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Music in Balance: The Aesthetics of Music after Kant, 1790–1810

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"Formalism" and "the autonomy of art"—few would dispute the continued importance of these concepts to debates about musical aesthetics and interpretation. Ever since Joseph Kerman's attack on "formalistic" styles of music analysis and the subsequent New Musicological polemics against the autonomy of the musical work, they have been central to any consideration of how or to what extent musicologists should approach "the music itself."[1] Yet as Kerman's own genealogy of music analysis showed, the stakes in such debates are at least partly historical, not just abstractly ontological. The question of music's relationship to its meanings and contexts is so powerfully influenced by how we think about the value of music from the past that we seek assurance—almost compulsively—about the origins and continuity of our attitudes. We want to know that similar modes of thought about similar types of value in similar works of music have maintained a degree of historical coherence up to the present moment. It seems *a priori* to make a difference to our sense of aesthetic legitimacy in the present when we discover how philosophers and music critics established the status or value of art in their own time. Among those thinkers regularly invoked to provide such a sense of legitimacy, none carries as much intellectual weight, and freight, as Immanuel Kant.

[1] Joseph Kerman, "How We Got Into Analysis and How to Get Out," *Critical Inquiry* 7 (1980): 311–31; and Susan McClary and Richard Leppert's Introduction and Janet Wolff's Foreword ("The Ideology of Autonomous Art") to *Music and Society: The Politics of Composition, Performance and Reception* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), xi–xix and 1–12, respectively.

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There are many reasons for Kant's status in these debates. His aesthetic system has long been admired from both sides of the Continental/analytical divide in philosophy. For G. W. F. Hegel, Kant "spoke the first rational word on aesthetics,"[2] while for Roger Scruton, without the first part of Kant's *Critique of Judgment* (1790) "aesthetics would not exist in its modern form."[3] In hindsight the timing of Kant's reflections also seems remarkably apposite. Peter Kivy, for instance, remarks on Kant's theorization of the judgment of taste in relation to a key phase of canonic Western concert music:

> Is it a coincidence that at the time the aesthetic attitude theory reached full development, in 1790, the art of pure instrumental music had reached a position of prominence in the musical world not theretofore attained? Coincidence or not, the music seems made for the attitude, the attitude for the music. . . . The aesthetic attitude . . . became the prescriptive code for listening to a kind of music not only ideally suited to that code but hardly susceptible of full appreciation without it.[4]

Kant's aesthetic system is almost certainly the first to include references to "autonomy" (*Autonomie*), and has often been described as "formalist." On the former point, Lydia Goehr, perhaps the most influential recent genealogist of music aesthetics, identifies Kant's *Critique of Judgment* as one of the most powerful articulations of what she calls the "separability principle" in aesthetics, according to which "at the end of the eighteenth century, it became the custom to speak of the arts as separated completely from the world of the . . . everyday."[5] Kant's descriptions of the "pure" judgment of taste "helped sever the age-old connection between the arts and their purported external utilities, and that helped guarantee the fine arts their autonomy."[6] Romanticism's rapidly institutionalized veneration of the musical "work concept" was merely a practical consequence of the philosophical division Kant had already performed. Echoing Goehr, Richard Taruskin concludes:

> Kant's categories are still the ones normally invoked when artworks are defined or ranked as autonomous. You know the drill: they must be disinterested both in their motivation and in the mode of their

[2] Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie*, in *Sämtliche Werke* (Stuttgart: 1927–), 19: 601, quoted in Helmut Kuhn and Katharine Everett Gilbert, *A History of Esthetics*, rev. ed. (New York: Dover, 1972 [1939]), 321.

[3] Roger Scruton, *Kant: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 79.

[4] Peter Kivy, *New Essays on Musical Understanding* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001), 54–55.

[5] Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 157.

[6] Goehr, *Imaginary Museum*, 169.

> contemplation, they must have the appearance of purposiveness (*Zweckmäßigkeit*) without having an actual purpose (*Zweck*) or socially sanctioned function. These are the criteria that have come under heaviest attack for the way in which they have seemed to divorce art from social concerns.[7]

Whatever Kant may have thought about music personally, as a philosophical move his definitions of aesthetic judgment seem perfectly designed to secure for it both autonomy and, anticipatorily, a status it would come to occupy fully within the aesthetics of Romanticism: a pure, conceptless, and functionless realm of tones, the ultimate embodiment of "art for art's sake."

So much for autonomy. What about formalism in Kant's thought and its relationship to music? According to a recent encyclopedia definition, "form" is "the perceptual elements of an artwork and . . . the relationships holding between them," with "formalism nam[in]g the aesthetic doctrine in which these related (formal) elements are said to be the primary locus of aesthetic value."[8] If we take this definition as our point of reference, there is indeed a sense in which Kant's aesthetics is "formalist." Section 13 of the *Critique of Judgment* tells us plainly (albeit parenthetically) that "beauty should actually concern only form."[9] Lee Rothfarb's uniquely detailed panorama of nineteenth-century formalist music aesthetics situates Kant as the "stimulus and point of departure for the growth of formalism in the nineteenth century."[10]

Yet problems for a robustly formalist interpretation of Kant's aesthetics of music emerge in Rothfarb's discussion. Not the least of these is the extent of Kant's authority when it comes to music. Rothfarb deplores Kant's "lack [of] training and insight. . . . Surely musical formalism requires a more suitable originator than a philosopher who likens the effects of music to the undesired, spreading fragrance of a perfumed handkerchief waved about at social gatherings and to the 'feeling of health produced by intestinal agitation.'"[11] On Kant's

[7] Richard Taruskin, "Is There a Baby in the Bathwater?," *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 63 (2006): 163–85, at 164.

[8] Lucian Krukowski, "Formalism: Conceptual and Historical Overview," in *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics*, ed. Michael Kelly (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 2:213.

[9] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. Werner Pluhar (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1987), 69 (henceforth *CoJ*), orig. pub. as *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, in *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Königlisch Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaft (=Akademie-Ausgabe), vol. 5 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1912–13), 223 (henceforth *KdU*); in what follows all page references to the German original are to the Akademie Ausgabe, vol. 5, page numbers for which are given in the margin of Pluhar's translation as well as in most reputable modern German editions, e.g., *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, ed. Heiner F. Klemme (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 2001).

[10] Lee Rothfarb, "Nineteenth-Century Fortunes of Musical Formalism," *Journal of Music Theory* 55 (2011): 167–220, at 176.

[11] Ibid., 174–75.

conclusion that music is "more a matter of enjoyment than culture" and "like any enjoyment, it needs to be changed fairly often . . . [lest it] mak[e] us weary," Rothfarb remarks despondently that when it came to music, "Kant's sensibilities—not to mention understanding—were regrettably limited."[12]

While such remarks need not undermine the more general philosophical definitions of beauty and taste that Kant's *Critique of Judgment* so carefully lays out, they do prompt a question that will be fundamental to this essay: how should such definitions be applied? If aesthetic concepts are to function in what Goehr (herself following Kant) has called a "regulative" sense, guiding musical behavior and ideals for the particular culture of music in which they are valid,[13] then such regulation cannot occur without the *mediation* of concepts and practices—the translation of abstract, generalized philosophical theses into statements, whether descriptive or prescriptive, about musical values and processes, and the subsequent exemplification of those statements in particular works, genres, styles of performance, and modes of listening. The latter phases of mediation will not be discussed in this article, which does not address the ultimate consequences of Kant's aesthetic theories for musical practice. Nevertheless there is plenty to be said about the initial stages of the application of his thought, both in his own reflections on artistic genres and media (not limited to, and indeed not as limited *as*, his statements on music), and in how they were taken up by musically engaged aestheticians and critics between 1790 and 1810. Indeed the dichotomy of the "pure" and the "applied" (or "dependent") was itself one of Kant's most fundamental conceptual legacies to music-critical discourse in the first decades after the publication of the *Critique of Judgment*.

We thus need, rather urgently, to move beyond taking note of apparent formal homologies or correspondences—what Kivy described as "coincidences (or not)"—and advance a more historically grounded account of how Kant's transformation of philosophical aesthetics affected his contemporaries' views on music, as well as to classify or evaluate these effects. On the question of evaluation in particular, we should beware of seeking too simple a correlation between past discourse about music's value and the music of the past that *we* find valuable today. It is all too easy to take the ideas of Kant, or for that matter a critic such as E. T. A. Hoffmann, as an "explanation" for or vindication of the instrumental music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. Even at the apex of a key creative period within the Western art music canon, we should not disregard the presence of critical voices—writers who were not blind to

[12] Ibid., 175n20.
[13] Goehr, *Imaginary Museum*, 101–6.

what was being achieved around them, but whose moderated or differently articulated appreciation of contemporary instrumental music demonstrates their commitment to priorities other than the "purely" aesthetic. The dynamism of music-aesthetic thought during this era indeed owes partly to an orientation not simply to works of the present but also of the past (via the genesis of musical historicism) and the future (manifested through speculative theories of a future German opera that would bear fruit only in the decades to come).

