

MUSIC-SPECIFIC EMOTION: AN ELUSIVE QUARRY

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Expressive music, almost everyone agrees, evokes an emotional response of some kind in receptive listeners, at least some of the time, in at least some conditions of listening. But is such an emotional response distinctive of or unique to the music that evokes it? In other words, is there such a thing as music-specific emotion? This essay is devoted to an exploration of that question and others related to it. In the main part of the essay a six-part component model of a standard emotion is set out, and a case is made for the music-specificity of an emotional response to music of a mirroring sort, with respect to four of the six components of such emotion. In the latter part of the essay aspects of the phenomenology of the music-listening experience, and especially that of the inner sounding of music being heard, are explored further, and issues of the value, communicability, and degree of singularity of the emotional response to expressive music are addressed.

I. PRELIMINARIES

The question I am interested in here is whether there are emotions had only in connection with particular pieces of music, in other words, emotions that are uniquely tied to and indissociable from a particular such piece? More broadly, my concern is to shed some light on the singularity and irreplaceability of the emotional experience of expressive music. In what, if anything, does such singularity and irreplaceability reside?¹

Let me try to be clearer about what I have in mind by a *music-specific* emotion, what might also be called a *music-qualified* or *music-inflected* emotion. It is an emotion that you feel *while* you listen closely to some passage, *because* of your perception of the passage, and in a way that is not *detachable* from the passage in its musical specificity. And although I have begun by speaking of emotions occasioned in a listener by *pieces* of music, for manageability my focus here will be on emotions occasioned by attending to individual *passages* of music.

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¹ This is not a new issue, of course, as one of the most valuable recent empirical studies of musically induced emotion makes plain: 'The general notion that emotions generated by music may have special characteristics compared with day-to-day emotions, or with emotions generated by other arts, may be traced to the 19th century. In *The Power of Sound*, Gurney states that "The prime characteristic of Music, the alpha and omega of its essential effect, is its perpetual production in us of an excitement of a very intense kind, which yet cannot be defined under any known head of emotion."' Marcel Zentner, Didier Grandjean, and Klaus R. Scherer, 'Emotions Evoked by the Sound of Music: Characterization, Classification, and Measurement', *Emotion* 8 (2008): 495.

(One would be hard put to give sense to the idea of *the* emotion expressed by Mahler's Fifth Symphony, or even its first movement.) That focus on the emotional experience of passages, however, is not meant to deny the context-sensitivity of the emotional response to a given passage in light of passages elsewhere in the piece, especially those that immediately precede the passage in question.²

We might at the outset distinguish different degrees of the *music-specificity* of emotion experienced when auditing a specific musical passage in a given piece of music. The highest degree would apply to an emotion or emotional response *uniquely* associated with and deriving from a specific musical passage, such that the emotion or emotional response could be afforded by *nothing other* than the passage in question. Lower degrees of such specificity would be a matter of an emotion or emotional response that could only be afforded by passages *quite similar* to the passage in question, or ones that could be afforded *only by music* but by a *significant range* of musical passages.

As is widely recognized, the emotion *felt* or *experienced* when attending closely to a passage of music is, of course, not always the same as the emotion *expressed* by and *perceived* in the passage. Even leaving aside those cases in which personal and idiosyncratic associations with a passage are what mainly drive the emotional response,³ there are a number of different common scenarios, leading to emotional arousal of different sorts, which account for the general non-coincidence of emotion felt and emotion expressed.

These scenarios include ones featuring mirroring or empathetic responses, for example, a joyous response to joyful music; sympathetic or reactive responses, for example, a pitying response to distressful music; antipathetic or oppositional responses, for example, a scornful response to imploring music; and detached or analytical responses, for example, an impassive response to passionate music. For the purposes of this article my focus will be on the default response of mirroring or empathizing with the emotion expressed in a passage of music, identifying

² For some discussion of this, see my 'Hope in *The Hebrides*', in *Music, Art, and Metaphysics: Essays in Philosophical Aesthetics*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 336–75, and *Music in the Moment* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998).

