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A (Dis)Pleasure of Influence:
George Rochberg's *Caprice
Variations for Unaccompanied
Violin* (1973)

(Ne)ugodje vplivanja: Georg Rochbergove
*Kapriciozne variacije za violino brez
spremljave* (1973)

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IZVLEČEK

ABSTRACT

V sestavku soočam Herolda Blooma »Strašljivost vplivanja« z vrsto novejših in še zlasti uspešnih glasbenih adaptacij Blooma, pri čemer ponujam teorijo glasbenega (ne)ugodja na podlagi postlacanovske psihoanalize.

In 'A (Dis)Pleasure of Influence: George Rochberg's *Caprice Variations for Unaccompanied Violin* (1973)' I bring together Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence*, several recent and particularly successful adaptations of Bloom to music, and offer a theory of musical (dis)pleasure informed by post-Lacanian psychoanalysis.

This paper will bring two texts into a close conversation with one another and with the traditions out of which they arose—George Rochberg's *Caprice Variations for*

Unaccompanied Violin and Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence*, both published in 1973.¹ I will discuss first Bloom, then Rochberg.

Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence*

The *Anxiety of Influence* (according to its own subtitle 'A Theory of Poetry') outlines a complex, arcane, and highly controversial theory of poetry. Better—it outlines a theory of modern poetry; better still—it outlines a theory of modern poetry in the Romantic tradition; and better yet—it outlines a theory of modern poetry in Romantic, Anglo-American traditions.² The publication of a second edition in 1997 attests to the work's staying power. Harold Bloom's work is an implicit response to several aspects of mid twentieth-century literary and cultural criticism in the Anglo-American tradition: 1) the techniques and aesthetics of source study, 2) the analytical techniques of the New Criticism, 3) the imperatives of post-structuralism and particularly deconstruction, and 4) late 1960s / early 1970s feminism.³

I read *The Anxiety of Influence* as a Theory of Poetry which creates its territory against the above four traditions. Bloom argues throughout his book that his theory has nothing to do with the techniques and aesthetics of source study; Bloom asserts '[s]ource study is wholly irrelevant here; we are dealing with primal words, but anti-thetical meanings, and an ephebe [poetic latecomer who must struggle against predecessors] best misinterpretations may well be of poems he has never read' (Bloom 70). Bloom implicitly distances himself from New Criticism by suggesting that '[I]et us give up the failed enterprise of seeking to 'understand' any single poem as an entity in itself' (Bloom 43). Bloom's dismissal of post-structuralism and deconstruction is implicit in the following sentiment: 'I am made aware of the mind's effort to overcome the anti-humanistic plain dreariness of all those developments in European criticism that have yet to demonstrate that they can aid in reading any one poem by any poet whatsoever' (Bloom 12-13). I cannot objectively document my claim that *The Anxiety of Influence* is an indirect response to late 60s / early 70s feminism; Bloom might well have written his book had late 60s / early 70s feminism not happened. But currents of defensive explorations of masculinity on many levels in *The Anxiety of Influence* run all the stronger against the backdrop of the power of feminist discourses that were

¹ For an early review, see Merle E. Brown, "Review: Theory of Poetry" in *Contemporary Literature*, Volume 16, number 2 (Spring 1975). Brown emphasizes the connections between Bloom's book and W. Jackson Bate's *The Burden of the Past and the English Poet* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1970). Bloom discusses Bate at the outset of *The Anxiety of Influence* and Brown argues that Bloom's debt to Bate is substantial and pervasive. Reviews by Geoffrey Hartmann and Paul de Man will be discussed in a section of this chapter below entitled "Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence* and the Gaze."

² The book argues, in a nutshell, that the modern era (Enlightenment to the present in the Anglo-American traditions) has produced a history in which "strong" poets cast dark and anxious shadows over their followers, who, in order to become "strong" poets themselves, must paradoxically absorb and distance themselves and, much more crucially for Bloom, their work from the works of their "strong" masters. Bloom's six "revisionary ratios" describe how this absorption / distance is negotiated.

³ Briefly, source study will tend to locate meanings in direct relationship to evidence from source sketches and other materials; the New Critics sought to keep a poet's biography or personality out of criticism in favor of describing the structure of a poem on its own terms, creating one work of art in service of another; deconstruction seeks to reveal the structures in social space that make it possible for a work of art to come into being in the first place by "pulling" at a telltale surface detail till the entire structure of complicity unravels; and feminism seeks to understand much western culture predicated on the prestige of patriarchy, explicitly or implicitly embodied in many if not all western cultural, social, and artistic levels of life.

forceful, focused, and quite audible in major universities at the time of the composition of Bloom's book.⁴

The paragraph above describes negatively what the book isn't; it is, in Bloom's own words the positive product of Nietzsche and Freud, shot through with evocative imagery from Judeo-Christian traditions.⁵ Bloom's Freud is odd indeed. The Oedipal underpinning of his theory is obvious, and it is there that the essentially phallogocentric nature of his thought can be seen. But as Lloyd Whitesell remarks in his blistering critique: 'Bloom's theory takes its momentum from a primal scene of Oedipalized relations between men. The classical Freudian Oedipal narrative elaborates a triangular relation of rivalry and desire, with a woman cast in the mediating role. The men in this narrative establish a bond of rivalry by vying for the same feminine object of desire. With Bloom, however, the loss of woman's role collapses the triangle into a pas de deux. This means that the channels of masculine competition and desire are no longer separately routed; the manly clinch now stands for both struggle and embrace.'⁶

Anyone writing about *The Anxiety of Influence* can get caught between imaginary mirrors of infinite regress in which various (mis)readings replicate each other at different levels; for example, since Bloom says so much about (mis)reading, one could (mis)read his (mis)reading of Freud as oddly intentional, or at least in the spirit of one critic (mis)reading another critic, as one poet (mis)reads another poet. Not that an articulation of such a spectacular trap would be neither interesting nor valid. But it would miss the issue that I think it is important for us to face head on: is Whitesell right in arguing that Bloom's work is underwritten by a homophobic homoeroticism that pervades at least much modern western culture, at least implicitly? If so, what does that mean? I think it means two things (and they are both relevant for music criticism towards which we are heading): 1) Bloom has touched upon something in the culture of western patriarchal modernism, and 2) Bloom's critical stance has either exposed or glorified such a tradition. Whitesell (and the feminist critics upon whom he depends) have shown us that Bloom is writing about a tradition in which homophobic homoeroticism functions, sometimes openly, sometimes hidden. Is Bloom critical of homophobic homoeroticism or is he complicit with it? Whitesell asserts (and I agree) that he is complicit with it: '[b]y glamourizing the Oedipal dilemma, the Bloomian model precludes any perspective from which to analyze the intersections of gender and power that are at issue' (Whitesell 165). My (re)reading of Bloom and my study of George Rochberg will not depend directly on issues of gender; still, as I will show below, in negotiating a shift from Bloom (and poetry) to Rochberg (and music) issues of gender are crucial at one precise juncture.

⁴ Feminists read patriarchy in Bloom's work early on. For a nuanced reading of Bloom from the point of view of women's literature (particularly Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper"), see Annette Kolodny, "A Map for Misreading, or Gender and the Interpretation of Literary Texts" in *New Literary History*, Volume 11, number 3 (Spring 1980). For a more aggressive feminist critique on the patriarchal underpinnings of Bloom's work, see Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, "Infection in the Sentence: The Woman Author and the Anxiety of Authorship" *The Madwoman in the Attic* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979, 2000), pp. 45-53. For a critique of Bloom through the lens of a more general consideration of the "Yale School", see Barbara Johnson, "Gender and the Yale School" in *Speaking of Gender* Ed. Elaine Showalter (New York: Routledge, 1989), pp. 45-55.

⁵ "Nietzsche and Freud are, so far as I can tell, the prime influences upon the theory of influence presented in this book" (Bloom 8).

⁶ Lloyd Whitesell, "Men with a Past: Music and 'The Anxiety of Influence'" in *19th-Century Music*, Volume 18, number 2 (Autumn 1994), p. 161.

This juncture is the historically-specific 'moment' of gender trouble in mid 19th-Century European culture; there is also a psychoanalytic 'edge' to this juncture, and that is the post-Lacanian structure of the gaze in its castrating dimension.

Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence and the Gaze*

In a review of *The Anxiety of Influence*, Geoffrey Hartman focuses on the singular and oppressive nature of Bloom's vision of history: '[w]ith an audacity and pathos hard to parallel in modern scholarship, Bloom apprehends English literary history from Milton to the present as a single movement, calls it Romanticism, and, even while making it exemplary of the burdens of Freudian or Psychological Man, dooms it to a precession which looks toward the death of poetry more firmly than Hegel does.'⁷ And '[h]is 'misprision' makes sense only in a world with family dimensions of gothic intensity, where the individual is bounded by others, all motion is accountable, and we can scarcely stir because of the protective or oppressive air' (Hartman 29). Hartman's language suggests to me that for Bloom (or Bloom through the eyes of Hartman), modernity is a landscape at whose vanishing point resides the irrevocable gaze of the dead, supreme master. Lacan and post-Lacanian writers have described the gaze at length as a displaced look, as a sense in which an object can be sensed impossibly 'looking at one', as a primary agent embodying symbolic, castrating power. Indeed, the most powerful gazes often do not emanate from live eyes at all, but from the orbs of a blind man, a sardine can floating in the water, a building whose windows seem to gaze out at us from the screen, or, the gaze of a *woman*.⁸

Hartman reads Bloom as highly-mediated Freud. According to Hartman, 'Freud sees life as possessing a binary structure through the mercy of time: childhood / adolescence, mother / wife, father / husband. This repetition, or second chance, is essential for development; to collapse the binary poles (and subtler oppositions) is fatal. Through this repetition we can redirect our needs by substitution or sublimation. Family Romance, in the child, his quest for new or the real parents, is a figurative prophecy of the loss to come and of the imaginative capacity for substitutes' (Hartman 29). But according to Hartman, Bloom forecloses Freud: 'Bloom's overcondensation takes away the second chance: literary history is for him like a human life, a polymorphous quest-romance collapsing always into one tragic recognition. Flight from the precursor leads to him by fatal prolepsis, nature always defeats imagination, history is the repetition of one story and one story only.' (Hartman 30). For me, Hartman suggests that Bloom's reading of

⁷ Geoffrey Hartman, "Reviewed Work(s): *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* by Harold Bloom in *Diacritics*, volume 3, number 1 (Spring 1973), p. 27.

⁸ For the well-known account of the gaze and the other, see Jacques Lacan, *Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis* Edited by Jacques-Alain Miller. Translated by Alan Sheridan (New York: W.W. Norton: 1981), pp. 95-97. For a discussion of the horror explicit in a pure gaze, see Slavoj Žižek *Enjoy Your Symptom!* (New York: Routledge, 1992), pp. 126-127. For a discussion of the relationship between the look and the gaze in film theory and in Lacan, especially of the gaze as disembodied look, see Kaja Silverman, *The Threshold of the Visible World* (Chapter 4) (New York: Routledge, 1996). For a discussion of how a woman's gaze can trigger castration anxiety in fiction, Lacanian psychoanalysis, and women's studies, see Beth Newman, "The Situation of the Looker-on: Gender, Narration, and the Gaze in Wuthering Heights" in *PMLA* Volume 105, number 5 (October 1990), pp. 1029-1041.

