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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

FACULTY OF ARTS

School of Humanities

Musical Expression and Performance

by

Carl Humphries

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

FACULTY OF ARTS

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES

Doctor of Philosophy

MUSICAL EXPRESSION AND PERFORMANCE

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This study examines the philosophical question of how it is possible to appreciate music aesthetically as an expressive art form. First it examines a number of general theories that seek to make sense of expressiveness as a characteristic of music that can be considered relevant to our aesthetic appreciation of the latter. These include accounts that focus on resemblances between music and human behaviour or human feelings, on music's powers of emotional arousal, and on various ways in which music may be imaginatively construed by listeners. It argues that none of these are entirely satisfactory. Then it proposes an alternative account, focusing on what is involved when our appreciation of music as an expressive art is informed by our awareness of it as something that is expressively interpreted in performance. It is claimed that this offers the basis for a better understanding of at least some aspects of expressiveness in music and its relevance to aesthetic appreciation.

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Introduction

The subject of this study is the fact that we experience pure music as possessing expressive characteristics, and often appreciate it for these. How this could be possible, and what it means, are issues that have provoked extensive philosophical discussion. As far as is possible within the space permitted here, I will investigate existing attempts to shed light on these matters. I will then consider whether a more effective account may be given by calling attention to the fact that music is typically (though not always) encountered as something performed by human beings, in ways that constitute an interpretation of the music as well as a realisation of it.

Any attempt to evaluate alternative accounts of how we come to experience and appreciate music as expressive, or what it means to do so, are complicated by a number of considerations. Chief amongst these is the fact that these questions themselves reflect a number of distinct issues, and there is no universal agreement about the relative importance or priority of these. For example, some prominent theorists (e.g. Levinson 1982) choose to focus on what is involved in the experience of expressive music, and only consider what it means to appreciate it as such in some more strictly defined 'aesthetic' sense as an afterthought. Others (e.g. Budd 1985a, 1995) take the constraints issuing from the latter as basic to any interesting account of expressiveness in music. At the same time, many theorists treat the issue of how we actually come to experience and/or appreciate music as expressive, and the issue of what it means, in conceptual terms, that we do so, as closely intertwined. Some, however, see the second issue as essentially reducible to the first (e.g. Meyer 1956), while others insist that it is the second of these questions that is the most important and fundamental, so that it should be dealt with entirely separately (e.g. Levinson 1996b). Many others appear to occupy a middle position, emphasising that it is important to state the conditions 'in virtue of which' we hear and/or appreciate music as expressive. The implication here is that any satisfactory account should make the role that musical expressiveness plays in our lives conceptually intelligible rather than merely psychologically plausible, but in terms that should be consistent with, and may usefully be informed by, the latter.

In some cases differences of approach may also reflect differing views on more fundamental issues, rather than differing views on the nature of the central questions themselves. Just as there is no clear agreement about exactly how aesthetic qualities in art relate to non-aesthetic qualities, there is no clear agreement about how expressive

qualities in music relate to other, non-expressive qualities. Hence while some theorists seek to make sense of musical expressiveness by relating it to fairly specific claims about musical listening and musical understanding as a whole (e.g. Scruton 1983, 1997), others reject this in favour of a minimal characterisation of the latter. Equally, there is no definite agreement about the exact nature or extent of our responses to music, and how these might bear on our experience of it as expressive – and this is so before questions of the aesthetic relevance of such responses are introduced into the discussion. One issue here is that different theorists describe their own experience as listeners differently – though rarely in terms that would do anything other than enhance the plausibility of their own preferred account. Another major complication is that there is also no clear overall agreement about the nature and significance of the emotions in general. The question of how far individual emotions can still be differentiated when expressed, or felt, under circumstances in which they are stripped of much of their everyday context is one that has not been definitively resolved. Neither has the question of the role that they play in our lives: their value and, consequent upon this, the value of encountering them (or something like them) in the context of musical listening, is thus to some extent an open one.

Finally, there is a question rarely addressed in the specific context of discussions of musical expressiveness, but which may, I think, turn out to have a bearing on the latter. This is the issue – simultaneously ontological *and* aesthetic – of *what* it is, in literal terms, that we encounter as *being* expressive when we hear and appreciate music for its expressive character. Is it just sounds and the higher-order properties that supervene on these? Or is there a sense in which an aesthetic appreciation of these can itself be seen to involve the idea that in attending to these we are also already attending to something more – something that might help to shed light on any outstanding difficulties connected with attempts to make sense of expressiveness in music?

Given the constraints of space that bear on a study of this kind, it is impossible to give full and proper treatment to every possible combination of these different perspectives that might be taken up on the issue at hand. Moreover, since my intention is not merely to present an overview of existing accounts, but is also to present a proposal of my own, it is inevitable that certain options cannot be dealt with in the way that they would need to be for the study to count as comprehensive. A certain amount of

selectivity is, therefore, inevitable, and the best option in the circumstances is to make the nature of this selectivity explicit from the start.

The first way in which this account is selective is that it does not aim to set out a comprehensive historical perspective on theories of musical expressiveness. The main ideas and issues pertaining to the topic are therefore discussed primarily, and in some cases exclusively, as they relate to the recent and current literature in this area. Related precedents are only acknowledged where they constitute points whose relevance has not been subsumed into more recent accounts. The second way in which this account is selective is that it does not attempt to fully represent the ideas of every single contributor to contemporary debates about the issue. Here too, a certain degree of ‘natural selection’ has been allowed to take place. I focus exclusively on those theorists whose ideas or accounts add something significant, and where these additions are not themselves already invalidated by objections and counter-arguments directed against other previously existing or related approaches. The third way in which the account is selective is that it presupposes, as any such account must inevitably do to some extent, a position on certain fundamental issues in philosophy – albeit one that I hope will be relatively uncontroversial. The account reflects my sympathy for many aspects of Wittgenstein’s later philosophy. Hence I take notions such as ‘art’, ‘value’, ‘meaning’, ‘expression’, etc. as referring to things in ways constrained by the thought that whatever their meaning, it must be of a sort intelligible with reference to entirely public practices. (I also make more specific use of certain Wittgensteinian ideas, as these relate to the concepts of human behavioural expression and aspect-perception.) The fourth and final way in which my account is selective is that it begins – as, I think, do all such accounts in practice – from certain stipulative commitments. These are connected with the notion of music, and with the notion of aesthetic appreciation.

In the case of music, I assume a fairly standard basic understanding of the term ‘music’ itself, even though this probably excludes from consideration some forms of creative activity involving sound that are radically experimental (or purely functional) in character. I assume that ‘music’ is something that involves normatively constrained practices of composition and/or performing (or improvising), and of appreciative listening, informed by some kind of notion that these activities possess a positive meaning and/or value for those who participate in them. On the other hand, I reject the idea, commonly assumed by theorists to be unproblematic, that an experience or appreciation of music is essentially an experience or appreciation of the same, single

overarching type of phenomenon, regardless of what the focus of our experience or appreciation happens to be.¹

As far as ‘aesthetic appreciation’ is concerned, I have chosen to focus on how accounts of musical expressiveness work in relation to the kind of constraints that issue from a relatively strict understanding of what it means for something to be relevant to the aesthetic value we place on a work of art, or on our encounter with it. I see this understanding as imposing two principal constraints on what a successful account could imply about the relationship between our experience and our appreciation of expressive music. I will call these the *inseparability requirement* and the *normative constrainability requirement*.

The first of these expresses the intuition that, where some musical work is construed specifically with reference to its serving as an object of aesthetic appreciation, it is inappropriate to offer explanations that represent it ‘as being related to an experience which can be fully characterised without reference to the nature of the work itself’ (Budd 1985: 123). In other words, we should not pretend that the music, rather than some contingently related experience, remains the primary focus of appreciation, if the music is valued merely as a means to the end of having such an experience for its own sake. As Budd puts it, a theory that implies otherwise may be said to commit ‘the heresy of the separable experience’.²

The second is more complex. The *normative constrainability requirement* insists that whatever are put forward as grounds for arriving at a particular appreciation of an artwork should be consistent in principle with the possibility of reaching agreement about whether such grounds are in fact present or not, in a form relevant to that appreciation. The essence of this idea is already to be found in Hanslick’s insistence that where ‘the effect of music...possesses neither the necessity nor exclusiveness nor the constancy which a phenomenon would have to exhibit to be the basis of an aesthetical principle’ it cannot properly be considered a basis for judgements about the music’s value (Hanslick 1986: 7). The idea is to make clear that the claim that a certain range of expressive qualities has been shown to be relevant to appreciation by a particular account is, in practice, robbed of its significance, if the same account also implies that

¹ This point has major implications for my own proposed account of certain kinds of musical expressiveness, developed in Chapter Five and in the Conclusion to this study.

² Not all theorists embrace this constraint, or do so with equal stringency. Levinson (1982: 236-7) expresses doubts about its defensibility, though his later account seems to demand something similar (1996b: 91-2).

there are no publicly accessible grounds that we can be directed to as a basis for agreeing that the particular expressive qualities in question are in fact present. (The idea that these grounds must be publicly accessible in order to make agreement possible in principle reflects the Wittgensteinian bias already mentioned.)

It is conceivable that more than one account might fulfil these requirements. Hence it may also be necessary to point to more specific advantages or disadvantages they possess. As a general principle, and allowing for ‘all other things being equal’,³ it seems reasonable to assume that an explanation that requires the minimum of broader theoretical commitments (at least of a more speculative variety), and which invokes a minimum of additional facts about the phenomenon such as might be open to dispute, will be preferable on grounds of *economy*. Also as a general principle, and subject to the same qualification, one may assume that an explanation that promises (while still meeting all other constraints) to make sense of the widest possible range of ways in which music can be experienced as, and valued for being, expressive, will be preferable on grounds of *inclusivity*.⁴

This ideal of an explanation that succeeds while presupposing only a *minimally specific* characterisation of the object of enquiry can be spelled out more precisely in two ways: I will call these the ideals of *minimal deviation from central cases*, and *minimal context-dependency*.

The first of these is a familiar idea in aesthetics. The ideal of *minimal deviation from central cases* comes into play when we seek to explain something such as expression as it is thought to occur in art, or in music, with reference to the possibility that the term in question – in this case ‘expression’ – acquires its primary significance for us as a means of characterising or referring to something that exists or occurs outside of these areas. If the encounter in art or music with something we are inclined to refer to as ‘expression’ is invested with something like the significance that it has for us in those more central cases, then an account of how this is possible will be more effective the more it succeeds in articulating the extent of the similarity to these central cases. This may be regarded as fulfilling the virtue of descriptive economy, since the more this is so, the less basis there will be for postulating the existence of additional sui

³ In the sense of factors particular to certain types of music or musical encounter, etc.

⁴ Indeed it is to be expected that, on many occasions at least, the virtues of economy and inclusivity will go hand in hand, since an account that presupposes a less complex or specific understanding of that which, in certain respects, demands explanation, will also presumably leave less scope for particular variants to be excluded on the grounds that they are not consistent with such an understanding.

generis phenomena. The latter introduce the risk that the phenomenon in question will only be linked to more central cases by a purely homonymic use of the same term, and this is not illuminating. (Of course, if all accounts that posit a significant proximity to central cases are first tried and found lacking, only the *sui generis* case will remain, in which case this ideal will be redundant.)

The ideal of *minimal context dependency* can be understood as bearing on the extent to which an account is obliged to invoke either extra-musical or intra-musical forms of context-dependency to make sense of expressiveness in music. Of course, what counts as ‘extra-musical’ or ‘intra-musical’ is itself an open question. However, the motivations for this are straightforward. An account that makes all expressiveness dependent on a highly cultivated awareness of contextual factors (e.g. historical conventions in force at the time of the music’s creation) is less economical and inclusive than one which does not. (For example, it implies that individuals who lack such awareness but nevertheless experience the music as expressive are not in a position to formulate aesthetic appraisals of any kind based on their experience of it as expressive). Equally, if an account of how specific musical features come to be heard as expressive requires them to correspond to, or form part of, relatively high-level musical structures, this will exclude the possibility of lower-level musical features being experienced in a self-contained way as expressive, on similar grounds. Such an account then offers no *direct* explanation of the fact that we can experience particular constituent elements of music as expressive in their own right, and even appreciate them as such, as when they appear in the exercises that musicians execute for practice purposes.

The need to place sensible limits on the degree of context-dependency that can be realistically invoked is demonstrated by considering the case of the Romantic ‘transmission’ theory of expression in art, which is now widely rejected. This theory claimed that there is a direct chain of causal relations connecting the feelings of the artist to his creation of an artwork expressive of those feelings, and from this to an audience’s experience of the same feelings (Tolstoy: 1895). It implied that the expressive character of an artwork is only graspable by inferring causal relations of this sort from the conjunction of its more basic, non-expressive features with wider contextual conditions bearing on its creation and reception. It is said that this fails to acknowledge the sense in which expressive characteristics are themselves also *immediately* available to be experienced alongside non-expressive ones (Bouwsma

1963: 71-96, Hospers 1955: 313-344, Beardsley 1971: 288-302). However, this objection might be defused by arguing that in cases of ordinary expressive human behaviour, where we typically experience something as expressive because we have first identified it as actual behavioural expression, this same immediacy is present, even though the identification in question is surely often context-dependent.⁵ If so, then the more reliable grounds for rejecting the Romantic theory spring from the thought that, in order to infer the causal relations in question from the artwork's non-expressive features, the latter would have to be conjoined with an almost unlimited range of contextual conditions bearing on its creation and reception.

The point, then, is not that invoking such conditions for any purposes is ruled out in principle. It is rather that in order to reveal causal relations of this sort they would have to be so extensive that we could never realistically expect listeners to gain access to them, even if the artwork *was* an expression of the artist. Yet there are those who for various reasons would insist that what matters for critical interpretation is just that such relations *can* exist in principle, even if the conditions are always too complex or unstable for us to ever identify them in practice. This can then be invoked as a basis for demanding that we should reject – or ‘deconstruct’ – not only the Romantic theory of expression, but attempts of *any* kind to establish the significance of an artwork in positive terms, by referring to its context of creation. That would have obviously damaging implications for any account of musical expressiveness that treats it with reference to notions of aesthetic appreciation. This is because the latter are typically taken to imply the sort of normatively constrained practices (of listening, participating, interpreting, valuing, etc.) that would be prime targets for a deconstructive agenda.⁶ Hence our typical appreciative engagements with artworks, though not prevented from being responsive to the wider social and historical context relevant to their understanding, must also reflect some kind of minimal empiricist constraint. It must be possible to perceive a *necessary* connection of some kind between the context invoked

⁵ At least, when viewed from a Wittgensteinian perspective, such as will be clarified later.

⁶ This highlights another sense in which my account may be regarded as stipulative. I assume that the activity of aesthetic appreciation as defined here plays *some* role in our actual experience of music, but leave it to the reader to determine how far this is so. Of course ‘aesthetic appreciation’ may also be viewed as a socially ‘constructed’ (and hence readily ‘deconstructible’) practice: one which we adopt, or subscribe to, for all sorts of extraneous reasons. But the point is to see how far musical expressiveness (and *its* value) can be understood with reference to this practice, regardless of the ultimate value of the practice itself.

and experientable qualities of the artwork itself.⁷ Indeed, such a thought may already be implicit in the inseparability requirement mentioned earlier.

This understanding of the constraints and ideals issuing from the concept of aesthetic appreciation can be usefully compared to the list of ‘desiderata that an acceptable analysis of musical expressiveness must try to meet’ proposed by Levinson (1996b: 91-2). Levinson holds that such an analysis should (1) be somehow related to or analogous with actual cases of human behavioural expression, (2) be related in some way to expressiveness in the other arts, (3) ‘belong unequivocally to the music itself’, (4) be immediately experientable rather than inferred, (5) comprise, amongst others, ‘familiar psychological states of a general sort’, (6) ‘naturally, if not inevitably’ lead to a real or imagined experience of feeling/affect, and (7) be something that contributes to the aesthetic value of the music.

(1) is an alternative formulation of the ‘ideal of minimal deviation from central cases’, while (3) corresponds to my ‘inseparability requirement’. My ‘normative constrainability requirement’ is a more specific version of (7), designed to reflect a Wittgensteinian reading of what it means to value music, emphasising the constitutive role of normative agreement about the public grounds for evaluative judgements. This leaves (2), (4), (5) and (6) as having no obvious equivalent in my list of constraints. On one level (4) seems obviously correct. Yet it is hard to see how one could agree on exactly what counts as ‘immediately experientable rather than inferred’, given that the implied disjunction between these properties is open to question (at least from a Wittgensteinian perspective on meaning and expression).⁸ My reasons for not building the remaining requirements into my initial conception of what an account of musical expressiveness should look like are that they do not seem to me clearly entailed by the notion of aesthetic appreciation itself. I note that Levinson himself opts for a significantly relaxed version of (2) to accommodate his own theory, while (5) seems already implicit in (1). On the other hand (6) is formulated in a way that makes it seem question-begging for ‘dry-eyed’ critics – if such persons exist. Anyway, the same point

⁷ For a defence of such a minimal constraint, developed with reference to the role of pleasure in aesthetic appreciation, see Levinson (1996a: 15). This rules out the Romantic theory of expression, since the causal nature of the connections invoked by the theory imply the logical possibility of first individuating the psychological causes, and their experientable effects in the artwork, independently of one another. (The concept of a causal relation implies the logical possibility of identifying or individuating cause and effect independently of one other.)

⁸ Having said this, I follow Levinson in rejecting certain theories because of their failure to meet this desideratum. But this is partly because this overlaps with other considerations to do with inclusiveness and economy.

can be made by appealing to the ideals of inclusivity and economy proposed here: an account that failed to meet Levinson's desideratum would fail to make sense of large areas of the musical experience of many listeners. Hence it would trivialise the concept of aesthetic relevance, even if it did not conflict with it.

Chapter One. Resemblance

The first type of account of what makes music expressive that I propose to examine is commonly referred to as either the resemblance theory or cognitivist theory of musical expression. I will examine the versions of this theory put forward by its most important contemporary advocates, while also considering the principal earlier theories that these are responding to. My aim is to establish how far current versions of the resemblance theory really furnish the sort of explanation their proponents claim to have achieved.

The resemblance-based account of music's expressive characteristics can be understood as an attempt to avoid the pitfalls of certain earlier theories of expression in art and music while at the same time acknowledging certain insights into the specific nature of the problem posed by the expressive potential of purely instrumental music. On the one hand, it aims to provide an alternative to 17th and 18th century accounts that treat music as exercising a mechanistic power to cause affective responses that then lead the listener to perceive the music as expressive. On the other hand, it also rejects both the 'Romantic' theory of artistic expression as a form of transmission, according to which an artist is driven by his own felt state to produce an artistic creation that causes the recipient of the artwork to be infected by similar feelings to those which led to its creation (Tolstoy 1895). At the same time, it seeks to distance itself from the 'formalism' that emerged as the converse of this. The most notable form of the latter was Hanslick's insistence that music is incapable of conveying anything like emotions, on account of the fact that it fails to furnish states of affairs that could serve as the sorts of thing a person could be understood as entertaining those emotions about. Hence any expressive qualities music displayed could be nothing more than subjective associations projected by listeners (Hanslick 1986). It is significant that the resemblance theorist does not seek to dispute the limitations imposed by music's non-referential and non-representational character in this respect, but seeks instead to establish the possibility of music being expressive in spite of them.

With regard to all of these considerations, the resemblance theorist starts from similar premises to those who propose that expressive music should be construed as constituting a specific form of symbol, either in the sense of presenting and codifying the differentiating characteristics of our experiences of various felt states by standing in formal relations of 'isomorphism' to these characteristics (Langer 1951), or in the sense of 'exemplifying' some property – some particular type of expressiveness – in virtue of

which it may be thought to count ‘metaphorically’ as an expression of the felt state corresponding to that property (Goodman 1968).¹ The principal point here is that like proponents of these theories, the resemblance theorist seeks an alternative to both mechanistic accounts that attribute music’s expressive capacities to causal forms of arousal, and to an ‘associationist’ account (Hanslick) that suggests that our descriptions of music’s expressive qualities lack ‘public’ or ‘objective’ significance.² The motivation for this lies in a desire to demonstrate that expressive characteristics of music can, after all, be thought of as in principle furnishing the sort of grounds that would justify regarding them as relevant to an aesthetic appreciation of music. This in turn is taken to be a matter of explaining how they could come to be present in music in terms consistent with their fulfilling the requirements of *inseparability* and *normative constrainability* that are the key constraints on what may constitute appropriate grounds of this sort.

Of course this claim of relevance is exactly what an ‘associationist’ account of musical expressivity would explicitly deny. The resemblance theorist thus aims to show that this denial is unfounded, and hopes to do this more effectively than would be possible in the context of an appeal to the more abstract and elusive conceptions of music’s symbolic function that the other accounts mentioned above (e.g. those of Langer and Goodman) involve, just by giving a more highly specific and concrete description of what it is about music’s ‘public’ or ‘objective’ character – and/or its relationship to other ‘public’ or ‘objective’ phenomena (such as human behaviour) – that leads us to find it expressive.

A more obvious rival to resemblance-based accounts of music’s expressive capacity is what is known as the arousalist (or sometimes, less illuminatingly, the ‘emotivist’) theory. Such a theory appeals to music’s capacity to cause us to feel certain affective states, which we then, in consequence of this, hear the music as conveying. Here, the contrast with the resemblance theory is of a different sort, since the arousalist proposes an alternative basis for taking music’s expressive characteristics as constituting appropriate grounds for an appreciation of it. Typically, however, the resemblance theorist considers this sort of explanation incapable of meeting the requirements connected with such an appreciation, on account of the fact that it seems

¹ I shall consider the content of these theories more closely in due course.

² Kivy, one of the principal exponents of the resemblance theory, uses both of these terms at various points to characterise the status that he wishes to accord to music’s expressive characteristics.

to be an inevitable consequence of it that any grounds invoked to justify an appreciation of music's expressive character will have to consist either of just those characteristics in virtue of which it exercises such a causal power, or those characteristics together with the responses which they evoke in listeners. In the former case, it is not clear that these grounds need make any substantial reference to our actual musical experience, so it is not clear that the inseparability requirement has been met. In the latter case, where our responses are taken to be relevant because of their being caused by the music (rather than because of any intentional directedness towards the music that such responses might display in their own right), it is not clear how judgements based on such responses could ever be constrained by public norms of appreciation. This is because the responses do not, apparently, stand in anything more than contingent (i.e. causal) relations to our encounters with the music as a publicly constituted phenomenon. If that is so, it is not at all clear that the normative constrainability requirement can be met.

I shall in due course consider whether these objections can be successfully defused by more sophisticated versions of the arousal theory. One line of response is to argue that music's capacity to affect us can be relevant to our appreciation of the music itself just insofar as it is exercised in virtue of features of the music that we ourselves experience as being of the sort in virtue of which we would expect it to exercise that capacity. However, to the extent that these turn out just to be features *already* construed as expressive, it will presuppose some other more basic account of the relevance to appreciation of expressive characteristics of music. This would then suggest that the need for an alternative sort of account (to arousalism) such as might appeal to notions of resemblance or symbolic meaning, or some other grounds that have yet to be specified, remains outstanding, even when this more modest sort of arousalist explanation has been successfully argued for.

(i) Kivy

The central idea of Kivy's resemblance-based account of music's expressive characteristics is that music, by its very nature, invites us to recognise the fact that it resembles the outwardly perceivable characteristics of human behavioural expressions. Kivy's use of the term 'recognition' is important here: we do not perceive such resemblances because of any capacity music might have to causally evoke responses in us, but through an act of 'cognition'. This cognitive act – in virtue of which Kivy's

theory claims for itself the right to be known as the ‘cognitivist theory’ of musical expression – consists in our comprehending the fact that what music resembles is something that in itself conveys the ‘emotive content’ (sic) which, were it to also be an actual case of expressive behaviour, would be indicative of the felt state revealed by that behaviour. Kivy marks this distinction between something conveying the ‘emotive content’ of an expression without being an expression, and something conveying that same ‘emotive content’ in virtue of being an expression, with the contrasting phrases ‘expressive of ϕ ’ and ‘expressing ϕ ’ (ibid: 50).³ The example he uses to illustrate this is the face of a Saint Bernard dog, which looks sad but clearly does not mean that the dog itself is sad. According to Kivy,

We see sadness in the Saint Bernard’s face in that we see the face as appropriate to the expression of sadness. And we see it as appropriate to the expression of sadness because we see it as a face, and see its features as structurally similar to the features of our own faces when we express our own sadness.” (ibid: 51)

Kivy holds that exactly the same thing occurs when we find music expressive:

We hear sadness in the *Lamento d’Arianna* in that we hear the musical sounds as appropriate to the expression of sadness. And we hear them as appropriate to the expression of sadness (in part) because we hear them as human utterances, and perceive features of those utterances as structurally similar to our own voices when we express our own sadness in speech. (ibid: 51)

He goes on to extend this model of how music resembles expressive human behaviour to include not just resemblances to expressive aspects of speech or utterance, but also expressive aspects of bodily movement or gesture. In Kivy’s view, music resembles these not only in virtue of the fact that it offers an ‘obvious analogue to bodily movement’ in the form of rhythm, but also because it furnishes an experience of music as rising and falling (in respect of pitch) that is deeply entrenched, albeit (in his view) metaphorical (ibid: 55).

³ Kivy’s concept of ‘expressive of ϕ ’ here comes close to the idea that to say that some feature of an artwork ‘expresses ϕ ’ is to ascribe to it no more than a one-place predicate: i.e. what is expressed in such cases should not properly be taken as the direct object of the verb ‘express’ but merely as a term used to determine the exact character of this predicated property (Tormey 1971: 121-4). Hence the fact that this conception of expression in art is sometimes characterised using the concept of ‘intransitive expression’.

These quotes make clear that Kivy's account involves the conjunction of two conditions of appropriateness: firstly, that the expressive phenomenon itself be seen as an instance of something (such as a face, voice or moving human body) that normally serves as the locus of actual cases of behavioural expression; secondly, that it share with that something certain distinguishing features or qualities of how the latter appears when it is in fact the locus of an actual expression of the particular feeling that the expressive phenomenon also is experienced as being expressive of. Taken by itself, the example of the dog does not reveal the exact nature of Kivy's position, since there is an ambiguity connected with whether the dog's face is something that we literally construe as being a face in its own right, and thus as something that we can also see as expressive, or merely a surface which we see as a face *because* it resembles a human face – possibly in virtue of shared characteristics that may in fact be expressive in their own right. More helpful is Kivy's subsequent elaboration of the thought that human beings have a general predisposition not only to be struck by such resemblances to expressive features of human appearance and behaviour, but also to perceive inanimate things *as if* they actually possessed the distinctive characteristics – e.g. expressive characteristics – of animate creatures (e.g. human beings) that they resemble in respect of other non-expressive characteristics (ibid: 57-9).

What is evident from this is that although the recognition of certain features as distinctive of how something appears when it is the locus of actual expression is something that, for Kivy, can be regarded as resting on 'public criteria of expressiveness' that are implied by the 'public criteria of expression' that we must all, standardly, possess (ibid: 67), the precondition for encountering those features in some phenomenon – and thus for deeming it expressive in virtue of such an encounter – is that we already have in place some basis for experiencing the phenomenon as a proper locus for the actual occurrence of expression.⁴

The implication of Kivy's account is that we *first* imaginatively perceive certain non-expressive aspects of music (e.g. contours) as pertaining to some form of human utterance or bodily movement or gesture, and *then* realise that the features that the

⁴ In the case of a dog's face, this might be because it already *resembles* a human face and is imagined by us in virtue of this resemblance to actually be a (human) face, or because it just *is* (understood to be) a face. Which of these is the case will depend on what view we take of our relations with our non-human yet sentient fellow creatures. In the case of music, though, Kivy's assumption would appear to be that the latter option is excluded: after all it seems plain, at least at first glance, that music is not itself literally something that we experience as an attribute of any actual human being in the way that ordinary expressive behaviour is.

music has in common with these are also the sort which we typically encounter in ordinary life as features distinctive of human behavioural expression – at which point we experience them as expressive. If that is so, then it is worth noting that no matter how ‘public’ or ‘objective’ the criteria may be that determine what behavioural significance these features have when encountered in such circumstances, their being construed as expressive in music will only be as ‘public’ or ‘objective’ as the mode of imaginative perception upon which it rests.

One of Kivy’s main aims is to show that an account of this sort is superior to one based on the notion of arousal. Yet it might well be objected that positing a disposition to perceive things in imaginatively informed, animistic terms, has implications for how the resulting experience of expressive characteristics might figure in our appreciation of the music that are just as problematic as those which emerge when an appeal is made to a disposition to perceive things in ways expressively coloured by the affective responses they cause inside one – exactly the appeal made by arousal theorists. Kivy claims that it just is a contingent fact about human beings that we all tend to perceive at least some phenomena in this animating or anthropomorphic way (*ibid.* 57-59), and he argues that the apparently metaphorical ways of thinking about music (e.g. as movement or as rising or falling) that come with this experience are too deeply entrenched in our habitual ways of hearing it to be dismissed as mere subjective associations (*ibid.*: 55-6). However, this does not in itself establish the superiority of his account to that of an arousalist, who can claim, in a strikingly similar fashion, that musically evoked feelings and the affectively coloured perceptions these engender equally just *are* features of how we are disposed to react to certain aspects of music.⁵

What this shows is that in both cases the resulting experience can be conceived as an invariable feature of our experience of music, but the extent to which it can play a normatively constrainable role in our appreciation of the music as a public phenomenon in each case is open to dispute. Kivy’s position appears to be that once the imaginative perception of the music is entertained in some generic manner, the way individual expressive characteristics will be construed as such in the music will be governed by the

⁵ This parallel between the invoking of contingent claims by resemblance theorists and by arousal theorists is pointed out by Goldman: ‘...it is just as plausible that we are wired not only to animate what we perceive, but to react emotively to recognition of human-type states in perceived phenomena’ (Goldman 1995: 63). Of course, the challenge that the arousal theorist then faces is that of showing that there is indeed a meaningful sense in which music furnishes an encounter with ‘human-type states’ of this sort: i.e. of the sort that would arouse such responses in us outside of musical encounters. As we shall see in due course, it may not be such an easy matter to show that this is in fact the case.

same ‘public criteria of expressiveness’ that we must all, standardly, possess, just because these are themselves implied by ‘public criteria of expression’ that must be operative wherever human behavioural expression is construed as a publicly constituted phenomenon (ibid: 67). This assumes that the sense in which ‘public criteria of expression’ entail matching ‘public criteria of expressiveness’ is strong enough to carry over into contexts where many (and perhaps all) of the background circumstances that typically inform our construals of behaviour as constituting a genuine instance of expression are inoperative.

That music is an example of this latter sort of context is surely implicit in its being conceived in line with the sorts of consideration that make the Romantic transmission theory of expression unacceptable.⁶ For Kivy, though, it is evident that this entailment is preserved in the case of music, just because we are universally disposed to imagine it to be the sort of thing that would be an appropriate locus for encountering expression: i.e. as a form of human gesture or utterance.

The assumption here seems to be that the absence of the background circumstances informing our construals of behavioural expression in everyday life does not remove the grounds for making such construals in connection with whatever it is we imagine music to be, but only impacts upon their specificity. That would mean that such states as are expressively conveyed in music are limited to just those that can be displayed without reference to anything more than the intrinsic qualities of the behaviour itself – independently of circumstantial conditions. In short, these felt states would have to be consistent with the possibility of being recognised with reference to criteria of expression⁷ whose public form corresponds to no more than the qualities themselves. So they must be recognisable as such independently of whether they are also encountered in any wider circumstances consistent with either the idea that they correspond to behavioural expressions or not, or with the idea that they are linked to human physiognomic or behavioural appearances in some other way. Indeed, such recognitions would seem to imply a primitive inclination to take certain forms or shapes at face value as genuine expressions without reference to any context at all. However, that must surely be considered controversial in the light of Wittgenstein’s suggestion that what marks out an expression in the first instance as such is never anything other than those facts about it that can be thought of as furnishing a public criterion. In that

⁶ See the Introduction to this study for a characterisation of these.

⁷ I.e. ‘criteria’ in the later Wittgenstein’s sense.

case, Kivy's failure to address these potential implications must surely represent a serious limitation to his theory as it stands.⁸

Kivy's conception of animating perception is designed to offer an alternative to the theories of Langer and Goodman, so it will be useful to consider his reasons for rejecting these accounts, given that they too seek an alternative not just to the Romantic 'transmission' theory of expression, but also to both the mechanistic arousal theories of the 17th and 18th centuries and Hanslick's outright denial of the aesthetic significance of expressivity in music.

The theory put forward by Langer (1951) can be seen, amongst other things, as an attempt to make sense of an insight into the expressive character of music that emerged into prominence in the context of 19th century Romantic theorising about music by philosophers and musicians who were much preoccupied with the contrast between language and music, and, as the following extracts indicate, especially by an intuition that music could somehow convey states of mind that were either too specific or too vague to be verbally paraphrased:

A piece of music that I love expresses thoughts to me that are not too imprecise to be framed in words, but too precise. So I find that all attempts to express such thoughts in words may have some point to them, but they are also unsatisfying... (Mendelssohn-Bartholdy 1864: 337-338.) (English translation in le Huray & Day 1988: 457.)

Therefore music does not express this or that particular and definite pleasure, this or that affliction, pain, sorrow, horror, gaiety, merriment, or peace of mind, but joy, pain, sorrow, horror, gaiety, peace of mind themselves, to a certain extent in the abstract, their essential nature, without any accessories, and also without the motives for them.... Yet its universality is by no means that empty universality of abstraction, but is of quite a different kind; it is united with thorough and unmistakable distinctness. (Schopenhauer 1969: I. 261-2.)

In particular, it has been argued that Langer's theory should be understood as an attempt to make sense of the paradoxical thought that emerges from these formulations, to the effect that what expressive music conveys is both too precise and too vague for words, without resorting to the more far-reaching claims involved in Schopenhauer's

⁸ My own account, which I will present in due course, seeks to address the issues raised by this.

own interpretation of the metaphysical significance of music (Åhlberg 1994, Guczalski 1999).

Langer claims that we find music expressive because it functions as a ‘presentational symbol’ for states of feeling, and that it does this because of an ‘isomorphism’ between the dynamic properties of music itself and the distinctive ways in which those states unfold dynamically over time – what she terms the ‘morphology’ of feelings. Langer’s conception of the distinction between ‘presentational’ and ‘discursive’ symbols has been criticized as obscure. Her conception of ‘isomorphic’ relations holding between formal properties of such symbols and formal properties of the ‘morphology’ of feelings has been dismissed – perhaps rather too summarily – on the grounds that it appeals to a Tractarian metaphysics that is especially questionable when applied to something as intangible as private states of feeling, and to any distinctive qualities of temporal unfolding these might have.

However, it is worth noting that Kivy’s own objection takes a more specific line. Kivy claims that it does not follow from Langer’s notion that music is isomorphic to our experience of our emotional life that it must also be a ‘symbol’ of this emotional life (Kivy 1980: 61). This objection could mean one of two things: it could mean that for something to count as a ‘symbol’ it must be connected to that which it symbolises by more than mere ‘isomorphism’, but it could also be an objection to the apparent leap from the idea that music stands in a significant relation to certain formally abstractable aspects of how we experience our emotional life generally to the idea that it stands in a similar relation to our actual emotional life itself, such that it can be said to have successfully explained our inclination to ascribe qualities to music that seem to link it to our experiences of undergoing actual episodes of emotion or feeling.

The former interpretation would not imply very much: only that Langer’s account should perhaps, like Kivy’s own, be framed in terms of notions of ‘resemblance’ rather than symbolism, where this would of course involve dispensing with the notion of a *formally* instituted meaning in the sense implied by the Tractarian aspect of her account.⁹ Langer’s account would then still be useful to someone wishing

⁹ It would not then be clear why music *must* be understood as calling our attention to aspects of feelings which it can be experienced as related to, in the absence either of specific explicit conventional agreement to this effect or of these Tractarian commitments themselves. All it would then show is that it *could* be so understood, but such a claim could be accompanied by an insistence that it also just *is* contingently the case that this is how we are disposed to construe it. Kivy could not object to that as such, since his own account makes a similar sort of appeal to contingent facts – about how we are disposed to perceive things animistically.

to argue that our experience of expressive music rests on recognising an underlying resemblance between how music sounds (particularly in respect of its dynamic or energetic motion-related characteristics) and how it feels to undergo certain emotions or felt states (Budd 1995: 135-142): the idea that music ‘sound[s] the way moods feel’ (Pratt, 1932: 203).¹⁰ Of course, in the light of the later Wittgenstein’s reflections, *this* sort of resemblance-based account cannot be unproblematically taken as involving an equivalent to Kivy’s entailment relation grounding normative *public* criteria of ‘expressivity’ in normative *public* criteria of ‘expression’, since it is taken to be a resemblance to something privately experienced. (On the other hand, we have already noted that Kivy’s own account contains a hidden assumption, which also seems potentially problematic when viewed in this light, about how such criteria carry over into the special contexts in which pure music is thought to be appreciated.)

