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Hear Me:

How Intratextual Musical Association Develops Literary Characters

Abstract

Intertextual musical reference in novels can yield insight in terms of characterization. Specifically, the linking of novelistic characters with particular pieces of music can affect their process of characterization. This essay explores this interdisciplinary phenomenon, with a specific focus on the use of Mussorsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* in *The Song Beneath the Ice* by Joe Fiorito.

Introduction

There is always something more, something that cannot be said... music affords the... novelist: the ability to invoke states of consciousness that are beyond the ability of language to render. (Smyth, 25)

The linking of character with music in novels is hardly a new practice, traceable as it is through the canon from George Eliot to Marcel Proust to Anthony Burgess and beyond; however, although an impressive (and growing) amount of attention has been paid to the exploration of music in novels more generally,ⁱ the specifically character-based area of investigation is not yet so developed.ⁱⁱ My interest lies in examining the idea of music in novels in terms of characterization, specifically how novelistic characterization works in relation to textual references to music. A significant amount of a novel's task is set to examining, exploring, explaining and expanding its characters; as Roland Barthes put it in *S/Z*, his 1974 exploration of Balzac's "Sarrasine," "To read is to struggle to name" (92).ⁱⁱⁱ It therefore follows that authors and readers alike are alert to ways of developing characters as

much as possible, striving towards a sense, for the reader, of “presence” for these fictional beings. One method, the one that I will explore, is characteral development by means of musical association; how textural references to music work towards the “building” of fictional people in novels,^{iv} and what it is about music, specifically, that makes it unique in this capacity.

In *Aspects of the Novel*, E. M. Forster speaks of ‘flat’ and ‘round’ characters; a distinction that divides characters, roughly, between those who can be surmised in one phrase (“flat”), and those who demonstrate more layers of complexity (“round”). This seems a simple enough distinction; however, it raises the idea of “levels of roundness”. Can one character be said to be more “round” than another? Is there such thing as a complete or final level of “roundness” that a character can (or should?) strive to attain? James Wood, in his *Guardian* article, “A Life of Their Own,” opines on this issue, stating that:

[True] "roundness" is impossible in fiction, because fictional characters, while very alive in their way, are not the same as real people. (*The Guardian*, 26/1/08)

Wood sees “roundness” as a synonym for “fullness,” and goes on to protest that Forster’s distinctions privilege novelistic characters, as they have more pages available to them in which their traits can be related. He thus implies that novelistic characters will have a leg-up in terms of “roundness” over characters in shorter formats, for example, short stories or poetry. This is true, of course, but the fact of the matter remains that neither the character from a short story, nor she from a novel, will ever stand a chance at being completely “round” (or “full”) in the way that real people are. They are not real people, and have no real-world, actual referent, and so, they will always necessarily be less-than-full, or round,

regardless of whether they have ten or ten-thousand pages to attempt to convince us otherwise. However, there is no need for authors and readers to despair. On the contrary, once we have made this distinction, that fictional beings are not the same as real people, we can begin to note and discuss positive ramifications in terms of character and characterization. Because they are inhabiting a different world and space than our own, we can get to know literary characters in ways that we cannot know people in real life. So, while we cannot know them as fully or as “roundly” as we would know our own friends, neighbours and family, there are certain kinds of intimacy we can only experience with fictional beings, certain kinds of “knowing” that are specifically tuned to function within the realms of text, textual people (characters), and the relationships readers form with them. In this way, they can often be even more *available* or open to us than “real people.”

