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Narrating the Uncanny: the Music of *Les Revenants*

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Abstract. This article explores the narrative function of music in the French TV drama *Les Revenants* and its connection to the literary tradition of the fantastic. It argues that the music enacts the narrative device of hesitation to provide generic, timbral, tonal, semantic and temporal ambiguity, and in doing so gives voice to the show's characteristic fantastical presentation of the Freudian uncanny.

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Introduction

The underlying premise of the French TV drama *Les Revenants* (Canal Plus France, 2012–15) is simple: how might people react if their loved ones returned from the dead? The subject matter lends itself to certain tropes of the horror genre: supernatural events appear to revolve around a mysterious child, Victor; there are nods towards body horror as certain characters begin to manifest symptoms of decay; and a serial killer with a taste for human livers returns. Horror does not, however, dominate. Indeed, the returned are, at least initially, unaware of their deaths and indistinguishable from the living, so that the narrative is driven by the gradual unfolding of (and complication of) the mystery around how and why they have come back. The continued deferral of answering questions posed by the plot situates *Les Revenants* alongside similarly genre-blurring series such as *Twin Peaks* (ABC, 1990–91; Showtime, 2017), *The X-Files* (Fox, 1993–2002; 2016–18) and *Lost* (ABC, 2004–10).[1] Against this backdrop of this supernatural mystery, the programme offers an extended melancholic meditation on matters of life, love and loss.

Given the important role that genre plays in framing hermeneutic interpretation, there is considerable value in scrutinizing that of *Les Revenants* more closely. English-language websites describe the series in terms of a supernatural drama, a fantasy, a horror and a mystery.[2] On the Canal Plus website, *Les Revenants* is listed as a "série fantastique,"[3] a somewhat broad term that can be applied as readily to shows such as *Twin Peaks* and *Lost* as it can to *Game of Thrones* (HBO, 2011–19), *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (The WB, 1997–2001; UPN, 2001–02) and *Doctor Who* (BBC, 1963–89; 2005–).[4] Some of these "fantastique" programmes, including *Les Revenants*, exhibit qualities similar to those found in the French tradition of the fantastical in literature.[5] Thus Clotilde Landais' definition of the literary fantastic serves equally for *Les Revenants*: "set in the contemporary everyday world of its author—and of his/her readers [or viewers]—a fantastic fiction narrative depicts […] a brutal intrusion of mystery into a rational and lifelike fictional world. This crisis of the real characterizes the fantastic and distinguishes it from genres such as fantasy or science fiction."[6] Typical of the fantastic genre too is *Les Revenants*' focus not on the supernatural phenomena themselves, but in Tzvetan Todorov's words, on "the reactions which this mystery provokes."[7]

Nevertheless, Todorov's own definition of the fantastic relies on the supernatural: "the fantastic is that *hesitation* experienced by a person who knows only the laws of nature,

confronting an apparently supernatural event."[8] Framed thus, it is as much an aesthetic experience as it is a literary genre. It is notable, therefore, that even before Todorov defined the fantastic, he compared it to the "neighboring genre" of the uncanny, another concept that patrols the borders between the generic and the aesthetic.[9] And it is the extent to which *Les Revenants* explores this fantastical-uncanny territory that aligns it most directly with the literary fantastic. In particular, the series foregrounds key themes that are discussed in Sigmund Freud's classic 1919 study of the uncanny, *Das Unheimliche*:[10] the return of the repressed, the conflict between the homely (*heimlich*) and unhomely (*unheimlich*, uncanny), and Doppelgängers. It is this return of the repressed that situates *Les Revenants* within the uncanny, rather than conceptually adjacent modes such as the "weird" ("that which does not belong") or "eerie" (which "seldom clings to enclosed and inhabited domestic spaces" such as the *heimlich*). [11]

The presence of the uncanny in *Les Revenants* has not been lost on critics. For instance, the film scholar Katie Moylan has analyzed the way in which the series' visual aesthetic (such as its memorable mountain setting, filmed in the French Alps near Annecy) intensifies its uncanny themes.[12] Moylan notes as an aside how the music of *Les Revenants* might contribute to its particular atmosphere, noting that there are

> three melodies that [recur throughout the series] to indicate a given uncanny moment. This use of music functions to underscore and deepen the emotional power of the televisual moment and to reinforce the haunting capacity of televisual music within the series as a whole […] [the] melodic scoring of these movements emphasizes and deepens this blurring, haunting capacity, facilitating our immersion into the eerie story world of the series.[13]

However, Moylan's characterization of the music as a reinforcement and intensification of the televisual moment serves to diminish the more dynamic role it plays within the unfolding presentation of the uncanny.

Indeed, from the outset the soundtrack to the series—written and performed by the Scottish post-rock band Mogwai—has formed a key part of its reception.[14] Mogwai had been asked by the producers to "start writing [the soundtrack] before they started filming [the series]".[15] Having only seen a couple of scripts, the band "didn't know what the overall tone [of *Les Revenants*] was going to be like … so it was a bit of a stab in the dark" – indeed, they included pre-composed material in the early demos sent to the producers[16] – but the producers described the results as "inspiring them, they wanted some kind of musical mood in place before they started".[17] During the ensuing collaboration, as both music and filming

progressed quasi-independently, there were times when the producers wanted "the music to be really bombastic and crashing", only for Mogwai to hold firm with their vision of the soundtrack.[18] The active role played by the music in shaping the mood of the series led to the producers describing the music "as being a character within the film as much as the people involved".[19] Regardless of the significance one might attribute to this rather cliched description of the music's function, it remains clear that rather than simply adding to the immersive experience, the music of *Les Revenants* is an essential part of the series' narrative strategy.

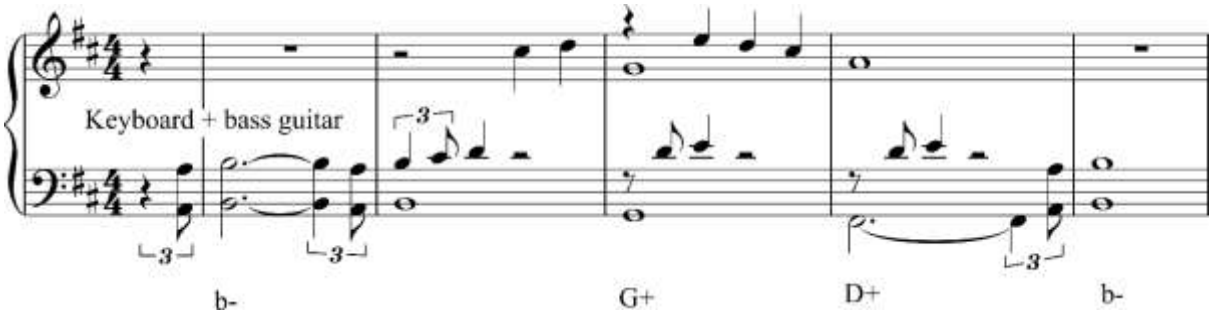
Such a focus on narrative in the interpretation of *Les Revenants* helps transcend the otherwise superficial connections between the televisual and literary fantastic described above. More suggestive insights—not least for the role music has to play—arise through the comparison of the multimodal narrative strategies employed by *Les Revenants* and those found within the fantastic-uncanny literary tradition. In order therefore to understand better the function of the music in *Les Revenants*, this article begins by reading the audiovisual narrative strategies of the opening scenes of the first episode of the series in dialogue with theories of the uncanny and literary fantastic, with a particular focus on how it manifests Todorov's idea of *hesitation*. From here, the account shifts to explore how such narrative strategies inform the first seasons' development of classically Freudian uncanny themes of the (un)homely, doubling, and returning.