With regard to the second interpretation of Kivy’s objection, it is by no means certain that the objection stands. His claim is that Langer fails to make sense of the apparent significance of expressive music, as revealed by our talk about it, which, as Kivy himself remarks, is ‘about music’s relations to the particular human emotions, not just to some abstract “emotion in general”’ (ibid: 62-3). A defence against this objection is offered by Budd (1989: 130-1), who disputes the idea that music’s expressive significance must lie in some sort of connection to *specific* emotions if it is to be consistent with the broadly uncontroversial intuition (pertaining to the nature of aesthetic appreciation) that any piece of music should lend itself to being valued in terms that presuppose that it is different from all others, and must therefore express something unique. Budd claims that all that is required to do justice to this is that the musical *unfolding* of the music’s expressive character be unique, and not the particular feeling conveyed through this unfolding. (A rather more interesting and ambitious defence of Langer against this objection is explored by Guczalski (1999), who develops a theory of signs and symbols that allows for the possibility of a medium being such that emotions or feelings might in some respects be presented in ways that are unusually specific or precise, while at the same time being also presented in other respects in ways

¹⁰ It could also be seen as providing grounds for the claim that we can make-believely identify our experience of expressive music either with some impersonal occurrence (in someone somewhere) of the felt state that the music is expressive of, or with the experience we would have if we ourselves underwent that felt state (Budd 1980: 134-6 and 1995; 147-152). I will discuss these possibilities in due course.

that are unusually vague and imprecise.¹¹ It seems to me that this avoids the need to commit oneself, as Budd does, to a view about which of these two possibilities is more likely to be operative in music generally, or in particular kinds of music. Unfortunately a proper exposition of Guetzlowski's theory would require a much more detailed treatment than is possible within the limits of this dissertation.)

The real problem with Langer's account is, surely, that it asks one to believe that the particular degree of expressive precision of which music is capable stands in direct correspondence with the degree of precision with which individual states of feeling are picked out (or symbolised), when this is done exclusively with reference to their so-called 'morphology' – their dynamic character as manifested in the distinctive ways in which our experiences of them tend to unfold over time. The problem here is not that Langer is describing an impossible form of correspondence, but that even if it were true, it is doubtful that it could ever be *shown* to be so.¹² Claims about the individuating role that the dynamic morphological characteristics of feelings might play in distinguishing different felt states from one another amount to claims about the individuating role of private experiences, and these seem to fall squarely into the category of claims that have been made to appear highly problematic as a consequence of Wittgensteinian considerations regarding the possibility of private languages and the unresolved controversy that continues to surround these. More recent attempts to rehabilitate aspects of Langer's theory have not sought to overcome this problem, but instead have proceeded on the assumption that it can be ignored.¹³

I will now turn to Goodman's account of what we mean when we characterise music as expressive, and consider the extent to which Kivy is right to regard his own account as superior. Goodman (1968) claims that expressive qualities of music are

¹¹ This view is similar in some respects, but not others, to the characterisation of purely resemblance-based musical expressiveness offered by Ridley, when he states that 'if a piece of music is... expressive of sadness, then it may be expressive of sadness in an infinitely particular way but still not, on the account offered so far, expressive of any particular sadness.' (Ridley 1995b: 118). Ridley goes on to argue that the particularity that music's purely resemblance-based expressive character lacks is supplied when we experience this character in a way that is informed by our musically aroused responses to it. By contrast, Guetzlowski's model points towards an account in which both this lack of expressive specificity, and the sense that what is conveyed is, nevertheless, a particular rather than a general state of mind, would be accounted for in terms of the way music functions as a form of resemblance-based symbol.

¹² Numerous theorists have raised this objection to Langer's account, notably Scruton (1997: 147).

¹³ E.g. Budd (1995), whose account I discuss later in this chapter, or Addis (2001). The latter's account relies on postulating a complete theory about the nature of consciousness, thus making the account of musical expressivity dependent in what seems to be a needlessly uneconomical way on commitments relating to considerably more far-reaching and controversial issues in contemporary philosophy.

grasped as such by virtue of their place within a formal symbol system: we take the more salient expressive characteristics of music to be not merely possessed but *exemplified* by the music itself, and this is sufficient to constitute a form of denotative reference to these characteristics themselves. Because we can grasp the music as having a formal significance of this kind, as an *exemplification* of sadness, we are then also led to construe it in metaphorical terms as *expressing* that sadness (Goodman 1968: 45-99).

Kivy begins his critique of Goodman by claiming that it does not follow, as the latter would like it to, that because something is taken as an instance of an expressive property, it must also count on some occasions as exemplifying that property (Kivy 1980: 61). In Kivy's view, this would also require some form of conventional understanding to support the notion of a *formally* instituted symbolic meaning. By contrast, all that Kivy's own resemblance-based account requires is for it to be logically possible that the resemblance be discernible and that there be empirical facts that support the claim that we just do happen to be disposed to discern resemblances of that sort – i.e. resemblances to the sort of things Kivy claims *expressive* music must resemble to be perceived in certain respects as expressive (ibid: 62). In this respect, Kivy's resemblance-based account seems more economical, in that it does not presuppose such conventions for those aspects of music to which it applies, if that music is to be experienced as expressive *in any way at all* (that could still count as appropriate grounds for an appreciation of the music). (Apart from this, Kivy appears to find Goodman's account of exemplification loosely compatible with his own position (ibid: 61)).

As with his objection to Langer's account, it is worth noting that Kivy's formulation of this objection leaves it open to Goodman to claim an empirical basis for his account along just the same sort of lines as Kivy does for resemblance-perception: he could just say that it is enough that it be logically possible for us to see expressive music as exemplifying expressive properties, and at the same time an empirical fact about how we understand expressive music that when we do this we also construe those properties metaphorically as expressions of actual occurrences of the equivalent emotional states.

In this respect, Kivy is only able to drive home one of the two widely pursued lines of objection to Goodman – both of which are in fact potentially damaging – and this fact may be taken as highlighting some of the limitations implicit in his own account. The first objection is the one already mentioned, which is that it is not clear

why an artwork should need to exemplify some expressive property (and/or be understood as denoting it in virtue of this) rather than merely possess it, in order to be construed as expressive. The second is that Goodman fails to clarify in significant terms what the notion of *metaphorical exemplification* amounts to, above and beyond being a needlessly obscure way of stating the thought that music is metaphorically sad because it cannot actually be (i.e. feel) sad, in a sense that is unamenable to literal paraphrase of the sort that some philosophers, at least, take to be a standard feature for ordinary linguistic metaphors.¹⁴ This suggests that the metaphor, if metaphor it is, must be regarded as ineliminable, in which case it cannot usefully be invoked as a basis for explicating the phenomenon in question.¹⁵

The point of this second objection is to show that the concept of *metaphorical exemplification* does no real work as far as making sense of the immediacy with which we experience music as expressive is concerned: it merely proposes a way to make sense of how we *talk* about this experience, and does so in terms that, as Davies points out, seem almost metaphorical themselves. In short, it does not do what it is supposed to do, which is to make sense of the powerfully immediate experience we can have that music somehow 'is' sad in a way that is significantly like the way in which people 'are' sad when they (are taken to) *feel* sad, where the challenge is to explain this against the background of the self-evident fact that music itself cannot ever *feel* anything.

Kivy is not in a position to draw out the significance of the failure of this aspect of Goodman's account. This is because the whole drive of his own theory is towards accounting for the experience of expressive music in terms that exclude the idea that our appreciation might ever involve responding to it in the way that an arousalist would like to say is also the cause of our experience of it as expressive in the first place, and for Kivy this means excluding any ways of responding to it *as if* it had something like the human significance that actual behavioural expressions have for us.¹⁶ For Kivy, it would seem, we experience music as expressive in ways that call upon the normative criteria that, in the more typical circumstances of human behaviour, expressive characteristics share with actual expressions, but this need not mean that we also impute anything of

¹⁴ E.g. Davidson (1978: 31-47).

¹⁵ These objections are comprehensively elaborated in Davies (1994: 137-150). This last point represents a type of objection to the use of the notion of metaphor to explain music's expressive features that resurfaces in connection with Scruton's metaphor-based account, which I examine in Chapter Three.

¹⁶ This reflects Kivy's insistence that the only emotional responses that can be legitimately invoked as part of an aesthetic appreciation should be ones directed at qualities the music possesses in the light of its being viewed as an artefact whose creation reflects standards of artistic achievement: e.g. admiration, awe, etc.

the broader significance of expressions to our encounters with these expressive characteristics when we encounter them in music. Hence the issue of how it could be that expressive music might actually be experienced as having an immediate and powerful emotional significance of its own for us simply does not arise for him, and because of this he is not in a position to be struck by the unilluminating nature of Goodman's attempt to explicate just this feature.

There are two senses in which we might regard this as pointing to a limitation in Kivy's own position. Firstly, we may say that an account (such as Kivy's) that explains how we come to experience and appreciate music as expressive in terms that exclude the idea that this experience has anything like the significance for us that an encounter with expressive characteristics has when these correspond to expressions has, in effect, explained less than an ideal theory would about why music matters to us in virtue of being expressive. It may therefore be said to have explained less about the kind of appreciative judgements that many of us are, in fact inclined to pass on expressive music, which do often imply a sense that expressive music partakes, albeit vaguely or indirectly, in the distinctively human significance that such characteristics possess when construed as expressions that reveal the actual emotional life of persons. In this respect, Kivy's theory cannot be said to fulfil the ideal of *inclusivity* in any positively interesting sense.

This conclusion is reinforced by the second sense in which these considerations point to his account being of limited value. This concerns the fact that his commitment to excluding any ways of reacting to music as if it had something like the broader human significance that actual behavioural expressions have makes him wholly opposed to the idea that expressive characteristics that we do perceive in music as a consequence of our responses to it could be relevant to our appreciation of it.¹⁷ That makes it possible that his account – at least insofar as it appeals to resemblance, rather than to convention – will turn out to fall far short of the ideal of offering an inclusive explanation of the *range* of expressive characteristics for which music may in principle be appreciated. At any rate, this will certainly be the case if it is found that the range of such characteristics is significantly broadened when it is allowed to include those that we perceive as a consequence of our affective responses.

¹⁷ In his later writings, Kivy makes some limited but significant concessions to certain forms of arousal theory. I discuss these in the next chapter. For the present, however, I will focus on his initial account and its motivations.

Furthermore, Kivy's point to the effect that Goodman's account is more dependent upon conventions than its author might wish to admit is itself weakened by the fact that Kivy himself must rely heavily on purely conventional forms of associative understanding. He has to do this to account for the fact that we find aspects of music expressive that, on his own admission, are manifestly not covered by his conception of resemblance-based expressivity. This is because the latter only appears to cover rhythmic and melodic *contours* and not the expressive differences that help to distinguish individual intervals or chords from one another or that are intrinsic to the particular colouristic qualities of individual tones or textures.

That Kivy's account of resemblance does not reach down as far as these more basic low-level elements of music is surely a deficiency, since it means that his account of *their* distinctive expressive characteristics runs counter to the intuition that if any expressive aspects of music should be understood as possessing the sort of perceptual immediacy that Kivy's resemblance account seeks to make sense of (with its suggestion that they are not dependent upon symbolic conventions alone), it should be just *these* ones. It also implies that such elements of music cannot be experienced as expressive in non-conventional terms except in virtue of their role in larger-scale melodic and rhythmic contours, and this runs directly counter to the ideal of minimal (intra-musical) context dependency that is one of the criteria on the basis of which an account might be preferred. The point is that certain chords and intervals *do* seem to possess audible characteristics sufficient to make them immediately expressive for us *in their own right*. While Kivy's account has little to say about this, we cannot help but note that it is consistent with what an arousalist would say, which is that their expressive character can be explained with reference to a primitive emotional response we are disposed to have when presented with those characteristics, of the same order as that which we may have when presented with certain colours (Radford: 1991).

At the same time, it is conceivable that the real weakness of Kivy's account, taken as a whole, could turn out to be that it invites one to concede too much to the arousalist. This is because it assumes that there is no *alternative* way of explaining how individual tones, chords and textures could come to be heard as expressive in virtue of their intrinsic character, so that the arousal theory – whatever its defects might be – is made to look as though it offers the only plausible account of this.

(ii) Davies

I will now turn to the version of the resemblance theory proposed by Davies (1980, 1994). Like Kivy, Davies is concerned with how music can be expressive in ways that do not require us to think of it as an actual expression of actual feelings on the part of someone somewhere: the expression of emotion ‘*in* music’ rather than ‘*through* music’ (Davies 1980: 67). Although in some respects Davies’ account appears to follow a similar line to Kivy’s, it leads to a more specific formulation of the argument for resemblance in relation to expressive music, and reflects a distinct understanding of how we come to value music for its expressive characteristics from that implied in Kivy’s account.

Whereas Kivy emphasises the need to explain expressivity in music as a formal or intrinsic feature of the music that is simply there to be appreciated as such, Davies formulates the problem itself in terms that imply the need to give an explanation that would also be consistent with the capacity of expressive music to affect us or at least strike us as significant. This seems to bring into focus the real nature of the difficulty posed by expressivity in ‘pure’ music:

In the non-musical paradigmatic cases something that *is* sad *feels* sad. Since no-one who says that a particular musical work is sad believes (or knowingly imagines) that the music feels sad, how is it possible to claim that music is sad and, at the same time, maintain that the word sad retains here a use which preserves its meaning? Clearly we cannot say... that in their application to musical works emotion words have a uniquely aesthetic secondary use. For then we would be unable to explain why it is that, say, musical sadness interests us and moves us as it does. (1980: 67)

For Davies, then, it is important that an account demonstrate some significant link between the conditions under which we ascribe emotion terms to music and those under which we ascribe them to persons, such that it becomes clear why and in what sense the former may be seen as inheriting something of the significance of the latter as this relates to the actual emotional life of human beings. He believes that in order to meet this challenge it is sufficient to show ‘that (a) there is a secondary use of emotion words in the description of human behaviour, and that (b) the use of emotion words in descriptions of music is significantly analogous to their use in (a)’ (1980: 68). In this

respect at least, he may be understood as seeking to approximate to the ideal of minimal deviation from central cases.

Davies' basic strategy, like Kivy's, is to argue that it is a contingent fact about us that we are inclined to perceive certain things as possessing expressive characteristics even when there is no basis for taking them to be actual expressions. However, his account focuses not on the case of inanimate things or non-human creatures (such as weeping willows or Saint Bernard dogs), to which one might imaginatively impute characteristics associated with specifically human behaviour, but on the expressive characteristics that human behaviour itself displays, even when this behaviour is not in fact taken to be an actual instance of expression on the part of the person whose behaviour it is. Davies calls these 'emotion-characteristics in appearances' (1980: 68; 1994: 224). It is significant that these not only need not correspond to any occurrence of actually felt feelings, but are also 'necessarily publicly displayed and lack emotional objects' (1980: 68). They thus correspond to what he calls our 'no-reference-to-feeling' use of emotion terms to characterise how people look on particular occasions (or how they are disposed to look), where this implies nothing about what they feel (or are disposed to feel). At the same time, this use of emotion terms is parasitic upon the use of such terms to refer to actually felt emotions, since 'the behaviour which gives one's appearance its emotion-characteristic is the same as the behaviour which gives 'natural' expression to the corresponding felt-emotion' (ibid: 70).

For Davies, emotion-characteristics in appearances impose limits on what sort of feelings or emotions can be expressed in music, since they can only correspond to those feelings whose expressions do not require prior recognition of their emotional object in order to be identified as the particular kinds of expression they are. Moreover, not all expressive behaviour gives rise to corresponding expressive appearances of this kind, and where expressive behaviour is not sufficient to reveal exactly what sort of feeling is being expressed without reference to further contextual conditions, the corresponding expressive appearances will inherit this ambiguity unless similar contextual conditions apply (ibid: 71-2).

For Davies the perception of such emotion-characteristics in appearances is, consequently, a case of aspect-perception – of 'seeing as', understood in a specific way, such that for Davies it is to be distinguished not just from ordinary perception (in which, for Davies, one's perception is accompanied by a belief that what one perceives is also true) but also from forms of imaginative (or make-believe) perception, in which a

thought is fictively entertained about the object of perception, i.e. without actually believing it to be true. For Davies, it seems to mean little more than noticing *certain* literal characteristics of a phenomenon as opposed to others, where this is normally a function of context but also can illuminate certain non-paradigmatic cases in which the typical context is absent but the mode of perception retained nevertheless. Davies later ascribes to emotion-characteristics in appearances the status of emergent properties, but attaches to this much the same implications as he attaches in his earlier account to the notion that they are aspects (Davies 1994: 228).¹⁸

This leads Davies to assert that the perception of an emotion-characteristic in an appearance involves simply perceiving a straightforward property of that appearance, and there are ‘no specifiable rules for its occurrence’. In this sense, therefore, while ‘the behaviour that gives rise to an emotion-characteristic in an appearance is necessarily similar to the behaviour which naturally expresses the corresponding felt-emotion... the perception of the emotion-characteristic does not depend upon the noticing of analogies’ (ibid: 73). This suggests that the role of notions of resemblance or analogy is to be confined to explaining what it is in virtue of which we experience such emotion-characteristics in appearances in *music*, as distinct from in human behaviour: they do not contribute to explaining the nature of emotion-characteristics in appearances themselves, as these relate to ‘the behaviour which naturally expresses the corresponding felt-emotion’.

However, this conflicts with the claim made elsewhere, that ‘we justify our perception of the emotion-characteristic in an appearance by arguing that the behaviour which gives rise to it would, in the appropriate contexts, naturally express [i.e. count as revealing an actual instance of] the corresponding felt-emotion’ (ibid: 72).¹⁹ The fact that similarity to actual behavioural expressions can play such a justifying role in this respect surely indicates that a perception of similarity is what *also* lies behind the kind of aspect-perception with which Davies identifies our experiences of emotion-characteristics in appearances *in general*.

One way to throw this into relief is by contrasting it with the implications of Davies’ account, which are that we identify the aspect as the same, both in and out of

¹⁸ This contrasts with the account developed by Scruton (1974, 1983, 1997), in which the concept of ‘seeing as’ is also invoked, but in a less minimal sense, to explain the role of imaginatively informed modes of perception in our experience and appreciation of aesthetic objects. I will discuss Scruton’s approach in due course in the next chapter.

¹⁹ I have added the paraphrase in brackets here in order to make absolutely clear what Davies means by ‘express’ in this context.

the context in which it would correspond to an actual expression, and by reflecting on whether this is after all a plausible characterisation of how these experiences relate to each other. If the expressive physiognomic characteristics that lead us to construe behaviour as an actual expression are in themselves only *partly* constitutive of the expression, then they must be perceived as part of an irreducibly context-dependent phenomenon, not as a contingent conjunction of expressive characteristics and other contextual factors. If that is indeed so, then the identification of a *common* aspect perceived in both that sort of case and in other cases where no such context is present (except perhaps contingently) – as required by Davies’ account of emotion-characteristics in appearances in general – will require us to abstract out certain features from this context-dependent characterisation and perceive them as salient on the basis of the fact that the same features may also be encountered in other unrelated contexts. In other words, it will require us to perceive those features in a context-independent way, and the thought must be that we do this *because* it enables us to see them in the light of their constituting a resemblance to how they look in the case of a mere expressive appearance. But if that is so, shouldn’t we say that this experience is more like a case of perception based on accidental similarities than a case of aspect-perception proper? After all, the concept of perceiving an aspect properly corresponds to more than merely the idea of perceiving the same figure or form in different ways: it also typically involves *understanding* that figure or form (e.g. the duck-rabbit, when actually seen *as* a duck, or *as* a rabbit) as either being or representing that which we see it *as*, rather than as just accidentally looking like that which we see it *as*.²⁰ The problem for Davies here is that once the notion of aspect-perception is shorn of its cognitive substance, its being invoked to explain recurrent and apparently non-trivial aspects of our experience of music becomes as much in need of explanation as the notion of emotion-characteristics in appearances that it was itself meant to explain.

In choosing to emphasise a sense in which the experience of an emotion-characteristic in an appearance can be thought of as being just some sort of immediate and self-sufficient encounter with a property intrinsic to that appearance, Davies appears to be offering a more precise account than Kivy of what it is, exactly, that music must resemble if it is to be experienced as expressive. In so doing, it may seem as though he

²⁰ At least, it seems to me that this interpretation would be more consistent with the broader implications of Wittgenstein’s discussion of aspect-perception as a whole, as highlighted – correctly in my view – by Mulhall (1990: 6-35, 123-152; 2001: 246-267).

has minimised the significance of the controversial commitments implicit in the latter's account of how criteria of expressivity continue to relate to criteria of expression even when the former are applied to something as artificial, impersonal and abstract as music might be thought to be. It is tempting to think that he has succeeded here, just because of the fact that, unlike Kivy, he is not committed to explaining any significance that music may have for us in virtue of being expressive exclusively with reference to his account of resemblance. (Explaining something like this would, presumably, involve explaining why we might invest the same sort of significance in characteristics of appearances as we invest in similar characteristics of actual expressions.) This is because Davies, unlike Kivy, holds that the significance that these emotion-characteristics in appearances take on when encountered in music is *also* partly to be explained by their ability to engender 'mirroring responses' similar to those aroused inside us when we encounter such emotion-characteristics in appearances in life.

This more overarching aspect of his theory might thus be thought to redeem his otherwise questionable account of how resemblance-based expressive characteristics of music are constituted in respect of the notion of aspect-perception, but that will only be so if the latter account can indeed fulfil the role demanded of it by this larger theory, which itself would have to be plausible. The challenge facing Davies is as follows: the idea that mirroring responses to music can be understood as being the same kind of responses as those that we have to emotion-characteristics in appearances when we encounter them in life is one that requires justification in two different respects. Firstly, he must show that the conditions which lead us to perceive emotion-characteristics in appearances in life are reproduced in music in a way that would explain our being *affected* by them not just when we encounter them in life, but also when we encounter them in music. (This would allow him to claim to have respected the ideal of minimal deviation from central cases). Secondly, he needs to show that the sort of responses we have to these appearances in life are broadly consistent with the range (and intensity) of the emotional responses we actually have when listening to music, and not merely some attenuated version of these. If these requirements can be fulfilled, his account might well look preferable to many others from the point of view of inclusivity, at least on the assumption that a theory that explains expressive features of music by appealing to both resemblance and arousal at the same time would be better placed to explain a wider range of those features than one which relies on just one of these. However, I will argue that these requirements are problematic for him.

As we have seen, Davies interprets the difference between perceiving an emotion-characteristic in a human appearance and perceiving the equivalent real case of behavioural expression in terms that suggest that rather than there being a perception of a resemblance or analogy between these two types of encounter, there is just an object of experience (i.e. an 'aspect') genuinely common to both. He therefore does not confront the fact that, within the terms of his own account, what in fact links the two sorts of encounter *are* just accidental similarities: similarities that reflect no more than the fact that the expressive phenomena in question are only contingently related, since they both occur in respect of human bodily appearances, but for unrelated reasons (in that one sort occurs because of factors pertaining to the felt experience of a person, but not the other). As such, his invoking of the concept of aspect-perception is robbed of the explanatory value it might otherwise have in respect of both aspects of the abovementioned challenge, since it no longer implies any meaningful explanation of *why* we should wish to attend to some common aspect of these two types of experience.

This is perhaps relevant above all to his response to the *second* aspect of the challenge mentioned above, according to which Davies needs to show that the sort of responses we have to mere expressive appearances in life are at least to some degree consistent in range and intensity with those we have to music. In passing over the full implications of the difference between such appearances and actual expressions, the thought that we could respond to the former in the same sort of ways as we do to the latter is made to seem more plausible than it otherwise would. An impression is created that there is no real need for an explanation of how it could be that we would respond to *music* with something like the range and intensity of feelings characteristic of our response to genuine expressions, even though what we are in fact responding to *are* just expressive appearances. However, once the full implications of the difference between expressive appearances and genuine expressions are spelt out, it is clear that an explanation is still required here, and that Davies has not supplied it with his account of emotion-characteristics in appearances.

Davies might still claim that emotion-characteristics in appearances are a plausible explanation of the significance of expressive characteristics of music because the significance they have for us when we encounter them in music is *itself* to be explained in terms of the responses they elicit from us, rather than because of the connection they themselves have to real cases of expression (in that this connection does not, as we have seen, itself appear sufficient to make sense of those responses – at

least as Davies has elaborated it). In that case, he would be left with something that starts to look much more like an arousal theory of expression pure and simple: at the very least, it would imply a role for arousal that is not itself fully explained in terms of the resemblances constitutive of that which engenders the arousal, so that the arousal itself must either count as a basic, unexplained element or be explicated with reference to something else, such as some form of imaginative engagement.²¹ This would mean that even if his account still assigned a role to resemblance as part of a larger theory, nothing interesting would have been explained by the appeal to resemblance itself, and as such his account would not be fundamentally distinct from the more complex versions of the arousal-based and imagination-based theories to be discussed in due course.²²

Alternatively, Davies could just insist that emotion-characteristics in appearances are a plausible explanation of the significance of expressive characteristics of music simply by virtue of the purely accidental connection that they in fact have to real cases of expression. However, even if one were to accept the idea that our responses to expressive music could be likened to some sort of pre-cognitive response that we might be thought to have to expressive appearances of this sort outside of music, the theory would still face an objection: in life, these responses are defeasible – they can be, and are, over-ridden by fully cognitive responses that reflect an understanding of the difference between expressive appearances and actual expressions, so that we are then led to direct our responsiveness towards the latter rather than the former. If the analogy were to hold good between these responses to apparent behaviour and our responses to music, we should expect to see a falling off in our capacity to have such responses to music once we reflect on the fact that, if Davies is correct, they, like

²¹ This is because arousal would have been invoked to account for why these resemblances to emotion-characteristics in appearances should strike us as significant – as the sort of thing we should want to notice and appreciate music for – rather than as purely accidental (and thus irrelevant to an appreciation of the music as music), and if this appeal to arousal were in turn justified by explaining the relevance of musically aroused responses to appreciation in terms of their being responses to resemblance-based expressive characteristics whose significance already makes such responses appear natural, then the account would be circular. Hence arousal must be postulated as a basic, unexplained element or be justified with reference to something other than resemblance.

²² My discussion of Davies' theory here has concentrated on whether his account of the role of resemblances can fulfil the role required of it in his larger theory, which also calls upon musically aroused responses of a certain kind to explain why those resemblances, or the expressive characteristics that we perceive in virtue of them, should matter to us in the context of appreciating the music. In the next chapter, I will consider whether his specific view of the nature of the musically aroused responses themselves adds anything significant to his account.

other mere expressive appearances, have no substantial link to actual occurrences of feeling in anybody. Yet that does not seem to occur.

Neither outcome would allow Davies to claim that his model of resemblance offers a basis for an account of why we experience music as expressive in terms consistent with us also having musically aroused responses to it. Once we are clear that emotion-characteristics in appearances do not in any *significant* sense constitute the same object of experience and response as actual cases of expression do, we can see that he has not shown that these resemblances can make sense of the *possibility* of responding to music in the full-blooded way that we do, since they have not been shown to be resemblances to the sort of thing we would expect to have such responses to in life. As it stands so far, then, his account fails to fulfil the ideal of minimal deviation from central cases by a long way.

I will now consider some additional aspects of how Davies responds to the challenge which his account faces in the above-mentioned respects. I hope to show that any further elements to his theory that he introduces in relation to this matter do not mitigate the deficiencies just pointed out.

Davies must demonstrate that the conditions which lead us to perceive emotion-characteristics in appearances in life (and to be affected by them as we are) are somehow reproduced in music itself. Although he would not accept that his conception of emotion-characteristics in appearances involves any sort of analogy with *real* expressions that might depend upon the perception of resemblances to these, Davies does attempt to make sense of the fact that we experience such characteristics in *music* in terms of a connection of this sort, and in this area he goes significantly beyond Kivy in attempting to spell out the grounds for our awareness of resemblances between music and expressive behaviour. He points to the fact that music furnishes us with an experience of movement as evidence for its dynamic character (ibid: 73-4), but unlike some theorists (e.g. Pratt 1931), he does not take this dynamic character as sufficient in itself to explain our willingness to ascribe expressive characteristics to it. For Davies, the similarity between music and human behaviour is much more highly specific: he aims to show that music 'displays the kind of intentionality upon which the expressiveness of human action depends' (ibid. 74), asserting that both human behaviour and music present the same sort of contrast with the sort of intentionality one might attribute to the movements of a machine. Whereas the latter are, in his view, fully

explained by citing the creator's intentions and the causal mechanisms that lead to their realisation, it is a striking feature of human behaviour that

... by referring to a person's motives, desires, feelings and intentions we can give the causes of his behaviour but, at the same time, we recognise that these causes do not *determine* [sic] his behaviour in the way that causal mechanisms determine the machine's movements. His behaviour could have been other than it was and, what is more, it could have been other than it was and still be explained by the same motives, feelings, etc. In this way human behaviour goes beyond the reasons which explain it in a way that mere movement does not... (ibid: 74)

Likewise, in the case of music, the 'reasons why the musical movement takes the course it does' are not given when we merely cite the composer's intentions (if such a thing is possible) and elaborate any causal mechanisms linking these to the musical result, but

... are to be sought in the music itself; if the music makes 'sense' then its sense is given in the course of the music and an appreciation of the composer's intentions is not yet an appreciation of the musical sense. We recognise that the course of the music may have been other than it is; the possibility of alternative courses comes with the notes themselves. No causal mechanism determines the outcome. As in explanations of human behaviour, we recognise that the reasons that we give in explaining why the music takes the course that it does could count equally well in explaining other courses which the music might have taken. (ibid: 75)

In short, Davies' claim is that

... because musical movement can be heard as making sense and because that sense is not determined solely by the composer's intentions, musical movement is sufficiently like the human behaviour which gives rise to emotion-characteristics in appearances that musical movement may give rise to emotion-characteristics in sound. (ibid: 75)

This attempt to highlight the experience we have, when hearing music, of encountering something like, or connected to, human intentionality or agency as this is normally manifested in the behaviour of others is, I think, highly significant. It is tempting to think that it could serve as the basis for an account of what it is about music that leads us to hear it as expressive in ways that make it natural for us to attribute to it *more* significance than accidentally expressive appearances could ever have. Moreover,

this could be so regardless of whether we respond to it with musically aroused emotions or not. It would also then explain *why* we would respond to it as we do, where this seems more like the way in which we respond to actual expressions. However, this is because the account appeals to intuitions about how we experience human actions as ‘making sense’ – in appearing purposeful – even when we are not sure exactly what the actual intention of the agent was. Davies seems to think that our experience of music is informed by a sense that the experience of emotion-characteristics in appearances is analogous to this. But it is not at all clear why this should be so. Actions generally appear purposeful just *because* they unfold in relation to their surroundings in ways whose systematic character points to a purpose being fulfilled by the bodily movements of the agent. Take away the relation to the surroundings, and you take away the basis for seeing those movements as systematically related to these in a way that would suggest that they are purposeful, or that they are actions at all.²³ It is not clear why we should think that there is any corresponding (and meaningful) sense in which expressive appearances ‘make sense’ in their own right, given that what distinguishes them from actual expressions is precisely the fact that they do not occur in circumstances that would suggest that they are anything other than physiognomic accidents.

Davies is surely right to suggest that something very much like an experience of agency is furnished by the *intrinsic* character of the music itself (since ‘the possibility of alternative courses comes with the notes themselves’). This is an interesting claim about the relationship between music and human behaviour, just because it does not simply equate this with the ways in which our experience might be informed by an awareness that the music is, in fact, the product of actions carried out intentionally by composers or performers in the real world. If there is something about music itself that invites us to hear it as a manifestation of human agency, then this could in principle be relevant to an account of a range of characteristics of music that might serve as legitimate grounds for its aesthetic appreciation.²⁴

Nevertheless, where we are specifically concerned with music’s expressive characteristics, the relevance of this is not at all clear. Davies implies that the mere co-presence of an experience of an emotion-characteristic in an appearance and an experience of human agency being manifested in that same appearance would be

²³ This feature of actions, or at least of instrumental actions, is most clearly elucidated in Meløe (1971, 1983), and has its origin in various remarks on the concept of intention in Wittgenstein (1953).

²⁴ See Chapter Five for my own attempt to make use of this idea.

sufficient to engender some sort of impression that we are encountering a phenomenon that would possess something like the significance for us that actual expressions have. The idea is that this would also make sense of the fact that we respond to such an impression in the same way as to human expressions. But Davies does not give us any good reasons for thinking that this is so. He seems to regard it as a self-evident fact.

He would also need to demonstrate that the conjunction of a self-contained manifestation of agency and an expressive appearance, which taken together we are supposed to experience as significant in something like the way that actual expressions are, would still be distinguishable from the latter in real-life cases. This must be so if the thesis is to be consistent with the fact that emotion-characteristics in appearances must derive whatever significance they have from the fact that they occur in the first instance as features of actual people, whose behaviour also typically displays this sort of agency. He must show that they are derived in such a way that we are not prevented from distinguishing them from the real cases of behavioural expression they merely resemble. Given that his position implies that they take on a similar significance to the latter when encountered alongside human agency, and given that they also do resemble them, it is not clear how he could achieve this.

Another problematic issue that is not addressed is the following: in ascribing to music something like a self-sufficient appearance of human agency (as something supposedly disclosed independently of our understanding of anyone's actual intentions, and how these may have influenced the particular course of the music's unfolding), the account claims to shed light on why we hear music as expressive in the way that we experience behaviour as expressive. But even if that *were* so, it would only be at the expense of creating a further problem that stands in need of explanation, and for just the same sort of reasons as the original problem of expressivity in music did. If an explanation of how music could furnish *self-sufficient* expressive characteristics corresponding to emotion-characteristics in appearances was required in the first place, is not an explanation of how it could furnish self-sufficient appearances of human *agency* (what one might call "action-characteristics in appearances") now just as much in order, before the account can have any real elucidatory value? Yet Davies does not in fact give such an explanation.

Davies sums up his position in the following terms:

... musical movement invites attention to expressiveness because, like human behaviour (and unlike random process), it displays order and purposiveness. Musical movement is invested with humanity not merely because music is created and performed by humans but because it provides a sense of unity and purpose. We recognise... a logic such that what follows arises naturally from, without being determined by, what preceded; in this, musical movement is more akin to human action than to random movement or to the fully determined movements of a nonhuman mechanism. (1994: 229)²⁵

As a loose characterisation of what we experience, I find his description intuitively convincing, but on closer analysis it seems that not much has been explained, just because the sense in which movement can *both* ‘display[s] order and purposiveness’ and ‘arise[s] naturally from, without being determined by, what preceded’ is one that seems highly elusive, whether considered in relation to music or in relation to human behaviour generally.

One consequence of this aspect of Davies’ account is that, like several other resemblance theorists (e.g. Kivy, Budd), he is committed to explaining expressivity in music principally with reference to the experience of musical *movement*.²⁶ I will now argue that this imposes undesirable limitations on the explanatory potential of his account of resemblance-based expressive characteristics of music.

Like Hanslick and many others, Davies holds movement to be a central feature of music, in that music is ‘heard and described in spatial terms’:

Notes are heard not as isolated individuals but as elements in themes, chords, and the like. These higher units of organization involve motion that unfolds through time. There is movement (stepwise, not gliding) between notes that constitute the theme. Rhythm, meter, and tempo generate the pace of this movement. The experience is not merely one of succession, but of connection. (ibid: 232).

Like many other theorists of expression in music,²⁷ Davies makes two assumptions. Firstly he assumes that because musical movement itself is such a curious

²⁵ At least at this stage in his argument, Davies is unequivocal about the fact that this feature of music ‘arises from the character of the musical materials themselves, not solely from the recognition that human hands shape those materials’ (ibid: 229).

²⁶ Not all resemblance-based accounts focus exclusively on resemblances that involve an experience of *movement* in music. One that does not is that of Ridley (1995b), which I will examine in due course.

²⁷ Notably Pratt (1931), Zuckerkandl (1956), Budd (1995), and Scruton (1997).

and striking phenomenon, it must somehow lie at the heart of any explanation of how music can be expressive. Secondly he assumes that because musical movement is a central feature of melody and harmony and rhythm, it must function as a dynamic gestalt phenomenon into which more basic musical features (such as the way in which a single tone, chord or texture unfolds continuously over time in respect of its intrinsic properties of pitch, colour and intensity) are subsumed without remainder.

This conception is certainly encouraged by certain aspects of the Western art music tradition, where an emphasis on those aspects of music that can be systematically represented in a score as the principal form-bearing elements of music tends to promote the impression that all that is of essential importance in a piece of music are the dynamic contours and progressions created by successions of discrete pitches and the higher-order groupings they can give rise to. However, as I have already argued in respect of Kivy's theory, a view of this kind (i.e. corresponding to the two above-mentioned assumptions of Davies) leads to an account of expressivity in music that fails to explain the expressive character that low-level musical phenomena can have in their own right. As such it falls foul of the ideal of minimal (intra-musical) context-dependency, since it requires us to postulate the presence of higher-level musical structures before we can admit that musical tones, chords and textures are expressive at all. As a point of pure phenomenology, this seems incorrect.²⁸

The most fundamental objection to Davies' account is, however, that it is at odds with the fact that our responses to music do seem to surpass the kind of responses that we have when faced with such *accidentally* expressive appearances in life. Moreover, they do so not just in range and subtlety, but also because part of what it seems to be like to experience such responses fully and freely in relation to music is to somehow experience them as (or as if they were) the sort of responses we have to real cases of expression, i.e. as responses to just those forms of human expressivity that, in real life, are bound up with the actually occurring emotional dramas of real human existence. This suggests that even if Davies' account could be further clarified, it would still be inadequate to account for more than a limited range of emotional responses, which

²⁸ The full significance of this becomes apparent when we consider – as I will later on – the expressive role that at least some of these lower-level phenomena take on when they come to prominence, as the aspects of music most typically inflected by performers to achieve an expressive interpretation of the music in performance.

would then be defined precisely by the fact that they do not necessarily involve this sort of implicit connection to actual human life.