Freud suggests that modernity is a large-scale, infantile, foreclosed Oedipal drama, and (as Whitesell has mentioned) one in which the mother is utterly absent. It is thus not a triangular drama with threatening and reassuring dimensions that undergoes a second chance with substitutions along the pairs of signifiers: child / adolescent; mother / wife; father / husband, but rather a one-on-one, male-on-male, father(once son)-on-son(to be father) battle always-already lost.⁹ Hartman hears a castrating dimension to Bloom: 'Bloom is equally puritan in his conception of greatness and not less pessimistic about the future. He also implies a diminished succession of the great ages of English poetry: Renaissance, Romanticism, Modernism. The emasculating burden of the past or an effeminate embarrassment of riches take their toll. *Someone was there before us* [emphasis Hartman's]' (Hartman 30).¹⁰

Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence* and Music Studies

We must be very careful crossing the divide between Literary History and Music History. Literature and the critical approaches to literature, for one thing, are made of the same kinds of signifiers—those of the language of this essay, marks on a page with signifiers and the concepts of signifieds triggered by them in the mind of a reader in social space.¹¹ While music signifies in a wide variety of ways in a wide variety of contexts, there is a 'new' structure of difference in the musical sign—the signifier on a page points to a signified in the *ear* and *mind* of a *listening subject* in social space.¹²

For me, the most telling feature of this difference is in music's (dis)ability at irony. In language, irony depends on signifiers which can flip the meaning of a signified along

⁹ For a review of Bloom that avoids all implications of the Oedipal drama and focuses on *The Anxiety of Influence* as a metaphor for the "circuitous journey of Romanticism," see Nannette Altevers, "The Revisionary Company: Harold Bloom's 'Last Romanticism'" in *New Literary History*, Volume 23, number 2, *Revising Historical Understanding* (Spring 1992).

¹⁰ For a fascinating and very different account of Bloom, see Paul de Man, "Reviewed Work(s): *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* by Harold Bloom in *Comparative Literature*, Volume 26, number 3 (Summer 1974). For de Man "The substantial emphasis, in the description of the six ratios, falls on temporal priority: a polarity of strength and weakness...is correlated with a temporal polarity that pits early against late. The effort of the late poet's revisionary reading is to achieve a reversal in which lateness will become associated with strength instead of with weakness.... If the substantial emphasis is temporal, the structural stress entirely falls on substitution as a key concept. And from the moment we begin to deal with substitutive systems, we are governed by linguistic rather than by natural or psychological models; one can always substitute one word for another but one cannot, by a mere act of will, substitute night for day or bliss for gloom" (de Man 274). For de Man, Bloom's Theory of Poetry is a theory of relations between text (the precursor) and reader (the latecomer) (273).

¹¹ This overly schematized pass at the elementary structure of the sign derives from Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*. Edited by Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye. Translated and annotated by Roy Harris. (LaSalle, Ill: Open Court Press, 1986). Saussure's notion that the signified does not represent an object but a concept of an object (or idea) in the mind of a subject in social space opened the way for the structuralism of early to mid 20th-Century literary criticism and anthropology, together with the notion that signifiers owe their integrity to differences along a signifying chain. Jonathan Culler discusses the global structuralism in light of these features of his work in *Ferdinand de Saussure* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986). For an overview of Saussure's role in 20th-Century semiotics, see Kaja Silverman, *The Subject of Semiotics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983). For a reading of Saussure that marks a milestone in the development of deconstruction, see Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*. Translated and Edited by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).

¹² For an introduction to music and semiotics, see Eero Tarasti, *Signs of Music: A Guide to Musical Semiotics* (Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 2002); Robert S. Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes: Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004); Raymond Monelle, *The Sense of Music: Semiotic Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); and Jean Jacques Nattiez, *Music and Discourse: Toward a Semiology of Music* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

a symmetrical axis—flipping a positive to a negative, or a negative to a positive. The linguistic signifier negates either explicitly with a syntactic ‘no’ or ‘not’ or prefix that flips as in ‘a-’ (e.g. ‘atonal’), or a flip in meaning depends implicitly on contextual evidence of ‘not-ness’, such as exaggeration. Music parodies; music makes structures based on earlier structures; music quote itself, other pieces; music (re)composes itself; music, in fact, constitutively does all of these things in many different styles. But given the difference in logical classes between the (linguistic) signifier and the (linguistic/musical) signified, can music flip meaning along a symmetrical binary axis? Is it possible to write a non-F-sharp, for example? The answer is a qualified ‘yes.’ But since music does not have a ‘no’ or ‘not’ in its signifying chain, it must borrow its ‘no’ or ‘not’ from language, from context, from the (linguistic) language of criticism.¹³

Putting aside this difference between the linguistic and the musical sign for a moment, applications of Bloom to music seem to work as theories of (romantic) modernism writ-large. Bloom implicitly reads western culture building to its pre-Enlightenment apex, to decline spectacularly in the Nineteenth Century and to come to rest in the Twentieth Century. If one understands music history in a similar way, an application of Bloom to such a history might sound like this: canonical western music history builds to its apex in the late 18th Century to decline in anxious romanticism in the 19th Century and come to rest in the 20th Century; while Bloom’s master poet is John Milton; music’s master composer is Beethoven.¹⁴ I approach applications of Bloom to music studies by examining the theoretical, historical, and analytical choices made in two particularly successful studies.¹⁵

¹³ For a simple example, consider a piece in which a pattern is established and then violated. An analytical statement of the form “in this piece, instead of (x), the composer has given us (y).” Such a statement poses two levels of meaning—an expectation latent in a piece and a divergence from that expectation. This elementary structure of Gestalt psychology underwrites Leonard Meyer’s *Emotion and Meaning in Music* (Chicago: the University of Chicago Press, 1956); Meyer’s theories persist in the music-critical community; for a more recent version, see Eugene Narmour, *Beyond Schenkerism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977). Neither Bonds nor Korsyn explicitly theorize the difference(s) between irony in literature and irony in music, though they are crucial. Instead, by example, Bonds and Korsyn show contextual illustrations of ways in which music comments on itself. For me the absence of a musical “no” or “not” is not necessary; it is contingent. That is, for whatever reasons, we have never felt it necessary to have a musical “no” or “not”; it is easy to imagine one. We are used to making temporal space for grace notes—itches that impinge upon the signifying chain of rhythm. One can imagine a notation which would mean that pitches are played in such a way that they “don’t count” as pitches, as grace notes “don’t count” as rhythmic entities.

¹⁴ For a large-scale historical claim that the masterwork arrives in the late 18th Century as fundamental component of the canon and new music history, see Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).

¹⁵ Mark Evan Bonds, “Sinfonia anti-eroica: Berlioz’s Harold en Italie and the Anxiety of Beethoven’s Influence” in *The Journal of Musicology* Volume 10, number 4 (Autumn 1992) republished in Mark Evan Bonds, *After Beethoven: Imperatives of Originality in the Symphony* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996); Kevin Korsyn, “Towards a New Poetics of Musical Influence” in *Music Analysis* Volume 10, numbers 1/2 (March - July 1991).

For a theory of musical influence that locates the tonal tradition as symbolic antecedent and atonal / serial departures of the early 20th Century as latecomer(s), see Joseph N. Straus, “The ‘Anxiety of Influence’ in Twentieth-Century Music” in *The Journal of Musicology* Volume 9, number 4 (Autumn 1991); Straus’ application works to the extent that one imagines early 20th-Century atonality / serialism as extensions of the chromatic late-Romanticism of the 19th Century. Straus’s application seems somehow wrong if one does not imagine early 20th-Century atonality / serialism as extension of the chromatic late-Romanticism of the 19th Century.

In his book, *Remaking the Past*, Straus offers an expansive reading of both “progressive” and “classicalist” early twentieth-century music as a response to an anxiety of influence in music. Straus offers 8 “musical revisionary ratios” that are structurally fascinating, though void of any trace of Bloomian anxiety. For well-understood applications of Bloom’s ratios to music, see pages 57-58 (for a discussion of askesis) and page 134 (for a discussion of apophrades) that are theoretically and musically astute. See Joseph N. Straus, *Remaking the Past* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990).

Most theorists and musicologists would agree that if Bloom’s theory obtains to music, Beethoven is music history’s “strong poet.” In a fascinating study, Jeremy Judkin traces a musical debt Beethoven owed to Mozart; his is a story of a founding mo-

Music and Influence: Mark Evan Bonds

In his application of Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence* to music, Mark Evan Bonds points to very strong structural similarities between Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and Berlioz' *Harold in Italy* that 'invite—and indeed, virtually...demand—a comparison between the two works' (Bonds 419). Bonds is referring to the beginnings of each work's fourth movement. In Beethoven, the orchestra recalls moments from the earlier movements—a unique example in the canon of a work of music remembering the stages of its own unfolding in time. In Berlioz '[t]he viola systematically recalls themes from each of the three previous movements, and the orchestra, just as systematically, rejects each one' (Bonds 418).¹⁶ But Bonds points out that for Berlioz, the homage is fraught with ambivalence, and it is here that Bonds turns to Bloom. Bonds does not apply each of Bloom's six revisionary ratios to music; rather he generally refers to compositional debt and the charges of ambivalence in the score of *Harold in Italy*. One of Bonds' strongest points is that while the self-quotation in Beethoven is followed by the heroic 'Ode to Joy', the analogous moment in Berlioz is anti-heroic. Bonds provides very strong evidence for this assertion. For one thing, no new theme bursts forth in Berlioz; in fact we hear only the old and familiar 'Harold' theme: 'When the viola's *idée fixe* does arrive in m. 80, it returns not in the anticipated guise of transcendence but in a remarkably tentative form—so tentative, in fact, that it is given largely to the clarinets rather than the viola solo' (Bonds 427). For another, in the finale, 'the viola disappears for no fewer than 373 measures. It is silent, in other words, for more than three-fifths of the finale and for almost all of the work's final ten minutes. Its reappearance shortly before the end, moreover, is brief, tentative, and strangely anticlimactic' (Bonds 418).

Bonds argues that a large-scale repetition of material in the finale serves to delay the return of the viola—a further sign of anti-heroism in the work: '[t]he purpose of this particular repeat goes beyond the issue of intelligibility. Given the allusion to Beethoven's Ninth and the concomitant strategy to thwart the arrival of any transcendent theme, the middle portion of the finale must fulfill two demands: it must counterbalance the weight and size of the introduction, with the reminiscences; and it must extend the length of time during which the soloist is consigned to the role of non-participant. While Berlioz could have expanded the finale at this point through any number of means, the solution he chose was a literal repetition of the exposition, followed by a relatively brief development section. Had he presented either an extended new development or even a varied reprise of the exposition, the focus of our attention within this movement would necessarily have been drawn toward the evolution of ideas associated with the brigands'orgy. But the primary function of this part of the movement is less to develop ideas than to delay the anticipated return of the viola. In spite of its prominence, the

ment in influence studies at the dawn of its anxious dimension. See Jeremy Judkin, "Beethoven's 'Mozart' Quartet" in *Journal of the American Musicological Society* Volume 45, number 1 (Spring 1992). For a study of influence in which Wagner is the "strong poet," see E. Douglas Bomberger, "Chadwick's 'Melpomene' and the Anxiety of Influence" in *American Music* Volume 21, number 3, Nineteenth-Century Special Issue (Autumn 2003).