The uncanny as narrative transgression

Les Revenants begins with a three-and-a-half minute cold open that presents both tragedy and a mystery. It starts with a title placard on a black screen that announces the name "Camille". It is followed by a cross-fade that reveals a coach travelling along a road on top of a vertiginous reservoir dam; the camera pans up to reveal the mountainous location. The music begins as the camera tracks the coach winding its way through the countryside. At first halting—a flattened seventh upbeat to a B minor chord—the material gradually fills out the musical space with a melancholic chord loop in the Aeolian mode (Example 1).[20] The visuals cut to inside the coach. A young teenage girl is sitting alone, lost in thought, listening to something on her headphones. A teacher passes up and down the coach, returning work to students and announcing a test for the following Tuesday. As the girl—identified by the teacher as Camille—removes her headphones, the music continues: what the viewer hears is not (necessarily) the music Camille was listening to. The visuals return to the outside of the

coach as the music fades out. Inexplicably, the coach swerves violently to the left and, to the sound of screeching tyres and screaming children, crashes through the roadside barrier and plunges into the valley below. The screen fades to black.

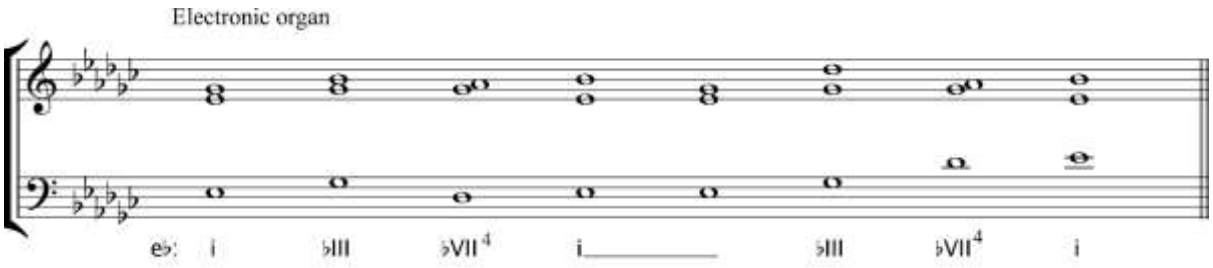
Example 1 Outline of "Whisky Time" (opening)



A second title placard appears: 'Aujourd'hui' (present day). Another cross-fade presents the viewer with an image of a house in a secluded mountain region. The gloomy lighting suggests twilight, a liminal state between light and dark. As a sustained E-flat minor chord establishes itself, the camera begins a slow zoom towards the house that cuts to a zoom within it, moving along a corridor towards butterflies mounted in a frame on the wall (Figure 1). The chord is held for some twenty-three seconds before the harmony changes to G-flat major, returning eventually to E-flat minor via a D-flat chord. The harmonic loop recalls that which accompanied the coach: it is again Aeolian (Example 2). At the first change of harmony, drums fade in, providing an active rhythmic layer beneath the slower moving drones. The impression is that of different temporal strata moving at different speeds. The butterfly in the center of the frame twitches, returning to life, eventually shattering the glass and flying out, fluttering past an old man who has fallen asleep in front of the television. As the butterfly passes an old photograph of a young lady, the music comes to an abrupt close with a distorted guitar chord. A knock at the door wakes the old man. Someone has returned.

Figure 1 Screenshot from *Les Revenants* Series 1, Episode 1 ("Camille")

Example 2 Harmonic outline, "Wizard Motor"



There is one further scene before the opening credits, located back at the mountain valley from the beginning of the programme. Twilight has deepened. The music is now ambient, teasing the pitches of B-flat, G-flat and B-natural (thus picking up on some of the focal pitches of the first two scenes). We see Camille, apparently unharmed and unaged, climbing up the valley slope to where the coach had swerved off, and beginning her walk back across the top of the dam towards the town below.

The superficially fantastical elements of this opening are easy to discern. Even without the interstitial title confirming the present-day setting, the coach, clothing, mundane discussion of schoolwork, and headphones all suggest a twenty-first century (that is, contemporary to the viewers) setting. Grounded in reality, the stage is set for the seemingly supernatural—uncanny, even—return to life of both the butterfly and Camille. While such elements serve to identify *Les Revenants* with the televisual "série fantastique," they remain distant from the narrative approaches adopted within the literary fantastic. What is at stake

here is the way in which the fantastic-uncanny moments reveal themselves within *Les Revenants*. Nicholas Royle has drawn attention to the way in which the uncanny is "never familiar […] never fixed, but constantly altering. The uncanny is (the) unsettling (of itself)."[21] While Royle's work belongs within the post-Freudian uncanny lineage exemplified by Hélène Cixous and Jacques Derrida, [22] his ideas resonate with the narrative strategies of the fantastic-uncanny, described by Todorov as revealing "the workings of literature, precisely because the hesitation that marks the reading experience of the fantastic is inscribed in the text."[23] Todorov isolates "the fantastic effect" within literature and defines it in terms of "a hesitation" between "uncanny phenomenon which we can explain in two fashions, by types of natural causes and supernatural causes."[24] This ambiguity can only be resolved by the reader. If the reader "decides that the laws of reality remain intact and permit an explanation of the phenomena described, we say that the work belongs to another genre: the uncanny. If, on the contrary, he decides that new laws of nature must be entertained to account for the phenomena, we enter the genre of the marvelous."[25]

The music of *Les Revenants,* we would contend, actualizes such narrative strategies by providing an audiovisual analogue to the hesitation effect described by Todorov. It achieves this, in part, by resisting assimilation into either the "real" or the "supernatural" domains offered by the visuals and plot. Returning to the opening of the series, the melancholic score for the first scene seems disconnected from the quotidian images it accompanies and is far removed from the tragedy it precedes (indeed, the lack of relationship between music and the coach veering off the road is confirmed by the sudden cutting off of the music at the moment the coach tyres screech.) Likewise, in the second scene, it is only the knock at the door that curtails the music, which otherwise continues as if oblivious to the miraculous resurrection it underscores. If such audiovisual strategies suggest at first incongruity or anempathy, this reading is problematized in the third scene, in which there exists just enough of a relationship to the music of the previous scenes to suggest a connection between the butterfly springing to life and Camille's return. The music thus occupies a liminal state between supplying a (sometimes incongruous) mood and offering commentary; in short, it enacts narrative hesitation.

Todorov's reading of the fantastic, along with contemporaneous work by Cixous and Derrida, contributed to a "turning point in the conceptualization process of the uncanny."[26] In all three of these cases—and in much of the ensuing discourse around the uncanny in the half century that followed—Freud's *Das Unheimliche* (serves as a continued point of reference. So much so, in fact, that in Anneleen Masschelein's elegant reading, "*the Freudian uncanny*

is a late-twentieth century theoretical concept."[27] Indeed, it is the very "stickiness" of Freudian notions such as the return of that which was repressed, of the etymological entwining of *heimliche* (homely) and *unheimliche* (unhomely, uncanny), and of doubling (amongst many others) that serve to hold together "the conceptual elements" of the uncanny within contemporary theory.[28] Yet despite such stickiness, the uncanny, in life as well as art, is not something that can be readily pinned own—Freud's own performative pursuit of a definition is characterized by a ceaseless deferral of closure.[29] The uncanny is the by-product of a process, an undefinable excess, rather than an emergent property.[30] It emerges in the literary fantastic as a consequence of particular narrative strategies; in *Les Revenants*, it emerges through the active role played by music in enacting such strategies.

