University of Alberta

Investigation and Analysis in Cross-Media Reception:

Schubert, Goethe, and Others

by

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Comparative Literature

Fall 2009
Edmonton, Alberta

Examining Committee

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Abstract

Is there ever a simple place of convergence where two media coexist and interact equally? If one assumes that there is indeed a mental space where media convgerge and are understood simultaneously, what problems arise if an when one medium overrides the meaning of another? It is difficult to distinguish with precision what individuals respond to in the reception of media presented simultaneously. The relationship between music and text together is a complex one I aim to analyze in this thesis. Using the poet-composer combinations of Schubert and Goethe, and Britten and Donne, I will analyze the interaction between text and music. Additionally, I have conducted empirical studies in Edmonton and Munich to investigate the felt engagement of participants as well as any cultural differences that may be present in terms of how the media are received. I will also engage in a cultural analysis of the changes in pedagogical approches in public education that might make students more willing to appreciate areas of media that might otherwise be categorized by them as only academic.

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I. Introduction

There is a long but rapid sequence of events that takes place in an individual's mind during the act of enjoying a work of art, a kind of chain reaction that continues along with the ongoing media he or she perceives. Each link in the chain is crucial, however, because a sour note or a predictable ending to a work can change that chain of reactions from what could have been an experience of enjoyment into one of criticism. Components of art converge to make an overall impression on an individual, and the complexities regarding which components contribute to which aspects of that person's impression are vast. Interpreting the various factors that contribute to the perception of media is a challenge, but a challenge that is worthy of comprehensive analysis. If, as Marshall McLuhan claims, "[a]ny extension, whether of hand, skin, or foot, affects the whole psychic and social complex" (McLuhan, 4), the act of media perception requires analysis of the work of art itself and the individual's reaction to that art using different approaches to answer different questions.

The fact that this thesis contains a variety of components illustrates the complexity and challenge of reaching a unified conclusion about multimedia reception: a chain of analyses to help shed light on the chain of reactions that exists in the act of media perception. Discussing the theoretical aspects of this

kind of cross-media, cross-cultural work will provide a context for the empirical component of the thesis, which will in turn rely upon the responses and emotions of individuals today. Exploring the theory of media reception is as important a component as the empirical component of the thesis.

Further, examining the composers and authors that have manipulated media throughout history—Schubert and Goethe, Britten and Donne—allows insight into the context informed audience members may have, and how that context might change their interpretation of their works. What has come before has influenced our thoughts and emotions about the arts, consciously or otherwise. Additionally, offering information about the writing processes of these creators can help later to analyze whether or not the intentions or attitudes of the creators were at all impactful in terms of how audiences experienced their works. The analysis and explanation of the studies that were conducted aims to ground the subject of cross-media reception in the relevant present.

It is important to show why an empirical approach is helpful to a study of cross-media analysis. It can be argued that hypotheses about how individuals perceive multimedia information, including determining which medium takes precedence, do not have a great deal of meaning unless these hypotheses can be tested in some way. As Marisa Bortolussi and Peter Dixon outline in *Psychonarratology*, theories about how people interact with media are merely

theories and an effort should be made to test whether these theories have predictive value:

> How readers process narrative is essentially an empirical question that can only be answered by systematic observation of actual readers reading actual texts; it cannot be answered solely on the basis of intuition, anecdotal evidence, or even sophisticated models of human experience . . . the answer to this question will be complex. (Bortolussi and Dixon, 13)

Bortolussi and Dixon go on to say that a "twofold" approach is necessary, comprised of "a theoretical treatment of the reading process" followed by empirical evaluation "by observing the response of actual readers." While my own approach does not fit exactly into the model outlined by Bortolussi and Dixon, I have nevertheless combined theory and empirical study as a means to explore a complex topic that warrants a comprehensive approach. In "On the necessity of empirical studies of literary reading" Miall states that engaging only in conventional hermeneutical studies is akin to "studying food in terms of its appearance, customs, and history, while failing to pay attention to its nutritional function." This analogy suggests the kind of research that is missing from many aspects of literary studies.

If it is possible to illuminate and the mechanisms of art that yield certain responses, what potential applications can this insight have? Understanding the

reception of music and text can help educators better extend to students an appreciation for art forms toward which students might otherwise be unreceptive. As I will elaborate later, the current methodology in many schools and institutions is simply not reaching individuals; perhaps there are phenomena occurring—slowly but palpably—that are going unnoticed by educational institutions which lead to an end result of fewer and fewer students being willing to hone an interest in fine arts and literature. Is it indicative of a problem with how art is being taught or in the relevance of the art itself? Perhaps these changes are an inevitable sign of progress in art and media, but since we do not have a sufficiently significant body of related research to help with these potential phenomena, we are forced then either to attempt to shed more light on this typically overlooked area, or to ignore it. While much scholarly activity relies upon inferences about historical events, it is equally important to try and focus on illuminating present conditions.

By laying a theoretical and historical foundation for the empirical study within this work, I aim to provide the context necessary to analyze the results of the study using the tools that are available from research from past literary and music scholars, and from theorists who have made relevant contributions about human perception. I hope that the directions that this paper takes will reflect the

same kind of contextualized and comprehensive nature of thought that is necessary to better understand an ever-changing human interaction with art.

Investigation and Analysis in Cross-Media Reception:

Schubert, Goethe, and Others

> Hence it appears that *Melody, Dance* and *Song* naturally arose in *Union*, and that *Measure, Rhythm,* and *Numbers* were the certain Consequence.
>
> —John Brown, *A Dissertation on the Rise, Union, Power, The Progressions, Separations, and Corruptions, Of Poetry and Music.*

II. Theory

In this section I will explore the relationship between music and text. I will illustrate how I have synthesized this information to create an empirical study that addresses my primary concern in this thesis: whether or not one medium in a music-text work will prompt greater felt engagement than the other medium. There is an array of factors and theories that suggests how the complexities of cross-media analysis interact; these factors will also work to indicate why I have chosen an empirical approach to addressing cross-media issues. I will develop and discuss several ideas and theories that will lead to the formation of two related hypotheses for the conducted studies. This section will thus first include a brief section on the relationship between music and text

historically, followed by a discussion of theories and ideas that suggest my guiding hypothesis: that music will have a greater emotional impact—or active engagement—on an individual than will text.

This hypothesis is formed through two assumptions: first, the assumption that music is accessible earlier during development from infancy to people than text is; second, that this inherently more accessible quality of music is proposed to enable defamiliarization in music to produce greater active engagement in individuals than text would be able to do.

Additionally, because I propose that responses will demonstrate cultural differences, I carried out studies in two different locations. The accessibility of music is of importance in both hypotheses—in the first hypothesis, music's more innate qualities allow it to be more accessible and as such can produce greater felt engagement. My second hypothesis takes into account the accessibility of certain media and works that can be attributed to cultural background. My second hypothesis is that I expect that individuals from the culture that has fostered more familiarity with a given medium or genre will respond with greater felt engagement to the works used in the studies.

The evolution of music and text has progressed such that today the two media, having long ago been seen as conflated, have become separate entities with rich, autonomous contexts. Their history together is also extensive, and it is

easy to forget that their use in combination is among the earliest available records of these media. In fact, music and poetry have in the past been categorized not only as similar, but as one and the same. Whatever the stance, there is no denying that music and words have been familiar bedfellows since recorded history, and that the reception and performance of the two has shared many similarities. It is no coincidence that traditional structures of poetry and music so closely resemble one another: the epic poem was traditionally sung, and it has been posited that it was not until some time after Homer that music and text began to follow separate, if parallel paths. As societies left behind their oral-based origins, the combination of these media has been one that remains strong, but this has not been necessary for the creation of either. The various stylistic and structural changes that have taken place over time show that, like the visual arts, music and text usually represent the mentality of a society and its artists; the classical, romantic, or modernist movements in western culture are all good examples of instances where a great many comparisons of changes in music and text can be made. Through each of these movements, music and text have converged in some of the most telling representations of the social climate of the time. Examples of this parallel evolution include the increasing precision and decreasing improvisation of music once music began to be written, printed, and more widely disseminated. This is, of course, similar to the permanence and

authorship of text that occurred when printing became more common (e.g., consider the over 40 variant versions of *Canterbury Tales* produced prior to printing). In terms of genre, commonalities between structures can be seen between the classical era of music with that of the Enlightenment in literature: an attention to rigid structure, rational expression of emotion (more temperate dynamics in music, for example) are among the similarities. Other examples of media sharing similar approaches to conventions can be seen in the array of stylistic and structural conventions of music and text in the Romantic period, such as in a Wagner opera. Another example is Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*, which shares many of the conventions of Modernists in other media. It can also be argued that comparisons can be made of changes in music and text. The disillusionment the post-WWI artists of Europe felt seemed to result in the various branches of Modernist poetry breaking apart the conventions of poetic language and Modernist music breaking with conventions of musical structure. Exemplifying the commonalities between media are works that combine media; they serve as ideal examples of shared structural and stylistic conventions on a common theme. And artists most certainly made use of multimedia works that had the capacity to express the different facets of an artistic movement in a way that one medium is limited from doing.

Another commonality that has historically followed both media is the language used by people to talk about language (especially poetry) and music, which has a great deal of overlap. This overlap applies to how we analyze our media today. However, the critical analysis offered by an average individual may differ a great deal between the media based on the individual's familiarity with them. Books, newspaper articles, and other texts are often liked or disliked by individuals for *specific* reasons: the ending was bad, the characters were unlikeable, the author's opinion is divergent from the individual's, etc. With music, however, many people will know what they like but may be less able to explain why they did not like it. Conceivably it is because of the ostensible difficulty in comparing media that music is often viewed as more isolated from other literary or artistic movements. Lippman, for example, subscribes to the notion that music is an isolated medium where the capacity for interpretation is concerned:

> What interpretation seeks to make clear is the complex of feelings, associations, and ideas that were initially formulated in tone by the composer and produced by an adequate performance at the time the work was composed. The conceptions and feelings that are embodied in music are in large measure specific to music itself; they are essentially unknown in any other way (114).

The unavoidably abstract nature of music with the admission that somehow a more tangible meaning filters through musical sound is one which permeates much musical theory and which, ultimately, is irresolvable. After all, the discursive language that has been established by literary scholars is indeed one that has evolved from and drawn inspiration from artistic language and which is still used today in a variety of review formats. The language used in describing and talking about poetry is a construct similar to that of music: *rhythm*, *meter*, *flow*, and a host of other words can be used to describe either medium. In this sense, the critical language used to analyze music and poetry can serve as a connecting factor or at least a related structure that can illuminate similarities between music and poetry. Additionally, since both media are perceived and interpreted so differently, looking at what terms are *not* common could also reveal either medium's capacities and areas of influence on the individual. Even an individual's familiarity with literary or musical criticism—from a record review to a journal article—can assist him or her in reception of works. This ongoing history of media interaction caused a variety of similarities, differences, and contentious subjects to emerge.

Although music and text have a shared history and an enormous capacity to exist in combination in a powerful way, it becomes problematic to understand how these media affect each other—and the individual—in a given work. Can

two media coexist and interact equally? If one assumes that there is a mental space where media converge and are understood simultaneously, what problems arise if and when one medium overrides the meaning of the other? Scholars and artists have struggled, and at times argued about the role music and poetry have when presented together. For example, Mary Breatnach reports that Baudelaire wrote in 1861: "Wagner's operas were proof of the theoretical and aesthetic validity of unifying words and music in a single work" (69). This notion did not sit well with Mallarmé, who Breatnach suggests would have regarded it as having "amounted to an aesthetic and theoretical error of the greatest magnitude" (69). Mallarmé himself, according to Heath Lees in *Mallarmé and Wagner*, had "a deep attraction to music as a dimension of poetry" (7), a notion that seems to necessarily relegate music as subordinate or secondary to poetry. In other instances, music has acted as a platform from which texts or other works have been created. Ultimately the ongoing interaction among media is one which may in fact, like changes in form and style of art, have fluctuated with prevailing social attitudes. Social attitudes, however, are not necessarily indicative of the actual effects of music or text on individuals.

