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Gloves & Grease

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An abstract of Gloves & Grease
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Abstract

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By Jon Shapiro

My project draws on two musical experiences I have had in order to outline emerging musical forms and conventions. The first is the process of teaching children pop songs at a summer camp, and the second is the process of creating a sound design for a student theatre production. In the former environment, beginning musicians are exposed to the basic elements of music. They learn how to hear and perform melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic components of a song with a group of musicians. The latter environment allows the musician to experiment with these rules, and through digital manipulation, create new forms with different expressive possibilities.

The biggest difference between the two environments is the function of musical codes. At the camp the children's goal is to reproduce their favorite recordings, so the codes must be repeated as faithfully as possibly. While the codes have produced the children's favorite songs, they have also allowed them to be regulated like non-artistic commodities in a capitalist economy. But in the process of sound design, these codes can be transgressed. By examining the politics that shape these codes, we can see that their transgression is liberating for the musician and the work.

These three components, the basic elements of music, digital manipulation, and the theoretical bridge between the two of them, are crucial for today's musicians.

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Gloves & Grease

My thesis is about musical forms and conventions and has two main sections. The first chronicles the time I have spent teaching at Summer Music Programs (SMP), a summer camp located outside of Philadelphia. The camp provides children between the ages of eleven and seventeen with the unique opportunity to play in a band where they get to choose the songs they learn. This experience gives them more freedom than they are used to in their school's jazz combos and chamber ensembles, but they are still subject to the codes of the song, the predominant musical form of twentieth century U.S. pop. It is important for the children to listen to and follow these codes, as they are necessary for a group of musicians to play together. In addition to considering how the technology provided by the camp determines the music that gets selected, I will also show that the codes give voice to a song by limiting the children's musical freedom.

The second section is about my experience creating the sound design for the production of Ariel Dorfman's "Death and the Maiden," presented from April 8th-18th, 2009 by Starving Artists Productions (SAP), Emory University's student theatre group. Music is freed from the conventions that constrain it on the SMP stage for two reasons. The first is that it accompanies the dramatic action of a play instead of being the primary focus, allowing it to share the burden of meaning. The second is that SAP's stage is equipped with more sophisticated technology, opening up digital manipulations that are not possible with the children's analogue instruments. There are moments in the sound design that utilize fragments of songs to enrich the meaning of "Death and the Maiden."

This is an example of musical expression through breaking the codes taught at SMP. The two sections function together to create a synthesis of two different conceptions of music. By comparing them side-by-side, code-by-code, we can see that to fail on one musical stage is sometimes to succeed on another.

The children at the camp need to learn to listen to the musical components of a song, such as the melody, harmony, and rhythm. But on the SAP stage these elements are less prominent than the overall moods created by the sounds and their interaction with the themes of "Death and the Maiden." The works of theorists Trinh T. Minh-ha, Jacques Attali, and Susan McClary will serve as the framework for a type of listening and composition that encourages new forms of musical thought and practice. Although I began the sound design by delving into experimental practices, I ultimately came back to song structures, and found a way to use them that synthesized my experiences on both of the aforementioned stages.

Summer Music Programs:

...two, three, four, ***one***!

This is a game we play called 'find the downbeat.' We play it in the rehearsal rooms when the children are not focusing, not listening to each other. The children are not playing together. They are all playing slightly different tempos, as if they were not even in the same room. How can musicians—drummers especially—play together and not count? The first explanation would have to be that while these children are more devoted to music than the average young white male from the suburbs of Philadelphia (by far the most prominent demographic at the camp) they are not here to learn a craft; a lot

of them are here because their parents need them out of the house during the summer. Which is fine, since it is not the camp's goal to produce the next Mozart.

The camp started in 1993 and uses Harcum College's facilities for rehearsal space. Each session is a week long and the number of students ranges anywhere from sixteen to nearly one-hundred. The amount of staff working each week varies accordingly. The staff-to-student ratio is usually one to four. Rehearsals take place Monday through Wednesday. Thursday they get to record in a professional studio, and Friday they perform in Harcum College's cafeteria for their parents and friends.[1] While the rehearsal process is stringent for thirteen-year-olds with reduced attention spans, it is hardly comparable to the arduous labor that the Beatles put in night after night in Hamburg that transformed their status from another cover band to one of the most respected and successful pop acts. The children can take water breaks whenever they want, and if a part is too challenging, their instructor will simplify it for them.

"Find the Downbeat" is a tongue-in-cheek way of illustrating the importance of listening. Before the campers can play together, they must understand that listening while playing with a band means something different than listening in other situations. Musicians playing with a band must use their ear to weave between all the instruments in the group, making sure that they can hear what the other players are doing and that their own contributions are helping to keep the song on track. This active listening is different than putting on a song and focusing on the lyrics, or only trying to find the groove in order to dance.

Getting the children to listen to each other in this way is the most difficult task. Even by Friday's performance, a discerning ear will note that each band has at least one

member playing slightly out of tune or time. This is to be expected and does not capture the essence of this listening problem. In the rehearsal rooms, the problem becomes most obvious during the first run-throughs of a song. It often happens to the bassist, who fills a musical role that most beginning musicians do not appreciate and the others in the group pay the least attention. The bassist will make a mistake in the form of the song, perhaps forget to go to the chorus and will start the verse pattern while the rest of the band plays the form correctly. Instead of noticing that the rest of the band is playing the chorus, and then stopping to correct the mistake, he or she continues to play the verse. Meanwhile the rest of the band, concentrating on their respective parts, does not notice either. The song inevitably derails.

In one rehearsal, in the middle of a run-through, I heard the bass cut out and looked at the bassist who had accidently stepped on his cable, causing it to fall out of his instrument and lie at his feet while he continued to play. I waited for him to notice and plug it back in. He never did. Once the song ended I asked him how he felt about the run. He said it was fine. Being purposefully overdramatic I asked him if he was carefully listening to himself as well as the band, and if he was sure that he *heard* himself playing in time and following the form. Exasperated, he said he had. I told him to look at his feet and he slapped himself on his forehead. He knew there was no way to hear an unplugged electric bass over two electric guitars, drums, and vocals.

It is unfair to say that the bassist was not listening correctly. He was still listening to the band on some level and letting the music affect him. But his ear was not honed in to each instrument and the sounds they produced together, the type of listening required for a band to function as a cohesive unit. He was utilizing a type of gestalt listening in

which the ear engages with music like a student with a survey history course. In such a course dates are not as important as big-picture ideas and patterns. Similarly, for the gestalt listener, intervals are not as important as the overall mood created by the sounds. This is one way to listen to playlists, by observing the relationship between the songs and trying to discern meaning in the order in which they were sequenced.

The children's difficulties with the first type of listening glared every time I asked them if they knew how to play a twelve-bar blues. I usually asked on Mondays to get the children playing and listening to each other. Very few of them said they knew how and the ones who claimed to be able to proved to have only a superficial knowledge of the form. They could tell me that the form was a repeating pattern using the I-IV-V chords, but were not comfortable enough with the form to play all the way through. This issue gets at a reoccurring problem that I faced as I taught.

If the children want to play a Beatles song, it is clear at the outset that they will not produce anything comparable to the original recording. Amateur teenagers cannot touch the work of professional prodigies. The fact that the children cannot correctly play a twelve-bar blues starts to explain why. The amount of blues material that Led Zeppelin pilfered has become well known, but the same can be said for any rock and roll act. It is not a one-to-one correlation, being able to play a twelve-bar blues well does not mean that a musician can play every rock song. However, it does add to the foundational elements that all rock musicians draw from.