¹⁶ This idea of the orchestra "rejecting" what a soloist "says" in a concerto suggests a musical form of comment close to irony. For another example, see the beginning of the slow movement of Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto.

brigands' music is not the main event of the finale; Harold's failure to reassert himself is' (Bonds 440).¹⁷

Bonds is a cautious reader of Bloom's six revisionary ratios, seldom invoking them explicitly: 'Harold preserves the terms of reference established by Beethoven, only to reverse them. In so doing, it represents what Bloom calls the tessera or 'antithetical completion' of a precursor's work. It is a product of 'creative revisionism,' a 'deliberate, even perverse revisionism' (Bonds 454). Bonds strengthens his argument with plentiful historical evidence that Berlioz was self-consciously aware of working in Beethoven's shadow, and Bonds' article is a repository of evidence as well that Brahms composed as well in the same shadow.¹⁸

Music and Influence: Kevin Korsyn

Like Bonds, Korsyn discusses within the nineteenth century, Brahms' Romanze Opus 118, no. 5 in the light of a precursor—Chopin's Berceuse, Opus 57.¹⁹ Before beginning his analysis, Korsyn reads Bloom in much greater detail than Bonds. Korsyn will eventually apply each of Bloom's six revisionary ratios to the inter-textual echoes between Chopin and Brahms.²⁰ Korsyn begins by connecting an aspect of Bloom's thought to Kant: 'Kant distinguishes genius from mere imitation, arguing that the primary property of genius is originality. He goes on, however, to add something quite paradoxical; there is an original kind of imitation; one genius can liberate the originality of another providing a model for originality. This paradox of original imitation, of one genius liberating the originality of another, is an ancestor of Bloom's strong poets influencing strong poets, but without the anxious tone that permeates Bloom's writings' (Korsyn 10). And Korsyn sees another ancestor of Bloom's thoughts: 'Just as Hegel, in *Phenomenology of Spirit*, shows how consciousness comes to know itself, becomes self-consciousness, by encountering otherness, Bloom shows how poems become unique by encountering other poems' (Korsyn 13). And, as Korsyn nears his adaptation of Bloom to music (including one-to-one transformations of a poetic ratio into a musical ratio), Korsyn astutely asserts that '[t]o appropriate Bloom, we must misread him, becoming Bloomian revisionists; we must productively misread him as we figuratively extend his ideas' (Korsyn 14). Korsyn builds his analysis in careful stages, first making 'conspicuous allusions' the level of obvious similarity (Korsyn 22).

¹⁷ Bonds suggests elsewhere that the viola itself has an anti-heroic quality: "[w]ithin the family of stringed instruments, it lacks the projective power of the violin or cello, and within the conventions of four-part string writing, it is the one voice least likely to play a leading role" (Bonds 448).

¹⁸ Berlioz wrote in 1829 "[n]ow that I have heard that terrifying giant Beethoven, I know exactly where musical art stands; the issue now is to take it from there and push it farther...not further, that is impossible—he has reached the limits of the art—but as far along a different route" (quoted in Bonds) p. 450. And there's the well-known statement of Brahms at 40 in reference to Beethoven: "I shall never compose a symphony! You [Hermann Levi] have no idea how it feels to our kind [i.e. composers] when one always hears such a giant marching behind one" (quoted in Bonds) pp. 419-420.

¹⁹ Korsyn outlines historical evidence for Brahms knowing Chopin's music; although there is some evidence to suggest an "anxiety of influence", Korsyn's argument will rely on internal structural similarities and differences between the two works.

²⁰ It is curious to read such an extended argument in which Chopin occupies the position of the strong father to whom an anxious son must cast his glance. Chopin has long been associated with femininity, after all. See Jeffery Kallberg, *Chopin at the Boundaries: Sex, History, and Musical Genre* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996).

For Korsyn, surface ‘conspicuous allusion’ is that which can be represented on the upper levels of a Schenkerian graph.²¹ Korsyn makes an imaginative leap by saying that what happens on deeper levels of structure are unconscious transformations—at which levels the most interesting traces of influence can be found.²² Korsyn makes his argument at this binary opposition of structural levels: on the surface are conspicuous allusions between Chopin and Brahms; at deeper levels, particularly of the Brahms, transformed versions of Bloom’s ratios (thanks to Korsyn) can be seen and heard to operate. Korsyn’s graphs and the musical-analytical points are magnificent and convincing.

Of the binary oppositions between Schenkerian surface and depth, Korsyn contributes to a topic left open above—irony in language and music. For Korsyn ‘[i]rony is to say one thing and mean another; it involves a conflict of levels, a disparity between surface meaning and deeper intention. In music, we have a theoretical model that has the potential to reproduce the structure of irony, although I doubt anyone has so read it: Schenker’s theory of structural levels. In a Schenkerian voice-leading hierarchy, dissonance at one level can become consonant at the next; a passing note, for example, can be composed-out at the next level, becoming a local consonance. A passage can, in effect, say one thing (‘consonance’) and mean another (‘dissonance’)’ (Korsyn 34). For me, what Korsyn is saying about the difference between structural levels works as a feature of Schenker’s global structuralism, and it works as component of an application / adaptation (mis-reading) of Bloom to music, as described above. It maps imperfectly onto linguistic / literary irony, however.

For me (and Korsyn says this) irony involves saying one thing and meaning something else. But that else, is, first of all, in a mutually exclusive binary relationship with what is said. There is a bit-flipping quality of irony in language, and that bit-flipping is felicitous in language due to the ability of language to negate. If Schenkerian voice-leading involved two levels in a similar mutually-exclusive structure, then perhaps irony might obtain to describe musical structure. But Schenkerian sketches of even the simplest pieces involve many levels. Also, irony in language depends on the dual articulation of syntax and semantics. Meaning in language can flip its bit due to the inter-dependence and independence of these articulations. For example, Chomsky’s famous non-sense sentence has a crystal clear syntax and minimal semantic dimension: ‘colorless green

²¹ Schenker developed a technique of graphing the structural levels of movements of tonal music. At the “deepest” level, there is the established key and a large-scale motion to the dominant—usually the next to last chord in the piece; the piece then “closes” at the deepest level with the last tonic chord after the dominant. Everything that happens between the initial tonic chord and the penultimate dominant is represented on “higher” and “higher” structural levels. At the “top” is the surface of the piece itself. You can think of this according to a transformational metaphor. At the “deep” level of any and all sentences ever spoken, written, thought and not spoken, written, thought is a subject - verb binary opposition. Then, moving “up” through deep structure, there are rules of simple transformation—negation, active - passive, question, etc. At “higher” levels there are dependent clauses, phrases, adjectives, adverbs. At the “top” is the chain of words themselves.

²² Korsyn points out that “Schenker’s system, however, discloses *both* hierarchical reduplication *and* its opposite [emphases Korsyn’s], showing both the possibility of a rapport between levels, as when the same motive appears in both the foreground and middleground, and a tension or contradiction between levels, as when a dissonance on one level becomes a consonance at the next” (Korsyn 27). This is a version of how I think structural models work in the spirit of “global structuralism” described by Jonathan Culler. Culler describes “global structuralism” as a central European phenomenon at the turn of the 20th Century in which Saussure (linguistics) Freud (psychoanalysis) and Durkheim (sociology) developed theories of latent content beneath manifest content in texts of their respective disciplines. To this list I would add Schenker, and to Culler’s description, I would add a threshold of perceptibility above which lies the manifest content and beneath which, at times counter-intuitively, the latent content and unconscious mechanisms work.

ideas sleep furiously.’ One of the symptoms of music’s difficulty with irony is that such a non-sense sentence is extremely difficult to write; in music (not necessarily but contingently) the syntactic and semantic dimensions are fused, or not yet distinguishable from one another.²³ I think music can produce a binary bit-flip with great difficulty; but music has no difficulty being ironic along a continuum of no ironic distance (at one imaginary end) and great ironic distance (at the other).

Korsyn concludes his nuanced and fascinating study with a general statement about music of the 19th century and Bloom’s last revisionary ratio—apophrades or the return of the dead. For me, this is one of the most interesting and elusive of the six ratios. It produces, to overstate the matter, the illusion that the latecomer has influenced his predecessor. In the language of the present study then, it would suggest that at one level of meaning Brahms has influenced Chopin. It is perhaps this kind of paradox that Korsyn was after when he quoted Kant’s paradox of the original imitation. Korsyn says of this ratio ‘[the] open-endedness is a quality the Romanze shares with many Romantic pieces. More than one critic has noted that many nineteenth-century works seem less closed, less self-contained, than works of the classical period. In the context of Bloom’s theory, we could interpret this open-endedness as an introjection of futurity’ (Korsyn 57).

Anxiety and Influence in Historical Modernism

There are many musics of the mid-to-late 20th Century—extensions of serialism, computer music, music concrète, new minimal music, interactive electronic music, new romantic music, popular music, film music, and the enormity of how all of these musics are becoming refigured on the internet. Whenever one ‘zooms out’ and makes a historical claim much information gets lost, just as a Google-earth ‘zoom out’ from a neighborhood causes the viewer to lose sight of cars, trees, houses as larger elements of a landscape emerge into view. Bloom’s theory and its most successful applications to music can be understood as theories of modernism writ-large, of the period roughly of the late 18th Century...till when? In the last quarter of the 20th Century, we would have said ‘to the present.’ I think that the mid to late 20th Century is the ‘other end’ of a certain dimension of modernity, just as the late 18th Century had been its point of origin. In the first decade of the 21st Century, we are still perhaps too close to such an ‘other end’ to see it clearly. Perhaps it doesn’t exist, or perhaps people in half a century will adjust my claim as culture develops in a certain direction. Still, I think two coinciding development in histories makes the claim a legitimate starting point for a discussion.

In music history, one can understand the following trajectory: from early 19th century diatonic tonality, the binary opposition of tonic and dominant yields more and more throughout the 19th Century to chromaticism, to thirds, to double tonic complexes, to

²³ I am playfully suggesting that if we decided collectively to function in social space using music as deeply as we function in language, perhaps we would thereby cause a space to emerge into which we might perceive an inter-dependence and independence of the dual articulations.

a growing emphasis on color and orchestration and, as the 20th century approaches to anti-naturalist sonorities (sonorities that are not arranged according to the principles of the overtone series). Atonal music is a rough analogue for analytic cubism, as serialism is a rough analogue for synthetic cubism (see note 25 below). The end point of this Googled-out history is 4'33" of John Cage—an acoustic analogue to the color field paintings of Rothko. I have done nothing more nor less than sketch two twin (imperfectly parallel) trajectories (in art and in music) of romanticism / modernism as it becomes transformed into postmodernism.²⁴ It is as if we can hear in this large-scale modernism an ache of regret at the loss of representational realism in the visual arts, and the clarity of diatonic tonality in music. This imaginary ache is at the heart of the anxiety of influence described by Bloom.²⁵

We have not lived enough culture after Cage and Rothko to know if postmodernism, posthumanism and other theories of the 'present' are resonances of the end of this modernism writ-large or the initial edges of something new; nevertheless, I would like to suggest here that while there are immense (even dominant) kinds influences at work in the arts of the late 20th / early 21st Centuries, there may or may not be evidence for Bloomian anxiety.

Quotation has become one of the most essential features of music in the late 20th / early 21st Centuries. It would be more true than false to say that the compositional act of writing pitches on staff paper has been replaced in the late 20th / early 21st Centuries by cutting and pasting (more command-C / command-V than pre-digital cutting and pasting literally) on a screen. One can understand quotation in music as an extension of collage techniques, or, one can understand quotation in music as a counter-intuitive return of music to its first method of instruction and exercise—copying.

As far as I know there has been no study of the music of the late 20th / early 21st Centuries from the point of view of influence, despite the fact that perhaps the most common feature of this music is quotation, copying, (re)composing. I choose George Rochberg for several reasons: 1) I love his music and find it compelling, 2) he uses quotation, copying, (re)composition in most of his music written from roughly 1973 to his death in 2005, and 3) his *Caprice Variations for Unaccompanied Violin* (1973) is a piece that offers a precise version of quotation, copying, (re)composition that has never been studied before.

²⁴ For an introduction to postmodernism in culture, see Fredric Jameson "Post-modernism and Consumer Society" in *The Anti-Aesthetic*, Edited by Hal Foster (Port Townsend: Bay Press, 1983). For a study of postmodernism and music, see *Postmodern Music / Postmodern Thought*. Edited by Judy Lochhead and Joseph Auner (New York: Routledge 2002).

²⁵ In art history, one can understand a similar trajectory: from early 19th century realism, the object of painterly representation becomes more and more mediated; light becomes an object of interest more and more for its own sake, and finally, by the early 20th Century, the object of painterly representation has become more internal states of mind than external objects, more abstraction than realist representation. Analytic and synthetic cubism lead to a greater role of collage techniques and (zooming out still further) the primacy of the brush stroke is falling apart in favor of other means of applying paint (and other "objects") to the canvas. The end point of this Googled-out history is the monochromatic paintings of Mark Rothko and the color field painters of post World-War II Europe and America.