The existing contention about which medium is more impactful may be aided by a discussion about theories suggesting that music may be a more innate medium than text. As stated previously, if music is more innate than language,

music may then have the ability to produce greater defamiliarization than language, and thus greater felt engagement may be asserted. Before embarking on developing hypotheses for the empirical studies to follow, it is important to clarify what is meant by "felt engagement". Felt engagement can be explained simply as "pleasurable interest", referring to a combination of cognitive involvement, immediate engagement in the work, and pleasure. What is "pleasurable" to an individual does not limit a work to a happy tone: indeed, an individual may take pleasure in experiencing works with a dark or somber tone—the idea is that the experience is pleasurable in the sense that they would repeat the experience or seek out similar experiences. While felt engagement does not necessarily mean that an individual will be critically engaged with a work, it does mean that he or she takes pleasure or finds intellectual value in the reception of that work. Immediate attentiveness or engagement in the ongoing changes and progressions in the work are a component of felt engagement—this means that the expectations and anticipations of an individual (which can be linked closely with his or her familiarity with a medium or genre) will be an important factor in determining how much felt engagement he or she had.

The first assumption in the process of developing this hypothesis is that music is more innate. Since only tones and sounds can be heard in the womb, and language development is a process that occurs only later, and over several

years, it is often thought that music, because it is processed by individuals at an earlier stage in development, is a more familiar, primal medium than that of language. Understanding language as individuals develop through childhood requires ever-increasing cognitive abilities; music on the other hand, may be more readily accessible.

Wingstedt and Berg, for example, argue that:

> Even though a large part of the music we encounter on a daily basis can be attributed to the media music category, paradoxically our relation to and conscious knowledge about this form of musical expression is often on a rather unreflecting and subconscious level. Our understanding about the communicative functions and conventions of this kind of music is frequently of an intuitive and relatively unsophisticated nature. Media music [music set to advertising, movies, or other multimedia works] becomes a black box that is taken for granted and becomes invisible – or unheard.

Among the compelling theories that music can perhaps play a more impactful role in people's lives is that music is inherently processed more instinctively than language. Sounds are perceived by an individual, after all, long before language is perceived intelligibly. Iegor Reznikoff is one proponent of this theory, stating that "The reason is that *the level of sound is much more primitive in our consciousness*

than the level of speech. . .sound is related to our deepest, that is to say, to the *very first* levels of consciousness: those appearing already in the period before birth." If music is indeed more instinctive, then perhaps it is a medium which individuals can navigate more easily and with greater confidence since it is more of a second-nature experience for them.

Moreover, Jen Mapes suggests that music is intrinsically natural to organisms other than humans: "not only are natural sounds such as whale and bird songs music, but that their songs may be part of a "universal music" that provides an intuitive musical concept to many animals—including humans." Levitin seems to agree with the idea that music is, for humans, at least, an ancient force, stating that "Music predates agriculture in the history of our species. . . We can say, conservatively, that there is no tangible evidence that language preceded music. In fact, the physical evidence suggests the contrary" (25). In terms of how music may relate to language, Levitin also argues that

> . . .music's function in the developing child is to help prepare its mind for a number of complex cognitive and social activities, exercising the brain so that it will be ready for the demands placed on it by language and social interaction. The fact that music lacks specific referents makes it a safe

> symbol system for expressing mood and feelings in a nonconfrontational manner. Music processing helps infants to prepare for language. . .” (256)

If this is correct, it would make sense that music can impact the individual in a stronger way because it acts as a base-level form of self-expression. Thus, individuals would be more familiar with the medium as a foundational form of developing communication and expression skills. Assuredly, though, there are great differences in music worldwide, and even within individual cultures. If Levitin’s assumptions about the expressive powers of music being more accessible than those of language are correct, it may also be true that music is necessarily diverse and different types may appeal to different people. Thus, the innateness of music must play just as significant of a role in reception as do an individual’s unique and/or learned behaviours, preferences, and characteristics. The evolutionary and learned (cultural) aspects of music reception seem to both weigh heavily on reception and preference. Nature and nurture may exist at once with music: as Mark Tramo suggests, there are both culturally learned and innate aspects to music:

> Music appreciation as you and I experience it in everyday life is learned. What we've been exposed to, the associations that we have with music, what our personalities are, where we're coming from. . . But all of us are

> born into the world with the capacity to apprehend the emotion and meaning in music. And there have been a considerable number of experiments done in infants that show that with a minimal amount, if any, exposure to music in their lives they showed sensitivities to some of the same musical structures that we experience as adults…There's something basic about the ability to extract pitch and melody and harmony and rhythm that we all experience very early on in our lives.

Ultimately the give-and-take of both the culturally learned and instinctive aspects of music will determine a person's musical tastes. Cultural and individual differences may vary, but a sense of appreciation for music is nearly universal. The fact that music precedes language and acts as a stepping stone to linguistic processes in humans indicates that we are more familiar with the medium.

The next step in the argument to assert that music has a greater emotional impact on individuals than text is to discuss how an innate familiarity with music may be part of the reason that its impact is greater. Assuming that music is indeed a more primal experience for people than language, it follows that the effects of defamiliarization may be more powerful in music as well. There is a variety of ways in which defamiliarization can be referred to when considering music. For individuals who are familiar with genres or types of work, then, the

capacity for emotional impact may be greater upon reading reviews of those works, articles about the producers of those works, etc. This is where cultural differences may impact the level of felt engagement a work may have on an individual: different cultures focus on different composers, authors, works, movements, and any number of subcultures or subsets of a culture may vary in what types of art are known and read about. For example, adults who may have learned certain works, authors, and composers in school may have a much different perception of similar works compared to who did not share that learning. Similarly, younger participants may respond with less felt engagement than older participants because they have had less opportunity—less time—to compile experiences that allow for ever greater access to the defamiliarizing effects of art. Accessibility relates to experience, and a variety of factors can affect the level of experience an individual has with art, and as such, the level to which defamiliarization can occur in relation to their experiences with art. To address why context or familiarity is important to media reception, the following quote explains defamiliarization. Victor Shklovsky famously coined the term "defamiliarization" in his work "Art as Device," stating that

> The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known. The technique of art is to make objects "unfamiliar," to make forms difficult, to increase the difficulty and

length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged.

In other words, familiarity within a medium allows an individual to take greater "risks" when approaching it. Factoring in an individual's familiarity with a work of art is one which is relevant to the studies conducted.

Artists and theorists alike have understood that extremes of shock and boredom are wisely avoided in the arts. In some instances, it is the composer's impulse and deliberation that creates music that will have the effect of limiting access to listeners. The music of Schoenberg, for example, has remained largely inaccessible to the general populace, even among those who enjoy a variety of classical or orchestral music. Arguably, Schoenberg and many of his contemporaries aimed to create music that would startle and defamiliarize. Examples of similarly inaccessible literature can be seen in the futurist or Dada movements: their goals were to make audiences uncomfortable, uneasy, and discontented in an effort to reflect the discontent and disillusionment Europeans felt at the beginning of the 20th century. This literature and Schoenberg's music is in no way received in the same manner as more moderate contemporaries of these artists, such as Debussy; or in the case of literature, Fitzgerald or even Brecht. For those who were familiar with artistic forms, the drastic changes in genre may have had enormous impact. As is the case today, most avant-garde or

less accessible works are typically not widely embraced—generally only a more informed, familiar audience finds it palatable.

Defamiliarization can also refer to more specific reactions of individuals receiving different works of art. The patterns that an individual observes in art become dependent on prior experience with earlier works and it is difficult to interpret art when its patterns do not resemble enough the associations the individual has made. These associations are not merely abstract and in fact are embedded in an individual's physiological memory as well as his or her psychology. These physiological reactions, just as the cognitive ones, are not only affected by the music itself, but by the suspense that is contained in the music. Meyer touches on the physiology and expectations the audience experiences in music in stating that:

> Nor do they [individuals] undergo changes that can be traced to changes in stimulus conditions—the music. Motor attitudes and responses involve voluntary muscles systems. . . they appear to be products of the belief and expectation that we are going to have an affective aesthetic experience. (Meyer 79)

As a musical work continues, each section of the song, and indeed each component of the listening experience is an opportunity for those attitudes and expectations to change. An individual's specific familiarity with and anticipation

of the forthcoming "aesthetic experience" will yield different ranges of physiological response that can be identified as effects of defamiliarization. At the beginning of Damasio's *The Feeling of What Happens,* he describes the feeling that an audience has before the first act of a play begins and the lights come on, as well as the feeling an actor has in the wings before he or she steps on stage.

> I realized some years ago that the moving quality of this moment, whichever point of view one takes, comes from its embodiment of an instance of birth, of passage through a threshold that separates a protected but limiting shelter from the possibility and risk of a world beyond and ahead. (Damasio 3)

Assuming Damasio is correct, art can be seen as an opportunity to provide the individual with greater capacity to experience defamiliarization. Perhaps a work will bring new joys or rewards to consciousness, perhaps it will not. The willingness to engage in art is a readiness for opportunity, for defamiliarization, an eagerness for the opportunity for individual mentality to change. But an audience will generally be more receptive if they have already had successful experiences with defamiliarization in order to be enthusiastic about a repeat performance of the defamiliarization experience. Here again, music's more innate role in the individual may have an advantage over poetry or text.

Composers and authors have to tread carefully in order to adequately defamiliarize an audience while at the same time provide enough comfort and context in order for the audience to be receptive to any defamiliarizing aspects of the work. This need to achieve equilibrium for an audience may be aided by the merger of media in a work. In fact, a combination of media might allow one medium to pick up slack in say, the act of defamiliarizing, while the other can be providing the audience with the safety needed to be willing to receive more shocking or unsettling elements of a work. Although the media are relayed to the narrative simultaneously, they may provoke different parts of suspense and comfort at different times, which can provide a palpable, palatable balance for audiences to sense while listening. Whether or not this balance yields reception that can be attributed to one medium or another is uncertain; it is nonetheless important to note that regardless of focus, the interaction between the audience and the media produces an effect which is unique to such a combination.

Defamiliarization can also apply to analyzing a work's performative components. Today, the main difference between the dissemination of music and that of literature is that music, with very few exceptions, demands of its audience aural exposure, whereas a text can be absorbed without audible performance. The move away from oral culture inherently affected literature on a greater number of levels than it did music. Where the evolution of text

reception has been closely intertwined with literacy rates and the proliferation of texts, the reception of music is an activity that has remained comparatively social and comparatively rooted in aural proficiency. The extent to which the player or performer shares a component of authorship in a musical work adds another layer of interpretation to the process of art. As John Sloboda states, "in performance of a 'composition', there is an objective record of the composer's intentions, usually in the form of a score" (Sloboda 67). Moreover, while some composers include copious notes regarding the performance of their works, and detailed, precise dynamic markings, many composers leave their manuscripts sparse, leaving the performer to play the piece at his own discretion. Further, editors of music have long tinkered with older manuscripts, changing among other things, dynamic signs or simply adding them where there were none. It would seem that in some respects the heightened regulation that emerged with copyright laws in the mid 18th century substituted old problems with new ones. Sloboda adds that the advent of a musically literate culture (that is, one that has an established method of musical notation) has changed music's relationship to the self, stating that putting text to music: "encourages the formation of an image of ourselves as separate from our words and actions. We see ourselves as observing and acting on the world rather than being part of it" (244). If Sloboda's postulation is correct, that modern notation has changed the composer's

relationship to his music, then this change seems, ironically, to encourage a listener's identification of the composition with its author. Because a performer is in a sense an expert listener, a performer will in most cases attempt to recreate the musical work with the author's supposed intentions in mind. Different performers will determine different performances according to their knowledge of the composer, the era in which the composer was writing, and at their own level of licence in terms of how true to the original musical style he or she may be inclined to be. A performer has the agency to defamiliarize audiences through his or her interpretation as he or she is effectively the mediator between the composer and the listener.

Audience reception of, for example, two different performances of the same musical work could help show better the role that musicians play in communicating and composing musical meaning. While two musicians may both give performances that diverge from the composer's era or express directions in the music, one musician may be defying convention knowingly while another musician may simply be unaware that it should be played a certain way at all. This reflects the context of audience members, one of whom may walk into a concert full of expectations and knowledge about what is about to be played, while another member may find each note a surprise. Once again it is evident that an individual's familiarity with genre, specific works, and

performances converge and work together to comprise the level of defamiliarization that can take place.