³ This is the first of the 'four ways in which music arouses emotion' identified in Jenefer Robinson, 'Emotional Responses to Music: What Are They? How Do They Work?', in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Emotion*, ed. Peter Goldie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 651–80. My concern in the present article is mainly with the fourth of those ways – namely, responding emotionally 'to what is expressed by music', though I will acknowledge in due course the second and third ways, responding emotionally 'to music's beauty and craftsmanship' and responding emotionally 'to how the musical structure of a piece is unfolding', as possible components of the complete emotional response to a passage of music.

with the indefinite agent or persona one hears in it, and so as a result sharing the emotion of such an agent or persona.⁴

II. INTERTWINING OF EMOTION FELT AND MUSIC PERCEIVED

The basic idea to which I am attracted is that of a music-specific emotion as an emotion in which music perceived enters into the emotion experienced in such a manner that the specific musical material heard becomes essential to the emotion experienced. The problem is how, exactly, to characterize emotional responses to music that might be seen as ineliminably musical, but without falling into either logical or phenomenological error.

One approach that seems promising is to posit that some such responses include perceived musical structure as part of their *object* and not just as their *cause*. The idea, say, is that if you experience melancholy, at least in imagination, in connection with a specific passage of the *Poco allegretto* of Brahms's Third Symphony to which you are closely attending, that the intentional object of your affective response, occasioned by your sharing of the passage's perceived expression, is *twofold*: on the one hand, some only vaguely posited thing towards which melancholy would be appropriate, and on the other hand, the specific musical structure that occasions the feeling of melancholy and seems inextricably intertwined with it.

But what is the relation between these two objects of your emotion, which in being yoked together perhaps make your emotion of melancholy a distinctively *musical* one? It's not as if you felt melancholy *for* or *about* the musical passage you are hearing, not in the way one primarily feels melancholy, as *for* or *about*

⁴ For more on the theory of musical expression here assumed, see my 'Musical Expressiveness as Hearability-as-Expression', in *Contemplating Art* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006), 91–108. I hasten to add that nothing in the present essay depends on the specifics of that theory – in particular, the idea that a grasp of musical expression must pass through the imagination of a persona whose expressing the music is a vehicle of. For by a mirroring or empathetic response I mean only an emotional response that *matches* the emotion expressed in the music and results from one's *conscious perception* of that expression in the music, as opposed to an emotional response that does not match what the music expresses and/or does not result from conscious perception of the music's expression. So characterized, a *mirroring* response to emotionally expressive music is akin to, yet distinct from, what has been labelled an *emotional contagion* response. Responses of the latter sort also involve emotional matching, but are of a more unthinking sort, in which the character of music is at some level registered and has its effect, but without conscious perception of that character by the listener. For a useful discussion of the emotional contagion phenomenon, see Stephen Davies, 'Music-to-Listener Emotional Contagion', in *The Emotional Power of Music: Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Musical Arousal, Expression, and Social Control*, ed. Tom Cochrane, Bernardino Fantini, and Klaus R. Scherer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 169–76.

something in life that one has lost or that is not going well. Rather, you feel melancholy *in relation to* the musical passage, or as *coming from* the musical passage, or as *inhering in* the musical passage, but not, in the aforementioned sense, as an emotion felt *for* or *about* the musical passage. If this alternate notion of an aroused emotion's intentional object is intelligible, and if a musical passage's specific sound can be such an intentional object of that emotion, then the specificity of the music being heard looks as if it might secure for the emotional response to the music's perceived expression the same degree of specificity.

But this may be too quick a route to the desired conclusion, for the following reason. It seems there is a distinction between an element of an emotion that serves merely to *logically individuate* the emotion, and one that serves rather to generate a *phenomenologically distinct* kind of emotion. Consider that pride in Sally may be individuated in part by its object, Sally, just as pride in Molly is by its object, Molly. But assuming they are of the same nature and degree, the emotions of pride in question are not thereby different in kind or phenomenologically different. And so the same would seem to hold for a joyous mirroring response to joyful musical passage A and a joyous mirroring response to joyful musical passage B: these would not be phenomenologically different merely in virtue of having different intentional objects in the usual sense – namely, objects on which the emotion is directed or focused.

However, perhaps things somehow work differently with intentional objects of this *second* sort, so that a difference in intentional object *does* entail a phenomenological difference in the emotion had. An emotion had *from* or *through* a particular perceptual object, after all, is one in which that object figures more intimately, so to speak, than in the case of an emotion had *for* or *about* an object. The posited double intentionality of musically aroused emotion, if admissible, may just involve two different sorts of intentionality, one that 'intends' its object in a *logical* or identifying manner, and one that 'intends' its object in an *oblique* or secondary manner.

