timbral electroacoustic composition, music in which there is often no melody (or *Hauptstimme*), no metre, no tonic, perhaps no audible structure. If none of these traditional devices is a composer's aural focus, what is, and can this device be perceived by the listener? The goal here is not to stimulate simplicity in timbral music, but instead to strive for greater music appreciation and consequently music evaluation in which composers, musicologists and all others involved in electroacoustic music can profit. An extensive CDiscography has been included.

KEY WORDS Electroacoustic music, music appreciation, musical dramaturgy, "listening strategies"

Preamble

Anyone involved in the creation of timbral composition is often – if not always – faced with the question: if traditional compositional elements the likes of melody and harmony are not prominent in the work I am about to compose, what will be? The listener is equally regularly confronted with a similar question: if traditional compositional elements the likes of melody and harmony are not prominent in the work I am about to hear, what will be? The latter question is also relevant to those studying timbral music.

An assumption: Virtually every contemporary music listener is more interested in the appreciation of music than in being confused by a given work.

An often heard comment: The remark: "This piece seems to go nowhere" is an awful one. But is it always the piece that indeed is going nowhere or is it perhaps the listener who is unable to find his or her way into a given work (a prerequisite to being able to follow a work's flow)?

A hypothesis: Today's listener, especially those who have had little experience with timbral composition, can profit by having something to hold on to in works in which many traditional elements are not prominent.

The goals of this article: It is hoped that more composers (along with musicologists) will consider providing listeners, especially first time listeners, with a listening strategy (a term gratefully borrowed from Christiane ten Hoopen) so

that they may appreciate, and therefore not be confused by new timbral works. Furthermore, it is hoped that the framework proposed below may be of use to the composer with respect to making decisions relevant to the "something to hold on to factor".

Although obtaining a grip on a piece is not the entire road to appreciation, our primary concern here is with demonstrable ways for new listeners to enter into the universe of a given work. My contention is that people who are open to timbral composition are not averse to being given a helping hand when hearing pieces for the first time. As they become more used to timbral works, they can discover their own listening strategies. (There are of course no universal rules as to how music is perceived. It is by no means assumed here that generalisations can be made as to how a piece should be listened to at any given moment.)

The idea is to have the composer offer some sense of 'user-friendliness'. User-friendliness by the way need not be synonymous with being overly friendly to the user. (That is taken care of by composers of "lovely music", e.g. Michael McNabb and Morton Subotnick and composers that belong to the label of the same name including David Behrman and Robert Ashley. Their works tend to be more note-based than sound-based ones and often represent what might be called electroacoustic minimalism.)

Introduction

Background: In recent years many of my talks and a good deal of my writings have concerned the sad lot of new music's diffusion. Extra-musical issues have been found to be highly relevant, especially those of the less than ideal state of the communications media and of education. But passing the blame is only part of the story. Today many potential listeners have not acquired an enthusiasm for timbral music as they simply do not know how to listen to it.

Of course this idea is nothing new: Morton Feldman often made the following comment about Gustav Mahler's compositions: "You know, Mahler is very easy to listen to and enjoy as there are never more than two or three things going on at the same time in his works". Does this mean that one has to compose simple music to be enjoyed? Obviously, the answer is negative.

A good look at any of György Ligeti's scores from the 1960s demonstrates a certain level of complexity. Yet, he was very careful in those years to profile register and density through his cluster writing as two parameters that could be easily followed. In other words, he offered his listeners something to hold on to. His relative success within the field of timbral instrumental and vocal music is undisputable. Similarly, in several scores by Iannis Xenakis, the presence or absence of order, of masses of short sounds or lengthy glissandi and of very dissimilar dynamic flows can be discerned.

Luciano Berio's *Sequenza III* for solo voice is rich in a variety of vocal sounds; it can be listened to in the sense of an abstract dramatic work. Its "story" can be found in the virtuoso musical development of emotional personages by a single female voice. To create a bridge to our area of concentration, his earlier *Thema: Omaggio a Joyce* for tape, which consists solely of processed recordings of Cathy Berberian's voice, goes beyond the potential of the live voice and yet is not

necessarily difficult for the new listener due to the constant treatment of the single sound type, at times completely phonetic, at times vocalising phrases. Truly the choice of the voice is an obvious frame of reference in a timbral work; we will soon meet less obvious ones within electroacoustic timbral composition.