As Meyer has indicated, art prompts physiological responses in individuals during reception; it can be assumed that the characteristics of defamiliarization—essentially being "caught off guard" by some features of a work of art—play a role in the real-time reception of a work. This defamiliarizing effect can have deep implications for the individual in other ways as well. Another way in which music can prove more impactful than text is through its ability to endow the individual with a sense of agency or will. Henri Bergson theorized in *Time and Free Will* that the most compelling part of poetry or music is its "grace", which alludes to future notes or words: "If jerky movements are wanting in grace, the reason is that each of them is self-sufficient and does not announce those which are to follow. . ." (Bergson 12). If this is correct, then those musical works that will be the best received should include phrases and notes which contribute in a graceful way, that is, in a way which suits all the other phrases and notes within the song. The same could then be said to be true of text, except that the time in which a story is read may differ in the mind of a reader compared to the performance of a musical work. Music here, then, has an advantage: because music is received necessarily at a quantifiable time, as opposed to an individual reading a poem, where exact

moments of digestion and comprehension of words and ideas are unknown, musical reception is passive to an extent, subject to time and therefore more easily observable. Music is far more restrictive with its "grace"; certainly an audience member could not simply stop a performance he or she was listening to, but a reader could easily muse on a word or interrupt the rhythm of a poem at his or her liberty. Bergson goes on in *Time and Free Will* to discuss the nature of free will and determinism. In choosing between two possible alternatives, an individual asserts his free will; a determinist will state that there was no other choice than the one chosen. Could the "grace" that music is endowed with enable a receiver to feel the flow of time such that it is always in motion and thus be considered more deterministic than a poem whose rhythm could pause or regress at the receiver's whim? Counterintuitively, by eliminating the element of agency in temporal reception of a work, music endows the receiver with a sense of will over the piece because it connects time through sound and rhythm and represents the cause and effect of free will. When listening to music, the finality and definition of what a listener hears can represent the environment and conditions of life by which an individual is surrounded. The vacillation between tension and resolution that is so inherent to Western music can offer solace to the listener, in the sense that their efforts and decisions in life (tension) will result in a sense of well-being (resolution). Scores to operas and movies are good

examples of more obvious application of this idea. Dissonant, diminished, or unresolved sounds often preclude some bad or unpleasant point in the plot of an opera or movie, but triumph and love are almost always announced by resolved chords. This sense of accomplishment is reflected and expanded upon by the music because it in a sense symbolizes the actions of the story being told. Listening reflectively to music can be seen in a similar way as it applies to the self, whether this application occurs consciously or not.

Ultimately, Bergson indicates that the necessary component to the symbolizing of human will is the "grace" or continuity of music that offers listeners a sense of agency. If it is the unity and connectedness of music that facilitates a sense of will in the individual, however illusory, it follows that the music that will be seen as the most enjoyable will be that which manages to negotiate suspense in a broad context which is unexpected—but not too unexpected. Leonard Meyer illustrates this extensively in stating that

> [e]mbodied musical meaning, is, in short, a product of expectation. If, on the basis of past experience, a present stimulus leads us to expect a more or less definite consequent musical event, then that stimulus has meaning. (Meyer 35)

Meyer later elaborates that a key part of musical expectation lies in previous musical experience. According to Meyer the difference between liking or

responding positively to the music and disliking it would be based largely on the individual's history with music similar to it.

The principle of defamiliarization suggests that music would inherently have better chances at producing felt engagement in an individual than text. Ultimately, an individual's interest in music as an innate, prenatally absorbed experience may result in greater ability for individuals to experience new or different genres of music because the effects of defamiliarization have had a longer time to take effect. Additionally, building on Bergson's notion of free will through the immediacy and grace of music make the medium better able to exact an impact on the individual. Music as a precursor to language, and indeed in its own right as a method of self-expression and interpretation of life's tension-resolution narratives affects individuals profoundly. Theoretically, music has advantages in the studies I have conducted that the text does not have. In terms of developing a study that would satisfy the factors involved in this hypothesis, I will now review a study that examined some of the same possibilities for reception and defamiliarization that I have just described.

A study similar in design to my own was conducted by D.D. Coffman in 1995, in which individuals were presented with a text on its own, a text set to music, and music on its own. Participants were split into a variety of groups and responses were organized according to a variety of factors, including gender and

familiarity or formal training with music. Participants' affective responses to the media were of interest here, measured by "activity", which was a combination of participant self-reports before and after the experiment and along a variety of semantic differential scales; Coffman describes the results: "These empirical findings reinforce the beliefs of people in the film, television, and music industries who assert that music can heighten the affective response to verbal and visual information." According to Coffman, "Musical settings received higher activity ratings than the spoken text alone condition: Evidently, the addition of piano accompaniment yielded higher listener ratings of activity." Because there are similarities between this study and my own, the results of Coffman's study are in keeping with the basic concept of my first hypothesis.

As indicated earlier in this section, the capacity that music has to invoke pleasurable interest is stronger than in the case of poetry. This leads me to hypothesis I, which is that participants will experience more felt engagement in the music of the works I have chosen. Further to this, I also propose hypothesis II: that because culture shapes access to various media and influences their reception, that the culture more familiar with a work or genre will respond with greater felt engagement than a less familiar culture.

An historical analysis of the composer-author pairs chosen for the studies—Britten and Donne, and Schubert and Goethe—is relevant to the

hypothesis of the studies in the sense that an understanding of the miliey of the artists and their intenions will give insight into why and how individuals may react to their works. Moreover, the capacity a work has to create defamiliarization in an individual can be better understood through an examination of the work's creation. Understanding how a reader or listener familiar with the culture in question might interpret a work will also have implications for how we may interpret cultural differences between study participants.

III. Britten and Donne

Composers who make use of existing literary texts for musical purposes are, in many ways, just as subject to the context in which they interpret these texts as the average reader is. The level of felt engagement they feel upon reading a work can determine whether or not they wish to make use of that work at all. Many factors come into play when a composer engages with a text searching for artistic resonance, or for an emotional impact. Familiarity with an author, the period in which the work was written, and the critical body of work that may surround it all contribute to how impactful it will be. A composer today is just as far removed as any other reader from a text that was published in a different time and composers who use texts in translation are just as disadvantaged as the

ordinary reader who is doing the same. It is important to factor in this context to examine the different methods that composers use to manipulate and change the text they use in order to serve their own compositional goals.. Britten and Schubert had very different experiences in terms of the cultural contexts in which they put the particular texts to music; of particular importance here are the differences that the passage of time plays in these compositions. Whereas Schubert and Goethe were alive at the same time and in a broad sense were contemporaries, Donne died centuries before Britten chose his work to put to music. This difference carries with it seeming advantages and disadvantages for both composers.

Many factors other than the rich body of literary criticism contributed to Britten's manipulation of Donne's texts. Personal experiences deeply affect an individual's response to specific subjects in art, and in this way, Britten's personal life experiences contributed significantly to his interpretation of Donne. An individual familiar with the basic life and works of Britten would be familiar with the fact that, having lived through the Second World War, familiar with the tragedies and hardships that can seem commonplace during wartime, Britten identified himself strongly as a pacifist. An abhorrence of war was evident in many of his compositions. Britten's tour of German concentration camps was the source of the mourning tone that he infused the work with, and that inspiration

is audible. "Oh Might Those Sighes and Teares" offers an excellent example of the dirge-like tone Britten implements in all of the Lieder in this somber song cycle. Someone who knew well Britten's pacifist undertones would associate this dark tone with the lamentations that come from war. Graham Johnson describes the conditions under which Britten composed the *Holy Sonnets of John Donne* in *Britten, Voice and Piano*:

> It is almost legendary fact that this great work was written in a week or so in August 1945. The composer was ill with fever but nevertheless composed the cycle at a feverish pace. He had just returned from a tour of the recently liberated German concentration camps. (Johnson 126)

It is not surprising, then, that the tone of the work is particularly morose given the weight of Britten's experiences at the time. In fact, given that Donne's wife's death was said to be influential in writing this sonnet cycle, a sense of mourning would be in keeping with the original inspiration for the piece. Britten frequently drew from political or humanitarian situations for emotional direction in his music. Where Donne was mourning the loss of a loved one through the poem, Britten used the poem to mourn the huge loss, both literal and symbolic, that the atrocities of the Second World War brought to the world. Nothing in the text has been changed to modernize, clarify, or situate the work within any one ideology; the music Britten wrote to accompany a poem is in many ways a

text of personal mourning and the tone of the music remains one of mourning—only on a grander scale.

Britten's capacity to write music that served a text well was recognized. One of Britten's collaborators, the librettist for several of his operas, W.H. Auden, said of Britten's attitude toward language that "[Britten had] extraordinary sensitivity to the English language. Here at last was a composer who could set the language without undue distortion". It is interesting that Auden should make this claim in light of Britten's copious reworking and editing of texts that were to be set to music. In "Benjamin Britten's Poetic Alterations" by Andrew Thomas Kuster, it is stated that Britten

> often made significant alterations to the original poetic texts he chose to set. Frequently, he altered a poetic text to heighten a musical form or a musical effect as in his setting of *A Hymn to the Virgin*. Other times his alterations served to make the poetry more intelligible, as in *Rejoice in the Lamb*. Finally, Britten occasionally changed the poet's words to intentionally alter the poet's meaning, as in the *War Requiem*.

Kuster later adds that Britten's or any conductor's knowledge of the poetry he set to music will invariably "enhance the rhetorical presentation of the musical work." In this sense then, Auden's statement is most certainly a testament to Britten's sensitivity and ability to edit and manipulate text with a

sophistication that allows the original tone of the text to be emphasized and clarified by the music in spite of fairly significant alterations of the text.

Britten was much more temporally distanced from Donne's work than Schubert was from Goethe; Schubert had the benefit of being able to interact with Goethe, with whatever marginal success he had. Britten did not have this open as a possibility, which can offer both benefits and drawbacks to the composition process. What can be seen as an advantage to substitute for that is the foundation of criticism of Donne's work that can only come from having had a century or two for Donne's writing to be formalized and cemented into the literary canon with which Britten was familiar. Though Schubert had the knowledge that Goethe was a literary giant in his own time, Schubert did not have that luxury when judging contemporary poets to choose texts from. Britten, on the other hand, could to a certain extent count on Donne's work being at the very least well received as being worthy of musical interpretation.

There are, however, drawbacks to having historical hindsight: because Donne's work is already respected over many decades of trials in reception, Britten's setting must, in a sense, live up to the standard that Donne has set for the poem. Like the film based on the beloved novel rather than the obscure one, Britten had increased pressure to do justice to a work already confirmed as worthy of canonization. Audience members who knew the poem would have

specific expectations and established associations with the content—Britten's setting could be so far removed from those expectations that defamiliarization's beneficial effects of felt engagement could be lost in a too-extreme departure from audience expectations. When authors or composers die, their works live on subject to public opinion and scholarship; the associations that people carry with them of various artists and authors grow, and any addition or change to that nebulous network of information that categorizes an author or work with ever more specificity—even misguided specificity—can be daunting for the individual who is interpreting or manipulating the works of a given author.

Both composers experienced different levels of success and notoriety in their lifetimes. Britten enjoyed more popular acclaim than Schubert did in his own time; it is impossible to say beyond mere conjecture how both composer's work will be interpreted and appreciated over time given the short amount of time history has had to study and test the enduring qualities of the works of Britten, who died in 1976.