Imagine "Purple Haze"[2] is the only Hendrix song a guitarist knows. So many questions about how Hendrix was able to play in this style are self-evident if the guitarist knows how to really listen to "Red House."[3] Hendrix, through his gifts and practice, had

at his disposal tropes and techniques of the blues guitarists who preceded him. This network of guitarists is one of the musical traditions he is drawing from. His tone, the notes he could hear over every chord, and the references he drew from the oral tradition of the blues lexicon make it hard to place Hendrix in either the rock, R&B, or blues idiom. But what is clear from the recordings he made was that he had internalized years of blues history and tradition and was continuing to absorb all the music around him as evidenced by his cover of the Beatles' "Sgt. Pepper"[4] on June 4th, 1967, just days after its release.

The same can be said about Miles Davis' sparse playing in his electric years. What is different about Miles' sparse playing, in the opening of "In a Silent Way"[5] for example, that differs from what an amateur trumpeter would produce if limited to the same small selection of notes? Has the amateur musician spent twenty years playing as the most renowned jazz trumpeter? And it is safe to assume that he or she did not have the discipline to practice as much as Miles, nor to have played on his or her own time the same amount that Miles did before a paying crowd. This is another example, shared by all brilliant musicians, of paying dues and building a framework.

Here is another, potentially more frustrating game that gets played every Monday morning. I'll ask my new group of children, "So guys, what kind of music do we like?"

"I don't know."

"Well if you don't know, who should I ask?"

"I don't know."

"OK... I see you own an electric guitar, do you like Jimi Hendrix?"

"Yeah."

"Would you be interested in playing a Hendrix tune this week?"

"I don't know."

The children’s music collections span hard drives and they cannot organize it all in their heads. The iPod has changed the camp. I remember attending the camp when I was thirteen, the summer of 1999. The song selection process was very different. Although we had the technology to burn CDs of downloaded or borrowed music, there were no portable databases comparable to the iPod. This limited the number of songs that were feasible to learn during the week, and made the selection process easier. Of course we were still reticent to name our favorite bands in front of a room of strangers, but we also owned copies of all our favorite albums, a modest collection compared to any of today's campers' iPods, and by limiting our options the selection process was much easier.

Consider the act of putting a CD into a stereo. The format is digital but playing it requires an analog preparation that seems intensive compared to the digital act of queuing up songs on an iPod. By today's standards the process of selecting a CD, removing it from its case, placing it in the stereo and pressing play seems archaic when compared to the efficient digital thumb work that can send you through thousands of albums in under a minute on an iPod.

This luxury afforded by the purely digital interface has only added to the obstacles of Monday mornings. When I went to the camp, someone put on a CD, we sat and listened to the song and then discussed whether everybody wanted to play it. Now it is common to see a camper plug his iPod into the PA and click through songs without letting them finish. The children have absorbed this mentality and they seem to get

restless after thirty seconds of a new song. Exposure to their own vast digital catalogues has hindered their ability to listen carefully.

This makes us think about the different contexts in which we encounter songs. The rehearsal room, the car, at home, at different types of musical venues. These different contexts produce different types of songs that are contingent upon variables such as audience and technical equipment. The camp is careful not to advertise itself as a "rock camp" for financial reasons, to attract a wider range of clients, as well as creative ones. There are weeks when the camp brings together a variety of genres and arrangements together on one stage. There is a favorite story that gets retold about a group that played a heavy metal arrangement of "In the Hall of the Mountain King." There have been a few jazz ensembles of horn players, and a group that I taught played the Notorious B.I.G.'s "Big Poppa."[6] But the predominant genre of music is still rock, which makes sense given the technology provided by the camp for the children. The camp recreates the context in which these rock songs were written and recorded.

The Hip-Hop club is a newer musical context and relies on more sophisticated technology than what the camp provides. In its early stages, before the digital revolution, its music relied on turntables in addition to the amplification systems described above. Today drum machines, synthesizers, and digital sampling devices are used to record, play, and remix the music. In simple terms, if the early careers of Dylan and the Beatles were aimed at the New York folk club and the Liverpool or Hamburg R&B clubs respectively, then today's mainstream club music uses songs such as Usher's "Yeah!"[7] for its model which combines the oral tradition and bass heavy beats established by pioneers in Hip-Hop with emerging sub-genres such as crunk.

In this model where pop music is determined by the type of club that will serve as the ideal stage for the song, we can see that the setup of the camp is rooted in 60s and 70s' music that relied on solid state technology and conventional song structures. Consider the 'three club' example above of Dylan, The Beatles, and Usher. The first example I will use is Bob Dylan's performance of Woody Guthrie's "Car, Car"[8] with Dave van Ronk at the Gaslight Grill in 1961. The second is the Beatles' "She Loves You."[9] Although recorded in 1963, after the Beatles had been signed to EMI and were no longer a club band, it still captures the essence of what they were trying to do in their early days, as if they perfected the art of the concert hall in a studio. Then I will jump ahead to Usher's 2004 hit "Yeah!" All three songs have pop novelties that engage their audiences on different levels. I will evaluate how each song's novelty can be translated to the camp's stage. In demonstrating that Usher's hit relies on technologies not provided by SMP for rehearsal, I will show that newer music requires a different stage that offers new possibilities for sonic expression. This is the stage for playlists, programs, and noise. This is also the stage, as we shall see, for *Death and the Maiden.*

Dylan's performance of Woody Guthrie's "Car, Car" at the Gaslight Grill from September 1961 is a terrific recording of the atmosphere in the club, the stage to which Dylan was aiming his art. As the tape starts we hear Dylan say, "I can't do the other one on tape" which immediately brings to mind the separate criteria of a song worthy for performance versus a song worthy of recording. It serves as an inadvertent disclaimer and, along with Dylan's introduction of Dave Van Ronk, signifies the impromptu nature of the performance.

Dylan, on guitar and harmonica, sings lead and Van Ronk sings backup. The most striking feature of the song is the reoccurring harmony between Dylan and Van Ronk's humming and lip buzzing that imitate the sound of a car engine. This clever and unusual performance technique is perfect for a small audience who expect to hear folk songs with the usual sophistication of content and melody. Proof of this comes from the audience's reaction at the end of the song. We hear a member exclaim, "Yeah! Yeah buddy, yeah!" Using this colloquial expression, 'yeah,' that runs through each of the three example songs, in conjunction with the affectionate term 'buddy,' the listener expresses his surprise and approval of this novelty song. His outburst is striking and compresses the feelings of camaraderie between audience and performer that Dylan has evoked. The performance is almost precocious. This would be a welcomed addition to a camp band's set as it is a deceptively simple song with a strong melody and a fun novelty that draws an audience's attention. The intimacy of the stripped down arrangement would also be a welcomed change.

Turning to the Beatles' pop masterpiece, "She Loves You," we have to switch gears and consider the implications of a full rock band's instrumentation. "Car, Car" was performed before an attentive seated audience while an upbeat electric number like "She Loves You" was performed for dancing, screaming teenagers. The strong melody and characteristic Ringo shuffle ensure that the song hits its mark as memorable and danceable. The simple yet crucial novelty of the song is in the vocal harmonies, specifically the major 6th on the last 'yeah' of the refrain. Four-part vocal harmony was a rare feat in early Rock and Roll. The Beatles incorporated it and brought it to the center of attention by ending the song with the lingering interval. The controversy surrounding

its use is a sign of the times since there are no harmonies off limits in today's pop music. The Beatles had to convince George Martin that it was acceptable to end a rock and roll song with a major 6th chord.