In what follows, we examine the three Freudian concepts identified above and the ways in which the music's narrative hesitation contributes to their effect. First, we explore the uncanny tensions between homeliness and secrets repressed in the family units presented in the series, and how these function as narrative drivers. Here, musical hesitation emerges through use of timbre and generic ambiguity. Second, we explore the network of doublings in both music and plot, and how these, too, are rendered uncanny through a hesitation concerning the signification of block scoring. Finally, we draw both of these arguments together in a reading of the opening and closing of the first episode in order to demonstrate the soundtrack's uncanny temporalities. In this instance, we draw in part on Derridean developments of the uncanny and the notion of spectrality. To achieve the above, data were first compiled in the form of spreadsheets that contained timings of individual scenes and musical cues; notes were taken on action, the affective quality of the cue and shot type. Each scene was given its own numerical code (so, for example, in this article 1.30 refers to episode 1, scene 30, and so on), and where possible, cues identified (either by referring to track titles in Mogwai's *Les Revenants* album (see footnote 1) or, for diegetic music, finding the original song). More generic sustained drones were not named, but noted in the table. Comparison between the two seasons suggests a greater use of drones in season two, pointing to an evolving musico-narrative strategy; the focus of our argument is thus restricted to the first season.

The family unit and the (*un*)*heimlich*

Freud begins his account of the uncanny by tracing the etymology of the German term *unheimlich*, and its antonym *heimlich.* The latter relates to two separate ideas that are not wholly distinct: one idea refers to the familiar and homely, and the second to that which is hidden and kept out of sight. Freud uses this double meaning to invoke Friedrich Schelling's definition of the uncanny as "everything that ought to have remained … secret and hidden but has come to light."[31] But not every secret that is uncovered need necessarily invoke a sensation of uncanniness. For Freud, this fact alone is not sufficient to allow us to "rightly understand it."[32] In order to discern that which renders certain situations uncanny and others not, he offers a wide-ranging survey of uncanniness in literature and real life. His conclusion is that, in many cases, there is a repressed "infantile factor" that is the catalyst for an uncanny response.[33] Whether infantile in origin or not, it is the manner in which the secret coming to light relates to repression that gives rise, in Freud's view, to uncanny sensations.

Notions of family, homes, "infantile factors" and repression could function equally as overviews of the central themes of *Les Revenants.* Not only is the familiar presented in an unfamiliar context, but the reverse is also true. The return of the dead to a domestic situation that is usual for the family but alien to the returned, and the manner in which this brings to light long repressed feelings, allows the viewer to witness the characters experiencing simultaneously the home as familiar but also *unheimlich*. The uncanny emerges repeatedly throughout *Les Revenants*, creating a perpetual feeling of unease as each family unit independently comes to terms with the impact of the returned. Table 1 shows the four primary family units portrayed within the first season of *Les Revenants*. In all but one of these cases, the returning family member is unaware of both their own death and the time that has passed since then, providing the narrative impetus for familial secrets to be brought to light: secrets involving betrayal, concealment, infertility, suicide, and murder.

Table 1 Major Familial storylines, *Les Revenants* Season 1

Family	Members	Secret
Sèguret	Camille* and her twin Léna; separated parents Jérôme and Claire	Léna cheated on Camille by sleeping with the boy with whom Camille was in love. Camille hidden from town on return.

Lewanski/Meyer	Victor* and Julie	Julie was attacked by serial killer Serge Garel, causing her to be unable to have children.
Delaître/Werther	Simon*, Adèle and Chloé	Simon killed himself on the day he and the pregnant Adèle were to marry; Adèle later tried to commit suicide. Simon discovers Chloé is his daughter.
Garrel	Serge* and Toni	Toni killed his serial killer brother Serge; their mother subsequently died from her grief.

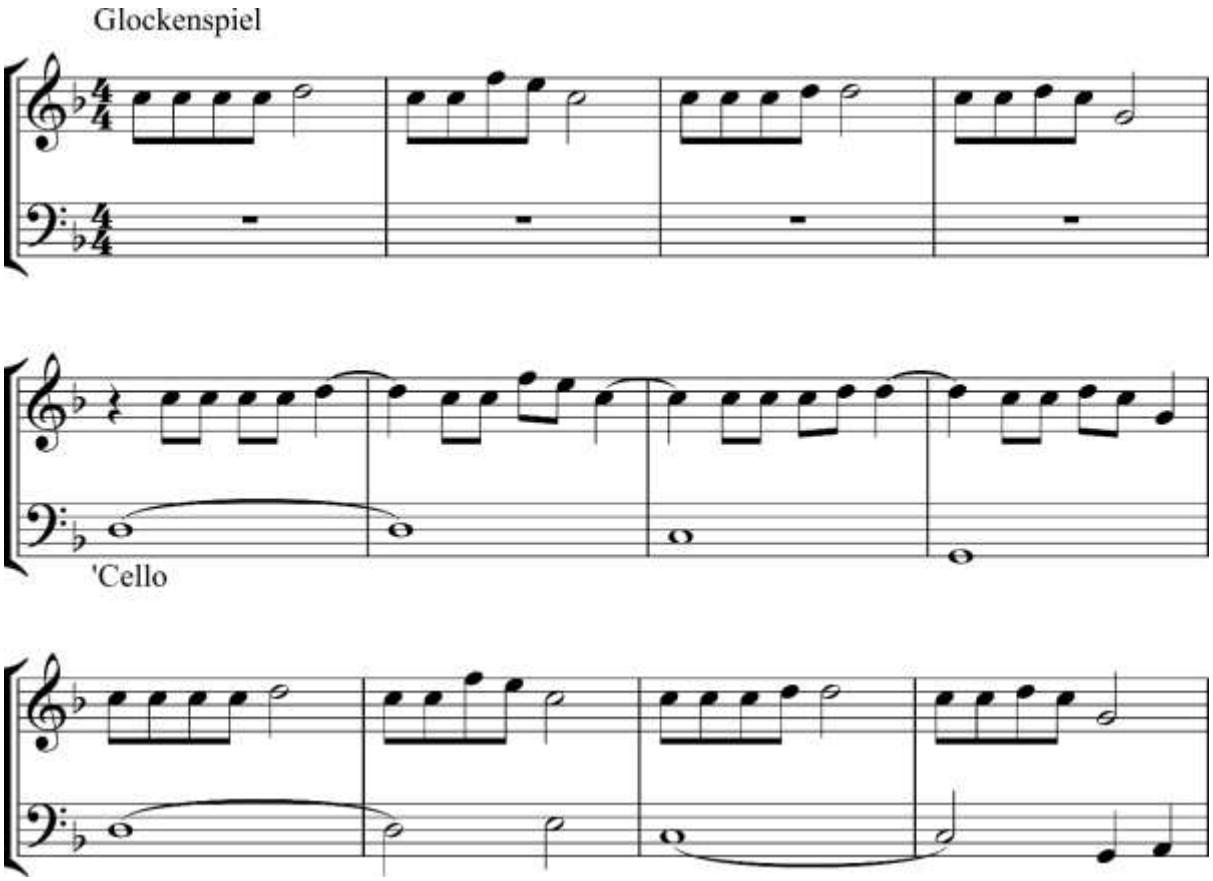
* indicates one of the returned

The music of *Les Revenants* is characterized by an intimacy that maps on to the familial focus of the narrative. Eschewing their usual bombast,[34] Mogwai "tried to keep the rock to a minimum."[35] The resulting stripped-down aesthetic gave emphasis to solo instruments—piano, cello, and glockenspiel in particular. This, along with the absence of traditional horror movie music tropes in *Les Revenants*, [36] led certain critics to leap through interpretative hoops in order to match music onto the subject matter. For instance, Joe Clay, in his review of the album, confessed he hadn't seen the series, and (on the assumption that the undead in the series were of the stereotypically slow, shambling, flesh-eating type) compared the sense of repressed power in the soundtrack to the ever-present threat of zombie hordes.[37]