In this respect, his account is open to the same sort of criticism that, as we shall see in due course, arousal theories invite, insofar as the latter attempt to make sense of Hanslick's thought that 'pure' music cannot furnish the sort of worldly states of affairs that could serve as a proper intentional object of emotions that are thought to necessarily possess a cognitive aspect. Advocates of such theories are obliged to acknowledge the limited range of feelings that could, if their accounts are correct, be conveyed through music (in a way that would make them relevant to appreciation), and Davies appears to accept similar limitations to the range of felt states that emotion-characteristics in appearances could convey – a range that in his view is confined to various types or degrees of happiness or sadness (1980: 85 and 1994: 262). This objection becomes damaging as soon as a credible alternative account is made available that promises to account for something more like the full range of our responses as relevant to appreciation. (However, we have yet to see here if such an account can be successfully developed.)

Even so, Davies does claim that his account is consistent with a slightly wider range of emotions than Kivy's, partly by arguing in the manner of Levinson (1990) that certain patterns of feeling corresponding to more specific psychological states might be expressed in music through the 'order of its expressive development' (1994: 263). Given the fact that Davies' account only invokes musically aroused responses that directly mirror existing expressive characteristics of the music, it is not clear that there is anything about his actual account that makes it more consistent with this line of argument than Kivy's account would be. Moreover, in contrast to Levinson himself, Davies has extremely limited room for manoeuvre on this score, owing to his refusal to countenance any conception of a fictive expressive persona in music that might be experienced as the continuous source of such a series of expressive musical happenings.

Some additional features of Davies' account emerge in his later treatment of the differences between his approach and Kivy's (Davies 1994: 260-277). I have already referred to the fact that Davies assigns a significant role to music's capacity to arouse mirroring responses – responses which do not involve recognising a state of affairs as the intentional object of the emotion felt by the person whose expression we might respond to in this way. This, of course, contrasts with Kivy's more radical anti-

arousalism (Kivy 1990: 146-172), according to which the only proper responses we might have to expressive music are of the contemplative and appreciative sort: a sense of awe and wonder at the beauty of the music, or at the skill and subtlety with which the expressive unfolding of the music has been brought about by the composer, for example.

Davies' account seems more intuitively satisfying than Kivy's here, if only because it seems to avoid plunging us into a protracted debate about the relative superiority of different ways of listening to music (i.e. with or without direct emotional responses to the expressive content of the music, as distinct from responses that take the aesthetic achievement that the music represents as their intentional object). It acknowledges a more basic role for resemblance-based expressive qualities but leaves the door open to those who feel that musically aroused responses also play an important role in our experience and our appreciation of music. (The problem is, that although his aims are to be applauded in this regard, Davies does not show in a convincing way how they might be fulfilled.) By contrast, it is hard to avoid the suspicion that Kivy may have invented and embraced a personal 'style' of listening and responding to music in order to be able to have just the sort of musical experiences required to lend credence to his own theory.

Also important is the fact that Kivy and Davies disagree about whether music can ever be 'about' the emotions expressed in it. Whereas the former denies this possibility, the latter states that music 'does not merely present emotion; it "comments," or may "comment," on the emotions so expressed.' (1994: 265). Davies defines a taxonomy of various possible conceptions of meaning, ranging from the non-intentional to those which involve highly conventionalised forms of reciprocal intentional understanding, and what he has in mind here clearly falls into those categories of meaning that depend upon some form of recognition of intentions. This represents a significant addition to the original version of his theory (i.e. Davies 1980), and requires comment.

Davies believes that we cannot but be aware of the fact that the music has been 'shaped with certain effects in mind' (1994: 265). He takes the view that composers often try to express a particular emotion in the music they create (though not necessarily their own emotion), and that *unintentionally* expressive music is the exception rather than the norm (ibid: 264). In other words he is committed to the view that our experience of music often involves an awareness that it is intended to count as the

product of a process of artistic self-expression on the part of its creator. The result is that, for Davies, we take the music to be the result (or manifestation) of some sort of act of expressive communication on the part of the composer:

We regard the expressive character of music as a matter of design... Accordingly, we hear in the music not merely a presentation of expressive appearances but also a type of reference, or ostension, effected through the composer's deliberate use of her materials. In the majority of works... we hear the music's expressiveness as a central element in an act of communication. (1994: 272)

This would also normally imply that we, as listeners, interpret the music's expressive characteristics with reference to conventions of expressive meaning of the sort that we think the composer in question would probably have observed, or which at least reflect our own awareness of the sort of expressive choices that would have been available at the time of the music's creation.²⁹

Davies holds that our understanding of music as the product of an act of intentional artistic creation impacts on the nature of our *experience* of the expressive significance of music, and that this can be adduced to help explain why we value musical expressiveness in spite of the fact that this expressiveness is, according to his own theory, experienced by us as no more than a series of expressive appearances (albeit that they are ones that he takes to be evocative of *some* sort of response themselves). This is a significant move away from his earlier account (Davies 1980), which implied that emotion-characteristics in appearances and our mirroring responses to these are sufficient in themselves to make sense of our typical level of emotional investment in, and responsiveness to, expressive music.

Davies clarifies his new position as follows:

Though expressive appearances are not backed by occurrent emotions, the intimacy of their relation to occurrent emotions, coupled with their deliberate use and shaping by the composer, entitles us to recognize and

²⁹ For an account of artistic reception along these lines, see Gombrich (1960, 1963). Davies does not address the exact nature of the relationship between intentions and artistic expression, which seems quite distinct from that which holds between intentions and ordinary acts of expressive communication. This emerges if, for example, one contrasts Collingwood's understanding of the process of artistic expression (Collingwood 1938), according to which one only discovers what one wishes to express *by* embodying it in one's medium, with the Gricean conception of reciprocal understanding (Grice 1956), whose implication is that a speaker first knows what they intend to say and then sets about communicating to others their *intention* to be understood as saying just that.

appreciate a connection between music and the wider affective context that is the milieu for human interaction...[Music] is redolent of the intentional context in which it is created and performed, and this, quite properly, affects the way we are inclined to experience its expressive aspects. (1994: 272)

His strategy here is to claim that we experience expressive appearances in music as significant in the light of some sort of *non-specific* intuition that the music's expressive character must somehow reflect the communicative intentions of the composer, which in turn can be assumed to reflect his attitude to affective life in general. This might be thought to defuse the objection that his account of resemblance and arousal depends on an intentionalistic view of music through and through, since the implication is that we do not need to attribute *specific* communicative intentions to the music to experience its expressive appearances as humanly significant rather than accidental, and thus be moved by them to the extent that we are. Unfortunately Davies is singularly ill-placed to make sense of how this purely generic contextualisation of music in relation to its origins in human agency and artistic expression could come about, just because the experience of agency in music that he might call upon to make sense of this is one that he himself sees as depending upon an irreducible analogy, where this in effect marks out the limit to what he is willing to regard as being amenable to or in need of explanation.

Even so, we can get a sense of how problematic this will be just from Davies' claim that 'we hear in the music not merely a presentation of expressive appearances but also a type of reference, or ostension' (1994: 272).³⁰ This invites us to wonder about what kind of prior understanding of music's communicative purpose would license us to infer that some act of creating music had been intentionally aimed at creating an ostensive reference to expressive characteristics of the resulting music itself. The difficulty with this is that it is not clear that there is any plausible sense in which this reference might be graspable as the *evident* purpose of the act of creating that music, given that the presence of the expressive characteristics in the music could equally be explained as a merely *contingent* effect of the composer's *actions* without preventing us from valuing the music in virtue of its possession of those characteristics. (There does not appear to be any constraint that obliges us to *only* appreciate music for its expressive

³⁰ There is insufficient space to present the full range of possible objections to Davies at this point.

characteristics as and when we have grounds for taking these to be a *deliberate* product of the artist's actions.)³¹

Moreover, there is a sense in which any account fundamentally reliant upon intentional context conflicts with our experience of music, which is of something whose expressive significance is – perhaps – made more precise by awareness of its intentional context, but whose underlying emotional *impact* in many cases seems definitely to be in place prior to this, and in a form simply too immediate to be accountable to what we might subsequently discover about the intentions of the composer or the communicative conventions that may have guided his creative decisions.³²

Davies anticipates the objection that his more or less generic appeal to intentions runs counter to the immediacy of music's expressive capacities and their impact upon us, when he considers Speck's statement that 'in contrast to visual works of art... music has an emotive vividness and immediacy that seems traceable only to the peculiar emotive impact of sound' (Speck 1988: 44). His response, though, is merely to claim that music in fact possesses no greater expressive vividness or immediacy than painting (1994: 269). The problem with this, as with Kivy, is that it prompts the suspicion that his account may reflect his own limitations as a listener (or, indeed, vice versa), in that many listeners would quite happily concur with Speck's statement.

(iii) Ridley

Before turning to the other principal sort of resemblance-based account, I will consider a number of additional points that pertain to behavioural-resemblance theories, made by Ridley (1995b).³³ Ridley attempts to defend the theory against a number of criticisms put forward chiefly by Budd (1985a). In contrast to Davies' later approach, Ridley expressly defines the notion of resemblance in terms that exclude reference to intentions: we do not perceive resemblances in music because we take it to be the case that we are intended to perceive them (or anything else), or because of any general appearance of intentionality that the music itself displays. In order to distinguish this

³¹ One possible response to this might be to invoke the notion of hypothetical intentionalism. A move along these lines in relation to musical expressiveness is advocated by Stecker (2001: 91-94). I discuss this general kind of approach in Chapter Four.

³² In this respect Kivy (1990: 146-172) seems closer to the mark in holding that there is some sort of aesthetically interesting and valuable experience to be had of expressive music prior to the sort of more complex understanding of it that makes reference to what it may have been intended to communicate.

³³ Ridley's account of resemblance is part of a larger account which I consider in Chapter Four.

kind of perception of resemblance from how intentional portrayals or representations in music of expressive behaviour might be experienced, Ridley co-opts the term 'melisma'. He seeks to be more precise than either Kivy or Davies about what aspects of music give rise to such resemblances, and why we perceive them to the extent that we do.

A significant feature of Ridley's approach is that he is not so dependent upon the idea that we are disposed to perceive phenomena in general animistically, on account of the fact that he is willing to explore the respects in which music can specifically resemble the human voice – in its everyday non-linguistic role as a channel for spontaneous expressions of feeling and as an instrument of expressive communication (Ridley *ibid*: 75-81). Consequently he can give a more telling account of why we should be disposed to perceive such resemblances, simply by pointing to

...the ubiquity and importance in our lives of the expressive human voice. Its tones, inflections and accents affect us intimately and directly; and to these qualities of sound it would be surprising if we had failed to become sensitive. And to the extent that this would be surprising, it would be surprising if we were not to move easily (and perhaps unconsciously) from the perception of those qualities of sound to the thought of the state of which those qualities of sound are, in their primary context, expressive, even when the sound having those qualities is not the human voice but is instead a piece of music...(*ibid*: 80)

This answers one of Budd's chief criticisms. This is that where such resemblances are supposed to be perceived because they are naturally striking, the theory carries the implication that it is necessary 'to realise which features a piece has in common with a sad voice if it is to be perceived as sad' (Budd 1985a: 143), and indeed this cannot be right. Ridley's point is that, when properly explained, we can see why such resemblances would seem so natural that we cease to even be aware that they are there.

By giving distinct accounts of the ways in which music resembles the human voice and physical gesture, Ridley is able to spell out more clearly and economically what it is about music in each case that leads to the perception of such resemblances. In the former case, because the voice is something that is itself manifested *essentially*

through (or as) *sound*, the resemblance is not, as Kivy tends to suggest, constituted merely in virtue of music's melodic and rhythmic contours:

Timbre, by itself, may also have melismatic effect, in its resemblance to thinner, sharper, richer, brighter, more honeyed or more shrill qualities of the expressive human voice. Throughout, aspects of the music are heard as having qualities audibly *in common* with vocal sounds. (ibid: 76)

This goes *some* way, but definitely not *all* the way, towards defusing one of the objections levelled at Kivy's account, which is that it is only applicable to higher-level musical phenomena (i.e. *gestalts*), and thereby fails to account for the intrinsically expressive qualities of musical materials such as individual tones, chords and textures in the most economical and inclusive way possible. It does not explain why these elements – in particular different types of chord or harmonically sounded interval – should be heard as expressive (when encountered in isolation) even when the sounds in question bear no resemblance to the sounding character of the expressive human voice. Moreover, in highlighting resemblances to the voice in a way that allows him to better answer Budd's objection to the resemblance theorist's account of how we come to notice just these resemblances and not others, Ridley seems to fall foul of a potentially more damaging critique which Budd develops of any theory seeking to explain music's expressive capacities with reference to similarities that it may bear to the human voice. Because Budd, unlike Ridley, assumes that any experience of music as expressive based on resemblances must involve being *struck* by the resemblance, it must in his view also involve the listener entertaining a thought about that which the music resembles. In other words, the music must bring to mind that which it resembles, and be experienced in the light of this – presumably *as if* it were that which it resembles (Budd *ibid*: 131-2).³⁴ Budd therefore tends to assume that all accounts of resemblance-based expression will involve an element of imaginative make-believe. Nevertheless, the point he makes about such accounts also bears on any account that, like Ridley's, specifically invokes

³⁴ Budd distinguishes two ways in which this might occur: either we imagine that the music is someone's vocal expression of their emotion, or we imagine that the music is someone's voice, which just happens to display expressive qualities. The first of these is close to the concept of 'expression in music' developed by Levinson, which I will explore in due course. The second of these is closely related to Davies' account of emotion-characteristics in appearances, and Budd criticises it for much the same reasons as I have criticised Davies' account, albeit in much less specific terms, stating that 'it lacks an explanation of the significance of musical expression and why the listener can be moved by the expression of emotion in music' (Budd 1985a: 141)

resemblances to the voice in its everyday capacities, even where it stops short of the idea of a make-believe experience of hearing the music as if it were such a voice:

Now someone who wished to produce a 'work of art' that facilitated as much as possible the work's being experienced as make-believable as the vocal but non-linguistic expression of [emotion] E could not do much better than to reproduce the kinds of sounds that a person characteristically makes when he experiences E and which can be said to express his E... He would produce a work which sounded as much like the non-linguistic vocal expression of E as he could. But such a work would not be of much artistic interest... The sounds in which people express their grief for instance, are typically not something in themselves that we would wish to listen to... The mere fact that a set of sounds is for someone make-believable as the vocal expression of an emotion is therefore not sufficient to endow it with artistic value for him... the fact that it is music or music of a certain kind that is make-believable as the vocal expression of emotion must play a role in the explanation of the value of the music as art. (ibid: 132-3)

This conclusion is significant because, as Budd himself has already pointed out, when music

...set[s] out to imitate, for example, sobs or cries of anguish... it attempts to reproduce them only in a highly stylised form: it presents only approximations and not the sounds themselves. The formalisation is necessitated by the differences between the sounds that are actually called forth by our emotions and the sounds that are used in music... Music can, then, *sound like* the vocal expression of emotion. But even when it does it doesn't sound very much like the vocal expression of emotion. And it is clear that the difference between our reaction to such music and to the real vocal expression of emotion is partly a function of the perceived differences in the sounds. (ibid: 132)

This poses the following challenge for any theorist who wishes to say that music is even partly expressive because of resemblances to the voice: they must explain why it is that we in fact neither hear music as more expressively significant, nor value it more highly for being expressive, the more closely it resembles the exact sounding character of everyday expressive vocal utterances. As the above quotations suggest, our appreciation of *music* as expressive does not seem to grow in proportion to the degree to which the music overcomes or avoids the limits imposed on its capacity to resemble the

human voice by its stylised musical materials, but if anything quite the reverse.³⁵ Ridley does not address this issue, except insofar as he implies that where music is plainly expressive in ways that do not involve resemblances to the voice, they must involve resemblances to human gesture: the sort that are perceived in virtue of the fact that music also furnishes a distinctive experience of movement. As we shall see, his account of the latter also introduces positive features missing from other accounts, but cannot answer the challenge posed by Budd's remarks, which are relevant just because a good deal of the appeal of Ridley's account lies in its treating resemblances to the voice (as a *sounding* phenomenon in its own right) as independent of resemblances to expressive bodily movement or gesture.³⁶

Ridley's account of how music comes to resemble human gesture – what he terms 'dynamic' (as opposed to 'vocal') melisma – adds significantly to previous accounts in seeking to shed light on the experience of musical motion. This is normally explained with reference to the idea that music affords something analogous to an experience of space – though to the extent that this is the case, as many theorists have pointed out it is only imperfectly so,³⁷ and the experience itself is of something that seems quite literally to be unfolding with reference to a spatial aspect. However, what normally goes unexplained is how we could experience motion *through* space in music:

...for there to be motion there must be something that moves. Yet when one note follows another it seems that there is nothing that moves, for one pitch is simply displaced by a different pitch, to give a bare succession – and not movement. (Ridley *ibid*: 89)

Ridley contrasts this with the experience of certain kinds of sound that continuously change in pitch:

³⁵ At least, this seems uncontroversially the case if certain forms of modern music are excluded, and it is likely that the latter are not typically experienced simply as creating more exact resemblances, but rather as deliberately setting up contrasts with the more stylised and inexact resemblances of traditional music.

³⁶ I will try to meet this challenge myself in Chapter Five, in the context of an account informed by an understanding of how music is experienced as expressive in the light of its being performed in ways that are also experienced as expressive in their own right.

³⁷ E.g. Budd (1985a: 180) and Scruton (1983: 83). Other theorists argue that there is a more literal basis for this experience in our ordinary physical relationship to our spatial surroundings (Pratt: 1951: 54), or that the experience is evidence of an ineliminable metaphor informing our musical experience generally (Scruton 1983: 85). The latter idea is criticised by Budd (1985b: 239-245).

...the siren and the portamento occupy not only successively different positions in the pitch range, but also all intervening positions (as moving objects do in physical space) – which is one reason those sounds are the continuously identifiable individuals that we experience as being, unproblematically, in motion. But sirens and portamento are not in this regard representative of musical sounds in general. (ibid: 89-90)

Ridley's response to this problem is to insist that

The continuously identifiable individual that moves is not an illusory construct. When we hear an oboe scale as an ascending movement we do not, mistakenly or otherwise, experience the scale as if it were a scoop (unless the scale is *extremely* fast – in which case there *is* a kind of illusion); we experience movement in a succession of pitched sounds. (ibid: 90)

Ridley is right to take it as self-evident that we do not experience the whole scale as a single scoop, but is that the real issue here? Isn't the real point to do with what we hear, or how we hear whatever we hear, at the moment when one 'sound' or 'note' is actually experienced as moving *to* another 'sound' or 'note' of different pitch? Do we hear *that* change or movement as continuous or discontinuous? It is not clear that Ridley is right to say that we hear this as discontinuous, even if in fact it is. In the case of the voice (and in the case of changes of pitch produced by shifting hand position on stringed instruments – which is something often done for *expressive* effect), we *do* hear a continuous, albeit rapid, transition between two pitches. We hear not two *sounds*, but a *single* sound that is inflected, and it is these inflections that correspond to the experience of movement, which is more properly characterised as an experience of a succession of *notes* than a succession of *sounds*. A performer playing an instrument (other than the voice itself) will often seek to emulate the distinctive qualities of melodic shaping that are associated with just this feature of vocal melodising, by other means – usually for expressive effect. This suggests that, in hearing such movements as *expressive*, we may hear them as, or as if they were, continuous after all.

It is hard to assess Ridley's claim that 'the experiential analogue of an individual that is continuously identifiable through pitch change is the sound of the instrument whose pitch changes', or his subsequent suggestion, that where this is not possible (e.g. because the melody is split between instruments) we are still able to construe the melody line as a series of movements with reference to such a (hypothetical) source on

the basis of its purely structural cohesion (at some more abstract level) as a melody line. At a deeper level, both of these claims assume that the encounter with something construed as persisting in virtue of its being the *source* of a series of distinct events (i.e. a series of what, for Ridley, are experienced as separate sounds), can explain our experience of something persisting as the *subject* of a series of changes to which those events correspond: i.e. as the subject of a series of changes to one of its qualities, pitch, which translates into those same events being experienced as changes to the perceived spatial position of that same persistent subject. But it is surely more economical to think that we construe such changes as continuous changes by analogy with the voice, which is regarded by musicians as the *ideal* of natural expressivity in music, and whose movements of pitch are *literally* heard as continuous changes, so that they furnish exactly the sort of unproblematic correlate of movement through intervening positions that Ridley himself takes as not standing in need of any explanation.³⁸

Ridley also explores the thought that the felt states conveyed by music might be made more specific by more precise expressive resemblances that emerge when we encounter musical ideas or effects embedded in the context of extended musical forms. He considers Donald Ferguson's claim to the effect that this would be sufficient in itself to explain how we might come to experience music as being expressive of highly specific emotions (Ferguson 1960).

Ferguson thinks that an emotional experience involves three elements: a certain quality of felt tension (or 'feeling-tone'), a dynamic impulse to motion of a certain sort, and a context which is the cognitive object of the emotion, and he holds that the first two of these are sufficient to distinguish the emotion itself from other emotions (ibid: 53). In his view, music can portray the first two elements, i.e. the various purely felt aspects of the experience, and from this we can infer the third aspect, i.e. the sort of circumstances that would constitute an appropriate cognitive object for this experience (ibid: 55). As Ridley points out, this approach to explaining the specificity of musically expressed emotion faces two problems, which are related. Firstly, he points out that

Ferguson ought not to be claiming that the inference will yield a circumstance of comparable particularity to those that might be portrayed

³⁸ The relevance of this to my own account of the role of the voice in our experience of expressive music will, I hope, become apparent in due course.

by the representational arts... “appropriate circumstance” must mean appropriate *type* of circumstance... music may be expressive of emotion types, formally construed, not particular episodes of emotion, materially construed... (Ridley *ibid*: 106)

Secondly, although Ferguson attempts to give detailed descriptions of how, in music, the specific unfolding over time of qualities of movement and tension can call to mind specific emotions, ‘it is not clear whether the description of patterns of tension and motion actually warrants the summation of expressive effect that is offered’ (Ridley *ibid*: 110). As Ridley points out, from the particular dynamic patterns of the music there are any number of different stories that could be inferred as equally plausible ways of making sense of the purely affective qualities displayed by the music. Consequently, ‘we do better to isolate what is common to any story that will fit the pattern’ (*ibid*). However, this raises another difficulty:

... what is the justification for relating these patterns to passions or states of mind... rather than to instances of movement in general? This is a problem that did not arise over vocal melisma; and it did not arise there simply because the sounds that music was held uncomplicatedly to resemble were the sounds of the human voice – and no-one doubts that the human voice is expressive of passion. Dynamic melisma, on the other hand, presents music as resembling (also relatively uncomplicatedly) certain qualities of movement possessed by moving things, among which – but obviously not all of which – are human bodies moving expressively; yet other moving bodies may have no expressive qualities at all. (Ridley *ibid*: 111)

Although Ridley admits that vocal melisma and dynamic melisma may combine to give rise to more specific emotional states being conveyed, he fails to draw out the full implications of the above point. In my view, his own observations here suggest that it is, essentially, *vocal* melisma that establishes the link between qualities of sound and qualities of behaviourally expressed states – a link which, once in place, can be filled out and qualified by the further correspondences between music and expressive behaviour in general that arise from the experience of *dynamic* melisma.

What comes out of Ridley’s account of the role of resemblances in our experience of musical expressivity is an unusually precise characterisation of the sense

in which music appears to express something that is both highly specific and highly non-specific at the same time³⁹:

The first eight bars of the *marcia funebre* constitute an extremely precise musical gesture – indeed an infinitely precise gesture: *any* change in the music would alter its character... The musical gesture is therefore precise in the way that a physical gesture is precise... if those gestures assume only a very slightly different (dynamic) character, then the state of mind which is revealed may change markedly... The precision of the gesture, therefore, lies in its uniqueness. (ibid: 115).

From this, and still with reference specifically to melismatically expressive features of music, Ridley concludes that

...such expressiveness can be expressive only of general *kinds* of states of mind. Thus, if a piece of music is melismatically expressive of sadness, then it may be expressive of sadness in an infinitely particular way but still not, on the account offered so far, expressive of any particular sadness. (ibid: 118).

At the same time, these conclusions are accompanied by an intuition that there may be more to our experience of expressive music than can be made sense of in terms consistent with such an account:

...it is only when we have moved beyond mere melisma [i.e. resemblance] that we shall be able to make sense of the other kind of intuition – Mendelssohn’s kind, or Malcolm Budd’s when he says that “much expressive music is heard as containing states of mind that create the impression of a personality.” *That* will require music to be expressive not merely of, for example, no particular sadness in an infinitely particular way, but of *this* and *that* infinitely particular sadness. (ibid: 118-119).

³⁹ in a sense which the quotations towards the start of this chapter, taken from Mendelssohn and Schopenhauer, also seem to be drawing our attention to.

(iv) Budd

Before considering alternatives to resemblance-based theories, such as might speak to an intuition of the sort expressed in the passage just quoted, it will be worth considering one alternative form of resemblance-based account that may seem better equipped to make sense of the connection between music's expressive capacities and what Speck calls 'the peculiar emotive impact of sound'.⁴⁰ This is to be found in Malcolm Budd's later discussions of the nature of expressivity in music (Budd: 1995).

Budd holds that there are a number of different ways in which we can experience music as expressive, most of which involve particular forms of imaginative engagement. (I will consider the latter in due course in my discussion of imagination-based theories.) However, he also proposes an explanation of what he takes to be 'the basic and minimal concept' of the musical expression of emotion, 'according to which qualities of emotion are audible features of music' (ibid: 135). This explanation is concerned with what Budd takes to be 'the most basic way in which we experience music when we hear it as being expressive of an emotion', which is one where 'we hear the emotion the music is expressive of as characterizing the music itself, as when we hear the music as being sombre, melancholy, cheerful or blissful: we hear the emotion *in* the music' (ibid: 136).

For Budd this basic experience can be most straightforwardly explained in terms of the idea that '...when you hear E in music – you hear the music as sounding like the way E feels; the music is expressive of E if it is correct to hear it in this fashion or a full appreciation of the music requires the listener to hear it in this way' (ibid: 136). This means that '...the sense in which you hear the emotion *in* the music – the sense in which it is an audible property of the music – is that you perceive a likeness between the music and the experience of the emotion' (ibid: 136-7). This has clear similarities to the theories of Pratt (1932) and Langer (1951), in claiming that hearing music as expressive involves experiencing resemblances between music and the way we experience the felt aspect of our emotions. His theory is, consequently, a resemblance-based one, but the resemblances in question are not thought to hold between music and expressive *behaviour*. Budd's account aims to circumvent his own objections to Pratt's account (Budd 1985a: 37-51), which primarily concern the latter's view that it is the physical

⁴⁰ as quoted earlier in this chapter.

aspect of our experience of feeling emotions that music resembles in virtue of its ability to furnish an experience of musical movement. In contrast to Pratt, Budd follows Wittgenstein in taking the view that the experience of feeling some emotion cannot be identified with the experience of *bodily* sensation that may accompany it (Budd 1995: 139).⁴¹ (Budd also makes no use of the notions of formal isomorphism and presentational symbol that Langer holds to be central to understanding musical expression.)

As far as emotions are concerned, for Budd it is ‘the subject’s felt evaluative attitude to how the world is represented, not what bodily sensations are undergone, that makes his reaction an emotional reaction and serves to define the emotion the subject feels’ (ibid: 140). By contrast, certain feelings *are* essential or ‘intrinsic’ to the experience of emotion in that they are part of what ‘any person must feel (as opposed to think) if the person is to feel that emotion’ (ibid: 139). Budd takes these to be, ‘by and large, types of felt desire and aversion... distress... pleasure and displeasure, especially displeasure at the frustration of desire’ (ibid: 140). Apart from these, he points to other feelings (of a non-bodily sort) that, for some people at least, frequently form part of the experience of certain sorts of emotion – including ‘feelings of energy or lethargy... of movement or tendencies to movement, of inclinations to action or impulses to action... or of tension or relaxation’ (ibid.). He also points out that the real issue is not ‘how much or how little of the emotions can be reflected in music’, but ‘how much it can express of what we *feel* [my emphasis] when we are emotionally affected or in a mood’ (ibid: 140-1). In the light of these considerations Budd thinks that

It is not hard to identify the resources in virtue of which music is able to mirror those aspects of feeling available to it – the mere fact of desire and the ease or difficulty with which it is satisfied, tension and relaxation, pleasure, pain, satisfaction and distress in their various degrees, differences in upwards and downwards direction, magnitude, speed and rhythm of felt movement, levels of felt energy, and so on. (ibid: 141).

Budd follows Schopenhauer (1969) in holding that there are clear correspondences ‘between the melodic aspect of music and the springing up of desires and their satisfaction’ and ‘between the transition, integral to tonal music, from those

⁴¹ This aspect of Budd’s thinking about emotion and feeling is more fully apparent in his own extended study of Wittgenstein’s views on the language and experience of the emotions (Budd 1989a: 146-165).

musical sounds that do to those that do not stand in need of resolution and the transition from states of desire to states of satisfaction or from states of tension to states of release' (ibid: 141-2). More specifically, he holds that the spatial verticality involved in differences of musical pitch, combined with effects of rhythmic and melodic succession between notes, can furnish an experience of movement that can 'reflect felt movements integral to certain kinds of emotion', and this allows him to also point to the way in which 'levels of felt energy find natural analogues in variations of the strength of the musical pulse, the degree of movement and the musical mass...' (ibid: 142).

Budd adds an important and interesting qualification to his account, when he says that

...in addition to how an emotion feels, there are other aspects of what it is like to be in an emotional state – other aspects of the state's 'phenomenology' – that music can be heard to sound like. Consider depression (sadness, dejection, melancholia). A depressed state is characterized by relatively slow and confined mental processes, lack of energy, lack of determination, passivity, and difficulty in changing one's state. These aspects of the condition are experienced by the subject, but cannot all be said to be felt. But there are just as much audible analogues of these experienced but non-felt aspects as there are of felt aspects: the tempo of the music can be slow, music can be quiet, confined within a narrow tonal range, rhythmically flaccid, and lacking in momentum. So the account should be extended from perceived resemblances to how emotions feel to perceived resemblances to how emotions are experienced: music can sound like what it is like to be in a conscious emotional state. (ibid: 207)

He concludes from this that the 'possession or "expression" by music of qualities that can be perceived in it in the cross-categorical likeness sense is not confined to the field of the emotions but extends much more widely – to attitudes of various kinds, to certain qualities of character or manners of action...' (ibid.). This is, I think, an important insight into the nature of music's expressive range and significance, and yet it is striking that it is just as consistent with a behavioural resemblance account (such as Kivy's or Davies') as it is with that presented by Budd: the same conditions that make it possible for us to experience analogues of these non-felt aspects of emotional states in *music* surely make it possible for us to also experience them in the outward behaviour of others.

If Budd's version really has anything to offer above and beyond the other sort of resemblance-based account, it must therefore lie in some other aspect of his theory. The

most promising point of advantage seems to lie in the thought that his account runs parallel to Schopenhauer's conception of music as offering a direct reflection of 'the will' and its central realisation (in human life) in emotional experience, in that in so doing Budd's own account 'gives a sensible content to the apparently paradoxical thought that in the experience of music we perceive directly what ordinarily we can only perceive indirectly (as manifested in the appearance of the body), namely the "inner life" of emotion' (ibid: 137).

This would answer a more general line of objection to resemblance theories, which emerges in the light of Speck's critique of these, when he states that

...some feelings expressed in music seem to have no counterpart in ordinary experience. The feelings expressed in Beethoven's late quartets, for instance, often seem unfamiliar, as if the composer were able to explore entirely new emotional domains. It seems highly improbable that the listener could recognize these feelings from symptomatic resemblances. Moreover, many subtle feelings expressible in music do not have any overt behavioural expressions at all. We become acquainted with these feelings not through their recognition in the behaviour of others but by sharing the experiences which evoked them. If music is capable of expressing these feelings, then it cannot be by symptomatic resemblances. (Speck 1988: 43-4)

Of course, the resemblance theorist may deny that music is expressive of anything other than what can be conveyed through, and is familiar from, overt behaviour. However, in doing so he would seem to invite the objection that the resemblance theory cannot then, of itself, explain why we should find it preferable to contemplate the expressive characteristics of music as they appear in music rather than contemplate the same expressive characteristics as they occur in those phenomena which the music resembles, and in virtue of which – so it is claimed – we experience the music as expressive in the first place.⁴² It is perhaps also worth noting that this objection is not defused by appealing to the particularity of music's expressive character, as in the formulation put forward by Ridley when he characterises sad music as 'expressive of

⁴² This is perhaps the most potentially damaging of the objections that Budd raises, and one which has not been convincingly addressed, either by advocates of the resemblance theory or those who argue that we imagine music to be a form of fictive human behavioural expression. The failure of these theories to address this point can then be used as grounds for accepting an 'internalist' account that makes no reference to human behaviour at all, e.g. an account based on arousal, or on resemblances to felt states themselves, or one in which the listener is thought to imagine that the felt states conveyed by the music are his own. However, I will argue in due course that this objection can be defused in a way that keeps the central reference to expressive behaviour intact.

sadness in an infinitely particular way but still not... expressive of any particular sadness' (Ridley 1995b: 118). This is because the same could be said of human utterances and gestures themselves in their purely physiognomic aspect, which we are able to observe as such independently of music.⁴³

If the implication that Budd draws out from his own account, to the effect that 'in the experience of music we perceive directly what ordinarily we can only perceive indirectly', is a correct and coherent one, it would therefore appear to offer a way out for the resemblance theorist from one of the most damaging objections to his theory. It can be used to suggest that what is special about the encounter with expressive characteristics in music is not the characteristics themselves, but the immediacy of their manifestation. However, this move invites an obvious objection, which is that if the perception of this 'inner life' of emotion as something manifested in the appearance of something distinct from the emotion itself – which is how it must surely be experienced in the case of expressive music, if it is to count as something that we experience as a feature *of* the music – is *normally* had (i.e. outside of music) through perceiving its bodily manifestation as expressive behaviour (or as certain physical appearances that resemble this), then it is in fact the latter, everyday perception that should be regarded as the real precedent for the experience of hearing emotion (feeling, mood, etc.) *in* music (which Budd holds to be the most basic experience of expression in music). In short, it seems far more plausible to think of the experience of hearing emotion *in* music as just another way of experiencing emotion *in* some distinct object of perception,⁴⁴ and that just paradigmatically *is* the sort of experience we have when we experience emotion *in* behaviour.

Budd seems to have ignored the implications of the phenomenon of physiognomic perception as this relates to human expressions,⁴⁵ whereby we experience

⁴³ Nevertheless, I do not think Speck's own proposal, that some emotions can be fully specified purely with reference to their felt aspect, takes us any closer to a satisfactory explanation here, since as with Ferguson, it does not provide a basis for explaining the range and extent of the expressive characteristics we take music to be capable of displaying, and which we typically regard as relevant to our appreciation of it as a self-contained (i.e. purely musical) phenomenon. As such, it encourages the belief that the expressive range and extent of such music is not, after all, a function of its nature as pure music, but is dependent after all on its relation to extra-musical factors. Since our purpose is to establish whether an account is available that would not entail this conclusion *any more than is absolutely necessary*, it would clearly not be desirable at this stage to simply accept that music's intrinsic expressive capacity is limited in this way.

⁴⁴ That is, in some object distinct from what would be involved in our experience of simply undergoing the emotion ourselves. (I am not suggesting that we hear expressive qualities of music as clearly distinguishable from, and so only contingently related to, the music itself.)

⁴⁵ See Wittgenstein (1953: I. §537)

the affective quality that we take to be a person's state of mind as being directly presented to us *in* the behaviour that we take to be its expressively revealing manifestation. If emotion presented in music and emotion presented in behaviour are both in fact cases of the same perceptual phenomenon, then surely it is the sort of instance in which the experience is furnished in the context of what could be taken to be an expression of an actual emotion – i.e. of a person's actual state of mind – that must represent the central case of the phenomenon – which must be the latter of these two. Assuming that expressive music is not literally construed as itself constituting an instance of *that*, it should naturally fall under the same pattern of explanation as other cases where an emotion is experienced as presented in an external object of perception, but where, for one reason or another, this cannot be construed as a case of genuine expression: i.e. a pattern of explanation that treats it as somehow derived from the more central case. This suggests that until Budd is able to furnish an explanation of why the same sort of experience had in relation to music should need a distinct sort of explanation implying a direct comparison to one's first-person experience of undergoing the felt states themselves, the behavioural-resemblance approach of Kivy, Davies and Ridley will seem more in line with the ideal of minimal deviation from central cases.