Although the textural effect of the major 6th sung against the tonic chord is beautiful, it is a treat for the musically literate who can both identify the extended harmony and recognize its inclusion in a rock and roll song as unique. That said, and aside from it being technically demanding for the average camper, it would translate well to the SMP stage because it relies on musical conventions that can be performed with the available technology of two electric guitars, bass, drums, and PA system for vocals.

The style of the sparse beat and synth line in Usher's song has become ubiquitous in today's R&B clubs. These characteristics owe to the production of Lil Jon, pioneer of the crunk sub-genre of Hip-Hop. He cites music he encountered in Atlanta strip clubs as the source of these synth sounds and beats[10]. Notice the connection to the Beatles' early days in Hamburg where they played a number of strip clubs. Part of what made Usher's hit unique is that it combined the modern R&B sound with the emergence of crunk.

While it is possible to recreate the drum sequencers on an analogue set, the synthesizer melodies and textures on guitar, and the harmonically ambiguous bass glissandos on a bass guitar, something is lost in translation. This discrepancy arises from the inadequacy of the technology provided by the camp for recreating the atmosphere of a contemporary R&B club. For instance the rhythmic groove does not rely on the pocket created by the relationship of a steady bassline to a drum beat. Instead the beat is very sparse, a kick on the first downbeat and second upbeat, a handclap on the second and fourth beats, and an eighth-note hi-hat pattern during the verse, a longstanding Hip-Hop

convention since artists like Run-D.M.C. brought it to the mainstream in the early eighties.

Since we can break down the elements of the song and describe them in conventional music terms, we see that it is possible for musicians to cover it with the traditional musical lineup promoted by the camp. But in order to do this each part must be transcribed and this brings up questions of authenticity. In order to reproduce the song authentically, the camp would have to either provide sampling technology, thereby allowing the children to sample the actual instrumental parts of the song, or drum machines and synthesizers so that they can program the parts themselves.

The bands that have the greatest success on Friday are the ones that pick simple songs centered around the guitar, bass, drums instrumentation provided by the camp. They are the bands with the most talented campers, but they also rehearse well during the week. Rehearsing well entails repeatedly playing through the song while listening carefully in the manner described above. They have internalized the form of the song and adhere to its codes, meaning that they know how to navigate through the melody and harmony and can do so in time and tune with each other.

In the camp archive of all the recordings since its inception in 1993, it is no surprise that Nirvana was covered more than any other band. In fact, the camp has an unofficial rule that bands are no longer allowed to cover "Smells Like Teen Spirit,"[11] because from 1993-1996 a band played it almost every week. The song had a devastating impact on popular music in the early 1990s. In early 1992 *Nevermind* replaced Michael Jackson's *Dangerous* as the number one album on the *Billboard* charts.[12] Nirvana's aesthetic was radically different from the hair metal and sentimental pop of the 1980s,

offering the public an exciting alternative. However, the strong melody and concise song structure are often overlooked as reasons for its success.

Setting aside the sociology of uncovering the reasons for Nirvana's rise to fame on the national level, their ubiquity at the camp can be explained in the musical terms described above. They provided campers with strong songs that could be transported to Friday's stage. The strength of Cobain's songwriting and Nirvana as a band came through as I listened to nearly thirty camper renditions of "Teen Spirit." While the Nirvana's simplicity is sometimes criticized as amateurish, none of the camper bands could accurately reproduce the song. None of the drummers could play the original beat and none of the singers could flawlessly sing the verse melody. In the chorus, even the prepubescent singers could not hit the Bb. This speaks to Nirvana's credibility considering that these are the same problems that bands have in covering the Beatles, of which there were fifteen attempts in 2008 alone. The drummers miss the subtlety of Ringo's swing, evidence that the popular criticisms of his musical ability are myth. Lennon and McCartney's almost perfect intonation and, particularly McCartney's, range are also completely lost on the singers.

In scouring the archives I found that of the most commonly performed songs, the ones that were successful, meaning that they adhered to the codes set forth by the original recordings, were "Wild Thing,"[13] "Blitzkrieg Bop,"[14] "Sweet Child o' Mine,"[15] although only a few of the guitarists could play the main riff flawlessly, and "When I Come Around."[16] A number of AC/DC songs, usually "T.N.T."[17] and "Highway to Hell"[18], are also scattered throughout the camp's history. These are performed well by the better groups because they are not demanding in the ways mentioned above. The rhythm is

straightforward, meaning that the drum parts are variations on the standard rock beat in common time. While the melodies are strong, they do not demonstrate the same complexity and sophistication as "Teen Spirit" or virtually any Beatles song. Bands like Guns N' Roses and AC/DC, fronted by singers who consistently sing in their upper registers pose a problem for some of the male campers. However, since the entire melody is too high, not just a few outlying notes as in the "Teen Spirit" example, transposing it down in octave is an easy and effective solution.

There is an implicit agreement between the musicians that they will not alter the structure of the song during a performance. It is a political agreement since each member is surrendering his or her power to deviate from the codes of the form and thereby derail the song. That is why it is the instructors' job to clearly explain the codes and to correct the campers when they deviate from them. While these strict rules liberate and protect the rights of the song, they limit the children's range of expression. The instructors teach the form of a song to children and caution them to handle it delicately. It is a form of self-negation. The wants of the performer become irrelevant in order to serve the larger purpose of the song.

Recording a song solidifies its form into a document and listening to it allows others to learn it. But in covering a song its form becomes malleable again. Any mistake or deliberate alteration changes the form into something other than what is on the recording. The ideology of the camp insists that the finished sculpture must conform as closely as possible to the polished version that we hear on recordings. The children must wear gloves so their fingerprints do not mar the smooth surface of the original. While their fingerprints are imperfections, they are also unique statements of identity that are

sacrificed in this type of rehearsal process. The next section discusses a context for music where these fingerprints are not only tolerated, but become the focus of attention.

Leaving Summer Music Programs:

Returning to the example of the camp bassist who accidently unplugged his bass, we should give him the benefit of the doubt regarding his listening capability. Gestalt listening is not necessarily careless or immature. What if he had said to me he did not notice that his bass was unplugged because he was transfixed by each hi-hat stroke? I would have to encourage him not to listen this way while he's playing with other musicians who hope to produce a song together. However, in another context this type of listening is equally valid. It is like exploring non-Euclidian geometry. Sometimes two parallel lines do intersect and there are entire mathematical systems built on this. But a student who answers that two parallel lines intersect on a test about Euclidian geometry will be marked incorrect.

The generation that is developing through the digital revolution is accustomed to reorganizing the authoritative version of music, the album released by a recording label. The ease with which one can compile a playlist on iTunes allows the listener to change the story of an album by changing the order, or even create new stories using songs that span different albums. Many music listeners have taken this a step further and compiled playlists that encompass not only the songs on the official pressing of an album, but also the B-Sides that were recorded at the same time but left off at the artist's discretion.