Programme and CD liner notes: But what do we read in our programme booklets in the concert hall or in our CD inserts? In general the choice is between vague notions of sources of inspiration to a composer and/or huge technical descriptions of a work's construction whether it is perceptible or not. The two computer music series Wergo has produced provide dozens of illustrations of this tendency.

Certainly specialists have the right to obtain technical information concerning the architecture of a piece, but at the end of the day most listeners are more interested in what they can hear. If the listener is unable to perceive an algorithm, what is the point of focusing on it in terms of programme information?

There is a current development within musicology moving away from the study of scores (or in the case of timbral music, the study of a tape work's realisation) and more towards questions of interpretation and, more relevant to us, listening. The "something to hold on to factor" exemplifies this development within timbral electroacoustic composition.

The concept of dramaturgy in music: What does a dramaturge do in a theatre? He or she is the person who attempts to make the chosen path of the director, composer, scene designer and so on understandable and place the interpretation in historic context to - in chronological order - the actors and others involved in the performance, those funding the production, journalists and the public at large (especially through the programme booklet, but also through the communications media). In other words the "Why" of a production, the intention of the interpretation, is worked out and presented by the dramaturge offering the viewer at least one possibility of something to keep in mind during a performance, especially those treating abstract texts.

In the past the author has often suggested that today's composer add the question "Why" to those of "What" and "How" with respect to discussions of their works. The musical translation of the theatre dramaturge's work, the dramaturgy of a composition, is to be found in the combination of the articulation of the "Why" of the work, with the proposed offering of a grip to (first) listeners where relevant. Such an aim should always be encapsulated in our programme and CD booklets. The "Why" story will be dealt with on other occasions. We can now develop our main theme.

The four categories: Some contemporary composers have developed reputations through establishing expectations: a Glenn Branca piece will most likely be loud, a Brian Ferneyhough piece will most likely be complex. The former is easy to follow (be it a controversial choice), the latter sometimes less easy. This establishing of expectations is true as well for a number of electroacoustic composers, although others will concentrate on a different challenge for each piece.

The following four general categories are proposed. 1) It is sometimes found that one parameter (e.g. space, tunings) is the special focus of a composition.

2) Homogeneity of sound quality is an often followed path. 3) In a number of cases the Feldman remark gains new meaning: a transparency is created in electroacoustic works where no more than four layers of sound are present at any given point. 4) All sorts of programmes, realistic or imaginary, have been known to offer the listener something to hold on to. This approach has often been called *cinéma pour l'oreille* by members of the French school.

These four categories are the result of this first attempt to classify things to hold on to in electroacoustic timbral works. Some categories know many examples. In such cases only a small selection has been made as an exhaustive list would be "behind the times" in six months' time.

Rules of the game: In the following section only electroacoustic compositions will be discussed, specifically those in which the timbral dimension outweighs that of melody or any other form of *Hauptstimme*. Emphasis has been given to those pieces where the sound is more prominent than its subset, the note. It is often difficult to treat entire works in terms of the proposed factor as these works may be quite diverse from section to section; they might offer different things to hold on to at different moments. In such cases the most prevalent characteristic of each work has been chosen. It must be stated here that the works to be discussed below have not been extracted from the author's "Hit Parade" of timbral music, but instead have been chosen due to their being illustrative of a given category.

The list was made after many listening sessions of works recorded on CD. The CD restriction was a practical one. It is hoped that most of the cited compositions can be found commercially or in archives locally without too much difficulty.

Some Things to Hold on to

i) Some parameters for a start

a) Dynamics It has been said that when sounds become very loud, the perception of colour differentiation is lessened. Still throughout the decades there have been several composers who have chosen the parameter of the youth, loudness, and in general the higher levels of the scale. The historic example is Gottfried Michael Koenig. In his entire *Funktion* series of the late sixties (*Funktion Grau*, *Funktion Indigo*, etc.) Koenig created works where loudness was the factor most held on to during first listenings.

b) Space Although the parameter of physical space is not an obvious one here, it indeed is quite clearly something to hold on to when it is central to a piece. Naturally a CD recording is not the ideal medium for the diffusion of such works. One piece recorded on CD that is spatially inventive is John Chowning's *Turenas*. During certain sections of this work Chowning has sounds moving along circular paths in a quadrasonic setting. Another composer who has spent a good part of his career making people aware of the spaces around them is Alvin Lucier.

c) Pitch This parameter seems to be unusual given our desire to look into timbral composition. Nevertheless, some composers have explored new tuning systems and interval combinations which in turn take the emphasis away from *Hauptstimme*-orientation and more towards colour. John Chowning's golden-mean work *Stria*, a work that flows with a constant glissando movement exemplifies this well.