Rochberg on Rochberg and Influence

The discussions of anxiety of influence in music above (Beethoven / Berlioz; Chopin / Brahms) were strengthened by anecdotal evidence in the form of letters in which composers expressed self-conscious awareness of a shadow in which they were living and working. The statements of an artist must always be taken to be at least potentially the words of an unreliable narrator, however. Some artists are spectacularly articulate about their work; some are spectacularly inarticulate about their work; some have things (consciously or unconsciously) to hide. But most significantly, the great artists in the canonic tradition(s) are great precisely because their works transcend the limits of what any artist could be capable of articulating about his / her works within the limits of a 'moment'; they are great precisely because they say something about the history of which they are an expression and which they help to create. Psychoanalytically, greatness is that within a work which is more than the work itself. We can read the statements of such unreliable narrators with an awareness of a necessary lack of one-to-one correspondence between utterance and truth value, connecting their words to our understanding of their relevance and context(s).

Take the words of Rochberg with regards to his own career: '[m]ost recently, [Rochberg is writing in the late 1960s / early 1970s] my search has led to an ongoing reconsideration of what the past (musical or otherwise) means. Current biological research corroborates Darwin: we bear the past in us. We do not, cannot, begin all over again in each generation, because the past is indelibly printed on our central nervous systems. Each of us is part of a vast physical-mental-spiritual web of previous lives, existences, modes of thought, behavior, and perceptions; of actions and feelings reaching much further back than what we call history.²⁶ Remembering that Rochberg's *Caprice Variations for Unaccompanied Violin* and Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence* were both published in 1973, the above passage from Rochberg suggests a very much inverted view of the relationship between a creative artist and his past. While Bloom argues for a monumental and necessary, (foreshortened) Oedipal struggle, Rochberg calls for a re-connection with the past. His is a *desire* for influence. What if such a desire is an emblem for a larger historical move? What if Rochberg desire is characteristic of much late 20th-, early 21st- century music? What if post-World War II extensions of serialism, and the music of the avant garde are, in the minds and hearts of composers such as Rochberg, signs, or causes of paternal loss? One way of understanding Rochberg's music composed after 1973 is to hear it as a single gesture of trying to regain a lost paternal signifier.

Rochberg gives an account of the history of his own music as follows: 'Not yet ready to re-embrace tonality without reserve, I began to approach it first by quoting tonal music of the past, in assemblages or collages of different musics (*Contra Mortem et Tempus and Music for the Magic Theater*, both 1965), and in commentaries on works of the past (*Nach Bach*, 1966); later, I would compose sections of movements or whole movements in the language of tonality (Symphony no. 3 1966-69). By 1972 I had arrived

²⁶ George Rochberg, *String Quartet no. 3*, the Concord String Quartet (Nonesuch 1973). LP liner notes.

at the possibility not only of a real and personal rapprochement with the past (which had become of primary importance), but also of the combination of different gestures and languages within the frame of a single work.'

Writing of his landmark String Quartet no. 3, Rochberg states: 'I draw heavily on the melodic-harmonic language of the 19th Century..., but in this open ambience tonal and atonal can live side-by-side—the decision of which to use depends entirely on the character and essence of the musical gesture. In this way, the inner spectrum of the music is enlarged and expanded; many musical languages are spoken in order to make the larger statement convincing.' And: '[w]e are filaments of a universal mind; we dream each other's dreams and those of our ancestors. Time, thus, is not linear, but radial.' Rochberg's phrase 'tonal and atonal can live side-by-side' implicitly acknowledges the constitutive friction of placing tonal and atonal together: tonal pieces project a centripetal force of all musical materials to a tonal center; atonal pieces project a centrifugal force of all musical materials away from a tonal center. And his word 'can' suggests, nevertheless, that tonal and atonal can be placed side-by-side.

'Side-by-side' is a phrase that has become loaded with narrative implications. It has been applied to grammatical elements in poetry as a sign of emerging, modern, parataxis.²⁷ The hypotaxis of subordination can be thought of as an emblem for tonality; the parataxis of coordination can be thought of as an emblem for atonality (I will comment at greater length on the parataxis / hypotaxis binary below). One of Rochberg's tasks in his *Caprice Variations*, as I will explore below, is to examine how the hypotactic subordination of musical materials in tonality can exist side-by-side with the paratactic coordination of musical materials in atonality. But more importantly, what do Rochberg's choices in this piece suggest about his / his music's relationship to influence? I will now begin to listen closely to the music in order to address some of these questions.

Rochberg's Caprice Variations for Unaccompanied Violin (1973)

On his recording of the *Caprice Variations*, Zvi Zeitlin re-arranges the *Caprices* according to the table below. The numbers on the top correspond to the order of tracks on the compact disk; the numbers on the bottom correspond to the numbered *Caprices* in the score.²⁸ Zeitlin omits *Caprice* no. 11, 'after Brahms Opus 35, Bk I, no. 11.' Such a re-ordering is very much within the style of the work. In an 'Afterword to the Performer', Rochberg says '[i]f the player chooses not to perform the entire set, he is at liberty to select those sections which will add up to a satisfying whole in musical terms and still represent the intentions of the work. In a shortened performance version, it is strongly urged, though, that the performer include as many of variations 5, 18, 19, 33, 34, 35, 39, 41, 42, 45, 47, 48, 49 and 50 as possible, so as to preserve a balance in the stylistic spread

²⁷ See Eric L. Santner, *Friedrich Hölderlin: Narrative Vigilance and the Poetic Imagination* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1986). See also Theodor Adorno, "Parataxis" in *Noten zur Literatur* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2003).

²⁸ The liner notes that accompany this CD are flawed. They are correct through track 13; every other track is listed incorrectly. The table below is correct and complete.

which is a fundamental premise of this work'.²⁹

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	49	42

11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
19	9	10	12	13	14	41	47	34	35

21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
20	32	15	30	33	45	18	16	17	46

31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
43	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29

41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
30	31	40	48	37	38	44	39	50	51

The caprices are like points along an imaginary continuum with direct and transparent transcription at the left and original composition at the right. At the far left is the last caprice of the set—caprice no. 51 (Paganini's Caprice XXIV).³⁰ This piece is almost an exact transcription; Rochberg has added a few grace notes, accents, and forte dynamic marks.³¹ I will address the appearance of the Paganini (near perfect) transcription more fully at the end of this essay.

Moving one notch to the right on our imaginary continuum, there are near-transcriptions including caprice 7 ('After Beethoven Op. 74, Scherzo'), caprice 8 ('After Schubert, Waltz Op. 9, no. 22'), caprice 9 ('After Brahms Op. 35, Bk. I, no. 2'), caprice 10 ('After Brahms Op. 35, Bk. I, no. 3'), caprice 11 ('After Brahms Op. 35, Bk. I, no. 11'), caprice 12 ('After Brahms, Op. 35, Bk I, no. 12'), caprice 13 ('After Brahms Op. 35, Bk. II, no. 10'), and caprice 21 ('After Beethoven Symphony no. 7, Finale'). In all of the above cases, music for instrument or ensemble other than a solo violin, means that the sounds of the near-transcriptions will always sound mediated to a listener familiar with the original. All of the pieces that have been transposed have been transposed to the same pitch level (also to be discussed at the end of the chapter). It is curious indeed that two of the composers associated with applications of Bloom's theory of influence to music are represented here Beethoven and Brahms. Schubert is also commonly assumed to have been overwhelmed to work in Beethoven's shadow. Finding Beethoven

²⁹ George Rochberg, "Afterword to the Performer" *Caprice Variations for Unaccompanied Violin* (New York: Galaxy Music, 1973), p. 52.

³⁰ I would like to refer to Rochberg's work at hand as a whole with the term "set." The term set comprises pieces "to the right" of a "left" delimiter and "to the left" of a "right" delimiter. Thus, the set [1,2,3,4,5] contains the elements 1,2,3,4, and 5. I would like to avoid the term "cycle", since that term evokes organic principles of voice-leading, key-scheme, and mode-scheme unity found in works such as Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin* (1823-1824), and *Winterreise* (1827).

³¹ Rochberg's note to this piece says "[i]t is understood that both the form and performance style of Paganini's theme, the concluding music of the Caprice Variations, have been altered somewhat in order to provide a fitting envoi for this work" (Rochberg *Caprice Variations* 52).

and Brahms both in works of scholarship exploring anxiety and influence in music and in near-transcriptions in Rochberg's work means that Rochberg, in his urge to connect his new music from the early 1970s on to the past, brought him right to the heart of the common-practice canon.

There are two things worth mentioning in these near-transcriptions. Rochberg is witty in his near-transcription of Brahms. Brahms wrote two books of variations for piano on the theme of the caprice XXIV of Paganini, and Rochberg is writing variations of variations on the same theme. Also Rochberg, in his attempt to capture 'stylistic spread' across his set, is not interested in having a single caprice explore a single style. There are mini-sets within the larger one; caprices 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13 are all 'takes' on Brahms, for example.³²

Moving one more notch to the right on our imaginary continuum, there are two caprices that heavily borrow musical materials from previous pieces but are not transcriptions of them. Caprice 41 ('After Webern, Passacaglia, Op. 1') is based on a transposed version of the idea that begins at the *Sehr Lebhaft* section of the Passacaglia four measures before rehearsal 6 in the score. Caprice 44 ('After Mahler Symphony No. 5, Scherzo') is based on the fugatto theme that appears from the pickup to measure 40 through measure 46. The rest of this chapter will address pieces that gradually move to the right of our imaginary continuum. Caprice 24 embodies an oscillation between two bits of musical materials.

Rochberg's Caprice 24

Rochberg's caprice 24 embodies a particularly late 20th Century version of parataxis. Parataxis means side-by-sideness, juxtaposition, coordination. Its complementary term, hypotaxis means the principle of hierarchy, subordination. Taking Adorno as his lead, Eric Santner has discussed the paratactic quality of diction in the poems of Friedrich Hölderlin. For Santner, parataxis signifies a breakdown of traditional hierarchical forms of both grammar and subject formations at the dawn of modernism.³³ In the 'New Romantic' style of the late 20th Century, composers such as Rochberg and Jakob Druckman used paratactic juxtaposition to place bits of quoted material side-by-side to create texts that undermine closed narrative structures. See example 1 for a transcription of Rochberg's caprice 24.

³² Also, the set contains even smaller sets of variations of variations; for example caprice 17 is a clear and consistent variation of caprice 16, and caprice 4 is a variation of caprice 3.

³³ A musical correlate of parataxis in Hölderlin might be chromaticism as it seeps into deeper and deeper levels of structure in music in the late 19th Century. Free atonality (roughly 1905 to 1923) suggests paratactic side-by-sideness of a negative variety; composers of the Second Viennese School sought to distance the 12 pitches as much as possible from one another, not repeating a pitch until all 12 had been used. Serial techniques (1923 to the present) suggests paratactic side-by-sideness of a positive variety; the 12 pitches are arranged as a fixed row, with prime, inversion, retrograde, and retrograde inversion operations enacted upon it. Depending on the precise nature of musical materials, and the design and nature of a piece, atonal and serial music can stress paratactic juxtaposition or it can introduce at the will of the composer, elements of hypotaxis or subordinating hierarchy.

Example 1. George Rochberg, *Caprice no. 24*.

Many of Rochberg's caprices are in simple binary form with each part repeated. As shown in Example 2, the A section typically alternates between tonic and dominant; the B section moves to the subdominant, mediant, supertonic sonorities before the structural dominant that closes the form on tonic. See Example 2.