To gain a sense of the context from which Kantian music aesthetics emerged, we should start with Kant's own philosophical aims, which could be summarized as attempting a new, synthetic account of experience. The connection between experience and judgment was not only crucial to Kant's aesthetics but can be seen as fundamental to the whole system outlined by his three Critiques—the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), the *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788), and the *Critique of Judgment* (1790)—as well as to the tradition of German Idealism that emerged from them. Kant's philosophy steered a carefully charted course between two competing contemporary schools of thought: rationalism, exemplified by René Descartes, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, and (most relevantly to Kant's specific context) the German academic philosopher Christian Wolff; and empiricism, championed by British philosophers such as John Locke and David Hume. Kant's early commitment to rationalism was famously upset by his reading of Hume, whose systematic skepticism "woke me from my dogmatic slumbers," as Kant would later put it.[14]

Yet Kant did not simply abandon the rationalist belief that the most important elements of our knowledge could be worked out *a priori* from first principles, and uncritically embrace the characteristic empiricist commitment to sensory experience. Rather, his insight in the *Critique of Pure Reason* was that experience itself could only be converted into knowledge through the aid of pre-existing "categories" of thought. Our mind was not, as Locke had posited, a blank slate or *tabula rasa*, but it consistently applied *a priori* ordering principles—such as the assumption of causality, or the distinction between an object and its properties—to the phenomena it encountered. Analogously, when it came to the sphere of morality and religion, or "practical reason," the choice did not have to be between, on the one hand, an empiricist, Humean skepticism as to whether God or a soul existed (or even as to whether human beings were capable of acting rationally) and, on the other, the rationalist project of demonstrating the existence of such entities *a priori*, together with all the moral principles they customarily implied. Instead one could—as Hume had dared and the rationalists had not—put the human being front and

[14] Kant, *Prologomena zu einer jeden künftigen Metaphysik*, in *Akademie-Ausgabe*, 4:260.

center in moral philosophy, while tethering human "freedom" to tentatively (or "transcendentally") posited "Ideas" of moral Reason—ideas which, however, could not be definitively proven, God included.

This "transcendental method," as Helmut Kuhn wrote, "resembles the method of an eclecticism," taking up elements scattered across the contemporary philosophical scene, but was "actually less eclectic than it was irenic": through it Kant sought to create an "enduring intellectual peace" between the warring claims of logic and experience.[15] Yet a contradiction loomed within Kant's own philosophy—what Kant himself called an "immense gulf" between the two spheres of human activity represented by his first two Critiques.[16] One produced an outward-directed, scientific knowledge that saw the physical universe in terms of unbroken chains of causation and necessity, while the other valued an inner principle—our freedom to act morally—that seemed inevitably to refuse such explanations. How could the inner and the outer, the sensuously perceptible and the morally just, be reconciled? An important part of Kant's answer, which was to dominate subsequent Romantic and Idealist philosophy, was to locate that reconciliation in aesthetics and art. Crucially for Kant, these are not the same: aesthetics is not merely a "theory of art," for much of the first part of the Third Critique is concerned with the attribution of beauty to natural phenomena. In exploring the application of Kant's aesthetic theory it is important to understand the difference.

The "Critique of Aesthetic Judgment," which forms the first (and most commonly read) part of the Third Critique, begins by striking another balance between rationalism and empiricism, this time regarding the function of judgments of taste. They are neither merely empirical and subjective reactions of pleasure or displeasure, as Hume claimed,[17] nor are they truly a kind of knowledge, albeit one more "confused" than full intellectual knowledge, as the founder of aesthetics, Alexander Baumgarten, proposed under the influence of Wolffian rationalism. Rather, judgments of taste fall short of knowledge by evading the application of cognitive categories, instead reacting to a formal "harmony" of sensations provoked by their object. Although subjectively experienced, aesthetic judgments are implicitly generalized to the experience of all human subjects, who (so the one passing judgment expects) "ought" to judge likewise. In this sense aesthetic judgments share something with the form of moral judgments (which should also be "universalizable" in

[15] Gilbert and Kuhn, *History of Esthetics*, 326–27.

[16] *CoJ*, 14/*KdU*, 175.

[17] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1888), 299: "Beauty is nothing but a form, which conveys pleasure, as deformity is a structure of parts, which conveys pain."

Kant's view), while taking as their content the same sensuous realm of experience as scientific knowledge. They serve, therefore, as a bridge over the "gulf." Such a bridge would remain merely formal or theoretical were it not possible for art to allow us to realize it creatively. Art actually translates "Ideas" of moral reason into symbols that we appreciate sensuously. In so doing, it brings into play all the subjective capacities—imagination, genius, and creativity in the expression of inner experience—that artists and theorists of art in the Romantic and Idealist traditions would continue to value for the next century and more.

These traditions were brought together under the heading of the "aesthetics of experience" (*Erlebnisästhetik*) by one of the leading interpreters, and critics, of Kantian aesthetics in the twentieth century: Hans-Georg Gadamer. Gadamer's reading of Kant, now more than half a century old, remains worthy of study in that it forms the basis for one of the key arguments of *Truth and Method* (1960), his philosophical masterwork. The book's initial aim was to overthrow the lingering nineteenth-century tradition of *Erlebnisästhetik* that had been rooted, according to Gadamer, in Kant's *Critique of Judgment*. In addition to the formidable depth of philosophical understanding evident throughout Gadamer's text, it is precisely the *revisionist* aspect of his critical genealogy for epigonal late-Romantic aesthetic attitudes that should command our attention. In order for Gadamer to lay bare and dismantle the Kantian paradigm, he needed to, and did, know his "enemy" very well indeed.

Yet in situating Kant's *Critique of Judgment* as the point of departure for *Erlebnisästhetik*, Gadamer produces a reading that is at odds with current assessments of Kant's aesthetic significance, such as those of Goehr and Taruskin cited above, which tend to de-emphasize the importance of temporal or socio-cultural context in his thought, as well as in its consequences. When we turn to the application of Kant's concepts of "form" and "autonomy," as traced by Gadamer, it becomes evident that Kant never intended to put forward the formal autonomy of aesthetic judgment as key to the arts, or to his defense of the dignity and significance that art would henceforth possess for modern society. Indeed such an interpretation could be characterized as a wholesale misreading of Kant's argument.

In addition to bringing gains in hermeneutic precision, this rereading of Kant also presents aesthetic-genealogical advantages. The disjunction between the role of art and the essential form of aesthetic judgment that turns out to be central to Kant's theory of artistic experience also grounds his immediate influence, according to Gadamer, over a body of Romantic aesthetics and criticism stretching more or less unbroken from 1790 to the mid-twentieth century. By contrast, one of the weakest aspects of the alternative account of Kant as an artistic

formalist lies in its (often merely suggested) genealogy of twentieth-century formalism. This weakness is particularly noticeable in the accounts given by analytical philosophers of art. Stephen Davies, for instance, sees Kant's "legacy" exemplified primarily in the early years of the twentieth century, by which point "it was widely held"—as a delayed result of Kant's thought, implies Davies—"that aesthetic judgments, including those made about artworks, involve the adoption of an attitude of distanced, disinterested attention that requires the bracketing out of all knowledge or concern with the item's origin, history, kind, function, or possible usefulness."[18] With an analytical philosopher's breezy disregard for historical verisimilitude, Davies is not worried by this gap of more than a century in the enactment of Kant's true "legacy." The gap, however, is more important than he acknowledges.

Not by chance, Davies's remarks occur in a discussion of Kant's theory of "free" and "dependent" beauty, one of the most famously "difficult" parts of Kant's Third Critique, described by Gadamer as a "particularly dangerous [*höchst fatale*] doctrine for the understanding of art."[19] At this crucial moment in the text, Kant begins to pivot from the characterization of aesthetic judgment in itself to a theorization of the arts. The difficulty and "danger" of the theory arise from the seemingly more transcendent descriptions that Kant attaches to the idea of "free" beauty. For Kant free beauty is the embodiment of "pure" judgments of taste. It is in "pure" judgments of taste that we apprehend and evaluate objects solely according to the abstract "harmony" of sensations they produce in us. This makes it feel as though such an object must have been designed with a purpose (*Zweck*) to which all elements of its formal organization are subordinate, even though any specific and merely utilitarian purpose is lacking, or at least disregarded in the resulting aesthetic judgment. "Pure" aesthetic judgments are based entirely on our pleasurable response to the object's formal harmony, not on our conceptual knowledge of what kind of a thing it is and what purpose its attributes serve. The object for us thus has "purposefulness without a purpose" (*Zweckmäßigkeit ohne Zweck*), and our judgment of it possesses aesthetic autonomy (*Autonomie*).[20] These characterizations—in particular adjectives such as "free" and "pure"—might give us the impression that Kant is ascribing an absolute philosophical pre-eminence to free

[18] Stephen Davies, "Aesthetic Judgements, Artworks and Functional Beauty," *Philosophical Quarterly* 56 (2006): 224–241, at 226.

[19] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 41 (henceforth *TM*), orig. pub. as *Wahrheit und Methode: Grundzüge einer philosophischen Hermeneutik*, 2nd ed. (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1965), 42 (henceforth *WM*).

[20] *CoJ*, 224/*KdU*, 350.

beauty over "dependent" beauty, whose appreciation involves a more mixed type of judgment.