This processes of recombination is also a form of communication with a nuanced dialect. Both the compiler and the listener are able to create meaning in the sequence of

songs. For example, a friend of mine got a mix tape from a young woman he liked. She put Leonard Cohen's "Suzanne"[19] at the end of the first side. In the silence between the end of the song and the end of the first side of the tape, a fragment from the last verse of the song somehow got repeated. "They're leaning out for love/They will lean that way forever/While Suzanne holds the mirror." He played this for me in his dorm and insisted that the woman of his fancy was trying to send him a message. He refused my suggestion that it was just a glitch. He never asked her whether this repetition was intentional. Regardless of the compiler's intention, my friend and I arrived at two different readings of the situation.

The repeated fragment carried meaning even though my friend did not know the chord progression or the intervallic contour of the melody. He attributed meaning to the lyrics, the overall somber mood of the harmony and melody, but specifically its unusual placement on the tape. Perhaps he was imposing the form of a letter, hearing the fragment as a post-script to the message of the mix. In this process of recombining sounds, form is ambiguous. We have clear definitions, or codes, for forms such as sonatas, concerti, and songs, but what do we call a pastiche of the three, constructed as a digital recombination of fragments from each?

"And over there there's broken bones

There's only music, so that there's new ringtones"

--Arctic Monkeys[20]

The camp teaches the codes of pop music, the codes to which songs in the mainstream media conform. In Jacques Attali's analysis of the effects different stages of

capitalism have had on the function of music in a society, he argues that these codes dictate music's form and how it is produced. Attali's argument is that the effects of the political economy on music are far-reaching, that its laws "take the place of censorship laws"[21] (8). He wants to alert people that "listening to music is listening to all noise, realizing that its appropriation and control is a reflection of power, that it is essentially political," and that the codes that regulate its production and consumption are the same codes that, "analyze, mark, restrain, train, repress, and channel the primitive sounds of language, of the body, of tools, of objects, of the relations to self and others" (Attali 6). Recording technology has allowed music to be stockpiled as a commodity. Recorded media can be controlled the same as any other products from hair gel to powdered soup. In addition it also allows whatever ideals music espouses to be repeated *ad nauseum*. Music is inescapable today. It comes out of iPods, cars, and cellphones. It is on television on programs, commercials, and station identification bumpers. It is played in restaurants, stores, and sporting events.

The ease with which we can play back recorded sounds even helped make sure the music at the 2009 U.S. Presidential Inauguration went off without a hitch. Preventing the musician's cold hands and instruments from making a performance error similar to the one between Obama and Chief Justice Roberts. Unbeknownst to the public, the music that played over the video feed of the Quartet playing John William's "Air and Simple Gifts" was not coming from their instruments. It was not even coming from the visible microphones and monitors that were left on stage despite the claim of Carole Florman from the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies that "no one's trying to fool anybody"[22]. It is true that cold weather threatens a musical performance by

increasing the chance that a string or an instrument will break or go out of tune and also by stiffening to performers fingers. However, Florman avoided acknowledging the implications of a group of classical musicians miming its performance at a political ceremony:

> It's not something we would announce, but it's not something we would try to hide… frankly, it would never have occurred to me to announce it. The fact they were forced to perform to tape because of the weather did not seem relevant, nor would we want to draw attention away from what we believed the news is, that we were having a peaceful transition of power from one administration to the next.

This precaution was made to silence the potential noise of a broken string or an out-of-tune interval, noises that would muddle the representation of the transition of power. According to Attali, we need to examine how these codes standardize sound and who has the power to set them. Florman's denial of the significance behind the musicians' charade is in line with Attali's claim that, "everywhere we look, the monopolization of the broadcast of messages, the control of noise, and the institutionalization of the silence of others assure the durability of power" (Attali 8).

One reason experimental artists break from conventions is to demonstrate the oppressive politics that have created them. Trinh T. Minh-ha writes about how music has become the "opium of cinema," insofar as it, "determines characters, expression, mood, atmosphere, transition, orientation and meaning. Music drowns out all life noises that accidently break in on the created world" (202)[23]. It is used to plug up holes in the sound wall, and these holes are reminders of our mortality. This latter point echoes Attali's assertion that, "life is full of noise and that death alone is silent" (Attali 3). Conventions

dictate that we plug the sound holes in order to "breathe into the shadows on the screen some of the life that photography has taken away" (201).

Minh-ha's essay, "Holes in the Sound Wall" is structured as a dialogue between her and an archetypal male figure who complains about the soundtrack of one of her films. His words are printed in standard font while her responses are italicized, "Your soundtrack is a disaster! *Why? I asked HIM who knows the rules of precedence. Who can evaluate with certainty what ranks above and what ranks below in the art of ordering film sound*" (201). By personifying the opposition she faced in pursuing her experimental methods she is able to uncover the hidden politics that lie in conventions, the same way that Attali claims that traditional musical codes silence as many composers as they give voice to.

She focuses on the gender politics of a conventional soundtrack's fear of silence, "Above all, no hole. Please no hole. And should there be any, let's block it up. With music" (201). This statement is repeated throughout the dialogue. She argues that conventional music undoes the deconstructive work that she is attempting with the visuals, "*reintroducing thereby in a forceful manner the mainstream devices (of description, expression, association, identification) the images attempt at undermining*" (204). In order to solve this problem, Minh-ha reconsiders the relationship between noise and music. She arrives at a conclusion similar to Attali's relativism, that meaning is ultimately determined by listeners, which includes the performer, "*Whether noises are music or not… depends on the hearer's way of living: how one listens to them, absorbs, and recreates them"* (205).

Attali's solution to the threat of music's stagnation by its strict conformity to codes is to reconceptualize our notion of composition. Perhaps music does not have to conform to preexisting codes laden with political history. Music can be composed at the same time as the codes to which it conforms:

> We are all condemned to silence – unless we create our own relation with the world and try to tie other people into the meaning we thus create. That is what composing is. Doing solely for the sake of doing, without trying artificially to recreate the old codes in order to reinsert communication into them. Inventing new codes, inventing the message at the same time as the language. Playing for one's own pleasure, which alone can create the conditions for new communication. A concept such as this seems natural in the context of music. But it reaches far beyond that; it relates to the mergence of the free act, self-transcendence, pleasure in being instead of having (134).

We saw that bands succeeded on the SMP stage by adhering to the codes of a song that were crafted and learned through two separate processes involving repetition. In his method of composition Attali is calling for a different approach, where the message is not communicated by replaying a code, rather it is communicated in the act of creating a new code. This threatens our current musical network based on the model of composition and then distribution of material copies.

An example of this act of self-transcendence is to conceive of the turntable as an instrument of composition, not repetition. This is the foundation of the art of sampling. As an instrument of repetition its relation to a record is analogous to the relation between a boiling pot of water and a pack of powdered soup. It is the domestic counterpart of the purchased commodity, allowing the latter to be consumed in the method prescribed by the network of distribution. It contributes to our tendency to locate the pleasure we derive from music in its material medium, to point to the records we have as its source. As an instrument of composition, the record player frees music from the political

economy's sentence of repetition and unites the listener with the work. I will return to the implications of playing a record as artistic expression in the section on the sound design methods for *Death and Maiden*.

In her essay, "The refuge of Counterconvention,"[24] Susan McClary explains the counterconventional tendencies in nineteenth century German music, citing Norbert Elias' explanation of how, "eighteenth-century German culture constituted itself in part as a reaction against what was perceived as the superficiality of Francophile courts." She adds that, "German *Kulture* sought the unmediated expression of the inner self," something that required acting against accepted musical conventions (McClary 111). McClary identifies the symbolic refutation of old conventions as the catalyst for the formation of exciting new ones, "when the public signs of reason came to be regarded as impediments to free self-development, then the (no less public) signs of irrationality became a popular alternative" (111-2).