A section (sometimes repeated)

B section (sometimes repeated)

i or I V or v || iv III ii diminished or flat-II V i or I

Example 2. *A Sketch of the Form and Harmonic Design for Many of Rochberg's Caprices.*

In accord with the sketch above, Rochberg's caprice 24 moves back and forth between tonic and dominant in the A section; the B section touches on D and then C (the harmonics in measures 6 and 8 respectively), and then moves to a close with an E to A cadential gesture.

Although Rochberg's caprice 24 bears no motto of musical debt, I hear the work as a paratactic juxtaposition of two bits of music within this general AB form: 1) a descending perfect fifth (once a perfect fourth) filled in diatonically and played pizzicato; the first four notes are thirty-second notes and the fifth note is an eighth note, and 2) a slightly varied pattern of three gestures of three notes each—two sixteenth notes followed by an eighth note. I will first discuss the paratactic dimension of these two bits and then discuss what elements of hypotaxis tie them together.

The first bit sounds like a passage from Paganini's caprice 9 (see example 3):

61

65

Example 3. Paganini Caprice no. 9, mm. 61-68.

The second bit sounds like a passage from the Brahms Violin Concerto; see Example 4:

307

p *leggero ma espressivo (grazioso)* *simile*

311

Example 4. Brahms, Violin Concerto, first movement mm. 307-314.

The second passage in Rochberg's mm. 7-8 is a direct quote from the Brahms Violin Concerto, measure 307. The Brahms begins in the C minor of measure 307—the harmony Rochberg reaches in his mm. 7-8 as he moves from D through C towards the dominant gesture E-A at the end.

The paratactic dimension of the caprice involves its juxtaposition of bits of Paganini and bits of Brahms. The hypotactic dimension is very strong as well, however. The sketch of the piece below shows that each first and second bit clearly outline the harmonic pattern shown in Example 2. And one can hear a steady motion of eighth notes throughout, as if the piece were written in 4/8; 4/8 'beats' 1 and 3 are always eighth notes; 4/8 'beats' 2 and 4 are always subdivided—at first into Paganini-like 32nd notes, and then into Brahms-like sixteenth notes. Further, the Paganini-like pitches are diatonic; the Brahms-like pitches are chromatic. Together, they mesh into one composed-out version of the progression outlined in Example 2. Paganini-like notes have downwards stems; Brahms-like notes have upwards stems; see Example 5.

The image displays two staves of musical notation in treble clef. The first staff contains measures 1 through 6, with Roman numerals *i*, *V*, and *iv*⁶ positioned below the notes. The second staff contains measures 7 through 12, with Roman numerals *iii*⁶, *ii*^o, and *V i* positioned below the notes. The notation includes various accidentals (sharps and flats) and slurs connecting notes across measures.

Example 5. Sketch of Paganini-like bit and Brahms-like bit Meshing in Rochberg's caprice 24.

Moving to the 'right' of our imaginary continuum from caprice 24, there are two kinds of caprices: works that compose out the basic harmonic and formal design of example 2 with spiral-like repetition, and works evocative of the avant garde of the 1970s with extended violin techniques and their notation.

Rochberg and the Spiral

Tonal works have often repeated themselves, and indeed the formal design suggested in Example 2 grounds these pieces precisely in one of the most repetitive forms in music history—the baroque binary dance form. Anyone who has played an instrument remembers being told by a teacher, however, that the second time you play a repeated passage, your performance must bear the effects of its repetition. And, moving away from repetition as simply 'playing it one more time' to 'interpreting it one more (different) time', there are repetitions that are re-contextualized—such as the 'repetition' of the first thematic area of group in the recapitulation of a common-practice sonata form.

There are many kinds of cyclical formations in tonal music as well from the cycle of fifths to versions of 'devil's circles' in music.³⁴ In the pieces at hand, Rochberg composes out, as it were, a continuum between *circles* (like the circle of fifths that closes on itself

³⁴ The circle of fifths is a "circle" in the equal-tempered universe. That is, if you move clockwise around the circle, you gain a sharp at every notch (D / A / E...) and then, at some point you "flip" to the flat side and subtract flats (A-flat / E-flat / B-flat / F...) and you end up where you began—at C. You can accomplish the same thing in the reverse track, moving counterclockwise: you start out at C and add flats (C / F / B-flat...) and then, at some point you "flip" to the sharp side and subtract sharps (E / A / D...) and you end up where you began—at C. On the other hand in the harmonic world "before" equal temperament, if you move clockwise around the "circle" of fifths, you never get back to C; you keep adding sharps infinitely. This is a spiral, and when you get to B-sharp you can imagine turning the spiral on its side and seeing the space between C and B-sharp; another pass would increase this distance to A-triple sharp, etc. Similarly, if you move counterclockwise, you would never get to C but rather to D-double flat. If B-sharp is "above" C, then D-double-flat is "below" and one infinite spiral of sharps moves "up" away from C and one infinite spiral of flats moves "down" away from C.

There are well-known examples of progressions that embody such spirals that become circles through equal-temperament's enharmonic re-spelling. One of my favorites is the devil's mill from Schubert's "Der Wegweiser" from *Winterreise* (1827).

through enharmonic re-spelling) and *spirals* (like the circle of fifths without enharmonic re-spelling). Caprice 2 sounds, on first listening, and indeed, on subsequent listenings, to ‘stop’ and not ‘conclude.’ Indeed, pieces that are hypotactic tend to conclude (the hierarchically organized subordination of materials leads to a logical conclusion or cadence); pieces that are paratactic tend to stop (the side-by-sideness implies no necessary closure). See Example 6.

Example 6. Rochberg, *Caprice no. 2*.

For the A section of the form, the music moves as expected between tonic and dominant, with a conventional terraced dynamic *piano* for the repeat of music played *forte* the first time. For the B section, Rochberg composes a spiral in which the music nearly but crucially not quite closes back on itself. The B section involves an alternation of exact and near quotes with itself according to the scheme shown in example 7:

9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
=	≠	=	≠	=	≠	=	≠	=	≠	=	≠	≠	≠	=	≠
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40

Example 7. Exact and Near Cross-References in the B Section of *Caprice 2*.

Measure 25 is an exact repetition of measure 9; measure 27 is an exact repetition of measure 11, etc. Measure 26 varies the texture of but maintains the harmonic implications

of measure 10; measure 28 varies the texture of but maintains the harmonic implications of measure 12, etc. If the pattern had continued, a hypothetical measure 41 might have either been a repetition of measure 25 = measure 9; or a hypothetical measure 41 might have altered the pattern. If hypothetical measure 41 would have equaled measure 25 equals measure 9, then the pattern of the B section would have resembled an equal-tempered cycle; if hypothetical measure 41 would not have equaled measure 25 equals measure 9, then the pattern of the B section would have resembled a non-equal-tempered spiral of key relations. The piece ends with a paratactic gesture of tearing off, brought out by Rochberg's *senza rit.* performance direction.

Rochberg composed another caprice with a varied return to the beginning; see Example 8 for a transcription of caprice 15.

The musical score for Example 8, Rochberg's Caprice 15, is presented in five staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. It features a series of triplet eighth notes, with dynamics starting at *p dolciss.* and including performance directions like *senza rit.* and *rit.*. The second staff continues the triplet patterns, marked *p comincia agitato e cresc.* and *mf cresc.*. The third staff shows further development of the triplet motif, marked *f ancora piu agitato* and *cresc.*. The fourth staff introduces more complex rhythmic figures, marked *piu f*, *sost.*, *mp dolce*, and *cresc.*. The fifth staff concludes the piece with a paratactic gesture, marked *rit.* and *senza rit.*

Example 8. Rochberg, Caprice 15.

There is compound, stepwise motion generating a structure that holds this piece together. That two-voice counterpoint (with some inner voices) is represented in Example 9.

D . S C H W A R Z • A (D I S) P L E A S U R E O F

The image shows a musical score for Example 9, consisting of two staves of music. The first staff contains measures 1 through 7, and the second staff contains measures 8 through 14. The music is written in a single melodic line with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are primarily eighth and sixteenth notes, with some triplets. Slurs and ties are used to connect notes across measures, highlighting the voice-leading framework. The first staff shows a series of ascending 10ths from measure 1 to 4, followed by a double bar line and a repeat sign. The second staff shows a series of 6ths from measure 5 to 7, followed by a series of 6ths from measure 8 to 9, and then a series of 6ths from measure 10 to 14. The notes in the first staff are: 1: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5; 2: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5; 3: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5; 4: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5. The notes in the second staff are: 5: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5; 6: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5; 7: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5; 8: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5; 9: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5; 10: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5; 11: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5; 12: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5; 13: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5; 14: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5.

Example 9. Two-voice framework for Rochberg's *Caprice 15*.

The sketch shows what I hear in the music—a series of 10ths from mm. 1-4 to the double bar. These 10ths prolong the diminished fourth C-sharp / D-natural / E-natural / F-natural in the upper voice; underneath these notes, in order are A-natural / B-natural / B-sharp / C-sharp / D-natural. The inner voice motion A-natural / B-flat / B-natural in mm. 3-4 brings the A section of the piece back to the B-sharp at the beginning for a smooth and closed cyclical structure upon repeat of the A section.

The sketch shows that for the B section, Rochberg composes a series of 6ths between the upper and inner voices. The upper voice in mm. 5-7 is a variant of the upper voice from mm. 1-4. From mm. 5-7 it prolongs the perfect fourth C-sharp / D-natural / D-sharp / E-natural / F-sharp. In the middle voice, underneath these pitches (forming a series of parallel 6ths, beginning under D-natural) is F-natural / F-sharp / G-natural / A-natural. From mm. 8-9 the upper voice prolongs a minor third: G-sharp / A-natural / B-natural; underneath these notes in an inner voice another series of 6ths is created with B-natural / C-natural / D-natural.

In measure 9, the b-natural² in the first triplets is transferred down an octave in the second triplets. From the second half of measure 9 on, the music like an indirect repetition of the opening of the piece. Herein lies a spiraling dimension of caprice 15. On the one hand measure 9 does not repeat measure 1; on the other hand, the sketch above brings out the voice-leading that makes a kind of repetition (as if on a different 'plane') quite audible.

The sketch shows that the piece begins with a neighboring B-sharp resolving to C-sharp supported by A-natural. The C-sharp supported by A-natural interval initiates a series of ascending 10ths as discussed above. The second half of measure 9 into measure 10 'repeats' this gesture: measure 9's B-natural moves to C-natural (an enharmonic equivalent of the opening B-sharp) which resolves to C-sharp supported here not by A-natural but *A-sharp*, likewise initiating a series of ascending 10ths. The 10ths from mm. 10-14 expand the 10ths from mm. 1-4. The internal slurs from mm. 9-11 show the motion in the B section that parallels (as if on a different 'plane') the music from mm. 1-4; the larger slurs show the entire series of 10ths culminating in an implied augmented sixth chord at the end of measure 14. As in all common-practice augmented sixth chords the F-natural in the lower voice is heard as flat-6 ('Le') that resolves into measure 15 to E-natural; the sharp-4 ('Fi') at the end of measure 14, likewise resolves to E.

The A minor triad is full and clearly realized in the second group of sixteenth notes of measure 15. Now the C-natural in this triad, again, sounds like a veiled return to the

opening B-sharp (remembering the enharmonic equivalence between B-sharp and C-natural). Rochberg is for a second time taking on a transformed ‘pass’ at the opening. Note (not on the sketch) the 10ths in mm. 15-17. The upper voice prolongs C-sharp / D-natural / D-sharp (m. 15) / E-natural / E-sharp (m. 16) / F-sharp (mm. 17-18); underneath these notes in the lower voice Rochberg prolongs A-natural / B-natural (m. 15) / B-sharp / C-sharp (m. 16) / D-natural (mm. 17-18). This motion parallels the 10ths in mm. 1-4.