Alternatively, what I am calling the oblique or secondary intentional object of the aroused emotion might perhaps be redescribed in a less ad hoc manner as the *perceptual focus* of the aroused emotion.⁵ The perceptual focus of a musically

⁵ In Stephen Davies's 'The Expression of Emotion in Music', *Mind* 89 (1980): 67–86, a distinction is made between the *emotional object* and the *perceptual object* of an emotion which is roughly parallel to my distinction between the *intentional object* and the *perceptual focus* of an emotion. The trick, if it can be turned, is to show that what I've labelled the perceptual focus of a musically aroused emotion might be regarded as a *kind* of intentional object of that emotion, which Davies's terminology obscures by in effect assuming rather than arguing for a positive answer to that question.

aroused emotion is basically the specific total *sound* of a musical passage, one that is experienced as merging with the emotion it evokes. One experiences the music as somehow *implicated* in the aroused emotion, even though the music is not in the ordinary sense its *object*.

III. COMPONENT MODEL OF PARADIGM EMOTION: INTENTIONAL, EVALUATIVE, AND CONATIVE COMPONENTS

I have been exploring the sense in which the mirroring emotion experienced in attending closely to an expressive passage of music might have an intentional object, on one understanding of that, of the same high degree of specificity as the passage itself or the listener's perception of the passage, in addition to its primary intentional object, some unspecified imaginarily posited thing towards which an emotion of that sort would be appropriate, where such a secondary intentional object might alternatively be conceived as the perceptual focus of the emotion.

But an emotion's intentional object, whether single or double, is only one of its core components, each of which might help to individuate an emotion as distinct from others. Let me now sketch these other components of emotions, and how they might contribute to making an emotional response to music, an emotion experienced from music, *music-specific*.

I will assume a widespread view of a paradigm emotion as a complex psychological state, one whose overall character might be said to be that of an appraisal of something that presents itself to a subject, and involving a number of interrelated components.⁶ These are (a) an evaluative thought or attitude, (b) an intentional object on which that thought or attitude is directed, (c) a characteristic ensemble of action tendencies, (d) a characteristic range of desires or inclinations, (e) a characteristic ensemble of physiological changes, and (f) a characteristic inner affect or feeling. For future reference I will label these the *evaluative*, *intentional*, *actional*, *conative*, *physiological*, and *affective* components of an emotion. As was suggested above, the *intentional* component of a musically aroused emotion, if allowed to have the sort of double intentionality that was there posited, could be a crucial part of what makes

⁶ I hasten to add that this view is a selective construction on my part, and not a view the letter of which could be ascribed to any particular theorist of emotion. However, more or less the same conception of the components of a generic emotion is acknowledged in Zentner, Grandjean, and Scherer, 'Emotions Evoked', 514: 'there is some modest consensus [...] that emotions have more than one psychological or behavioral manifestation: In addition to subjective feeling [that is, affect], they also contain action tendencies, physiological arousal, cognitive appraisals, and expressive motor behavior [...] differentiation on the feeling level requires "backing" by differentiation on a cognitive, behavioral, or physiological level.'

such an emotion music-specific, and thus inseparable from the music that occasions it.

Let us turn then to the *evaluative* component, the evaluative thought or attitude that most centrally defines an emotion as of a particular sort. If we stick with the melancholy of my Brahms example, that thought is, very roughly, that something is not right with the world, that something is lacking, that something of value has been lost and is missed. Thus, if one experiences melancholy in a mirroring fashion when listening to that passage, the evaluative component of one's response is just that thought, directed on the emotion's vaguely-posed-in-imagination logical object, a thought in no way different from that which would be a component of the melancholy response to anything else, whether in art or in life. So, it seems, that component of a musical emotion would not contribute to its music-specificity.

Next consider what I have labelled the *conative* component of an emotion, the sort of desires, wants, wishes, or inclinations that seem bound up with and partly definitive of an emotion, such as the desire that a person one loves avoid harm, or the wish to enjoy some good that an individual that one envies is in possession of. So far as I can see – and leaving aside the emotion's occurring most likely in an imaginative mode, which normally inhibits the behaviours that such desires or wishes typically prompt – this component of a musically aroused emotion would in no way be different from what it would be in a case of real-world, extra-musical emotion. And thus no contribution to the music-specificity of musically aroused emotion seems attributable to the emotion's conative complexion.