This impression is misleading. In the context of Kant's aesthetic theory as a whole, "free beauty" encompasses, first and foremost, natural beauty and the decorative or formal arts (Kant's examples range from flowers and the arabesques of Persian carpets to music "without a theme" or "without text"), whereas the justification of the beauty of the other fine arts, including poetry and figurative painting or sculpture, must appeal instead to "applied" or "impure" judgments of taste, which take concepts and purposes into account. Hence, fine arts such as poetry appear inferior to nature or the decorative arts in terms of the type of judgment they naturally provoke, at least according to the value-associations that adjectives such as "pure" seem to carry. As Gadamer puts it, in this reading "true beauty would be the beauty of flowers and of ornament, which in our world, dominated by ends, present themselves as beauties immediately and of themselves, and hence do not necessitate that any concept or purpose first be consciously disregarded."[21]

This would be somewhat counterintuitive; as Gadamer says, it does not reflect the goal of Kant's theorizing. Rather, the considerations of purpose that rule out certain types of formal beauty as inappropriate—and here Kant presents as examples inappropriately florid architectural details on a church facade and tattoos (which he regards as the improper application of formally beautiful ornamental patterns to the human body)—are a desirable and necessary part of the theory of art, *even though* they interrupt our purely aesthetic pleasure in beautiful forms.[22] It is here, observes Denis Dutton (one of the few analytical aestheticians of recent decades with a genuine appreciation for Kant's dual concept of beauty), that the relationship of beauty to its environment becomes "more problematic and rich, embodying, as Kant reminds us, vanity and corruption, but radiant exaltation as well. . . . The concept of a bare, self-subsistent beauty is ultimately lost in the infinite complexities of art's dependence on its human context."[23]

The point of isolating the "judgment of taste" in its "pure" form is not to uphold "free beauty" as the highest sort of beauty, let alone as the aim of art. Rather, Kant proceeds as he does because of the need to outline with due care his position within the aesthetic debates of the

[21] *TM*, 42, translation altered slightly with reference to *WM*, 43.

[22] *CoJ*, 77/*KdU*, 230; cf. *TM*, 42/*WM*, 43.

[23] Denis Dutton, "Kant and the Conditions of Artistic Beauty," *British Journal of Aesthetics* 34 (1994): 226–239, at 239. See also Helmut Kuhn's similar judgment (Kuhn and Gilbert, *History of Esthetics*, 338) of "how thin this [Kantian principle of 'purposiveness without a purpose'] forces pure beauty to be," and the comparative "gain in richness" or "greater magnitude and importance" of the experience of adherent beauty.

period, specifically, his critique of Wolffian aesthetic rationalism, as represented by Baumgarten. The "pure" judgment of taste is a hypothetical ideal, almost a thought experiment, intended to prove that taste in its pure form cannot be cognitive; its substantial basis is *feeling* in response to form, rather than (as Baumgarten and the rationalists assumed) the cognitive assessment of "perfection" or, in scholastic terms, the "adequacy" of something to its concept. Kant does not wish to remain limited by the terms of this thought experiment for the entire duration of his treatise, however. Rather, "pure" aesthetic judgment reveals itself as incomplete, as requiring a more mixed judgment that includes a moral or extra-aesthetic component to engage the full measure of our receptive powers, our imagination in particular. As Gadamer proposes: "This imaginative productivity is not richest where it is merely free, however, as in the convolutions of the arabesque," but where a concept exists for the object of our contemplation, without thereby exhausting the object's potential to engage us.[24] This balance of determination and nondetermination is the "ideal of beauty" (*Ideal der Schönheit*),[25] and it is the token of Kant's debt to the classicism of J. J. Winckelmann and G. E. Lessing that he finds this exemplified to the highest degree in the human form.[26]

The beauty of the human marks the transition in Kant's theory from the account of our purely sensuous engagement with beauty to our awareness of its higher possibilities, including the specific worth of artworks. This transition also carries the argument away from free beauty, which, as Dutton notes, "virtually drops from sight" in the later sections of the "Critique of Aesthetic Judgment," and toward an elaboration of "dependent" beauty.[27] The appearance of a human being corresponds to a definite concept, as an arabesque does not; but it also has the capacity to express "moral attributes," which transcend concepts. The difference between a house, or a cow, and a person is that the beholder has only a cognitive concept of the first two, one sufficient to enable their insertion into a certain category in an outer picture of the world; the last, however, stimulates a transcendental awareness (*Vernunft*) of the inner moral and spiritual universe shared by the beholder and the person beheld.

In sum, that is why we can gaze longer into the eyes of another human than into the eyes of a cat. The paradigm of the "ideal of beauty" is human precisely because the human is more than purely "natural" or exterior—its outer appearance suggests inner content. In this respect it resembles art, whose task must also be to represent the realm of inner or

[24] *TM*, 43/*WM*, 43.
[25] *CoJ*, 79/*KdU*, 231.
[26] *TM*, 44/*WM*, 44.
[27] Dutton, "Kant and the Conditions of Artistic Beauty," 238.

"moral" ideas. Kant believes, as Hegel would later put it, that the essence of art is to "confront the human being with himself"—a notion that would remain significant to later Idealist thinkers down to Benedetto Croce, even when (like Hegel) they ceased to believe that art could play the key role in such self-reflection.[28] For Kant, other kinds of art, such as landscape painting, can borrow "moral ideas" through a process of projection or anthropomorphism, but only in the human form are moral ideas and aesthetic content completely congruent.[29] Kant's position on art is not aesthetic formalism, but aesthetic humanism.

This might still suggest a rather limited conception of the kinds of artworks that could fulfill Kant's requirements for the representation of "ideas"—principally sculpture busts and portraits, one imagines. But this apparent limitation neglects the transformation of mimesis or artistic representation that occurs when Kant identifies the "moral," inner, or transcendental aspects of human beings as more profoundly deserving of representation than their outer appearance. Such aspects can be best approached through analogies or other imaginative channels to which, as Kant's disciple Schiller would later claim, poetry has more direct access than the visual arts.[30] The starting point for a deeper theory of mimesis, this inwardness produces Kant's notorious category of "aesthetic ideas": objects of representation that are neither real objects nor concepts and thus exceed both realism and allegory. There is no technique for successfully portraying aesthetic ideas; they can only be conveyed through genius, the highest human capacity called on by art.[31]

The relative status of the arts is dependent on the scope and support they provide for genius in its penetration into the inner realm of aesthetic ideas; it does not depend on the outer scaffolding of realistic images or concepts. This is why Kant announces at the beginning of his "Comparison of the relative aesthetic value of the fine arts" (*Critique of Judgment*, §53): "Among all [the arts], poetry (which owes its birth almost entirely to genius and is the least guided by prescriptions or examples) claims the highest rank."[32] In this judgment Kant was hardly original, but he was consistent. The worth of poetry, as the "highest" of the arts, rests neither on its formal composition nor on its aesthetic autonomy, but on its ability to create and exhibit beauty as what Kant

[28] *TM*, 45/*WM*, 45, cited in Hegel, *Vorlesungen über Ästhetik*, 57.
[29] *TM*, 45/*WM*, 45.
[30] Schiller, "Rezension der Gedichte Matthisons," *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung* 298 (1794): cols. 665–80 at col. 671. "The plastic artist makes the outer man into his object, the poet the inner man."
[31] *CoJ*, 182–85/*KdU*, 314–16; cf. *TM*, 48–49/*WM*, 49.
[32] *CoJ*, 196/*KdU*, 326.

calls, in the final pages of the "Critique of Aesthetic Judgment," a "symbol of morality" (*Symbol der Sittlichkeit*).[33]

Pace Davies, judging artworks in Kant's view *is* typically a matter of knowing something about their "origin . . . , kind, function, or possible usefulness."[34] Concepts such as *Zweck*, *Begriff*, and *Idee*, which form part of the reception of "dependent beauty," collectively embrace all these categories and more. (I have left "history" out of Davies's original list, but the historical dimension in artistic judgment will return in my discussion of Kantian music journalism.) Highlighting this point's significance in relation to the value of music, Andy Hamilton correctly perceives that Kant is not truly a formalist aesthetician; he is rather "an *anti-formalist* about many artforms other than instrumental music. . . . Kant is a formalist about music [only] because he denigrates the art as a free artificial beauty which lacks aesthetic ideas."[35]

Still more precisely, what matters in understanding the application of Kant's doctrine of "free" and "dependent" beauty to music is that even in Kant's own theory, music itself cannot wholly be assigned to one category or the other. Kant mentions "what in music are called fantasias (without a theme)" as potential embodiments of "free beauty" but implies that, or leaves it for us to decide whether, other genres might require more "dependent" judgments.[36] Far from being a failure of his system, this indecision is a fertile point of ambiguity. It is both an honest acknowledgment of his own limits as a musical connoisseur (q.v. Rothfarb) and an invitation to the extension and application of his aesthetic theory within criticism.

In the decade after Kant's Third Critique, this invitation was taken up by three music critics: Kant's friend J. F. Reichardt, described with some justification by Helmut Kirchmeyer as "to all intents the first Kantian music journalist";[37] the anonymous author of the article series "Remarks on the Development of the Art of Music in Germany in the Eighteenth Century," published in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*; and the erstwhile philosophy lecturer C. F. Michaelis, another prolific contributor to the same journal. Of particular interest in these writings is how Kantian innovations such as the distinction between free and dependent beauty relativize musical autonomy and "formalist" aesthetic values, allowing them a carefully delimited role in a larger critical system whose ultimate concerns are often social, historical, or political. Judgments of free and

[33] *CoJ*, 225–30/*KdU*, 351–54.
[34] Davies, "Aesthetic Judgements, Artworks and Functional Beauty," 226.
[35] Andy Hamilton, *Aesthetics and Music* (London: Continuum, 2007), 72.
[36] *CoJ*, 77/*KdU*, 229.
[37] Helmut Kirchmeyer, *Situationsgeschichte der Musikkritik und des musikalischen Pressewesens in Deutschland, II. Teil: System- und Methodengeschichte* (Regensburg: Bosse, 1985), xvi.

dependent beauty relate to particular types of work (categorized in terms of vocal or instrumental music, church music, opera, song, and other genres, or in terms of historical style). They demand differing levels of critical expertise. They could also be applied within differing schools of aesthetics and criticism. Kantian aesthetics, certainly in its application by Schiller and his successors, is normally thought of as classical as well as Idealist. Yet given the rise of Romantic aesthetics in both music and literature from the 1790s on, tracing the continuing influence of Kant's ideas also involves understanding how they were (re)interpreted from a Romantic standpoint.