I am here seeking to explore one such type of characterization, that which works through the association of a literary character with a particular piece of music. Because an author is limited in the amount of information, or number of “traits,” she can provide about a character, those that she does assign can sometimes be given special or increased weight. This can function on many levels; for example, if a character is described as having fiery red hair, but receives no further description, readers will often justifiably make the leap to assume that that character has a fiery personality (unless, of course, they are told or indicated otherwise by the text); whereas, upon meeting a real-life person with fiery red hair, we are swamped with endless other traits to consider and balance. In real life we know enough not to assume one dominant trait by which we can pass judgment; there are simply too many other traits to take into account. This is not to say that literary characters cannot be nuanced, layered, or subtle, but instead that there functions a certain type of code in literature, whereby certain traits, in their relative prominence, can be read into more deeply than one would do with a real person. (I will be delving further into the idea of various types of “trait” in later

paragraphs.) I am looking to investigate instances where a character's link within the text with a certain piece of music functions as just such a "magnified" or prominent trait, where, for reasons of the sort that we will discuss in upcoming sections of this piece, one particular piece of music can thusly be a source of valuable, and sometimes even otherwise unattainable, character information.

Music's Distinction

What is it, exactly, about music that allows it to function *uniquely* as a literary (and, therein, character-building) tool? I believe what sets musical associations apart from other types of novelistic intermediality is, primarily, music's non-representational nature. Music is much less suited to representation and objective expression (that is to say, expression with a definite *something* to express from creator to audience, or from artwork to observer/listener) than other art forms, both performance and non. To simplify, upon hearing a solo piano piece, one generally cannot definitively, objectively, state the piece's "subject," for example, "that was a waterfall" (or "that was *about* a waterfall"). Although musical motifs and pieces can certainly conjure specific ideas and images in this way, there is next to nothing in the way of agreed semantics in this vein, nor, many would argue, would such a thing even be possible. What is for me a waterfall may be for you a stag or the scent of fresh-mowed grass. This ineffability of music was particularly called into scrutiny during what is now known as the Nineteenth-Century program music debate. Within this cultural arena of scholars, critics, composers and artists across various disciplines throughout the Nineteenth-Century and into the earlier parts of the Twentieth, there arose a heated discussion regarding the extent of music's ability to express or represent, and whether the inability to "represent" would diminish the art form's aesthetic value. On one side, we had figures such as Hector Berlioz and E. T. A. Hoffman, declaring that instrumental music was more than capable of

expression, that it was “as lofty and as expressive of human experience as more obviously representational art forms, such as painting or literature.” (681)^v Their opponents, such as Stravinsky, however, claimed that, “Music is powerless to represent anything at all.” (681)^{vi} During this period of debate, the idea of the “program” arose as a means of acquiring respect for instrumental music.^{vii} Program music can be defined as a piece (or series of pieces) portraying an extra-musical theme or narrative. This is in contrast to “absolute music,” which is non-representational.^{viii} Examples of various types of program music include Franz Liszt’s *Ce Qu’on Entend sur la Montagne*, a symphonic poem based on a poem by Victor Hugo;^{ix} Modest Mussorgsky’s *Pictures at an Exhibition*, a ten-movement suite for piano “depicting” a series of paintings by artist Viktor Hartmann; and Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov’s *Scheherazade*, a symphonic suite which follows the narrative path of the Persian folk-tale. An important distinction here is that program music is *not* simply music inspired by something extra-musical, for example, a piece inspired by the sun on a wheat-field, or a poem by Keats. These sorts of extra-musical connections are strictly author (or composer)-sided; that is to say that, while they may play an important role in the creation of a piece, they are not implicated in its reception. A piece of program music must be attempting to *communicate* something extra-musical. But is such a thing even possible? The moniker “program music” comes from the idea that the extra-musical element would be described, or at least disclosed, within a piece’s program notes, thus tipping the audience off as to what to “listen for.” It is tempting, then, to claim that therein lies the deciding proof, for, were there not a program to guide listeners towards supposed extra-musical content, then this content would not be communicated. In other words, it is all well and good for an audience to sit back and “hear” Saint-Saëns’ *Swan*^x after they have all been alerted that it is, indeed, a swan they are listening to; however, were there no indication in the title or program, would all listeners come away from the performance having linked the piece with the idea of a swan, specifically? I would

say no. Music can have swan-like features, certainly, it can, in a sense, glide or be majestic or lonely or aquatic; however, it lacks the visual representational tools of fine art or dance, and the textual or verbal tools of literature or theatre necessary to impart objective signification.^{xi}