Since it was more common for Britten to make changes to a text he was using rather than to leave it in its original form, there are several implications to the fact that Britten left the text of Donne's sonnet intact. It could mean that Britten felt that Donne's poem accurately conveyed the meaning or purpose of his composition. Indeed there are instances in which Britten has modernized the

text of an older piece, replacing certain antiquated phrases or spellings; though there are numerous instances in Donne's poem of these anachronisms, Britten ostensibly felt no need to change them. Britten was also passionate about art being relevant to society, able to speak to the issues and concerns of the real world. Perhaps in this specific instance, Britten felt it was important to leave the text with its archaic qualities as a means to show the enduring suffering of humanity, a suffering which he probably felt all too potently after witnessing the reality of concentration camps. As a pacifist, he may have felt it important to indicate sorrow on a global scale through language that, because it is anachronistic, may allow the work a timelessness or universality that can come with language that has existed centuries earlier, a reminder of suffering in the past in a way to serve the composer's wish of reminding his audience about the suffering that had just so recently occurred. Indeed, the antiquated language from the poem may have been intended to serve as a warning to remember the permanent and ongoing effects of war and suffering of humanity so as to prevent its further presence in the world. Paul Kildea states in his article "In His Own Words" that

> words were [Britten's] medium. Long before he showed his engagement with English text in his great opera of 1945, *Peter Grimes*, Britten had started a love affair with English prose and poetry. . . In his songs and

> operas, Britten was able to hide behind functionality: words were there to be pressed into action, given a musical context, and they could remain ambiguous.

According to Kildea, then, Britten's interaction with language was indeed one which valued attention to detail in accurately serving the purposes of his music. Whatever changes Britten made to the text of a setting, Kildea seems to believe that the changes were to tailor the meaning of the text to the song rather than to alter the author's original intent.

Britten's attention to detail in accurately portraying the intentions of literary texts through music has even caused him to receive undue criticism. Alex Ross refers to unfair critics responding to Britten's settings:

> You hear this patronizing guff about how there is something wrong with his setting of Rimbaud's French in 'Les Illuminations.' In fact, Rimbaud's diction is on purpose peculiar, because he was in London when he wrote, and was mixing French and English words. Actually, I can't think of any other composer who was so ambitious in his choice of poetry.

Ultimately, Britten's attention to the texts he uses indicates a very calculated and sensitive approach to setting words to music that placed a great deal of importance on studying and understanding the details of the literature he used. As time passes it will be interesting to see how both the texts Britten chose will

be remembered both alone and as a part of Britten's music. If indeed Britten demonstrated a deep respect for the original intent of the authors whose texts he used, perhaps then readers will see a more balanced volume of attention paid to both the texts and how they interact with the music. While some poems are today only known, or at least best known, for being set to a more famous song, perhaps Britten's settings have made room for the poetry he chose to be regarded with as much veneration as his music.

IV. Schubert and Goethe

As discussed in previous chapters, Bergson's notion of the grace or continuity of music as endowing the audience with an illusory sense of free will within art is necessarily extended to the artists themselves. In the cases of both Schubert and Britten, a musical composer was inspired by an existing text.

As stated earlier, an important factor when comparing poetry and music occurring simultaneously is a potential discrepancy between the quality of the poem and that of the song. For example, using Bergson's notion of grace as a determining factor in the quality of an artistic work, if the poem either does not contain the graceful qualities that evoke an emotional response, or if the music and text have not been effectively combined such that the graceful qualities of

both media are undermined, then it can be assumed that the work will not have a lasting impact or a potential to endure.

There has been long-standing scholarly contention regarding the quality of poetry that Schubert chose to set to music, but the broader opinion is that Schubert exhibited discretion and taste when making text choices. Youens, for example, applauds Schubert's poetic taste: "The more one examines Schubert's literary choices, the more one is impressed by his acuity. From the array of poets of every stripe—good, bad, near-great, mediocre—at his disposal in Vienna's many literary almanacs and poetic anthologies, he chose the best" (Youens 1). It is true that among the texts chosen are those of lesser poets, who perhaps enjoyed moderate success within the context of a culturally flourishing Vienna. However, when one looks at where the majority of Schubert's Lieder texts are acquired, only a few come from what Whitton describes as Schubert's "poetaster friends" (37); Goethe, Schiller, and Heine make up the vast majority. As for Goethe, Schubert idolized the icon, whose celebrity had already been established by the time Schubert began composing. "It is difficult to over-estimate the effect of this great writer . . . on the development of the German Lied" (Whitton 25), and it is true that Schubert is not alone in making use of the great writer's poems for use in Lieder. It is difficult to say beyond the fact that the texts were part of a larger cultural movement (Sturm und Drang, etc) what aspects of Goethe's

poems precisely lent themselves to music so readily. In any case, Schubert employed, if nothing else, the deep feelings of inspiration that Goethe's poetry evoked in him to pen his Lieder.

It is interesting to note that there is no reciprocity in terms of artistic inspiration or otherwise in this poet-composer relationship. Goethe did not particularly enjoy Schubert's interpretations of his poems, much less derive any sort of documented influence from them. In his own time, Schubert did not enjoy as much notoriety as his contemporaries; it is this fact combined with Goethe's more traditional view of how poetry should be set to music that served to prevent any recognition of the other artist's work.

Goethe was so successful in such a variety of fields that it comes as little surprise that Goethe himself was musical, an amateur composer, and had his own ideas on the nature of the interpretation of music. Lorraine Byrne remarks that "[Goethe] is obsessed with the idea that a musical work can never free itself from abstract ideas" (Byrne 20). Given this fact, it is likely that Goethe would have been particularly aesthetically sensitive to any musical interpretation of his poetry.

Perhaps Schubert's most famous Lied, "Erlkönig" is an ideal example to show where the two authors interpreted the text of the poem differently. Both Schubert and Goethe wrote musical settings for the poem. Goethe's strophic,

and largely unmemorable folk song setting was vastly different from Schubert's: "It is a fact that Schubert's setting was puzzling to Goethe, and this has often prompted unkind remarks about the poet's musical discrimination. His reaction is not surprising, however, in view of the way he himself used the poem" (Stein 64). Stein goes on to mention that Goethe placed "Erlkönig" at the beginning of a Singspiel, a comic opera, and in his own setting retains to a much greater extent the element of folk song. By comparison, Schubert's "intensely gripping rendition" (65) may have been too indulgent or dark a departure for Goethe. In any case, Goethe either did not like the song settings Schubert sent to him, did not care enough about them to have provided any sort of written record of having listened to them, or most likely, with the exception of his exposure to "Erlkönig", did not listen to them at all. Whereas most music lovers today would be hard pressed to recall the melody of Goethe's own setting of the poem, let alone know of its existence, it is the fact that both Schubert's song and Goethe's poem have both become canonical works in their respective media, If Johnson is correct in his comment that "Thanks to Schubert's ability to capture the poet's tone of voice, the young Goethe himself materialises before our ears—a man for all time who has beaten the coachman at his own game. . ." (40) then is it possible for another person to better capture the universal energy of a work of art when transferring media? It seems somehow strange that the essence of the

young Goethe could be more deftly evoked by Schubert than by the man himself: was the older Goethe perhaps less able to tap into the more experimental and innovative tendencies of his youth? Or more simply, was music an area for which Goethe did not either know about or have enough skill in to implement creative techniques?

It is true that many of the major developments in the Lied which Schubert particularly mastered were maligned by Goethe. One such technique that Schubert employed is *durchkomponiert*, or through-composed form, which differs from strophic compositions which use the same melodic line for each stanza of poetry. An example of how repetition is perceived is included in Stein's description of the strophic setting of Goethe's eponymous poem "An den Mond":

> The effect of the strophic musical setting is much more prominent, and the ninefold repetition of the same melody and harmony, not benefiting from anything comparable to the completely new text in each strophe, can, and here does, become in the end monotonously repetitious. Schubert's setting is quite different. (22)

Durchkomponiert is seen in this example as a more complicated form which is not confined to a single repeating melody but which, due to the melody's freedom to transcend the structure of the stanza, can allow greater license to the composer.

Without having to indicate stanza change, the words of the poem are, in *durchkomponiert* form, subject to a far greater extent to the tempo, rhythm, and melody of the composition. This is not to say that strophic settings of songs are necessarily boring; indeed, repetition in music can signal a variety of techniques and methods. David Lidov describes the array of effects that different types of repetition in music can have on an audience. Lidov states that music is unique in its use of repetition and even has hierarchies of repetition, as could be analyzed in rigid classical structures such as sonata allegro form, a popular form in the classical period Schubert was familiar with. In sonata allegro form, different themes are repeated or recapitulated throughout a work and can be identified as main themes or subthemes—to say nothing of smaller repetitive components that often pervade such works.

It is important to acknowledge that strophic settings can use repetition as effectively as any other musical structure can in sophisticated ways that engage audiences. Ultimately, however, Schubert's revitalization of the art song in the form of successfully manipulating the new structure of *durchkomponiert* was among his triumphs in the genre. This is not to say that structurally the form is devoid of patterns, which, as we will see later in greater detail, exist in abundance in different forms in Schubert's Lieder. Nevertheless, the original rhythm of a poem could be ignored in favor of the rhythm the composer

establishes in either strophic or *durchkomponiert* forms. When writing in the latter, however, it becomes possible to take many more liberties with the repetition of certain lines of poetry, temporal emphasis on a single word, or an alteration in the way in which lines of text are connected. Schubert favoured this form and brought it to the forefront of Lied composition.

Goethe, on the other hand, very much disliked the form and stated "a melody which one doesn't enjoy hearing several times is probably not the best" (cited, Cone 5), here making reference to the repetitive nature of the melody line in strophic song settings. It may be difficult to understand why Goethe would have such a seemingly narrow view of composition since he himself seemed to embrace artistic revolution, being responsible for much of the transformation that took place in poetry during the 18th century. Some point to the Sturm und Drang movement, primarily pioneered by Goethe, as one of the major contributing factors to a change in composition structure. It would seem, however, that Goethe was reluctant to question other firmly institutionalized notions of art that were prevalent during this time. Paul Scher explains the atmosphere of the arts in the 18th century:

> Conforming to the established hierarchy of the arts in 18th century aesthetics, which regarded poetry as the highest form of art followed at a considerable distance by painting and then music, German song

> composers in the second half of that century abided by the premise that musical setting was to be subservient to the poem. (Scher 286)

So perhaps it was a mixture of the prevailing opinions of the majority in Europe at the time with a healthy infusion of narcissism (it is not unreasonable for a poet to consider poetry as more important than other forms) which prevented Goethe from being more receptive to songs inspired by his works from more forward-thinking composers such as Schubert or Beethoven. Either way it is clear that Goethe wanted the "melodies" in his poems—in other words, the rhythmic structure which is essentially the only musical aspect a poet can infuse into his written work—to remain as intact as possible when being set to music. This would indicate that *durchkomponiert* was not only a change in musical structure, but it represented a power shift of sorts between media. The shift from strophic to *durchkomponiert* intimates both a shift in the agency of the composer to reconstruct with greater freedom the poem which is being set, and a response to broader socioeconomic changes; specifically, the proliferation of the piano and of sheet music.

Additionally, it is important to clarify other aspects of the complexity of Schubert's remodeling of art song structure and how that restructuring was a departure from the folk origins of the Lieder. It was certainly not a matter of simply abandoning the repetition of strophic form; the complexity involved in

maintaining the unity of a song within a dynamic structure such as *durchkomponiert* is formidable. The structural symmetry and melodic creativity of the stanzas in the Lieder indicate not only how willing Schubert was to transcend the traditional form of the Lied, but how capable he was in doing so.

In many ways, Schubert's mastery of *durchkomponiert* in conjunction with the frequency with which he took license with other musical innovations is indicative of an overall move in music at the time to incorporate text with music in a way that was more meaningful and in many ways more palatable to a bourgeois sensibility. In fact I postulate that one of the primary reasons the newly fashioned *durchkomponiert* Lieder gained such popularity in the 19th century was borne of the emergence of the piano as an almost standard-issue household item for the bourgeois class. The art song was well-suited in duration and instrumentation to the pianoforte, and its ubiquitousness in middle class Europe had made the art song highly attractive. As Parsons states: "The [development of the Lied] occurred through a conscious appeal to middle-class patronage and a reconceptualization of vocal music as a product for domestic consumption rather than a public or aristocratic spectacle" (304). The demand for songs which would fit well into this atmosphere would grow, and Schubert's ability to merge text with song seemed to come at a time when audiences were nearly ready for it. Combining the huge popularity of poetry with songs with

instrumentation that was increasingly accessible was a societal shift that was a happy coincidence for Schubert, but obviously it was not simply these confluences to which we can attribute his success. Whitton muses on Schubert's unique talent for songwriting:

> Was it a sure sense of literary values? Did he perhaps 'hear' the music as he read the poetry? Did he perhaps *sing* the poetry to himself? . . . What is clear from a study of his other works is that there has never been another composer with such a fecund storehouse of melodies, nor, perhaps, one who could make so much of a melody, once discovered. . . his extraordinary ability to set words to music (34).