IV. PHYSIOLOGICAL AND ACTIONAL COMPONENTS

We can turn now to what I have labelled the *physiological* component of an emotion. At the outset of my discussion I focused on the emergent expressiveness of a passage as grasped by an attentive listener and then empathetically seconded by such listener. Consider now what goes on in such cases at a prior and more fine-grained level: a sequence of sub-emotional or micro-emotional reactions of tension/relaxation/expectation/surprise and so on, evoked by individual twists and turns – melodic, rhythmic, harmonic, dynamic, timbral, textural ones – in the music as it unfolds in time, and on which both the emergent expressiveness of a passage and the overall emotional response of a listener importantly depend.⁷ Call this ensemble the *micro-reaction*

⁷ On this process, which turns most centrally on expectation, see Leonard B. Meyer, *Emotion and Meaning in Music* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1956); *Music, the Arts, and Ideas* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1967); Jenefer Robinson,

ensemble induced by a particular musical passage in an experienced and attentive listener.

Some of what might be included under this rubric are frissons, shudders, goose bumps, chokings-up; pangs, twinges, chills, and thrills; tensings and relaxings; quickenings and slackenings of breath; tightenings and loosenings of muscles; accelerations and decelerations of heartbeat; apprehensions, calmings; meltings, hardenings; feelings of uncertainty, feelings of closure.⁸

So if one includes in the emotional response to a particular passage of music not only the overarching emotional response that mirrors the emotion expressed by the passage, but also the sub-emotional micro-reaction ensemble that the passage occasions, another avenue is opened to the music-specificity of the overall response. The music-specificity of that overall response would be anchored, not as suggested earlier, through incorporating the specific musical structure in that experience as an oblique intentional object or else the perceptual focus of it, but instead through acknowledging the distinctive micro-reaction ensemble correlated with that musical structure as part of the physiological component of the aroused emotion. For as my brief survey of that terrain might suggest, the micro-reactions in question are either themselves physiological perturbations, or else manifest themselves in such perturbations. The highly distinctive physiological profile of a musically aroused emotion, reflecting in large measure the specificity of a musical passage's expectation/realization potential, would thus seem able to contribute to its music-specificity.

Now consider the *actional* component of an emotion, the ensemble of action tendencies the emotion involves or comprehends. This is another dimension that plausibly contributes to the specificity of an emotion aroused by music. And two things enter into this most noticeably.

The first is the fine-grained *rhythmic entrainment* that the specific rhythmic character of a passage, including its degree of swing, groove, syncopation, smoothness or chopiness, regularity or irregularity, waltzy or marchlike character, and so on, can be relied on to induce in the listener – that is, more plainly put, the capacity of music to make us move along with it, or at least instil in us impulses to so move. The second is the *subvocalization* of salient melodic lines that music attended to closely often induces in listeners, which

'The Expression and Arousal of Emotion in Music', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 52 (1994): 13–22; Jerrold Levinson, 'Musical Expressiveness', in *The Pleasures of Aesthetics: Philosophical Essays* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), 90–125; and David Huron, *Sweet Anticipation: Music and the Psychology of Expectation* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006).

⁸ Most of these instances are offered in my 'Musical Expressiveness'.

subvocalization, as empirical studies suggest, normally involves minute movements in the area of the larynx and throat, whether or not consciously registered by those listeners.

If that is so, then the ensemble of action tendencies associated with audition of a passage of music will likely be specific to that passage, and if admitted to constitute an individuating component of the emotion the passage arouses, such an emotion could attain music-specificity also in this manner.

V. AFFECTIVE COMPONENT OF MUSICALLY AROUSED EMOTION

We come finally to the purely *affective* component of an emotion, the quality of inner feeling, the colouring of consciousness that it involves. Might that contribute to the music-specificity of a musically aroused emotion?

I have long been drawn to the idea that the emotional response to a specific passage of music must somehow be distinctive in its purely affective aspect, whatever distinctiveness it might possess in other ways. Moreover, I believe that there are discriminable shades of pure feeling, or affect, which emotions raised in ordinary contexts exhibit; for instance, the sinking feeling, the feeling of elation, the feeling of anger, the anxious feeling, and perhaps, the feeling of shame. Thus there is no reason a mirroring response to music expressive of an emotion would not also normally include, if at lesser intensity due to the emotion's occurring on an imaginative plane or in an imaginative mode, such affect.