Chapter Two. Arousal

In this chapter I will begin to examine the arguments in favour of or against the idea that some or all of the perceived expressive characteristics of music can be explained in terms of its capacity to arouse felt responses in listeners.

Arousal-based theories of musical expression fall into distinct categories, depending on what role they are expected to fulfil in the context of an overall account of music's expressive character and our appreciation of it. I will therefore use the term *strong arousalism* to refer to arousal-based theories that claim that arousal offers a self-sufficient mode of explanation of music's expressive qualities: that is, an explanation that does not itself presuppose some prior set of perceived expressive qualities that would need to be explained in some other way. By contrast, *weak arousalism* suggests that music's expressive qualities are perceived as a consequence of musically aroused responses brought about by encounters with other expressive qualities – ones that do then need to be explained by other means.¹ While the strong arousalist is more likely to conceive of his explanation as obviating the need for a resemblance-based account (or any other alternative account), it does not follow that he is committed to explaining all of music's perceived expressive qualities with reference to arousal in this sort of way. Either approach is, in fact, consistent in principle with the idea that music's expressive characteristics may require a combination of forms of explanation. A third option, *strong-weak arousalism*, attempts to combine elements of both forms of arousalism by claiming that the perception of those expressive qualities of music that require explanation in terms of something other than arousal, and the capacity of music to arouse felt states in listeners (such as may then also lead to the perception of further expressive qualities), are mutually dependent in some irreducible sense.

We may also distinguish between approaches that explain musically aroused responses (and aspects of our experience of the music thought to reflect these) in terms of the idea that these responses are caused by a straightforward perception of the music's intrinsic expressive *or* non-expressive perceptual properties, and approaches that conceive of these responses as brought about by exposure to aspects of the music that in turn presuppose some other sort of response to it, such as an imaginative engagement of some kind, whose own relevance to aesthetic appreciation is then likely

¹ This use of the terms 'strong' and 'weak' is introduced by Ridley (Ridley: 1995a and 1995b).

to also stand in need of justification. I will use the term *simple arousalism* to refer to accounts of the former sort, and the term *complex arousalism* to refer to accounts of the latter sort. Strong, weak, and strong-weak arousalism can all be thought of as versions of simple arousalism, and it is these theories that will form the subject of this chapter. (I will deal with complex arousalism in due course, in the context of my treatment of the imagination-based theories that seek to provide a basis for it.)

Within the range of simple arousalist accounts, the most direct contrast with resemblance-based accounts of the sort considered in the previous chapter is offered by the strong arousalist position. This position can take two forms: either it states that we respond to music affectively with emotions that take non-expressive aspects of the music as the intentional object of our responses, or it states that we respond to music affectively with felt states that do not possess an intentional object at all, but which are nevertheless experienced as being essentially connected to the music itself in some other way.

In the former case, which may be termed *strong intentionalist arousalism*, the challenge is to show, contra Hanslick, that music can, after all, furnish events or states of affairs that would be appropriate intentional objects of the cognitive aspect of our emotional responses. The simplest way to accomplish this is to insist that such responses are limited to the sort of emotions that take specifically musical (i.e. formal) features as their object. This is the approach taken by Leonard Meyer. An alternative version of this same approach is to argue that the ‘cognitivist’ model of the emotions which imposes these limitations on our responses (and which is presupposed by Hanslick) is mistaken. One can argue that it is not necessary to entertain beliefs or judgements about the object of one’s emotion for that emotion to be essentially directed towards some feature of the music, since the nature of the felt aspect of certain emotions is such that they are intrinsically so directed, as what may be characterised as ‘intentional feelings’. This is the approach taken by Geoffrey Madell.

By contrast, in the case of the second form of the strong arousalist position, which may be termed *strong anti-intentionalist arousalism*, the challenge is to show that even when musically aroused responses do not take the music (or anything else) as their intentional object, they are still part of an experience that cannot be fully characterised independently of our experience of the music itself. In other words, this position seeks

to show that the inseparability requirement can be met by other means. This is the approach taken by Derek Matravers.

Some aspects of what Madell and Matravers seek to achieve are anticipated in an important article by Levinson (1982), dedicated to demonstrating the value of our emotional responses to music. Levinson – who nevertheless does not seek to defend any form of strong arousalism – argues that higher-order emotions that typically have a cognitive aspect and an intentional object can still be differentiated without reference to these, in terms of their purely phenomenological and/or sensational character. In this sense, unlike Madell, he can be seen as attempting to work within the overall cognitivist model of the emotions. At the same time, like Matravers, he attempts to establish that these emotional responses are still ineliminably tied to the music even in the absence of their typical cognitive aspect. Levinson's arguments on this score are highly perceptive, but nevertheless inconclusive – if only because of continuing discussions about the exact cognitive character of the emotions (see Goldie, 2000). (Another problem is that this approach requires one to give precise first-person characterisations of one's introspective experience of undergoing emotions, in a way that divorces these from the more public language normally used to characterise such experiences with reference to their cognitive aspect, their context, etc. From a Wittgensteinian perspective on language, it is not clear how meaningful such characterisations can be.). However, I find Levinson's defence of the value of having such responses to music highly perspicuous.²

In addition to the general challenge posed by Hanslick's objections towards any theory that would treat music's expressive characteristics as relevant to its appreciation, to the effect that such characteristics are of their very nature connected with variable and wholly subjective aspects of our musical perceptions and responses, the strong arousalist also faces a more specific challenge. He must convince us that he is not positing an experience of emotional response that we just have alongside our experience of the music, but which in fact has no essential connection with the latter. Moreover, he must accomplish this in a particularly stringent and direct form, in contrast to the weak

² Lack of space prevents me from reviewing this aspect of his account in the detail it deserves. However the emphasis of Levinson's position is on the intrinsic value of our responses rather than on their relevance (in a strict aesthetic sense) to appreciation of the music itself. Another interesting defence is that of Robinson (1994: 20-1), who argues that primitive emotional responses (of the strong arousal kind) are necessary to alert the listener to the expressive character of the music, even though the latter character is emotionally more complex (in part because it is linked to large-scale aspects of the music's formal development). Robinson also seeks to incorporate this into a complex arousalist model of empathetical listening (*ibid*), but does not offer any serious defence of strong arousalism against the objections put forward by its critics.

arousalist and the strong-weak arousalist, and the various sorts of complex arousalist. The weak arousalist may invoke the thought that the connection is given in the form of a primitive response of some kind that we just have to existing expressive qualities of music (that can themselves be explained in terms of resemblance, or some other equivalent theory, or that may perhaps simply be regarded as inexplicable). It is a response that is explained by the fact that it corresponds to that which we would have to human behaviour displaying the same qualities – typically when that behaviour expresses a state of mind corresponding to that already conveyed by the music. The strong-weak arousalist may invoke the idea that the essential connection linking our experience of the music and our experience of our felt responses is to be characterised as a *two-way* dependency. The complex arousalist may invoke the idea that we imagine the music itself to *be* something that it would be natural for us to experience in ways that, by their very nature, are inseparable from and influenced by our affective responses, as might be thought to be the case with human behaviour itself.

None of these options are available to the strong arousalist, who must show why non-expressive aspects of music, literally construed, can be understood as giving rise to felt responses that still depend on our experience of the music itself for their significance. This aspect of strong arousalism has made it into the primary target of an extended critique of arousalist theories put forward by Kivy, and one important measure of the relative merits of different versions of this theory will be the extent to which they succeed in defusing such a critique. At the same time, because strong arousalism sets itself up as a direct alternative to resemblance theories, it also proceeds from a critique of the latter. In the course of assessing different versions of strong arousalism it will thus also be useful to consider whether the specific criticisms lodged by its proponents against the resemblance theory merit outright rejection of the latter, or can themselves be defused. Should the latter turn out to be the case, we will be left with no more than the outstanding reservations concerning these theories arrived at in the previous chapter.

(i) Strong Intentionalist Arousalism: Meyer and Madell

The *intentionalist* arousalism proposed by Meyer takes as its starting point a certain cognitively oriented understanding of the listening process itself, according to which listening to music involves a grasp of extended musical structures as they unfold in time. The significance or interest of these structures for the listener is a function of the

ability of their constituent elements (or stages of unfolding) to arouse specific musical expectations as to how such structures will be continued or completed. These expectations can be more or less satisfied or frustrated by the various ways in which expected forms of structural continuation or completion are fulfilled, delayed or varied, giving rise to subtly differentiated degrees of affectively experienced tension or relaxation in listeners. These same felt states (of tension or relaxation) are also then thought to be experienced as expressive perceptual qualities of the very music whose unfolding led to the frustration or satisfaction of the listener's expectations that evoked just these felt states (Meyer 1956: 22-35).

Meyer's theory does not begin from a critique of resemblance theories of musical expression, and is often taken as describing music at such a basic level that it can even be considered consistent with the latter: at least as an explanation of the dynamic properties that resemblance theorists often call upon to account for perceived resemblances between musical movement and either behaviour or affectively felt aspects of our experience. However, there is one important respect in which Meyer's theory does stand in conflict with these approaches, and in virtue of which it is controversial.

Meyer invokes a specific understanding of music's communicative significance, according to which it is the ability of musical occurrences to furnish more *informationally* complex experiences of formal musical structures that makes them meaningful and valuable for us (Meyer 1967: 27-28). This seems to imply that we should not simply appreciate expressive characteristics of music for what they are expressive *of*, as a resemblance theorist would tend to assume is the case. Rather, we should appreciate them as indicators of how the particular musical features that are bearers of these characteristics stand in relation to wider structures of formal musical unfolding, and in virtue of which, according to Meyer, they are taken to possess a form of purely musical meaning. This is in line with the thought that such expressive characteristics, and the felt states that they reflect, consist of nothing more specific than felt gradations of tension and relaxation (together with beliefs about the purely formal implications of the corresponding music). However, if this were taken to account for our experience of music as being expressive of more everyday human feelings, such as happiness or sadness, it would start to seem highly counter-intuitive: in life we do not view these feelings, whether displayed or felt, as significant in this purely formal informational sense, but rather as being intrinsically important as an essential aspect of

our lives as affectively engaged beings. If Meyer's theory were to be taken as also attempting to explain the significance of these sort of expressive characterisations of music, it would therefore represent a drastic deviation from central cases.

This brings home the extent to which Meyer's theory can only properly be thought of as shedding light on the most absolutely basic aspects of our affective response to music and any perceived expressive characteristics that depend on these. Indeed, insofar as Meyer himself hopes to explain more than just these aspects, it is partly through an appeal to conventional or personal forms of association with extra-musical elements – what he calls 'connotations'. These either involve just the sort of appeal to wider forms of context-dependency and conventions that resemblance theorists and arousal theorists would normally seek to exclude from their account of music's expressive characteristics in the interest of economy and inclusivity, or they involve invoking more highly individual and anecdotal aspects of our responses to music that are too idiosyncratic to form the basis of value judgements that would be consistent with the requirement of normative constrainability. Once these additional aspects of his theory are removed, what we are left with is an explanation that only permits a thoroughly one-dimensional affective experience of music to be considered relevant to our appreciation of it, and this surely falls far short of the ideal of an inclusive explanation that would make sense of the full range and intensity of our responses to music and of any aspects of our experience of the music that reflect this.

There is also room for additional doubts about Meyer's own conception of what makes this sort of experience of music valuable and interesting for us, where this is connected with his appeal to the concept of information. This aspect of his theory has been criticised, both as failing to explain why we should value such information, given the absence (in the context of purely musical encounters) of any practical use that it might otherwise have, and for implying that music is essentially more valuable and interesting the more surprising it is – an idea that seems to run counter to the obvious fact that the music we value most highly can sometimes be the music we are most familiar with (Goldman 1992: 39).

For a strong arousalist theory like Meyer's to be taken seriously as a candidate for explaining anything more than the most basic expressive characteristics associated with music's dynamic qualities, we therefore require an understanding of how our musically aroused responses could be essentially connected to our experience of the

music itself in such a way that this could make sense of a wider range of such responses. The theories put forward by Madell and Matravers attempt to meet this challenge. However, in doing so they must also defuse the more specific objections to arousalist theories put forward by Kivy (1989). These objections seem less applicable to Meyer, because the aroused states that his theory may in fact be able to make sense of are little more than fluctuations in an underlying state of ‘expectancy’ that listeners have, together with correlated feelings of tension and relaxation. As such, they fall short of what would normally be thought to constitute emotions (or felt aspects of these) in any interesting sense.³

The central strand of Kivy’s critique of arousalism rests on his distinctive formulation of the implications of a cognitivist understanding of the emotions, according to which these are thought to be differentiated in a way that makes essential reference to an intentional attitude (i.e. belief, judgement, etc.) towards some real or imaginary state of affairs that may thus be thought to constitute the ‘intentional object’ of the emotion.⁴ We have already seen such an understanding of the emotions to be relevant to issues connected with musical expression in the context of Hanslick’s claim that absolute music cannot be thought of as depicting emotions just because, as a quintessentially non-representational (and non-linguistic) art, it cannot furnish the sort of worldly states of affairs about which such emotions could, in principle, be entertained. In one sense, Meyer’s characterisation of our responses to music and the effect these have on our perception of it, so far as it goes, can be seen as providing the basis for an obvious rebuttal of this: if the formal features that arouse degrees of expectancy and fulfilment in listeners do so *in virtue of* their intrinsic formal significance, then they just are also the sort of features about which it is appropriate for us to feel those states – they just are appropriate intentional objects of those states. At the opposite end of the spectrum, the kind of evaluation-based responses that Kivy himself would endorse share this characteristic: in being moved by the beauty or artistry of music, we feel emotions such as awe, wonder or excitement whose appropriate intentional objects are the very features of the music that gave rise to those responses in us, and it is because they are appropriate intentional objects of such emotions that they can also be usefully invoked to explain why such emotional responses to music are

³ Also, whereas Meyer’s theory was developed prior to Kivy’s critique of arousalism and so cannot reasonably be expected to have anticipated its objections, Madell and Matravers both claim to have successfully defused Kivy’s criticisms in their accounts.

⁴ This interpretation of the intentionally directed nature of emotions is set forth in Kenny (1969).

relevant to the appreciation of the music that causes us to have those responses. (It is important to note that neither Meyer's position nor Kivy's at any point implies the converse form of justification, according to which features of music are said to count *as* appropriate intentional objects of such emotions just *because* they cause us to feel those emotions. As we shall see in due course, it is not clear that the latter thought can serve as a coherent basis for asserting the relevance of musically aroused emotions to an appreciation of the music.)

The problems arise, however, once the emotions that the arousalist wishes to ascribe to listeners in order to *account for* music's experienced expressive characteristics are ones that, in life, seem to be typically directed at persons and their situations: e.g. happiness, sadness, etc. According to Kivy these *are* just the sort of emotions that, in life, admit of explanations that genuinely shed light on how and why we come to feel as we do, with reference to that about which we feel what we do:

In the normal case, when I am angry at my Uncle Charlie, say, there is an intentional object of my anger: my uncle. There are also things that I believe about Uncle Charlie that make my anger understandable: I believe that he behaves badly... that he cheats... that he engages in shady business deals. In other words, all the pieces have to be in place that are required by the conceptual analysis or theory of the emotions to which I subscribe. If an emotion is to be aroused... there must be an Uncle Charlie kind of explanation in place for it. (Kivy 1999/2001: 102)

Kivy makes it clear that, for him, what he takes to be the self-evident absence of anything in music that could be the basis for such an explanation is sufficient to discredit strong arousal theories of this sort, even were his other objections to be met:⁵

If, as the emotivist claims, music is moving in virtue of arousing such emotions as sadness, joy, anger and the like, it seems absolutely extraordinary to me that there should be no obvious, commonsensical explanation of the Uncle Charlie kind, to explain how arousal takes place. If I had no other reason to be suspicious of the claim that to be moving, music must make me sad and angry and yearning, than that there is no ordinary, non-technical explanation for why these emotions are aroused in me, or how, I would consider the absence of such an explanation enough to put me off that claim (Kivy 1991: 151).

⁵ Here I focus on how this objection impacts on strong arousalism. I examine how it might relate to other versions of arousalism in due course.

Kivy also has two other more general criticisms of arousal theories. Firstly, he claims that it is implausible to suggest that musically aroused feelings are emotions in any real sense, because the behaviour of listeners in the concert hall suggests that they do not give rise to the behavioural manifestations typically associated with undergoing emotions of this sort in everyday life (Kivy 1989: 155-6). Secondly, he claims that arousal theories have the problematic implication that we enjoy and seek out music for qualities that require us to undergo emotions that would in fact be painful or upsetting to experience, and which we would ordinarily avoid experiencing (ibid: 155). However, both of these objections have been effectively disputed.

In respect of the first criticism, one can point out that listeners in the concert hall have independent reasons for suppressing the normal behavioural manifestations of their emotional responses, given the conventions governing audience behaviour at events of this sort. Moreover, when these factors are not operative the behavioural manifestations of music's capacity to arouse affective states are in fact clearly evidenced in ways that suggest that music also exercises this capacity upon listeners in the concert hall:

...there is much more direct evidence of music's ability to cause affective effect. The widespread and effective use of music in all societies for ritualistic, ceremonial, political, and military occasions would be largely inexplicable if it did not have the effect of arousing and coordinating emotional reactions of social groups, aiding them in or preparing them for communal actions. Kivy dismisses the use of music outside the concert hall as being irrelevant to its typical effects within it. But if music is the main stimulus to coordinated affective reactions within groups on many public occasions, reactions which would not occur without it, then it is unlikely that setting makes as much difference as he seems to think. Music's therapeutic effects are well known to clinical psychologists and to ordinary listeners. Its bodily effects are easily measured. Its rhythms stimulate bodily movements, sometimes irresistibly, some of which themselves naturally express emotional states as well. Animals and infants react affectively to intensity, pitch and rhythm in the human voice without understanding content, and these are musical characteristics. (Goldman 1995: 61-2).

If this is so, then Kivy must concede, as indeed he has since done, that even if he is impervious to these affective capacities of music, many others are not (Kivy 1993: 1-12). What then remains of his first criticism is just the question of what *sort* of affective

states these might be, and whether they are such as could be considered to be connected to our experience of the music in the sort of way that would render them relevant to our appreciation of the latter. This then depends on whether it can be shown, *contra* Kivy, that the sort of affective reactions that listeners have to music can, after all, furnish examples of the ‘Uncle Charlie kind of explanation’, or if not, whether there are alternative grounds for considering them to be relevant to appreciation.⁶

Kivy’s second criticism is one that definitely cannot be straightforwardly accepted. There is a long and distinguished tradition, stretching back to Aristotle, of fascination with the problem of trying to explain why we should wish to engage emotionally with art forms such as tragedy that elicit painful responses. However, more recent treatments of this issue (Levinson 1982; Davies 1994: 307-11; Ridley 1995b: 146-70) speak against Kivy’s position, which seems to be that there can never be any overarching purpose that would make it desirable to experience anything other than pleasurable reactions to art.

It is hard to see how an advocate of strong arousalism could give an account of music’s expressive characteristics that would go beyond the narrow range of Meyer’s theory while also satisfying Kivy’s demand for ‘Uncle Charlie explanations’, short of invoking an imaginative response that would justify redescribing music in non-literal or fictive terms as the sort of thing that, in life, *would* be the kind of intentional object of emotions that could furnish this sort of explanation – e.g. as the behaviour of some actual person. However, as we shall see, this kind of appeal to what I have termed *complex arousalism* itself requires justification. To the extent that this turns out to require invoking the prior availability of an experience of music’s expressive characteristics, any arousalist account based on this can only ever amount to a *weak arousalism*. If that is so, the advocate of strong arousalism stands a better chance of defusing Kivy’s central objection by showing that it rests on faulty premises. He may hope to achieve this by arguing that the affective responses that music arouses are not in fact required to furnish ‘Uncle Charlie explanations’ to be connected to our experience of the music in the sort of way that would render them relevant to our appreciation of the music. He could perhaps do this by showing that there is an alternative way in which such responses can avoid implying the ‘heresy of the separable experience’. For example, he could argue, as Madell does, that there is an alternative basis for thinking

⁶ In both cases, Kivy responds with specific objections, which I will deal with in considering the individual theories that pursue these strategies for defending arousalism against his criticisms.

that such responses could take the music as their intentional object in a way that would make it impossible to conceive of somebody as having such responses in the absence of the corresponding experience of the music. Alternatively, like Matravers, he could argue that such responses need not be thought of as taking the music as their intentional object in this sort of way at all for them to be relevant to our appreciation of the music. He can do this by pointing to some other form of connection between these responses and the music, and arguing that this is still strong enough to meet the inseparability requirement.

Madell offers us what appears to be an argument by elimination: it is evident that music does furnish some sort of experience of expressive qualities that appear to match the experience we have when we undergo certain highly specific emotional states, such as love, nostalgia, etc. Yet in his view there is reason to think that neither the resemblance theory nor the existing versions of the strong arousal theory can account for this. He therefore proposes an alternative to standard accounts of how emotions are related to their affective aspects which, he claims, has two virtues. On the one hand, it promises to resolve certain problems with such accounts generally. On the other, it promises to make sense of how affective responses could be intentionally directed towards purely musical features which could also count as appropriate objects of those responses, in such a way that this is so even when those responses (and the expressive characteristics of music thought to depend on them) match the affective experience we have when we undergo relatively specific emotional states such as love, nostalgia, etc.

According to Madell's theory, emotions involve 'intentional feelings' – feelings that are intentionally directed *in their own right* towards objects, inasmuch as these objects are evaluatively characterised or characterisable states of affairs. The feeling-aspect of the emotion is not merely a contingent episode of raw, objectless affect (analogous to a sensation), that just happens to be causally triggered by a belief or judgement about an intentional object whose evaluative characterisation is thus prior to the affective reaction. Rather it is directed intentionally towards the object just insofar as the latter is the object of the evaluative characterisation. At the same time, though, Madell asserts that an evaluative characterisation of an intentional object of emotion can, typically, be arrived at either 'coldly', through a judgement that is made prior to

one's affective response, or 'warmly', as the intentional object of one's affective response (Madell 2002: 67-81).⁷

Madell apparently sees the principal advantage of his model as its promise of a basis for a superior account of the role of desire in human motivations and valuations. He takes it to imply that the experience of pleasure should be conceived of as a species of desiring that occurs concurrently with its own ongoing fulfilment.⁸ Thus pleasure, like desire, can be considered a 'mode of attention' (82-102). Musical listening, for Madell, typically involves *pleasure* (or occasionally its opposite – pain), and his own analysis of the relation between desire and pleasure suggests that such listening involves *desiring* particular musical outcomes. Madell concludes from this that our musically aroused feelings must be directed towards features of the music in ways that take these features as appropriate intentional objects of such feelings, in the same way as evaluatively characterised states of affairs are to be taken as appropriate intentional objects of such feelings in life, where this evaluative characterisation does not merely reflect a judgement (that just happens to be contingently accompanied by an affective reaction), but reflects the fact that it is experienced as the object of an episode of feeling directed intentionally towards it (ibid: 118-24).

Madell also holds that the patterns of intentional feeling associated with particular emotions are an essential rather than a contingent feature of those emotions – they are part of what makes them the emotions they are: there is no possible world in which the intentional feelings associated with grief could instead be associated with elation, and vice versa (ibid: 115-8). Because the patterns of intentional feelings aroused by musical features closely match those familiar to us from our emotional responses to life situations, we recognise them as the same or similar states, whose only difference is that they cannot always be linguistically characterised in the same terms – a difference which is itself rendered less significant by his analysis of the role of intentional feelings in emotions, which gives a diminished role to linguistically characterisable judgements and beliefs anyway (ibid: 124-9). He takes this as evidence that there is no reason to think that we cannot have felt responses to music that correspond in essence to a range of human emotions (excluding a small number whose felt aspect is indistinguishable –

⁷ Madell's position seems to be that certain affective responses presuppose the relevant evaluative characterisation of their object, but may also play a part in determining that characterisation. Yet it is unclear from this whether their contribution to the latter is essential or not.

⁸ Lack of space precludes proper consideration of Madell's account of the emotions but, as we shall see, this has little bearing on his arousalist account of musical expressiveness, which is implausible for other reasons.

e.g. shame and embarrassment) (ibid: 134). At the same time, he holds that we do in fact respond to music with emotions of this sort. By a process of elimination, he then concludes that the patterns of intentional feelings he has described must be invoked as essential to any explanation of music's expressive characteristics, since no positive alternative exists given what he takes to be the outright failure of both resemblance accounts and alternative accounts of strong arousalism based on the standard cognitivist theory of emotions.

I will argue, however, that even if one accepts Madell's account of the nature of intentional feelings and their relation to the emotions, he has given us no compelling reason to embrace his account of music's capacity to arouse such feelings as being best suited to explaining its expressive characteristics and our appreciation of these.

Madell's rejection of the resemblance theory is principally directed at the version developed by Kivy, and has two elements. His more basic claim is that

...the claim that the expressiveness of music is in the main a matter of resemblance between musical and human expressive gesture cannot be sustained. There are, to begin with, far too many examples one could mention of pairs of musical 'gestures' that are very similar with respect to their 'behavioural' aspect, but which differ very markedly in their expressive import... Consideration of 'behavioural' features suggests only the broadest of constraints on the expressive character of the music... (Madell 2002: 11)

From this he moves to his second, more specific objection to the resemblance theory, which is that

...in the main the expressive character of music is conveyed not by any similarity between musical and human expressive gesture, but primarily by the harmonic character of the music, a feature for which there are no behavioural analogues. Of course, melody is also an important factor which contributes to the expressive character of the music, but it is quite wrong to suppose that it does so by describing a contour which resembles human expressive gestures. On the contrary, it does so in virtue of containing points of tension and relaxation which are harmonic in their implications. (Madell ibid: 11)

Of course, as far as the latter objection is concerned, Kivy accepts that expressive characteristics of music that relate to purely harmonic differences (e.g. major

vs minor chords or keys) are not explained by his theory of contour-based resemblances, and holds that they must be explained with reference to convention – something which Madell argues is implausible, though for reasons that are themselves highly disputable.⁹ (Even so, we have already seen that there are more straightforward considerations that speak against this aspect of Kivy's account, so this need not be seen as undermining Madell's strategy of eliminating the possible alternative theories.) Yet Madell surely has a point here: whatever expressive effects result from these harmonic aspects of the music's unfolding cannot themselves be explained with reference to a contour-based theory of resemblance.

This may be so, but his claim that the dynamic qualities of tension and relaxation themselves displayed by unfolding melodic lines are constituted entirely out of the harmonic implications of points of tension and release seems to overstate the phenomenological facts. For example, one can indeed debate the *expressive* character and potential of atonal music, in which such harmonic implications are deliberately neutralised, but one cannot dispute the fact that we still experience many of the purely *dynamic* qualities of melodic movement itself in such music, where these pertain to unfolding successions of melodic steps and leaps of varying extent, speed, direction and shape, and to the variations in accent and intensity that accompany these. Moreover, even if harmonic implications are responsible for the points of tension and release in music's melodic unfolding, this in no way precludes the idea that the expressive qualities that melodies have depend irreducibly on the perception of resemblances between the conjunction of these harmonic features with contour-based qualities of shape and motion on the one hand, and human behaviour on the other.

Madell's first and more basic reason for dismissing the resemblance theory can also be questioned. On the one hand, he himself quotes an example from Scruton which highlights the fact that in ordinary life we are naturally disposed to experience people's behaviour as expressive, and respond to it as such, even when we know nothing of the

⁹ Madell asserts that it is hard to see how purely harmonic aspects of music – in contrast to some others, such as the sounds of certain instruments – could ever come to be conventionally associated with extra-musical circumstances in ways that would allow their association with certain sorts of expressive or emotional character to be picked up on by future generations of listeners, in the way that, for example, the referential meanings of words must be learned and transmitted (ibid: 17-25). Madell's argumentation here is highly questionable in two respects. Firstly, it involves a view about the limited extent to which conventional associations between musical and extra-musical features could be developed and sustained in cultures that many music theorists would disagree with. Secondly he takes a view on how verbal linguistic competence is acquired that puts great emphasis on the role of formal instruction therein. This is controversial in the light of the critique of the notion that linguistic meanings can be taught through ostensive definition alone, as developed by Wittgenstein (1953).

context which would allow us to know what the intentional object of the emotion is (Madell *ibid*: 9):

...emotions are not identified only through their objects, but also through their subjects, and the behaviour whereby a subject expresses them. Suppose you are walking in a quiet place; turning a corner, you come across a woman who sits on a bench, head in hands, quietly weeping. Your heart goes out in sympathy towards her emotion: you know nothing of its object; but you have a strong and immediate sense of its intentionality – as you might see an arrow pointing, without knowing where. The release of sympathy here is not irrational or confused; it is a clear response to a clear situation. (Scruton 1997: 167)

This appears to count against Hanslick's claim, that we cannot identify emotions from expressive characteristics of music alone because we cannot identify them from expressive behaviour unless we know what the intentional object of the emotion in question is (which he takes to be impossible in the case of music as a consequence of the latter's non-representational character). On the other hand, however, with reference to one of Kivy's musical examples, he insists that

...the bare contour of the melody can suggest no particular emotion at all... Why should the musical line suggest the behaviour of a restless person, rather than, say, the motion of a swimmer diving into a pool and rising to the surface? What conveys emotion in the case of the restless person is not a mere pattern of movement, but the total context in which behaviour occurs... The pattern of movement, considered in isolation, cannot ground an ascription of emotion. (Madell *ibid*: 12-13)

Madell's point is that '[A] mere sequence of movement is generally not enough to indicate any particular emotion, and similarly the mere shape of a melodic line considered in isolation cannot express a particular emotion' (*ibid*: 13). Yet it is not clear that this is a correct characterisation of what Kivy's musical contours are meant to amount to, even when stripped of their harmonic aspect. This is because it seems to ignore the role played in Kivy's account by the idea that we animate our perceptions, so that movements and other configurations are not merely perceived *as such*, but as the movements or configurations *of* just the sort of things we are most inclined to find expressive: the living human body and countenance. This aspect of Kivy's account shows that what he means by the experience of contour in music is more in line with

Scruton's example, in that it is already characterised as an experience of *human bodily* movement, not 'mere movement'. In that case, it is not at all clear that Madell is justified in his claims about the extreme limits on what the experience of contour and movement in music can convey in terms of particular emotional qualities.

Madell's specific objections against Kivy's account of animating perception may not hold water, but he might nevertheless still insist that Kivy's account – and any other account of resemblances of musical contour to gesture – fails to convince because, as at least some of its proponents are prepared to admit,¹⁰ it appeals to an irreducible role for the imagination that cannot itself be explained except by falling back on vague claims to the effect that music just is the sort of thing we invest with human psychological significance. Moreover, just as arousalists may be criticised for citing contingent facts about how we respond to music as evidence that it is appropriate to regard those responses as relevant to appreciation, he could argue that citing contingent facts about how we perceive things in imaginatively informed ways fails to show that it is appropriate to regard these forms of perception as relevant to appreciation.¹¹ However, this would be to ignore the possibility that an account could be given that would show that music's expressiveness could be accounted for, at least in central and typical cases, with reference to human behaviour – or human vocal behaviour – in terms that do not in principle require us to posit any such role for the imagination.¹²

These doubts are crucial. They suggest that Madell is not, after all, justified in assuming that it is enough merely to show that his theory can in principle explain some instances of the sort of response that needs to be cited as the basis for a strong arousalist account. This assumption depends on his argument by elimination, which would only be effective if he had indeed managed to show that both of the alternative accounts deserve to be eliminated from consideration entirely. However, because his critique of the resemblance theory falls short of providing the grounds for the sort of outright rejection of it that he proposes, this condition has not been fulfilled.¹³

This puts the burden of proof back on his shoulders: he now needs to show that his account is better suited than others to explaining the kind of emotions, such as love and nostalgia, that he himself regards as corresponding to the appropriate forms of

¹⁰ E.g. Ridley (1995b: 111).

¹¹ As was noted already, this parallel between the invoking of contingent claims by resemblance theorists and by arousal theorists is pointed out by Goldman (1995: 63).

¹² I will put forward such an account in Chapter Five.

¹³ Madell's reasons for rejecting the anti-intentionalist version of the strong arousal theory need not detain us, since they are broadly in line with Kivy's critique of these.

intentional feeling that musical features can arouse. It is hard to see how he could do *this*. It is certainly not enough to just point, as he does, to the fact that musical features can arouse highly specific responses of *some* sort involving elements of desire-related feelings such as pleasure. He must show that *these* responses do in fact match those associated with the emotions whose expressive embodiment in music he claims to have explained, but this could only be established by a form of introspective analysis that will always be open to dispute.¹⁴

(ii) Strong Anti-intentionalist Arousalism: Matravers

In contrast to Madell, Matravers, who advocates the anti-intentionalist version of strong arousalism, broadly embraces Kivy's view of our everyday emotions. That is, he accepts the cognitivist position that emotions are typically defined with reference to an intentional attitude – normally a belief or judgement held about some state of affairs or other – that causes an affective response corresponding to the felt aspect of the emotion. He does not attempt to claim that music can serve as an appropriate object of emotional attitudes of this sort, although he acknowledges the possibility of attempting to do this in the manner pursued by Madell, with reference to the account of intentional feelings offered by Greenspan (1988: 17-20) (Matravers 1998: 173-4). Instead, his strategy is to show that music can be conceived of as arousing non-intentional feelings that can still be thought of as connected to the music. That is, they would still be connected to the music in a way that would make it impossible to characterise our experience of these feelings independently of our experience of the music, given how they are experienced in the listening context.

Matravers advocates a version of strong arousalism in connection with music that is modelled on his own account of the nature of our responses to fictional events and characters as represented in narrative art forms. Given the fictional status of these

¹⁴ Indeed, it could be argued that Madell's whole theory depends on introspective claims of this sort, the truth of which may, if Wittgenstein is right, be impossible to agree upon. This leaves it open to the likes of Hanslick or Kivy to continue to claim (as the latter does) that it is only ever really clear that our musically aroused feelings are intentionally directed at the music itself when they form a part of an emotion in a sense that is in line with the standard cognitivist account of the emotions that Madell rejects. As Matravers points out with reference to an account by Greenspan (1988) which Madell's theory closely resembles, although the possibility of invoking such an account to make sense of strong arousalism exists, one cannot help suspecting that it is espoused just *because* it offers a solution to the problem of musically aroused responses being relevant to appreciation, rather than because it is has been independently determined to be a superior account of the emotions (Matravers 1998: 174).

events and characters, such responses cannot, he claims, be accounted for except in terms of an arousalist account of the sort he proposes, which centres upon a defence of the claim that ‘...expressive judgements are caused and justified by the effect expressive works of art have on the feelings of the observer (or listener, or whatever).’ (Matravers *ibid*: 100). At the same time, he accepts that such an account must then be supplemented with an account of ‘what it is to *experience* art as expressive’ if it is to do justice to our aesthetic appreciation of art (*ibid*: 101), and it is significant in this regard that he quotes Sibley with approval (*ibid*: 87):

...aesthetics deals with a kind of perception. People have to *see* the grace or unity of a work, *hear* the plaintiveness or frenzy in the music, *notice* the gaudiness of a colour scheme, *feel* the power of a novel, its mood, or its uncertainty of tone. (Sibley 1965: 137)

A discussion of the merits of Matravers’ views on our responses to fictional narratives lies well beyond the scope of this dissertation, but if his account of how this relates to music is to be considered at all economical, it seems reasonable to think that it should commend itself as such purely with reference to how it works as an account of our responses to the latter. However, his account does depend on taking the sort of responses we have when we respond to music to stand in the same relation to the ‘central case’ – that of responding to an actual encounter with another person in real life, where we are affected by this experience – as do the responses we have when encountering fictional narratives that engage our emotional responses. According to Matravers, the best way to make sense of the fact that we do respond to the latter as we do, and in ways relevant to appreciation, is to hold that we do so because, in the context of our suspension of disbelief, we believe these narratives to be actual expressions of the emotions and attitudes of fictional narrators. For Matravers, this belief is itself justified by the fact that the narrative arouses just the sort of responses in us that would, in life, typically be aroused by actual encounters with persons expressing those attitudes or emotions (*ibid*: 83-101). Likewise, in the case of music he holds that all that is required (in order to show that our responses are relevant to an appreciation of the music) is that the music does in fact arouse responses that would also be aroused by actual encounters in life. That is, it should arouse the responses that would also be aroused by actual encounters with persons expressing attitudes or emotions equivalent

to those which we think of the music as expressing, when we react to it in this kind of way. The idea is that within the relatively abstract context of music we are then justified in believing it to be an expression of those attitudes or emotions:

The account of the relation between music and the aroused feeling parallels the account of the relation between the reader's experience of a representation and his aroused emotion towards a fictional character... The experience of expressive music is the experience of an organized structure of sound and the corresponding feelings it arouses. The feelings are aroused by paying attention to the sound, and sustained by continued attention. The feelings' being those usually aroused by the expression of a certain emotion in the central case is (for a qualified listener) sufficient to cause the belief that the music is expressive of that emotion. This is simply a contingent fact about us and the world. (ibid: 177)

In other words, our belief that the music is an expression of the attitudes or emotions that, were they to occur in the context of a real-life encounter with somebody, would typically be the cause of the sort of responses the music in fact causes us to have, is *justified* by the fact that we do in fact have just those responses when listening to the music. This seems to free us from the idea that the music should in any way need to constitute an appropriate intentional *object* of our responses, in the sense that would prompt Kivy's demand for 'Uncle Charlie explanations'. Matravers acknowledges the need to distinguish his formulation of the central case, which concerns our being justified in believing that a person's behaviour expresses something simply on account of the fact that it arouses the appropriate felt reaction in us to an expression of that sort, from cases where this felt reaction is part of an emotion, since if this formulation were also held to apply in the latter sort of case it would lead to problematic implications for art, such as believing music to be expressive of sadness because it reminds us of something sad, and for life, such as believing that weddings express joy because they arouse joy. He therefore insists that 'It is only feelings which are not simply components of an emotion that cause the belief that their apparent cause is expressive' (ibid: 169).