Ariel Dorfman's *Death and the Maiden* takes its name from Schubert's *String Quartet No. 14 in D Minor.* It was written in 1824, after the changes in German music to which McClary refers. The piece becomes a dominant force in the protagonist Paulina's life and in relation to her tragic experience exemplifies this "unmediated expression of [her] inner self." "Death and the Maiden" as a motif has its roots in Renaissance painting, usually depicting a woman dancing with a death figure. As we shall see, Dorfman uses this motif to express Paulina's subjection to a death figure in musical terms.

Death and the Maiden:

Written in 1990 by Ariel Dorfman, *Death and the Maiden* tells the story of a country after a tyrannical dictator, presumably Chile and Pinochet, has been removed from power. The protagonist, Paulina Escobar, is the wife of a lawyer, Gerardo Escobar, who has been named by the new government to head a truth commission that will investigate "human rights violations" committed under the dictatorship, "that ended in death or the presumption of death" (Dorfman 9). Paulina, a survivor of torture and rape, is tormented by the irony that survivors are not to be included in the archive created by the commission. Dorfman based the commission in the play after President Patricio Aylwin's model in 1990, which was limited in the same way. "In limiting the commission's scope Aylwin was being prudent and practical; he was trying to address the horrors of the past but in a way that would minimize the risk of Chile's democratic future by giving the still powerful generals as little cause as possible for staging a second coup" (Morace 136). Dorfman shows us the costs of Aylwin's prudence and practicality through Paulina's forced silence.

By chance, her husband brings a man, Roberto Miranda, whom Paulina suspects is her torturer, who blindfolded and raped her while playing Schubert's quartet "Death and the Maiden," into her home. Having never seen her captor's face, she thinks she recognizes his voice and, one night, ties him to a chair and refuses to let him leave until he confesses to his crime. The ending is ambiguous, we never know if she has caught the right man.

First performed in Santiago, *Death and the Maiden* was not received well by the middle class who saw it as either an attack on the commission or the victims. It seemed to

open old wounds, hindering the nation's healing process. But this willing amnesia is what Dorfman was reacting against. After a staged reading on November 25 1990, part of the "Censored Theatre" project of the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA), the institute spent its entire £2,000 budget to bring the play, then titled *Scars on the Moon*, to the London International Festival of Theatre (LIFT). After LIFT, *Death and the Maiden* was performed in July of 1991 on the small Upstairs Stage at the Royal Hall, along with other international plays including Harold Pinter's *New World Order* and Griselda Gambaro's *Putting Two and Two Together*. *Death and the Maiden* enjoyed better reception once it had been removed from the tumultuous political environment it was addressing and contextualized with other plays that dealt with similar political issues. In November of 1991 it moved to Royal Court's Main Stage and then to the Duke of York in the West End. Once again it drew support from being contextualized amongst other plays that dealt with "history through the experience of the diseased or damaged"[25], Tony Kushner's *Millennium Approaches* and Alan Bennett's *The Madness of George III*, which also appeared in 1991.[26]

By 1995 the play had been performed in over fifty-seven countries, including a performance in an English prison and one at the Manchester City of Drama Festival that was also aired on BBC Radio 4. The play's success may seem baffling because it transcends the national politics at its core and is able to "catch the conscience of an international audience".[27] The density of the text, "underlaid with political, social, and feminist arguments… give immense ethical power to a revenge drama".[28]

Robert Morace argues that Dorfman's inclusion of the complicated and specific political details of Pinochet's dictatorship is what makes Paulina's story universal. "By

grounding Paulina's madness in concrete historical circumstances, by investing her madness with the mythic power of a Medea or an Elektra, and by rendering her sexual anguish inseparable from political anguish, both literally and metaphorically," Dorfman's narrative is able to communicate with his audience on levels that transcend national or historical barriers.[29]

Death and the Maiden is about uncovering painful truths. Gerardo's Commission is aimed at uncovering the truth about the crimes committed by the old government so that the nation can "move on." The play is also about uncovering misogyny where it lurks. Dorfman shows how men have woven it into social practices such as division of labor and humor that are accepted by society at large, similar to Trinh Minh-ha uncovering it encoded in artistic forms and conventions.

Death and the Maiden asks serious questions on the topic of gender roles and norms. Why is it that Gerardo takes Roberto's side instead of his wife's? Should he trust her even though she is wielding a gun after having tied a man to a chair and gagged him with her underwear? Paulina cleverly responds to his statement, "while you point [that gun] at me, there is no possible dialogue" with the retort, "On the contrary, as soon as I stop pointing it at you, all dialogue will automatically terminate. If I put it down you'll use your strength to win the argument" (24). She knows that it is difficult to back up her grand accusation with reason. But this is not a matter of reason for Paulina, she has been tortured and forced to remain silent about it, and she finally explodes like a bomb.

Paulina has passed the fifteen years after being released in silence. The night she was released she found Gerardo in bed with another woman. She seems to have forgiven him, understanding that he had searched for her during the two months she was held

captive, but the two have not tried to talk about it since that night. As she presses him for details about the Commission, trying to get him to admit the irony that his efforts to help the victims of the tyrannical regime are keeping her quite, he ultimately responds with, "I don't like to talk about this, Paulina" (9). In his unsuccessful attempts to comfort her, he claims a greater level of maturity than he possesses. His words say one thing, that he will be willing to talk with her about her past, but his actions say another as his speech wanes and sputters out:

> But we'll have to talk about it, won't we, you and I? If I'm going to spend the next few months listening to the evidence, relatives and eyewitnesses and survivors—and each time I come back home I—and you wouldn't want me to keep all that to myself. And what if you… if you… (9)

His poor choice of words proves that he does not truly understand Paulina's suffering. He is implying that the time has come for the two to talk about these traumatic experiences because not talking about them will finally affect him. These painful memories have been ruminating in Paulina's mind for fifteen years, but only now that Gerardo will be faced with them is he ready to talk about them. These insensitive remarks show that Gerardo is unwilling to subject himself to these painful topics to relieve Paulina's tension, only his own.

After reading the script I had two reactions. The first was discomfort. It is emotionally taxing to be bombarded with these grim subjects at the extremes of human emotions. Everybody feels stress and experiences some degree of trauma, but this play is about feeling ruined after direct exposure to the darkest end of the human spectrum. What makes Paulina's case particularly tragic is that her husband refuses to focus on these

horrific topics and chooses silence for both of them, precluding himself from understanding the nature of his wife's condition.

My other reaction to the script was fascination with Dorfman's techniques in expressing this latter point. Specifically the unique way he uses music to articulate Paulina's isolation. The morning after Paulina binds and gags Dr. Miranda, she frightens him by wielding a gun and playing a cassette of "Death and the Maiden" that she found in his car. She plays the music and passionately tells Roberto how excited she is to have caught her torturer, meaning that she can exact revenge and reclaim the piece of music that has made her physically ill for the past fifteen years. In the process she wakes up Gerardo, who stumbles sleepily into the room and is horrified by Paulina's act of violence. He chastises her and turns off the cassette. He is understandably surprised and distressed by the sight of his armed wife and the condition of Dr. Miranda, but he does not notice that Paulina has been listening to "Death and the Maiden," the piece of music that she has vehemently avoided for the past fifteen years. If the two had been open about Paulina's emotions, he would have at least recognized that all this violence has given her a breakthrough.