This does not mean music has ‘failed’ in any way, however, quite the contrary. What the Nineteenth-Century program music debate seemed to overlook was the fact that this independence from concrete signification, and the toil towards it, is what sets music apart and renders it most affecting. The German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer granted music special status among art forms for this reason, stating, in his *The World as Will and Representation*, that:

Depicting individual things ... is the aim of all the other non-musical arts ...
[but] music, since it passes over the ideas, is ... quite independent of the
phenomenal world, positively ignores it. (257)

Daniel Albright, author of *Music and Modernism*, clarifies the philosopher’s point:

Schopenhauer thought that music was the only art that did not merely copy
ideas, but actually embodied the will itself. (39)

Schopenhauer was not alone in that belief. Poets like Mallarmé idolized music for this reason, for its freedom from semantic meaning,^{xii} endeavoring to make their poetry as “musical” as possible, through form and aural affect. In fact, most all of the Symbolist wordsmiths were especially fond of this characteristic of music. As Marina Frolova-Walker points out in her review of “Russian Opera and the Symbolist Movement” (by Simon Morrison):

Symbolists in general were often in love with the idea of music as a higher art form, floating free of worldly encumbrances and capable of expressing the ineffable. (507)

Music has its own kind of language, one that does not communicate through any concrete sign system which can be objectively interpreted as can words or pictures, but a language no less, and, no less a language. Like the Symbolists and unlike the Nineteenth-Century critics, I believe this semantic distinction to be what can make music a uniquely potent art, and, thereby, a distinctively effective tool in character-building within literature.

Part of the sticking point of music's ineffability, and attempts (including this one) to discuss it, is the fact that, as made evident above, it does not function within verbal semantics. Simply stated, putting into words why music cannot be put into words proves something of a challenge. Nevertheless, this is why music is so well-suited to the character-building task at hand; music says what words cannot. In literary characters linked with a piece of music there is no tautological overlap, the two languages, that of words' semantic preciseness and that of music's non-representational ineffability can function symbiotically to present an impressively vivid depiction of character. Consider the trait-based formula of characterization as outlined in previous paragraphs. As we read through a novel, we are given various items of information (traits) pertaining to a particular character that, once collected and connected by the reader, serve to constitute that character.^{xiii} As discussed earlier, fictional beings do not have real-world referents; they are nothing but these traits (and our interpretation of them). This metaphor of "connecting," however, implies that there must be some amount of space between what is being connected; as we can never know everything about our characters, we must jump from trait to trait. As Ruth Ronen asserts in her article,

“Completing the Incompleteness of Fictional Entities,” “fictional entities are inherently incomplete.” (817) This is where the idea of textual “gaps” comes in; in this way, literary characters are holed. However, musically-associative character traits can function positively in relation to these gaps. Music, in its non-precise, non-semantic, non-textual language, can offer a very particular form of character cohesion, a way of bridging readers across the gaps. Let us consider a fictional character named Mary. The author tells us only Mary’s name, that she is forty-eight years old, and that she is afraid of spiders, so that we have a certain, quite limited idea of Mary’s character. If we are also told, however, that Mary has a strong textual association with the first movement of Beethoven’s *Moonlight Sonata*, then the aural idea of this piece, conjured as it is when we read about Mary and her connection to it, offers another language of non-semantic representation which works alongside what we know of Mary and adds a new level of textually indefinable character-knowledge. It bridges, or even weaves us between, the gaps in Mary’s pure-text character.^{xiv} Of course, it should be noted that I am not claiming that music can completely or finally fill the gaps in literary characters; knowing about Mary’s Beethoven connection does not mean we can completely *know* Mary. However, in its non-textual language, music can offer a unique and powerful method of bridging together diverse textual fragments, unavailable through (non-intermedial) words alone; its distinct form of expression unifies our necessarily disjointed literary characters.