At the same time, Matravers is quite open about the fact that an analysis of musically aroused responses that takes these non-intentional feelings as the cause of a belief about what the music expresses is open to the objection that it cannot exclude the

possibility of the same feelings being aroused by factors other than the music about which we entertain such beliefs:

The possibility of such counter-examples stems directly from the arousal theory's causal analysis of expression. Because the feeling aroused by expressive music is only causally connected to the music and is thus independent of it, it follows that the feeling could be aroused by other means. (ibid: 169)

This seems to make Matravers' approach vulnerable to a potentially fatal objection lodged at previous versions of the arousal theory that emphasise the non-intentional or objectless character of musically aroused responses. A typical example of the latter would be that of Mew, who claims that music may be significant precisely because it represents a counter-example to the idea that emotions can only be recognised in ways that involve reference to their intentional objects (Mew 1985: 34), and that it can lead us to imagine appropriate objects, some of which are 'permanently available for contemplation' anyway (e.g. transience, death) (ibid: 40).¹⁵ The standard objection is that the same feelings could be induced by a drug, whose effects would, absurdly, be in principle just as consistent with this sort of account of why our responses should be considered relevant to artistic appreciation. Matravers' strategy, however, is to take on board this implication while seeking to show that there are other factors central to our musical experience that render it unproblematic:

The task then is to work within the causal picture: to explain what it is about art (and in particular music) that distinguishes its arousing feelings from the feelings aroused by taking an appropriate drug. (ibid: 171)

According to Matravers, there are two essential differences between drug-induced feelings and non-intentional feelings aroused by music. Firstly, he claims that in the musical case, but not the drug-induced one, it is a requirement that the cause (i.e. the musical feature in question) be present to consciousness if it is to be causally efficacious. This is because, according to Matravers, such feelings are only aroused in the case of music when we attend to it in a sustained and focused way. He holds that this must be so because music's capacity to arouse such feelings depends on us

¹⁵ A more detailed and damning critique of Mew's account is given by Ridley (1986)

experiencing its distinctive musical properties, and in particular its dynamic properties, and these in turn are constituted out of an experience of its long-term relational properties which, he claims, are only evident to the attentive listener (ibid: 178-9). Moreover, they involve the experience of sounds which, for Matravers, as secondary qualities only exist in consciousness, and in his view this is sufficient to defuse Kivy's objection against arousalist accounts that posit non-intentional, objectless felt responses to music, which is that such feelings necessarily distract from a focused and attentive appreciation of the formal qualities of the music itself. According to Matravers, this objection loses its sense because both the feelings in question and the formal properties of the music only exist for us insofar as they are fully attended to, and do so only in our consciousness, so there is nothing to prevent them forming part of a single experience (ibid: 172).

Secondly, he claims that in the case of music we experience the cause (i.e. particular musical occurrences) and effect (i.e. our felt responses to these) as unfolding concurrently in a far more precise way than would ever be possible in the case of a drug. According to Matravers, this is evident from the fact that the cause is one that lends itself to phenomenological characterisation in much more complex and precise terms, consisting as it does of musical features (and their properties) that are relationally defined by their place in unfolding musical structures:

It is not that one listens to a sound and this simply causes a feeling. The connection is far closer than that. At any time during the experience of a piece of expressive music, the feeling at that time will be caused by the accompanying sound, plus the relations which that sound has to others in the piece. The connections are both intricate and intimate, and the feelings themselves will reflect this complexity. There is an enormous phenomenological difference between the experience of expressive music and the experience of having one's mood altered by a drug; a difference which is more than sufficient to account for the fact that the first causes the belief that the music is expressive and the second does not cause the belief that the drug is expressive. (ibid: 180-1)

This allows Matravers to claim that 'the structure of the music is mirrored in the structure of the feelings it arouses' (ibid: 180), and that 'the simultaneous presence in consciousness of two things in intimate causal connection... provides a plausible explication for the phenomenological claim that a listener hears the music as expressive' (ibid: 182). In this way Matravers claims to have accounted not only for what is

involved in our *believing* that music is expressive, but also for what is involved in *experiencing* it as expressive, where it is above all the latter that must be properly accounted for if the relevance of music's expressive characteristics to aesthetic appreciation is to be demonstrated (ibid: 182-3).

On closer examination, however, neither aspect of Matravers' attempt to distinguish the drug case from the musical case stands up to scrutiny in a way that would justify him in claiming to have accounted for the relevance to appreciation of this experience. Matravers' first point does not stand up, since the ability of music to cause subliminal arousal effects (noted in the passage from Goldman quoted earlier) is widely acknowledged, and these effects imply that the very dynamic qualities that Matravers claims only manifest themselves to listeners who give the music their sustained and conscious attention in order to grasp its relational properties can, after all, exercise their causal capacity to arouse affective responses in listeners (such as babies and animals) who have no *conscious* grasp of these properties. Moreover, even from the point of view of appreciation, the insistence that all relevant properties or features of the music be consciously experienced seems too strict: many music theorists argue that long-term key-relations and motivic connections cannot be grasped consciously, yet still influence our sense of the music's unfolding and its expressive impact in indirect and subliminal ways.

Matravers' second point is also questionable, as it is not clear that it fully succeeds in excluding the drug-induced feeling from being relevant to an aesthetic appreciation in the way it is supposed to do. It implies that if a sequence of drug-induced changes to one's state of mind could be experienced concurrently with the particular causes of those changes – say, by designing each drug so that it produced a different physiological sensation as it circulated through the body – then this would justify regarding the drug-induced changes in our feelings as relevant to an aesthetic appreciation of the sensations we have of the drug as it circulates. It is not clear that this implication is consistent with the nature of aesthetic appreciation, since it does not seem to prevent responses being considered relevant that depend on entirely private and anecdotal associations, where these just happen to *recur* for a particular person every time they reach a specific point in a piece of music, yet without taking the music in question as their intentional object. Matravers just assumes that the recurrent causal relation to a particular passage would itself be sufficient to demonstrate their relevance, but that can only be so if one has already accepted in principle the adequacy of a purely

causal account of the grounds for considering such responses relevant to appreciation, so the account is question-begging. Matravers has not in fact given us any reason to think that his assumption is correct, so his assertion that ‘it is only feelings caused by the music that are relevant to expression, not feelings released by the music but which have some other source’ (ibid: 181) remains an empty one.

An important aspect of Matravers’ account is his view that Kivy’s demand for ‘Uncle Charlie explanations’ is simply inappropriate, because it rests on an assumption that what is required of an arousal theory is a justification of the responses of the listener with reference to qualities of the work, whereas in Matravers’ view, this is simply to misunderstand what the arousal theory (in its strong form) aims to achieve:

The theory is an attempt to justify our beliefs that certain works of art express sadness with the claim that those works arouse a feeling in a qualified observer in relevantly normal conditions. This aroused feeling is not, however, appropriate in a way that would justify our response to the work. The whole point is that the second movement of the *Eroica* is not an appropriate cause of sadness in the way that a death is an appropriate cause of sadness. It is a virtue of the arousal theory that it does *not* require a causal intermediary between the music and feeling that will justify the latter. The basis for the theory is that expressive music just is that which arouses the feelings. Although the aroused feeling is not justified, it justifies the belief it causes. It is the fact that the work arouses (in the right person in the right circumstances) a feeling of a particular sort that justifies the belief that it expresses an emotion of that (or related) sort. (ibid: 161)

Matravers’ position seems to be that it is unreasonable and unnecessary to expect an account of how music arouses feelings, of the sort that philosophy might be expected to be concerned with (i.e. an account of the grounds in virtue of which such responses would be justified), where this would inevitably have to involve some sort of non-contingent connection between such responses and characteristics of the music itself, such as is hard to conceive of except in terms of the idea that those characteristics themselves constitute an appropriate intentional object for the responses:

The request for explanation, that is, the question of how music arouses feelings is (as was true in the central case) not for philosophy to answer... The basic thesis is, therefore, that it is simply a fact that art arouses feelings and it is because of this that we have it. (ibid: 161)

The problem with this is that, in seeking to redefine what we should expect of a theory of musical expressivity in the light of his own arousalist preconceptions, Matravers seems to have lost sight of what such a theory is really supposed to show in order to demonstrate that our experience of music's expressive characteristics can be relevant to our appreciation of it. What the arousalist needs to show is not that music can, in a way consistent with the demands of appreciation, cause us to *believe* that it is expressing something, but that it can, in the right sort of way, cause us to *experience* it as expressive. However, as his critics have pointed out, the latter cannot simply be assumed to follow from the former: the thought that we might infer from our felt responses to music that the music is an expression of something, even were it to be correct, could not shed light on what is involved when we attribute emotive qualities to the music itself:

It is the failure to appreciate the distinction between objects and causes of emotion that leads Matravers... to think that from the fact that we experience ('feeling' of) pity we *infer* that something must be sad (as if something's being sad were merely a cause of pity); whereas of course something's being sad is the *object* of pity, which is an emotion, and so is not inferred at all: for the cognition of sadness is an essential part of the pity itself. Therefore, in as much as we infer from our response a *cause*, we have no reason to attribute to that cause any emotive quality... and in as much as we do attribute emotive qualities to the *object* of our response, we do so on the basis of nothing we have inferred from the responses aroused in us. (Ridley 1993: 73-4).

Matravers has therefore given us an account of what might be involved if it were the case that we hypothesize music to be an expression on the basis of our responses, and not an account of how our experience of it as expressive is constituted. If his theory were to have something interesting to contribute to the latter issue, it might be as a basis for giving a causal account of an imaginary or hypothetical phenomenon of 'expression in music', construed as something which, in the first instance, we justifiably *believe* to be happening rather than experience as happening, and which might nevertheless be regarded as the basis for responding sympathetically and empathetically to music in the way that advocates of complex arousalism suggest is the case (and as something that only then impacts on how we *experience* the music). However, Matravers is not prepared to contemplate these forms of imaginative response to music, and this may

account for why he does not pursue this possibility. Moreover, the question remains open of whether an account of how one could come to have beliefs of *this* sort about music would be most effectively given when couched in the causal terms favoured by Matravers in his attempt to explain our responses to fictional narrative descriptions.

In a more recent paper Matravers seeks to defuse a further objection to his account, which is that it is implausible as a characterisation of the phenomenology of our experience of musical expressiveness. He considers the idea that our experience could be systematically misleading, and that this is why we experience the disposition of certain musical features to cause certain felt responses as an expressive property of the music itself (Matravers 2003). However, he himself subsequently dismisses this idea and again appeals to the concurrent nature of the unfolding of musical features and felt responses, insisting that the burden of the proof is now on his opponents to show that this is not a plausible account of the phenomenology (ibid: 361-2). Yet even if we accept his account of the phenomenology, the real objection to his original theory still stands, which is that it offers no basis for thinking of the listener's affective reactions, or the expressively coloured perceptions they give rise to, as reflecting something essential about the music itself – apart from its disposition to cause these very reactions. For Matravers this does not represent a defect in his account, but rather an indication that the demand for an explanation that would make our musically aroused responses intelligible in aesthetically relevant terms is misguided. However, it is also clear that if an alternative approach were to succeed in providing such an explanation, the credibility of this stance would be undermined.

(iii) Weak Arousalism

The next type of arousal-based theory I shall consider is that which I have termed 'weak arousalism'. It is important to realise that weak arousalism does not, in itself, seek to *explain* what makes music expressive. It only seeks to justify the relevance to appreciation of our musically aroused responses. This is something that arousalist *explanations* of musical expressivity (e.g. strong arousalism) are also supposed to accomplish, but which typically comes under attack when such explanations are rejected, since one of the most straightforward ways in which an opponent of arousalist explanations of musical expressivity can seek to undermine the credibility of these explanations is by showing that the responses they invoke are ones that cannot be

relevant to the appreciation of expressive music, whether they explain how we come to experience that music as expressive or not. Hence, for such an opponent, even if certain aspects of music's expressive character *could* be explained in such terms, this would simply serve to demonstrate that those aspects were ones which should not be thought of as informing an *appreciation* of the music as expressive. This, essentially, is Kivy's point. However, as we have seen, it brings him into conflict with the many listeners who intuitively feel that their responses *are* relevant to an appreciation of the music even when (and perhaps especially when) they are responses to the inherent characteristics of the music itself, rather than just to its significance as some sort of artistic achievement. Such listeners would also naturally tend to feel that any experience they have of the music as expressive that is dependent upon having those responses should not be considered irrelevant to an appreciation of the music on account of this fact.

The weak arousalist seeks to show that such musically aroused responses can be relevant to appreciation, providing that they are responses to independently existing features of music that constitute appropriate objects of such responses. Moreover, it must be the case that what makes the latter features appropriate is something about their intrinsic character or significance (rather than contingent facts about their propensity to cause such responses): e.g. that they themselves are already perceived as expressive, or that they themselves somehow justify construing the music as constituting an appropriate object of such responses.¹⁶ If the weak arousalist is successful in this respect, he will have defused Kivy's principal objection to arousalist theories in general, which is that the inability of musically aroused responses to furnish so-called 'Uncle Charlie explanations' means that they cannot provide a basis for *explaining* anything, since they themselves are unintelligible.

However, the price that the weak arousalist pays for defusing this criticism of strong arousalism is that, in providing an alternative basis for holding such responses to be relevant, he is obliged to cite independently occurring features of the music that themselves need to be explained, and these features will either be ones that are already experienced as expressive, or ones that can be conceived as playing a role in the account similar to that which experienced expressive characteristics would play. This means that weak arousalism, in itself, cannot be said to have *explained* the experience of

¹⁶ Complex arousalism, with its appeal to imaginative engagements or metaphor, may be seen as seeking to achieve essentially the same result. Some versions of complex arousalism may thus also be seen as complex versions of weak arousalism.

expressivity in music, or the experience of music as having any other characteristics that could play an analogous role to its expressive characteristics in making it the appropriate object of the responses in question.

As a consequence of this, the weak arousalist can only hope that his account of the relevance to appreciation of musically aroused responses will turn out to be useful as an element in some more complex account that seeks to explain how we come to experience music as expressive. In this regard he potentially faces two apparent difficulties. Firstly, if the qualities to which he appeals in order to justify the relevance of musically aroused responses are themselves ones that are to be explained in terms of this more complex theory, and this theory itself presupposes his justification of those responses, his account will be circular.¹⁷ Secondly, even if his defence of the relevance of musically aroused responses is accepted, it does not follow that his more complex account of what makes music expressive will be unproblematic since, as we shall see, such an account must call on other elements in addition to weak arousalism, and these may invite other objections that may render the theory problematic as a whole.

(It is tempting to take the defence of emotional responses to music by Levinson (1982) as a defence of weak arousalism, given his rejection in that context of strong arousalism. However it cannot be seen as a defence of weak arousalism in the sense that we are chiefly concerned with. This is because Levinson adopts an unusually weak notion of aesthetic relevance, according to which ‘what we are seeking is emotion embedded in a particular complicated perceptual activity that generates it’. Hence his account does not seek to address the issues raised by the inseparability requirement. Moreover, some of the elements of his defence presuppose a complex arousalist account that makes reference to notions of empathetical listening.)

Prior to any attempt to make use of such an account as part of a more complex overall theory, the central move which the weak arousalist makes is to dispute the paradigmatic status which Kivy, as the ‘cognitivist’ par excellence, attributes to ‘Uncle-Charlie explanations’. He can do this by pointing to familiar instances where something does appear to constitute an *appropriate* object of a response even when the response is a non-cognitive one. The point of such examples is to suggest that such objects can be said to be ‘appropriate’ in a non-cognitive (or, possibly, non-intentional) sense that

¹⁷ However, he may seek to vindicate this circularity itself, as in Ridley (1995a and 1995b).

nevertheless goes beyond merely reflecting contingent facts about the propensity of such features to *cause* such responses. This ‘emotivist’ line of argument is pursued by Colin Radford (Radford 1989, 1991), who holds that ‘[t]here is a “congruence,” a sort of internal connection, between the expressive quality of sad music and the emotion, sadness, which (listening to) sad music may elicit.’ (Radford 1989: 70).

Radford’s starting point is a well-known remark of Wittgenstein (Wittgenstein 1953, §476), which he paraphrases as saying ‘that a face which inspires fear (or delight), and which is, therefore, the “object” or “target” of fear, is not on that account its cause’ (Radford *ibid*: 69). This seems to assert that it need not follow from the idea that something is the ‘intentional object’ or ‘target’ of an emotion that it is also its cause, which in turn implies that when something constitutes such an ‘intentional object’ of an emotion, it cannot be assumed that it does so simply in virtue of being the cause of that emotion. Radford’s aim is to insist that there is more to the idea of being an intentional object of an emotion than just being its cause, while at the same time distancing himself from the assumption that this ‘more’ must *always* be rationalisable in the way that a cognitivist (i.e. Kivy) would require it to be before the latter would accept that characterising the emotion simply as a response to the object in question is sufficient to make its occurrence intelligible. He proffers two fairly typical examples that show that we can indeed often point to something more than just the capacity of a phenomenon to cause an affective reaction as a basis for thinking that it is appropriate to have that particular feeling in response to it and not some other:

...grey days look dull, depressing and do depress people...Some colours are described as “sombre” and tend to put people in “sombre” moods. Are not these cases very like the case of sad music? They are both “expressive of” certain moods and feelings and help to induce them. (*ibid*: 70)

Radford makes it clear that he does not wish to imply that these responses are in some way intelligible to us because they correspond to any rational explanation that could be given for having them. As he says:

In the case of pure, sad music what is there for listeners to be sad about? Just sounds. What reasons could explain and justify being moved to sadness by sounds? None! Since pure, sad music does not suffer itself,

does not portray suffering (or any other feeling, state, or emotion) as may a picture, and since it does not tell us of anyone's suffering, as may a narrative (true, false, or fictional), it cannot make its listeners feel sad. (ibid: 71)

He is thus perfectly willing to admit what the cognitivist would insist is the case (insofar as the latter admits that we have such feelings at all in these circumstances), but draws a different conclusion:

When we listen to sad music and it makes us sad, we are not sad about the music. What we are listening to, the focus of our attention, is not the object of our emotion, but is its immediate cause. Because the sadness lacks an object it must lack any justification or explanation, if having such is identified with having beliefs about the object which justify the emotion. But that does not make it unintelligible. For we can explain and justify why we feel sad in terms of the expressive quality of the music. Only people confused by philosophical theory about the emotions would say this cannot be sadness or, if it is, that it is unintelligible... For sadness can not only lack an object, it can lack any obvious cause, and can be experienced in situations where there is no focussed attention, or, if there is, we cannot see why our focussing on that should do anything more than coincide with the onset of our sadness. (ibid: 74-5)

Given that feelings such as sadness can be entertained in such circumstances, Radford's conclusion seems to be that we should have no qualms about taking it to be completely natural that we should also feel sadness when encountering music, since the only justification needed to make this intelligible is the fact that the music *is* sad.

Kivy offers a number of critical responses to Radford's position as outlined above. He argues that Radford's claim about sad music making us sad would be trivial, even if it were true, because it is not clear that it can be generalised to hold with reference to other felt states such as anger or joy as well (Kivy 1989: 224-5), and he also suggests that while there is statistical evidence to suggest that grey days do in fact make us depressed, there is no such evidence to suggest that individual colours have the capacity to affect our moods in the specific ways that Radford ascribes to them (Kivy ibid: 226-7). Kivy implies that if we hold that the latter is in fact the case, it must be by analogy with cases such as that of the weather, where there is a clear fact of the matter. Yet he also claims that there is something wrong with Radford's characterisation of this latter case in terms of the idea that depressing weather is somehow 'expressive of' a

depressed emotional state, and insists that in virtue of this fact there is an important difference between the case of the weather on the one hand and both colours and music on the other:

Do we really want to say that depressing weather is expressive of depression as we would want to say that, for example, Papageno's music is, after he has lost Papagena and is about to hang himself. I suggest that it is as odd to say this as it is to say that sad news is expressive of sadness. We call news sad, of course, in virtue of its unhappy consequences for us or for others. And it is the same for dreary, depressing weather. I am not depressed by yet another gray, damp, and bone-chilling day in London because of its "aesthetic" or "phenomenological" properties. I call it depressing because it depresses me; it does not depress me because it is depressing. And it depresses me because of its depressing consequences for my life... It is no more a convincing argument that sad music must make me sad because depressing weather makes me depressed than that sad music must make me sad because depressing news makes me depressed. (Kivy *ibid*: 227)

Either way, it looks as though Radford's analogy breaks down: there is, at least for Kivy, no real basis for a direct analogy between sad music and depressing weather, while if sad music is thought to make us sad much as a bright colour such as yellow is thought to make us cheerful, then the analogy that is still required between colour and weather, if one agrees with him that it is only the latter that is *known* to move us in this sort of way, will also have been shown to be unfounded, for similar reasons. Hence, Kivy is able to conclude that

Radford has failed to alleviate our uneasiness about the supposed sad-making propensity of things merely expressive of sadness, because he has failed to come up with a *bona fide*, uncontroversial example of anything that is both expressive of an emotion and arousing of that emotion purely in consequence of its being expressive, and not because of its practical consequences for our lives. It is clear that depressing weather depresses us, but by no means clear that it is expressive of depression; and it is clear that yellow is expressive of cheerfulness – is a cheerful colour – but by no means clear that it arouses cheerfulness. All, I think, that is left of the *property* model of emotive arousal is the bald-faced and unargued claim: it just stands to reason, is just self-evidently plain, that if something is expressive of an emotion, it must have some tendency, however slight, of arousing that emotion in the perceiver. (Kivy *ibid*: 227-8).

Radford's response is to point out that, as far as his own direct analogy between the case of the weather on grey depressing days and the case of music is concerned, Kivy has distorted the example, since '[s]uch days seem to work their effect immediately, perceptually, not because of the practical consequences they may purport' (Radford 1991: 248). In doing so Kivy has also given the false impression of there being a disanalogy between the case of weather and that of colour:

Perhaps gray days would not have their aesthetic emotional effect if they were not often cold and damp or did not often herald such consequential weather. But perhaps primrose yellow would not look "bright" and "cheerful" if sunshine were not bright, primroses were not yellow, and we were nocturnal or photophobic creatures. Aesthetic properties as well as their effects are often dependent upon, and not so easily separable from, the reality underlying them, and what that reality can mean for our lives. (Radford *ibid*: 248)

Radford (*ibid*: 248) dismisses Kivy's insistence on the need to appeal to statistical evidence as a basis for asserting that certain musical or non-musical phenomena tend to cause certain affective responses. He cites the capacity of lively, brightly orchestrated dance music to move listeners to the sort of exuberance in which they wish to start dancing, as evidence not only of the self-evident character of music's capacity in this respect, but also of the fact that this capacity is not confined to a single emotional state such as sadness, or to what Kivy would dismiss as arousal effects too 'slight' to be of consequence.

According to Radford, Kivy wrongly assumes that all emotions are rational insofar as they involve cognitive attitudes of some kind towards objects, and also wrongly ignores moods that may involve no such cognitive attitude at all. This is why he is inclined to deny the very occurrence of such felt states as sadness as part of our musically aroused responses to sad music (Radford *ibid*: 249-251). Yet this does not in itself constitute a defence of the relevance of such responses to our appreciation of music, if this is taken to require some sort of demonstration that in principle such responses can be thought of as fulfilling the normative constrainability requirement. He has not yet shown that such responses can stand in relations to intrinsic characteristics of the music that would be strong enough to serve as a basis for establishing normative

agreement about which responses are appropriate or inappropriate in respect of particular instances of expressive music.

For Radford '[t]he music is the focus of our attention', and 'its perceived sadness or happiness makes us feel sad or happy', but 'we are not sad for or about the music or its perceived emotional tone or property' (ibid: 249). If a cognitivist inquires as to what it is that we are sad or happy about, his response will be "Everything" and "Nothing", since '[a]ny other answer would... make the pure music do its emotional work impurely, i.e., by association' (ibid: 249). He denies that this

...renders the listener irrational (because it doesn't claim or have to claim that that music which makes us sad or happy is – or is, therefore – what we are happy or sad about) or that a listener to sad music is incomprehensible or irrational in wanting to, and continuing to, listen to music which may induce feelings of sadness (ibid: 251).

This defuses some of Kivy's objections to the idea that we can, in fact, be intelligibly thought of as having such responses to music – as the latter has since conceded (Kivy 1993). However, it does not take us any further than this in terms of defusing the objections to the idea that such responses can figure in our appreciation.

Indeed, these objections are implicit in Radford's own perceptive statement, quoted above, that '[a]esthetic properties as well as their effects are often dependent upon, and not so easily separable from, the reality underlying them, and what that reality can mean for our lives' (Radford ibid: 248). This can be taken to imply that it is, after all, reasonable to expect some sort of account to be given of *why* these phenomena arouse the emotional responses that they do – an account that appeals to more than mere causal factors or self-evident dispositions.

It is this limitation to Radford's account that Stephen Davies picks up on when he argues that his own notion of 'emotion-characteristics in appearances' must be invoked if the weak arousalist position is to count as a convincing defence, not just of the intelligibility of the idea that we have such musically aroused responses but also of their potential relevance (and that of any further aspects of our musical experience dependent upon them) to our appreciation of the music itself.

Davies highlights the failure of Kivy to address the implications of Radford's second example – that of colours that, on Kivy's own admission, are perceived as

expressive of the very states of mind that, according to Radford, they typically also arouse in those who are exposed to them. As Davies points out, ‘to deal with this case, he [Kivy] must allow that yellow is a cheerful colour while denying that it cheers those who live in yellow rooms’, and Davies is surely right to agree with Radford in finding this implausible (Davies 1994: 302). Nevertheless, Davies is critical of Radford’s inclination to equate responses to music with irrational moods:

...the response to music is not like an objectless mood, for the former involves close attention to the music and is a reaction to that close attention, whereas the latter is objectless not only in lacking an emotional object but also in lacking a specific cause and focus... If the response to music is to be admitted into the “garden” by virtue of its resembling some other reactions we accept as ordinary, then the resemblance should be closer than that between objectless moods and sad responses to sad music. (Davies *ibid*: 303)

Davies then puts forward an example of the sort of response which he thinks could provide a familiar equivalent for that which we have to music in virtue of its expressive qualities:

A nearer case to the musical one, a case in which the emotional response depends on the expressive character of its cause, is the following. Moods seem often to be contagious; we can catch a mood as well as respond to one. The company of sad people can be depressing (whether or not their sadness is also the emotional object of a response such as sympathy or compassion)... The case described here comes closer to the musical one in that it is the situation that affects one’s reaction. (Davies *ibid*: 303)

However, Davies admits that important disanalogies remain between this example and the case of musical responses. On the one hand we do not avoid sad music in the way that we may sometimes avoid sad people on account of their making us feel sad (through contagion rather than sympathy). On the other hand, whereas it is conceivable that even in the case of emotional contagion my mood may be rationally informed by a belief that someone somewhere does in fact feel that way, in the musical case we do not entertain any such beliefs – assuming that we reject, as Davies does, the Romantic transmission theory of expression in art (*ibid*: 303).

Davies' solution is, unsurprisingly, to invoke his own notion of 'emotion-characteristics in appearances', as developed in the context of his account of the resemblances which he takes to form the basis for music's perceived expressive characteristics. To illustrate this he gives the following example:

Tragedy and comedy are commonly represented by two masks, one with a sad expression and the other with a happy one. A person surrounding herself with masks of the tragic type... might find the atmosphere depressing and catch the sad mood; a person surrounding herself with masks of the comic type might be inclined to feel more cheerful than would otherwise be the case. Now, since the person does not believe that the masks express emotions that are felt, there is no reason why any emotional response is called for. Nevertheless, not only do we find the moods felt by others to be contagious, we sometimes also find expressive appearances similarly affecting... If one wished to feel happy one might do so by surrounding oneself with happy-looking people. That one need not believe that the happy-looking people feel happy before their appearance can have this mildly cheering effect on one, and that no belief that they felt happy would have this effect on one if they never showed their happiness, indicates that emotional responses of this kind are made to emotion characteristics in appearances rather than to felt emotions as such... In a view, such as Kivy's, according to which music wears an expressive physiognomy...if one could explain one's sadness as arising from an environment in which one were surrounded by sad-looking masks, so too could one justify a sad reaction to sad music. (ibid: 304)¹⁸

As Davies is quick to point out, this form of analogy seems to defuse one of Kivy's chief objections to arousalism, which is that concert audiences generally do not act as if they actually felt sad when encountering sad music, or happy when encountering happy music. It provides a plausible explanation of this fact that is nevertheless consistent with the idea that audiences do in fact have the responses in question, since '[i]n the case of a mirroring response to an emotion characteristic in an appearance, many beliefs relevant to motivating action are absent' (ibid: 306).

Nevertheless, Davies' position here is problematic in several respects. Firstly, it still seems vulnerable to the objection raised by Kivy to theories that invoke the notion of emotional contagion in connection with musical responses. Kivy's objection is that

¹⁸ Personally, Davies' assertion that '[i]f one wished to feel happy one might do so by surrounding oneself with happy-looking people' strikes me as implausible. If I am not already happy myself, nothing could be guaranteed to depress me more than being surrounded by people who are, in fact, happy, or whose mere appearance is that of being so, such that I am reminded of the fact that people can be happy, even when I myself am not.

our ordinary aesthetically oriented encounters with music (e.g. in concerts, rather than in settings where the same music is continuously repeated) do not furnish the sort of long-term exposure to particular expressive characteristics that is required for the *tendency* which mere expressive appearances have of affecting one's mood to actually be realised (Kivy 2001: 107-8).

Secondly, for reasons already explored in Chapter One, Davies' notion of emotion characteristics in appearances seems ill-suited to serving as a basis for explaining our responses to the expressive appearances of other people, since it implies a purely accidental resemblance between their appearance and how they would look if they were actually to feel what is conveyed by their appearance. This contrasts with the case of actual people's expressive appearances, in that it seems clear from experience that we are only moved by these, *even* as a form of contagion, so long as the possibility of their being actual expressions has not been explicitly precluded. This is surely at least in part due to the fact that when they belong to *actual* people we assume, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, that such appearances are also genuine expressions.¹⁹ By contrast, in likening the musical case to that in which we are exposed to masks, where we know from the start that what is expressed corresponds to no actual person's felt emotions, Davies is in effect likening our musical responses to a different sort of case. This is one which arises, at least where the expressive behaviour or physiognomy of actual people is concerned, when a person continues to strike us as sad even *after* we have arrived at the belief that they are not in fact feeling sad. (We might arrive at such a belief because we know them to be acting, for example, or behaving merely politely, or because we learn that their appearance of sadness is no more than an anatomical or physiological coincidence.)

But in what sense do we in fact continue to *see* a person as sad in such circumstances? Reflection on our own experience suggests that there is a sense in which we do, *and* a sense in which we do not. Yet while we may mistake such cases for genuine expressions of sadness, and so see them as sad in the fuller sense for a while, the possibility also exists, in principle, of discovering that they are not in fact what, for a

¹⁹ Wittgenstein (1953: 227) draws the conclusion, in the context of his analysis of the role of public criteria in fixing the meaning of human behaviour, that there is simply no general agreement about which expressions are genuine and which not – at least when construed according to purely physiognomic criteria, independently of their role in our wider forms of life, and possibly in other circumstances too. However, the fact that these forms of life more often than not depend on our assuming, in the most basic and typical cases, that expressions *are* genuine simply in virtue of how they appear to us (i.e. in the absence of any evidence to the contrary) is perceptively highlighted by Løgstrup, in his analysis of the ethical dimension of human relationships (Løgstrup 1997: 8-63).

while, they seemed to be. And if we are able in principle to distinguish these two kinds of experience, then why should we continue to *respond* to the instances that lack cognitive significance for us in anything like the way in which we respond to those that do possess such significance? Although Davies admits that there is some sort of difference between the way we respond in each case, he still wants to suggest that our responses are made intelligible by the mere fact of the contingent connection between the two sorts of experience – a connection consisting of no more than the fact that they resemble each other at the level of pure appearances. It is hard to believe that this contingent connection justifies a level of response that would be significant enough to explain a sizeable portion of our musically aroused responses, so that it would count towards a defence of the aesthetic relevance of the latter without at the same time trivialising them.²⁰

The point here is that Davies faces an unresolvable dilemma. He might attempt to make the analogy between musical responses and responses to expressive appearances of people convincing with reference to his own understanding of the latter. But then he will be forced to admit – as he comes close to doing (Davies *ibid*: 305, 307) – that the only *intelligible* responses we have to music are ones that are so weakened and anaemic in character (compared to our emotional responses to real-life dramas) as to suggest that they cannot contribute anything significant to our musical experiences. This then invites the objection that such responses simply do not do justice to our actual responses to music, which, it can be claimed, sometimes *are* strong enough to make us behave as we do when we feel such emotions in response to real-life situations, as is demonstrated by the example given by Radford (1991: 248), of Latin dance music whose exuberant gaiety moves people in such a way that they are *also* moved to start dancing in gaily exuberant ways.²¹

²⁰ Davies (*ibid*: 304) also invokes the idea that we would not ever be made to feel happy as a consequence of knowing that someone is happy, were it not that they sometimes also show that they are so through appearing so. But this is not sufficient in itself to support *his* case: it does not follow from the fact that if we are to be moved by the knowledge that F we must also at least sometimes see that F, that we must also be moved when we *merely* see that F.

²¹ Kivy objects to this example on the grounds that it is not clear that it is the exuberant gaiety of the music itself that brings this about, since the music is not encountered in the neutral setting of the concert hall, so the behaviour may be an effect of the broader non-musical context in which the people are gathered together, etc. He also finds it significant that music that displays a similar character does not move us to behave in this way when encountered in a neutral concert-hall setting. (Kivy 1993: 7-9). However, as Goldman (1995: 62) implies, it need not follow from this that our emotional responses are systematically suppressed in such situations, as Kivy would claim, but only that the behaviour that normally issues *from* such responses is repressed, in the light of the social conventions in force on these occasions.

On the other hand, if Davies suggests that the musically aroused responses legitimated by his account are significantly like our responses to actual human dramas, even while being rendered intelligible through no more than an appeal to the idea that they are analogous to responses to emotion characteristics in appearances, then he invites the objection that he has achieved his end only at the cost of devaluing our emotional responses *per se*. This is because the justification which he cites for these responses in connection with music is then no more than the wholly accidental similarity that still holds between people's expressive appearances and their actual expressions even when instances of the former have been judged to lack their normal and proper significance as indications of the latter. (The implication is that our responses do not substantially reflect our own awareness of the significance that the causes of those responses have for us.)

The point here is that our responses, whether they be cognitive or non-cognitive in character, *are* paradigmatically responses to circumstances or events that are believed, perceived or imagined to actually hold or occur, if they are responses *to* anything at all rather than being objectless moods of the sort that Davies, unlike Radford, seeks to contrast with responses to music. But Davies is prevented from doing justice to this insight by his own understanding of the nature of expressive appearances, according to which they are in no sense believed, perceived or imagined to correspond to any actual circumstances or events in which human expressions could occur, but are just accidental resemblances to these. (Davies' treatment of his own example is misleading here. While it is the case that masks are also not believed, perceived or imagined to be real faces, the fact remains that they can and do function as *representations* of these, so in this case our responses can be explained in a way that is not available either for pure music or for the purely coincidental resemblances of human anatomy to actual expressions that Davies invokes.)

If this is the situation for Davies, then the only remaining option for the weak arousalist would seem to be to fall back onto Radford's bald assertions: that we just do have such mirroring responses when confronted with phenomena that have expressive perceptual characteristics, and that many of our responses in ordinary life are no better suited to rational explanation than this anyway. Yet this suggests that to the extent that weak arousalism succeeds in being uncontroversial, it *explains* nothing of any interest. More specifically, apart from not explaining expressive characteristics themselves, it does not do what Davies would like it to do, which is to explain why such

characteristics could come to engage our interest as listeners to the extent that they do, by striking us as being imbued with some sort of human value or significance. If it is to be considered a useful strategy for explaining expressivity in music, weak arousalism must therefore either invoke some other account of how we come to perceive expressivity in music, or in things generally, which may in turn be controversial (in a way that may then infect the account as a whole), or be proposed as a basis for thinking that no such explanation is possible in principle.