Music is not discursive in the same way language is and it is difficult to elucidate the meanings it conveys. Dorfman has found a function for music that allows him to convey the discursive conclusions that develop slowly in the text in a single instance. The misunderstanding between Paulina and Gerardo is subtle and complex. It would require pages of language to explain and analyze how the married couple keeps perpetuating the silence that prevents their problems from being resolved. However this entire treatise is

conveyed in the single instant when Gerardo stops the tape without acknowledging the significance in the fact that it is playing in the first place.

I was excited to design the sound for a play that had a complex theory of music as its foundation. One of the central means of expression is determining the characters' relation to the Schubert Quartet. The fact that Roberto has this cassette in his car is used as evidence against him in the mock trial, Gerardo's obliviousness to its symbolic significance increases the rate at which he is drifting from his wife, and at the center of the ineffable meaning behind the music is Paulina.

In designing the sound for *Death and the Maiden* I relied on the methods of making sounds I felt most comfortable with. I have played guitar for ten years, and as much I would like to think that I spent the entire time practicing, I know that this is not the case. I spent a good deal of that time, eating, sleeping, bathing, going to the bathroom, going to school, playing with friends, interacting with my parents, watching television, playing on the computer, climbing trees, catching bees, opening and closing my mouth, in the dentists' chair, in the doctor's office, lying down, standing up, learning math, learning to read. I made sounds during all of these activities, and most of them of them I had also been doing for the decade before I started learning guitar. Taking Stockhausen's notion that music is organized sound led me to think about the music of everyday life.

After age three, when I acquired a primitive understanding of how to operate a VCR and a tape player, I gained greater control over my aural landscape, my soundscape. I did not realize it but these were the first instruments, besides my own body, that I learned. Traditional musical instruments, such as piano, the ones for which educational institutions provide instruction, have eclipsed the light of instruments that espouse a

different ideology. They are instruments made to make the patterns of musical intervals in the composer's mind into an audible reality. They imply the method of composition employed by the bands that write the songs heard from the SMP stage.

As a child my formal exposure to music took the form of my parents playing music from their stereo and eventually music classes at school. In both of these environments, electronic technology was only used to replay previously recorded music. I was only encouraged to create my own music with my voice and later my guitar. This was in the early 1990s when sampling had already become a well-established musical practice. Yet there was no explicit mention that choosing the music to come out of a set of speakers is a valid form of musical expression in the same way as choosing the notes that come out of one's mouth or instrument.

An important question to ask is who is responsible for the sound coming out of a set of speakers. Is it fair to say that the person responsible for the noise is the person operating the musical machinery rather than the person who performed the recorded sound? The answer seems to be yes. If I were to play music from my laptop in a library and refused to turn it off, I would certainly be removed for violating a library regulation related to sound. I was making noise so I should be removed. If I were playing "Eruption"[30], the library staff would not blame Eddie Van Halen they would blame me. It is undeniable that playing music declares our presence.

By considering the sounds that we force out of our stereos as expressions of ourselves, we can incorporate them into our compositions, letting them bring another layer of meaning. The sounds that we choose represent our tastes and the interaction that these sounds have with our environment go beyond a statement of presence and start to

reveal subtleties that make our presence unique. Imagine two Emory students walking across the Quadrangle, both listening to iPods to make the sounds of the walk more enjoyable by drowning out the ugly mechanical hum emanating from the top of the Administration Building. What is the difference between the two if one is listening to a piece by Richard Wagner and the other is listening to recording of a speech given by President James Wagner?

Dorfman uses the expressive possibilities of customizing the sounds that come out of a tape player, by selecting which tape it is reading, to represent the emotional distance between Gerardo and Paulina in the evocative scene described above. By taking this idea a step further I saw that there are other ways of using sound that Dorfman does not explore, yet also help to tell a story through non-discursive sound.

Editing the sound, customizing it to our own tastes is a statement of identity the way clothes are. Sound editing software allows us to go beyond combining songs together and suggesting a narrative, expression through playlists, and into the realm of meaning created by modifying the sound itself. Paulina has been forced to hear Schubert a certain way. It is impossible for another to hear what Paulina does in the quartet. It has been distorted somehow and as a result makes her physically ill. But this distortion exists in Paulina's head alone, yet another reason why she still feels imprisoned after fifteen years. Audio editing software gives its users a vast aural palette to rearrange the order of sounds in a music file, and even modulate the frequencies with such precision that a simple change can render a familiar piece of music unidentifiable. Distorting the Schubert quartet gives Paulina's trauma a representation in audible reality, the way older instruments gave sonic reality to melodies in a composer's mind.

In the change of sound itself the audience can hear her pain. When confronted with a changed sound, we cannot help but determine its distance from the original sound. For instance, speaking into a microphone and changing the pitch by turning a knob from 0 to 10 is quantifying the change the sound has undergone. This change represents the damage. What could cause a person to hear something *that* different than an ordinary string quartet when played “Death and the Maiden”?

The text continually emphasizes the failure of language to express the trauma felt by Paulina and the country as a whole. In the opening of the play, Gerardo fails to communicate with Paulina about her past, which has caused her to remain in silence about it for fifteen years. Later, in Act II Scene II, language fails him even in his attempt to express the impossibility of knowing a victim’s pain. Roberto asks him what it is that Paulina hopes to gain from his confession, Gerardo answers, “Maybe it liberates her from her phantoms, how can I know what goes on in people’s heads after they’ve been—” (46). Perhaps modified sounds, like those described by Minh-ha, succeed where discursive language continually fails.

The opening scene shows Paulina alone in the Escobar’s beach house in state of distress waiting for Gerardo to return from his meeting with the President that will determine whether or not he is appointed to the Commission. She sets the table only to clear it again and then sits in a chair in darkness. When she hears a car enter the driveway she grabs a gun and rushes to the window to see. I added a distorted rendition of “Death and the Maiden” to this scene that would foreshadow the themes of the play.

I used a recording of “Death and the Maiden” and layered it with an unidentifiable rumbling and used a digital filter to distort the quartet. The result elicits a visceral,

tangible effect. The music sounds like it is being drowned out, devoured by the grim memories of her trauma. The layer of rumbling, taken from Zorn's "Fleurs Du Mals"[31] casts a shadow against the strings which are sent through the filter that makes them sound more like the gas escaping through an alien anus than diamond nodes on a golden chain. In the landscape the audiences is seated before Paulina, but in the soundscape the audience is seated between Paulina's ears. Hearing the disturbing sounds that are floating around in her head, the audience can understand her paranoia and why her instinct is to reach for her gun when she hears noise outside.

At the end of the play the script calls for Mozart's "Dissonance" Quartet to be used as a transition into the final scene in which Paulina's dream of being able to attend a live performance of Schubert's "Death and the Maiden" is finally realized. I imported the first movement of Mozart's Quartet into an empty Logic file alongside Alice Coltrane's "Journey In Satchidananda"[32] because I liked the atmosphere of the latter, and thought it would help to represent the transition of place in the script. I wanted to cut up pieces of "Satchidananda" and layer them against the String Quartet. Before I started this process I simply played the two tracks alongside each other. Right away I was amazed at the amount of coincidences that occurred without any manipulation. Mozart's strings slowly grow in volume and intensity in between the lulls in the bass and tambura from the Coltrane track.

