
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Styra Avins

I first bought a subscription to *Tempo* because I thought I 'ought' to do better at keeping up with contemporary music; but I continue to subscribe because I find it the most interesting reading on music I know. Informative, even inspiring, and my collection of CDs has grown in ways I never expected.

But from time to time I'm puzzled by the picture of American life occasionally displayed in your pages.

A recent example is Mark R. Taylor's comments in his review of Cage's *Two, Five, Seven*, etc. on page 54 in the January 2002 issue. In describing John Cage, Mr. Taylor wrote: 'But still one is struck by the singularity of this American's gesture in involving himself specifically in Japanese Buddhism – not just so profoundly but so early on, at a time post-War when *all the cultural traffic* (*GIs on Okinawa, baseball as national sport ...*) *would have seemed to be flowing in the opposite direction.*' [emphasis mine].

In fact, by 1950 there was already a serious interest in Japanese culture on US college campuses. Americans who had served in Japan were back in America and teaching in many parts of the country, and there were plenty of GIs in Japan who had grasped the beauties of many aspects of Japanese art and culture, or had felt the appeal of Buddhism (especially Zen), and they formed the first students of these subjects. By the time I was in college (mid 1950s) there were courses at many good US universities – including my own – in Japanese language, Japanese culture and society, Buddhism, and Oriental art in general. While one can safely credit him with a deeper interest than most, John Cage was anything but singular in his interest.

As for the references to Yoko Ono, and Fluxus: I knew Toshi Ichianagi, visiting him in his New York flat in the late 50s out of an interest in things Japanese. He happened to be married to an interesting Americanized Japanese girl, who had escaped from her banker-family's home in the well-to-do NY suburb of Westchester via the expedient of marrying him, a young Japanese avant-garde composer then in New York. (Toshi was earning money playing piano accompaniments for Leonard Rose's cello students at

Juilliard, which is how I came to hear about him). I met Yoko because I went to see Toshi. This was at least a year before she took an interest in musical matters; she was then a recent graduate from an expensive American women's college, active as a poet. I remember she introduced me to an exotic food, edible sea-weed, which I found delicious. Fluxus (of which I was an original albeit somewhat reluctant member) was formed without reference to Yoko.

The virtues of *Tempo* are many. I hope in the future that list will include more contributors who are prepared to dip somewhat more deeply into American realities when they write about matters beyond the western shore of the Atlantic.

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From Adrian Farmer

In your recent review of the Zemlinsky Quartets recorded by the Artis Quartet on Nimbus (*Tempo* 222, pp.47–8) you stated that regrettably these discs were no longer available.

I am happy to tell you that Nimbus Records has been restarted by the company's original founders. We have successfully re-acquired the entire master tape archive and have been restocking the catalogue since June 1st 2002. The Zemlinsky Quartets are therefore once again available.

Further information about the status of each title in Nimbus's Classical, World Music and Prima Voce catalogues can be found on our website at www.wyastone.co.uk.

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From Mark Doran

Once again I have the pleasure of thanking various individuals for their welcome correspondence – specifically, Andrew Porter for a gracious acknowledgement (*Tempo* 221); Mark R. Taylor for some kind remarks and an intriguing observa-

tion (*Tempo* 222), and Michael Graubart for his extended and musicianly reflections (*Tempo* 221 and 222).

Before responding to these last, however, I would like to draw attention to something of which I was only dimly aware at the time I wrote ‘The “True Relationship”: Schoenberg’s Analysis of “Unity” in the Op.9 *Kammersinfonie*’ (*Tempo* 219), and which I have since been half-expecting every new correspondent to touch upon. As pianistically adventurous Schoenbergians will no doubt have been pondering, my article’s Exx.5 and 6, while reasonable representations of what can be found in the ‘regular’ score of Op.9 as well as Webern’s quintet arrangement (1922–3) and the composer’s ‘Op.9B’ version for full orchestra (1935), are in a small but significant respect *not* in agreement with Eduard Steuermann’s solo piano arrangement (possibly 1920¹; publ. 1922):