But there is a major wrinkle with this. It seems plausible, on the face of it, that the affects experienced in such cases are only the *generic* ones that characterize different emotions as types, and not ones that would be *unique* to the specific, perceptually individual passage being audited. And if that is the case then the affective component of a musically aroused emotion, once again, would not appear capable of contributing to its music-specificity.

However, there may be other routes to the individualization of the affect component of a musically aroused emotion and thus to the emotion's music-specificity. Here are two.

First route. Consider a passage P that is expressive of a highly specific emotion M, a kind of melancholy, but one more specific than what verbal descriptions, such as 'melancholy' or 'halting melancholy' or even 'plaintive halting melancholy', can indicate. On the model of the mirroring emotional response to music with which we have been working, P might thus arouse M, or an analogue of M, in a listener who recognized and empathized with the emotion expressed in the passage, and such an aroused emotion would then seem to be a music-specific one – namely, the specific species of melancholy

expressed by P. This route to music-specific emotion hinges on the notion, championed by writers as diverse as Schopenhauer, Gurney, Wittgenstein, and Scruton, of the absolute individuality and possible ineffability of what music expresses emotionally.⁹

Second route. We have yet to focus on two phenomenological aspects of the music-listening experience. The first is the *specific sound* of the sequence of sounds constituting a passage of music, or, in other words, how that sequence of sounds *sounds*. This, which could be labelled the music's *direct sonic feel*, will be an invariable aspect of any such listening experience. The second is the feel of one's *inner sounding or seconding* of that sequence of sounds as one listens. This, which could be labelled the music's *indirect sonic feel*, will be a variable aspect of listening experiences, depending on whether the listener is in fact engaging in such seconding and on the extent of the listener's awareness of such seconding.¹⁰

With that distinction in mind we are about ready to see how the affective dimension of the emotion had in response to music might serve to anchor in all cases its music-specificity, relying only on the invariably registered *direct sonic feel* of a musical passage. We need only one further posit, that of an emergent *sonic-emotive feel*, the psychological fusion of the passage's *direct sonic feel* and the *generic emotive feel* of the core mirroring emotional response. Such an emergent feel would be music-specific, since the direct sonic feel that enters into it is so, even if the emotive feel with which it is fused, say, that of generic joy or sorrow or melancholy, is not. But since that latter feel is clearly an emotive and not a sonic one, that allows the posited emergent feel to qualify as an aspect of the *emotional* response to the music, thus securing the music-specificity of that response through its affective dimension, which is what we were seeking.

VI. PROVISIONAL CONCLUSION

It would seem, then, that the mirroring emotional response to a musical passage closely attended to is likely one that is specific to the passage in question, in virtue of the specificity of the *intentional*, *actional*, *physiological*, and *affective* components of the elicited emotion.

⁹ It is also more or less what the composer Mendelssohn was getting at when he opined that what the music he loved expressed was not too *indefinite* for words, but rather, too *definite* for them.

¹⁰ Since that second sonic feel is a variable and not an invariable aspect of the experience of listening and emotionally responding to expressive music, I do not pursue how it might contribute, if present, to the specificity of such response.

The first of these involves an intentional object of the same specificity as the passage itself; the second of these involves a series of fine-grained motor reactions to the passage's rhythmic and melodic profile, some centred on the larynx and some on the body as a whole; the third of these involves a series of corporeal micro-responses or micro-feelings, induced mainly by mechanisms of expectation generation, satisfaction, and frustration activated by the passage, which presumably reflect in large measure the passage's distinctive audible structure; while the fourth of these involves emotional affect that is plausibly not detachable from, and not designatable apart from, musical passages in their concrete specificity.

One the other hand, we have seen no reason to think that the *evaluative* and *conative* components of a musically aroused emotion can contribute to the emotion's *music-specificity*, though such components naturally contribute to the emotion's specificity *tout court*, that is, to what makes the emotion the particular emotion it is.

VII. A LITTLE CLOUD

With apologies to James Joyce, a little cloud threatens the provisional conclusion I have just reached. It comes in the form of a worry as to whether every *emotional experience* in fact constitutes an *emotion*. Clearly, the *total* experience had by a listener in closely attending to a passage of music, perceptually registering its specific structure, having micro-reactions to its musical implications as they unfold, moving bodily and subvocally to its individual melodic and rhythmic shape, and responding affectively to its overall expressive character, will be a distinctive one, not plausibly afforded by any other passage of music. And let us allow that it must be correct to call that experience an *emotional* experience, if not an *exclusively* emotional one. Is there then an argument to be made that such an emotional experience constitutes a distinct *emotion*? Perhaps not. But such a case is neither needed nor desirable.