With the ‘piu tranquillo’ of measure 19, Rochberg makes another, more distant pass at the beginning; here the A-natural / B-natural / C-sharp / D-natural motion of the lower voice of mm. 1-4 is foreshortened in an inner voice (the piece sounds like a winding-down clock at its end) to A-natural / B-natural / C-sharp. Rochberg thus begins in measure 1, composes a veiled return at measure 15, and yet another veiled return at measure 19. I hear this structure as a spiral with two passes at a beginning. See example 10 below for a sketch of these passes.

measure 19	(re)calls	measure 15	(re)calls	measure 1
measure 20	(re)calls	measure 16	(re)calls	measure 2
		measure 17	(re)calls	measure 3
		measure 18	(re)calls	measure 4

Example 10. A Sketch of Cross-Referential ‘passes’ at the Beginning of Caprice 15.

Caprice 29 is a heavily chromatic example of a work which refers at its ending to its beginning. Unlike caprice 15, caprice 29 (re)approaches its beginning at its end in a retrograde gesture to be described below. See Example 11 for a transcription of the work.

Example 11. Transcription of Caprice 29.

The top line of measures 1-2 unfold a falling minor second motive: c-sharp² / c-natural¹ / b-natural¹ (with the b-natural¹ moving to an inner voice below f-sharp² on the downbeat of measure 2). This falling semitone idea is supported by a-natural throughout producing a two-voice counterpoint of 10-10-9. I hear this two-voice counterpoint with its goal as the 9th between a-natural and b-natural¹ as the basic material of the caprice. An additional voice doubles the falling minor second idea a sixth below as shown in Example 12.

Example 12. Reduction of mm. 1-2 of caprice 29.

The 10-10-9 two-voice oblique counterpoint represented in Example 12 sounds Wagnerian in its semitonal descent. After the double bar a thoroughly internalized version of the Tristan chord / progression appears, magnificently veiled. See Example 13.

Tristan-esque Progression in Rochberg
with interpolated chord in parentheses.

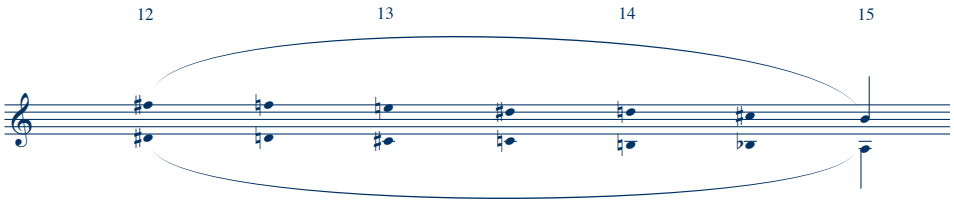
The same Tristanesque Progression in
Rochberg transposed down a minor second
followed by a cadential motion to B major.

Example 13. Transformations of the Tristan chord / progression in Caprice 29.

Example 13 shows to the extreme left the middle of the three Tristan Progressions from the very beginning of the Prelude to *Tristan and Isolde* by Richard Wagner. The example shows, moving to the right, a thoroughly veiled (re)composition of the progression by George Rochberg in the caprice at hand. The chord in parentheses is an interpolated sonority; the three-chord progression is an audible expansion of the famous Tristan-to-dominant seventh chord progression. The dotted slur shows that Rochberg omits the B and in favor of C (enharmonically respelled as B-sharp); the dotted line shows similarly that he omits the C-sharp in favor of the D—moved to an inner voice. The example shows to its extreme right, the Wagner-esque transposition of the Tristan-esque progression down a half-step.³⁵ At the asterisk, Rochberg writes a C-natural instead of a C-sharp. The change makes the music sound like an augmented-sixth chord resolving directly to tonic.

³⁵ Robert Bailey has described the prevalence of semitonal voice-leading in Wagner. See Robert Bailey, "Analytical Study" in Wagner, *Prelude and Transfiguration*. Ed. Robert Bailey (New York: WW Norton and Co, 1985).

Once Rochberg arrives at B major in measure 12, the music moves down in a sequence of 10ths to the downbeat of measure 15 as shown in Example 14.



Example 14. Rochberg caprice 29, motion from mm. 12-15.

The two-voice counterpoint is an expansion of the 10-10-9 motion that we heard earlier (see Example 12, above). This motion (the 10-10-9 of measures 1-2 and the 10-10-10-10-10-9 of measures 12-15), suggests that the ninth a-natural / b-natural¹ is a goal. From mm. 1-2 the melodic motion c-sharp² / c-natural² / b-natural¹ takes place over a pedal a-natural; from mm. 12-15 the approach to b-natural¹ takes place with a series of parallel 10ths. Measures 15-19 reverse the motion of mm. 1-2, as shown in Example 15.



Example 15. Cross-Referential Representation of Rochberg caprice 29, mm. 1-2 and mm. 15-19.

Example 15 compresses an idea that might be demonstrated more thoroughly—that measures 15-18 prolong b-natural¹. Indeed, I hear mm. 15-18 prolonging not only b-natural¹, but the ninth a-natural / b-natural¹. Example 15 shows that I hear the initial melodic motion in mm. 1-2 c-sharp² / c-natural² / b-natural¹ reversed in the melodic motion in mm. 15-19—b-natural¹ / b-sharp¹ (enharmonically equivalent to c-natural²) / c-sharp². The end of this piece sounds like a return to its beginning, but not its very beginning, its just-having begun (so to speak); from the b-natural¹ in measure 2 (mm. 15-18), the music backs up to the c-natural on the *second* beat of measure 1 (the b-sharp¹ on the *first* beat of measure 19) and backs up again to the c-sharp² (the c-sharp² on the *second* beat of measure 19). Or, one could say it the other way around; from the b-natural¹ of measures 15-18 (the b-natural¹ of measure 2), the music backs up to the b-sharp¹ on the *first* beat of measure 19 (the c-natural² on the *second* beat of measure 1) to the c-sharp² of the *second* beat of measure 19 (the c-sharp² on the *first* beat of measure 1). The fermatas on the b-sharp¹ and c-sharp² of measure 19 draw the ear to the temporal play in the work between beginning and ending.

Rochberg's caprice 31 is composed of intricate and imbricated loops. See Example 16 for a transcription of the work.

Molto Adagio (♩ = ca. 40)

pp *pp* *restless; rubato; threatening* *pp* *poco f* *pp* *pp*

11 *poco f* *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp* *poco f*

21 *pp* *pp* *poco f* *pp* *pp* *misterioso*

27 *pp* *pp* *poco f* *pp* *pp* *poco f* *pp* *pp* *poco f* *ppp*

34 *pp* *poco f* *pp* *pp* *poco f* *pp* *pp* *poco f* *ppp*

41 *pp* *poco f* *pp* *pp* *poco f* *pp* *pp* *poco f* *ppp*

Example 16. Transcription of Rochberg, *Caprice 31*.

The piece involves two textures: a slow motion of descending sixths with accompanying ‘restless; rubato; threatening’ iterated pitches mm. 1-24 and mm. 41-49, and the passage in triplets at *Un poco piu mosso* mm. 25-40. These two different textures are united by transposition of an opening melodic fragment f-natural² / g-flat² / e-flat²; the accent marks in the *Un poco piu mosso* section reveal a continuity of ascending step followed by descending third. It turns out that these different passages are even more intimately related as I will show below. I hear measure one as a sixth with an upper neighbor leading to a more structural sixth on the downbeat of measure 2. Measures 1-6 thus prolong a fully-diminished chord built on G-flat (G-flat / B-double-flat / C-natural / E-flat). The G-flat / B-double-flat / E-flat are present in measures 2-3; the C-natural is added to the chord in measure 5. It is possible to hear the passage in other ways, and those ways would produce different but analogous results. Measures 7-12 transpose this progression down four half steps to prolong a new fully-diminished seventh chord (A-flat / B-natural / D-natural / F-natural). The progression is transposed down another four half steps; now mm. 13-18 prolong the other (and final) fully-diminished seventh chord in the tonal universe: (B-flat (or A-sharp) / D-flat / F-flat (or E-natural) / G-natural). Measures 1-18 prolong what is often called in tonal music a *Teufelsmühle*, or Devil’s Mill—a progression that closes on itself like the musical equivalent of a snake eating its own tail. Devil’s Mills are progressions that are specific to tonal / chromatic music, usually vocal.

For the purposes of this study, I will refer to their larger class of structures—loops. See Example 17.

Example 17. A Loop in Rochberg's Caprice 31.

The ‘chord tones’ of the fully-diminished seventh chords are represented in the sketch by hollow note heads; the solid note heads are like ‘dissonances’ that decorate them. I hear two levels of structure in this loop: 1) the prolonged fully-diminished seventh chords, and 2) on a ‘deeper’ structural level, an augmented triad. The augmented triad represents the levels at which the fully-diminished seventh chord is transposed—four half steps or major thirds. This augmented triad is quite audible in the music; it is embodied in the ‘restless; rubato; threatening’ pitches—B-double-flat / F-natural / D-flat.

Rochberg lets the loop close back upon itself and begin to repeat; measures 19-24 = measures 1-6. The repetition seems to break off at the beginning of measure 25 with the *Un poco piu mosso*; in fact, it continues after the *Un poco piu mosso* passage which functions as an interpolation. See Example 18 for a chart of correspondences between measures 1-18 and the rest of the piece.

measure 47	equals	measure 19	equals	measure 1
measure 48	equals	measure 20	equals	measure 2
measure 49	equals	measure 21	equals	measure 3
		measure 22	equals	measure 4
		measure 23	equals	measure 5
		measure 24	equals	measure 6
		measure 41	equals	measure 7
		measure 42	equals	measure 8
		measure 43	equals	measure 9
		measure 44	rather equals	measure 10
		measure 45	rather equals	measure 11
		measure 46	rather equals	measure 12
				measure 13
				measure 14
				measure 15
				measure 16
				measure 17
				measure 18

Example 18. Cross references among measures in Caprice 31.

The column to the right represents how the music unfolds in time, moving top to bottom; measure 1-18 unfold the loop represented in Example 17. Measures 19-24 repeat measures 1-6 as shown by the middle column, moving top to bottom. The row left blank represents the interpolated *Un poco piu mosso* section, and the repetition of initial music continues with measure 41. Measure 44-46 ‘rather equal’ measure 10-12; measures 44-46 color the note names of measures 10-12 differently (the C-sharp of measure 10 becomes a C-natural in measure 44, etc). The piece stops with a second return pass at its beginning (measures 47-49 = 19-21 = 1-3).

The *Un poco piu mosso* section of the piece re-works the loop of measures 1-18; see Example 19.

Example 19. A Loop (re)worked in the *Un poco piu mosso* section of *Caprice 31*.

Rochberg composes the *Un poco piu mosso* section as a variant of his initial idea, with the a-flat¹ / b-double-flat¹ / g-flat¹ of measures 25-26 re-working the f-natural² / g-flat² / e-flat² of measures 1-2. The *Un poco piu mosso* section sounds a bit different from mm. 1-18, but the materials are the same. Put another way, one level of the music prolongs fully-diminished seventh chords in both passages—mm. 1-6 are to mm. 25-28 (F-sharp / G-flat fully-diminished seventh chord) as mm. 7-12 are to mm. 29-32 (G-sharp / A-flat fully-diminished seventh chord) as mm. 13-18 is to mm. 33-36 (A-sharp / B-flat fully-diminished seventh chord). On a ‘deeper level’ these fully-diminished seventh chords sound different because they are transposed down not a major third (to prolong an augmented triad) but in half steps. Note the beamed and hollow notes in Example 19 that shows a G-flat / F-natural / E-natural motion across mm. 25-36.