Although Davies' account is problematic for the reasons identified in both this and the previous chapter, the fact that he seeks an explanation of why expressive music has the potential to strike us as imbued with a distinctively human significance, as it surely does when it engages our interest most effectively, is to be commended.²² Also to be commended is his seeking to accomplish this without reference to notions of imaginary personae or primitive forms of arousal, both of which tend to invite the objection that they weaken the potential *aesthetic* significance of this sort of experience in appealing to aspects of our private responses as listeners that may have no clear public correlatives and so are difficult to agree upon as grounds for appreciation. (How far this objection is justified in the case of persona-based accounts is a question I will address in due course.)

Moreover, in spite of the limitations just highlighted, weak arousalism does seem to defuse one of the fundamental objections to arousalism that continues to be lodged by Kivy. According to the latter, the fact that we can perceive expressive characteristics in sophisticated and subtle ways without being moved by the music, as 'dry-eyed' critics might be thought to do, shows that being moved by the music is not a necessary condition for perceiving such characteristics. Of course, one can counter this by appealing to the idea of incipient or suppressed responses, but it is not clear how illuminating this is, since there is no clear way to determine if the 'dry-eyed' critic *experiences* these, given that the whole point of his being 'dry-eyed' is that he does not *feel* them, but only experiences their effect on his perceptions.

Weak arousalism defuses this objection in another way, since it allows us to point to cases where a lack of response would seem more like a basis for a failure of appreciation than a condition of the latter's success, without incurring the more

²² By contrast Kivy just seems impervious to the idea that music could even possess such a significance: hence his attempt to justify the *value* of music's expressive characteristics in terms of their syntactic role in the formal unfolding of music – an approach that I find strained and superficial.

questionable commitments that strong arousalists are obliged to endorse. Nevertheless, it may concede more than is necessary, since an account that held that only *some* aspects of music depend on arousal for their perceived expressive characteristics can defuse the objection represented by the case of the dry-eyed critic anyway. Moreover, it can do this without committing itself to the impossibility of justifying such responses as Radford does, or to a devaluation of the cognitive significance of such responses of the sort that Davies seems willing to embrace. This is because it can be argued that the dry-eyed critic simply *refuses* to attend to some expressive characteristics of the music, precisely because they are linked to certain aspects of music, or musical devices (e.g. repetitive syncopation), that in his view can only be perceived as expressive if one allows oneself to be moved by the music in ways that he holds to be incompatible with aesthetic relevance.

In relation to this it is significant that Kivy himself argues, against Radford, that exuberant Latin dance music may move us to exuberant behaviour (such as dancing) in part because of its *beat*, which causes us to dance, in consequence of which we are then made to feel exuberant, rather than because we are made to feel this way simply by hearing the music (Kivy 1993: 8). Kivy takes this as evidence that the response lacks the intelligibility needed to show that it, or any perceived expressive characteristics explained by it, could be relevant to an aesthetic appreciation of our experience of merely listening to the music and perceiving its expressive characteristics. But it is not at all clear that we would actually be moved to dance to syncopated music in the way that we do if we did not also sometimes experience syncopations as somehow expressive of the physical impulses or sensations involved in rhythmic bodily movement, independently of their having such an effect on us.

It is interesting to note that both Radford's and Kivy's accounts of what goes on when we dance to music seem curiously one-sided, yet complementary: we surely do not just dance in order to *make* ourselves feel exuberant (as Kivy suggests), but neither do we just dance as some sort of entirely spontaneous expression of how we are feeling, where how we feel is independent of whether we want to dance or not, and so might be taken (as Radford does) to reflect a purely contemplative attitude to any music one is hearing. There is, normally, something of both going on, and indeed each seems significantly less intelligible in the absence of all reference to the other.

(iv) Strong-Weak Arousalism

Some sort of fundamental interdependency between two nevertheless quite distinct ways of experiencing music as expressive is invoked, with respect to musical listening itself, in the context of what we have called ‘strong-weak’ arousalism.²³ Here weak arousalism continues to be seen as distinct from strong arousalism, in that it is not put forward as a self-sufficient mode of explanation of music’s expressive character, even though it is seen as forming an essential part of such an explanation. This approach seeks to press home the intuition expressed by Levinson, when he states that

[w]e are saddened in part by perception of a quality in a passage which we construe as sadness, but we in part denominate that quality “sadness” – or confirm such denomination of it – in virtue of being saddened by the music... Recognising emotion in music and experiencing emotion from music may not be as separable in principle as one might have liked.
(Levinson 1982: 335)

In other words, the suggestion is that while we do perceive certain expressive qualities in music independently of our responses to the music, there is some important sense in which these qualities can only be thought of as taking on the significance that such qualities should properly possess for us when they are also experienced from a perspective informed by our responses to them.

The most obvious reason for thinking that this could be so is that the central instances where we encounter such qualities are those in which they are (potentially) associated with, or indicative of, what we take to be expressions of the felt states of actual persons. As Ridley (1995a: 52-3) points out, in such cases we are naturally disposed to perceive the human behaviour that exhibits such qualities from a perspective informed by the fact that we, ourselves, are also human, and therefore are prone to having similar feelings in broadly similar circumstances, and about broadly similar things. In other words, we have an inherent capacity for understanding why someone else feels what they do when they do, and a natural extension of this is that we have both a capacity to place ourselves imaginatively in their shoes and experience the world *empathetically* from the perspective they have because of what they feel, and a

²³ This position is present, albeit in different ways, in the theories of both Ridley and Levinson, which I will discuss in due course. A primitive version of this idea can also be found in Gurney (1880).

capacity to respond *sympathetically* with feelings of our own – feelings that take *their* feelings as their intentional object.

Nevertheless, applying such a model of how we experience the behaviour of others to how we experience music requires us to invoke additional facts of one sort or another about our experience of the latter, in order to explain why we should also respond to it in this way. This takes us into the territory of what we have termed ‘complex arousalism’, and a central point of reference for the accounts considered in subsequent chapters will be their ability to furnish a basis for this kind of approach.

However, it is also conceivable that a defence of the ‘strong-weak’ arousalist position might be made without reference to any of these additional considerations, or to the notion of ‘complex arousalism’ (with its notions of empathetical and sympathetic responses). Such a possibility is implicit in the concept of ‘equiprimordiality’ put forward by Heidegger (1927/1962), who asserts that there is a fundamental interdependency of a more general nature holding between the forms of understanding that give shape to our worldly engagements on the one hand, and our felt states of mind (moods and other affective responses) on the other. From such a perspective, Levinson’s thought, that the perception of expressive characteristics may depend in part upon our responses, can seem like an instance of a more general fact about our experience as a whole. The onus would then be on the opponent of such a conception to show that there are more specific reasons as to why music, as an aesthetic phenomenon, should not be thought of as properly experientiable in this way. However, in making this move, we would be committing ourselves to a general stance upon broader philosophical issues – pertaining to the nature of our experience of (or engagement in) the world – that is by no means uncontroversial. If an account of music’s expressive character is obliged to appeal to such a wide-ranging and controversial stance to explain the latter, then it might well be said to lack economy, and it is therefore reasonable to first ask whether a more specific theory can be given that achieves the same goals without invoking such large-scale commitments.

Chapter Three. Metaphor

So far we have considered theories of musical expressiveness that appeal either to resemblance or to the capacity of music, construed as something that we experience in a fairly literal way, to arouse responses in the listener. However, we have not encountered a version of either theory that is anything other than short of ideal, at least from the point of view of establishing the relevance of our experience of expressiveness in music to an aesthetic appreciation of the music itself, where this is understood in the terms proposed in the introduction to this study. It is therefore time to consider other kinds of theory that do not begin from such a straightforward or literal construal of our underlying experience of music. In this chapter and the next, I will consider what might loosely be called imagination-based accounts. Then I will turn to an alternative account of a different kind – one that seeks to redefine our literal experience of music with reference to the fact that music is typically encountered as a performed art. All of these accounts tend (to a greater or lesser extent) in the direction of what we have termed ‘complex arousalism’: they seek to make intelligible our sense that the music’s expressive characteristics are relevant to its aesthetic appreciation, with reference to a model of what it means to hear music as expressive that also makes our musically aroused responses intelligible. The idea is that these responses can then be invoked as part of a more inclusive explanation of music’s expressive import than would otherwise be possible, without undermining the intelligibility required to establish the latter’s relevance to appreciation.

The attempt to develop a more complex account of our responses to music, based on the idea that we imaginatively construe the latter as the sort of thing that could serve as an appropriate intentional object of such responses, can have several possible starting points. It can begin from a general claim to the effect that what is required for somebody to experience *any* music – whether expressive or not – with proper understanding is that they experience it in a way which involves a mode of imaginative construal. This fact may itself then be taken to shed light on our experience of it as expressive, and the role that our emotional responses play in this experience. An example of this is the approach of Scruton, who claims that our way of listening to music is informed by irreducibly metaphorical modes of construal. Alternatively, it can begin from the more specific claim that it is appropriate or necessary to imaginatively construe *expressive* music in imaginative terms, specifically to make sense of it as

expressive: for example, by hearing it as if it were an instance of behavioural expression on the part of a fictive *persona*, manifested in some fashion peculiar to music, or as if it were our experience of our own feelings. This chapter will focus on the first of these approaches. The remaining options – the persona theory and the approach known as ‘imaginative introspectionism’ – will be considered in the next chapter.

Scruton begins from certain general reflections on what is involved in listening to music with the kind of understanding that an aesthetic appreciation of such music ought to presuppose. In this respect, and particularly as this applies to the question of what is involved when we hear music as expressive, Scruton takes his cue from the reflections of Wittgenstein:

It seems wrong to imagine that one could give an account of meaning in language while saying nothing about understanding language. Similarly, to follow Wittgenstein, it would be wrong to give a theory of expression in music which was not a theory of understanding musical expression; and that requires a total theory of understanding music. (Scruton 1983: 63)

Scruton’s motivation for insisting that such a theory of expression in music should reflect a more fundamental grasp of what is involved in hearing music with understanding also reflects his dissatisfaction with existing accounts, insofar as these appeal to the notion of ‘intransitive expression’ to account for the idea that we can hear and respond to music as expressive without also committing ourselves to the Romantic transmission theory of expression:

A return to the intransitive concept of expression does not dispose of the philosophical difficulties. Consider again the example of a face. A face can be said to bear an expression, in the intransitive sense, only, surely, because it sometimes expresses (transitively) the states of mind of its owner. It is because the face is the sign of independent thoughts and feelings that it can be called an ‘expression’ at all. Can the same be said of music? The considerations discussed seem to imply that it cannot. But what, then, entitles one to describe music as having expression even in an intransitive sense? (Scruton *ibid.*: 70)

It is just this notion of ‘intransitive expression’ that implicitly underlies the principal behavioural resemblance accounts studied in the previous chapter (e.g. as in Kivy’s distinction between ‘expressing’ and ‘being expressive of’), and which we have found to be problematic, even when given a more specific characterisation of the sort attempted by Davies in the form of his appeal to the notion of ‘emotion characteristics in appearances’. This is because such accounts seem to require us to ignore precisely the disanalogy between expressive faces (and other aspects of actual human physiognomy) and musical artworks pointed out by Scruton in the passage just cited. Scruton’s hope is, evidently, that a better understanding of more fundamental aspects of our experience of music will shed additional light on why it seems appropriate to describe it as expressive, and to respond to it as such.

For Scruton, hearing music properly (i.e. in the way that is required for its aesthetic merits to be appreciated) requires hearing it with the requisite musical understanding, and this in turn involves perceptual competencies on the part of the listener, central to which is the ability to perceive certain specific kinds of tonal form (e.g. individual tones, as opposed to mere sounds, as well as melodies and harmonies), and it is significant for Scruton that we cannot give an adequate description of our experience of these forms without recourse to metaphor:

There are certain basic perceptions involved in hearing music, and these are crucial to understanding it. For example, there is the hearing of movement – as when one hears a melody, theme, or phrase, move from one note to another. There is the hearing of tones as opposed to hearing of pitched sounds: the hearing of one tone as higher than another; the hearing of rhythm (as opposed to temporal sequence); the hearing of harmony, as opposed to aggregates of tones, and so on. All these experiences are basic...

...The distinctions here lie *in* the experience (in its intentional object) and not in the material object perceived. But clearly they demand further analysis... when I hear a tone, I hear a sound imbued with musical implications. Tones, unlike sounds, seem to contain movement... through a ‘musical space’, which we describe in terms of ‘high’ and ‘low’. It seems fairly clear that this description is metaphorical. (Scruton *ibid*: 90-92)

Scruton, like many theorists, holds that one of the basic and most important features of tones is their ability to furnish the experience of melodic succession which, like Davies and Budd, he takes to involve a sense of motion or movement, generated by

the experience of a sequence of sounds of different pitch heard as displacing one another, as they are typically thought to do in the context of melody lines.¹ For Scruton, it is the peculiar nature of this experience of tonal movement, with its undeniable yet inexplicable spatial character, that most clearly demonstrates the truth of his central claim, which is that our experience of music can only be made sense of by appealing to the thought that our perception is informed by an imaginative construal of the music as something that it literally cannot be – the sort of construal that is more clearly in evidence when we interpret or describe things or experiences in irreducibly metaphorical terms:

Perhaps we should confine ourselves to the study of musical tones; whatever auditory space should turn out to be, it is tones that are to be its basic occupants. But what now of musical movement? It seems to follow that no individual in auditory space can be in two places at different times. We have no way to individuate tones except in terms of their uninterrupted continuity at a single pitch. Therefore no tone can move from one pitch to another, without becoming another tone. Hence no individual in auditory space actually moves. We cannot separate the individuals from the places they occupy, not even in thought. So there is no such thing, materially speaking, as musical movement.

...The conclusion we should draw is that, while we hear movement in music, this is a fact about our experience, which corresponds to no actual movement in the auditory world... It might be tempting then to renounce altogether the idea that there is an auditory space... But if we take that extreme point of view, we end by reducing the experience of music to the experience of sound; the distinction between a sound and a tone has vanished... If we take away the metaphors of movement, of space, of chords as objects, of melodies as advancing and retreating, as moving up and down – if we take those metaphors away, nothing of music remains, but only sound.

...It seems then that in our most basic apprehension of music there lies a complex system of metaphor, which is the true description of no material fact. And the metaphor cannot be eliminated from the description of music, because it is integral to the intentional object of musical experience. Take this metaphor away, and you cease to describe the experience of music. (Scruton *ibid*: 96-97)

¹ The problematic nature of this experience of succession itself, especially as it relates to the experience of melodic shape, is not addressed by Scruton, even though it was pointed out and characterised in some depth by Husserl (1966) and its implications explored by Zuckerkandl (1956).

In short, for Scruton, the experience of melodic movement as movement of an object in or through tonal space is one that involves experiencing the music in the light of an ineliminable metaphor.

Scruton, like Davies, invokes Wittgenstein's conception of aspect-perception as a way of characterising the status of this kind of perception. Unlike Davies, however, Scruton seeks to make use of this notion to explain the more fundamental, structural character of musical listening in general rather than just our experience of it (or of human appearances in general) as expressive:²

A consideration of aspects helps us make sense of the metaphorical transfer that is integral to musical experience... Consider the face in a cloud. You see the face in the cloud only when you also see that it is not there. To believe that there is a face in the cloud is not (in the relevant sense) to perceive it. It is to be the victim of an illusion... There is a transfer involved in seeing the face: the intentional object of experience must be described using a concept that is known not to apply to the material object of perception. This transfer is not unlike that which occurs in metaphor...

The perception of an aspect is not, then, the acquisition of a peculiar false belief. For this reason, it remains partly, or perhaps wholly, within the control of the subject... The structure of this control is difficult to describe. But its musical manifestations are readily identified. They illustrate the peculiar way in which the subject is active in the perception of music, however indifferent or hostile towards it he might be. By 'active' I mean something quite specific... in my sense not every perception is 'active'. To be 'active' a perception must exhibit that kind of conscious participation that is involved in the perception of an aspect: it must involve an engagement of attention, an interest in surface, a transference of concepts from sphere to sphere (as in metaphor); in the limiting case it may itself be a voluntary act.

All those features of 'activity' are exhibited in the perception of musical movement... (ibid: 100-101)

This raises a number of questions. The comparison between hearing sounds as music and seeing a face in a cloud seems particularly strained: in the one case we are hearing something as music that has particular sensuous and formal characteristics that are such that, once they are grasped, it is inconceivable that we would wish to hear it as anything other than music. But in the case of the cloud, we are always able to just see it as a cloud – there is nothing about its intrinsic characteristics that *compels* us to see it as

² This aspect of Scruton's account is more fully elaborated in the context of his earlier, more general account of the nature of aesthetic perception and judgement (Scruton 1974).

a face.³ A better comparison would be between seeing faces in clouds and hearing natural sounds (e.g. the sound of the wind or the rain) as human voices, or even in certain cases as music (as with wind-chimes). In this case it is clear that there *is* a kind of ‘transference of concepts from sphere to sphere’ of the sort that Scruton describes in terms of the notion of aspect-perception, but why should we think that this is the sort of aspect-perception also involved in hearing sounds as music, when the intrinsic qualities of those sounds are ones that – with the exception of unusual coincidences – *only* arise in the kind of context where it is evident from the outset that the sounds are supposed to be heard as music? Scruton in effect asks us to assume that all cases of aspect-perception necessarily involve a specifically metaphorical form of transference, but does not give us any reason for thinking that this is so. Moreover, it is hard to see what reasons could be given, since the most typical cases of aspect-perception, such as seeing a face in a collection of physical features of a person’s body, or hearing a voice manifested in a series of sounds, are not ones where we impose an alternative mode of perception or construal on something that already has an intrinsically ordered and significant perceivable form, but are, rather, cases where the perception of the aspect constitutes the bedrock on which our coherent grasp of the world around us rests. Although in such cases we may be capable of suspending such forms of aspect-perception in a way that suggests that they are subject to the will, this is misleading if taken to suggest that they are, in fact, only operative in the first place in response to the demands of the will.

One way to make sense of what Scruton is doing here is to take note of his own references to his earlier claim (Scruton 1974) that this particular form of aspect-perception is a central and defining feature of what is involved in experiencing something in a specifically aesthetic manner, as *art*. The problem with this, however, is that given that what he is seeking to explain are basic aspects of how we come to perceive musical forms in the first place, it is not clear that he is entitled to assume that such a model automatically applies.⁴ A central feature of Scruton’s account of the kind of aspect-perception which he thinks can explain our distinctive experience of art is that

³ This is why seeing faces in clouds is so much more a matter of the idiosyncrasies of individual perceivers than hearing music as music could ever be. That there is something seriously awry here is shown by the fact that it is hard to imagine a culture in which people collectively agree that it is more appropriate to see certain types of face in certain kinds of clouds, rather than others – the equivalent of what goes on, or seems to go on, in musical listening.

⁴ That is, it is by no means certain that it is a necessary condition of experiencing these forms as musical forms per se that we should also experience them ‘aesthetically’ or as something we should wish to call ‘art’.

it does not involve ‘the acquisition of a peculiar false belief’, even though it clearly involves seeing the art work as something that, literally, it is not. When we talk about the suspension of disbelief involved in witnessing staged events, in imagining events described by a fictional narrator, or in observing the representational contents of a painting, there is something happening that clearly calls for an explanation of some sort in terms of the idea of seeing something as something else. But if the case of hearing musically ordered sounds as music is more akin to the case of seeing certain features of the human body as faces, or of hearing certain sounds emitted by such bodies as corresponding to the activity of voices – because there simply is, in the ordinary circumstances of actual human existence, no other interesting and meaningful way to see or hear these – then it is not clear that there is anything going on here that calls for such an explanation at all.

Further grounds for suspecting that Scruton is seeking to impose an inappropriate form of explanation on these aspects of music emerge when he claims that

[t]he voluntary character of this perception provides one of the foundations for structural criticism of music. It is because I can ask someone to hear a movement as beginning in a certain place, as phrased in a certain way, and so on, that the activity of giving reasons in support of such analysis makes sense. Much of music criticism consists of the deliberate construction of an intentional object from the infinitely ambiguous instructions implicit in a sequence of sounds. (ibid: 101)

The suggestion here is that listeners can freely choose between different ways of parsing the music, without being constrained in any significant way by the literal character of what they hear. But if that were so, there would be no point in music criticism of the sort that Scruton himself is referring to. The ‘activity of giving reasons in support of such analysis’ only makes sense because in trying out different listening strategies we are somehow able to arrive at judgements to the effect that some of them are more successful than others. We could not do this if the ‘instructions implicit in a sequence of sounds’ were ‘infinitely ambiguous’ in the way Scruton suggests. There must be *some* basis for distinguishing between a parsing of the music that is responsive to the structures of saliency implicit in the perceptually given character of the sounds or tonal forms themselves, and one which is not, otherwise the conventions and habits that shape our ways of listening to music would never be open to critical modification or

development.⁵ Moreover, even if one were to insist, for reasons of principle, that no such distinction can be made, it is not clear that the thought that *particular* ways of hearing tonal structure in music are not constrained by anything intrinsic to the music itself entails a similar conclusion with respect to the question of how we come to hear any such tonal structures in music at all.⁶

Scruton, nevertheless, does come close to offering a more specific explanation of how listeners to music might come to make the metaphorical transfer he proposes, when he says of the sense of ‘up’ and ‘down’ in music, that it

...is not a purely geometrical idea – it is, rather, an idea of human movement, made available to us by our own activity. It therefore depends upon our sense of what obstructs and furthers action. At a deep level, the sense of ‘up’ and ‘down’ is a sense of human will. It is not implausible to suggest that it is this sense of ourselves as agents – rather than any purely geometrical idea of space – which underlies our experience of musical movement, and prompts us to describe that movement in spatial terms. (ibid: 98-9)

He seeks to illuminate this further through invoking the notion of empathetical perception, or *Einfühlung*:⁷

In certain circumstances, observing a gesture of expression, we have the experience of *Einfühlung*, of knowing what it is like, whereby the gesture

⁵ We can tell that something has gone seriously wrong with Scruton’s account here, since its implications for music criticism conflict with his own views about art criticism generally, which tend towards an emphasis upon aesthetic judgements grounded in shared modes of experience of the sort that he takes to be furnished by cultural traditions. If music criticism really consisted of nothing but ‘the deliberate construction of an intentional object from the infinitely ambiguous instructions implicit in a sequence of sounds’, then the critically informed listening that it is supposed to engender would inherit this same status. If that were so, then the view that received traditions of listening and appreciation derive their authoritative character entirely from externally imposed structures of social domination rather than from anything intrinsic to the listening experience would be made much more credible, and this would be an argument for embracing exactly the sort of relativistic agenda aimed at deconstructing such received forms of reception that Scruton’s other writings (Scruton 1983: 261-286) show him to be adamantly opposed to.

⁶ I am using the term ‘tonal structure’ here in a broad sense that is designed to reflect Scruton’s own view that all, or almost all, perceivable forms of musical structure supervene on the experience of ‘tone’ as distinct from the experience of mere ‘sound’. On this point he is, I think, essentially right, with the proviso that certain forms of modern music that are consequently excluded from such an account then stand in need of a separate explanation.

⁷ Scruton takes a critical view of traditional attempts to apply the notion of *Einfühlung* to theorising about the nature of expression in art (e.g. Theodor Lipps), which he accuses of relying upon a Cartesian conception of purely subjective mental properties. One of the most interesting aspects of his approach is his attempt to sketch an alternative interpretation of this notion which would avoid such Cartesian commitments (Scruton 1983: 110-1).

becomes, in imagination, our own. We feel it, not from the observer's, but from the subject's point of view. This experience may occur, and may grant a sense of completeness of its object, whether or not the context permits description of the object of the other's feeling; whether or not we believe that 'feeling' is the right term for what is known; and whether or not we even believe that there *is* another, into whose mental arena we have felt our way. It is as though we have been granted a first-person perspective on a world that we know is not ours. Neither is it anyone else's. It is a creation of the imagination...Normally we hear musical gestures as we might see a man gesticulating to an unseen audience, perhaps guessing at the objects of his feeling, perhaps remaining entirely ignorant of them. Even in such circumstances, we may enter into gestures and see them from 'within'. For we may see them as containing spirit, character, and an outlook on the world. Just as we see spirit, life and activity in gestures, so do we hear movement, life and activity in music. (ibid: 113-4)

In short, for Scruton, what we hear when we hear music is not mere sounds, but tonal forms, and a coherent description of what it means to hear these tonal forms cannot be given without invoking the idea that in hearing these we imaginatively commit ourselves to hearing them 'as' actual manifestations of human life, replete with all its physicality, intentionality, expressivity and, above all, potential significance for other human beings of the sort that normally accrues to human behaviour and physiognomy in virtue of its being the quintessential locus of these qualities.⁸

This seems absolutely right, but the question that emerges is whether we are really obliged to apply the term 'metaphorical' to this experience of music in order to do proper justice to it. Indeed, it seems to be an absurd consequence of Scruton's view – given the analogy he himself makes between hearing music and perceiving actual human gestures empathetically – that one should also regard something as basic as the perception of the latter as more than mere bodily flailings as being metaphorical as well. If the concept of metaphor that Scruton invokes as an ineliminable feature of certain experiences really pervades our experience of the world at such a fundamental level, it is not clear that it is really illuminating or appropriate to ascribe to it, as Scruton does, the significance of a mode of construal that contrasts with our everyday engagements in virtue of being more active or creative in an imagination-involving sense. If the analogy

⁸ This allows Scruton to extend his approach to other features of music: for example, the experience of instrumental timbre as having quasi-vocal characteristics, and the experience of rhythmic pattern in music as a form of organised active movement, i.e. something very much like human bodily movement, where this latter insight can be thought of as illuminating something about the relationship between music and dance. Many such implications of his account are explored in an unusually rich and detailed way in his principal subsequent work on musical aesthetics (Scruton 1997).

with the empathetical perception of human gestures is to be preserved, then the notion of metaphor employed must be a significantly more modest one – so modest, in fact, that as Ridley points out, it looks more like an extended literal application of a term than a case of actual ‘living’ metaphor of the sort that requires someone to think or imagine something they know is not literally the case (Ridley 1995b: 97).

Several more specific objections to Scruton’s conception of the ineliminable role of metaphor in musical listening are raised by Malcolm Budd. Firstly, Budd claims that the very idea that such metaphors are ineliminable means that nothing can really be said to have been explained by invoking them, just because this very fact means that the metaphorical character itself cannot be elucidated with reference to any more basic facts about music. The implication is that music has a ‘metaphorical essence’, which is one that Budd finds to be incoherent (Budd 1985b: 242). However, this invites the response, already embraced by Scruton, that it may just be the case that the nature of musical experience is such that in reaching a level at which explanation requires us to employ these metaphors, we also reach a limit beyond which no further explanation is possible or necessary. A further difficulty, according to Budd, is that ‘it is unclear how a metaphor could be part of the content of a perceptual experience’ (ibid). This seems to invite the same kind of response as the first objection. However, for Budd, even if this point *were* resolved, we should still have to reject Scruton’s account, because it is clear that we actually do not have to entertain such metaphorical thoughts about music in order to experience it in the way that Scruton holds to be an essential feature of musical understanding (ibid.). Scruton might deny this, but it is hard to see how the question could be settled, and it seems unfair that the burden of proof should fall entirely on one side or the other.⁹

(Budd implies that the impulse to think of certain aspects of one’s musical experience as *constituted* through being informed by concepts whose application is metaphorical, rather than merely being such as to require us to use linguistic metaphors to describe them, is a result of a failure to distinguish between two ways in which music can be experienced as an intentional object, which he identifies respectively with what Christopher Peacocke calls ‘representational’ and ‘sensational’ properties of experience (Peacocke: 1983). According to Budd, the ‘essence of the distinction is between properties an experience has in virtue of the fact that it represents the environment as

⁹ For a detailed but inconclusive account of this particular point of contention, see Ellis (2001: 39-58).

being a certain way and properties it has in virtue of some other aspect of the experience' (Budd *ibid*: 244n). Budd seems to think that recognising many of music's properties to be 'sensational' rather than 'representational' would be sufficient to make clear that it is only the way we describe those properties that is metaphorical, and not the experience itself, presumably because it is then clear that we do not experience the music metaphorically, as (re)presenting an occurrence of movement in its environment that does not in fact occur. Although the distinction between these two kinds of property may well prove apposite to an understanding of the nature of music as an intentional object, there is nothing to suggest that Scruton identifies the metaphorical character of the concepts that he takes to inform musical listening with a metaphorical construal of music as *representing* movement in the extra-musical world.¹⁰)

Budd seems to arrive at a more fundamental critique when he claims that there is no reason for thinking that the concepts which Scruton takes to inform the experience of music, and whose metaphorical or literal character has consequently been in dispute, necessarily inform musical experience at all.

Firstly, he argues that Scruton is wrong to hold that the experience of rhythm in music – as distinct from mere temporal pattern – is one that must involve some reference to the concept of dancing. Budd offers an alternative account of the distinction between these two phenomena that does not require any such reference. However, it is not clear how far this goes in undermining Scruton's position, in that the latter's account of what it means to experience music rhythmically invokes the experience of dance to explain other characteristics as well as the distinction focused on by Budd.

Secondly, Budd argues that Scruton is wrong in holding similar views about melody and harmony. In this case, his counter-claim is that 'the notion of movement in space is not integral to the experience of melody and harmony' (*ibid.* 243), and his subsequent attempt to elaborate this (Budd 2003: 209-223) bears directly on Scruton's position, even though it focuses on the nature of the spatial concepts themselves (which the latter takes to be central to music's constitution as an intentional object) rather than on whether their application should be characterised as metaphorical or not (Budd 2003: 213).

Budd begins by insisting that there is nothing about 'the nature of the experience of pitch *as such*, rather than the nature of the experience of pitch when sounds are heard

¹⁰ Budd acknowledges this point himself in his later article, where he quotes passages from Scruton that are expressly opposed to this thought (Budd 2003: 218n).

as constituents of music', that requires us to think that we experience it in spatial terms: for Budd, the use of the terms 'high' and 'low' are therefore mere linguistic metaphors that stand in for the actual predicates we would wish to apply (ibid: 215).¹¹ He then proceeds to focus on Scruton's own view, which is that sounds are heard as pitched in a spatial way insofar as they are heard as 'tones' – as having musical implications of the sort that, for Scruton, specifically depend upon their being taken up and used as elements of the melodic and harmonic unfolding of music.

According to Scruton, the process of change that in both cases constitutes this unfolding requires us to hear tones moving towards or away from each other, and this experience would not be possible if the spatial aspect were eliminated from our musical experience (Scruton 1983: 85). But as Budd points out, 'Scruton recognizes... that "a tone... is inseparable from the pitch at which we hear it", so that no tone moves from one pitch to another and no tone is ever heard as doing so' (Scruton 1997: 50-51; Budd 2003: 216). This presents Scruton with an impossible dilemma, since for Scruton the experience of musical movement is an experience of something occurring that involves the musical sounds or tones themselves. Yet these sounds themselves clearly do not in fact move, and are not in fact distributed in a spatial way. But as Budd himself points out, this first point means that it also could not be tones, as distinct from sounds, that move, in that 'given that the identity of a tone is tied to its pitch level, to hear tones as moving towards or away from one another along a pitch continuum would be to hear something that lacks sense, an impossible accomplishment' (Budd 2003: 216). Budd himself holds that 'in listening to a melody we do not hear tones as moving along some (indeterminate) spatial dimension, nor do we hear something other than tones moving in this manner'. At the same time he insists that 'the mere imagination of movement – movement unattached to the basic constituents of music – concurrently or somehow 'fused' with a series of sounds... would not yield the idea of melody as consisting of movement in the sense Scruton desires' (ibid: 217-8). In short, for Budd, there is no *thing* that is common from one tone to another that can be conceived of as 'performing' or 'undergoing' the movement that Scruton holds to be basic to our experience of

¹¹ This is by no means an uncontentious assertion. While it is true that not all cultures use the terms 'high' and 'low' to characterise differences of pitch, it does not follow from this that the way *we* hear these differences is not literally captured using these terms. The perception of such differences may well reflect the way they are typically heard to function in the music one is familiar with, and the fact that this way of listening does not appear to play any significant role in some other musical cultures may be a reflection of their desire to create music in which the features that give rise to this experience are easily passed over, rather than indicating an alternative way of experiencing the same underlying differences.

musical melody (and harmony, at least in the ‘classical’ sense of coordinated voice-leading), yet in the absence of any such coherent concept of a ‘mover’, the concept of musical movement cannot be shown to be intrinsic to the phenomenology of melodic unfolding in music. Budd’s alternative characterisation of music involves insisting that

...the movement of a melody is not a matter of tones moving. Moreover, there is no imagined spatial movement of anything between tones – from one tone to another: when we hear a melody in a sequence of sounds this does not consist in our imagining something moving up and down a spatial dimension... a melody is a temporal *Gestalt*, with a beginning and end, that functions as a reidentifiable particular... but to hear a melody is not to have a perception one part of the intentional content of which is a thought about *spatial* movement. A melody does move from one tone to another, but this movement is merely *temporal*, not spatial: progress in time, not space. The movement of a melody is constituted by the succession of the tones of different pitch that compose it, and the relations among these tones is a matter of their positions on the pitch continuum, which is not itself a spatial dimension, although to a limited extent it is analogous to one... (Budd *ibid*: 219)

Budd seems to be suggesting that to explain the experience of movement in melody we need only point out that in experiencing the latter we simultaneously perceive a sequence of tones as outlining some sort of *Gestalt*, and experience the bare fact of temporal succession through which these same tones are individually connected (by standing in purely temporal relations of contiguity). The problem with this is that Budd’s own critique of Scruton commits him to the idea that an account of an experience of movement can only be coherent if it makes sense of the idea that there is, indeed, something that moves – whether this movement be in a spatial dimension or not. This idea of something moving, of a ‘mover’, by its very nature involves conceiving of some sort of reidentifiable particular persisting through change. Budd’s implicit acceptance that such a thing could be conceived of in a meaningful way without reference to space (providing that some other form of continuum is there to be experienced) directly resembles the idea of a ‘no-space world’ – a world that consists of nothing but changes in the pitch of a sound – of the sort hypothesised by Strawson in his attempt to establish the conceptual limits on what sort of thing could be considered to constitute a reidentifiable individual of any kind at all (Strawson 1959). Strawson’s model has been subjected to an extremely telling critique by Evans, who argues that actual physical space is conceptually necessary for reidentification to be a coherent

possibility, since the notion of reidentifiability itself requires the availability of a medium in which a subject can experience the effects of their own changes of position upon how objects appear to them and, by making compensatory calculations for these effects, still recognise that they are the same objects (Evans 1985). It is thought that the possibility of making such compensatory calculations – through adopting in one’s imagination a bird’s-eye view of how one’s changing position relative to objects translates into a changing perspective upon them – only exists in virtue of the subject’s existence alongside such objects in an actual physical space that is amenable to tactile-kinaesthetic experience. This suggests that any idea of purely temporal movement would still stand in a derivative relation to our experience of spatial movement, in which case Scruton would be vindicated, regardless of whether one wished to characterise this relationship in terms of metaphorical transference or not.

One possibility that neither Budd nor Scruton consider, but which would seem to bridge the gap between spatial and non-spatial accounts of movement in music, is the following: it may be the ability to explore the production of different pitches through different forms of muscular exertion – when physically producing musical sounds oneself, as a musical performer – that constitutes the basis of the distinctive experience of movement in music that seems to both invite and resist analogies with spatial movement. This possibility is most clearly illustrated with reference to vocal tone-production. One can have an experience analogous to that of reidentifying objects in spite of changes in perspective resulting from one’s own movements through space, when one produces a sequence of differently pitched tones and learns not only to reidentify the exact feel of the physical exertion required to produce each of them (as part of a coordinated ‘tactile-auditory’ experience), but also to recognise how certain changes of exertion lead to changes in pitch that may lead away from *and* back to the pitch of the tone with which one started.¹²

¹² The example of the voice shows that this need not involve recognition of how one’s body should be disposed in actual space if one is to produce different pitches, since this factor is inoperative due to the wholly internal character of the voice as a tone-producing instrument. Hence the experience must fall short of the kind of reidentification of concrete particulars that is a feature of human existence in the spatial world that we share with actual physical objects. Yet a connection to actual spatiality remains, since in life it is the specific possibility of reidentifying objects in actual space that affords a world of concrete particulars, and it is surely this fact that is responsible for the interest that any such experience of reidentification through change of position holds for us in the first place, whether the change of position be spatial or not. Where such an experience is to be had, even in the absence of a spatial milieu, it is more than plausible to think that in imputing to it something of the significance associated with the reidentification of concrete particulars in the world, we also impute something of the sensuous character

Such an account of the origins of the experience of musical movement would certainly be consistent with the sort of broader characterisation of the musical listening experience that Scruton himself aims to give through invoking the concept of empathetical perception or *Einfühlung*. Indeed, I would venture to suggest that it makes more sense of his own intuition that ‘it is this sense of ourselves as agents – rather than any purely geometrical idea of space – which underlies our experience of musical movement, and prompts us to describe that movement in spatial terms’ (1983: 98-9) than does his own notion of ineliminable metaphor.