Missing Person: *The Song Beneath the Ice*, by Joe Fiorito

From *The Song Beneath the Ice*, we shall be looking at the character of Dominic Amoruso. The novel opens thusly:

You may recall this story from the newspapers:

A year or so ago, during a recital of *Pictures at an Exhibition*, the concert pianist Dominic Amoruso stopped, got up from the piano, turned to the audience, paused – and walked away without a word. Just like that, he disappeared. (1)

Two sentences in, we already know two key things about our concert-pianist Amoruso:

- 1) He is linked with the Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*
- 2) He has disappeared.

What's interesting is how these two elements play off each other; how, in effect, Fiorito has left us with the Mussorgsky as character reference *in absence* of character.^{xv} No sooner have we met Amoruso than he has disappeared; the majority of the novel's plot will be spent trying to put together the pieces as to where he has disappeared to and why, and in so doing, putting together the pieces of Amoruso himself, constructing and scrutinizing his character as a means to solving this riddle. We therefore have a unique sort of protagonist in Amoruso: a character whose primary characteristic is his absence. Nevertheless, we have, earlier in this paper, determined that it is the unavoidable fate of literary characters to be incomplete, or, in a manner of speaking, always somewhat absent or missing. Amoruso, then, is not so much an atypicality, but, instead, a sort of magnified or exaggerated example of literary characters' plight.

The second notable element of the novel's opening passage (above) is the reference to Mussorgsky's piece. It takes Fiorito a mere two sentences to make this character-musical piece connection (a connection that will be reinforced again and again throughout the novel).

^{xvi} Note the order of introduction; Fiorito gives us the piece *first* and the character *second*, ("...during a recital of *Pictures at an Exhibition*, the concert pianist Dominic Amoruso

stopped...”) thus reinforcing the order of characterization, first we get the musical-association, and this helps us build the character, who therefore comes second. What’s more, here this ordering is underpinning the idea of what we have or know versus what we do not; we have and can know the Mussorgsky, but not Dominic Amoruso; the two are linked but not the same in terms of literary knowability, an ordering is, therefore, necessary. Finally, in terms of this opening passage, it’s worth noting that the reference to the piece, coming so early on in the text as it does, immediately sets up readers for its non-textual, musical language. Almost as soon as they begin to interpret the text, and its semantic expression, they are asked to also begin considering a parallel, musical, component for what is to follow. From the onset, Fiorito’s novel has positioned us well to examine and discover much about how musical association can function in terms of character. To delve a little further into these ideas, we shall explore Fiorito’s structuring of his novel.

As mentioned above, the novel’s focus is on trying to solve the Amoruso disappearance riddle: where did he get to, and why? The evidence we (and the narrator, Serafino) are given to work with is a stack of Amoruso’s tapes and notebooks that Serafino is mysteriously sent mid-way through chapter one. These tapes and notes are, in effect, Amoruso’s diaries, dating from before his disappearance until almost a year after the event. After its opening chapter of straight prose, *The Song Beneath the Ice* settles into a new format, reflective of these new sources, one it will maintain for the remainder of the text. The prose is now broken up into short (most often less than a page, sometimes only a line or two) fragments of three sorts: firstly, descriptions of recorded sound, as transcribed from Amoruso’s semi-obsessive everyday tape-recordings. These sections are headed by the word, “Tape” and the date of the original recording, and, for sounds-only, marked off in square brackets:

Tape, August 15:

[Water hissing thinly from a tap; six sticky steps – his bare feet on the kitchen tile? A cup and saucer being carried, shakily; spillage of coffee beans into an electric grinder; the fall and rise of the whirr from coarse to fine...]