Kant's friend and fellow Königsberger, J. F. Reichardt, was one of the most important North German composers of the late-eighteenth century and one of the most prolific critics of the period. As his biographer Walter Salmen describes him, Reichardt "was not a musician afraid of talking or writing about art and about his own composing; on the contrary, he demanded on principle the increased training of 'thinking and researching German musicians,'" a demand gradually satisfied by the expansion of informed critical engagement with music over his own lifetime, which laid the groundwork for figures such as Hoffmann, Schumann, and Wagner.[38] Dispersed throughout his numerous writings are reflections on aesthetics, which already to Paul Sieber in 1930, in the earliest study of Reichardt's aesthetic views, revealed a fairly consistent attitude.[39] Its foundations are "sentimentalist," part of a new wave of *Empfindsamkeit* across the arts. In resisting the music-theory-oriented and highly professionalized critical standards that had set the tone for the new music criticism of the mid-eighteenth century, Reichardt appealed to "feeling" (*Gefühl*), taste, and genius rather than to "correctness" or the satisfaction of rules. Mary Sue Morrow adduces a 1783 judgment on Reichardt's critical style that demonstrates traditional critics' objections to such a reliance on "feeling": "references to his [Reichardt's] own feelings simply do not help when he is discussing musical works, because the reader cannot possibly experience those feelings in the same way."[40]

This skepticism toward critical subjectivity and the possibility of a *sensus communis* hints at a clear distance from Kantian principles. By contrast, in Reichardt's argument "feeling" forms a true, if still incomplete, part of the process of aesthetic judgment as described by Kant, which

[38] Walter Salmen, *Johann Friedrich Reichardt: Komponist, Schriftsteller, Kapellmeister und Verwaltungsbeamter der Goethezeit*, 2nd ed. (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 2002), 189.

[39] Paul Sieber, *Johann Friedrich Reichardt als Musikästhetiker: Seine Anschauungen über Wesen und Wirkung der Musik* (Baden-Baden: Valentin Koerner, 1971 [1930]).

[40] *Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek* 53 (1783), 142, quoted in Morrow, *German Music Criticism in the Late Eighteenth Century: Aesthetic Issues in Instrumental Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 24.

must begin from the individual's felt response to an object. As Sieber summarizes, "feeling has for Reichardt primacy among the 'faculties of the soul'. . . . Feeling also passes judgment, according to Reichardt, on what is beautiful and what is not beautiful."[41] Yet as Salmen points out in his biography, Reichardt "stayed aloof from such extreme . . . demands and one-sided [formulations]" as Rousseau's aphorism, "sentiment is [worth] more than reason": "feeling" has priority for Reichardt, but it is not made absolute, since it typically requires "reflection and experience" to temper it.[42] Reichardt's approach thus possessed an inherent degree of compatibility with Kant's.

It is not surprising to learn, then, that Reichardt was so enthused by Kant's support of a similarly non-rationalist philosophy of taste in the *Critique of Judgment* that only a year after its publication he announced his intention to write a systematic tract on music aesthetics that would apply Kant's theory.[43] Kant seems to have had confidence in his friend's understanding of the framework underlying his aesthetics; in a letter of 15 October 1790, Kant encouraged Reichardt to apply his aesthetic principles to the arts, no doubt including music: "It would please me if the principles I have outlined of the power of taste, which is so difficult to fathom, could take on greater definition and detail in the hands of such an expert [*Kenner*] in that power [as yourself]."[44]

Reichardt never fulfilled his published intention to produce a systematic work in aesthetics. In the same breath as the promise, he added excuses for why it would not be soon forthcoming.[45] Yet his failure in this regard may not have owed primarily to the "limitations of his intellectual powers," as Salmen rather acidly phrases it, but to what Salmen more charitably identifies as an intuitive and praxis-oriented tendency: "where Reichardt can proceed from a concrete example, he speaks 'clearly and distinctly,' but where he by contrast speculates without an intuitive grasp [of the subject], he is often only the translator of borrowed ideas, or instead imprecise and formally unsatisfying."[46]

[41] Sieber, *Reichardt als Musikästhetiker*, 69.

[42] Salmen, *Johann Friedrich Reichardt*, 193–94, citing Reichardt, "Zweyter Brief, an Herrn Sch. Kr. in K." in *Briefe eines aufmerksamen Reisenden, die Musik betreffend* 1 (1774): 32–63, at 35.

[43] J. F. Reichardt, "Fingerzeige für den denkenden und forschenden deutschen Tonkünstler," in *Musikalisches Kunstmagazin* 2 (1791): 87–92, at 87.

[44] *Kants Briefwechsel* (Berlin 1900), 2:213ff., quoted in Salmen, *Johann Friedrich Reichardt*, 190: "Angenehm würde es mir seyn, wenn die Grundzüge, die ich von dem so schwer zu erforschenden Geschmacksvermögen entworfen habe, durch die Hand eines solchen Kenners desselben, mehrere Bestimmtheit und Ausführlichkeit bekommen könnten."

[45] Reichardt, "Fingerzeige," 87: "Man erwarte indeß nicht in den nächsten Messen ein solches Werk von mir . . . ich [werde] mir . . . alle Zeit lassen, die die Wichtigkeit und Vollendung eines solchen Werkes erfordert."

[46] Salmen, *Johann Friedrich Reichardt*, 196n680, 191.

Reichardt's critical virtues and eclectic vices are juxtaposed elsewhere in the same issue of his journal, the *Musikalisches Kunstmagazin*, in which he promised to produce his own work of Kantian aesthetics. The front page featured an extract from the concluding section of Kant's "Critique of Aesthetic Judgment," "On Methodology Concerning Taste," reaffirming Kant's conclusion that "there neither is, nor can be, a science of the beautiful," and therefore that "rules" or any other theoretical element in art must always be subordinated to the "freedom of imagination . . . without which there can be no fine art, *indeed not even a correct taste of one's own by which to judge such art*."[47] Reichardt highlighted the last clause in large type, a clear barb against his journalistic enemies—or more precisely, against the enemies of his favorite modern operatic composer, Christoph Willibald Gluck. In a footnote he explains: this passage "seemed to me to be well placed here in particular for Gluck's unqualified critics who lack imagination";[48] the subsequent essay contains a detailed analysis and defense of Gluck's aria "Misero e che farò?" from the second of his reform operas, *Alceste* (1767), introducing further Kantian citations. If a certain modulation in the aria was too far-flung by textbook standards, it was only because this "trait belongs perhaps with those which—as Kant puts it so well—the genius must leave to stand as a deformity only because it could not be removed without weakening the idea."[49]

Reichardt's simultaneous acceptance of bold infringements of theoretical orthodoxy and his support for musical styles simpler than those upheld by older, anti-reformist Berlin critics (such as J. N. Forkel) derive from a practical appreciation for all those elements—expressive aims, generic context, the demands of text, and performance—that nourished the appreciation of "dependent beauty" as opposed to "free beauty." Reichardt was also ready to censor music that showed no awareness of contextual constraints, in particular sacred music that borrowed indiscriminately from the style of *opera buffa* (paralleling Kant's above-cited remark on inappropriate architectural ornamentation in churches).[50]

[47] Kant, ed. Reichardt, "Von der Methodenlehre des Geschmacks," repr. in *Musikalisches Kunstmagazin* 2 (1791): 65 (emphasis Reichardt's): "Die Freiheit der Einbildungskraft . . . ohne welche keine schöne Kunst, *selbst nicht einmal ein richtiger sie beurteilender eigener Geschmack, möglich ist*" (cf. *CoJ*, 230–31/*KdU*, 354–55).

[48] Reichardt, "Von der Methodenlehre," 65n1: "Diese Stelle schien mir hier besonders für Glucks unberufene Critiker ohne Einbildungskraft an ihrem rechten Orte zu stehen."

[49] Reichardt, "Einige Anmerkungen zu den merkwürdigen Stücken großer Meister im sechsten Stück des Kunstmagazins," *Musikalisches Kunstmagazin* 2 (1791): 66–69, at 67: "Vielleicht gehört dieser Zug auch zu dem, was—wie Kant so treffend sagt—was das Genie als Mißgestalt nur hat zulassen müssen, weil es sich ohne die Idee zu schwächen, nicht wohl wegschaffen ließ" (cf. *CoJ*, 187/*KdU*, 318).

[50] James Garratt, *Palestrina and the German Romantic Imagination: Interpreting Historicism in Nineteenth-Century Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 37.