For this transition I chose to cut out the bass hits in "Satchidananda" and to recombine them to change the order of the bassline in a similar manner to Oswald's Plunderphonics, in which he loads samples of pop songs into a database and recombines them, treating them as raw data as opposed to music. This fades in after a simple,

atmospheric synthesizer pattern. It was the director's decision to accentuate the ambiguity in Paulina's final decision of whether or not to kill Roberto by adding a heavily treated sample of a gunshot that leaves the audience wondering if it is Paulina's gun or part of the music. In addition to this I also added samples of the actors' voices that I recorded during a rehearsal as the Mozart quartet fades in to the center of attention. The "Dissonance" Quartet is famous for its unusually slow introduction, and the transition into the faster tempo is marked by the end of this first aural scene. I accentuated this transition by adding pieces of Zorn's "La Fée Verte,"[33] an atmospheric piece including rolls of thunder and unidentifiable wet rumblings, against the quartet for about a minute before the mood changes. When the tempo finally picks up, it is very clear that we are in a different place.

The Mozart transition focused entirely on mood, on the complex emotional reactions produced by sounds combined in a unique soundscape that brings different parts of feeling together in ways that would be impossible if these aural ends were not made to meet. I wanted to bring out as much as I could from Stockhausen's assertion that "Whenever we hear sounds we are changed: we are no longer the same after hearing certain sounds, and this is the case when we hear organized sounds, sounds organized by another human being: music"[34]. The sonic possibilities of each sample in the Mozart mix are enormous and bringing them together, making them touch in a way they never have before creates a new mood. It is this new mood, not the individual samples, that serves as the transition piece in the play and this organization of sound affects the listener with all the subtleties and force that music has always possessed.

The director of the play, Jim Sarbh, chose to include laugh tracks to be played over the beginning of the play. The sound effects highlight not only the humor in the dialogue between Paulina and her husband Gerardo, but also its misogynistic undertones. The jokes, usually made by Gerardo at Paulina's expense, expose the subtleties of Paulina's emotional incarceration. This is humor that specifically targets women and relies on the constricting social roles into which they have been cast. One joke that recurs in Act III scene II, the last line of the play, is Gerardo's boast that, "my wife makes a margarita that will make your hair stand on end" (Dorfman 3). It is based on the exploitation of domestic female labor. Humor as a tool of oppression is ubiquitous, and its seemingly innocent inclusion in sitcoms only diverts our attention away from how destructive it is to perpetuate these roles.

The task at hand was to obtain recordings of people laughing. The options were to search the Internet, which is full of free resources for sound effects, check out the library's copy of the *Complete BBC Sound Effects*[35], or to make my own recordings of people laughing. The problem with these sources is that they do not disclose the source of laughter. A goal for the sound design was to recontextualize sounds within the layers of meaning of the play in order to make a point that explores the play's themes in greater depth.

It was necessary for misogynistic humor to have provoked the source of the laugh tracks. After establishing this, it was an easy decision to use the laughter from an album of Andrew Dice Clay's standup comedy. In the 1980s Clay was famous for his shock-value humor that targeted women. His jokes were in such bad taste that he provoked the public censure of many prominent women in American culture, the most famous example

being Nora Dunn and Sinead O'Connor's refusal to appear in the episode of *Saturday Night Live* that he was scheduled to host on May 12, 1990.

I went through his album entitled, "*The Day the Laughter Died*" and selected two tracks that were particularly offensive and oppressive in the same way that the humor in the opening of the play is. For this I chose a bit called, "Women Comics" in which he not only asserts that women are not funny enough to be professional comedians, but that they should only seek employment in prostitution and pornography, as well as a bit called, "Rhyme Renditions" in which he takes traditional nursery rhymes and changes the words so that the female characters are subjected to sexual ridicule.

I imported these sound files into Audacity, a free sound-editing program, and proceeded to delete Clay's words, leaving only the audience's response, which is filled with as many shocked declarations such as, "Oh my god!" as it is with actual laughter. I felt an unexpected sense of empowerment during this process, one that alerted me once again to the hidden potential for self-expression in digital manipulation.

I did not know how to respond to Clay's comedy when I first heard it. I could recognize his talent as an improviser and his sense for comedic timing, but his subject matter was so one-dimensional and offensive that it precluded me from laughing the way I would at comics such as Richard Pryor or George Carlin. They also deal with off-color subjects, but they deal with a variety of other subjects and display more taste and sensitivity than Clay's brutal tirades. My initial reaction was that if he were targeting a race instead of a gender that he would face much stronger opposition and the fact that he was able to build a career on this type of humor showed that the dangers of oppression

through humor were not taken seriously by mainstream culture, at least not when women are the targets.

The sense of empowerment and the revelation of this editing process as a form of self-expression came as I realized that putting the power of even a simple sound-editor in the hands of the people meant that individuals could make their own edits to reflect their personal beliefs. This is not censorship because it is not imposed by the state and does not limit the range of artistic expression of artists. Just as marginalia lets a reader respond to an author, editing a sound recording allows the listener to enter a dialogue with the recorded material.

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The play was to be performed in Emory's black box theatre in the Burlington Road Building. Jim had made the decision early on that he wanted the set to be gradually dismantled as the play progressed, leaving the actors in empty space by the end. The set, modeled after the Escobar's beach house, was made extravagant to accentuate this effect. It was constructed with stands of painted canvas that could be easily moved. There was a dining room table, and a curtain that signified a double window. For a unique addition, Jim hung empty window frames between the audience and the set, achieving a voyeuristic effect. To the far right, not framed by a window, a railing and patio furniture for the veranda.

As I watched the actors rehearse after the set was finished I saw another possible method of meaning to explore through music. Returning to a song structure, a convention that I once regarded as limiting, could actually free some of the central themes of the play from the page of the script and even from the materiality of the stage. Jim's decision to

deconstruct the set was also aimed at liberating the meaning of the actors' words from the materiality of the set. As a result, the gaps between scenes take longer than usual as stagehands remove the walls and furniture from the stage. During a run-through I started taking notes, connecting lines of the play the lines of songs that I knew.

I was not immediately convinced that we needed music to cover the silence, I remembered Minh-ha's critique of sound designers that fear the holes in the soundwall and use music simply to plug them up. She argued so convincingly that our tastes for these musical conventions have been shaped by the same harmful politics the play was denouncing. She attributes our fear of silences to the gender politics espoused by the archetypal male figure tell her to plug up her holes, implying that his attempt to stifle art that breaks from his conventions is really an attempt to stifle women.

But there were evocative connections to be made between the text and song lyrics. Mixing the visible and audible action on stage with the disembodied vibrations that jumped out of the speakers and filled the room would create a corollary message that penetrated the audience's mind through their ears. I was allowing the framework provided by songs would strengthen the narratives of the play, not simply adhering to a convention to preserve a tradition. Jean Ritchie's rendition of "False Sir John"[36] immediately came to mind. Specifically when the false Sir John says to the young May Calvin:

> Take off, take off your silken stays,
> Likewise your handsome shoes,
> For they're too fine and costly
> To rot in the sea with you,
> To rot in the sea with you.