Just as Rochberg had let his loop of mm. 1-18 fold back in upon itself with mm. 19-24 ‘recalling’ mm. 1-6 (the first fully-diminished seventh chord of the loop), so, too, in the *Un poco piu mosso* section, he lets his loop once again fold back in upon itself with mm. 37-40 ‘recalling’ measures 25-28. But there is a difference; mm. 19-24 repeat mm. 1-6 while mm. 37-40 rework mm. 25-28; mm. 37-40 prolong the same fully-diminished seventh chord as mm. 25-28. Measure 26 emphasizes, for instance, the pitch-class G-flat while measure 38, for instance, emphasizes the pitch-class E-flat.

In the *Un poco piu mosso* section, Rochberg is re-working his loop in a compressed form with six measures of earlier music compressed into four. See Example 20.

measures 25-28	rework	measures 1-6	which prolong	F-sharp / G-flat fully- diminished seventh
measures 29-32	rework	measures 7-12	which prolong	G-sharp / A-flat fully- diminished seventh
measures 33-36	rework	measures 13-18	which prolong	A-sharp / B-flat fully- diminished seventh

Example 20. A Loop in Caprice 31 in mm. 1-18 and mm. 25-36.

The information presented in Example 20 above shows what happens in the blank row of Example 18. Now we can see that Rochberg in fact takes three return passes through the beginning of the piece. Thus the return passes are not measures 47-49 = 19-21 = 1-3, but measures 47-49 *repeat* 19-21 which *repeat* 1-3 while measures 25-28 and measure 37-40 *rework* measures 1-3.

The first time we hear mm. 1-3 they suggest the beginning of a piece; with measures 19, 25, and 47, however, measures 1-3 sound like a window through which we hear dif-

The musical score consists of six staves. The first staff is for a Nocturnal; slow, starting with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a *con sord.* instruction. It features a glissando and an *ord. to sul pont.* instruction. The second staff continues with *ord.* and *ord. to sul pont.* instructions, with dynamics ranging from *pppp* to *pp*. The third staff is for a flute, marked *col legno* and *pppp*, with dynamics *mp* and *pp*. The fourth staff also features a flute with *col legno* and *pppp*, with dynamics *pp* and *pppp*. The fifth staff continues with *ord.* and *ord. to sul pont.* instructions, with dynamics *pp* and *pppp*. The sixth staff concludes with *ord.* and *ord. to sul pont.* instructions, with dynamics *pp* and *ppppp*. A footnote at the bottom indicates that the asterisk symbol (*) means to play 1/4 tone below the pitch.

Example 21. Rochberg, Caprice 42.

ferent passes through a loop. While caprice 31 contains a loop within its own (re)composed 'tonal' loop (with a fully-diminished seventh chord at its point of origin), Caprice 42 contains a loop (with an atonal pitch-class set at its point of origin) and avant-garde violin techniques. See Example 21.³⁶

If one understands phrases as melodic gestures whose end-fermatas provide a cadential closure, and atonal pitch-class set theory as a way of understanding the pitch-class content of these phrases, the structure of the piece emerges. See Example 22.

Example 22 consists of nine musical staves, each representing a different pitch-class set. Each staff is labeled with its Roman numeral, pitch-class set, and set class. The notation includes treble clefs, stems, and various accidentals (sharps, flats, naturals) to represent the specific pitches of each set. The sets are arranged in a roughly sequential order, with some overlapping or adjacent in pitch space.

- I pitch-class set {9,11,3} member of set class (0,2,6)
- II pitch-class set {4,6,10} member of set class (0,2,6)
- III pitch-class set {7,9,1,3} member of set class (0,2,6,8)
- IV pitch-class set {6,8,0,2} member of set class (0,2,6,8)
- V pitch-class set {5,7,11,1} member of set class (0,2,6,8)
- VI pitch-class set {4,6,10,0} member of set class (0,2,6,8)
- VII pitch-class set {3,5,9,11} member of set class (0,2,6,8)
- VIII pitch-class set {2,4,8,10} member of set class (0,2,6,8)
- IX pitch-class set {7,8,9,1,2,3} member of set class (0,1,2,6,7,8)

Example 22. An atonal pitch-class segmentation of the phrases of Caprice 42.

Example 22 reveals an atonal pun on tonal procedures in the A section of the work before the first repeat. Throughout the Caprices, Rochberg has moved from tonic to dominant in the A sections; in Caprice 42, the pitch-class set I gets transposed up 7 half-steps (as if to its 'dominant') to form pitch-class set II. After the repeat, Rochberg composes an atonal pitch-class loop whose close in upon itself in pitch-class set IX is baroque (as in baroque pearls whose imperfections are openly displayed). While the pitch-class sets of the A section are members of the set class (0,2,6), the pitch-class sets of the B section's loop are members of the set class (0,2,6,8)—an expansion. Pitch-class sets III through VIII comprise the complete loop. Example 23 represents this loop:

³⁶ The work is written in a kind of loose spatial notation with regard to duration; the length between pitches roughly indicates the length each pitch should be held; Example 21 is an only approximate representation of this aspect of the work, though I have tried to reproduce the durations implied in Rochberg's score.

pitch-class set III	{7,9,1,3}
pitch-class set IV	{6,8,0,2}
pitch-class set V	{5,7,11,1}
pitch-class set VI	{4,6,10,0}
pitch-class set VII	{3,5,9,11}
pitch-class set VIII	{2,4,8,10}
1) continued T-1	{1,3,7,9}
2) continued T-1	{0,2,6,8}
3) continued T-1	{11,1,5,7}
4) continued T-1	{10,0,4,6}
5) continued T-1	{9,11,3,5}
6) continued T-1	{8,10,2,4}

Example 23. The Atonal Loop in the B section of Rochberg's Caprice 42.

The left column shows the pitch-class sets III, IV, V, VI, VII, and VIII as they occur in the music. 1) continued T-1 shows what Rochberg would have reached had he continued to transpose his sets down by half-step; he would begin to duplicate the pitch-class structure of his sets. Notice that the 1) continued T-1 set would have been pitch-class set {1,3,7,9} mirroring the pitch-class content of pitch-class set III with dyads reversed. 2) continued T-1 would have (re)produced pitch-class set IV, with similar dyad reversals, etc.

Above I refer to the 'baroque pearl' of pitch-class set IX. Pitch-class set IX does in fact close the loop back upon itself, with pitch-class set III embedded as every other pitch-class; pitch-class set III {7,9,1,3} is a subset of pitch-class set IX {7,8,9,1,2,3}. But this is a distortion of a distortion; Pitch-classes 8 (A-flat) and 3 (E-flat) sound a quarter tone low! So pitch-class set IX would be better represented as {7, 7.5, 9, 1, 2, 2.5}. Even this somewhat whimsical pitch-class set with pitch-class 'fractions' isn't necessarily accurate, since it implies an equal-tempered quarter-tone—one that splits every equal-tempered half step into exact halves. An expressive tuning of these quarter tones might have the 'a-flat' lower than half way between an equal-tempered pitch-class 8 and 7 (since it might 'yearn' for G 'darkly' rather than 'yearn' for A 'brightly' as a G-sharp), and the 'e-flat' lower than half way between an equal-tempered pitch-class 4 and 2 (since it might 'yearn' for D 'darkly' rather than 'yearn' for E 'brightly' as a D-sharp).

Rochberg closes *Caprice 42* with a transformed version of the beginning of the B section—at once 'the same' and at a remove from 'the same'—through his quarter-tone 'a-flat' and 'e-flat' and through an embedded pitch-class set III within pitch-class set IX.

Conclusions

In drawing these remarks together, I will consider three points: 1) cultural conditions underlying claims of anxiety of influence as they obtain to George Rochberg, 2) the words Rochberg himself, and 3) intrinsic evidence of anxiety in the *Caprice Variations*.

As suggested earlier, at the present writing, we may still be too close to the period under discussion to draw conclusions. If one wrote in 1809 in Vienna about the nature of

the ‘masterpiece’ in music there would be plenty of evidence upon which to write, but a lack of perspective that would allow one to separate significant from insignificant events, texts, trends. And if one wrote in 1909 about the significance of Schoenberg’s ‘liberation of the dissonance’ a similar condition might arise. Of course ‘too close’ depends not only on chronological proximity; ‘too close’ will be minimized in an era of slow communications; ‘too close’ is *really* too close in the ‘present’ with global communications.

I would suggest that the late 20th Century is a time in which composers in the western Anglo-European tradition more or less freely cannibalize the standard repertoire. Composers such as George Rochberg, Jakob Druckman, Luciano Berio fill-out an imaginary continuum from transcription to quotation (direct and indirect) to original composition in their works).

I sense no large-scale historical anxiety as a cultural context for the music of George Rochberg’s *Caprice Variations for Unaccompanied Violin*; I would suggest that while the mid 19th Century is an era in which the figures of Beethoven and Wagner cast a shadow on the lives of belated latecomers, the mid-to-late 20th Century (at least in the music under discussion and others like it in the ‘New Romanticism’ category) is not an age of anxiety. To put it perhaps too crudely, Rochberg (and other New Romantic composers) seem to glorify in the floodgates of possibilities inherent in their turn to the past.

So what would it mean to say that the mid-to-late 20th Century (as the cultural context for Rochberg’s work at hand) was an era free of anxiety? Was it an era of pleasure? A ‘Pleasure of Influence’ would be suggestive given the frequency with which composers transcribe, digitize, quote, distort, steal, borrow from the musical materials of the standard repertoire. If the mid-to-late 20th Century were an age of a pleasure of influence, then, to connect our speculations with the fundamental assumptions of Bloom’s argument, the belated latecomer will have emerged into a world free of the Oedipal complex.³⁷ For me, much of the music we might be tempted to call ‘pleasureful’ contains a pleasure that requires a more refined definition. Let me move back into the words of Rochberg and the musical materials of his piece for evidence of a pleasure of influence.

I quoted the well-known liner notes of Rochberg’s String Quartet no. 3 above. Recall that Rochberg turns in the 60s and 70s ‘back’ to the past for inspiration, suggesting desire for, not anxiety about, the influence of masters. But what about evidence in the *Caprice Variations* of pleasure?

A Pleasure of Influence

The psychoanalytic structure of pleasure is complex. Let us imagine a linear narrative of developing subjectivity: the sonorous envelope, the mirror stage, and the language acquisition.³⁸ Sonorous pleasure is a fantasy of one-ness with sensations of

³⁷ What would it mean to suggest a psychic formation “free” of the Oedipal Complex? First, there is a traditional Freudian freedom from the Oedipus Complex that boys experience when they enter latency. Second, within the regime of the Oedipal Complex, one can become psychotically “free” of it through disavowal (a frightening fantasy indeed). Third, freedom from the Oedipus Complex might one day suggest a new theory of psycho-sexuality not based on the penis or its signifier—the phallus. See Elizabeth Bronfen, *The Knotted Subject* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998).

³⁸ Throughout the following discussion I will discuss Freud and Lacan side-by-side. The notion of a “narrative” like this is simul-

the mother; it is a retrospective fantasy of wholeness before the series of experiences and their representation that split the subject from his / her object of desire. Mirror pleasure is the result of a profound split in the life of the child as he / she at first sees its perfect, full presence in the mirror (an actual mirror or face or projection of a face (mis)perceived as the ideal self). Mirror pleasure is more precisely called (in Lacanian terminology) imaginary plenitude. Imaginary plenitude is the pole of experience and its representation that oscillates back and forth in the life of a subject with its binary opposite—imaginary lack. It can be indicated by the child feeding at the mother's breast (imaginary plenitude) and the hungry child without the breast (imaginary lack). Mutually exclusive binary oppositions of fullness / lack; presence / absence reside in mature life as remnants of this imaginary, binary opposition.³⁹

For Freud, the famous 'fort-da' game in which a child compensates for the missing object of desire (the mother) through a symbolic action (the game itself) inaugurates the subject into culture and language.⁴⁰ For Lacan, a similar transformation occurs as the mutually exclusive binary oppositions of the mirror stage become mediated through language. I think of this transformation in the life of the subject as follows: although language will never provide the subject with imaginary plenitude, it will always protect the subject from imaginary lack. Let me take another pass at this developmental narrative in order to focus on pleasure.