Yet even "free beauty," without text, representation, or expressive goals, belonged to Reichardt's range of appreciation—in the right context:

> Music is already by itself, as music, a delight, without it imitating feelings and passions. It may not make us sad, happy, or astonished, at all, and yet can tickle our ear in a charming fashion simply through a pleasant miscellany of tones, so that we are delighted. Furthermore it can occupy our intellect through the varied and contrived relationships of tones to one another, through their entanglement and resolution, and thus delight us in a noble manner. Finally it can combine the two. This is the reason why instrumental music alone, even when it does not express a definite emotion, can still give us pleasure. It is also the reason why the amateur [*Liebhaber*] is charmed by the instrumental music of the Mannheim school that tickles the ear pleasantly, and the learned connoisseur [*Kenner*] is pleased by the so-called Berlin style that occupies the intellect; and why the careful combination of the two grants to the genuine, sensitive connoisseur the highest delight of which instrumental music is capable.[51]

The difference from the French operatic pamphlet wars of mid-century, in which critical absolutes abounded (e.g., Diderot's unchained expressivity against the dignity of Lullian declamation or Rousseau's primacy of melody versus Rameau's insistence on harmony), is palpable. Only a philosophical position such as Kant's that refused to endorse either a crudely empirical sensualism or an abstract, rule-bound cognitivism could in the final analysis hold music in the balance.

It remained for other, more systematic thinkers than Reichardt to draw explicitly on Kant's free and dependent beauty, not merely in a dualistic fashion but in order to explore characteristic mixtures of the two categories. This occurred in a long, serially published article of 1801 for the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* (*AmZ*) titled "Remarks on the Development of the Art of Music in Germany in the Eighteenth Century." The article's author has traditionally been identified as J. K. F.

[51] Reichardt, "Neue merkwürdige musikalische Werke", *Musikalisches Kunstmagazin* 1 (1782): 69–87, at 84: "Die Musik ist an sich selbst schon als Musik eine Ergötzung, ohne dass sie Empfindungen und Leidenschaften nachahmt. Sie darf uns eben nicht traurig, lustig, und Erstaunen machen, und kann doch durch ein blosses angenehmes Gemisch von Tönen unser Ohr auf eine liebliche Art kützeln, dass wir ergötzt werden. Sie kann ferner durch ihre mannigfaltige und künstliche Verhältnisse der Töne untereinander, durch die Verwickelung und Auflösung derselben, auf eine angenehme Art unsern Verstand beschäftigen und uns dadurch auf eine edle Art ergötzen. Endlich kann sie beides verbinden. Diss [sic] ist die Ursache, warum wir an blosser Instrumentalmusik, die auch keine bestimmte Leidenschaft ausdrückt, dennoch Vergnügen finden. Diss ist auch die Ursache, dass Mannheimer Instrumentalmusik, die das Ohr angenehm kützelt, dem blossen Liebhaber vorzüglich gefällt, dass sogenannte Berlinische Musik, die den Verstand beschäfftigt, dem gelehrten Kenner vorzüglich gefällt; und dass vernünftige Verbindung von beiden, dem billigen und gefühlvollen Kenner die höchste Ergötzung bei der Instrumentalmusik gewährt."

Triest, but the attribution has been questioned by Christoph Hänggi (to facilitate easier reading I will continue to use Triest's surname, and the reader can supply the implied inverted commas).[52] In Triest's essay the distinction between "pure" and "dependent" judgements of taste becomes an opposition between "pure" and "applied" music. Importantly, this is *not* the same as the distinction between instrumental and vocal music, though those two categories are also frequently invoked. As Triest explains near the outset of his essay, historically,

> every fine art (including music) had a dual definition. It was partly *pure* art (existing for itself), the transformation of sensual material into the free and beautiful play of the imagination; and partly (in keeping with its empirical origins) it was only an aesthetic means to other ends, especially the more beautiful portrayal of one or several individual subjects (their feelings and actions), in which case it was *applied* art.[53]

Carl Dahlhaus points out that Triest's "dichotomy . . . rests . . . on a contamination of Kant's distinction between 'pure' and 'dependent' beauty on the one hand and the division of 'pure' and 'applied' mathematics on the other."[54] Though much instrumental music may be called "pure," and opera would certainly count as "applied" music, Triest notes that there can be a purity—an aspect of "free play"—in choral music where the formal procedures of counterpoint take priority over attention to the meaning of the text, whereas "applied music" may include "characteristic" instrumental pieces, or what would later be called "program" music, composed to portray a specific subject.[55]

Significant in Triest's use of this distinction is not just that the concept of music has been split and doubled, but that these two categories interact in what Triest himself calls an "aesthetic-historical" process. A later name for it would be "dialectic." Not only are there no absolute values, no prioritization of "pure" music over "applied" or vice versa, but the historical development of one category is shown to depend on the development of the other. In the early "miracles of art based on the myths

[52] Christoph Hänggi points out that both the article "Bemerkungen über die Ausbildung der Tonkunst in Deutschland" and another *AmZ* article it mentions as by the same author are printed anonymously, and that Triest's name was most likely printed by mistake, or in the wrong place, in the journal's *Autorenregister* for that year. To date this has been the sole source of the attribution: see *G. L. P. Sievers und seine Schriften: Eine Geschichte der romantischen Musikästhetik* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1993), 129–30.

[53] Johann Karl Friedrich Triest, trans. Susan Gillespie, "Remarks on the Development of the Art of Music in Germany in the Eighteenth Century," in *Haydn and His World*, ed. Elaine Sisman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 321–94, at 324.

[54] Carl Dahlhaus, "Zur Entstehung der romantischen Bach-Deutung," in *Klassische und romantische Musikästhetik* (Laaber: Laaber-Verlag, 1988), 121–40, at 129.

[55] Triest, "Remarks," 387n1.

of Antiquity" (i.e., Greek drama) music "had value . . . only as an applied art," and "quite a long time was required before it began to be practiced as a pure art . . . without reference to a text." For pure music to acquire value, music would have to develop its technical side, or what Triest calls its "mechanism," and it "would not have done so without the well-known cultural decline that plunged the sciences and arts into a long night"—in other words, the Middle Ages. This technical development involved the invention of harmony and counterpoint, which "did not spring from the senses, but rather from the understanding [or intellect, *Verstand*]." Thus "as a pure art . . . music made quite good progress. . . . All of music's art and erudition were united in harmony, and a knowledge of counterpoint was the single and greatest thing . . . [necessary] to attract the admiration of other artists."[56] German music at the end of the seventeenth century was, Triest claimed, dominated by the strict technique of "pure" church music.

This would soon change with the advent of the lighter *galant* style, represented by a generation of musicians around the middle of the eighteenth century, still remembered with respect, if categorized as outdated, when Triest wrote: Johann Adolf Hasse, Carl Heinrich Graun, and Georg Benda. Their speciality was opera, or "applied" music, and through the "more beautiful and graceful shape" they gave German music, they acquired a more "widespread following" than "could ever be inspired by an artist whose . . . brilliance shines in pure music." Through this development, but also through a number of material factors such as the development of the musical press and the declining remuneration of church musicians (Triest's "ideal" overview does not preclude attention to economics and technology), theatrical ideals of tuneful melody, dramatic buoyancy, and ease of communication came to dominate all areas of musical culture, even music in church (though Triest clearly disapproves of this).[57]

Finally, in the third phase of German eighteenth-century musical history "pure" instrumental music again won the initiative in the exemplary works of Haydn. But this more modern instrumental music differed from that of the early eighteenth century, as is revealed by the Kantian terms in which Triest describes it. Its "greatest effect" is in mimicking the "specific feelings and ideas" that are presented by vocal music, stimulating the listener's imagination into supplying them. The specificity of "applied" music is transferred to "pure" music by a union of "mastery of the tonal mechanism" (covering not only formal skill but expressive knowledge of the "natural character" of musical materials) with the "free

[56] All quotations in this paragraph from Triest, "Remarks," 323–27.
[57] All quotations in this paragraph from ibid., 338–39, 352.

play" of the listener's imagination. The "thoroughness of the first period" was combined with the "songfulness of the second."[58]

It is tempting to see this as anticipating a typical triumphalist Hegelian schema that culminates in the "classical style." But this does not appear to be Triest's view. Triest's third period is characterized above all by "fermentation," not culmination: "it seems to me equally foolish to speak of the decline of an art *per se* as to claim that it has reached its loftiest peak."[59] Nor does the Viennese school acquire its status by restoring the structural complexity and discipline of Johann Sebastian Bach after the trough of formulaic superficiality represented by *galant* composition. Triest's avoidance of this twentieth-century cliché is worth stressing.[60]

Although Triest praises Bach in enthusiastic terms as having gone beyond "everything that Italy, France, and England had done for pure music" and given "posterity examples [of learned works] that to this day have not been surpassed," he "do[es] not claim that J. S. Bach did everything there was to do for music." For in Triest's view, not dissimilar to Reichardt's, Bach's "accomplishments really only embrace pure music, i.e., the mechanism of music, especially harmony and the strict style." Rather than discussing his genius in expressive terms, Triest not only writes of Bach's bent for musical "inquiry" (rather than invention or expression), but also refers to his "Newtonian spirit," his position as "the legislator of genuine harmony."[61] Bach is closer to being a *scientific* genius than an artistic, or "poetic," genius (in our terms, that is; Kant for his part denied that genius was possible in science, even for a Newton, as Triest would presumably have been aware).[62]

It was the second phase of the century, the generation of Hasse, Graun, Benda, and particularly C. P. E. Bach, that "made it possible for music, which *until then had been almost only mechanical*, to claim to be a fine art."[63] Absolute command of music's "mechanism" may make a man of J. S. Bach's talents "seem like a magician to whom one tends to ascribe supernatural powers," but this command does not produce music in the fully modern artistic or expressive sense, a music that embodies "aesthetic ideas." Only with C. P. E. Bach's aestheticization and subjectivization of "pure" instrumental music did the achievements of the late eighteenth century, of Haydn and Mozart, become possible.