He says this after promising to marry her in a far-off land in exchange for the inheritance she was expecting from her father. But they only rode her father's horses until they came to a lonesome cliff by the sea, one from which John had already pushed seven women. To his demands May responds:

> Turn around, turn around, thou false Sir John,
> And look at the leaves on the tree,
> For it don't become a gentleman
> A naked woman to see,
> A naked woman to see.

With this request she subverts the power of the same stereotypes that John used to take advantage of her. Women as innocent and docile, willing to run away with any man who wooed them to escape the drudgery of their world where they "spun thread" and "made the hay." May Calvin uses the same social codes that convinced people of their need for gender separation to override John's plot. He does not imagine that a young woman could posses such cunning, and abandons his deception to uphold the ideology behind, "it don't become a gentleman a naked woman to see."

After John complies with her wish she pushes him over the cliff to the death he had planned for her. She kills the imposter assuming the archetypal male role, who has tried to convince her that her life is worth less than the clothes she wears. But the set's dissipation is over before the verse of her revenge gets played. The sound has already faded out, the audience will never know if May Calvin's plot to outwit and murder her tormentor is successful. They are just left with the phrase, "a naked woman to see" repeating in their ears. A phrase freed from its visual manifestation on the page and can be heard as "a naked woman to sea," and tie into the emotional themes established by the

sound design through the recordings of ocean waves and the way noise drowns out Paulina's memory of Schubert.

This transition occurs after Paulina verbally overpowers Geraldo with her demands that he convince Roberto to confess by threatening his life. Like May Calvin she has subverted the oppressive power of gender separation, in her case turning two men against each other in order to carry out her will. The final moment of *Death and the Maiden* leaves the audience with the same questions as the truncated song. Paulina is finally able to sit in a concert hall and listen to "Death and the Maiden," but is haunted by a phantasmagoric image of Roberto, and the audience cannot determine whether he is alive or not.

Dorfman's choice of Schubert as an anchor for his play shows that he had in mind the narrative possibilities of using music and musicians as symbols. David Schroeder argues that, "for Paulina, Schubert stands as a complex image, not confined to a single role. Not just a favorite composer, Schubert represents for her everything she values about a civilized society, a nobility of spirit that vanished during the years of oppression" (Schroeder 7). For evidence he cites Paulina's explanation of why she must kill Roberto, "so I can listen to my Schubert without thinking that you'll also be listening to it, soiling my day and my Schubert and my country and my husband," demonstrating the Quartet is the place where her ideas of country and husband converge (Dorfman 63).

Schubert himself wrote songs with narrative analogues and used his own music in a manner similar to Dorfman. In Schroeder's analysis of "Der Lindenbaum," a poem Schubert set to music, he shows that Schubert was using contrast in musical mood to express, in ways words cannot, different psychological states:

> "Der Lindenbaum," after a piano introduction, gives [a] beautifully lyrical melody… and that lyricism parallels the nostalgia of the text, as the protagonist remembers the associations of the tree with his loved one. As he walks away from the tree a shift to the minor key and a triplet figure in the accompaniment introduce an element of disruption. Suddenly a gust of wind hits him in the face, and the key change here, along with the greater agitation in the music, remind him of the hopelessness of his situation. The concluding section of the song returns to the opening melody, but it can no longer be as it was, now infiltrated by the triplets associated with his despair. This format signals a blunt message, that the nostalgia will be followed by destruction, and try as one may, there is no possibility of returning to that earlier state of grace (Schroeder 3).

Schroeder's analysis focuses on Schubert's use of traditional musical elements such as changes in key and rhythm and the nuances of the melody he created, and shows how they relate to the text of the song and add layers of meaning beyond language's capabilities. This is the spirit I wanted to capture in my sound design. But, along with most people, I do not possess Schubert's musical virtuosity. My solution to this problem was to rely on the methods that Attali has illuminated, specifically that we can use the same technology that has trapped music in the status of commodity to liberate it from the codes that limit its possibilities.

This came through most clearly in the Jean Ritchie example, where every edit that disrupted the delicate structure of the song itself, aided the structure of the play. Songs function differently on the SAP stage than they do on the SMP stage. Even though the SAP stage requires a different type of listening and intentionally deconstructs the forms of songs that get taught at the camp, the process of finding the right song was contingent upon having internalized its structure. This reinforces the old maxim that one must know the rules before breaking them.

The goal of SMP is to teach children the musical codes of their favorite songs, specifically the harmony, melody, and rhythm. As beginning musicians, they must be comfortable with these before they can experiment with digital manipulation. After Friday's concert the children receive a CD of their recorded work. The ones who return the following week have already imported their work to their iPods by Monday morning. These digital music files, long lists of 1s and 0s, are the leftovers from the previous week and are ready for the musical process of the SAP stage. They are ready to be cut up and reassembled. The latter process does not require the children wear gloves because the fingerprints that obscured a song's form on the SMP stage are the focal point of the SAP stage. It allows the musician to work with greasy hands.

After completing the sound design I was able to synthesize these different musical systems and learned a musical lesson that I had not encountered in the classroom or through private instruction. The purpose of this thesis is to document the sound design process, where there are no established codes, and to distinguish it from traditionally codified music. This is the musical path I took through the ever-expanding digital database at our disposal.

Neither one of these musical conceptions has greater validity. Considering them together shows that each one has its place in our modern conception of music. Experiencing both is what has shaped me as a musician. I can walk away knowing when to wear gloves and when to work with greasy hands, and the costs and benefits of each.

Appendix: CD Track Listing

1. Intro Music: Paulina Setting the Table
2. Scene Transition: Joni Mitchell Collage[37]
3. Scene Transition: Mozart Collage
4. Final Concert: Gerardo and Paulina Listening to Wagner

5-10. Laugh Tracks

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[4] Jimi Hendrix, "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band," *The Jimi Hendrix Experience,* 2000, MCA.
[5] Miles Davis, "In a Silent Way," *In a Silent Way*, 1969, Columbia.
[6] Notorious B.I.G., "Big Poppa," *Ready to Die*, 1994, Bad Boy 73000.
[7] Usher, "Yeah!," *Confessions*, 2004, Arista.
[8] Bob Dylan, "Car, Car," *Minnesota Tapes,* 1994, Wanted Man WMM 033/034/035.
[9] The Beatles, "She Loves You," *Past Masters,* 1988, Capitol.
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[12] http://www.rollingstone.com/news/story/6597662/17_nevermind.
[13] Troggs, "Wild Thing," 1966, Fontana 1548.
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[15] Guns N' Roses, "Sweet Child o' Mine," *Appetite for Destruction,* 1987, Geffen.
[16] Green Day, "When I Come Around," *Dookie*, 1994, Reprise.
[17] AC/DC, "T.N.T.," *T.N.T.*, 1975, Albert.
[18] AC/DC, "Highway to Hell," *Highway to Hell*, 1979, Atlantic.
[19] Leonard Cohen, "Suzanne," *Songs of Leonard Cohen*, 1968, Columbia Records.
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[32] Alice Coltrane, "Journey In Satchidananda," *Journey In Satchidananda*, 1970, Impulse! Records.
[33] Naked City, "La Fée Verte," *Absinthe*, 1993, Avant.
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[36] Jean Ritchie, "False Sir John," *Ballads from Her Appalachian Family Tradition,* 2003, Smithsonian Folkways 40145.
[37] Joni Mitchell, "Harry's House/Centerpiece," *The Hissing of Summer Lawns*, 1975, Asylum EQ-1051.