In this sense, not only was Schubert able to offer European audiences a type of song which catered to a new sensibility, but also, through both his selection of poetry to set the Lieder to as well as his ability to write for voice, open up to the European mentality a different means of interpreting and feeling poetry. As for musical influence, it can be said that "The so-called "accompaniment" had had its day! For after *Erlkönig*, the piano part was no longer a merely incidental adornment of the vocal part, but was now established as an independent composition, often determining interpretation" (Whitton 99). Now the pianist and the singer could showcase their skills much in the same way a concerto did for instruments in an orchestra, alternating melodies between the two. The fact

that the *durchkomponiert* form was now used as a common structure for art songs can be attributed to the same reasons that the art song itself was gaining popularity. With the piano becoming a standard instrument for middle-class households, the necessity for repetition in songs decreased. Rather than repeating a melody line numerous times in order for the theme of the song to be remembered, art songs were short in length and could afford to feature a longer and less repetitive melody. With a shift from performers in the concert hall to the salon, the regularity with which songs could be played and performed increased, diminishing the need or desire for the same melody across all stanzas. The art song catered to the small audience atmosphere and its sophistication and complexity were ideal for the environment in which it was to be performed.

With the piano emerging as a popular standard form of entertainment among bourgeois families, the social milieu seemed ideal for a composer such as Schubert to advance the art song's position further as a tool for poetic expression that could make full use of the advantages of both the piano and the human voice. His Lieder in particular offered bourgeois audiences—and performers—engaging pieces that were not overly long and could be learned quickly. Moreover, Schubert's Lieder easily accommodated and likely encouraged social interaction and community performance, since at least one singer was needed in addition to the accompanist.

Schubert's outstandingly prolific collection of Lieder offered audiences and performers amateur and otherwise a breadth of emotion and musical variation. Among them, "Erlkönig" is arguably among Schubert's most innovative Lieder. The song is intensely dramatic, with a dark, exciting tone, and the song uses various techniques in its composition to heighten the imagery that is in the text. Similarly, "An Schwager Kronos," the Lied analyzed for the purposes of this paper (with detailed description of the song in the following chapter), captures a spirit of energy with its dramatic piano accompaniment.

Above all what is the most outstanding about the piece is Schubert's capacity to indicate increasing tension. Meyer states in "Some Remarks on Value and Greatness in Music" that "the willingness to forgo immediate, and perhaps lesser gratification for the sake of future gratification" in reference to music is one of the ways by which one can judge the merits of a work. Until the final fanfare at the end of the piece, Schubert takes his time building between stanzas. For example, between the first and second stanza alone, the piano builds tension by adding higher inversions of the same chord in the treble clef. The piano accompaniment is always in flux—which is not to say that there are not melodic elements which recur. What Schubert does is ground the listener in common rhythm or melodic pieces of which smaller parts then show up later in the song, thus asserting the song's holistic unity and maintaining the dynamic drive of the

song's tone. The same effect could simply not be achieved with a more simplistic structure.

Social influence has been postulated to affect musical works on different levels. In John Shepherd's *Music as Social Text,* it is suggested that the kind of patience required to feel satisfaction out of the sort of tension-building songs that Schubert wrote can only happen when a society is advanced or enlightened enough. Shepherd states that

> [t]hose whose function is ownership and control. . .think while others do. Their role is one of impersonal manipulation at a distance over relatively extended time periods. So it is musically. The music of those with power is concerned with the impersonal and abstract manipulation of a relatively simple harmonic-rhythmic framework at a distance. . . (Shepherd 135).

Working with Shepherd's notion that societal roles and music are very much connected, the social atmosphere of Schubert's Europe would correspond well with this theory. If one would look no further in terms of historical context, this theory might hold. However, I would argue that issues of structural complexity in music are not nearly as connected to power structures in society as Shepherd would claim. Vienna's burgeoning bohemian atmosphere may have nurtured Schubert's musical genius but his work did not yield the kind of fame that composers of his stature enjoyed in their own times. Schubert was more or less

unknown in Europe at the time he died. Perhaps Schubert tapped into a more sensitive way to connect to society that had not been done before; however, it still remains that it was not until after Schubert's time that his music has come to be appreciated in full. In any case, Shepherd's theory of a causal relationship between musical complexity and social sophistication or power does not seem to account for Schubert's inspiration for his musical choices or for his appreciation after his death. In Messing's *Schubert in the European Imagination*, it is revealed that Schubert was not, as Shepherd would likely have predicted, appreciated by more sophisticated members of society:

> Three decades after the composer's death, a local ceremony such as the laying of a memorial wreath at the composer's grave could still produce a characterization of Schubert that was more of an appeal to *Volk* than to *Staat*. (Messing 29)

Whatever intellectually stimulating atmosphere Schubert was exposed to in Vienna, it would appear that shortly after his death, Schubert's following did not consist primarily of members of the cultural elite. The traditional content of Schubert's Lieder very likely contributed to his music and persona being glorified as an emblem of German traditional values.

Over time, however, the composer was revered for both his contributions to German folk music as well as his sonatas and orchestral works. Schubert's

pioneering composition style was indeed acknowledged and seen as liberating old conventions of style. While in many aspects of his compositions, he adopted the style and structure of his predecessors, in just as many other aspects he took risks. In fact, it was not only in the music itself that Schubert took liberties; in all of his 600 Lieder, there is seemingly every possible permutation of alteration to the original poem. Whether repeating certain stanzas, excising them entirely from the piece, or truncating lines and changing words, Schubert used the musical content of his song as a guide to how to fit the lyrics in. This is not to say, of course, that he did not derive original inspiration from the texts. It was ostensibly more important to the composer, though, that a melody or established rhythm allowed the words to be heard in the most musical way possible. It would seem that much of this modus operandi hangs on the decision to move away from strophic forms which stay doggedly true to the organization of the text. It would have been difficult for Schubert to revolutionize the structure of Lieder without making changes to the structure of poems that remained strophic in composition.

The effect that Schubert's music has had on audiences can be regarded as meaningful examining nothing else but the enduring quality of it. Analysis of how effectively Schubert used texts for song provides clues as to why Schubert was able to succeed so well in his efforts with the art song, and why audiences

have continued to respond to it. How music is received by both the composer and the subsequent audience naturally becomes more complex when factoring in the issue of text manipulation. For example, Stein lauds Schubert's compositional talents in particular at the end of a Lied he finds remarkable:

> At "Töne, Schwager, ins Horn" in the last stanza, Schubert produces a fanfare in the piano part that wonderfully expresses the urgency, the confidence, the boldness, the impetuosity of the young poet. The cumulative impact of the poem is breathtaking, of the song even more so. (Stein 70)

Stein's commentary is useful because it highlights how semantics like those employed in the above commentary are somewhat problematic. To what extent can Stein's comparison be shown to express genuine values of either work? To what extent has Schubert's setting already influenced his own perception of the poet's intentions for the text? It is difficult to determine to what extent one can verifiably say that a song is enhancing a poem's content rather than changing it entirely.

Authorial power and perception becomes complicated when analyzing the effects of the adaptations Schubert made to his text settings. For example, Schubert's numerous settings of Goethe's poems may have added a dimension to how Goethe is perceived—in Stein's case, as an impetuous young man—that was

not evident from the text alone. In a narrower sense, the structural aspects of this poem appear to have been altered. Stein focuses on the suspense, the excitement of the setting. This suspense is something that has been changed by Schubert. At the point at which a reader could begin to see, while reading the poem, that it was about to end, Schubert is able, through the temporal nature of music, to increase the excitement and suspense through a piano fanfare, in roughly the same spot where readers of the poetry alone might already be visually anticipating the work's end. Even for those exposed to the poem aurally (i.e., the poetry being read aloud to the listener without access to a text), there will be a marked difference between their experience and those exposed to the song: simply, in making full use of the medium at his disposal, Schubert manipulates the text throughout the song by endowing it with a sense of real-time movement; to the end of the song he extends this same motion and direction to the text while being able to surprise listeners with this fanfare-like passage, which while not necessarily, as Stein would maintain, making the song more "breathtaking," certainly changes the content of the text such that a new set of emotions will be felt unlike with a reading of the poem alone. From this one could postulate that the audience is more subject to the music, a medium in which one is necessarily more passive in reception, rather than the text, a medium that allows for a greater interaction between the receiver and the medium. If Goethe's assertion

about music is correct, if music is absolutely abstract and beyond any sort of concrete interpretation of meaning, then music would seem to compensate for this through its ability to take concrete meaning (i.e., text) and extend to it a universality of experience; that is to say that in any given performance of a piece of music, every individual must experience the text which accompanies the music in the same space, the same time, at the same volume, etc. There is no ability for a listener to dwell on a specific word in a song unless the composer has expressly accented that word through dynamic levels or duration. The listener is at once subjected to a comparatively more abstract setting of a concrete text and in a sense at the mercy of the composer's interpretation of that text.

Stein's commentary may also indicate a lack of sensitivity on the part of the composer. If the composer was indeed striving to serve the text of the music as faithfully as possible, he or she may feel as though they had failed at that task if an audience finds themselves overwhelmed by the music of a Lied but ultimately unimpressed with the poetry of the song. This assumes, of course, that the composer is at all concerned with the emotions or revelations of the audience when listening to a composition. Even if the song is created solely for the purposes of self expression, a composer would likely still choose a text meaningful to him. The fact that the music created overshadowed and diminished the effects of the poetry might still be a discouraging prospect.

From all of this could be ascertained that the agency with which the audience is endowed by the nature of any given medium can determine its ability to affect that audience. The creative act of reading a novel, for example, for many people involves creating scenes, characters, and detailed imagery in the mind; this is an activity which simply cannot take place by a person watching a movie or a television show where all of these aspects of narrative have already been created. It would seem that the enriching qualities of literature have stemmed from this agency on the part of the reader; once a poem or text is finished, there has been a temporally related set of images, thoughts and feelings that, while dependent on the text for their presence at that particular moment in the individual's mind, are a component *of* the art for that individual. In many ways, the reader becomes a performer, extending his own set of influences to the work at hand. Juxtapose the enrichment a person can receive through this active agency while reading a text with the more passive nature of listening to a piece of music. As stated before, the myriad factors which play a part in being able to sit down and absorb music—composition, historical circumstances such as editing which may have changed the content, the interpretation of the performer, the temporality of music—are all factors which the listener cannot be in control of. The power that music has on an individual can in part be attributed to the power that is necessarily absent from the listener while hearing music.

From the analysis performed here, it seems reasonable to claim that music, at the very least in this specific case, manages to surpass that of poetry in regards to its influence on the reception of the works performed simultaneously. However, in this more conventional approach, there still exist problems which may not find solutions from this method of analysis. For example, one of the most problematic aspects of comparing these two media that one must take into consideration is the fact that music is, in a physical sense, a performative art, whereas text is not. The degree of agency which is allowed a performer to represent Schubert's Lied is yet another layer of authorship that requires attention. While Goethe's poems will likely remain intact for future readers, Schubert's Lieder will be subject to countless interpretations by musicians; in fact it is only through subjective interpretation of the song that it exists for an audience.

An audience that has a grasp of the history, multiple and ongoing interpretations, and basic knowledge surrounding all of the works discussed in this chapter will likely be able to relate more to the works themselves. The context may allow them to feel more at ease when exposed to the works. As previously discussed, the "leg up" that audiences may have with music as what we have assumed to be a more innate medium may make a significant difference in the audience's felt engagement with these works. However, the context that

different cultures may have, or familiarity with specific works and artists may prove to make a difference in how significant a role that "leg up" plays in the forthcoming empirical studies results.

V. Empirical Studies

The existing methodologies and theories surrounding media reception are useful foundational tools upon which empirical study can be launched.

The following component of this thesis offers an empirical component to cross-media analysis. With the results of studies conducted in the fall of 2005 and summer of 2006, I hope to show, in addition to insight regarding cross-media reception, the usefulness of combining an empirical component of research to an examination of these works.