In James Dashow's piece *Sequence Symbols*, he has created an interrelationship between harmonic structure and timbre. His approach is successful in the sense of the current article in that this interaction leads to homogeneous sectional timbral flows within the work. Whether the listener is precisely aware of how this homogeneity was constructed is unlikely (unless a programme has been read); the various forms of timbral homogeneity are what is held on to in any event.

It should be said here that, other than isolated movements of compositions by Bernard Parmegiani and a short work by Javier Alvarez, no timbral electroacoustic music was found where rhythm or temporal divisions offered the listener the kind of grip we are looking for. Certainly other parameters could be called on here as well, but none was discovered during the preparation of this article.

ii) Homogeneity of sound and the search for new sounds

a) To begin - pieces based on one or a few pitches Phill Niblock is a composer who has spent most of his career making pieces in which many sustained notes are heard surrounding one or at most a few pitches. In recent years these works have been written solely for acoustic instruments and are recorded employing multi-track techniques. Giacinto Scelsi is another instrumental composer who chose for this form of minimal pitch materials to gain a maximum sonority. In electroacoustic music the obvious candidate is one of the composers on the Canadian "Electro-clips" CD, Yves Daoust with his *Mi bémol*.

b) Homogeneous textures As these categories are hardly independent of each other, previously mentioned compositions also belong to this category: Chowning's *Stria* is one as well as many pieces by Lucier. But this category is quite broad covering many approaches and very different compositions. Similar to the above-mentioned Daoust work is John Oswald's simple sampling clip from the same CD entitled *Bell Speeds*. Here the composer takes one sampled sound and turns it into an entire ensemble within a broad register by compressing and stretching it throughout a range of several octaves and setting different durations for each pitch.

Homogeneous timbral movement can be found in the granular sound complexes of Barry Truax's *Riverrun* and *The Wings of Nike* as well as a number of Paul Lansky's *Idle Chatter* works (the tonal dimension of the latter is a traditional 'something to hold on to' at times, too). It is interesting how these composers reach homogeneity through the complexities of massive amounts of very short sounds. Although the algorithmic composer Emanuel Dimas de Melo Pimenta's sounds are longer than granular ones in his composition *Rings*, one can again speak of clouds of sounds of a very homogeneous nature tying this piece together.

From short to long, David Wessel's *Antony* gains its homogeneous timbral character from a bank of oscillators creating an overall singular, slowly evolving texture. In Charles Dodge's *Profile*, inharmonic timbral homogeneity (and that of large-scale movement) has been generated through a scheme of self-similarity, the basis of fractals.

But there's homogeneity and there's homogeneity. Until now the word has been used in a limited sense of "sounding very much alike at any given moment". In many of Bernard Parmegiani's compositions - as well as Christian Zanesi's - movements may be highly dissimilar, but the movements themselves treat materials that have a common denominator in a wider sense. Parmegiani's large-scale works *La création du monde* and *De Natura Sonorum* exemplify this well.

One movement title, "Etude élastique" indicates what sort of common denominator a movement can have. Such Parmegiani works are ideal examples of this factor.

c) **New sounds** The name of this category is not an obvious one, as a good deal of electroacoustic music deals with new sounds. Still some composers including Iannis Xenakis are simultaneously obsessed with searching for new sounds in their electroacoustic works as well as providing the listener with a grip by creating their new sounds with some sort of common quality. Xenakis's *Mycenae-Alpha* typifies this category. Although many listeners are alienated upon first listening by the noisy textures in such works, they do obtain a sense of homogeneity in terms of the types of sounds used. The complex granular sound compositions mentioned above all call for the development of new sounds (perhaps based on existent ones, but that is only from the construction point of view); they gain coherency through their homogeneous use.

d) **The voice and the special case of a live instrument plus tape** As said in the introduction, pieces such as Berio's *Thema: Omaggio a Joyce* offer the listener the most familiar and most versatile instrument there is, the human voice, an instrument made more versatile through electroacoustic manipulation. Truax's *The Wings of Nike* and Lansky's *Idle Chatier* series and the speech synthesis works by Charles Dodge belong to this category. However not all sounds need to be vocal to offer something to hold on to. Several works by Alejandro Viñao and Trevor Wishart focus on the voice as an element to hold on to even though it is but one of many sound sources. David Evan Jones's *Scritto* demonstrates an unusual use of speech sounds as they are treated as instrumental textures.