The music that accompanies the opening credits, "Hungry Face," embodies this approach.[38] The music begins with a tinkling glockenspiel in the upper registers, carrying with it connotations of childhood (see Example 3). However, this familiar sound is immediately defamiliarized by virtue of the reverberation applied to it; it is rendered strange. The resulting *unheimlich* quality is intensified when a solo cello (also electronically manipulated through compression) enters out of phase with the glockenspiel, the two never to reconcile. In conjunction with the images presented during the credit sequence—including dead animals suspended underwater, the framing of individuals (in the distance, or blurred) with images associated with death (wreaths, wooden grave markers), and deserted mountain landscapes and empty buildings—the effect is heightened yet further.[39] And one might even go as far to say that the music possesses a secret: the glockenspiel's figure is tonally ambiguous, *hesitating* between confirmation of key. It could be harmonized in C or F major,

for instance, but the entrance of the cello carries with it the revelation that it is, in fact, in an Aeolian D minor that links back to the modality of Examples 1 and 2.

Example 3 Pitch outline, "Hungry Face"



The focus of the first episode, and (in terms of screen time) the first season in its entirety, is the Séguret family (see again Table 1). Table 2 summarizes the scenes in which there is a revelation of "everything that ought to have remained … secret and hidden but has come to light."[40] Many of the revelations are rendered uncanny by virtue of the doubling that arises due to Camille and Léna being identical twins, as well as the issues that arise when Camille returns unchanged whilst Léna has aged (see below). In addition to these, there are also more conventional familial secrets involving the parents' separation and Jérôme's sex with Lucy, a psychic who he was seeing after the coach accident to try to connect with Camille.

Table 2 Revelations of Séguret family secrets, *Les Revenants* season 1

Scene	Action	Music
1.30	Léna and Frédéric have sex (leading to coach accident in 1.31)	Wizard Motor
3.5	Jérôme tells Camille that he and Claire are separated	-
3.37	Frédéric sees Léna's scar	Wizard Motor
4.18	Police reveal that Jérôme hit Léna	Sustain
4.26	Camille asks Frédéric about sex during bus crash	Unnamed Theme
4.30	Léna tries to reveal Camille's identity to Frédéric	Eagle Tax
5.38	Camille reveals her identity to Frédéric	Wizard Motor
6.3	Jérôme having sex with Lucy to see Camille	Special N

But just as much as the returned threaten to uncover secrets (Schelling's *unheimlich*), the living attempt to conceal them (Freud's second meaning of *heimlich*). Perhaps the most poignant example is between Camille and her mother, Claire (1.9). Having walked home from the site of the coach crash, Camille enters the Séguret house and, unremarkably, goes to make a sandwich. Claire, upstairs, hears the front door and assumes Léna has returned home early from the "Lake Pub" (the local bar). As she enters the kitchen area she is confronted with the sight of Camille. As Claire, Anne Consigny offers a masterclass in conveying conflicting emotions through facial expression alone, suggesting a mix of disbelief, fear, and longing (or, for want of a better word, her face captures the gamut of complex responses associated with the uncanny).

It is at this moment that the music begins, almost imperceptibly at first, reprising the bass of "Wizard Motor" (Example 2). The use of a low sustained pitch brings with it conventional associations of horror movies: at the very least, it alerts the viewer to the unease portrayed in the scene. At this early juncture in the series there is no way of knowing why the dead have returned, or what their intentions are. For Camille, the return home is wrapped up in feelings around the homely, familial aspects of the *heimlich*: she interprets Claire's reaction as a symptom of a mother's worry for (what Camille believes to be) her late return of few hours, and having finished her sandwich, goes upstairs for the comfort of a bath. Claire then runs into Camille's bedroom—which has clearly been kept undisturbed since her death—and in a panic proceeds to make it untidy, as if Camille had left it that morning. This

act captures the dual meaning of *heimlich*: Claire makes the room more familiar, more homely, for the returned Camille, but in doing so makes Camille's death hidden and kept out of sight. In Nicholas Royle's terms, this scenario is an example of "homeliness uprooted,"[41] for Camille as a deceased daughter no longer belongs in the Séguret house, but remains unaware of her own detachment.

The narrative implications of "Wizard Motor" and the return of Camille's room to a prior temporal state shall be discussed further below. At this juncture, however, what is most musically significant about this scene is the introduction of a different cue to accompany Claire as she hurriedly enacts the double meaning of the *heimlich* (Example 4). Although this theme does not appear on the soundtrack LP (and hence remains unnamed in this article), it is the third most common cue in the first season (in terms of amount of screen time; see Table 3). This theme is marked with respect to other cues by virtue of its exclusive use of electronic sounds and a jagged, irregular profile that emphasizes the tritone and renders ambiguous the tonal center (in contrast to the modal, often Aeolian language employed elsewhere). In fact, the cue serves a double purpose. It is first heard minutes before (1.7) as Camille enters the town: as she passes a petrol station, its lights flicker off, to be followed by a blackout of the whole city. The implication is that something supernatural is occurring; hearing the cue again as Claire untidies Camille's bedroom reminds the viewer that what is happening is inexplicable, and potentially threatening. In short, this cue rejects the intimate, *heimlich* sonorities of much of the soundtrack, and inserts an *unheimlich* presence into Claire's frantic concealment of a secret.

Example 4 [unnamed theme]

Table 3 Principal Musical Cues, *Les Revenants* Season 1

	Number of Cues	Number of cues (as % of total)	Duration of cues	Duration of cues (as % of total)
All cues	146	100	02:25:26	100

Wizard Motor	17	11.64	00:26:51	18.46
Portugal	15	10.27	00:17:57	12.34
[unnamed]	17	11.64	00:17:13	11.84
The Huts	25	17.12	00:16:47	11.54
Hungry Face (title music)	11	7.53	00:15:12	10.45
Fridge Magic	16	10.95	00:14:24	9.90

Camille discovers that she is a revenant later in the first episode; over the course of subsequent episodes, the Séguret family attempt to conceal her identity, passing her off as a visiting cousin, "Alice." Eventually, circumstances dictate that Camille has to be revealed to the town. Matters come to a head in episode 6. First, suspicious of "Alice," Frédéric (a peer of Léna; more of whom shortly) and a friend exhume Camille's grave, only to find her coffin full of water (6.7). The discovery of the water coincides with the first musical cue of the scene, "The Huts" (Example 5); the context of the action, coupled with the prominent tritone at the end of the phrase, recalls the traditional supernatural connotations of this interval (as also heard in Example 4). The cue overlaps briefly with the start of the next scene, a meeting at the Séguret house (6.8), in which various parents who lost children in the coach accident gather to learn of Camille's return. As with scene 1.9, the musical (and dramatic) implication is again that Camille's presence in the familial home is a disruption to the normal order; it is *unheimlich*.