Meyer states that "[t]he listener brings to the act of perception definite beliefs in the affective power of music. Even before the first sound is heard, these beliefs activate dispositions to respond in an emotional way. . ." (Meyer 11). It may be that within a given multimedia composition, there are aspects or components of that composition which will affect and engage audiences with varying levels of intensity.

Greater access to understanding how different media interact when presented simultaneously can open doors to understanding how to manipulate

media on more than just an intuitive level. My first hypothesis regarding music's innate ability to produce greater felt engagement in individuals is useful for critics and audiences to have greater insight into a work; this insight could also be useful to educational institutions to manipulate media such that they reach the greatest number of students with the greatest amount of clarity. My second hypothesis, that a culture more familiar with a certain type of work will show greater felt engagement than a less familiar culture, can have similar pedagogical applications.

Study Introduction

By creating a questionnaire, I hoped to discover how individuals interact with and approach the media. I was curious to see what kind of responses students would have in an informal atmosphere that would perhaps be more conducive to honest or revealing responses. Luckily, both studies included participants who were enthusiastic about discussing their reactions, irrespective of whether or not they liked the works themselves.

In order to determine what differences exist between media, a study had to be designed that would isolate the reception of the music from that of the text. Although poetry has a history of being read aloud, it is more often read individually in classroom study and as such I felt that it would be more relevant

if participants read the poem rather than receiving it aurally. Participants of both studies were split into three groups: one group that only listened to the song, one group that only read the poem, and one group that were exposed to both media. The first two groups would answer questions about their reception in one questionnaire, and the third group that were exposed to both works would fill out a questionnaire for each work.

For the purposes of the study, a song and poem combination had to be found which met all of the following criteria: they must be of a length reasonable for a twenty to thirty minute-long experiment; they must both be of, more or less, equal artistic value (i.e., both composer and poet would ideally be of an equal stature); they must both be highly evocative.

Study One: November 2005, Edmonton

Participants of this first study were all students at Spruce Grove Composite High School. With the permission of the administration and teachers, one English 10 class, a German 10 class, and an English 20 class were used to carry out the study. Students ranged from age 15 to age 18, with the average age being 16. The English 10 class was asked to read the poem alone and answer the questionnaire only for the poem. The English 20 class was asked to listen to the song and only answer questions about the song. The German 10 class was asked

to read the poem and listen to the song; after being exposed to each work they filled out both of the respective questionnaires. The John Donne poem "Oh Might Those Sighes and Teares" was chosen, which was set to music by the English composer Benjamin Britten.

To briefly describe the music participants were given, the song Britten put this text to is three minutes long and is a lament-like song, featuring a short piano introduction and a tenor voice. The vocals are accompanied only by piano, which has a slow, suspenseful buildup that effectively ignores the paragraph break in the poem in terms of musical rhythm, changing tone instead at "Th'hydroptique drunkard. . .", where the song is at its most intense and reaches its highest dynamic, a mezzo forte. The song ends in much the same way it began, with an ominous piano drone in the bass. Its dramatic tone is highly evocative, and the despondent expression of the singer is juxtaposed by the foreboding, somber accompaniment that begins before and remains after the singer's performance in the song is finished.

Procedure

To carry out the study, participants were given two-page questionnaires along with consent forms. A computer was used to play the song. Students completed the study in the classroom and among their peers. Students were asked to rate in

between 1 and 5 how well certain statements regarding the poem or the music applied to them. A copy of the "Poetry" questionnaire is located in the Appendix. All the questions were the same for the "Music" questionnaire, with the word "poem" replaced with "song", etc.

Participants were split up into three groups: one which only read the poem, one which listened exclusively to the song, and one which was exposed to both. All groups answered respective questionnaires.

Participants were given a briefing that informed them of the tasks involved in the experiment without directly intimating the ultimate purpose of their tasks. Participants were told that they could stop at any time during the experiment, but were encouraged to fill out the questionnaire to the best of their ability, stressing that even if they did not understand everything about the poem or song, they should not feel as though they would be at a disadvantage in completing the questionnaire. They were instructed to write about what they did not understand, or what aspects they disliked, and to not be reluctant to share an honest opinion.

Students silently read the poem or listened to the music and then individually filled out the questionnaires. The third group both read the poem and listened to the song. Afterward all the groups were debriefed on the nature of the study and time was allowed for open discussion or for questions they

might have regarding the study. The groups which only read the poem and listened to the song each took about half an hour; the group which had to fill out both questionnaires took about forty minutes to complete. The questionnaire included questions regarding the individual's general approaches in and opinions about poetry or music, alternated by questions regarding the individual's emotional response toward the specific poem or song. The results reported below show both the means of the responses—the higher the mean, the more strongly the group responded—and comparisons between the media when one medium was experience individually, and when that medium was experienced along with the other medium. In total there were 81 completed questionnaires.

Study Two: Summer 2006

In Munich I solicited a convenience sample of adults in informal settings such as cafeterias or cafés to be exposed to these media and to again fill out a truncated version of the questionnaire I developed for the first study in Canada. This questionnaire needed to be, of course, in German, and also needed to be shorter in order that participants would be interested in completing it.

The questionnaire was translated from the Canadian questionnaire and was eventually downsized to contain twelve questions, a number which was a compromise between comprehensiveness and brevity. Participants were

between the ages of 17 and 60. I used Schubert's setting of Goethe's poem "An Schwager Kronos" for this study. I will briefly describe the work here.

Goethe's poem "An Schwager Kronos," written in 1774, details the journey of a man who is riding with Time, who is portrayed in the poem as a coachman, through the stages of life. Categorized as part of Sturm und Drang poetry, which Goethe championed early in his literary career, the poem makes use of a passionate and at times dark language typical of the "storm and stress" period in the poet's life. Urging the coachman to hurry on through life, Goethe's poem has a sense of urgency, a pressure and speed that Schubert capitalizes on using a variety of musical techniques with precision in his setting of the poem.

The song, which was written in about 1816, begins inauspiciously, marked "Nicht zu schnell" (not too fast), but with direction in 6/8, which, along with 3/4 time, is the most common time signature used in Lieder. The song is written in D minor, with the piano initially audible in its lower register, imitating the fierce galloping of a horse, which is almost a constant throughout the piece. This galloping effect is accented not only by the 6/8 time signature, which has been used famously in riding songs such as Schumann's "Wild Rider," but also through the use of sharp treble notes that punctuate the end of the bars of music. The music escalates along with the volume of the piece until it breaks, briefly, into an exhilarating jaunt at "Auf denn, nicht traege denn. . .", adding to the

piece a fresh energy before returning to a minor key and the galloping bass continues. Immediately after this the listener is confronted with insistent drama as the line "Weit, hoch herrlich" is sung. The emphasis created in this section is achieved by having the poetry before this point going along at a quick clip with the music, which is then promptly juxtaposed with a sudden shift to having only one word per bar. The piano accompaniment continues to punctuate the singer's words at the beginning of the bars, accenting the strength of the first beat even further, adding to the driving movement of the piece. The tension has been, save for the brief departure into a major key at the aforementioned lines "Auf denn, nicht traege denn. . . ", building up to a climax.

There were twelve participants who read only the poem, twelve who listened to the song, and twelve who performed both tasks. The participants were given as much time as was necessary to either read the poem or listen to the song, which was set up for them using an mp3 player and headphones.

Results

Factor Analysis of the Response Questionnaire.

As was laid out in the theory chapter of this thesis, felt engagement has been clarified for the purposes of these studies as a combination of factors that produce a pleasurable interest in a work. As such, for both studies, different

types of questions within the questionnaires were intended to test for these combined factors. To organize questionnaire results, a factor analysis was used to group questionnaire questions into three different types of question, which could be categorized as tendency, felt engagement, and interest. Explanations of these categories are provided below. The three factors work together to provide context for an individual's potential familiarity with a medium (those questions in the Tendency category), as well as evidence of the defamiliarizing capabilities that occur in felt engagement: interest, pleasure, attentiveness, etc.

As discussed earlier, an individual's familiarity with a genre or a type of work may impact his or her ability to experience felt engagement. As such, individual tendencies were tested for in the questionnaires. Tendency-related questions (1,7, and 9) refer to those which inquire into a participant's everyday interaction with either music or poetry; how often they do or how inclined they are to engage in either medium. The questions were "I often read poetry", "Poetry and text tends to evoke strong feelings in me" and "I often read for pleasure". (Note that quotations throughout this section will reference either music or poetry, but that the wording for the music and text questionnaires were exactly the same with the exception of "music" being used instead of "poetry" or "text".) Internal consistency for Tendency questions was good for German and Canadian groups (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.66). It is expected that individuals with

a higher tendency to be exposed to those media will respond with more felt engagement because of greater familiarity, and as such, greater accessibility to a work.

Questions related to felt engagement (2, 3, 4, 8, 10, 11), as their label suggests, address in a very direct way the felt engagement a participant had for the pieces that were presented to them. These questions combined responses that relate to an individual's attitude toward the work (ex.: Question 2: "I liked this song."), as well as the individual's anticipation throughout the work (ex.: Question 10: "I was eager to read the conclusion of this poem"). These two factors are vital components of felt engagement, which was explained earlier to be a combination of interest and pleasure. The internal consistency of the questions related to felt engagement was very good (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.80).

Interest-related questions (6, 5, and 12) refer to the extent to which an interest—independently of engagement—is expressed. A cognitive suspense or interest in where the song is going to go is another way to describe interest. Interest items are different from felt-engagement-related items in the sense that there is no "pleasurable" part to the interest felt. Interest can be an unpleasant, but still engaging or suspenseful experience, and that is how it is defined here. Questions such as "I thought the song was boring" and "I was eager for the song to end" are intended to provide insight into the individual's immediate

attentiveness in reception of a work. Interest-related questions had poor internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.53); the question item "I felt uncomfortable while listening to this song" was not as in keeping with addressing issues of felt engagement as the other two questions.

Some response items were worded as negative statements; for the purposes of synthesizing the results, the numbers indicated by participants were reversed.

Table 1. Results of the Factor Analysis

Component	**Felt Engagement**	**Tendency**	**Interest**
1. I often read poetry.		.815	
2.I liked this poem.	.712		
3. This poem evoked strong feelings in me.	.790		
4. I felt as though there was tension within this poem.	.405		.375
5. The poem was boring.	.314		.716
6. I felt uncomfortable reading this poem.			.729

7. Poetry and text tends to evoke strong feelings in me.	.355	.632	
8. This poem evoked feelings of sadness in me.	.644		
9. I often read for pleasure.		.782	
10. I had mixed emotions while reading this poem.	.680		
11. I became less interested in the poem as I continued reading it.	.753		
12. Reading poetry makes me think of emotions or memories I have had in my life.	.480		.539

Hypothesis Testing.

1. Main effect for condition; the test of hypotheses I and II

To examine both of my primary hypotheses, I conducted an analysis of variance (ANOVA) in which condition (poem vs. song) and ethnicity (Canadian vs. German) were between subjects factors and felt engagement was the dependent variable. Preliminary indication was that the results for felt

engagement were in keeping with the expectations of hypothesis I, i.e., more felt enagement was reported in response to the song than to the poem (see Table 2). [1] This difference was marginally significant: $F=2.464$, ($df = 3, 147$), $p < 0.065$. Also, preliminary indication was that hypothesis II was confirmed, i.e., more felt engagement was reported among German than among Canadian respondents. This difference was clearly significant: $F=10.075$, ($df = 3, 147$), $p < 0.002$. However, a significant interaction between song/poem and ethnicity indicated unexpectedly that the Germans reported more felt engagement only to the song but not to the poem. This interaction effect was also significant: $F=3.781$, ($df = 3, 147$), $p = 0.12$). This means that while there is no difference between German and Canadian groups in response to poetry (which was not what I had anticipated), the Germans show distinctly higher ratings to the song, particularly when the song is paired with the words. One possible explanation for this is elaborated on in the explanation of hypothesis II.