Although this list consists primarily of tape works, there is one type of composition where timbres of live instruments, including the voice, seem to blend in and out of timbres recorded on tape. Such works are most relevant to this study. Horacio Vaggione has pursued this form of homogeneity in several pieces. His *Tar* and *Thema* exemplify what he has called "timbre object-oriented music". An exceptional example is Jean-Claude Risset's *Songes* where both the acoustic instrumental sounds and the processed ones are combined on tape.

iii) Textures not exceeding four sound types at once

Transparency through a consistent use of not too many levels of materials at once is one of the oldest paths to follow dating from the early years of electroacoustic music. One of the least complex works to the ear by Karlheinz Stockhausen, *Gesang der Jünglinge*, which is the sum of the youth's vocalisation and the homogeneity of the electronic sounds, exemplifies this well. Similarly Jonathan Harvey's more recent *Mortuos Plango, Vivos Voco* is based on two sound types, the voice of his son and the processed sounds of a bell. This approach has proven useful to a great number of composers, especially those of the French school (to be further treated in point iv).

One composer deserves special attention here. Denis Smalley is definitely a product of the French school, but has created a special place of his own. Although one might speak of his compositions' possessing a certain narrative character, their programme is so abstract that I believe his work is the ultimate illustration of the current category. In many of Smalley's works there is a sense of geometry: the slopes of *Pentes*, the concept implied by the title *Vortex* and of a geography as exemplified in his recent composition *Valley Flow*. The movement within his pieces

combined with the fact that there is rarely too much going on at any given moment lead to the fact that the listener can hardly get lost during a work. Obviously his craftsmanship and his sense of tension and release in the flow of his compositions are equally relevant. But the number of sound types at any given moment in a vast majority of his compositions seems never to confuse the perception by offering it an overdose of information. In this way the listener can hold on to virtually everything happening. Denis Smalley best exemplifies the above mentioned user-friendliness without necessarily being overly friendly to the user.

iv) Programmes, some are real but many are imaginary

As *musique concrète* was born of the radio play department of the French radio, it might be said that the first real-life programme music was music in which any sound can be used, electroacoustic music. Yet few have chosen real-life programmes; instead surrealistic and abstract images have been evoked by many composers who have created imaginary landscapes and abstract narratives in their works. One pertinent aspect of such compositions has to do with the listener's reaction to real-life sounds (whether they are indeed used or just suggested in a work is unimportant), as, along with his or her need of something to hold on to, the listener is often (un)consciously trying to place sounds within personal experience. When we try a new cuisine, we tend to say that something tastes like something we have already eaten; when we listen, we react analogously.

Most of the following works would fit into category iii, textures of finite layers, as they tend to have a similar transparency. The main difference between the two categories can be found in the higher number of contrasts locally due to the narrative character of these programme pieces.

a) **One programme - nature (for a change)** One wonders whether Händel knew what he was getting into when he wrote his *Water Music*. The following composers offer water to "hold on to" in their compositions: François-Bernard Mâche in his *Terre de feu* (where water-like textures are accompanied by fire-like ones) and Toru Takemitsu in his *Water Music* (from his faucet). Michel Redolfi and David Dunn have gone underwater. Jean-Claude Risset's *Sud* (in which the Mediterranean coast is the subject, not just water) and Barry Truax's *Riverrun* belong to the ever-increasing list as well. In some cases there are no recorded water sounds to be heard; the image of water is what one holds on to.

Nature in the wider sense is a theme often appearing in timbral electroacoustic music, especially in Canada, the land of the World Soundscape Project of Murray Schafer and others. Hildegard Westerkamp typifies a composer who applies WSP thinking to electroacoustic timbral composition.

b) **Two special cases with recycled known sounds - those musical and "anecdotal"** Several electroacoustic composers have made programmatic works through the use of recycling older music. Perhaps one might call this 'nostalgia composition'. The treatment of existent music within the electroacoustic context is one thing, usually not the only one, to hold on to in such works. Examples include: Yves Daoust's *Suite Baroque*, Robert Normandeau's *Jeu*, Åke Parmerud's *Alias* and Charles Dodge's *Any Resemblance is Purely Coincidental*. (This comical Caruso derailment in music is formally speaking not a timbral composition as defined here, but is so unusual the author has gladly included it.) The "absolutely not for sale" John Oswald *Plunderphonics* recordings radically explore the potential of recycling combined with today's sampling technology.