Example 5 "The Huts"

Scene 6.8 begins with close up of Camille staring out of the window as she watches the visitors arrive (this recalls a similar ghostly presentation of Camille in the credits, where it is part of the sequence of uncanny images described above). The camera is situated outside the home, the glass barrier between Camille and the filmic point of view reinforcing the distance between Camille as revenant and the living world. This inverts a visual aesthetic of the series identified by Moylan, in which discrepancies between the inside of the home and the outside render the former as homely, "from which [the returned] are visually as well as

narratively excluded."[42] Here, Camille is inside the house, but excluded from the world of those she sees outside; the space she occupies is homely (*heimlich*) but she is about to reveal a secret *(unheimlich*). Camille's presence and participation at the meeting forces the other family units to relive a deep-seated and repressed traumatic experience, rendering the revelation uncanny. Trauma on screen is not only an uncanny experience for the characters but also for the viewer that instinctively empathizes with them to feel similar catharsis.[43] The way in which the music weaves in and out of key scenes in *Les Revenants*, repeating the same cues over and over again in different contexts, echoes the experiential belatedness and resurfacing of trauma and the uncanny.

From a narrative viewpoint, however, these cues enact the principle of hesitation. The soundtrack refuses to conform generically to either horror or domestic drama; it subverts the timbres of its instruments to undercut associations of either the home or the supernatural; and frequently hovers ambiguously in the interstices between tonal areas. Such hesitation is both uncanny, for it sustains the tensions between the *heimlich* and *unheimlich*, but is also a marker of the fantastic.

Doublings

In one of the most powerful scenes of the first episode (1.22), Camille comes face-to-face with Léna, her identical twin sister, only their faces are no longer the same. Léna's face is now four years older than that which Camille remembers, whilst Léna is presented with the visage of her long-dead sister. The scene ends with the image of Claire hugging a sobbing Camille, her hand extended to comfort the traumatized Léna; in the doorway, and completing this *unheimlich* family reunion, stands their estranged father, Jérôme (Figure 2). The only music heard in the scene coincides with this final image—a reprise of "The Huts," scored for piano, in this ironic depiction of domesticity and uncanny doubling. The question arises of how such a semantically ambiguous cue might function meaningfully in this otherwise harrowing context.

Figure 2 Screenshot from *Les Revenants* Series 1, Episode 1 ("Camille")

The notion of doubling is a common theme in accounts of the uncanny. Doubles can take a variety of forms, ranging from exact likenesses, sharing of thoughts (telepathy), identification with another, or recurrence of features and character traits. Freud cites Otto Rank to claim that, in the early stages of mental development, a double functions as an "insurance against the destruction of the ego [self]."[44] But Freud goes further: as the Ego matures, "the double reverses its aspect. From having been an assurance of immortality, it becomes the uncanny harbinger of death."[45] And so it is with Camille and Léna. The two were identical (leading certain people, though not the twins, to confuse one for the other); we shall observe in the next section their sharing of thoughts. Most significantly, and most uncannily, Camille, a figure from the past returned to the present—time is out of joint[46]—necessitates that Léna confronts her own mortality. In Freud's apt words, "the 'double' has become a thing of terror."[47]

Throughout the first season, Camille doubles Léna in a superficial way through clothing (3.14), attitude (3.33, when Camille sneaks out to frequent the Lake Pub, Léna's preferred venue to drink away guilt for her part in Camille's death), and behavior (3.35; Camille smokes with Frédéric). More uncanny, in that it involves telepathy and thus a blurring of the distinction between ego and double, is a moment in which Camille talks to Frédéric and leans in, touching his arm (4.27). As she does so, the scene cuts to Léna who starts awake in bed, grabbing her arm in the same place where Camille touched Frédéric. And yet for all of this doubling and telepathy, and the depiction of Camille as a harbinger of death,

the diversity of musical cues employed (see Table 4) indicates that there is no specific relationship between what we see and what we hear.

Table 4 Uncanny doublings, *Les Revenants* season 1

Scene	Action	Music
1.22	Léna meets the returned Camille	The Huts
1.30	Camille "feels" Léna and Frédéric having sex	Wizard Motor
3.33	Camille sneaks out, dressed like Léna	-
4.27	Léna wakes in the hospital/ feels Camille	Unnamed Theme

The evidence of Tables 2 and 4 might suggest that musical cues are shuffled somewhat at random, supporting Moylan's claim that they "underscore and deepen the emotional power of the televisual moment" without necessarily having any particular significance of their own. Or, to put this another way, the cues lack semantic specificity, and their hesitation over being attached to specific characters, locations or actions limits the extent to which the cues can act as musical doubles of that which we see in *Les Revenants*. To this end, the cues in *Les Revenants* would appear to challenge the traditional practice of "block scoring" within television dramas, which relies precisely upon the specificity of meanings attached to the blocks to trigger "emotional stock states as well as anchoring the situation on screen."[48] Indeed, the semantic non-specificity of these cues not only disturbs the norms of televisual audio-visal practice, but serves to authenticate the specific fantastical narrative strategy of *Les Revenants.* As part of this strategy, the semantic hesitation of the cues suggest a different relationship to the uncanny than is typically described in analytical literature, which tend to map the uncanny onto clearly defined narrative techniques or signifiers.[49] The way in which uncanny has been mapped onto harmonic ambiguity within hexatonic systems (*unheimlich* chromatic relationships within *heimlich* tonal contexts) offer little purchase in the light of Mogwai's predominantly modal language.[50] Nor are there the intertextual inclusions of material from other eras (or stylistic frames of reference) that might function in the manner of the returned.[51]

It is in fact, paradoxically, the seeming interchangeability of the cues that points to the medium-specific way in which doubling, and uncanny doubling at that, occurs musically within *Les Revenants*. Not only is there a consistent emotional quality across the cues (a legacy, perhaps, of Mogwai resisting the demands of the production team for bombast), but

also a network of musical family resemblances. The Aeolian harmonies of "Whisky Time" (Example 1), "Wizard Motor" and "Hungry Face" and the prominent tritones of Example 3 and "The Huts" have already been remarked upon. Added to this is the limited range of instrumental color, providing a further sense of homogeneity to the score. Such an *internal* network of references stands in contrast to Mogwai's typical approach to composition, which tends to point outwards:

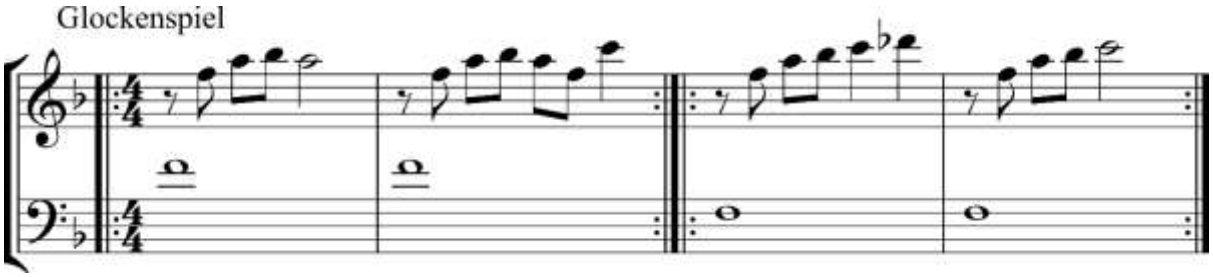
> Mogwai made something like "hauntology" integral to their aesthetic well before it was *de rigeur* [sic] to use Derrida's term to label anything incorporating degraded or muffled samples, or entire songs that had been distorted until they seem sepia-toned or decayed. Mogwai may not have invented the principle of submerging fragments of found-sound in the mix but they pretty much perfected it.[52]