(32)

Transcriptions of tape-recorded narration or dialogue are presented similarly, but without the brackets (dialogue in quotation-marks, narration offered straight):

Tape, August 19, cont'd

“Would you like hot sauce?”

“Mmm. You know she doesn't like you very much.”

“Who doesn't?”

“My agent thinks you are a distraction. Where was I? You see, you distract me now. You with your mouth full.”

“You're a big boy. Take the money. Play the concert.” (75)

Tape, August 15, cont'd

Bloor station, noon: No big city ought to be without an underground; it is a kind of long and skinny village that gives us an opportunity to rub shoulders with the other villagers – subterranean milkmaids, drovers, cattle on the hoof, and wandering minstrels. (46)

The second type of text fragment presented are excerpts from Amoruso's notebooks, which are plain text, with the header 'Notebook':

Notebook, August 15:

Slept in; grateful for having done so. (28)

And, finally, all of Serafino's own observations, thoughts and actions as narrator, are given in italics:

Note: I took a chance and called Claire. Would she consent to one or two questions about Dominic? (106)

The balance of the parts is roughly equal, with one third tape, one third notebook, and one third narrator, and are all mixed together, so that on one page we might see a few lines of tape, followed by a notebook paragraph, followed by a comment from the narrator. There is no set pattern (save a loose chronology to the plotline) to the order of presentation. This tripartite structure encourages the reader to identify with the italicized Serafino; like him, we are the observers, the detectives, the glue that must bring the other, scattered sections together in order to make some sense of them. And, the reverse is also true, this set-up and structure in essence puts the narrator, Serafino, in the readers' shoes, having him cobble together the mystery of his friend just as readers must cobble together character information whenever they read novels. It is here that the Mussorgsky becomes particularly relevant. As we saw in the opening passage of the novel, Fiorito makes no attempt to conceal the intermedial nature of *The Song Beneath the Ice*; this is made additionally clear by the fact that roughly one third of the text is descriptions of sound.^{xvii} Reading these passages, readers have their aural imaginations stirred, and, like our narrator Serafino, become increasingly sensitive to the mention and significance of aural detail: "*There is more sound around me than I am used to*

hearing.” (165) This is ideal for tuning readers into aural, and musical, content; however, it should be noted that the two (aural and musical content, as presented here) are not necessarily one and the same. Much of the aural, tape-recorded, content is spoken, dialogue or monologue, which, although it is described as heard as opposed to read (though, of course, readers must read what is being “heard”) still functions within text’s direct semantic language. What remains of the tape-recorded material is, for the most part, noise: the clanging pots and pans, beeping traffic, and rustling wind of everyday. Again, although aural, this is not the same as musical content, though the distinction here is a little less clear. These noises are scattered and (though, of course, corresponding with context) random, they are not organized or presented so as to be interpreted musically. Perhaps the best way of clarifying the distinction between these sounds and music is to consider the same situation in a different media. Novels will almost always hold many visual descriptions of things (“the red chair with one leg shorter than the others,” or “his eyes were of the deepest blue and his hair blacker than tar”) and yet, these images are not interpreted, nor are they meant to be, as textual occasions of visual, or fine, art. What is lacking in both these examples (aural and visual) is an intended organization that allows for creative expression. In music’s case, this is a non-representation expression, but an expression no less. Therefore, the aural landscape Fiorito presents to his readers certainly does function towards our cause, tuning readers into their aural, listening selves, and highlighting the importance of the aural dimension within this story-world; however, these tape-recorded sounds do not function in the same way as the actual musical character association (the Mussorgsky).