The term "anecdotal music" is originally from the pen of Luc Ferrari and refers to exposing the referential character of many sounds in a given work. The most radical statement of this kind was his own *Presque rien no. 1: Lever du jour au bord de la mer*, an abridged recording of a morning on a Croatian beach. Among several other relevant pieces is Bernard Parmegiani's *Dedans dehors* where the juxtaposition of inside and outside perspectives leads to very surrealistic sonic episodes.

A sister area to anecdotal music concerns works in which the composer plays a game with sound recognition. In German this game is one between *Schein* and *Sein* (semblance and reality). In such works the composers seem to manipulate the listener's perception. John Chowning's *Phoné* and Daniel V. Oppenheim's *Round the Corners of Purgatory* illustrate this well. This path can fascinate the listener, but it can also divert one's attention from a piece and into the territory of *Schein* and *Sein* and should therefore always be used with care.

c) Acousmatic tales Early French electroacoustic music was born within a radiophonic tradition. This meant that many of its composers would inevitably think programmatically, in the widest sense of the word. (Just think of how 'unstory-like' some modern theatre was at the time!) This basis has proven to be most dynamic. Historic figures of the 1950s and 1960s include most members of the *Groupe de Recherches Musicales* (GRM) and their allies. Today's group of composers most influenced by this notion are French and French-Canadian - names include Francis Dhomont (especially his *Novars*), Christian Calon, Yves Daoust, Claude Schreyer and Robert Normandeau working in Canada and Michel Chion, Claude Lejeune and Alain Savouret in France - or in most cases have passed through Paris or Montreal for some time. A complete list of composers of acousmatic tales world-wide would be fairly extensive.

- (i) Some parameters for a start
 - (a) Dynamics
 - (b) Space
 - (c) Pitch (and rhythm)
- (ii) Homogeneity of sounds and the search for new sounds
 - (a) To begin - pieces based on one or a few pitches
 - (b) Homogeneous textures
 - (c) New sounds
 - (d) The voice and the special case of a live instrument plus tape
- (iii) Textures not exceeding four sound types at once
- (iv) Programmes, some are real but many are imaginary
 - (a) One programme - nature (for a change)
 - (b) Two special cases with recycled known sounds - those musical and "anecdotal"
 - (c) Acousmatic tales
- (v) And so on

Figure 1 Some categories of things to hold on to

Defining the scope of programmatic electroacoustic compositions is worthy of an article in itself. Suffice it to say that the combination of narrative, including its most abstract varieties, and acousmatic listening strategies has led to this largest of all categories.

It should be mentioned that the typical French notion of including a narrator in an electroacoustic work offers something completely different to hold on to and may on occasion take one's attention away from a timbral "story".

v) And so on

It is perhaps surprising how little improvised music can be found above. Some researched works simply did not seem to offer any particular grip. Few were truly timbral pieces. An exception can be found in the work of Michel Waisvisz when he performs with his instrument called "The Hands". It must be said that the something to hold on to is what is seen while he is performing his improvisation. Therefore audio CD recordings miss an essential part of the work analogous to the stereo reduction of the above-mentioned spatial compositions.

Less surprising is the absence of a good deal of music that has been made within the realms of contemporary serialism and/or "new complexity" (as opposed to the complexity of granular music of, for example, Truax). Arnold Schönberg's dream that listeners would be able to hear row manipulation while listening to his works did not come true. Now that serial approaches have become very sophisticated in general, the perception's fuse box tends to blow from time to time. This sadly exemplifies music where the listener can get lost (which of course does not mean that the work is not going anywhere but that the listener is simply unable to find anything to hold on to).

A Few Closing Words

A final assumption (symmetric to the first one): With few exceptions, today's composers do not want to confuse their listeners; they prefer to have their works appreciated. (At least I hope so.)

That often heard comment (revisited): Today's composers do not enjoy hearing the comment that their pieces are not going anywhere either.