Beyond the obvious sonic connections between the cues, there is also a notable consistency in the types of musical *processes* that characterize them, and the capacity of these processes to unsettle temporality. For instance, the opening of "Wizard Motor" (Example 2) and the substance of both the unnamed theme and the "The Huts" (Exx. 3 and 4) employ drones. Isabella van Elferen has noted the uncanny potential of drones in Gothic contexts, not least for their resistance to musical closure.[53] The use of drones, both underpinning the main musical cues and in isolation to underscore a scene, is one of the few concessions on the soundtrack to standard horror music tropes.[54] Notwithstanding the potential horror associations of tritones of Examples 3 and 4, the drones throughout *Les Revenants*, considered together, reach beyond their typical audio-visual function of generating continuity and building tension. Instead, they point to a suspension of temporality, or (via associations with the pastoral and folk traditions) the distant or imaginary past.[55]

The suspension of temporality offers another music-specific instance of hesitation, and such associations cling to other musical signifiers to be found in the cues. The use of ostinatos evoke cyclic (or eternal) temporal states, but the introduction of irregularities, whether through inexact repetition (Examples 6 and 7) or unpredictable pauses (Example 4) point (in this context) to something gone wrong—musical hints that "time is out of joint." (In this sense, the ostinatos of *Les Revenants* are functionally and generically distinct from those in horror music, which tend towards the regular and ritualistic.[56]) Metrical irregularity (as in Examples 5 and 7) is yet another way of destabilizing temporality. The most thorough-going device, however, is the already-observed manner in which "Hungry Face" (Example 3)

establishes a displacement dissonance between the implied downbeat of the repeating glockenspiel phrase and that of the cello line that enters four measures later.[57]

Example 6 "Fridge Magic"



Example 7 "Portugal"

But it is not so much the aural similarities (doublings) in and of themselves that mark the hesitancy of the musical cues of *Les Revenants* as narrative instantiations of the fantastic-uncanny: it is the manner of their distribution. Such a conclusion resonates with van Elferen's definition of Gothic music as "determined by its functionality rather than by its external style." For van Elferen, Gothic music (and by extension, Mogwai's musical cues in *Les Revenants*) "gives the ghostly presences […] a voice," as "[a]n aural manifestation of the cultural repressed," in which once finds "a writing of excess through a hauntological evacuation of musical (non-) signification."[58] It is in this symbolic capacity that the music of *Les Revenants* acts as double, not for characters, situations or places, but as the constant, underlying repressions of the unconscious, resisting signification, but signifying nevertheless.

On Returning: Uncanny Temporalities

The sense of "writing of excess" identified by van Elferen reflects the uncanny excess of when an "inanimate object becomes *too much* like an animate one"—as when a corpse is animated.[59] Camille (and the other revenants) present an imitation of life so familiar that she (they) can no longer be believed to be dead. As seen in Table 5, encounters with the realization of Camille's revenant status permeate throughout the series, repeatedly reaffirming the ambiguous nature of her return and maintaining the underlying threat of her existence. We see this exchange between Camille and Pierre, Sandrine, and Frédéric through

the first three episodes of the series.[60] Each time the reaction is similarly one of awe, fear and panic.

Table 5 Uncanny recognitions, *Les Revenants* season 1

Scene	Action	Music
1.9	Camille at the fridge	Wizard Motor
1.15	Pierre meets Camille	-
2.20	Léna recognizes Simon	Wizard Motor
3.23	Camille is seen by Sandrine	Fridge Magic (pre-empt)
6.7	Frédéric opens Camille's grave	The Huts

Common to all these accounts is the way in which (uncanny) returns lead to uncanny temporalities: the blurring of distinctions between past and present (and what this means for the future). For Derrida, such an undermining of traditional, teleological views of temporality falls under the category of time being out of joint. While in his hands this notion leads to the revenants possessing a critical, hauntological function, it is equally possible to turn the notion back in on itself to explore how such out-of-jointedness has an uncanny, as well as narrative, function. To explore this function, we shall draw together the strands explored thus far—familial *heimlichkeit,* doublings, and the narrative hesitancy embodied by Mogwai's music—to read the uncanny temporalities of the first episode of *Les Revenants.*

The first episode ends with an extended return to the coach accident that opened the series, now identified via an on-screen caption as occurring four years before the main events of the series takes place. The narrative techniques thus echo Derridean notions of "time out of joint": techniques, in which frequent flashbacks (often viewing the same event from multiple perspectives) and recurring events serve to destabilize the linear presentation of the plot, rendering it ambiguous and leaving a semantic space for the music to fill. It is at this point (scenes 1.30–1.31) that it is revealed to the viewer that whilst Camille is sat on the coach, Léna (who had faked illness to miss the school trip), was at home having her first sexual encounter with Frédéric, a boy that both sisters had agreed not to pursue. Camille manifests extreme distress, distracting the driver as the bus winds its way up a mountain round. The bus turns a corner, to reveal Victor, an 8-year-old boy and another of the returned, standing

unexpectedly in its way; swerving to avoid him, the bus plummets down a cliff, killing all on board.

This climactic depiction of the coach accident presents a particularly prominent sense of time being out of joint. The seemingly incongruous use of "Wizard Motor" to score this moment is critical in achieving this effect. All prior uses of "Wizard Motor" in the episode occurred in the present day; first with the reanimation of the butterfly, and then (with the bass only), in two scenes where Camille's mother, and then her father, re-encounter their long-lost daughter, and finally one in which we see the butterfly collector's wife has returned (Table 6). To hear it again, as we do, in the final scene, set four years earlier, thus creates semantic ambiguity, in which previous associations of "Wizard Motor" with notions of returning in the narrated present are juxtaposed with themes of sex and death in the narrated past.