Pictures at an Exhibition is a suite for solo piano, made up of several short pieces corresponding to both pictures by the artist Viktor Hartmann (*The Gnome*, *The Old Castle*, and so on), as well as the act of strolling between these artworks, as depicted in the *Promenade* movements. It is notorious among pianist for the difficulty of its “picture”

movements, as opposed to the striking simplicity of the *Promenades*, and the piece as a whole is often employed as a virtuoso showpiece.^{xviii} *Pictures at an Exhibition* therefore contains many correspondences to and indications towards Amoruso's character. Firstly, the fact that he is linked with such a particularly showy piece implies both his skill level as a pianist (high), and his performance personality. The type of pianist, and indeed person, who would have this piece as their specialty is a different type to one who would have, for example, a spritely, mathematical Mozart Concerto or a precise and heavy Bach Fugue. *Pictures* is a conflicted, multiple-personality piece, crashing from the dynamic, intricate, and highly varied picture-movements to the hymn-like steady simplicity of the *Promenades*. The latter do contain complex melody and harmonies (at least to the Western Classical-Art canon's ears) but are strikingly basic in style, rhythm and texture, with the repetitive themes often playable by just one hand, or even one finger.^{xix} These *Promenade* movements are a cohesive element, wending in between the diverse pictorial movements, recalling again and again their same memorable tune, and, thus, leaving us with an essential unity, even calmness, underpinning the variously hectic individual parts. Likewise, Fiorito's Amoruso is a scattered and hectic type of character, made up, in his absence, by various mottled bits and pieces as assembled by the narrator and the reader. The scattered bits information we, along with Serafino, cobble together, are erratic and haphazard splashes of personality and colour, from a number of sources and in a number of voices, corresponding with Mussorgsky's varied and scattered picture-movements; while the haunting, simple tune of the *Promenade* that underlies *Pictures at an Exhibition* as a whole relates an idea of Amoruso's constant, actual, (insofar as fictional beings are "actual") character or self, it is the unifying agent for this varied character. He is a missing person, both literally, to his friends and former life, and, as we later learn, figuratively, to himself. This is why his link to the Mussorgsky piece is

integral. *Pictures at an Exhibition*, as intermedial double, serves as a cohesive element to this otherwise lost and scattered man.

We have established how, structurally, the Mussorgsky piece is an apposite match for Amoruso's character, and how his link with this music can function towards characterization in this way; subsequently, we can now ask: what does music's unique intermedial presence bring to this example? The answer relates greatly to our earlier discussion of "gaps," or, the unavoidable holes in literary characters. Here these gaps are perhaps the most obvious and literal out of any of our three examples (Fiorito, Powers, and Seth), given the nature of the textual information we are presented with, as discussed above. In other words, our primary novelistic language for characterization, that of text, is faltering here, and unable to provide what readers need to build a vivid Amoruso character. It falls to music, and its alternative, indirect, language to provide an essence beyond what the hard-facts of words can (or in this case, cannot) offer. In *Fictional Minds*, Alan Palmer states:

The reader ... constructs a consciousness that continues in the spaces between the various mentions of that character. The reader strategy is to join up the dots. (176)

In *The Song Beneath the Ice*, the character of Amoruso's dots, his text-based traits, are very scattered indeed. It takes the Mussorgsky, this musical, extra-textual language, to be able to begin connecting them.^{xx} The pairing with the real-world, other-media of *Pictures* offers a valuable aural dimension (to which the reader is especially attuned, as discussed in previous paragraphs), especially valuable here in its indirectness. As we've demonstrated, Dominic Amoruso is a character for whom direct means of characterization are ineffective; he has, in fact, done his best to evade them as much as possible, by disappearing and offering only

coded clues towards discovery; this is a character who *does not want* to be defined or discovered through straight-forward means. (The disappearance and discovery are both both literal and figurative; literal within the plot of the novel, and, what we are looking to explore here, figurative in terms of characterization.) It therefore falls to an indirect, implicit sort of language to be able to bridge his literally and figuratively holed persona, the kind of language music, in particular, can offer. Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* (and, principally, the *Promenade* movements, as discussed earlier) offers one musically encapsulated expression within this other, indirect language, to which readers can refer to bridge across the gaps or holes in Dominic's otherwise scattered character. It does not "tell," or even "show," but, instead, simply expresses. Music, therefore, both despite and due to its obliqueness, is the more reliable and "present" language for the characterization of Fiorito's lost pianist.