Striking though I find the effect of these ‘additional’ notes – the F#s in the first triplet of b.10, and the A#s in the second – the fact that I knew them only in a text mediated by another musician deterred me from mentioning them in my article.² I have now found, though, that they actually originated with Schoenberg – since they apparently constitute an attempt to bring within the reach of two hands a rising accompanimental line E-F#-G#-A# which in the score’s ‘Erster Druck’ (1912) occurs in the flute part (see

Arnold Schönberg: *Sämtliche Werke, Reihe B, Band 11, Teil 1* [Mainz, 1976]; other differences in spacing and doubling also repay examination), and which is also present, though at the bottom of the texture, in the composer’s own early transcription for 4-hand piano (1907). Some indication of the difficulty Schoenberg had with this bar (from which, of course, the part was ultimately removed altogether) comes from the quite uncharacteristic amount of scratching out and re-writing visible on the autograph MS of that 1912 score (see *Faksimile 1* in the collected edition’s *Reihe A, Band 11* [Mainz, 1976] p.VII). What is clear from all these versions, however – as also from the composer’s fragmentary arrangement for piano quintet (February 1907?: see *Reihe B, Band 11, Teil 2* [Mainz, 1979]) – is that Schoenberg was for an extended period (the work was ‘officially’ finished in July 1906!) committed to a harmonization in which the theme’s second-

and fourth-beat triplet groups were each, like the crotchet on the third beat, heard as part of a complete ‘augmented triad’ sonority.

Since my discussion of the composer’s later analytic selection of five ‘true principal tones’ from within this theme explains his choices by considering the tonal and harmonic ‘value’ of each melodic note, I feel I should point out that the very same result would have been obtained had Schoenberg allowed this additional element to remain. In fact, readers who wish to re-examine my Ex.6 will see that the presence of that element might even be said to make the analysis easier: *all* the notes lying between the G# of b.10 and the E of b.11 are now explicitly part of dissonant and extra-diatonic sonorities.

Turning to Michael Graubart’s letter, I must confess that, interesting and valuable though it certainly is, I finished reading it with something of a headache. For one thing, contemplation of a

¹ See Berg’s letter to Schoenberg (26 [27] December 1920), in Brand, J., Hailey, C., and Harris, D. (Eds), *The Berg-Schoenberg Correspondence: Selected Letters* (London, 1987), p.298.

² Though I did of course wonder where Steuermann got them from: the *New Grove* 2nd Edition may diagnose ‘pianistic fantasy’ in the transcription, but none of it would ever have seen the light of day without Schoenberg’s express approval. (Schoenberg seems, however, to have ‘okayed’ at least one misprint: the right-hand semiquaver chord in the example’s fifth bar should have G natural as its bottom note.)

musicological world in which a sub-thematic relationship derided as non-existent by some is held to be self-evident by others can only provoke the gloomiest imaginings (especially when it is the people in the first category who seem to be writing all the books); but for another, there is the fact that my esteemed acquaintance spends more than a little time arguing against something which only he has proposed.

To begin with, though, I hope readers will give due thought to the various original observations which Mr Graubart's letter presents. Most of these require no comment from me; but since more than one person has assumed that his 'It is all very well thinking of the diminished-seventh chords ... as rootless dominant minor ninths of E major ...' (in the paragraph about 'the D naturals that keep turning up in the triplet motifs of [Op.9's] theme (a) and the two bars preceding it') is directed at me, I may be permitted to say a few words about it.

For the truth is that my ear does not altogether support Mr Graubart's submission that those D naturals turn the diminished-seventh chords above them into 'very firmly rooted dominant minor ninths of G'. I can, of course, see what he means; but I find that I can only *hear* the juncture in that way if I distort those fleeting and sub-metrical Ds (the second and third quavers of a triplet group at *minim*=ca.104!) into far more deliberate and emphatic entities

Schoenberg's own analysis of the 'upbeat' harmony presents it as an example of what he calls 'multiple root reference of a diminished seventh chord': in his own personal symbology the 'VII' indicates that the 'other' postulated root (i.e. besides the B consistent with the chord's enharmonic notation and its triad of resolution) is the modified seventh degree, D natural.³ At the same time, however, it will be seen that Schoenberg also elects to *qualify* this 'registration' with a *question-mark* – a highly unusual and significant step, and one which I can certainly understand! For the rest, while I myself have neither 'wished away' those Ds, nor regarded them as 'unessential' (not a very Schoenbergian thing to do in any case!), it remains my aural experience that the sheer weight of that asserted E major compels them to function more as an 'irritant', a distinctly bracing *complication* that not only assists in the definition of the motif of which they are part, but also prepares the ear for the extra-tonal Ds about to be heard in the triplets of the theme to come.