Table 6 Use of "Wizard Motor," *Les Revenants* season 1, episode 1

Scene	Time/Location/Action	Music
1.2	Present day. Mr Costa's house. Butterfly comes to life and bursts out of frame; knock at door	Full version
1.9	Present day. Séguret house. Claire encounters Camille as revenant for the first time.	Bass only, reasonably prominent
1.11	Present day. Séguret house. Jérôme encounters Camille.	Bass only (underscore)
1.12	Present day. Mr Costa's house. Mr Costa walks along the corridor, past the broken butterfly frame to kitchen where we see Mdme Costa.	Bass only (fades in as Mr Costa approaches frame)
1.30-31	4 years ago. Séguret house/mountain pass. Léna and Frédéric have sex; Camille dies.	Full version

To listen to the various instances of "Wizard Motor" in the order that they occur in the episode, which is to say, in discourse time, might seem—at least on the basis of the first four occurrences—to suggest that the cue connotes the act of returning (see Figure 3). The final, narratively incongruous presentation of "Wizard Motor" in the context of sex and death would thus point to an indifference to the visual subject matter. But this kind of objectivity is

itself a strategy for dealing with the uncanny: Lawrence Kramer has observed Freud's own curiously detached third-person descriptions of his own encounter with the uncanny.[61]

Figure 3 "Wizard Motor" and discourse time, *Les Revenants* season 1, episode 1

In this light, the music itself can be understood not so much as a character (as the producers might have it) but as a motivated narrating voice, one that attempts to exert its own agency over the fantastic-uncanny by means of hesitation induced by such narrative distancing. This agency reveals itself when one considers the relationship between discourse time and plot time (for the latter, see Figure 4). Taken chronologically, the scenes in which "Wizard Motor" occurs *begin* with betrayal and death, and the cue carries these associations forward to the present day, so that scenes 1.2, 1.9, 1.11 and 1.12 can be understood as a stage in the process of revealing concealed secrets. But by hearing "Wizard Motor" as the soundtrack for Lena's betrayal of Camille, the cue becomes temporally unmoored within the narrative and viewing experience—itself, at once an inherently uncanny mode of listening and a realization of fantastical hesitancy. "Wizard Motor" offers an injunction to the viewer to hesitate, to reevaluate what they have heard before, to reach back into their own past in order to rethink the meanings they have attributed to the cue in previous scenes. What is at stake here, the music seems to be telling us, is not the returned in and of themselves, but what they bring with them: secrets concealed, and truths to be confronted. Or, in short, the music is giving us a privileged insight into the fantastical-uncanny heart of the show.

Figure 4 "Wizard Motor" and plot time, *Les Revenants* season 1, episode 1

Conclusion

The final case study demonstrates how Mogwai's musical cues have the potential to be heard as *unheimlich* by virtue of their disruption of temporality. The interweaving of these cues through the unfolding central narrative of *Les Revenants*, in which the returned are literally dislocated from their own time, actualizes such potential. Indeed, we argue that even without making stylistic assumptions about metricality in screen music, the distribution of the musical cues still evokes the uncanny due to their ability to give voice to the culturally repressed. To this end, the musical uncanny in *Les Revenants* can therefore be understood as a particular narrative device rather than a series of particular signifiers. Nevertheless, the related but ultimately divergent means by which music and plot express an uncanny, dis-jointed temporality suggests that their relationship is more than one of simple coherence or congruence (as Moylan might have it), but one that is altogether more nuanced.[62] Eisler and Adorno once described cinematic images as "living and non-living at the same time", with music "introduced not to supply them with the life they lacked … but to exorcise fear or help the spectator absorb the shock."[63] If the music of *Les Revenants* fulfils a similar function, then it is also true that it simultaneously does the reverse too, exaggerating the narrative conflation of the living with the non-living and heightening the spectator's uncanny response.

This uncanny response, we argue, is also the outcome of a prior narrative hesitation enacted musically through a variety of parameters (genre, timbre, tonality, semantic reference and temporality). For Todorov, such hesitation is a hallmark of the fantastic tradition, and it is only on resolution of the ambiguities of the fantastic towards the "supernatural explained" or the "supernatural accepted" that the fantastic collapses into the uncanny or the marvelous.[64] To describe *Les Revenants* as an explanation of the supernatural (and hence, in Todorov's

terms, uncanny) might strike one as odd (although the conclusion to the second and final season attempts to resolve some of its mysteries); this is perhaps, why, ultimately, a more orthodox Freudian reading has greater interpretative weight when approaching both plot and music. More pertinently, by locating the narrative hesitation of *Les Revenants* in the music, rather than the visual aspects, one can better understand its role not simply as a means of emphasizing and deepening the atmosphere but, *pace* Moylan, as an integral and indeed essential component of the audiovisual narrative strategy writ large.

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Endnotes

[1] On the role of music within *The X-files* and *Lost*, see Isabella van Elferen, "*Lost in Music:* Heidegger, the Glissando and Otherness," in *Music in Science Fiction Television: Tuned into the Future*, ed. K. J. Donnelly and Philip Hayward (New York and London: Routledge, 2013): 179–196.
[2] See, for instance, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2521668/?ref_=tt_ov_inf and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Returned_(French_TV_series) (accessed 8 September 2021).
[3] https://www.canalplus.com/series/les-revenants/h/4443719_50001 (accessed 8 September 2021).
[4] https://www.senscritique.com/top/resultats/Les_meilleures_series_fantastiques/796066?fbclid=IwAR18bqoRCV90oTsF7bpIrAfkHLWldRU-WNXU70wcyxkWrdpl9zHCerYEXyw (accessed 8 September 2021).
[5] A key text defining this tradition is Tzvetan Todorov, *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to Literary Genre*, trans. Richard Howard (Cleveland and London: The Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1973). Recent scholarship, however, has expanded Todorov's work to take into account Anglophone as well as Francophone literature, and to recognize the continuation of the nineteenth-century fantastic genre into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. On *Les Revenants* in particular, See also Tiphaine Courard, "*Les revenants* : renaissance du genre fantastique dans les séries télévisées françaises", *Art et histoire de l'art* (2014) https://dumas.ccsd.cnrs.fr/dumas-01116411/document (accessed 6 November 2021).
[6] Clotilde Landais, "The Narrative Metalepsis as an Instrument of the Uncanny in Contemporary Fantastic Fiction", *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (99) (2017): 236–52 (at p. 237).
[7] Todorov, *The Fantastic*: 50.
[8] Ibid.: 24 (emphasis added)
[9] Ibid.
[10] Sigmund Freud, "The Uncanny," in *An Infantile Neurosis and Other Works, The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* Volume XVII (1917–1919), trans. James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press, [1919] 1955).
[11] See Mark Fisher, *The Weird and the Eerie* (London: Repeated Books, 2016), pp. 10–11.
[12] Katie Moylan, "Uncanny TV: Estranged Space and Subjectivity in *Les Revenants* and *Top of the Lake*," *Television & New Media* 18, no. 3 (2017): 269–282. Moylan's approach to the uncanny via the work of Freud and Cixous aligns neatly with Masschelein's reading of contemporary discourse on the subject.
[13] Ibid., 278. Note too Moylan's identification of the blurring quality of the series—a hallmark of the fantastic-uncanny—as well as a less-helpful conceptual slippage from uncanniness to eeriness.
[14] For instance, *The Guardian* note that "From the outset there's something unmistakably creepy about *The Returned*, right down to its setting (stark, clean and vaguely *Twin Peaks*-y) and understated, Mogwai-penned soundtrack". https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/tvandradioblog/2013/jun/09/the-returned-recap-series-one-episode-one (accessed 6 November 2021). For a Francophone perspective, see Erwan Desplanques et Isabelle Poitte, "Grâce à Mogwai, la B.O. des *Revenants* vient nous hanter", *Télérama* (18 Feb 2013), https://www.telerama.fr/musique/grace-a-mogwai-la-b-o-des-revenants-vient-nous-hanter,93843.php (accessed 6 November 2021).
[15] John Cummings, cited in Luke Turner, "Interview: Mogwai on New Soundtrack", *The Quietus,* November 26, 2012, https://thequietus.com/articles/10792-mogwai-les-revenants-soundtrack (accessed January 15, 2020).
[16] Cited in Lauren Martin, "Screen Test: Mogwai on *Les Revenants, Zidane,* and 'why you won't catch our music at a Tory conference'," *Fact,* July 16, 2013, https://www.factmag.com/2013/07/16/screen-test-mogwai-on-les-revenants-zidane-and-why-you-wont-catch-our-music-at-a-tory-conference/ (accessed January 15, 2020).
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid.
[20] All of the musical transcriptions in this article were made by the authors and refer to cues presented in *Les Revenants* on their first occurrence. In some cases the re-recordings made by Mogwai for their soundtrack album *Les Revenants* (ROCKACT74CD, 2013) differ in terms of instrumentation and timing.
[21] Nicholas Royle, *The Uncanny* (New York: Routledge, 2003): 5 (original parentheses).
[22] See, for instance, Hélène Cixous, "La fiction et ses fantômes. Une lecture de l'*Unheimliche* de Freud," *Poétique* 10 (1972): 199–216, and Jacques Derrida, "La double séance," *Tel Quel*, 41–42 (1970).
[23] Anneleen Masschelein, *The Unconcept: The Freudian Uncanny in Late-Twentieth Century Theory* (Albabt: State University of New York Press, 2011): 89.
[24] Todorov, *The Fantastic*: 26.
[25] Ibid.: 41. Later scholars identify metalepsis (building on the work of Gérard Genette, and the notion of literary confusion of narrative levels) as a prominent narrative strategy in the literary fantastic (e.g. Landais, "The Narrative Metalepsis"). Although metalepsis has been explored within screen studies (e.g. Valentina Re, "The