Here's why. The *total* experience of the music in question is indeed an *emotional* experience of the music, but that total experience includes dimensions of the experience, such as the successful tracking of musical unfolding, that are *not* part of what make the experience an emotional experience. The dimensions that *are* part of that, that is, the six postulated dimensions of a paradigm emotion – evaluative, intentional, actional, conative, physiological, and affective – are a *subset* of the total experience in question. And so there is no reason not to consider that subset as constituting an emotion – and a music-specific one, if our earlier reflections were valid – while not accounting the *total* experience of the passage an *emotion*, despite its clearly being an *emotional* experience.

VIII. AN UMBRELLA AGAINST FURTHER CLOUDS

It is time to underline what is perhaps the most securely distinctive phenomenon as regards the emotional experience of music, if only as an insurance policy against weakness in the case I have tried to construct for the music-specificity of our emotional responses to passages of expressive music. And that phenomenon is the *specific succession of emotional responses to the sequence of expressive passages* in an extended piece of music.

Consider as an example, just one of thousands that I might have chosen, the third movement of Prokofiev's Violin Concerto no. 2 in G minor. That movement contains passages of strikingly different character – there are by my count three or four main strains – whose succession is orchestrated by Prokofiev with remarkable fluidity. As one passes from one type of expressiveness to another – from extroverted to plaintive, from plaintive to anxious, from anxious to excitable – one has a complex emotional experience not affordable, it would appear, by anything other than that piece as so structured.

The relevance of this observation is as follows. Even if nothing of the case I have so far made for the music-specificity of the emotional response to individual passages of music holds up, there is available at least a fallback position in that spirit – namely, that which affirms the music-specificity of the emotional experience of a *sequence* of passages in a piece of expressive music of any extent.

IX. OTHER SOURCES OF THE MUSIC-SPECIFICITY OF MUSICAL EMOTION

There are other potential sources of the music-specificity of musically aroused emotion on which I have not yet touched. Three will be described below. But if we examine them closely it is unclear that any of them can deliver what we were seeking – namely, something that would contribute to the specificity of the mirroring emotion had for a passage of music being heard.

The first of these is the *higher-order thought* that the emotion one is registering derives from or is grounded in the *specific sequence of sounds* to which one is attending. Such a thought, whether in the foreground of consciousness as an explicit judgement or in the background of consciousness as a diffuse awareness, is rarely very far from the mind of an emotionally responsive listener listening intently. But again, it is not obvious that such a higher-order thought can be accounted an element of the *emotion* had in response to the passage, rather than simply, and undeniably, an element in the total *experience* of the passage.

The second of these is the narrowly *appreciative* emotions, involving an evaluative assessment of musical quality or musical accomplishment, ones focused, for instance, on a musical passage's beauty, elegance, or expressiveness,

and which seem as though they might contribute, where they occur, to making the emotional response to the passage a music-specific one.¹¹ For insofar as appreciative responses on the order of *admiration* of a passage's beauty or *wonder* at a passage's craftsmanship are accounted *part* of the overall emotional response to the music, they would appear to contribute to the music-specificity of that response, since taking the passage in all its specificity as the intentional object of such appreciation. But again, emotional responses to music of the appreciative sort, though indeed reinforcing the music-specificity of the *overall* emotional response, would seem to stand beside, rather than entering into, the basic mirroring emotional responses that have been my primary concern here, and so would not obviously serve to reinforce *their* music-specificity.

The third of these is an aspect of the listening situation so far unremarked on – namely, the specifically musical *pleasure* had in listening to a stretch of music, one normally consequent on successfully following or tracking music one hears with understanding. Such pleasure in closely following music might, at first blush, be thought to also add to the specificity of the core emotional response, since its object is clearly the musical passage in its sonic particularity, the pleasure being pleasure paradigmatically taken in *just that* music unfolding in *just that* way. But a reason to resist that conclusion nonetheless is that pleasure as such is not normally accounted an *emotion*, nor even a *component* of emotion, though emotions can of course be *experienced* as more or less pleasant.