[58] Ibid., 369–70.

[59] Ibid., 357, 384.

[60] Charles Rosen, for instance, cites Triest in support of his conventional interpretation of the eighteenth-century canon; see "From the Troubadours to Sinatra: Part II," review of Richard Taruskin, *Oxford History of Western Music*, in *New York Review of Books*, 9 March 2006, note 1.

[61] Triest, "Remarks," 334–35.

[62] Cf. Kant, *CoJ*, 176–77/*KdU*, 308–9.

[63] Triest, "Remarks," 337 (my emphasis).

Triest thus recognizes that, as Melanie Wald-Fuhrmann has put it, instrumental music was the "innovatory form par excellence of musical development" at the time, one that favored German talents.[64] Nevertheless, there is no concomitant implication that "for Triest instrumental music appears to be . . . the 'real' music," as Dahlhaus one-sidedly claimed.[65] By positing this, Dahlhaus shows a significant failure to grasp the ontological intent of Triest's argument. There *is* no "real" music for Triest: no single definition that does justice to all its possibilities, no priority of instrumental music over vocal music, no elevation of "pure" art over "applied" art.

On the contrary, Triest is concerned that the one-sided development of instrumental forms and techniques was causing the neglect of song. The cultivation of song he says, is "the most important need now confronting the practical art of music for us in Germany," and he immediately diagnoses the lack of a culture of song as a symptom both of a pedagogical failing in German schools and, more importantly, of the "extremely oppressive" gap between the "lower and higher estates." (Instrumental music's progress had largely been funded, and appreciated, by upper-class audiences, while the broader-based popularity of lieder was offset by a lack of artistic prestige.) This was the class structure on which the historical development of eighteenth-century music had rested, and which had only been "ameliorated . . . in the last decade of the previous century," a thinly disguised reference to the Europe-wide resonances of the French Revolution.[66] It is tempting to speculate that the boldness of this political diagnosis in itself may have mandated the author's choice to remain anonymous. What is certain is that in Triest's assessment there is no space for political or cultural complacency—though there is ample room, opened by his "aesthetic-historical" mode of applying Kant, for consideration of the social, political, and historical factors long supposed to have been excluded by the Kantian aesthetic framework.

The last of our trio of music journalists, publishing both in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* alongside Triest and in Reichardt's *Berlinische Musikalische Zeitung*, C. F. Michaelis is also the most prolific and important Kantian aesthetician of music considered here. Occasional disparaging judgments notwithstanding (such as John Neubauer's reference to his "poor attempts at popularization" of Kant),[67] modern scholars have seen in Michaelis one of the most significant expressions of

[64] Melanie Wald-Fuhrmann, *"Ein Mittel wider sich selbst": Melancholie in der Instrumentalmusik um 1800* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2010), 56.

[65] Dahlhaus, "Zur Entstehung der romantischen Bach-Deutung," 129.

[66] Triest, "Remarks," 378.

[67] John Neubauer, *The Emancipation of Music from Language: Departures from Mimesis in Eighteenth-Century Aesthetics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 191.

music-aesthetic thinking around the turn of the eighteenth century, including the era's Kantianism. Just as with Dahlhaus's interpretation of Triest, however, German scholars in the wake of Dahlhaus, such as Wilhem Seidel and Lothar Schmidt, have also tried retrospectively to enlist Michaelis in support of "the idea of absolute music."

In his 1795 essay "On the Spirit of Musical Art, with Reference to Kant's *Critique of Judgment*," Michaelis would appear to be a reasonably faithful transcriber of Kant's music aesthetics, right down to Kant's negative assessments of music as more a "pleasant" than a "fine" art.[68] He was forced onto the defensive, however, by an attack advanced in the very first article of the first issue of the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* by its editor, Friedrich Rochlitz, who upheld music's honor as one of the fine arts.[69] By 1804, although Michaelis still considers it worth setting down Kant's view on music's aesthetic status, he immediately adds: "this last opinion has rightly been contested by recent aestheticians. . . . That music bestows the least culture among the other arts its devotees will not concede so easily to the philosopher from Königsberg, and astute men of recent times have shown the baselessness of this disparagement of music."[70]

According to Schmidt and Seidel, Michaelis's apparent "turn" of the early 1800s established music's fine art status through a radically increased objectivism that stressed the autonomy of the musical work and the formal self-sufficiency of instrumental music. For Schmidt, in the "closely related group . . . of texts from the years 1805 to 1807 . . . Michaelis goes decisively beyond his [1795] treatise . . . and formulates his concept of the musical artwork's 'autonomously perfected form' [*in sich vollendeten Form*]"; all these essays "have an anchor in the issue of the conditions of music as a fine art, which is oriented more and more toward the problem of the nature of musical compositions as works [*Werkcharakter*] . . . . In the center of [these] considerations stands . . . instrumental music."[71] For Seidel, Michaelis stays within the orbit of Kantian philosophy but tries to overcome its subjectivist tendencies: he "attempts to do justice, within Kant's subject-oriented system, to musical-artistic objects. . . . As great as Michaelis's respect for Kant's philosophy is, for him what matters is the criticism of musical works, not of musical taste."[72] Finally, claims Seidel,

[68] "Ueber den Geist der Tonkunst, mit Rücksicht auf Kants Kritik der ästhetischen Urteilskraft: Ein ästhetischer Versuch" (1795), repr. in Christian Friedrich Michaelis, *Ueber den Geist der Tonkunst und andere Schriften*, ed. Lothar Schmidt (Chemnitz: Gudrun Schröder, 1997), 1–70 (henceforth *UGT*).

[69] Hänggi, *G. L. P. Sievers*, 115.

[70] Michaelis, *AmZ* 6 (1803/4): 767ff., quoted in Hänggi, *G. L. P. Sievers*, 127.

[71] Schmidt, "Nachwort" to Michaelis, *UGT*, 302–3.

[72] Wilhelm Seidel, "Zwischen Immanuel Kant und der musikalischen Klassik: Die Ästhetik des musikalischen Kunstwerks um 1800," in *Das musikalische Kunstwerk: Festschrift*

> Michaelis struggles through to the insight . . . that a truly work centered music only revolves about itself, has no other subject than its musical theme, and nothing else to do but unfold, develop, and vary this [theme] according to the laws of organic form. "We do not regard," he writes, "the tones of music in most cases as signs, but immediately enjoy the harmonic play of their variety". . . . The work . . . must convince us "by itself, without any further relationship or significance."[73]

From Seidel's quotations alone it would appear difficult to contradict the argument that Michaelis indeed espouses here a proto-Hanslickian formalist aesthetic of "absolute music" and can scarcely have shared the interpretation of Kant I have furnished above.

Read in context, however, Michaelis's arguments are not only less formalist, but more nuanced, relativist, and logically coherent over the span of his career than Schmidt and Seidel admit. His 1795 treatise is already original in its interpretation of Kant, and although it repeats his deprecations of music at some points (thus inviting Rochlitz's ire), it challenges them at others. The confusion this causes for modern scholarship is evident in Georg Mohr's assessment of Michaelis's work.[74] While Mohr praises Michaelis's "progressive" views on the formal autonomy of the work, he cannot understand why in other passages Michaelis invests so heavily in the vocabulary of affect and expression, as if Michaelis somehow implies that "music is not about music, but about the correct manipulation of and sensitivity to affect." In conclusion Mohr offers only the limp query: "But what does that have to do with music?" Yet if affective considerations are included within music and its value, as the Kantian concept of dependent beauty makes possible, then there is no contradiction here. One only arises through the assumption that Michaelis is operating within a twentieth-century formalist aesthetic framework, based wholly on autonomous judgments of free beauty. In accusing Michaelis of being "highly unhistorical, uncultural [*unkulturell*], and . . . uncritical," Mohr reveals his own aesthetic prejudices.[75]

Such difficulties can largely be resolved by positing that Michaelis, like Triest, has a fully dual conception of music. Music's formal autonomy is only one side of the coin; the other side is its expressive, imaginative, and "characteristic" effects. The whole coin has value, not one side or the other. In chapter 6 of his 1795 treatise, Michaelis gives

Carl Dahlhaus zum 60. Geburtstag, ed. Hermann Danuser et al. (Laaber: Laaber-Verlag, 1988), 67–84, at 76.

[73] Seidel, "Zwischen Immanuel Kant und der musikalischen Klassik," 79.

[74] Georg Mohr, "'Die Musik ist eine Kunst des "innern Sinnes" und der "Einbildungskraft"': Affekt, Form und Reflexion bei Christian Friedrich Michaelis," in *Musikphilosophie*, ed. Ulrich Tadday (Munich: Richard Boorberg Verlag, 2007), 137–51.