To explain the following table: the Poetry Only group read only the poem; the Music Only group only listened to the song. The Music Both and Poetry Both groups are in fact the same group, which listened to both the poem and the song. The separation of the group is necessary to isolate their responses to the

[1] It is important to note that, due to clerical error, there is no information regarding the third group of Edmonton and German participants who filled out both questionnaires as to which music questionnaire corresponds to which poetry questionnaire. I have proceeded treating the responses as independent observations.

individual work. In other words, Music Both is the third group's results from the song, and Poetry Both is the group's results from the poem. Means are as follows.

Table 2. Means of Responses Related to Felt Engagement

German group	**Mean**
Poetry Only	2.6964
Poetry Both	2.5952
Music Both	3.2857
Music Only	3.0134
Edmonton group	
Poetry Only	2.5622
Poetry Both	2.7418
Music Both	2.6000
Music Only	2.5657
Totals for both groups	
Poetry Only	2.5997
Poetry Both	2.6955
Music Both	2.8224
Music Only	2.8610

One potential explanation for the higher rating of music for the German group is the fact that the Interest rating for the Germans overall is higher than that of the Canadians overall (main effect for ethnicity, $F(1,147)=4.24$, $p<.041$). Perhaps this circumstance, the aspect of anticipation and interest, can explain why music was received more favorably by German participants. It is also possible that there are elements inherent to Schubert's setting that were able to better produce felt engagement. Schubert's setting and the specific musical features he employed may well have been more accessible to German participants than Britten's setting was to the Canadians.

Analysis

If indeed "[n]ormalization plays an important part in facilitating the re-hearing of musical compositions" (Meyer 90), it would seem that a part of the mostly negative reception of the song in Canadian students could be attributed in part to a lack of familiarity with the type and structure of the composition. Moreover, it is clear that the cultural environment of Germany is significantly more receptive to poetry as an art form to be enjoyed rather than, as it is often

viewed in Canada, a burden to endure in one's school years and not return to again.

In addition to this, the effect of being subjected to media in a group rather than on an individual basis likely affected reception. It is common for participants to, consciously or otherwise, moderate their responses to accommodate themselves to a common reception, a factor which would be hard to ignore when students are aware that others in the same room are completing the same exercise. The individuals in the Spruce Grove study may simply have chosen to dislike the poetry more than they would have done on their own because poetry is not something which is accepted by their peers. The Munich group was also older on average and would likely have fewer negative associations surrounding poetry. The degree to which German natives are exposed to Goethe and Schubert is also a potential factor in how the works were received. Hardly any high school students would have heard of Britten or Donne in Canada, whereas it seems unlikely that older Germans who had studied in Munich would not have been familiar at least with the names of Goethe and Schubert, or if not with similar works. If this was indeed a factor in reception, then it would seem reasonable that increased exposure to poetry in particular would foster a deeper appreciation for it in students.

The students in Canada who enjoyed the poetry the least, that is, who wrote extremely negative comments in the Free Response section of their questionnaire, nonetheless seemed to warm up to the idea of talking about poetry. Too often, students are sat down with a text that is enforced on them under the claim that it is canonized and therefore a) worthy of an analysis which does not necessarily focus on enjoyment of the poem and b) beyond criticism from a student whose knowledge of the subject area is limited. This discourages students from freely musing on poetry and perhaps is an instrumental factor in preventing them from regarding the reading poetry as a source of pleasure. By endowing students with the agency to think whatever they please about poetry or music they might otherwise dismiss and to comment on their own personal reception of the media, helps eliminate potential resentment if nothing else.

Edmonton Open Question Responses

The Open Questions Responses, while not practical for the Munich questionnaires, allowed for some insight to the reasoning that Edmontonian participants had in relation to their questionnaire responses. One of the most frequent comments from students was that they did not understand the meaning of the poem or the song. Some mentioned this out loud at the end of the questionnaire. Overall, male participants seemed to state this more often than females. Interestingly, more participants commented that they did not

understand the poem but commented that they did not *like* the song. This would suggest that participants either felt they could understand the song without having to understand the lyrics and could thus form an opinion on it, or that the song was so unpalatable to participants that they were unable to move beyond their distaste for it. Comments included "I didn't get it", "Too many words I didn't understand", and "I did not understand the words in this poem."

Some students expressed an emotional response, especially to the poem. One participant remarked that "the poem was sad. The person in the poem sounded like they were going through a tough time. I felt depressed after reading this poem." Similarly, students remarked that the song sounded, "mournful" or that the person sounded "sad" or "desperate." Though the vocabulary used in the poem may have presented the students with difficulties, they nevertheless seemed to grasp the fundamental tone of the poem.

Another interesting phenomenon was the repetition of phrases implemented in the questionnaire in the long-answer portion. Representative of some of their remarks is this quote, "I noticed the rising tension in the song". It is unlikely that participants would have used this phrase free of any influence from the questionnaire, so it is clear that something of a Pygmalion effect occurred, wherein the participants adopted a tone in writing closer to that of the questionnaire than of their own personal voice.

Overall, the open-question responses revealed a sequence similar to that which Andringa (1990) outlines that emotion "initiates, selects, and steers the way of arguing." Similarly, this response is highly representative of the sequence in which many participants organized their thoughts in the open-question response: "I did not like the poem. It didn't make any sense. Other people who like this sort of thing might enjoy it, like people who read Shakespeare, but I didn't." Many of the responses followed this "emotion, evaluation, argument" sequence. Using the sequence of their open-question responses, it would be logical to conclude that the participants' emotions were the starting point from which their further comments originated. This is a detail that is important to understanding student interest in music and poetry. The students' emotional foundation is the platform from which they feel agency to base an opinion of a work of art. The apologetic nature of many students, admitting that it is in fact their own lack of understanding of the poem rather than any deficiency in the text itself, is further evidence that suggests that emotions—in this case, confusion—are the basis for an individual's overall impression of a work.

It was also interesting to see the extent to which students felt they needed to apologize for disliking the works. It is clear that students feel that there is an expectation of them to respond positively to work they are presented in class.

The tone in many of the open-ended responses suggested that they felt guilty for not appreciating the poem or the song. It is reasonable to wonder, then, how genuine the positive responses expressed in the study were—perhaps some students felt compelled to show greater interest in the works because they felt that it was expected of them. In fact, it was interesting to note that out of the three classes who participated in the study, it was the German class rather than either of the English classes, which demonstrated a) the greatest amount of interest in the work and b) were by far the least trying in terms of classroom management. Later on I will discuss the problematic way in which literature and the fine arts in general are being portrayed and taught to students in schools; it is not too much of a stretch to wonder whether or not the students in the English classes felt more pressure to react in a certain way to the media based on their previous experiences in those classes. The German class would have not had the same assumptions coming into the study; the study would be seen as more of a break from the regular exercises in class compared to that of the English class, where they may have felt as though the content of the study was in keeping with course content or (although they were assured to the contrary) that the study could impact their success in some way.

The responses to Question 5 in both questionnaires, "I thought this poem/song was boring," showed large number of individuals that strongly

agreed. Perhaps as a sigh of relief to students who did not feel a response to the media at all, this question received very high scores on average. It seemed as though the wording had struck a chord with students who may not usually feel as though they can express boredom about classroom material.

VI. Implications

The results of the studies reveal a variety of implications from which further study—and application—can be projected. One of the purposes of engaging in the issue of music-text reception was to evaluate potential implications for pedagogical practices. While differences between how poetry is taught in North America and Europe may have played a role in the different study results, it would be reductive to point to public education as the sole stifling agent in appreciation for poetry. There are numerous factors that may contribute to this disparity. A shift in North American media and forms of entertainment indicates a steady decrease in poetry as a form of art overall. Indeed it would be unfair to pin blame on an education system which, if nothing else, instills a sense of value on poetry, however flawed. The fact of the matter remains that poetry alone is simply not present enough in the everyday lives of students in a way which would allow them to see its applicability in anything beyond an academic exercise. John McWhorter in *Doing Our Own Thing* remarks

that "Modern America. . .is a country where rigorously polished language, of a sort only possible when channeled through the deliberate activity of writing, is considered insincere. . . it leaves us culturally and even intellectually deprived" (McWhorter 67). McWhorter puts the spotlight on this perceived decline in the use of language, referring in particular to the speeches of American politicians, folk preachers, as well as classical and popular music lyrics. McWhorter shows that through subject matter in which most people can find some common interest in language in the public sphere (politics, religion, etc.), North American attitudes have excised classical rhetoric and poetic style as methods of expressing emotion.

Perhaps along with education, the lifestyles of youth in North America have marked differences from that of European youths. In *Teenage Nervous Breakdown*, David Walley suggests that the malaise many youths today exhibit in reaction to canonized art or traditional pedagogy has to do with commercialism and the buying power of teens in North America. North American teens often work part-time up to twenty hours a week while in school, giving them an enormous buying power in comparison to their European cousins. Naturally, advertisers cater to this new market and package art geared towards this demographic by subscribing to or creating fleeting trends for which teens feel they have exclusive access. Walley describes a post-60's penchant for viewing

youth as a time period that has exclusive rights to relevant trends such as music, and that each subsequent generation of youth requires a new "mini-revolution" of culture, so to speak, to feel timely:

> Music is primarily fashion-driven these days, [consumers] assume that when they are buying the music of Madonna, Michael Jackson, or David Bowie. . . instead of being passive consumers we are active supporters of the cultural revolution whose inside track they alone are privy to. They've almost convinced us that these artists. . . are really sixties-style cultural revolutionaries. . . (Walley 82)

If Walley's assumptions about the cultural progression of the reception of music and art in North America are correct, it would seem logical that youth would consider forms of art that are taught widely in school with the authoritative methodology I have already described as archaic and simply not a meaningful part of their lives.

In previous chapters, the issue of defamiliarization was discussed. One of the biggest problems with education persistently maintaining that there are only specific correct ways to go about interpreting literary or musical works is that this distances students from the work so much that they cannot be emotionally moved by it. If they are taught to focus more on the correct interpretation than on the actual work, it is very difficult for students to identify with a work in such

a way that would make that work relevant to their life. Art appeals to individuals because they can relate to art, it represents something in their lives or something about how they want their lives to be. If an arm's length distancing—which often involves more interpretation regarding what is expected from a response than allowing for a genuine response to occur—is de facto in schools today, it is not fostering an appreciation for art. In order to make it is possible to package the art in a way that might help students relate to or identify with the sort of art that is intended to be taught in schools, it seems that one of the major criteria in selection of art in youth is being able to identify with the labels that a certain work or genre of work exhibits. While it may seem like the Internet and its ever-burgeoning variety of different forms of social networking and entertainment is slowly strangling appreciation of "old school" pastimes such as reading and talking to each other, I think that the Internet is an entity that can be used to glue all of the pieces of culture together and provide students with a cohesive, enjoyable learning experience. Rather than seeing it is an excluding force, I think educators can use the basic elements of online communities to their advantage.

Children who have grown up with the Internet have been more in control of the media they want to be exposed to than any generation previous. Conventional forms of teaching literature may be difficult for them to relate to in

a meaningful way because the way in which they view media now is very much a personal thing that they are in control of: on their own computer, at their own pace, and likely while chatting online friends, downloading music, and doing a homework assignment at the same time. I would argue that to make literature appealing to students, it has to be presented to them in a convincingly personal way.

Since labelling or access to a tangible identity is appealing to students, it is worth exploring the possibilities that online media can have for increasing an appreciation of poetry. Students in the neo-millennial generation, that is, in North America, children who have not known their world without a computer, use online resources to carve an identity out for themselves that is arguably more tangible in relation to their peers than ever before. The community of a teen is as vital as it has ever been, but now a sense of community is often visually represented online. Aspects of culture and music are situated in online profiles and indicate the manner in which an individual approaches and appreciates music. This proclamation of individual taste and identity construction suggests that students require a fresh approach to appreciating classical music.