X. MORE ON INWARDLY SOUNDING MUSIC

As noted earlier, when listening to music closely and absorbed in its moment-to-moment evolution, one often mentally echoes the music, inwardly sounding or seconding music being audited in the form of subvocalization. Moreover, when one does so one typically has a stronger or more intense emotional response to the music. So why is that the case? There are several possible answers. First, because the music then seems almost to *issue from you*; second, because you then end up tracking *even more closely* the music's specific evolution; and third,

¹¹ See Peter Kivy, *Music Alone: Philosophical Reflections on the Purely Musical Experience* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990); *New Essays on Musical Understanding* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Jesse Prinz, 'Emotion and Aesthetic Value', in *The Aesthetic Mind: Philosophy and Psychology*, ed. Elisabeth Schellekens and Peter Goldie (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 71–88; and Patrik N. Juslin, 'From Everyday Emotions to Aesthetic Emotions: Towards a Unified Theory of Musical Emotions', *Physics of Life Reviews* 10 (2013): 235–66. For Kivy, though not for Juslin, such appreciative emotions are virtually the *only* ones involved in responding emotionally to music, while Prinz's position on the matter is not entirely clear.

because of the greater *personal investment* in the music that such inner sounding implies.

A related phenomenon is this. It is commonly observed that in order to recall the specific emotional response one has to a musical passage, in order to summon up its specific quality, one normally has either to actually *rehear* the passage, or else imaginatively *revive* the latter, mentally rehearsing the passage from memory, where such rehearsal seems to involve subvocalizing salient melodic features of the passage. This seems a rather strong indication of the indissociability of the specific emotional response to a musical passage from the passage that induces it.

XI. VALUE AND COMMUNICABILITY

I turn briefly now to the question of value. What is the value of the musically derived and anchored emotional responses that have been my concern here? In past writings I have ventured a number of suggestions as to what of value such responses might afford us, in terms of emotional reassurance, empathic exercise, spiritual communion, experiential broadening, self-knowledge, and other ostensible goods.¹² Here I want to offer a suggestion of a different sort, one tailored to my present focus on the musical specificity of the emotional responses involved.

What I have in mind is the satisfaction taken in the *fitting together* of the different dimensions of these experiences – perceptual, conceptual, emotional, corporeal – in a sort of marvel of mutual attunement. This satisfaction is akin to that afforded by observation of a well-oiled complicated machine in action. But in this case the machine is a psycho-socio-physical one, in which the music, the performer, and the listener all play an essential part.

This suggestion echoes, though at some remove, Kant's suggestion that aesthetic pleasure consists in the free play of the cognitive faculties in relation to an apprehended form of purposive character, or, alternatively, an awareness of the harmony of the cognitive faculties underlying such free play. But there is a difference between Kant's suggestion and mine. With the special satisfaction of things fitting together felt in the experience of musically aroused emotion, which I have sought to describe, the satisfaction, it seems to me, lies more in a *controlled* than a *free* play of the powers or elements involved, in which our faculties of perception and emotion, on the one hand, and the formal and emotional potentials of the music, on the other hand, intermesh and interlock in a remarkably determinate manner.

¹² See my 'Evaluating Music', in *Contemplating Art*, 184–207; 'Musical Chills', in *ibid.*, 220–36; and 'Music and Negative Emotion', in *Music, Art, and Metaphysics*, 306–35.

Finally, consider the question of the communicability of the emotional experience of music in light of our reflections on the inseparability of such experience from the music that occasions it. What should be underlined is that the music-specificity of the mirroring emotional response to music variously modelled and argued for here is no bar to its communicability, that is, its shareability with others. Its music-specificity, however theorized, in fact makes such communication and sharing all the more achievable.

At least among listeners similarly backgrounded in the culture and tradition from which a given music arises, the common object and focus of the emotional response – the specific musical entity closely tracked – almost guarantees a commonality and convergence of emotional experience. Consider how, when at a loss for words to describe how one feels on a given occasion or the mood that one is in, pointing to a particular piece of music and saying, ‘like that’, is probably a more effective a way to communicate what cannot be said on the matter than almost anything else that one might do. So, for instance, one might try to convey verbally, to a friend of sunny disposition, the psychic state of oppressive angst in which one unhappily found oneself. Or one might simply have the friend listen to the opening of Brahms’s First Symphony.