[75] Mohr, "Affekt, Form und Reflexion," 150–51.

a double definition of music: first in light of its "characteristic effects" (*eigenthümlichen Wirkungen*), and then in its "inner essence" (*inneres Wesen*). From the first point of view, music is defined as "the art of exciting aesthetic sensations directly, and aesthetic ideas indirectly."[76] Viewed "from the side of its inner essence," however, music "consists in modified presentations of audible nature, fixed in form and material according to the law of unity in multiplicity"—a view that, if taken by itself and *only* if taken by itself, is considerably closer to that of Hanslick as well as of much twentieth-century aesthetics.[77]

It is this "inner essence" to which the title of Michaelis's 1806 essay explicitly refers: "Ein Versuch, das innere Wesen der Tonkunst zu entwickeln" (An attempt to develop the inner essence of the art of music), whose more emphatically formalist language Schmidt and Seidel take as key evidence for Michaelis's turn away from eighteenth-century psychological aesthetics. "The traditional justification for music in the aesthetics of effect is thereby given up," claims Schmidt.[78] Yet Michaelis is not giving anything up; he is simply re-engraving one side of the coin, "developing" the idea of music's inner "system" (another possible, and perhaps less prejudicial, translation for *Wesen*) rather than its expressive significance, which is developed more fully in other essays.

The tone in this essay is not polemical but defensive and relativist. There are many genres of music whose value does not seem to be fully accounted for by hearing them according to the aesthetics of expression. Just after the first sentence quoted by Seidel above, Michaelis writes:

> One would have to dismiss pieces of music prized by many people, for instance, many worthy fugues, if one were always to demand a definite expression, a meaning. . . . What they certainly should represent, or allow one to perceive and feel . . . is the beautiful or the sublime, and the noble, or what results from the union of these; this alone pleases in and through itself without any further relationship and significance.

Seidel took the second phrase he quoted out of context and attributed it misleadingly to the musical work. But Michaelis is actually talking about subjective, if not directly emotional, aesthetic effects (the beautiful, the sublime, and as in Reichardt's description of learned instrumental music, the "noble"). He is thus making a rather different point. Michaelis continues:

[76] *UGT*, 28.
[77] Ibid.
[78] Schmidt, "Nachwort," 310. Bonds has characterized Michaelis's position more moderately as "soft formalism" (*Absolute Music: The History of an Idea* [New York: Oxford University Press, 2014], 101), but it is unclear why the "formalist" label has to be applied at all, given Michaelis's even-handedness in dealing with form and expression.

> Music can do this and also still be *characteristic*, and its power is then all the greater. Characteristic, pathos-laden music maintains its great worth; the more truthful its expression is, the more surely it seizes hold of our imagination and our hearts. But one may not, I believe, demand in every music, as something essential, the expression of affects, passions, and inner moods.[79]

In other words, different kinds of music require different kinds of aesthetic judgment—and before passing judgment, it is necessary to know to what genre of music a piece belongs. The Kantian concept of dependent beauty, involving assessments not just of artistic propriety and context but of the artist's possible intentions, is fundamental for Michaelis. These contextual assessments are the core of musical connoisseurship:

> Our judgment of musical beauty can . . . be determined in two ways: either we pay . . . no attention to the inner purpose of a composition, and judge the music as free, unconditioned beauty, as if it were a beauty of nature . . . or on the contrary we judge the music according to the idea of its particular significance, consequently as a particular piece [or genre] of music. . . . We can thus grant our approval to a musical work from one perspective and deny it from the other. . . . We might concede, for example, the beauty of a musical work or individual movements and passages in it; it is just that as funeral music we do not find the composition beautiful, or that the individual movements and passages are not beautiful when performed in church. . . . Many disagreements over the evaluation of works of art and in particular of music can be resolved if one distinguishes the *beautiful in itself* from the *beautiful of its kind*. . . . Judgments of free beauty . . . presuppose no more than taste, that is, feeling for beauty in general; but judgments of dependent beauty (which is true artistic beauty as such) require in addition to taste also knowledge of the specificity and inner purpose of the object presented, and at the same time consideration of the idea and intention of the artist, or, in a word: knowledge of art [*Kunstkenntniß*]. Hence the difference between the judgments of mere amateurs and those of true connoisseurs of music.[80]

[79] *UGT*, 252: "Man müsste vieler geschätzten Musik, z. B. vielen trefflichen Fugen, das Urtheil sprechen, wenn man nur stets einen bestimmten Ausdruck, eine Bedeutung, die sich auf Begriffe bringen liesse, von der Musik verlangen wollte. Was sie allemal darstellen, oder an ihrer Darstellung wahrnehmen und fühlen lassen soll, ist das Schöne oder das Erhabene, und das Edle, was aus der vereinigung beider entspringt; allein eben diess gefällt in und durch sich selbst ohne weitere Beziehung und Bedeutung. Hierbei kann die Musik immer auch *charakteristisch* seyn, und ihre Kraft ist dann nur um so mächtiger. Die charakteristische pathetische Musik behält ihren hohen Werth; je wahrhafter ihr Ausdruck ist, um so sicherer bemächtigt sie sich unsrer Einbildungskraft und unsers Herzens. Aber man darf, glaub' ich, nicht von jeder Musik den Ausdruck von Affekten, Leidenschaften oder Gemüthsstimmungen als wesentlich verlangen."

[80] *UGT*, 18–20: "Unser Urtheil über musikalische Schönheit kann . . . auf doppelte Weise bestimmt seyn: entweder wir nehmen auf . . . keinen innern Zweck einer Komposition

The question becomes, then, what kinds of music suppose as their "inner purpose" a greater attention to and valuation of the music's form, and the effects of beauty or sublimity attaching directly to form, rather than effects mediated by affect or character? Hanslickian aesthetics, the remarks quoted earlier from Reichardt, or Michaelis's own mention of fugues might lead us to think that the paradigm here must be instrumental music. But that would be inaccurate. Rather, like Triest's division of "pure" and "applied" music, Michaelis—who instead favors an opposition of "objective" and "subjective" styles—sees the issue historically. His is an opposition of an earlier (*antike*), ecclesiastical choral style, in which "the imagination . . . is under the control of the intellect," to a more recent *galant*, operatic-theatrical style, which "reveals itself more in the free play of fantasy . . . the presentation and excitement of individual feelings. . . . It is more favourable to instrumental than to vocal music."[81]

Michaelis's dualism was not *entirely* even-handed, of course. In context, his intention—divergent from, though complementary to, Reichardt's—was primarily to defend the old, strict style against the encroachments of the new.[82] But this was in the spirit of restoring a balance—a balance also struck within the best works of recent music, which for Michaelis meant Haydn and Mozart:

> If the old [composers] sometimes went too far and produced, through their over-extended contrapuntal exactitude in canonic treatments, something constrained and rigid in their work, something bordering more on architecture than on free poetry, then some modern composers in the sentimental, romantic, and humoristic style fall often instead

Rücksicht, und beurtheilen die Musik als freie, unbedingt Schönheit, gleichsam als Naturschönheit . . . oder wir beurtheilen dagegen die Musik unter dem Begriffe von ihrer bestimmten Bedeutung, mithin als ein bestimmtes Tonstück. . . . Wir können daher einer Musik von einer Seite unsern Beifall geben, von der andern aber versagen. . . . Wir gestehen z. B. die Schönheit einer Musik oder einzelner Sätze und Gänge derselben ein; nur als Trauermusik finden wir die Komposition, nur in einem Kirchenstück angebracht, finden wir die einzelnen Sätze und Gänge nicht schön. . . . Manche Uneinigkeit in Beurtheilung ästhetischer und insbesonder musikalischer Werke läβt sich heben, wenn man das *an sich Schöne* von dem *in seiner Art Schönen* unterscheidet. . . . Die Beurtheilung freier Schönheit . . . setzt nur Geschmack, d.h. schlechthin Gefühl furs Schöne, voraus; aber die Beurtheilung der bedingten Schönheit (der eigentlichen Kunstschönheit als solcher) erfordert auβer dem Geschmack Kenntniβ der Bestimmung, des innern Zwecks des dargestellten Gegenstandes, und zugleich Rücksicht auf die Idee und Absicht des Künstlers, mit Einem Wort: *Kunstkenntniβ*. Daher die Verschiedenheit zwischen Urtheilen *bloβer Liebhaber* und *wirklicher Kenner* der Musik."

[81] Michaelis, "Über die Kritik musikalischer Werke, nebst beyläufigen Bemerkungen über die letzteren" (1819), in *UGT*, 284, note.

[82] Concert programming practice in this period, we should recall, was dominated by new rather than old music, as would cease to be the case half a century later; see William Weber, *The Great Transformation of Musical Taste: Concert Programming from Haydn to Brahms* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), ch. 6.