Examples of new approaches that can be helpful to this endeavour are emerging. James Koehne discusses approaches to reviving an appreciation for classical music. Koehne postulates that orchestras, for example, "should only

reasonably expect to exist as long as they are being listened to, as long as they are really integral participants in our society or community" (Koehne 168). Koehne advises that if classical music is to endure as a useful and active part of the arts in society, that its proponents must rethink what are, in his estimations, outdated methods of reaching out to audiences. Koehne encourages revisionism and expanding the canon, as well as "a bit of healthy disrespect for traditional judgments" (169), and interestingly Koehne promotes "restoring an awareness of the elements of commonness within the music of the beloved greats, rather than making a fetish out of their superior genius" (169). Essentially Koehne recognizes that there is an aspect to classical music that does not speak to younger generations and that in order to do so, change is required in terms of how orchestras choose and present their music. By demoting the canonical nature of some classical music—and here the same can be said of canonical literature—students may become more receptive in perceiving the media taught in schools as emotionally evocative and accessible.

It may be that students are also reluctant to relate to classical music not simply because it seems inaccessible, but also because it seems unfashionable. Aaron A. Fox states that "badness is a cultural logic, determined by social relations structured in hegemonic dominance and resistance, ease and abjection" (Fox 59). In this sense, particularly given Walley's account of a cyclical teenage trend of

quasi-unique rebellion in art that is catered to them, it would make sense that students are not responsive to art that is lauded as "good." If steps are taken to create a context of normalcy surrounding canonical works, perhaps students will be more eager to relate to them.

In terms of what tangible pedagogical tools can be implemented to aid appreciation of art, as mentioned before, existing social networking sites could offer a useful template upon which educational content can be applied. By making use of technologies students are familiar with and likely see as normal, everyday tools, educators can work to put into practice Koehne's advice regarding making classical music more accessible. Students already use online resources for personal use in a variety of ways. Using social networking sites, students can create a holistic scrapbook of their essence, complete with songs, lyrics, poetry, quotes, picture galleries, lists of friends, often in prioritized lists, interests, disinterests, and any other minutiae that the individual values. An innate inclination toward artistic expression is evident in students in secondary school. For example, out of one hundred profiles open to the public viewed on a popular Canadian networking site, Nexopia, over half made use of poetry from prose or poetry texts, or from song lyrics. This kind of technology can be harnessed to the advantage of the educator. This is a demographic that is

accustomed to customization in the construction of their perception of their lives. It is a standard, often preferred form of communication for students.

Combining these tangible and appealing aspects of communicating identity with learning may be a way for educators to encourage students to appreciate art in a way that makes sense to them. An integration of new media and traditional literature education could increase the student's feeling of autonomy over their studies as well as connect what they are learning with this very specialized and personalized online identity.

A prototype for such an educational tool might include a variety of different features. Games for younger students that teach concepts in all grades, practice exams, quizzes, links, and other resources for all grades, and there would be online help sessions with teachers as well as other students who had already learned concepts. Students can post their favorite song of the moment or photos just like they can on many other popular networking sites. Additionally, upon logging in students might be asked by the site to rate a song, for example, that might fit into a music curriculum. They could see how other students rated it, what their friends thought, etc. As for text, the presence of poetry and prose that is already visible on sites could be taken a few steps further. An application on this site of "My favorite poems," "books," or even quotes would allow all students in the network to see what their friends enjoy. Educators who moderate

this community could then suggest further titles or authors to the students based on what they post on their profile. I believe that it is in this kind of communication and interaction that students of this highly digital generation can really begin to see how literature and classical music do fit into their lives and can offer them some meaning.

However futile it may seem to lament any transition in the reception of language, the cultural differences seen between the two studies I conducted would indicate that it is possible to change the lack of appeal that poetry has in North American audiences, based simply on the fact that it is appreciated elsewhere.

In spite of sometimes statistically insignificant study results, I feel that it is ultimately important to conduct such research if for no other reason than obtaining a better context for hermeneutical analysis. It is imperative to explore all possible avenues of analysis and research in order to arrive at sound conclusions about theories. The empirical analysis of reception to literature and music is becoming increasingly sophisticated and can serve as an extremely valuable addition to other forms of research. Although the research methods I employed were not technologically sophisticated, they still served to illuminate the reactions and receptions of individuals toward the chosen works.

Above and beyond this, I feel it is important to implement further study on this area of media reception. Where there is such a ubiquitous mixing of media today, pinpointing authorship as well as what precisely is influential within a work becomes more and more complex. For instance, the results of the Spruce Grove study would show that poetry is in some sense out of fashion for the age group of participants tested (i.e., teenagers) as discussed in previous chapters. However, I believe that even a simple Internet search of online communities which this age group commonly frequents would show that poetry is extremely popular. Though poetry as recognized by educational institutions has in many ways died for the youth of North America, an interesting spike in the way poetry can be appreciated is visible on the profiles of young North Americans online. The only difference between then and now is that the process is in some ways reversed: where in the 18th century, composers would derive inspiration from poems and combine them with melody, individuals today are separating songs they appreciate and posting the lyrics of these songs up on profile pages or forums as a means of communication. The profile on which an individual customizes a special page with photos, personal information, and blog entries, acts as a calling card to other members of the community as well as functioning as a means for an individual to tangibly construct a desired identity. Using song lyrics as a part of this construction indicates a) how closely an

individual wishes to be identified and understood through the words they choose to publish on their page and b) also points to a reverence and respect for those words. By posting up lyrics which, more often than not, have a higher level of language than the individuals themselves have, an observable admiration for eloquence and expression is still very much alive in a medium which does not place as much pressure on the "definitive" interpretation of words. Popular music lyrics can be easily ghettoized along with pulp fiction as lower forms of art; perhaps because of this, younger individuals feel more comfortable enjoying language which, in a classroom they would normally feel intimidated by. Without pressure to understand the lyrics correctly, individuals can relate to and in a sense lay claim to words in a way which they have simply not been taught traditionally in educational institutions.

It is nonetheless reassuring to see that a love of language is neither dead nor dying. A vicious cycle forms, however, when institutions like that of education and the entertainment industry chalk a disinterest in classical rhetoric and poetic forms up to a lack of understanding or desire for beautiful language. It is in part the responsibility of these institutions to refrain from a) pandering to their audiences, based on the assumption that it will not be received well, or b) force-feeding authoritative or definitive interpretations to students and audiences, fearing a rejection or misunderstanding of a more creative and open

pedagogical approach. Perhaps part of the apologetic nature in students' responses to disliking poetry is because they have a genuine desire to appreciate language but in a way that makes sense to them. As Miall states in "The Project Method in the Classroom, "Students may learn when a point being made by the teacher relates to something they already know or are interested in, but much will bypass them because they have no way of assimilating it to their own experience of the text" (Miall 149–55). For students, music and text in combination is likely their preferred way to ingest literary language—generally in genres where teachers have not guided or instructed them as to the meaning of the content. Individuals feel passionate about media that speaks to them personally without worrying about their proper meanings. By capitalizing on personalization as having appeal to students, even questionnaires such as the one I distributed to Edmonton students could benefit appreciation of art. The more closely students are taught to analyze a work with the knowledge that they are not being tested for objective accuracy on a work but rather on their own opinion of it, the more comfortable they may become in identifying with that work. If students feel empowered to comment on and explore more freely why they do or do not like a work, they may be more open-minded to a broader range of works, particularly ones taught in schools that they may have previously felt were inaccessible.

For these reasons I think it is important to continue to explore the empirical method as a means to better understand what can appeal to students and help foster a different literary experience in school. Given what Miall refers to as the "hangover from the days of New Criticism," (Miall 463–478) it is ironic that students' notions of the "one correct" reading of the text should come from more arbitrary sources (scholars, or expert readers) than would a more systematic empirical approach that may better discern what elements of a text are outstanding to the greatest number of readers.

VII. Conclusion

The four different components of this thesis reflect the complexity of analyzing different media—as well as the implications such an analysis can have. A more composite approach to media is necessary in order to yield the most meaningful conclusion possible. Analysis of the theoretical and historical aspects of several examples of media, revealed that this more conventional analysis offered insights into specific aspects of cross-media perception: how different composers approach using texts from different perspectives; how from a more objective musicological and literary perspective the words and music interact; and how by applying different theories of media perception, different elements of the

musical/literary experience play different roles in creating meaning for an audience.

The empirical component to the thesis contributed insight into how individuals experience media personally. Thus, not only the opinions of the composers of the works and scholars are important to understanding the enduring impact certain works have on cultures. By studying the impact that a work can have on an individual, or indeed on a broader demographic, it can become possible to better determine what characteristics of the work make it outstanding. Among the consequent implications of the studies were methodological issues, including possible improvements that could be applied to future studies. Significantly, an implication of the study was the issue of how effectively literature is being taught in North America; a more in-depth analysis of this issue was the basis of the final component of the thesis. Practical applications to a variety of research methods makes such studies relevant and illuminate the amount of research that is still needed to offer more definitive solutions to media reception and teaching methods that will optimally benefit student reception and appreciation. Moreover, it would seem that integrating a more empirical, reader-response based approach to teaching can benefit a classroom's appreciation for a work as much as it can benefit the precision of analysis in research of that work. As Miall states in "Literary Discourse"

(*Handbook of Discourse Processing*), ". . . it becomes more urgent to understand what literary reading is. . . before it is reconfigured or disappears in the face of new forms of electronic literacy." (Miall 351) Since coming generations will likely be among those for whom a "reconfigured" reading process may occur, it is important to understand this transitional period of how language and media interact conventionally as a basis for understanding how new media will change perceptions and processes.

If conventional approaches to teaching literature are not reaching students, it is safe to assume that conventional research practices in understanding literature may not be meeting the needs of today's scholarship in the humanities. Ultimately I foresee empirical studies playing a larger role in adapting and adopting new methods to more fully understanding how art and its audience interact.

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Appendix A

Poetry Questionnaire

Age: _____

Check one: Male_____ Female_____

Please choose the answer which BEST reflects your personal opinion, using the following scale:

1= Strongly Disagree **2**=Disagree Somewhat **3**=Neutral **4**= Agree **5**= Strongly Agree

You will have an opportunity at the end of the questionnaire to write in your own comments. If you feel uncomfortable at any point in the questionnaire you are free to stop, no questions asked. Should you have any questions, approach the moderator.

1. ____ I often read poetry

2. ____ I liked this poem.

3. ____ This poem evoked strong feelings in me.

4. ____ I felt as though there was tension within this poem.

5. ____ The poem was boring.

6. ____ I felt uncomfortable reading this poem.

7. ____ Poetry and text tends to evoke strong feelings in me.

8. ____ This poem evoked feelings of sadness in me.

9. ____ I often read for pleasure.

10. ___ I was eager to read the conclusion of this poem.

11.____ I had mixed emotions while reading this poem.

12.____ I became less interested in the poem as I continued reading it.

13.____ Reading poetry makes me think of emotions or memories I have had in my life.

14.____ The poem did not seem to have a point.

15.____ I felt as though the poem was trying to evoke emotions but I did not feel them myself.

16.____ I try and read texts that I think will be meaningful to me and make me feel something.

17.____ There were parts of the poem that I thought were more emotional than others.

18.____ The poem had a clear rising tension and satisfying conclusion.

19.____ There were moments of this poem which stood out to me more than others.

20.____ I anticipated the end of the poem.

Section II

Please talk about your experience reading the poem. What did you like? What did you dislike? How did you feel? If you require more space, you can write on the back of this sheet.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Music Questionnaire

Age: _____

Check one: Male_____ Female_____

Please choose the answer which BEST reflects your personal opinion, using the following scale:

1= Strongly Disagree **2**=Disagree Somewhat **3**=Neutral **4**= Agree **5**= Strongly Agree

You will have an opportunity at the end of the questionnaire to write in your own comments. If you feel uncomfortable at any point in the questionnaire you are free to stop, no questions asked. Should you have any questions, approach the moderator.

1. ____ I often listen to music

2. ____ I liked this song.

3. ____ This song evoked strong feelings in me.

4. ____ I felt as thought there was tension within this song.

5. ____ The song was boring.

6. ____ I felt uncomfortable listening to this song.

7. ____ Music and song tends to evoke strong feelings in me.

8. ____ This song evoked feelings of sadness in me.

9. ____ I often listen to music for pleasure.

10. ___ I was eager to hear the conclusion of this song.

11.____ I had mixed emotions while hearing this song.

12.____ I became less interested in the song as I continued listening to it.

Section II

Please talk about your experience listening to the song. What did you like? What did you dislike? How did you feel? If you require more space, you can write on the back of this sheet.

_____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____