I have attempted to describe - be it only briefly - four classes of things to hold on to that have arisen from today's repertoire. Timbral electroacoustic composition, certainly ailing under the shadow of music made with note-based MIDI apparatus, has remained much too marginal. The reasons for this are known to us all. One reason seems to be the difficulty experienced by many potential listeners who fail to find the "key" to enter into this music.

I believe that considering the conscious use of the "something to hold on to factor" may aid in a better music appreciation. Granted, a grip is not everything, but it can make crossing the threshold into a work much easier.

An Acknowledgement

In 1986 Simon Emmerson published an article "The Relations of Language to Materials" in *The Language of Electroacoustic Music* (Basingstoke: MacMillan). In

this article he created a three by three matrix which was intended to aid in helping categorise compositional approaches in electroacoustic music from both the discourse as well as syntax points of view. Through his clear examples he succeeded in offering the reader a means of discussing the treatment of material and structure without resorting to terminology derived from the music of notes. His text has served as an example for the above discussion.

CDiscography

In this list each work is cross-referenced [between brackets] with the category or categories to which it belongs. Not all composers' names have been mentioned above.

- Alvarez, Javier - *Mambo à la Braque* (1990). i MeDIA IMED-9106-CD [i-c/rhythm, iv-b, iv-c].
 Amirhanian, Charles - *Pas de voix (Portrait of Samuel Beckett)* (1987). Perspectives of New Music PNM26 [iv-c].
 Arfib, Daniel - *Le souffle du doux* (1979). Wergo WER 2022-50 [iii].
 Ashley, Robert - *Yellow Man with Heart and Wings for English and Spanish Voices, Keyboards and Electronics* (1978). Lovely Music LCD 1003 [preamble].
 Bäck, Sven-Erik - *In Principio* (1970). Phono Suecia PS CD 41 [iv-c, with some narration].
 Bayle, François - *Toupie dans le ciel* (a movement from *Erosphère* 1979). INA C 1000 and INA C 3002 [iv-c].
 Behrman, David - *A Traveller's Dream Journal* (1988/1990) and other works. Lovely Music LCD 1042 [preamble].
 Berio, Luciano - *Sequenza III* (1965) for solo female voice. Wergo WER 6021-2, Philips 426 662-2 and Virgin Classics VC-790704-2 [intro].
 - *Thema - Omaggio a Joyce* (1958). BVHaast CD 9190 Acousmatrix 7 [intro, ii-d].
 Boerman, Jan - *Alchemie* (1961). *Composition 72* (1972), *De Zee* (1966). Composers' Voice CV 7701 (LP only) [iv-c].
 Brün, Herbert - *i toLD You so!* (No. 6 from his *Project SAWDUST* 1981). Centaur CRC 2045 [ii-c].
 Calon, Christian - *La disparition* (1988) and other works. i MeDIA IMED-9001-CD [iv-c].
 Calon, Christian and Claude Schreyer - *Prochaine Station* (1990). i MeDIA IMED-9004-CD [iv-c].
 Chion, Michel - *La ronde* (1982) and *La tentation de Saint-Antoine* (1984). INA C 2002/2003 [iv-c, the latter a typical case with narration].
 Chowning, John - *Phoné* (1980/1981), *Stria* (1977), and *Turenas* (1972). Wergo WER 2012-50 [iv-b, i-c, i-b respectively].
 Daoust, Yves - *Mi bémol* (1990). Ear Absolut CD no. 1 and i MeDIA IMED-9004-CD [ii-a].
 - *Suite Baroque* (1989). i MeDIA IMED-9106-CD [iv-b].
 Dashow, James - *Sequence Symbols* (1984, 1986). Wergo WER 2010-50 [i-c].
 Dhomont, Francis - *Novars* (1989), *Chiaroscuro ... ou les jeux de l'ambiguïté* (1987) and four other works. i MeDIA IMED-9107/9108 and BVHaast 9107/9108 [iv-c]. The latter piece is also available on *Le Chant du Monde* (Bourges) LDC 278048.
 Dodge, Charles - *Any Resemblance is Purely Coincidental* (1980). Wergo WER 2031-2 [ii-d, iv-b].
 - *Profile* (1984). Neuma 450-73 [ii-c].
 Dunn, David - *Chaos & the Emergent Mind of the Pond* (1990). The Aerial #2 [iv-a].
 Enström, Rolf - *Dagbrott* (1983). Phono Suecia PS CD 41 [iii].
 Ferrari, Luc - *Presque rien no. 1: Lever du jour au bord de la mer* (1970) DGG DG 2561 041 (LP only) [iv-b].
 - *Presque rien avec filles* (1980) and *Petite symphonie intuitive pour un paysage de printemps* (1973). BVHaast CD 9009 Acousmatrix 3 [iv-b].
 Goebel, Johannes - *Vom Übersetzen über den Fluß* (1987/1988). Wergo WER 2023-50 [ii-c].
 Harvey, Jonathan - *Mortuus Plango. Vivus Voco* (1980). Wergo WER 2025-2 [iii].
 Henry, Pierre (see Pierre Schaeffer).
 Jones, David Evan - *Scritte* (1986). Wergo WER 2024-50 [ii-d].
 Koenig, Gottfried Michael - *Funktion [Rot, Grau, Violett, Blau, Indigo]* (1968, 1969). BVHaast CD 9001/2 Acousmatrix 1/2 [i-a].
 Kupper, Leo - *Litanea* (1988). *Le Chant du Monde* (Bourges) LDC 278049/50 [ii-d].
 Lansky, Paul - *Idle Chatter* (1985). Wergo WER 2010-50 [ii-b, iii-d].
 - *Just-more-idle-chatter* (1987). Centaur CRC 2076 [ii-b, iii-d].
 - *Notjustmoreidlechatter* (1988). Neuma 450-73 [ii-b, iii-d].
 - *Smalltalk* (date unknown). New Albion NA030CD [ii-b, iii-d].
 de Leeuw, Ton - *Mountains* (1977) for bass clarinet and tape. Composers' Voice CV 7801 (LP only) [ii-d].
 Lejeune, Claude - *Le Cantique des Cantiques* (1989). INA C 1011 [iv-c, a typical case with narration].
 Lewis, Andrew - *Arrivals* (1987). *Le Chant du Monde* (Bourges) LDC 278049/50 [iv-c].
 - *Time and Fire* (1991). *Le Chant du Monde* (Bourges) LDC 278053/54 [iv-c].
 Lindgren, Pär - *Rummet* (1980). Phono Suecia PS CD 41 [iii].
 Lucier, Alvin - *Crossings for Small Orchestra and Slow-Sweep Pure Wave Oscillator* (1982/1984) and other works. Lovely Music LCD 1018 [ii-b, ii-d].
 - *I am Sitting in a Room* (1969). Lovely Music LCD 1013 [i-b].
 Mâche, François-Bernard - *Terre de feu* (1963). Candide CE 31025 (LP only) [iv-a].
 Malec, Ivo - *Reflets* (1961). INA C 1000 [iv-c].
 de Man, Roderick - *Chordis Canam* (1989) for harpsichord and tape.
 - *Le Chant du Monde* (Bourges) LDC 278053/54 [ii-d].
 McNabb, Michael - *Dreamsong* (1978). Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab MFCD 818 [preamble, iv-c].
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The "Something to Hold on to Factor" in Classical Composition