With regard to Mr Graubart's response to the analytic diagram in my follow-up letter (*Tempo* 220), things become more complicated; indeed, I am not certain that we altogether understand each other. In any event, I re-present the example here, partly out of concern for the interested reader now drowning in back issues, but also in order that I might add a few details that will be of relevance later:

Ex. 3(b) (corrected) trans. shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It features a sequence of notes with annotations 'a' above two groups of notes and '3' above a triplet. Ex. 4 (corrected) shows a similar staff with annotations 'a (trans.)' below two groups of notes and 'x' below a group of notes. Both examples include a bass line with various notes and accidentals.

than the actual musical context will permit. Now while this means that I myself can only stand by my description of 'a threefold presentation of the progression Vb9[*rootless*]-I leading up to and overlapping with the start of the theme' (p.18), I freely acknowledge that this does not prove Mr Graubart wrong: not only is what Schoenberg called 'thinking quickly' as much of a requirement (and as great a challenge!) in Op.9 as it is elsewhere in his output, but the composer himself can even be cited in support of Mr Graubart's interpretation – at least up to a point. For as my Ex.6 (and footnote 24) indicated,

Concerning the 'permutation of the note-orders in the two themes' (i.e. the relation shown by my two sets of connecting lines), Mr Graubart's question is 'Are we now to regard the themes as collections within which the ordering *and the functions* of the notes are unimportant?' I stress that I am as concerned as Mr Graubart that fatuous and imaginary 'relationships' should

³ And not, as more than one person has recently insisted to me, the D# leading note. As a sounding chord-factor this would be a distinctly un-Schoenbergian candidate for a diminished-seventh's root, and not at all an example of his 'multiple root reference'.

not gain credence within our 'anything goes' discipline; and I certainly acknowledge the theoretical 'inconvenience' of that part of the diagram. Yet I still insist that the relative ease with which one can musically demonstrate the presence of the same 3- and 4-note 'cells' in the two lines makes it impossible for me to regard either connection as 'unreal'. Beyond such a statement, however, I would not wish to go: I am the last person to insist that someone should accept an analytic submission that their ear does not spontaneously endorse, and recognise further that attempts to defend or justify an analysis are usually unseemly as well as unavailing.

On the other hand, there remains the question of just what (if anything) one might call this relationship (if any). For I cannot ignore that when discussing it in detail Michael Graubart writes that 'in the first bar the relationship between the two themes would have to be ... [a] rather attenuated example of reversed and postponed antecedent and consequent (Mark Doran does not call it that, but how else to describe a relationship between A#-B and B-A# in this melodic context?)'. Later on, considering the wider context, he emphasises that 'the true – or truer – relationship ... is not one of reversed and post-

poned antecedents and consequents'; and still later we see the relation described as 'that of parallelism, not the complementary one of antecedent to consequent'. Well, my headache is back: how does one address so many refutations of what one has not said? For I certainly do not describe the A#-B and B-A# relation as latently antecedent-consequent (in the manner of Keller's formulation of this 'background' structural principle), and nor would I – for three reasons. To begin with, there is my intense reluctance to risk muddying an area of 'Keller-studies' which is neither as well-known nor as straightforwardly unproblematic as one would wish – a reluctance which my tentativeness in the case of the Op.9 diagnosis, and my reticence in the face of Donna Marie Rolling-Proctor's enquiry [*Tempo* 220, p.27] will surely have made clear. More specifically, however, there is the fact that while the movement A#-B in the upper extract comprises degrees $\hat{7}-\hat{1}$ (in the transposed example's key of B minor), the movement B-A# in the lower extract comprises degrees $\hat{5}-\hat{4}$ (in that theme's key of E major). As a result – and while I too am aware of the 'B major' possibility present in that violin line considered as a 'purely linear' entity – I simply cannot propose the kind of tonal relationship between the successions