XII. COMPARISON WITH OTHER AESTHETIC OR ARTISTIC DOMAINS

In focusing on senses and ways in which emotions aroused by music that one attends to closely might be music-specific I do not mean to imply that object-specific aroused emotions are not to be encountered in other aesthetic or artistic domains, such as painting, poetry, cuisine, or nature. But the phenomenon in music seems to me both more robust and more distinctive than elsewhere.

First of all, music appears to arouse emotion more intensely, more reliably, and more sustainedly than do the objects of those other domains, at least for most perceivers. Second, emotional arousal by music seems to play a larger or more central role in music’s aesthetic appreciation than such arousal plays in the aesthetic appreciation of those other objects. Third, the emotion aroused by music, as I have repeatedly noted, is experienced as somehow inhering in and intertwined with the music that arouses it, whereas that sense of inherence in and intertwinement with the object evoking the emotional response seems less pronounced with those other sorts of emotion-arousing objects.

Some other disanalogies with the emotions aroused by those other sorts of things are these. In other temporal arts, such as literature and film and dance, their objects – that is, artworks in those artforms – evoke emotion mainly, though of course not only, through their *narrative* element, an element that is absent or relatively marginal in instrumental music, and an element that also

provides explicit intentional objects for the imagined emotions aroused in spectators by such works. Whereas with static visual objects, such as natural landscapes or abstract paintings, no part is played in the arousing of emotion by such objects of an *inner seconding* of the object's perceivable features – its lines, shapes, colours, textures, volumes, and such – it being hard even to form a conception of what such *inner seconding* would involve.

CODA: THE 'MUSICAL PILL' PROBLEM

Might music be replaced by a drug, such that a drug-based experience would be substitutable for a musical experience? Might a drug perfectly simulate, and so substitute for, an experience of heard music? In other words, if there were a pill that could give you the same experience as listening intently to a piece of recorded music, would the satisfaction provided by the drug then be equivalent to and just as valuable as the satisfaction provided by actually hearing the music furnished by your stereo system and resounding in your living room?

The relevance of the 'musical pill' problem to the issue regarding the existence and nature of music-specific emotional responses to music should be clear: if a pill could wholly substitute for the experience of hearing and responding emotionally to music, then it looks like the *music-specificity* of such emotional response – its depending non-substitutably on music heard in its sonic specificity – would be threatened, since it appears you could thus dispense with the music and the hearing of it, needing only to down a pill instead.

Well, if there were a drug that could really give you the *same experience* as listening intently to a piece of music, it looks as if the satisfaction provided by the drug arguably would then be equivalent to and just as valuable as the satisfaction provided by the music. Yet there is the conviction that a drug that gave you the experience of, say, climbing a mountain when you have not actually done so, to recall some familiar thought experiments of Robert Nozick and Thomas Nagel, would not be as satisfying or as valuable as actually climbing a mountain.

It depends, though, on how 'same experience' is understood in the present thought experiment regarding a musical pill. I suggest that a drug that simulated exactly and indiscernibly the experience of hearing a good performance of the Goldberg Variations on a harpsichord would be as satisfying and as valuable as actually hearing such a performance. Put otherwise, the difference between such a drug and the recording of such a performance encoded on a CD would be inconsequential, assuming there are no other effects of the drug and that the drug was a wholly reliable technology. The pill, in short, would in effect simply be another mode of storage and delivery of recorded music. By contrast, the drug

in the mountain-climbing simulation scenario is not supplying the experience of really climbing a mountain but only the illusion of such.

What at base distinguishes the musical and the mountain-climbing cases, I suggest, is that listening to music is in essence a *perceptual-psychological* activity, however grounded in and underlain by bodily processes, whereas climbing a mountain is only that in part, being also and irreducibly a *physical-corporeal* activity, involving real displacement in time and space, real risk to life and limb, the overcoming of real physical challenges, and a non-negotiable expenditure of bodily effort. Without the latter elements the experience of seeming to climb a mountain is a sham of mountain climbing, whereas the pill-based experience of recorded music is not, but arguably rather furnishes all that such experience essentially involves.

I confess, though, that such a mode of delivery of musical experience would not be to my taste. I would probably stick to my CDs and MP3 files and Sirius radio, however convenient it might be to have recorded music in pill form. So perhaps the two listening experiences, viewed more broadly, are not, after all, entirely equivalent or substitutable. At least for me.

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