> into the other extreme, whereby their musical works lose the [earlier] stiff quality but at the same time often all aesthetic poise and comprehensibility along with it. Joseph Haydn and Mozart will forever be models among modern instrumental composers in this respect. . . . We find in their best works simplicity without monotony, naturalness despite artifice, expression despite moderation . . . and a power that does not try to inundate [the listener].[83]

A classical aesthetic for a classical style, then? There are indeed good reasons for calling Michaelis a "classical" aesthetic thinker. But it would be a misrepresentation of his thought to imagine his ideal of music as rising above history instead of resulting from a hard-won mediation of the aesthetics of past and present. All composing and all reception of music occurs in a time and a place, and gives expression to that time and place:

> Even great composers who lived through several changing periods of taste have more or less followed the spirit of the age [*Zeitgeist*], and their more recent works were not very similar . . . to their earlier ones. Thus does the spirit of a nation, and of all its periods of taste, express itself in the manner in which its most significant and beloved composers treat music, and [in the manner in which] they are received by their audience.[84]

Finally, Michaelis had to acknowledge that the *Zeitgeist* of German musical culture was changing. He himself had absorbed some of the philosophical ideas of the post-Kantian generation, hearing Fichte and Schiller's lectures in Jena, and the poetry and philosophy of Jena Romanticism was leaving its mark everywhere on the critical idiom of the 1790s and 1800s. As powerful as the new rhetoric of Romanticism was, however, it did not overpower the overall concern with dualism

[83] Michaelis, "Allgemeine ästhetische Bemerkungen, auf Musik angewandt" (1817), in *UGT*, 269–70: "Sollte aber auch die Alten bisweilen zu weit gegangen sein, und durch ihre zu weit ausgedehnte harmonische Pünktlichkeit in den kanonischen Behandlungen ihren Werken mitunter etwas Steifes, Hartes, mehr an Architektur, als an freie Poesie, Gränzendes gegeben haben, so verfallen dagegen manche moderne Componisten der sentimentalen, romantischen und humoristischen Art vielleicht zuweilen auf ein andres Extrem, wodurch die musikalischen Werke zwar das Steife, aber zugleich oft alle ästhetische Haltung und Faßlichkeit verlieren. *Joseph Haydn* und *Mozart* werden unter den modernen Instrumentalcomponisten in dieser Hinsicht immer musterhaft bleiben. . . . Wir finden in ihren besten Werken Einfachheit ohne Einförmigkeit, Natürlichkeit bei aller Kunst, Ausdruck bei aller Mäßigung . . . und Kraft ohne Ueberschwemmung."

[84] Michaelis, "Vermischte Bemerkungen über Musik" (1806), in *UGT*, 369: "Große Componisten selbst, welche manche Perioden des wechselnden Geschmacks durchlebten, haben sich mehr oder weniger nach dem Zeitgeist gefügt, und ihre neuern Werke sehen den frühern . . . nicht sehr ähnlich. So drückt sich der Geist einer Nation, und jede ihrer Geschmacksperioden, in der Art und Weise aus, wie ihre bedeutendsten und beliebtesten Tonkünstler die Musik behandeln und von ihrem Publikum aufgenommen werden."

and dialectical balance that characterized Kantian thought. In this sense a fundamental continuity of aesthetic approach is identifiable—one that leads, arguably, all the way through to E. T. A. Hoffmann at the end of our chosen period.

One characteristic way in which Kantian thought was redirected toward Romanticism can be seen in the changing description of "aesthetic ideas." In C. F. Körner's authentically classical, Schillerian interpretation, such ideas had a fully "moral" and "beautiful" counterpart in the concept of character—a suitably ineffable, but definitely human, essence that could find expression in music (instrumental music included).[85] Character was the inexpressible moral core of human life, not something heavenly and transcendental. Yet in some of Michaelis's descriptions, "aesthetic ideas" in music are paraphrased in a rhetoric that seems to leave such grounded imagery behind and ascend into a more elevated realm:

> Aesthetic ideas constitute the spirit of music. One can indeed view every work of fine art as the expression of aesthetic ideas. Aesthetic ideas are intuitions of the imagination (inner perceptions). . . . A piece of music is infused with the spirit of aesthetic ideas when the energy and characterization of [its] harmony and melody awaken unnameable feelings and imaginative intuitions in us, and carry us up, as it were, into a transcendental [*überirdische*] sphere.[86]

Likewise, in linking aesthetic ideas to "poetry," as he does elsewhere, Michaelis repeats a Kantian theme. At the same time, by stressing the characteristically Romantic or (as he simply but indicatively terms them) "recent" ideas of "infinity" and the sublime, and by propounding the idea that any artistic expression of these is not only thereby "poetic" in itself but demands to be described through poetic language (as Schlegel put it, "poetry can only be criticized through poetry"), Michaelis's move toward a Romantic position, and its attendant critical idiom, is evident:

> Recently the explanation has been put forward of beauty as the representation of the infinite in the finite, and it is precisely this infinity which is that marvelous higher principle of life constituting the true soul of all spirited [*geistvoll*] music, but existing above all concepts and words. This spirit of music can be described to some extent through *poetry* [*Poesie*]. The mere philosopher cannot get at it through his cold abstractions and sharp analyses. But who can fathom at all the depths of the imagination in whose obscurity the magic power of music is at work?

[85] Robert Riggs, "'On the Representation of Character in Music': Christian Gottfried Körner's Aesthetics of Instrumental Music," *Musical Quarterly* 81 (1997): 599–631.

[86] Michaelis, "Ueber den Geist der Tonkunst, mit Rücksicht auf Kants Kritik," *UGT*, 8.

> At one moment music strides over the earth in fearful, gigantic steps; at another it hurtles like a storm over the heaving sea; at yet another it resounds in unearthly tones as if out of the catacombs, and convulses the imagination with sublime images of tombs, the sleep of death and resurrection. Think of Mozart's Requiem![87]

Hoffmann could scarcely have put it better. But the Requiem, of course, is no instrumental work. As a wave of recent scholarship has begun to show, neither Hoffmann nor his predecessors needed an exclusive promotion of "absolute" instrumental music to satisfy their Romantic critical priorities.[88] These were indeed much more closely oriented toward opera, Hoffmann's own most intense field of musical creativity and one he began to cultivate through the example and assistance of Reichardt—a formative influence traced by Norbert Miller right through to Hoffmann's mature aesthetics.[89]

Opera as Hoffmann imagined it did not belong on either side of the vocal/instrumental divide: rather it would unite the most prized representatives of each, the best Italian vocal music and the best of the German instrumental tradition, in a thoroughly "impure" but effective mixture of aesthetic strategies. As Emily Dolan has observed, even in his descriptions of symphonies as the "opera of the instruments," Hoffmann "challenges our notion of a separation between instrumental and vocal genres: Hoffmann still measured the symphony against vocal music."[90]

[87] "Ueber den Geist der Tonkunst" (1804), *UGT*, 201: "Neuerlich hat man die Schönheit als eine Darstellung des Unendlichen im Endlichen erklärt, und eben dieses Unendliche ist jenes wunderbare höhere Lebensprinzip, welches die wahre Seele aller geistvollen Musik ausmacht, aber über Begriffe und Worte erhaben ist. Dieser Geist der Musik lässt sich einigermassen durch *Poesie* schildern. Der blose Philosoph erreicht ihn nicht durch seine kalten Abstraktionen und scharfen Zergliederungen. Wer ergründet aber überhaupt die Tiefen der Einbildungskraft, in deren Dunkel die Zaubermacht der Tonkunst waltet? Bald schreitet die Musik, wie mit furchtbaren Riesenschritten einher; bald brauset sie, wie ein Sturm über dem wogenden Meere; bald hallt sie in schauerlichen Tönen, wie aus den Katakomben hervor, und erschüttert die Phantasie mit allen erhabenen Bildern der Gräber, des Todtenschlafs und der Auferstehung. Man denke an Mozarts Requiem!"

[88] Ulrich Tadday, "Zwischen Empfindung und Reflexion: Zur romantischen Musikästhetik," in *Musikästhetik*, ed. Helga de la Motte-Haber (Laaber: Laaber-Verlag, 2004), 201–19; Hänggi, *G. L. P. Sievers*; Francien Markx, *E. T. A. Hoffmann, Cosmopolitanism, and the Struggle for German Opera* (Leiden: Brill, 2016); and Matthew Riley, "E. T. A. Hoffmann beyond the 'Paradigm Shift': Music and Irony in the Novellas 1815–19," in *Words and Notes in the Long Nineteenth Century*, ed. Phyllis Weliver and Katharine Ellis (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2013), 119–43.

[89] Norbert Miller, "E. T. A. Hoffmann und die Musik I: Die Lehrjahre des reisenden Enthusiasten," in *Europäische Romantik in der Musik*, ed. Carl Dahlhaus and Norbert Miller (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 2007), 2:55–150, esp. 89–123. Francien Markx notes that "in his musical writings Hoffmann tended to agree with Reichardt for the most part" (*E. T. A Hoffmann*, 86).

[90] Emily Dolan, "Haydn, Hoffmann, and the Opera of Instruments," *Studia Musicologica* 51 (2010): 344.

To circle back to this article's introduction, what we regard as the "greatest" music of the period around 1800 was not necessarily the principal goal or subject of the era's music aesthetics—and where it was prized, it was often for idiosyncratic reasons. In Kant's musical legacy, there still lies much to challenge and surprise us. *Pace* Taruskin, if we think we "know the drill," we are wrong.

ABSTRACT

This essay argues that musicological interpretations of Immanuel Kant's music aesthetics tend to misread his stance as a defense of artistic formalism and autonomy—traits that, although present in his account of music, in fact reinforce his peculiarly *low* estimate of music's value among the fine arts. Kant's position and its subsequent influence can be grasped more securely by analyzing his dichotomy between "free" and "dependent" beauty. Through an exploration of this opposition's echoes and applications in the thought of three "Kantian" music critics and aestheticians in the two decades after the appearance of the *Critique of Judgement*—J. F. Reichardt, an anonymous series of articles commonly attributed to J. K. F. Triest, and C. F. Michaelis—this essay argues that Kantian aesthetics as applied in practice involved close attention to the impact of genre, style, function, and compositional aims on the relevant standards of judgment for an individual musical work. The result was not one-sided support for the aesthetic or metaphysical "truth" of absolute music, but a characteristic balance between the claims of "pure" and "applied" art forms—a balance that continued to be maintained in the transition from classical to Romantic aesthetics in the first decade of the nineteenth century.

Keywords: Immanuel Kant, C. F. Michaelis, J. F. Reichardt, music aesthetics, autonomy, formalism, classicism