by
L. Landy

Abstract: This article discusses the concept of "something to hold on to" in classical composition, which is a factor that helps composers to create a sense of continuity and coherence in their works. It is argued that this factor is essential for the listener to be able to follow the logic of the music and to appreciate its aesthetic value. The article examines the role of this factor in the works of several composers, including Beethoven, Brahms, and Mahler, and discusses how it is manifested in various musical elements such as melody, harmony, and form.

Keywords: Classical music, composition, continuity, coherence, aesthetic value.

Introduction

Anyone interested in the creation of musical compositions is aware of the need to find ways to hold on to a listener's attention, to provide a sense of continuity and coherence in the work. This is the "something to hold on to" factor, which is essential for the listener to be able to follow the logic of the music and to appreciate its aesthetic value. The factor is a quality of the music that helps the listener to hold on to the work and to follow the logic of the music.

An example of this factor is the use of a single melodic line, which is a common technique in the composition of music that is being studied by a given work.

Another example is the use of a single melodic line, which is a common technique in the composition of music that is being studied by a given work. The factor is a quality of the music that helps the listener to hold on to the work and to follow the logic of the music.

A hypothesis: Today's composers, especially those who have had little experience with classical composition, are often in danger of creating works that are incoherent and that lack the "something to hold on to" factor.

The main aim of this article is to suggest that composers should work with a "something to hold on to" factor, which is a quality of the music that helps the listener to hold on to the work and to follow the logic of the music.