For Freud, the life of the subject is governed by two principles—the pleasure principle and the reality principle. In the former, tension in the psyche brought about by excitation is lowered; 'an avoidance of unpleasure' produces pleasure (Freud 3). For Freud, the pleasure principle becomes modified by the subject's 'reality principle': 'This latter principle does not abandon the intention of the ultimately obtaining pleasure, but it nevertheless demands and carries into effect the postponement of satisfaction, the abandonment of a number of possibilities of gaining satisfaction and the temporary toleration of unpleasure as a step on the long indirect road to pleasure' (Freud 7).

In the process of developing his ideas on the pleasure and reality principles, Freud famously defines the differences among fear, anxiety, and shock: 'Anxiety' describes a particular state of expecting the danger or preparing for it, even though it may be an unknown one. 'Fear' requires a definite object of which to be afraid. 'Fright', however,

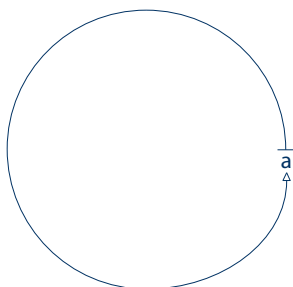
taneously valid and invalid. It is valid since children do seem to develop out of a state of undifferentiated body parts in which the mother and child are contained within one amorphous envelope of sensations (see Didier Anzieu, *The Skin Ego* Trans. Chris Turner (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989) and then moves into and through the mirror phase (see Jacques Lacan "The Mirror Stage" in *Écrits*. Trans. Bruce Fink (New York and London: WW Norton, 2007) and then into language acquisition—described by Freud in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* as the "fort-da" game on pp. 12-15, and described throughout Lacan's writings as entry into the Symbolic Order. The notion of a "narrative" like this is invalid, since the signifiers pointing to it are retrospective fantasies from a position of symbolic mastery and since sonorous, mirror, and language traces are more like dolls within dolls than elements of a sequential narrative. Put crudely, sonorous elements are present within mirror elements, are present within language; put more subtly, sonorous elements are transformed as they are partially incorporated within mirror elements, which are transformed as they are partially incorporated into language.

³⁹ A point of clarification. Elsewhere in this chapter I refer to an "imaginary" continuum; by "imaginary" continuum, I mean to suggest a hypothetical continuum along the points of which varying degrees of transcription (left) / quotation (middle) / original composition (right) reside. Elsewhere I speak of the imaginary (as above) implying Lacan's Imaginary Order—the larger logical class in which the mirror stage belongs. The Imaginary Order is that phase of development and representation governed by mutually exclusive binary oppositions.

⁴⁰ Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Translated and Edited by James Strachey (New York and London: WW Norton and Co., 1961), p. 12-15.

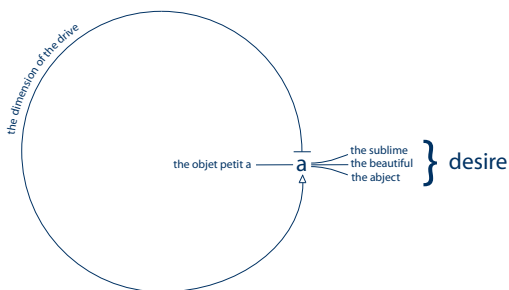
is the name we give to the state a person gets into when he has run into danger without being prepared for it; it emphasizes the factor of surprise' (Freud 11). 'Fright' foreshadows the notion of trauma, so key to the notion of the death drive he is about to discover. For Freud, only the death drive can explain the psychic logic of recurrent nightmares of war veterans, (and others who have suffered traumatic shock) for whom nightmares cannot transparently serve the logic of wish fulfillment.

The drives have a different meaning in Freud and in Lacan. For Freud, the drives are at the heart of sexuality based on biological instinct; for Lacan, the drives are not connected to biology—they are symbolic constructs that are constitutionally resistant to closure.⁴¹ Many have used Lacan's famous broken circle as a representation of drive, as shown in Example 24.



Example 24. Lacan's broken circle.

In much of the psychoanalytic literature, actions and representations of actions that involve continual circulation around the broken circle in repeating loops (despite / because of the bar that necessarily breaks imaginary plenitude) suggest the dimension of drive. Actions, representations of actions that in some way 'obey' the block (within which the object cause of desire resides) and ricochet into the space of the break suggest desire and its symbolic surrogates (with the sublime at its upper edge, beauty in the middle, and the object at its bottom edge) as shown in Example 25.



Example 25. Lacan's broken circle of the drives and desires.

⁴¹ See Dylan Evans, *An Introductory Dictionary of Lacanian Psychoanalysis*, (New York and London: Routledge, 1996), p. 46.

Desire and Drive can be inscribed in art in a wide variety of ways. And desire and drive can be inscribed in music in a wide variety of ways. I would like to focus on one of them—repetition. Repetition in the service of symbolic mastery tends to suggest desire; repetition that involves reiteration tends to suggest drive—as if iterations of an event don’t hear one another but keep going over and over again, like a cursor on a screen (drive drained of affect). Rochberg has composed a musical embodiment of reiterative drive in his Caprice 35 as shown in its entirety in Example 26.

Allegro molto; fantastico
(♩ = ca. 120)

ff feroco

NB: vary pattern of groups at will

Repeat ad lib. until almost unbearable intensity and break off

mf *ff* *ff* *fp*

ff come prima

slow; elegiac

f *ff*

a piacere

ff

wild! *f* *fz* *heavy bow pressure* *ff* *non troppo*

fff *lunga* *a piacere* *heavy bow pressure* *wild!* *ff*

ff NB: vary pattern at will
Repeat ad. lib. until maximum intensity and break off

Example 26. Rochberg *Caprice 35*.

This is an extraordinarily reiterative piece. A ‘wild’ stabbing motion articulates grace notes to a-natural¹ with twin neighbor notes—G-sharp and B-flat; an alternate stab articulates a-natural¹ / g-sharp² with a high G-natural.⁴² At the beginning of the second system and at the end of the last system there are passages that are repeated as often as the performer can bear it; for the first of these miniature loops, the performance directions states ‘repeat ad. lib. until almost unbearable intensity and break off’; for the

⁴² The first stab is pitch-class set {8,9,10} member of set class (0,1,2); the second stab is pitch-class set {7,8,9} member of set class (0,1,2)—transposed down a half step. The pitch-class material of the caprice expands pitch-class sets that are members of set class (0,1,2) to the e-flat¹ / a-natural¹ / d-natural² / g-sharp² set or pitch-class set {2,3,7,8} member of set class (0,1,6,7) that you can see in the lower left-hand corner of the transcription.

second of these miniature loops with which the piece stops, the performance direction states ‘repeat ad. lib. until maximum intensity and break off.’ The Lacanian term for a pleasure like this is enjoyment, or its French equivalent *jouissance*. Enjoyment of this nature has little to do with pleasure that is positive in its affective charge; enjoyment of this nature is more like pleasure in displeasure, or (dis)pleasure—a pleasure that derives from the energy around Lacan’s broken circle that refuses to be blocked by the *objet petit a* and refuses sublimation into deferred forms of partial, symbolic mastery through the sublime, the beautiful, or the abject. It is as if the energy gains in intensity each time it would be blocked by the cut in the circle and enjoyment derives from the reiterative intensity of a motion that can only move in the same way, over and over again, without conclusion.

A Musical Gaze

Rochberg’s Caprices also embody a uniquely obsessive dimension that causes, for me, their pleasure to narrow into a reiterative musical squint, or gaze. The entire cycle, and each of the caprices is ‘in’ A; the pitch-class A-natural (pitch-class 9), and often the pitch a-natural¹ (A 440) pervades the piece as a single red thread of continuity. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the gaze bears more symbolic weight than any simple look could bear. All of Rochberg’s transcriptions and near-transcriptions are transposed to A (major / minor) and all of the atonal pieces (and even one with serial implications)⁴³ focus on the pitch-class A natural (pitch-class 9) and / or pitch a-natural¹. The gaze of A-natural in Rochberg’s caprices is extraordinary; played in its entirety, the caprices take well over an hour to play.

On the one hand, A-natural provides Rochberg with a red-thread of continuity that guarantees unity in an extraordinarily heterogeneous sampling of styles from the baroque, classical, romantic, high modern, to the mid-20th Century avant garde. A-natural is also the *note par-excellence*; it is the note to which symphony orchestras tune; it is mentioned in Mallarmé’s ‘Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun,’ and it is the title of an American poetic classic, Louis Zukovsky’s book-length poem A. In addition, the re-iterated A-natural is an embodiment of Rochberg’s gaze back at the history of music.

Rochberg’s Paganini

There is something odd about the sound of the theme of Paganini’s Caprice 24 at the end of Rochberg’s Caprice Variations. For one thing, Paganini seems to be barely disguised core of this music from the beginning. For me, the entire work springs aesthetically *from*, and at the same time aspires *to*, the Paganini Caprices. Hearing the minimally altered theme of the Paganini Caprice 24 itself at the end is witty on one level, and reveal-

⁴³ Only one of the caprices uses rigorously serial techniques—caprice 42. In this work Rochberg creates a 12-tone circle of fifths progression with the hexachord <10, 11, 5, 9, 1, 7> transposed up a perfect fourth three times to <3, 4, 10, 2, 6, 0>, <8, (wrong note), 3, 7, 11, 5>, <1, 2, 8, 0, 4, 10>.

ing in an uncanny way, on the other—like Dorothy and the viewer behind her realizing that the Wizard is just a little man behind a screen at the end of the film *The Wizard of Oz*. Or, it is as if an odd bit of reality impinged itself on a world of representation; or as if an object fit just right in the space of the *objet petit a* of Examples 24 and 25. Of course, were such a thing to happen, the psychic apparatus would wind down like a loop without a break statement.

Or imagine what we see when we stand between two mirrors—reflections bend in twin and complementary directions into infinity. Hearing the Rochberg's Paganini at the end of his Caprice Variations is like suddenly having a transparent head (no longer in the way); it is as if we could stand and look squarely into the opposing mirrors and see all the way to a single vanishing point at the center of our eyes / mirrors.

POVZETEK

V sestavku začenjam s ponovnim branjem Herolda Blooma »Strašljivost vplivanja« (1973). Postavim jo v kontekst anglo-ameriške literarne kritike in ponovno preučim razburljiv sprejem od njene izdaje leta 1973 dalje, upošteva je njeno novo izdajo 1997. ter njeno aplikacijo v glasbi. Osredotočim se na novejša in še zlasti uspešne glasbene adaptacije Blooma, nakar razpravljam o tem, kaj bi pomenila aplikacija tega modela vpliva na glasbena dela poznega 20. stoletja.

V drugi polovici razpravljanja se osredotočim na podrobno analizo George Rochbergovih *Kapricioznih variacij za violino brez spremljave*

(1972). Znano je, kako se je Rochberg v poznih 60. in zgodnjih 70. letih vrnil k svojim predhodnikom; njegov 3. godalni kvartet in *Kapriciozne variacije* utelešajo posledice te vrnitve oziroma zaobrnitve. Taka poteza vsebuje bogate zgodovinske in teoretske implikacije za umeščanje Blooma v glasbo. Sprva se zdi, da Rochberg v zgodovini glasbe svobodno in veselo nabira gradivo za svoje delo. In vendar to svobodo in veselje blažijo znaki bolestne pokorščine večjim elementom oblikovne enovitosti in tesnih medsebojnih povezav v makrostrukturi dela. Poglavlje sklene vprašanje, kaj bi pomenilo govoriti o možnosti, da je pri Rochbergu na delu vpliv ugodja oziroma neugodja.