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which Keller's concept of 'latent' complementarity requires (and which those *Kammersinfonie* extracts surely exhibited, though there was on that occasion simple 'postponement' rather than 'reversal'). Even were this not the case, however, I would still be unable to think of a good reason for choosing the third and fourth notes of one example and the first and second notes of the other as the elements between which the 'latent' antecedent-consequent relationship should be construed: to my ear the additional, *third* note of the collection has an important defining role – and to propose a tonally complementary relation between the successions $\hat{7}-\hat{1}-\hat{4}$ and $\hat{5}-\#\hat{4}-\hat{1}$ (or $\hat{1}-\hat{7}-\hat{4}$ in our 'linear B') is not something which I would be prepared to do. (It will be recognised that the 'delimitation' of the relevant sections within the *Kammersinfonie* themes was much more intuitively convincing).

As for Mr Graubart's harmonic analysis, this seems to me to be perfectly reasonable: within the second, E major theme each melodic A# (as part of what someone with my upbringing would call an 'embellishing diminished-seventh chord') does indeed point 'forwards' to its resolving B. Yet while I could have no objection to such an observation being 'added' to my own analysis (and do in fact routinely combine sub-thematic and voice-leading approaches in the belief that no tolerably complete account of a structure is possible otherwise), I cannot consider it to be a viable *replacement*. For in 'reaching' from a dissonant tone to a resolution which occurs two (or four!) notes later it manifests in microcosm the usual shortcoming of a voice-leading analysis in such circumstances: single notes are held to achieve prodigies of integration ('it is the function of A# as an appoggiatura that relates Ex.G3 to Ex.G1'), whatever else may be latently or manifestly going on around them.

Of course, I acknowledge that in criticising the convenient discovery within a five-note phrase of a three-note 'cell', however contiguous, Michael Graubart attacks my example at its weakest point: the connection would hardly seem significant without the 'gathering' of additional elements of unification as the E major tune proceeds. Mr Graubart seems to admit the reality of the 'a' – 'a (trans.)' relation ($\hat{5}-b\hat{7}-b\hat{6}-\hat{5}$ becoming $\#\hat{4}-\hat{6}-\hat{5}-\#\hat{4}$), since he speaks of 'the direct motivic relationship of the decorated version in the second bar'. He does not, however, mention my proposed connection 'x' – 'x¹' – whence I might be permitted to say that, on reflection, I believe my description of it as a mere 'contour relation' rather fails to do it justice. Just how strong the

latent connection between the two really is can be shown by simply putting the pitches of the two segments into the same key:



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From Julian Silverman

Stefan Wolpe Appeal

The centenary year of one of the giants of 20th-century music has been and gone. It was all but ignored, so far as the UK is concerned, by his publishers, the musical establishment, the BBC etc. There had been vague plans to mount a number of relatively large-scale performances and broadcasts, to stage his two short operas for the first time and so on. They vanished. Music is a business like any other. Under the auspices of the Stefan Wolpe Society (USA), his daughter, the pianist Katharina Wolpe, managed to put together a short series of concerts in London recently, in which a few of his works received staggering performances before a very few people. The last of these, which would have seen the first performance for 2–3 decades of Wolpe's enormous *Enactments* for 3 pianos – had to be abandoned at the last minute for sudden lack of funds!

Those who decide what is going to be 'in' and what 'out' make their decisions in their own interests. There are few opportunities for contributions from living, breathing, sentient musicians. As in other spheres of life, responsibilities which have been monopolised by musicbiz and the cultural authorities will only come to life if individual enthusiasts take them up. Wolpe's centenary has gone, but, as his daughter remarks, he will still be dead for a long time. I would like to appeal to any readers who wish to try and play a small part in furthering a more developed musical consciousness, to do all they can to see that we get more opportunities to hear more of his amazingly dynamic and original works (many of which, still today, remain unperformed in this country!!) Any ideas, any suggestions for ways of raising money etc. are welcome at julian.silverman@btinternet.com