Monster at the End of This Book: Metalepsis, Fandom, and World Making in Contemporary TV Series," in *World Building: Transmedia, Fans, Industries*, ed. Marta Boni (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2017): 321–42) it has rarely been discussed with reference to music.

[26] Masschelein, *The Unconcept*: 76.

[27] Ibid.: 4 (original emphasis).

[28] Ibid.: 13.

[29] For an overview of Freud's "Das Unheimliche" as well as responses to it, see Royle, *The Uncanny*, 9–18.

[30] Masschelein, *The Unconcept*: 116, paraphrasing Cixous, "La fiction et ses fantômes."

[31] Freud, "The Uncanny": 224.

[32] Ibid.: 226

[33] Ibid.: 233.

[34] Alexander Tudor, "Mogwai: *Les Revenants*," *Drowned in Sound* (19 Feb 2013), http://drownedinsound.com/releases/17482/reviews/4146065 (accessed January 16, 2020)

[35] Turner, "Interview: Mogwai on New Soundtrack."

[36] Isabella van Elferen, to choose but one example, includes on her list of horror music tropes "dissonance and atonality […] diminished and augmented intervals […] destabilising glissandos; extremely small intervals […] or extremely large leaps; thickly filled textures or sparsely instrumented scores; fast crescendos or small diminuendos, the sforzando of stingers; the contrast of pianissimo against fortissimo; extremely fast rhythms against drones or repetition that seem to stop time." *Gothic Music: The Sounds of the Uncanny* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2012): 69. The distance between Mogwai's score for *Les Revenants* and the contents of such a list is notable.

[37] Joe Clay, "Reviews: Mogwai*, Les Revenants*," *The Quietus*, February 28, 2013, https://thequietus.com/articles/11524-mogwai-les-revenants-review (accessed January 16, 2020).

[38] Names given to musical cues have been taken from the versions that Mogwai re-recorded for the *Les Revenants* soundtrack LP.

[39] Moylan describes the imagery of the opening credits in detail, but only discusses the music in passing as being in a 'haunting minor key'. Moylan, "Uncanny TV,": 276–7 at 276.

[40] Freud, quoting Schelling, "The Uncanny,": 224.

[41] Nicholas Royle, *The Uncanny* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003): 1.

[42] Moylan, p. 277.

[43] In addition to emotional trauma, bodily trauma is represented in the series through the discovery of a scar on Léna (inflicted by her father, Jérôme); later in the season this theme develops into full-blown body horror as the revenants' skin begins to decay. The character of Julie Meyer is also shown to carry scars from an earlier, failed attempt of a serial killer to murder her.

[44] Freud, "The Uncanny": 235.

[45] Ibid.

[46] See Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (New York and London: Routledge, 1994), xxi and pp. 17–29 (and throughout the text) for ruminations on this phrase. Isabella van Elferen, in *Gothic Music*, has associated the uncanniness of Gothic music, including television music, with Derridean hauntological precepts.

[47] Freud, "The Uncanny": 236.

[48] K. J. Donnelly, *The Spectre of Sound: Music in Film and Television* (London: British Film Institute, 2005): 120.

[49] Precedents for treating the musical uncanny as a product of particular narrative techniques can be found in Carolyn Abbate, *Unsung Voices: Opera and Musical Narrative in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 52–7 and Lawrence Kramer, *Music as Cultural Practice 1800–1900* (Berkeley, CA, and London: University of California Press, 1990), 176–213.

[50] The musical uncanny has been explored in greatest depth by Richard Cohn. See his "Uncanny Resemblances: Tonal Signification in the Freudian Age", *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 57 (2004): 285–324; "Hexatonic Poles and the Uncanny in Parsifal", *Opera Quarterly* 22 no. 2 (2006): 230–48; and "Peter, the Wolf, and the Hexatonic Uncanny", in *Tonality 1900–1950: Concept and Practice*, edited by Felix Worner, et. al. (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2012), 47–62. For an application of Cohn's ideas to popular music, see David L. Forrest, "PL Voice Leading and the Uncanny in Pop Music", *Music Theory Online* Vol. 23 No. 4 (December 2017), http://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.17.23.4/mto.17.23.4.forrest.html. (accessed January 15, 2020)

[51] In addition to the identification of such intertexts, Michael Cherlin, in "Schoenberg and *Das Unheimliche*: Spectres of Tonality," *Journal of Musicology*, 11 (1993): 357–73, and again in *Schoenberg's Musical Imagination* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press: 2007), 173–229, and Michael Klein, in *Intertextuality in Western Art Music* (pp. 78–87) offer provisional lists of signifiers that tend towards the musical topic of *ombra* (see also Clive McClelland, *Ombra: supernatural music in the eighteenth century* (Plymouth: Lexington, 2012).

[52] Tudor, "Mogwai: *Les Revenants*"".
[53] van Elferen, *Gothic Music*: 4.
[54] See K. J. Donnelly, "Hearing Deep Seated Fears: John Carpenter's *The Fog* (1980)", in *Music in the Horror Film: Listening to Fear*, edited by Neil Lerner (New York and London: Routledge, 2010): 152–67, for an overview of drones in horror music and their particular narrative function in *The Fog*.
[55] See Philip Tagg, *Fernando the Flute: Analysis of Musical Meaning in an ABBA Mega-hit,* 4th edition (forthcoming; see extracts at http://tagg.org/mmmsp/fernando.html), 77 [accessed 7 February 2020).
[56] See Donnelly, *The Spectre of Sound*, 91–2.
[57] See Harald Krebs, *Fantasy Pieces* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press), 33–9 for an introduction to displacement dissonance.
[58] van Elferen: 173.
[59] Freud: 233.
[60] Scenes 1.15, 5.38 and 6.8.
[61] Kramer, *Music as Cultural Practice,* 213.
[62] The terms "coherence" and "congruence" are borrowed from Nicholas Cook, *Analysing Musical Multimedia* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).
[63] Cited in Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 39.
[64] Todorov: 41–2.