Whether we accept this alternative account of the nature of the experience of musical movement or not, there remain important respects in which Scruton’s account is both superior to others and at the same time deeply flawed. Its superiority over accounts that rest ultimately on the notion of resemblance alone (e.g. Kivy, and also – at the most basic level – Davies) seems to lie in its attempt to characterise the experience of music as an experience of something that we could be expected to be moved by in the way that we are moved by actual human behaviour: behaviour that we recognise as having the potential to serve as a locus for the actual expressive manifestation of felt states of human beings and which, in virtue of this, we are naturally inclined to experience empathetically. As we shall see when considering other theories of musical expressiveness that might serve as a basis for a complex arousalist account, this empathetical mode of experiencing the world, *if* it can be shown to be relevant to our experience of music, may provide a basis for understanding how music could elicit a relatively wide range of affective responses that are nevertheless intelligible as responses to the music.

Scruton comes closer to shedding light on how such an empathetical perspective on music could be appropriate, and to a proper characterisation of the phenomenology of musical listening, than any of the other theorists discussed so far. However, his conception of the role of metaphor in musical listening – and of imagination in aesthetic experience and appreciation generally – is at odds with our intuitions about the extent to which such experiences can be more or less grounded in more basic aspects of how we hear the constituents of music. This represents an outstanding flaw, even if the case for or against metaphor as a way of explaining the particular experienced characteristics in virtue of which music lends itself to being perceived empathetically remains unproven.

of the experience that makes the latter possible – i.e. the felt sensations that we have when moving our own bodies through space.

The relationship between these points is perspicuously articulated in another way by Boghossian, when he declares that

Any adequate philosophy of music... must do justice to the two [central] features of musical experience... that we do not regard just any response as appropriate and that we hear musical expression *in* the sound. The problem is hard because the two features work against each other. The idea of normative fit suggests that there is something genuinely dyadic going on: an experience of sound, an expressive response, and a relation of fit between them. Hearing in, by contrast, seems to demand that there be only a single experience, an experience of a sound *as* expressive. (Boghossian 2002: 54)

It should be clear by now that the challenge of reconciling these two fundamental aspects of our experience of music in a way that would also furnish the basis for a coherent and convincing account of how we come to hear music as expressive has not yet been met. As Boghossian states,

[t]he resemblance theory and its kin, for all their talk of “hearing in,” do not really earn the right to that phenomenology. Scruton, on the other hand, emphasizes hearing in, but at the expense of allowing us to make sense of the idea of normative fit... it is totally unclear how, on his view, one experience could be more appropriate than another. (ibid)

Chapter Four. Imagination

Having considered Scruton's metaphor theory, I will now explore the two main alternative ways in which listeners' imaginative engagement with music might be brought to bear on the issue of musical expressiveness. I will consider three versions of the persona theory of musical expressiveness, and two versions of the theory known as 'imaginative introspectionism'. As with Scruton's account, these approaches may be seen as providing a basis for a complex arousalist account of our responses: one that aims to shed more light on our sense that music can be expressive of higher-order emotions than is possible within the framework of either the resemblance theory or simple arousalism. However, other reasons may also be put forward for preferring one or other of these accounts over such theories.

(i) Persona

The first version of the persona theory I will consider (Callen 1982) emphasises that the imaginative engagements proposed by this approach are necessary to a full and proper experience of music's expressive character. The second (Ridley 1995a, 1995b) stresses more fully their role in the kind of experience of expressive music required by complex arousalism. The third (Levinson 1996b) goes further, arguing that the imaginative engagements proposed by this approach are necessary to make sense of the *concept* of musical expressiveness (as relevant to aesthetic appreciation), even where the expressive characteristics themselves are explainable with reference to other factors such as resemblance or arousal.

All of these theories invoke the idea of a fictive persona in music¹ as something necessary for a full and proper (i.e. properly intelligible) experience and appreciation of music's expressive properties. Their central assertion is that this cannot be had – at least for some kinds of music – unless the listener is in a position to respond as they would to actual cases of human behavioural expression. The listener must be permitted to construe the music, or certain aspects of the music, as the kind of human behaviour that would normally count as revealing a person's concurrently felt emotional states. The only way that this can occur without implying a version of the Romantic

¹ For one of the earliest applications of this notion to music see Cone (1974).

transmission theory of expression is to posit a fictive persona, and to claim that listeners make-believe that the dynamically unfolding emotional character of the music is the expressive behaviour of this persona. Because this behaviour is to be construed as actual human expression, it cannot be understood in terms of either Davies' notion of 'emotion-characteristics in appearances' or the canine physiognomic features of Kivy's Saint Bernard. Neither of these reveal the actual occurrence of a person's feelings.

Either or both of two more specific claims may then be invoked to support this kind of assertion. The first of these – present also in Davies' account of resemblance – points to the experience afforded by music of expressive qualities unfolding over time in a highly concentrated form, where this also occurs in the context of a strong sense of the music's logical development. It is claimed that this is sufficient to create an impression that its dynamic qualities are equivalent to some sort of bodily manifestation of purposeful human agency. In such circumstances it may also seem natural to construe its *expressive* qualities as qualities of the same bodily movements through which such agency is taken as manifested.² However, this carries the implication that such behaviour would, in virtue of its unique association with specifically musical characteristics, constitute an entirely *sui generis* form of human expression (Callen 1982: 386; also Levinson 1990: 338, 1996b: 107).

The second claim is that it is natural to imagine music to be an instance of behavioural expression when the changes in its unfolding expressive character appear to form the kind of pattern we would expect to encounter in the context of an unfolding psychological narrative, so that it makes sense to think of them as corresponding to a concurrent sequence of changes in the felt state of a human consciousness (Callen 1982: 385; Levinson 1990: 371).³

A major question here is whether there is, in fact, anything intrinsic to the nature of musical experience that would *require* us to construe the music imaginatively in this kind of way, rather than, say, in the more vaguely anthropomorphic terms suggested by Kivy's claim that we tend to animate our perceptions of things in general. However, the persona theorist can argue that the issue is not just whether our experience of

² There is no contradiction between seeing the same human bodily movements as both a manifestation of human agency in virtue of their purposeful character and as an instance of human expression in virtue of their expressive character. For an analysis of this 'adverbial' concept of expression, see Goldie (2000: 133-4).

³ I use the term 'narrative' loosely here to indicate just the kind of psychological coherence we associate with the unfolding over time of a particular person's mental states, rather than any actual narration of this unfolding. Levinson makes a similar distinction by adopting the term 'quasi-narrational' for this effect (Levinson 1990: 371).

expressiveness in music demands a certain understanding to make sense of how we could come to experience it as we do. It is also that a certain understanding may be demanded in principle, whatever the actual character of the experience, in order to make conceptual sense of the relevance of musical expressiveness to appreciation.⁴ On the other hand, critics of the persona theory tend to focus on the first way of construing the issue. They typically take what they perceive as the failure of the theory to demonstrate that such an account is implied by our musical experience itself as evidence of the irrelevance of the experience of a fictive persona in music to appreciation (Davies 1994: 292, 1997: 101-6). As we shall see, this tends to generate a standoff between advocates and critics of the theory.

It is important to distinguish the kind of persona theory that will be the focus of this chapter from another kind of use to which this notion can be put. In this other case, the idea is that our experience of an artwork's expressive qualities can be illuminated by thinking that we experience it *as if* it were some sort of expression of the artist's mental states. What may then be imagined is not so much a fictive human presence manifested *in* the artwork, as a fictive artist. The behavioural expression of the latter may be taken to correspond to the processes involved in the artwork's creation. Alternatively, we may imagine that the artist's *intention* was that the work be taken as an expression in this way. This becomes an application of the more general theory of 'hypothetical intentionalism', according to which we imagine such a fictive artist just in order to ascribe to him or her certain artistic or communicative intentions.⁵ Yet such ascriptions of expressed states or artistic intentions to a fictive (or 'implied') artist are usually required to be informed by knowledge of the real conditions in which the actual artist operated. This brings hypothetical intentionalism, and its equivalent with respect to expression in art, somewhat closer to non-hypothetical forms of intentionalism, and to related approaches to expression. Postulating a hypothetical persona becomes a process

⁴ Clearly there are limits to how far the persona theorist can go in this direction. One of the motivations for appealing to an imagination-based account *is* surely the intuition that replacing the Romantic transmission theory of expression by a view of our aesthetically relevant experience of artworks as limited to their intrinsic, objective or literal character just fails to do justice to our experience. Because an imaginative engagement on the part of listeners makes plausible the having of sympathetic and empathetical responses, it may allow some of the features of our experience whose recognition motivated the Romantic expression theory to be rehabilitated, without implying the kind of direct inferences to felt states of the artist that made that theory unsustainable. The emphasis, then, is still on making sense of our *experience* of expressive art, as bearing a marked resemblance to that which we have when encountering another person's actual behavioural expressions. See, for example, Elliot's distinction between experiencing a work of art 'from within' and 'from without' (Elliot 1967: 154-64).

⁵ A detailed consideration of hypothetical intentionalism lies beyond the scope of this study.

of drawing rational inferences from the expressive features of the artwork, treating these as evidence for acts of expression attributable to a *fictional* individual, but relative to an actual historical and cultural context (Vermazen 1986: 207-8).⁶ The problems with applying this approach to musical expressiveness are essentially the same, whether it is couched in hypothetical terms or not, and whether it makes reference to the intentions of the real or imagined artist or not. Firstly, the availability of historically specific intentional contexts in relation to artworks and particular artistic or musical styles is always potentially open to dispute. This makes such an approach relatively uneconomical, as it is not clear how much historical knowledge is required to be in place before we can say that a particular ascription of expressive import to music is historically appropriate and thus potentially relevant to appreciation. (This is a general issue in relation to accounts that appeal to the background knowledge and cultivated sensitivity of the listener. It is one that, as we shall see, resurfaces in relation to certain versions of the persona theory of musical expression. The point is not to question whether our ability to discern subtle expressive characteristics in music in aesthetically appropriate ways depends on these kinds of competency: typically they do. It is to highlight the undesirable implications of any theory that suggests that no aesthetically appropriate discernments of this kind could ever be made in the absence of such a competency. For example, it renders meaningless our appreciation of music as expressive whose original cultural context may be inaccessible or unknown to us.) Hence accounts of this sort can only be considered desirable as options of last resort.

Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, as Levinson points out, these approaches belong to a family of accounts that appeal to the idea that our experience reflects inferences about what it is rational to think of the music as expressing.⁷ These fail to make sense of the fact that our encounter with expressiveness in music takes the form of a perceptually immediate experience of the music, rather than of an explanatory hypothesis ascribed to it (Levinson 1996b: 98-102).

⁶ For example, in spite of certain contrasts spelt out by Vermazen, his account seems remarkably close to the conception of Gombrich (1963: 56-69). The latter claims that we experience expressive features of artworks as significant because we construe the artwork as conveying mental states in virtue of them: i.e. as expressing those states. We do this because we have first grasped the particular expressive features as indicating, relative to a certain historical 'matrix' of possibilities, the artist's actual intention that we experience it in this way.

⁷ These include accounts that claim that music is expressive of E because it is what one would compose if one felt E (Wollheim 1980: 27), or because it is judged as 'suited' to the expression of E (Barwell 1986: 175-81), or because of other more complex combinations of conditions. There is insufficient space here to consider these in detail, or Levinson's critique of these positions, which seems perspicuous to me.

I will start with the version of the persona theory proposed by Callen (1982). Part of Callen's aim is to rehabilitate an account of our musically aroused responses through appealing to the notion of sympathy. He therefore first seeks to defuse Kivy's objections to arousalism in general. He does this by arguing that in ordinary life it is appropriate, in a normatively binding and thus publicly agreeable sense, to respond sympathetically to the felt states of others, even when we do not know what the intentional object of those states might be. This is the case when, for example, 'we believe that it is *morally right or praiseworthy* to be grieved in the presence of sadness' (Callen 1982: 383).⁸ However, whereas in the ordinary-life case the absence of an intentional object is generally a contingent, circumstantial feature of the conditions under which we encounter others, in music the absence of such an intentional object is a *non-contingent* feature – a necessary consequence of music's basic character as a non-representational and non-referential art form. He does not address this disanalogy.

Even so, Callen's exposition of the view that we imagine expressive qualities of music to be expressions of a fictive persona is of interest, particularly as he attempts to locate grounds for this in our actual musical experience. His first move is to try to distance music's expressiveness from the expressiveness of a mere physiognomy (as in the face of the Saint Bernard) by highlighting the contrast between the dynamic character of the former and the static character of the latter. He claims that 'it is this same expressive dynamism in music that provides a substantial part of the warrant for thinking of *it* as emotionally alive' (ibid: 385). Indeed, if Wittgenstein's conception of the logically public character of expressions is correct, then it is just the fact that this latter character can be perceived as changing in response to changes in public conditions that allows us to identify it as behavioural expression at all. But Callen misses the point that purely physiognomic aspects of a person's expressive demeanour are not in fact limited to static qualities of the sort that we associate with faces, but are also perceived in a person's gait and quality of voice.⁹ What matters is that even in real-life human encounters these qualities are not perceivable as changing in response to conditions in

⁸ Callen suggests that the basis for this belief is a shared normative commitment to viewing others as ends rather than means, in the manner proposed by Kant (Callen 1982: 383). However he does not elaborate how this would justify the presumption which he takes us to adhere to, which is that, all other things being equal, it is simply *right* to respond to another's happiness by feeling happy and to another's unhappiness by feeling unhappy, rather than in some other way.

⁹ Hence, as Davies (1994: 292) points out, nothing about Kivy's own account requires him to reject this point.

ways that would suggest that they express emotional responses to those conditions. This is so even if they supervene on qualities of movement and utterance that are dynamic in respect of their unfolding in time in just the sort of way that music is.¹⁰ This means that Callen has not yet brought us any closer to a justification for responding to music as if it were a form of expression.

Callen then proceeds to invoke the two standard reasons for thinking that it could be appropriate for listeners to imaginatively construe music in this way. Firstly, the music displays a 'purposive coherence', in respect of its formal and expressive qualities (ibid: 385). Secondly, there is 'the recognition that the expressive dynamism of a particular movement or work resembles familiar patterns of purposive emotional life in the world'. Nevertheless, he admits that 'expressive dynamism and purposive coherence cannot be sufficient', as 'almost any series of expressive qualities will resemble some pattern of purposive life' (ibid). He insists that there must also be 'a concentration and development of particular expressive qualities... to give the appearance of dispositions of mind manifesting themselves in musical events' (ibid: 386). Unfortunately, he does not explain why the concentrated character of the unfolding of music's expressive qualities counts as indicative of 'dispositions of mind manifesting themselves in musical events'. If he takes this concentratedness to be a distinguishing mark of human agency, he is surely mistaken. What distinguishes agency is not the intensity or concentrated character of the purposefulness evinced by a human being's behaviour. It is just the nature of that purposefulness itself, independently of how concentrated or dispersed it may seem.

This point emerges when we consider the differences between human agency and those aspects of the behaviour of non-human animals that strike us as 'purposeful' or 'purposive'. The purposiveness of animal behaviour is, in almost all instances, fully graspable by understanding it as a form of reaction to the immediate environment in which the creature finds itself. By contrast that of human action almost invariably requires us to look beyond the immediate circumstances in which the behaviour occurs to find a context rich enough to fully make sense of it as purposeful. It is in virtue of this fact that we are reluctant to characterise anything other than human behaviour as evincing what we think of as intentional rational agency (Taylor: 1964). The point is

¹⁰ This parallels one of the reasons for rejecting the Romantic transmission theory of artistic expression: artworks generally cannot be perceived by audiences as evolving in response to extra-artistic conditions in the kind of systematic ways that would license taking stages in their evolution to be (traces of) behavioural expressions of responses to those conditions.

that this difference is not a difference in the degree of concentratedness or intensity of the impression of purposiveness that accompanies the behaviour. (If anything, the latter is more striking in the case of animals than of humans, just because its conditions of perceivability are more immediate.) It is a difference in the actual structural form of the purposiveness displayed.

Even for Callen, though, these considerations still provide ‘only the gross outline of what makes music live for us’ (ibid). He foresees an objection to the theory when he claims that ‘[o]ften one wants to identify the appearance of distinct agents in the work’, but ‘the difficulty... is to show that there is some kind of musical convention which makes sense of efforts to create and identify [these]’ (ibid).

The problem with the account so far is that however much it may succeed in bringing to light similarities between our experience of music and our experience of those phenomena uniquely associated with an emotionally alive being, this does not seem to defuse a critical objection. The objection is that these experiences differ just because one is capable of supporting ascriptions of behaviourally expressed states to actual persons while the other is not. Callen’s use of terms such as ‘emotional life’ may suggest that he has in mind a comparison with something other than behavioural expression itself. However if the basis for thinking that we are encountering a manifestation of an emotional life just *is* the fact that we are aware of the possibility of construing changes in its outwardly public character as behavioural expressions – and Callen does not offer any alternative model for how we could arrive at this thought – then the significance of the disanalogy has not been defused. Callen seems to admit as much when he says that

There is, to be sure, a real difference between the identification that helps us appreciate the emotional life in music and identification with the real emotions of persons. In imitating or reproducing in imagination qualities of sounds in which one hears determination, one does not imitate a person’s behavior. Rather, one imitates or images qualities of sound sequences which one takes for, or imagines to be, expressions of that attitude. The taking for is warranted largely by conventions which legitimate understanding rhythms, tempi, tone colours, articulations, and dynamics which resemble relevant aspects of actual expressive behavior to have expressive import. (ibid: 389)

This suggests that it is the additional features of his account, which concern how these conventions are thought to function, that will prove crucial to its acceptability. Indeed, in this respect, Callen does point to some features that suggest that it is appropriate to imaginatively construe our experience of expressive music in this way. In seeking to pinpoint conventions that might guide listeners in their identification of fictive agents in music, he states that

[t]he composer and listener share no knowledge of a set of explicit rules for unambiguously indicating the presence of unique agents in instrumental music. But they do share a knowledge of a musical culture that operates with forms, many of which have their roots in forms that combine instruments, song, and even dance. Current instrumental forms are known to have developed via the practice of substituting an instrument for a voice in a vocal work and then via the composition of original works in the same forms in which vocal parts are replaced with parts written for instruments. These parts are voice-like in that they continue to bear the important melodies. Thus, the listener may take an instrumental choir to indicate a distinct dramatic agent or group of agents as it closely resembles the unitary choral voice of a group of singers expressing a single point of view in voice and dramatic action. The brass choir may be heard, for example, as one might hear a tenor and baritone chorus in an opera in virtue of such qualities as a distinctive bright and vigorous tone color, unity of rhythm, melody, dynamics, and harmonic coherence that set off the brass from the rest of the ensemble for a time. The same family of features appearing later in the work with alteration, as say in a change from the minor to the major, can mark changes of expression in what are taken to be the same agents. Usually, it is one's developing sense of the expressive structure of the work as a whole that will help one to decide how best to take a particular musical feature, though of course one's grasp of the whole depends upon a reading of particulars that is defensible on appeal to a practice which operates similarly for a large range of works.

In short, the listener has a knowledge by which he can defend his claim to perceive distinct agents in the music present to him now in virtue of a range of properties shared with vocal forms in which dramatic conventions operate more straightforwardly. (ibid: 386-7)

There are two claims here, which are not fully distinguished. The less ambitious one is that we hear non-vocal elements in music as substitutes for, or equivalents of, vocal ones. We do this in ways that may reflect an awareness of the historical connections linking the musical forms and melodic devices used to the vocal equivalents from which they are thought to have been derived. But they may also reflect our perception of audible similarities between non-vocal and vocal forms of music

making. The more ambitious claim is that in doing this we hear non-vocal musical forms with reference to equivalent *dramatic* or *narrative* forms associated with the vocal elements that, if the first claim is correct, we take non-vocal elements as substituting for. These dramatic or narrative forms then provide a normative extra-musical context that legitimates specific attributions of fictive agency and expression to music.

Callen's first claim seems true to our experience, and is supported by norms of performance practice. These often revolve around a shared understanding to the effect that music gains in expressive interest when rendered in ways that emphasise similarities between instrumental and vocal effects. But this cannot be sufficient to justify hearing emotional life or human agency in music. Imagining that instrumental music just *is* vocal music must mean imagining it to be a form of vocal music stripped of any connections with a wider fictive context of the sort provided by a dramatic plot or sung words. Yet nothing in Callen's account gives us reason to believe that this will remove the disanalogy with actual human behavioural expression. Such music still lacks the referential or representational capacities that might otherwise establish connections in our mind with the inner life of a person. Hence it could only be in conjunction with his second, more ambitious claim that this insight might resolve the issue. However, this second claim must also be defended against critics of the persona theory, who claim that it undermines the concept of pure music by requiring listeners to import a fictive intentional context into their experience of the work that is not required just to understand what is there, so that they are, in effect, treating the music as programme music (Davies 1997: 101-2).¹¹

Indeed, Callen seems to have in some measure anticipated the objection of Davies, and in some measure appears indifferent to it. He admits to regarding all music as something to be experienced and appreciated programmatically. Yet he seeks to defend this with his claim that we are guided by a shared, historically informed awareness of conventional associations that determine the kind of fictive context it is appropriate to bring to bear imaginatively on our experience of music (Callen 1982:

¹¹ Davies directs his most detailed criticism of the persona theory at the version proposed by Robinson, which appeals to strong arousalism as providing a *psychological* grounding for our imaginative construal of music as an appropriate object of empathetic and sympathetic responses (Robinson: 1994). But as we have seen, strong arousalism fails to address the issues involved in showing the relevance to critical appreciation of our emotional responses to music. This is so regardless of how plausible it may be that the reactions it describes occur and influence our perceptions of music. Hence I do not discuss Robinson's account in detail here.

387). By contrast, Davies regards the mere fact that such forms of conventional agreement are possible as too weak a basis for demonstrating the relevance of imaginative responses to critical appreciation. He insists that what must be shown is that without these responses there is a sense in which the work cannot be ‘fully’ understood, or even cannot be understood at all (Davies *ibid*).¹²

These two positions seem to reflect different intuitions about how far we should go in accepting the relevance to appreciation of certain features of artworks. These features are those that may be required for certain shared experiences to be *possible*, but which cannot be shown to be *essentially* required as part of a minimally adequate or univocal critical interpretation of the artwork’s significance. This divergence may not invalidate Callen’s approach. But it does suggest that it is uneconomical: the validity of the theory becomes hostage to the complex hermeneutic disputes that, in the field of musicology at least, tend to surround the critical appreciation of particular works, genres and styles.¹³ Moreover, the thought remains that in suggesting that we hear all music programmatically Callen is forgetting that much of the instrumental music most highly valued for its expressive qualities – classical chamber music, for example – seems particularly remote from the dramatic or narrative contexts associated with vocal genres.¹⁴

There is a parallel between the sort of resemblance-based account advocated by Davies and some aspects of what Callen asks us to accept. Davies assumes that the association of expressive qualities with putative forms of human agency in music is sufficient to ground at least some of the emotional responses that, in real life, are typically reserved for actual behavioural expressions.¹⁵ On the other hand, Callen argues that this same connection, at least in an appropriate conventional context, provides grounds for imagining that we are encountering the behavioural expressions of

¹² Davies seems to equivocate between these two formulations by placing the word ‘fully’ in parentheses in his own formulation (Davies 1997: 101).

¹³ This raises the question of whether an account could be given of the relationship between instrumental and vocal music that would ride free of the specific conventions associated with particular musical genres but still shed light on musical expressiveness as such. Such an account would then have to address the disanalogy between pure music and actual encounters with human behavioural expression that Callen’s less ambitious first claim was incapable of resolving. I will explore such an account in the next chapter.

¹⁴ Hence Callen’s account conflicts with the ideal of *minimal extra-musical context-dependency* proposed at the start of this study.

¹⁵ For Davies, some of these responses are also had in real life as reactions to expressive characteristics associated with such expressions merely in virtue of accidental resemblances to them. We have seen, though, that this idea by itself fails to provide an intelligible grounding for our responses to music.

imaginary agents. In neither case, though, is the mere association of these elements sufficient to justify the kind of response attributed to listeners. We do not, in life, construe *all* expressive features associated with an agent's purposeful behaviour as being actual behavioural expressions, simply in virtue of such associations. A Wittgensteinian conception of the public criteria that govern our expression concepts suggests that we only construe them as such when the features in question recur in conjunction with the specific sets of conditions that furnish the criterial basis for their reidentification. These criteria are important precisely because they serve to distinguish such expressions from contingently occurring expressive features of our bodily appearance such as tend to be associated with, for example, the distinctive physiognomy of an individual. Given that this is so, it is hard to imagine that the same criteria could be fulfilled by the mere association of these same expressive appearances with a sense of purposeful agency internal to music.

Callen also faces a similar dilemma to Davies when he invokes the sense of purposiveness internal to music as a basis for the idea that we make-believe that we are encountering actual human agency in music. If this purposiveness is seen as a purely formal quality of the music, then this itself makes it quite unlike the purposefulness of real human actions, which is a reflection of systematic relations between episodes of human behaviour and changes in the wider world that this behaviour brings about. The only way to overcome this disanalogy is to follow Davies and link this sense of music's purposive character to our sense that it is an intentionally created human artefact. But this makes the association between music's purposive character and its expressive qualities even more problematic, since it introduces a discrepancy in how these are construed. This is because it is assumed that in order to steer clear of the Romantic transmission theory of expression one must reject any equivalent understanding of the expressive qualities of music. That is, one must reject *any* idea of expressive qualities also originating in aspects of the *actual* human context in which the music came to be created. Hence expressive qualities must be predicated of the music solely as a formally self-contained aesthetic phenomenon. But the need to avoid the disanalogy mentioned above means that qualities of human purposiveness must be predicated of it under a richer level of description that makes reference to its real-world intentional context. There is no single common level of description to which both sets of predicates apply. Yet this itself opens up another disanalogy with our real-life human encounters. In these we experience the purposefulness of actions and the expressiveness of behavioural

expressions of felt states as inextricably associated with each other, just because they are predicated of the same *person* or, at least, of the same *person's* behaviour. Hence there is a single common level of description to which both sets of predicates apply.¹⁶

The second version of the persona theory that I will consider is that proposed by Ridley (1995a, 1995b). Ridley seeks to elaborate more fully the role that such a theory can play within a complex arousalist account. Indeed, his account appears to operate on more than one level simultaneously. He accepts that resemblance constitutes a self-contained basis for hearing music as expressive in certain limited ways (ibid 1995a: 49-50). He also accepts that certain forms of musical arousal may be relevant to appreciation even in the absence of appropriate intentional objects, so these also contribute to our sense of music's expressive significance (ibid 1995b: 35).¹⁷ On the other hand, he seeks to augment these existing grounds for finding music expressively significant with an account of the way in which human perceptions of expressivity are bound up with an empathetical mode of perceiving human behaviour in general. The aim is to show that a more highly differentiated range of response-dependent expressive perceptions can still fulfil the constraints connected with relevance to appreciation, just as long as these perceptions reflect empathetical and sympathetic responses.¹⁸ These sympathetic responses receive their own justification from the idea that in perceiving the music as expressive at all we are already committed to adopting an empathetical stance towards it of the kind that we adopt towards our fellow humans. This implies that we are already hearing it as the expression of a fictive persona, and so as an appropriate intentional object of sympathetic responses.

Ridley seeks to develop this idea from an intuition voiced by Levinson, who states that

¹⁶ These considerations point in the direction of Levinson's version of the persona theory, where imagining a persona is treated as conceptually prior to any particular grounds that would determine what we imagine the persona to be expressing.

¹⁷ Ridley distances this understanding of music's powers of arousal from accounts that equate it with either purely personal associations or purely causal effects of music as a physical stimulus (Ridley 1995a: 51-2). His position is closer to Radford's: i.e. that certain phenomena (e.g. colours) affect us in virtue of their *experienced* perceptual qualities, even when there is no rational basis for our treating them as intentional objects of emotional response. Hence it is quite distinct from the attempt to ground a complex arousalist theory on purely causal processes of arousal, such as in Robinson (1994).

¹⁸ I take the distinction between empathetical and sympathetic responses to amount to this: with the former we just feel what we take someone else to be feeling, as part of an imaginative identification with them; with the latter we feel something *towards* the other person in the light of what we take them to be feeling, where this also reflects our empathetical identification with them. These are not always clearly distinguished. For example Ridley sometimes seems to use the term 'sympathy' to refer to both kinds of response, while many others talk only of 'empathising' with the music's persona.

We are saddened in part by perception of a quality in a passage which we construe as sadness, but we in part denominate that quality “sadness” – or confirm such a denomination of it – in virtue of being saddened by the music... Recognizing emotion in music and experiencing emotion from music may not be as separable in principle as one might have liked. If this is so, the suggestion that in aesthetic appreciation of music we simply cognize emotional attributes without feeling anything corresponding to them may be conceptually problematic as well as empirically incredible. (Levinson 1990: 335)¹⁹

Ridley expands on this in two ways. His first strategy is to argue towards the idea mentioned above: our experience of music as expressive already implies a form of appropriate sympathetic response. The latter can be shown to be an ineliminable aspect of what is involved in understanding another human being as having an inner emotional life at all. This understanding – conceived of as essentially empathetical – is an inherent feature of one human being perceiving another’s behaviour. Because that scenario provides the central reference point for our experience of expressiveness in general as something significant, it is also implicit in the latter (Ridley 1995a: 52-3). His second strategy is to argue that our sense of the expressive particularity of music – our sense that a particular instance of expressive music actually succeeds in conveying a *particular* affective state of mind rather than some relatively non-specific form that many different actual states could share – is only properly and fully explained with reference to the role played by our actual sympathetic responses to the music (ibid: 54-5).

Ridley’s first strategy can be seen as advocating what we have previously characterised as ‘strong-weak arousalism’. This follows ‘strong arousalism’ in refusing to treat arousal as a secondary phenomenon arising solely in response to independently

¹⁹ Quoted in Ridley (1995a: 54). This quote comes from an article in which Levinson offers a highly nuanced defence – linked to his version of the persona theory – of the idea that we can differentiate between higher-order emotions expressed in music, in the absence of their typical intentional objects, accompanying cognitive attitudes, or conative implications (1990: 341-57). His position appeals partly to the idea that these emotions can be differentiated by other features, and partly to the idea that our experience of them is informed by how they figure in the wider formal unfolding of musical structures. I find it hard to determine the correctness of his claims, partly because the exact nature of the cognitive character of emotions continues to be the subject of highly complex disputes (see Goldie 2000). At the same time, in an earlier article (Levinson 1982) he puts forward an equally detailed, and in my view highly convincing, account of the nature and value of our emotional responses to music. (See my comments on this in Chapter Two) This already makes reference to our empathetical identification with the music and thus anticipates many aspects of Ridley’s account. Unfortunately lack of space prevents me from discussing these articles in the kind of detail they deserve.

occurring perceptions of expressive qualities in music. However, it also follows ‘weak arousalism’ in insisting on the need for such perceptions to be present as part of the overall experience, of which our musically aroused responses *also* form an essential part. Yet Ridley’s position amounts to something more specific than a general advocacy of the response-dependent character of our perceptions and judgements.²⁰ He seeks to spell out the essential role played by sympathetic responses:

...there are reasons to think that sympathetic response is essential to the experience of expressiveness of any kind. We learn about the states of mind of others by coming to understand their behaviour, how they express themselves, what they mean by what they do, and how their behaviour fits in to the rest of their lives. We get (and need) an idea of what it might be like to be them. Their behaviour affects us. We see someone sad, and we know that their sadness might harm or upset us; we know something of what their sadness consists in. Their sadness fits into our lives, and our responses are part of theirs. There is or there can be among people a kind of community of affect, in which we grasp the states of others in the very act of responding to them and learn something of our own states through the responses they inspire. (ibid: 52-3)

For Ridley, this implies that ‘[o]ur responses and our judgements go together’, and would not be possible if we did not possess an inner life of the kind that, for example, a robot lacks. It is for this reason that if a robot could perceive and respond to expressive signs in a certain recognisably coherent way, they could still never have the distinctive significance for it that they have for us. This is a kind of significance that marks out expressiveness as something quite distinct from the kinds of sign we encounter in the natural world (ibid: 53). ‘Thus’, Ridley concludes, ‘expressiveness is what it is for us just inasmuch as it involves our own affective states; and the recognition of expressiveness (and not merely of one kind of sign among others) is conceptually related to our capacity to feel’ (ibid). Ridley adds an important qualification when he states that he is ‘not claiming that every time we ascribe expressive predicates to musical melisma we do so because we have so responded in some way to the music’. His point is only that if some or most of us had not at some point found it natural to respond in this way to the features of music in virtue of which it resembles human behaviour, these features would never have come to be regarded as

²⁰ Though he also seems sympathetic to a more general view of this kind (see Ridley 1993b, and 1995b, Ch. 2).

expressive at all (ibid: 54). Ridley is then able to claim that his version of complex arousalism avoids the ‘heresy of the separable experience’. This is because the interdependency or conceptual relation linking the experience of sympathetic response to the experience of the music as expressive implies that the former is inseparable from the latter: ‘the experience of sympathetic response... is ineliminably an experience of the music which occasions it’ and so may ‘contribute to the value of the music’ (ibid).

Ridley’s second strategy attempts to add further weight to his conception of how arousalism works in relation to our experience of expressive music, by showing that it can resolve an outstanding issue in musical aesthetics. This concerns the need to explain how ‘pure’ music, in which no narrative or dramatic context is represented, can nevertheless be experienced as expressively conveying felt states of unusual precision.²¹ For Ridley, our sense of the heightened precision of such states comes from the fact that our experience of the music as expressive, which necessarily involves and reflects our actual sympathetic responses, is therefore already bound up with an experienced state that is fully particular. This is the felt state of the listener undergoing these sympathetic responses.

Ridley is, in effect, appealing to the idea that his version of complex arousalism resolves a longstanding paradox concerning the expressive particularity or precision of music and its expressive generality or vagueness, as further evidence of its overall plausibility.²² However, as has already been mentioned, an alternative resolution of this paradox is available which avoids the need to resort to arousalism at all (Guczalski 1999, 2005). This fact surely makes his appeal significantly less persuasive.

What remains is his account of the role played by sympathetic responses in experiencing music as expressive in virtue of its resemblances to behaviour. Within this lies an implication that in responding sympathetically to music as a condition of hearing it as expressive we are already committed to a certain level of imaginative engagement with it. This engagement implies that we perceive it in the same empathetical terms as we would the behaviour of a human being. Hence it becomes natural to construe the expressive evolution of the music over time as conveying psychological changes in the

²¹ Ridley invokes as analogous to ‘pure’ music the example of an actor or mime-artist seen practising expressive gestures outside of any particular theatrical context, who we nevertheless respond to sympathetically because, like us, he is human.

²² This paradox has its origins in the writings of Schopenhauer, and figures prominently in Langer’s approach to the problem of musical expressiveness (as was noted in Chapter One).

state of mind of a fictive persona, as if the music were itself the behavioural expression of this persona.

This first aspect of Ridley's theory may seem to invite the objection lodged by Levinson (1996b: 97), who accuses it of implying that the music's expressiveness is just to be construed as the listener's self-expression. Nevertheless, Levinson embraces Ridley's account as a satisfactory elucidation of a certain kind of heightened empathetical experience of music – one that involves a sense that its expressive character is absolutely particular. This implies that he does not, after all, regard the underlying account of arousalism as entailing an unacceptable implication to the effect that the expressive character of the music is simply defined by the individual listener's affective response. What remains of his objection, then, is the claim that Ridley is conflating a way of experiencing music with maximum emotional involvement with the conditions for experiencing it as expressive at all (ibid). Yet even if this were so, the more general objection would be unwarranted. It is enough that Ridley's account of the relationship between sympathy and perceptions of expressivity makes essential reference to the *communal reciprocity* of such responses and perceptions between persons.²³ Moreover, it does not follow from Ridley's account of the role of sympathetic responses that the content of our expressive perceptions is not also constrained to a significant degree by the particular characteristics of the music in virtue of which it resembles human behaviour.

If there is a problem with Ridley's theory, it must stem from its openly circular explanatory character. As Ridley himself puts it,

Melismatic gestures are the features of a musical work which through sympathetic response are grasped as expressive features; and the expressive attributions made on the basis of sympathetic response are elucidated by appeal back to those melismatic gestures. (Ridley ibid: 56)

The problem with this is not that it is false, but that it does not illuminate our experience of music in the particular kind of way that would defuse the typical objections made to the persona theory (and its related form of complex arousalism) by critics such as Davies. Borrowing a phrase from Wittgenstein, one might say that the theory and its critique simply 'pass one another by'. This is true in two respects. On the one hand

²³ See the reference to 'a kind of community of affect' in the passage from Ridley quoted above.