Endnote

Musico-literary studies is very much a currently active, expanding field. The Open University and the University of East Anglia have both introduced courses in the subject within the past year; the international Word and Music Studies Association continues to gather momentum, gaining more interest and diverse members each year; and new books in the field such as those by Benson (2006), Smyth (2008), and Shockley (2009) are being published, read, and academically recognized. As this relatively new field continues to grow, an increasing number of academics are beginning to take notice of this particular breed of intermediality and to explore what it might accomplish, branching out into countless sub-categories of study, such as music and the spoken word,^{xxi} gender in the music-novel,^{xxii} or music and poetry.^{xxiii} However, there is, as of yet, still remarkably little in the field addressing the specific issue of characterization,^{xxiv} a particular area of exploration within the wider field from which I believe, and hope to have demonstrated, there is much to be gained, for both

readers and authors. As we have seen in our various examples, this type of intermedial association can, indeed, help us to bridge the inevitable, infamous gaps in literary character. Although, as these examples demonstrated, the methods for such an endeavor are diverse and flexible, there is one constant that we have traced through the music-character canon that grants this type of intermedial association its unique potency, setting it apart not just from text and what it can do, but from other forms of intermediality as well: music is an indirect, non-representational form of expression. Music is, at the same time, more and less than words; it functions in a different dimension to words, and indeed all other forms of “worldly” (Frolova-Walker, 507) representational expression, in their concrete, inflexible semantic articulation. This is why it is so difficult to accurately, objectively describe music in any other language, and why it is so difficult (or impossible, even) for music to accurately, objectively describe concrete, definite things. Working together, however, words and music, in their combined forms of expression, can provide uniquely vivid, multi-dimensional insights into novelistic, story-world components, particularly the enigma of literary characters. Indeed, from both a critical and a creative perspective, music can provide an alternate language of self for fictitious beings, more essential, perhaps even more true, for its indirect nature.

It is when [the novelist's] attention was drawn towards music, among all the arts, that he became aware of the existence of a non-verbal reality more expressive than speech and conforming to the dictates of inner time beyond anything that the novelist's language could communicate. (Aronson, ix)

Notes

ⁱ A few notable examples include Alex Aronson's *Music and the Novel* (1980), Werner Wolf's *The Musicalization of Fiction: A Study in the Theory and History of Intermediality* (1999), Stephen Benson's *Literary Music: Writing Music in Contemporary Fiction* (2006), and the text quoted above, Gerry Smyth's recent *Music in Contemporary British Fiction: Listening to the Novel* (2008).

ⁱⁱ This is not to suggest that the area has been completely ignored, only under-developed comparatively. As we continue there are various studies to which I will refer which do touch on this subject in a range of ways.

ⁱⁱⁱ For more on Barthes' treatment of character in *S/Z*, see Seymour Chatman's *Story and Discourse*, pp 115-116.

^{iv} The definition of "novel" as referred to and examined in this study will be mainly that of the classic-realist tradition. (NB: Some of the conclusions reached may not have bearing in more experimental or postmodern settings.)

^v Extract taken from *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music: Program Music*

^{vi} Ibid.

^{vii} This was, however, not the birthplace of program music itself; music with external referents can be traced virtually as far back as musical history allows. One pre-Nineteenth-Century example is that of the Fourteenth-Century Italian *Caccia*, a type of piece which was intended to depict the romping and rollicking of a hunt.

^{viii} This is not to be confused with the somewhat archaic definition of absolute music as a form of divinity. Nevertheless, there is an interesting cross-over here, as this type of absolute music, in lieu of *representing* or expressing anything of our world, is said by some to therefore evoke Godliness.

^{ix} It should be noted that symphonic poems are a general musical genre that do not, by nature, *have* to correlate to any specific real-world poetry, and, in fact, more often than not do not.

^x “The Swan” is the thirteenth (and by far most celebrated) movement from Camille Saint-Saëns’ *Carnival of the Animals* suite.

^{xi} We are, for the time being, considering music without sung text, instrumental music.

^{xii} For more on Mallarmé’s “musical” poetry, see David Evans’ *Rhythm, Illusion, and the Poetic Idea. Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Mallarmé*.

^{xiii} There are several instances of modern and postmodern novels that arguably thwart this type of characterization by providing confused or contradictory traits, and we shall deal briefly with the idea of inconsistent or conflicting traits in upcoming sections; however, for a more detailed discussion, see Aleid Fokkema’s *Postmodern Characters: A Study of Characterization in British and American Postmodern Fiction* or Docherty’s rather comprehensive *Reading (Absent) Character: Towards a Theory of Characterization in Fiction*.

^{xiv} We will deal with more in-depth examples of music-linked literary characters in upcoming sections.

^{xv} An interesting similarity between Fiorito’s book and Mussorgsky’s work is that the composer wrote *Pictures* to commemorate an absent friend of his own, the artist Viktor Hartmann, who had, at the time of composing, just recently passed away.

^{xvi} The next connection comes just a little further down the first page: “He was playing the piece with which he launched his career, and with which he is most closely associated,” (1) and a further sampling of references to the Amoruso-Mussorgsky link can be found on pages 36, 60, 61, 73, 83, 88, 89, 90, 95, 98, 102, 112, 117, 120, 168-172, 191, 201, 204-211, 301, 315, 330, 333, and so forth.

^{xvii} For the interest of this study we'll be focusing on the musical element to this intermediality. However, it should be noted that *The Song Beneath the Ice* also presents much in terms of visual art reference. Much action takes place about or around fine art and there are multiple references to real-world pieces throughout the novel (including, of course, those very same *Pictures* by Hartman that inspired Mussorgsky). What's more, there is also a notably large amount of *intertextuality* (in the words of Julia Kristeva, this text is a "mosaic of quotations," (66)) with much reference and language play to that effect, and countless referrals to poems, novels, and quotes, from *Death of a Salesman* to *Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird*, to *Hempel's Raven Paradox*.

^{xviii} Particularly infamous is the ninth movement, *The Hut on Chicken's Legs*, earning itself a nine out of nine for difficulty on the online database music-scores.com.

^{xix} The meter for the *Promenades* is most often written as alternating between 5/4 and 6/4, though originally marked as 11/4 throughout. Although this may seem complex, upon listening the rhythm here comes across as intuitive and natural.

^{xx} I use the term extra-textual because, although the initial reference to the music is and must be textual, that text acts as a trigger for a non-textual, aural experience. This resonates soundly with the Smyth quote at the opening of this paper, "music affords the... novelist... the ability to invoke states of consciousness that are beyond the ability of language to render." (1)

^{xxi} See *Word and Music Studies: Essays on Music and the Spoken Word and on Surveying the Field* (Edited by Suzanne M. Lodato and David Francis Urrows).

^{xxii} See Delia De Sousa Correa's chapter, "The Gendered Text."

^{xxiii} This is an especially vast sub-category of study, with many publications to its name. For examples, see Lawrence Kramer's *Walt Whitman and Modern Music*, or David Evans and Helen Abbott's "'Music and poetry at the crossroads: Baudelaire, Debussy and

'Recueillement,'" or Abbott's monograph, *Between Baudelaire and Mallarmé: Voice, Conversation and Music*.

^{xxiv} Nevertheless, some scholars have touched on the issue, for example, the work by Michelle Fillion, 'Edwardian Perspectives on Nineteenth-Century Music in E. M. Forsters' *A Room with a View*'

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