Ridley is willing to embrace a response-dependent account of what it means to experience anything as expressive. By contrast, for Davies, the starting assumption is that we experience expressive characteristics in the first instance as perceptual features intrinsic to music or behaviour, at a level of construal so literal as to preclude empathetical understanding and sympathetic responses. On the other hand, Davies imposes a strict criterion of aesthetic relevance which would make it incumbent upon the theorist of musical expression to demonstrate that his account is absolutely necessary, just to make sense of wholly uncontroversial aspects of our experience of expressive music. By contrast, Ridley embraces a more catholic set of criteria, according to which relevance to appreciation has been established just when an account succeeds in elucidating some of the richest forms of musical experience we are willing to acknowledge as possible. The implicit assumption is that these are the most important ones, even if they are not a necessary component of everyone's experience of music on each and every occasion.

The third version of the persona theory that I will consider is that proposed by Levinson, who presents his approach as belonging to the same broad category of explanation as those of Kivy and Davies: what he terms '*appearance-of-expression-based views*' (Levinson 1996b: 93). Levinson takes as his point of departure Kivy's contour theory, which he construes as open to three possible interpretations:

One is that a passage is expressive of [an emotion] E iff the passage is seen as resembling in contour behavior characteristic of E; the second is that a passage is expressive of E iff the passage is related to E by either contour resemblance or conventional association or both; and the third is that a passage is expressive of E iff listeners are disposed to animate the passage with emotion E (Levinson 1996b: 106)

According to Levinson, '[t]he first and second proposals... fatally substitute a schedule of primary causes or grounds of musical expressiveness for analysis of the concept of musical expressiveness' (ibid). However, he agrees with the essence of the third interpretation of Kivy's theory, if this is interpreted in the light of his own assertion that having this kind of imaginative experience of the music as animated itself *already* means that we hear the music 'as, or as if it were, personal expression' (ibid).

Levinson contrasts his understanding of the resemblance theory with that of Davies, who construes resemblance in terms of a direct analogy between dynamic characteristics of human behaviour, of the sort which give rise to expressive appearances regardless of any connection to actual expression, and similar dynamic characteristics of music. According to Levinson, this is not sufficient to shed light on why we perceive music as expressive. There are disanalogies between these two phenomena. Dynamic characteristics of human behaviour are not, for the most part, aurally revealed (or, at least, are not aurally revealed in the way that music's characteristics are), so that what exists in the way of a direct analogy is too vague in itself to shed light on what it means to say that we find *music* expressive. Hence the thought that we perceive such an analogy will only be illuminating if our experience of the relevant characteristics of music is taken to already occur against the background of a more specific construal. This construal of music must reflect 'our disposition to interpret it aurally as an instance of personal expression, perceiving the human appearances in the musical ones' (ibid: 103-5). Without this it is hard to conceive of what emotion-characteristics-in-appearances in music could amount to (ibid: 104).

On this basis, Levinson gives a more precise formulation of the position he seeks to defend:

...a passage of music P is expressive of an emotion or other psychic condition E *iff* P, in context, is readily and aptly heard by an appropriately backgrounded listener as the expression of E, in a sui generis, "musical," manner, by an indefinite agent, the music's persona. (ibid: 107)

Levinson adds a number of important qualifications. Firstly, in referring to the *context* in which a passage is heard, he has in mind both the musical context offered by the work as a whole and the broader context pertaining to its style and historical precedents (ibid: 107n). Secondly, being 'readily hearable as personal expression' by listeners with an appropriate background knowledge of the musical style and resources involved should mean being 'aptly hearable' as such. That is, it should mean being hearable as such in a way that reflects a proper awareness of the aesthetic possibilities and norms relevant to an appreciation of the musical style (ibid). Thirdly, in talking about expression 'in a sui generis, "musical." manner', his use of the term 'musical' in

quotes is meant to ‘signal that the music’s persona is not to be thought of as expressing his emotion by musical means in the sense we would have in mind in ascribing that to a person’ (ibid). That is, ‘the persona, in some unspecified way, is manifesting emotion through musical output, but *not* in the manner musically skilled persons normally do’ (ibid). Levinson also takes care to distance his idea of *sui generis* ‘modes of expressing emotion’ from the idea of *sui generis* emotions expressed *by* music, such as are invoked in certain theories criticised by Davies (Davies 1994: 202-3). He also admits that a persona is likely to be predicated of a passage of music rather than of the work as a whole, with the implication that in some cases at least there may be more than one persona ascribed to the music in the course of hearing a work in its entirety (Levinson *ibid*).²⁴

Levinson’s overall approach has several distinctive features. He makes a sharp distinction between two kinds of question. The first asks what factors might be held responsible (as ‘causes’ or ‘grounds’) for our actual experience of music as expressive. The second asks what it must mean for something to count in an internally coherent and aesthetically relevant way as an instance of the *concept* of ‘musical expressiveness’. Levinson believes that this second question should be pursued without reference to possible answers to the first. He states seven desiderata that such a concept should meet, (ibid: 91-2),²⁵ arguing that existing theories fall short of meeting some or all of these while his own preferred characterisation satisfies pretty much all of them.²⁶

²⁴ This possibility of ascribing multiple personae to a single work is taken by Davies to constitute a central flaw in the persona theory, on the grounds that it indicates the impossibility of agreement over exactly what kind of persona should be ascribed (Davies 1997:106-7). Levinson does not seek to argue against this in detail, but suggests that the issue may be resolved differently for different styles and genres, in ways that may be informed by the formal construction and degree of expressive integration of individual works (Levinson 1996: 107n). It is difficult to assess the validity of either Davies’ objection or Levinson’s reply, partly because it is not clear whether the experience of a persona as described by Levinson is sufficiently determinate to support a distinction between single and multiple personae encountered in the course of a single piece of music, or not.

²⁵ These have been reviewed in the Introduction to this study. There is insufficient space to recapitulate them here.

²⁶ Levinson is, in effect, invoking his first desideratum in his criticism of Davies’ resemblance theory. At the same time he takes it for granted that ‘simple arousalist’ accounts fall foul of his third desideratum, and argues that accounts that require us to think of the listener as making inferential judgements fall foul of his fourth. He also holds that ‘imaginative introspectionism’ fails to meet his first three desiderata, and possibly his fourth. I will discuss his criticisms of this last theory in due course.

Levinson's approach therefore consists mainly of argument by elimination.²⁷ Other kinds of account fail, so we are left with the idea that the only plausible account is one that operates along the lines of 'appearance-of-expression-based views': i.e. one that points to a significant sense in which music may be thought of as analogous to human behavioural expression. At the same time, his critique of Kivy, Davies and Scruton suggests that this analogy is only properly illuminated by the notion of 'ready perceivability as personal expression' (ibid: 91), rather than in terms of straightforward resemblances or metaphorical construals. Nevertheless, it would seem that his conception of musical expressiveness has much in common with these theories. Keeping the notion of resemblance in play, Levinson seeks to modify Pratt's dictum that 'Music *sounds* the way emotions *feel*', to say instead that music *sounds like* an alternative, purely musical mode of expression (ibid: 116). He also expresses sympathy for Scruton's idea that we hear more than just expressive *characteristics* in music, such as may resemble human expressions. We do not hear the music as *resembling* expressive human gestures in virtue of such characteristics, but as *containing* the human gestures themselves, where this is something that requires more than mere resemblance if it is to be properly made sense of (ibid: 105).

A major problem for Levinson's theory, however, concerns its internal coherence. It gives a central place to his notion that we hear expressive music as a *sui generis* mode of human expression, but at the same time invokes notions of resemblance or analogy between music and human behaviour. He anticipates and seeks to defuse several potential objections on this score, but his responses are not altogether satisfactory. He begins with the first of three objections that concern the role played in his theory by resemblances between music and human behaviour:

I have proposed that to hear music as expressive of E is, in effect, to hear it *as an expression* of E, or *as if it were an expression* of E.²⁸ And closely

²⁷ However, exactly what is meant by 'elimination' here remains cloudy. For example, Levinson, like Robinson (1994: 21), accepts that our appreciation of music as the fictive expression of a persona can reflect expressive qualities whose perception results from the kind of 'strong arousal' effects and 'imaginative introspectionism' that his own desiderata for the concept of musical expressiveness imply should be ruled out (Levinson 1996b: 114-5).

²⁸ Levinson's juxtaposition of the formulations 'hearing it as' and 'hearing it as if it were' is in part a response to a problem raised by Wollheim (1980: 222-3), who argues that it does not make sense to think that we can experience an artwork counterfactually *as* something that it is not, or could never have been. Instead, we must experience its imagined character as a counterfactual state of affairs represented in the medium, in the manner which he designates with the term 'seeing in' (as distinct from 'seeing as'). Levinson's phrase 'hearing as if it were' thus serves to make clear that he does not accept Wollheim's

related to that is the idea of the music sounding like an expression or manifestation of E... Now, must a passage of music resemble the actual limited behavioural repertoire of bodily expressions of E in order to sound like – or, more crucially, to be distinctively hearable as – a manifestation of E? If it did, that would be an objection to the present account, since clearly much expressive music fails to exhibit such resemblance to any extent. But there is, it turns out, no logical or empirical necessity for that. A passage might cause a listener in a nonconceptually mediated way to have certain subemotional responses typical of E, or it might possess features conventionally associated with E, or it might resemble natural phenomena that are antecedently expressive of E; any or all of these may equally well feed into the overall impression that the music is a manifestation or externalization of E, and compensate for the passage's lack of notable resemblance to behavioural expressions of E (ibid: 116-7).

The second objection Levinson seeks to address is closely related to this:

Some object to the hearability-as-personal-expression account of musical expressiveness because they believe it is incapable of handling the conventional, or non-resemblance-based, contribution to musical expressiveness... But this worry is without foundation. The hearability-as-expression account is not committed to isomorphism between musical shapes and standard human behavioural expressions being the sole cause or ground of a passage's power to induce listeners to hear-as-an-expression-of – or, for that matter, to its being necessarily the most important one. The view is not as such about the mechanisms involved in achieved expressiveness but only about what such attributions of expressiveness fundamentally mean or amount to (ibid: 117).

Meanwhile, the third objection that he anticipates comes from a contrasting direction, since it claims

...that the view cannot deliver the goods precisely because it depends on resemblance at all. The idea is that musical progression or sonic sequence is simply very unlike human behaviour, whether bodily or vocal.²⁹ My response to this is as follows: first, the charge of unlikeness is exaggerated, and overlooks the fact that resemblances are in effect created by, or, less flamboyantly, reside in, the dispositions to connect things perceptually that natural objects and works of art so readily elicit from us; and second, the charge overlooks the way in which gesture in

line of thought here (Levinson ibid: 111-2). It also reflects his sense of uncertainty about whether hearing something as personal expression necessarily involves what he calls a 'pointed' suspension of disbelief or not (ibid: 116n).

²⁹ This objection is raised by Malcolm Budd (Budd 1985a: 132-3).

particular, as Scruton has usefully emphasized, serves as a kind of linking or mediating concept between musical pattern and motion, and the patterns and motions of human beings (ibid: 117-8).

What Levinson's responses to these objections reveal is that while his account emphatically concerns what 'attributions of expressiveness [to music] fundamentally mean or amount to', rather than precise views about 'the mechanisms involved in achieved expressiveness', he is in fact obliged to invoke the latter in several forms in order to make his theory credible. In order to show that his conception of a *sui generis* mode of expression in music is compatible with the resemblance theory, he must commit himself in principle – as his reply to the first objection shows – to the possible grounding of at least some expressive attributions in factors other than resemblance, such as straightforward arousal (in the sense of strong arousal) and/or conventional associations (either of the specific sort described by Callen or of a more general kind). However, he himself has admitted that strong arousalism fails to meet the requirements involved in the idea of relevance to aesthetic appreciation (in particular as expressed in his third desideratum).

At the same time, attributing a significant grounding role to conventional associations threatens to put him in the same position as Callen. Like the latter, he must assume the general availability of an unproblematically shared understanding of how such conventions apply to particular musical works. But a significant number of practitioners of musicological interpretation would dispute this, if only because of their own ongoing hermeneutic disagreements, both about the nature of the role played by historical conventions and about how they should be applied in particular cases. Levinson does not see this as problematic, since he sees his theory as pertaining specifically to 'what it is for *music* to be expressive, rather than *sound sequences* generally, whatever their provenance' (ibid: 108). His own conception of 'music' makes reference to a significant degree of shared background understanding on the part of listeners, much of which may be presumed to involve familiarity with conventions that are unproblematically agreed upon:

That is to say, P's being music – a humanly projected sequence of sounds governed by a sort of broad purpose – is here presupposed. But I would argue, in any event, that non-music sound [sic] cannot be expressive in the sense that music can, because even though it can be

heard-as in various ways there is no prevailing practice or background intentionality underpinning the appropriateness of our doing so, and especially not in the direction of hearing as personal expression. Passages of music in which we perceive expressiveness are understood to be designed sequences of sound that invite hearings-as of various kinds; as a result, much music is in fact expressive, but no nonmusic is, even if we are disposed to hear personal expression in it, because nothing licences our taking nonagentially produced sound in that way. Thus... there is indeed an intentional constraint on expressiveness... It amounts to this. We find P expressive of E in part because it is the sort of thing, that is, music, that has been intended or projected for hearing-as, or construing, in an expressive manner, even if P's having been intended to express E in particular is not a condition of its expressing E (ibid: 108-9).

This may seem persuasive, especially as the sharp distinction between 'music' and 'nonmusic' appeals to the Wittgensteinian idea that our capacity to appreciate the former with an appropriate level of understanding of its norms and structures must necessarily rest on background practices. However, it also suggests that Levinson, like (later) Davies, is committed to invoking a *general* sense of the intentionality of music as a necessary precondition for our appreciating its expressiveness, even while admitting that no *specific* intentions need be ascribed for particular expressive attributions to be made in individual cases. One can only reiterate in response to this the objection to Davies' similar move, which is that invoking 'intentionality' *per se*, i.e. intentionality as a non-specific predicate (since it involves no ascription of *specific* intentions), simply makes no sense. It conflicts with what it means to be capable of discovering that something is a manifestation or product of intentionality at all in the first place. The latter is only coherent as a possibility in the light of the thought that we encounter individual cases for which the ascription of a specific intention is required to make sense of essential features of that particular phenomenon's occurrence. (What needs to be stressed here is that invoking background practices as a constitutive feature of what it means to appreciate art with understanding, and in ways that can be held to normative account, requires us to confront the conditions under which we can acquire an understanding of the background practices themselves. This should impose similar constraints on our understanding of how the practices function to those which, for Wittgenstein, bear on our understanding of the practices that make linguistic meaning possible, and which force us to revise our understanding of linguistic meaning itself in the light of this. In both cases acquiring an understanding of a practice only makes sense because the practice corresponds to certain kinds of situation in which a certain order is

disclosed that *could* not be made sense of in any other way than by invoking the idea of ‘intentionality’ or ‘meaning’. The point is that the *necessity* of this characterisation arises afresh in each and every case, because of the particular, experientiable *form* that a phenomenon takes on when it occurs as part of the practice in question.)

Levinson’s appeal to general conventions pertaining to ‘music’ seems to result in a tautologous claim: that we must hear expressive music in the way he suggests, as that just *is* what it means to hear it as ‘expressive’ and as ‘music’. It also means that he leaves unstated what would count as sufficient grounds for any *particular* attribution of expressiveness to music to have his preferred conceptual form. Hence his account, like Scruton’s, leaves unclear how disputes about such attributions could be settled in individual cases. This becomes especially evident when he seeks to defuse two further objections. The first is that nothing *requires* the listener to imagine a persona (ibid: 118), while the second is that his account overintellectualises our experience of musical expressiveness by implying that the listener must judge that the music is appropriately and naturally perceivable in this kind of way (ibid).

The former objection distils the essence of Davies’ critique (Davies 1997: 101-3) of the persona theory (already mentioned), and pertains to the inseparability requirement (and Levinson’s third desideratum). Levinson’s response is that ‘it may not, indeed, be strictly necessary that the listener so imagine, as long as he *sees* what sort of imagining is prompted by the music’ (Levinson ibid: 118). He also claims that the imaginative hearing-as need not be in the foreground of the musical experience or have any particularly determinate character (ibid). Meanwhile, the second objection leads him to state that ‘a qualified listener simply hears the music in the appropriate emotion-involving way, as an act of emotional expression, thereby normally acquiring without reflection the belief or conviction that the music is readily and aptly heard that way by other qualified listeners’ (ibid). Yet these qualifications mean that once again there is nothing a listener could point to in particular cases, that they would consistently be aware of as part of their musical experience, that would justify their saying that they hear the music in the way Levinson describes, even if they did in fact hear it in that way.³⁰

³⁰ Levinson admits that *knowing* that this is how one is experiencing the music would require a convergence of testimony with others (ibid: 118-9). This might provide a context in which it would be possible to furnish stateable grounds for defending the relevance of hearing a particular piece of music in this way. But since the essence of the *experience*, for Levinson, does not require this knowledge, we

The effect of this is to place Levinson in the same situation as Ridley. The theory in question may be correct, and may even resonate with many of our intuitions,³¹ but its very nature seems to rule out pointing to anything in our actual experience that would convince somebody of its rightness who had not *already* recognised this as the correct characterisation of their experience (e.g. Davies). Hence Davies' critique of the persona theory has not actually been refuted, and a 'standoff' between the two rival perspectives ensues.

Levinson keeps the issue of the nature of our fundamental *concept* of musical expressiveness separate from the issue of what might constitute appropriate grounds for applying such a concept to particular instances of our *experience* of it. This seems to relieve him of the burden of demonstrating that his particular formulation of the former is consistent in principle with a coherent account of the latter. However, in addition to raising the general problem of the 'standoff' just mentioned, it makes it look as if any difficulties one might have with these grounds would have no consequences for his overall conception of musical expressiveness. Yet, as we have seen, in dealing with the first three objections that he anticipates to his account, he is obliged to set out his views on these matters, notably in order to defuse the tension between a resemblance-based account of such grounds and the notion of *sui generis* modes of expression. In so doing he is forced to admit a role for strong arousal of the kind that he himself elsewhere eschews, and to appeal to a potentially controversial – because highly specific – form of generalised conventional understanding of how music's expressive character is intended to be construed.

In his quoted reply to the third of the objections that he anticipates, Levinson seems to be moving towards the view that it is resemblance, after all, that should be viewed as the central element in grounding our individual expressive attributions, but along the sort of lines proposed by Scruton. These may be seen as presupposing something like the concept of 'hearability as expression', in the form of an irreducible analogy between music and human behaviour and gesture. But this only gets his account of the grounds of individual expressive attributions into the same difficulties as Scruton's metaphor-based account. Resemblance itself now depends on some more basic irreducible analogy between music and human behaviour that cannot, apparently,

could not infer anything about our wider experience of expressive music from such a case. Hence this does not rescue his theory from my criticism.

³¹ Especially given the highly convincing description by Levinson (1990: 366-75) of his own experience of certain passages in Mendelssohn's *Hebrides* Overture.

be spelt out in terms that would convince those not yet already persuaded of its perspicacity. Indeed, Levinson seems willing to contemplate the possibility that such an analogy might lack specific grounds of any sort, or at least of any non-imaginary sort. This is revealed by his response to the final objection which he anticipates. According to this objection his theory, in positing the ready hearability of music as a *sui generis* form of expression, requires listeners to ‘know what it would mean for music to be a natural mode of expression’ (ibid: 120), which is something they plainly cannot know if the mode of expression is, in fact, *sui generis*.³² Levinson’s first response is to suggest that the listener need not know what this would amount to, and need ‘only be disposed to posit, in imagination, that music is such a mode’ (ibid). His second, more concessive proposal, is that talk about a *sui generis* mode of expression be replaced by talk about hearing music as ‘personal expression, sort unspecified – or else, personal expressing, *tout court*’ (ibid: 121). Both suggestions reinforce the impression that Levinson’s underlying concept of what it means to attribute expressiveness to music has become too distanced from any recognisable cases of actual human expression to shed real light on our actual musical experience, or on what it means to characterise this experience in expressive terms.

(ii) Imaginative introspectionism

Imaginative introspectionism may be arrived at from two directions. It may be motivated by a positive desire to account for certain features of our experience of expressive music deemed striking, or simply by negative considerations thought to rule out all other accounts as less plausible. Typically, both types of consideration are present. However, the former is perhaps more fully exemplified by the approach of Kendall Walton (1988, 1994), the latter by that of Malcolm Budd (1989b).

For Walton, the fact that a particularly strong sense of intimacy is connected with our experience of music’s expressive characteristics is striking. He reasons that the psychological impact on the listener of any emotional narrative suggested by pure music ought, after all, to be diminished rather than heightened by the latter’s relatively abstract character, leaving the listener more emotionally distanced than would be the case, say, with a staged drama or literary narrative (Walton 1994: 54). Yet, as he notes, the

³² This quote comes from a larger passage quoted by Levinson from an unpublished essay by Hubert Eiholzer, entitled ‘Musical Expression’, which is the source of this line of criticism.

opposite would appear to be the case, and this would seem to call for an explanation that does something other than merely exploring possible analogies between our experience of expressive music and our experience of other, less abstract forms of emotional drama or narrative in art. Walton therefore offers the following proposal:

...music sometimes gets us to imagine feeling or experiencing exuberance or tension ourselves – or relaxation or determination or confidence or anguish or wistfulness. This accords with the idea that music portrays anguish not by portraying behavioural expressions of anguish but more directly, and also with the thought that our (fictional) access to what is portrayed is not perceptual – we imagine introspecting or simply experiencing the feelings, rather than perceiving someone's expressing them. (Walton 1994: 55)

Walton also formulates his proposal in more precise terms than this, which are clearly intended to defuse certain possible objections. He states that

...sometimes a passage imitates or portrays *vocal* expressions of feelings. When it does, listeners probably imagine... themselves hearing someone's vocal expressions. But in other cases they may, instead, imagine themselves introspecting, being aware of their own feelings. Hearing *sounds* may differ too much from introspecting for us comfortably to imagine of our *hearing the music* that it is an experience of being aware of states of mind. My suggestion is that we imagine this of our actual introspective awareness of auditory sensations. (ibid 1988: 359)

Part of the motivation behind Walton's approach thus lies in a sense that the idea that we imagine music to be behavioural expression is inadequate as a general theory of expressiveness, because it could only apply to certain aspects of music or types of music (e.g. vocal music). (This line of reasoning is encountered more fully in Budd's version of the theory.) However, it is also meant to stave off an obvious objection which Walton himself formulates, when he reminds us that '[m]usical experiences are not just experiences caused by music; they are experiences *of* music. We don't merely hear the music and enjoy certain experiences as a result of hearing it' (ibid 1994: 55). His response is to consider the possibility that 'music stimulates imaginings which are in part imaginings about the sounds themselves' (ibid). However he concludes that '[t]his is almost right but not quite. Listeners' imaginings are, in many instances, about their experience of hearing the sounds rather than the sounds themselves' (ibid). Walton tries

to illustrate this point by drawing on an analogy with our experience of pictures. Whereas a verbal description induces the reader to imagine seeing what is described, a picture also ‘induces the spectator to imagine of her actual visual experience of the picture that it is her visual experience of the dragon. One’s seeing of the picture is not just a stimulus but part of the content of one’s imaginative experience’ (ibid). Likewise, he claims, music possessed of a particular emotional quality does not just lead one to imagine that one is undergoing a felt state akin to that quality, but actually induces one to imagine that one’s hearing of the music, one’s auditory experience, is *itself* an experience of the felt state in question (ibid).

This central feature of Walton’s account has, rightly, attracted savage criticism. As Levinson points out, it implausibly requires that the listener divide his attention between maintaining an introspective awareness of his auditory sensations and maintaining a proper attentive focus on the unfolding of the music itself. Meanwhile the very idea of imagining *anything* about our sensations seems implausible anyway, as does the suggestion that the content of such an imagining would consist of identifying the experience of those sensations with an experience of emotions (Levinson 1996b: 94). Moreover, as Levinson points out, Walton’s theory ‘represents expression in music as in effect the expression of the listener’s own, albeit imaginary, feelings. But expressiveness in music... is something we encounter fundamentally as residing “out there,” as existing exterior to our own minds... as belonging to and inhering in *the music*, not in *oneself*’ (ibid).³³ As he also points out, the theory offers no explication of why we hear music as expressive, since it fails to establish any basis for seeing this experience as connected to our central experience of expressiveness, namely as a feature of behavioural expressions of feeling on the part of human beings (ibid: 95). In this respect it clearly fails to meet the criterion of minimal deviation from central cases.

In his version of imaginative introspectionism, Budd begins by laying greater emphasis upon the inadequacy of alternative forms of imagination-based account of

³³ Walton has evidently succumbed to the conceptual fallacy exposed by Wittgenstein, surrounding the use of the term ‘experience’. The thought that this term denotes some *thing* above and beyond the *content* of experience – an internal correlate of an external object – makes it tempting to think that imagining something about what one experiences (e.g. a pictorial image, or a sequence of sounds possessing a certain expressive quality) is also to imagine something about ‘the experience itself’. (Clearly, if such an experience existed above and beyond just its content, then so would an experience *of* this experience, and so on...)

musical expressiveness.³⁴ He calls our attention to his own prior arguments (Budd 1985a: 121-150) against the idea that ‘emotionally expressive music is experienced as if, make-believedly, it is the expression of someone’s emotion in sounds’ (Budd 1989b: 134). Referring to this same idea, he tells us that his main aim was

...to show that it does not capture a significant conception of the musical expression of emotion, since it does not apply to much of the music that we experience as expressive of emotion and that is valuable to us because we experience it as expressive of emotion. The thought of emotion being expressed from someone’s body is not partly constitutive of my attitude to the main portion of this music: when I hear emotion in music my relation to the emotion is not mediated by the idea of sounds emanating from a person’s body in consequence of his emotional condition. (ibid)

These arguments are distinct from the line of criticism pursued by Davies against the persona theory. In contrast to Davies, Budd does not seek to completely dismiss the idea that we might, on some occasions at least, find it appropriate to hear expressive music as if it were a behavioural expression of emotion. His aim is rather to demonstrate that this idea, even when developed in more highly specific versions, explains little if anything about why we *value* music for its expressive character, and that it cannot readily be applied to many elements within the music that we experience as expressive.

Budd considers three possible variants, all of which he links to the more specific idea that we hear music as vocal expression. Firstly, we imagine the music to be a voice expressing an actual person’s sadness; secondly we imagine the music to be a voice whose intrinsically expressive qualities are identified with the expressive character of the music; thirdly, we imagine the music to be something that is not a voice, or any other form of human bodily manifestation of expressive qualities or expressed states, but which nevertheless shares with these those qualities in virtue of which they are heard as expressive. (These are qualities that can also be experienced independently of whether they belong to the voice or its non-vocal behavioural equivalent or not.) The first of these ideas is easily recognisable as the standard form of the persona theory

³⁴ Budd’s account here predates his ‘minimal account’ of expressiveness (discussed in Chapter One), which appeals to the idea of a resemblance between dynamic qualities of music and our experiences of undergoing episodes of feeling. In that later version, various possible forms of make-believe experience are also considered, but the implication is that they presuppose this more basic resemblance. However, as this ‘minimal’ account has already been found to be unsatisfactory, we can assume that it will not offset any objections that arise in connection with his version of imaginative introspectionism.

itself, while the second and third both seem to roughly correspond to Davies' notion of emotion-characteristics in appearances, with the difference that in one case but not the other an explicit reference to the human, behaviourally implicated character of the bearer of the qualities is still made.

Budd seeks to persuade us that these second and third variants offer nothing beyond the standard persona theory, while insisting that the latter is itself problematic. In his view, neither the second nor the third variant explain the significance of the musical expression of emotion, meaning both its value and why the listener is moved by it (Budd 1985b: 141). For Budd, the thought that a piece of music reminds us of a sad voice because it possesses the *features* that make the voice sad tells us nothing about why it should matter to us (ibid: 144). Moreover, invoking the idea that such an experience may evoke empathetical responses that prompt us to feel sadness cannot resolve the problem, since he takes this to amount to a form of the heresy of the separable experience (ibid). The first of these points is revealed as reflecting a more fundamental objection, when he subsequently argues that even where we do hear the music make-believable as if it were the vocal expression of a person, this *still* explains nothing of its significance or value.³⁵ However, his second objection here seems to have been defused in principle by Ridley's arguments, examined earlier in this chapter, which make clear that arousalism can avoid heresy since it need not appeal directly or exclusively to music's causal capacity to arouse responses. This is because normative grounds for the appropriateness of responding to it can be found in the idea that hearing anything as expressive already presupposes hearing it (more or less directly) with reference to a human being whose states could be expressible through it, and who is thereby implicitly present as an appropriate intentional object for empathetical and sympathetic reactions.

At the same time, many of Budd's objections to the standard persona theory fail to survive closer examination. For a start, he focuses exclusively on ways in which music could be heard imaginatively with reference to either the voice or its distinctive qualities, as he holds that 'sounds expressive of emotion issue from human beings only vocally' (ibid: 134). This is not correct, even if vocal utterance *is* the principal means that we employ to express ourselves in sound.³⁶ This is significant because one of

³⁵ I will examine this more fundamental objection, and how it might be defused, in the next chapter.

³⁶ For example, we can bang a table to express degrees of anger, and so on. Moreover, acknowledging the extent to which behaviour inadvertently reveals emotional states even when aimed at some unrelated goal,

Budd's aim is to diminish the credibility of *any* kind of appeal to a link between music's expressive significance as something that contributes to its artistic value, and the significance associated with the human voice itself as a medium for expressive behaviour. First he argues that even when music is *intended* to resemble vocal expression, its stylised character means that it does not do so to any great extent (ibid: 132). Secondly, he argues that even if it *did* do so, it would not imply that one necessarily also heard it make-believedly as if it actually *were* vocal expression, and conversely, hearing it in that way would not mean that one had perceived any particularly striking resemblances to vocal expression (ibid: 132).³⁷

Implicit in this is the idea that there are therefore no general grounds that we could appeal to in order to justify the idea that we *should* hear *any* particular music this way – something which has, indeed, emerged as a weak point in the persona theories already discussed. Yet if we resist the temptation to construct this comparison exclusively with reference to the voice as a defining instance of human bodily expression, it is not clear that these claims about the lack of a significant correlation between resemblance to, and hearability as, bodily expression still hold. For example, admitting the *full* range of forms of hearable bodily expression (i.e. not just vocal ones) alerts us to a fact ignored by Budd. This is that the expressive qualities of many of these forms are only heard as such because they manifest the expressive qualities of a person's bodily *movements*, much as *stylised* musical utterances, in contrast to ordinary vocal expressions, gain in expressive character through their capacity to engender an experience of musical motion.

These arguments lead Budd to his main point, which is that even if someone created a piece of music that reproduced the salient features of actual vocal expression in music as fully as was possible, so that the strongest grounds conceivable existed for hearing it make-believedly as an instance of such expression, this would be no guarantee of its artistic *value* (ibid: 132-3). He concludes from this that hearing music as if it were human vocal expression fails to shed light on the value of the experience of expressive music to us, and so is not useful as an account of the nature of this experience.

we find many situations where *non*-vocal behaviour can be heard as expressing a state of mind through its sounding form, as when a person is *heard* pacing impatiently, scratching frantically, knocking tentatively, marching sombrely...

³⁷ Once again, these are relatively fundamental objections. I will consider them in more detail in the next chapter.

However, even if we did accept the abovementioned assumptions of Budd about the form that the connection between expressive music and human bodily expression must take if it is to provide a basis for hearing music as make-believe expression, such a judgement would be premature. As Walton points out:

Budd is quite right to observe that “the mere fact that a set of sounds is for someone make-believedly the vocal expression of an emotion is... not sufficient to endow it with artistic value for him”; much more does indeed need to be said. But as grounds for summary dismissal of this fact playing a significant role in musical value it is clearly inadequate. Sadness is important in our lives. A significant connection between a musical work and sadness is a promising step toward an explanation of why the work also is important to us. (Walton 1988: 364n).

For Budd, this thought leaves only the idea of a more direct form of make-believe experience of emotional states conveyed by the music – one that makes no reference to the idea of such states being expressions of anybody or of their being expressive characteristics of human behaviour. Nevertheless, this still allows for several possible variants: we might imagine that the music *itself* simply *is* the person undergoing the states that it conveys expressively, rather than corresponding merely to their behaviour, or that the music corresponds to an experience of undergoing the felt states which it conveys – an experience that may be ascribed either to an indefinite person or to the listener himself.³⁸ Budd opts for the idea that we imagine our experience of the music to be an experience of a felt state, and argues that such an experience of undergoing a feeling can only be coherently thought of as something we *hear* if the experience of undergoing the feeling is ascribed to the same person as the experience of hearing the music, so that my *hearing* the music is identified with my undergoing the felt state (Budd *ibid*: 134).³⁹

³⁸ The first possibility is pursued by Trivedi (2001), and seems to legitimise talk of encountering a persona ‘in’ or ‘as’ music, but not talk about encountering their behaviour. Yet it raises the obvious question of what it could mean to encounter another person without encountering any specific behavioural manifestation of their presence – something that is surely impossible to explicate given the fact that, short of encounters with ghosts, we do not encounter other people as living, feeling beings without also encountering their behaviour.

³⁹ Like Ridley, Budd claims that his preferred version has the merit of explaining the expressive particularity of music. But as with Ridley, the force of the claim is dissipated by the fact that an alternative explication has been offered by Guetzalski (1999, 2005) that requires no such appeal to either arousal or make-believe.

The problem is that Budd is forced here to appeal to conjectures about the relative coherence of various forms of make-believe experience that are far removed from anything we experience in literal terms, and from anything that has a reliable public correlate in our ways of revealing our listening habits to one another. This means that even if we put aside criticism of his arguments against other positions, and waive the objections levelled against Walton (many of which seem just as applicable here), his theory appears to operate in terms too nebulous to count as genuinely illuminating.

Another difficulty is that, as Budd admits, such a theory makes it difficult to see what the grounds might be for differentiating appropriate cases of the make-believe experience from inappropriate ones, since the idea that such a putatively private process is constrained by strict rules or conventions is implausible. As Levinson points out, this only seems to leave room for an appeal to the thought that the music *induces* the listener to hear the music in this kind of way, but that is to make Budd's theory fall foul of his own notion of the heresy of the separable experience (Levinson 1996b: 96). Anyway, Budd himself accepts that ascribing the make-believed experience to the *listener* is not a necessary feature of the experience itself (Budd *ibid*: 135). It is perhaps for these reasons that he later moves in the direction of a more minimalistic position. According to this, only the underlying idea of the make-believe position is retained, to the effect that 'emotionally expressive music is designed to encourage the listener to imagine the occurrence of experiences of emotion' (*ibid*), without specifying how this is brought about or whose experiences of emotion they are. But as Levinson points out, this idea is so vague as to be entirely compatible with an advocacy of the persona theory as well (Levinson 1996b: 96-7).

Chapter Five. Performance

The investigation carried out so far suggests that none of the accounts considered up to this point can be regarded as entirely satisfactory. In some cases the theory put forward, though internally coherent as an account of how we might come to experience certain aspects of music as expressive in certain ways, fails to do justice to the range of our actual musical experiences and responses.¹ Such theories are not necessarily wrong: it could, of course, just be the case that most of our experiences and responses *have* no legitimate role to play in our critical, aesthetic appreciation of music. But even allowing for that possibility, this is a conclusion that few (except Hanslick) would wish to embrace, unless confronted by the certainty that all other more promising explanations had been found wanting. It therefore prompts us to ask whether an alternative account can be found.

In other cases, the theory is internally coherent, but highly uneconomical. This may be because it requires us to invoke a highly specific or specialised form of musical listening (which may then exclude an unnecessarily large number of people's experiences of music, or may conflict with our intuition that our *basic* experience of music as expressive is immediate and non-inferential in character).² Alternatively, it may be uneconomical because it requires us to embrace controversial theoretical commitments not essentially related to music.³ Once again, the theories are not necessarily wrong, but their negative implications for the role that our actual experiences of expressive music could play in appreciation still prompt us to ask whether all alternative accounts have, in fact, been exhausted.

In yet another group of cases, though, the theories *are* internally incoherent – at least as a defence of the *aesthetic* relevance of expressiveness (i.e. its relevance to critical appreciation). This is because their essential character places them at odds with one or more of the principal constraints identified here as bearing on the latter issue.⁴

¹ Notable here are the various forms of behavioural resemblance theory, and the strong arousalism proposed in slightly different forms by Meyer and Madell. Radford's appeal to intrinsically expressive characteristics of music, treating these as analogous to colours, may also fall into this category.

² Examples of this are theories, such as Callen's (and to an extent Kivy's and Goodman's), that appeal excessively to the listener's awareness of historically specific conventions as to how the music's expressive significance should be interpreted, as a basis for invoking associations either with dramatic or narrative forms, or with expressive human appearances themselves.

³ E.g. a complete theory of mental representation, as in Addis.

⁴ Matravers' version of arousalism and Walton's version of imaginative introspectionism would seem to fall into this category, in failing to meet the inseparability requirement. The idea of direct resemblances to our introspectively available experience of felt states, proposed by Langer and Budd, also does so, in

Finally, there are theories that do not *necessarily* contravene the essential constraints on aesthetic relevance that have served as a reference point throughout this study so far, and which also do not appear to be undesirable as anything other than theories of last resort (on the grounds that they lack inclusivity or economy). However, they are problematic because their very nature makes it impossible to point to grounds in actual musical experiences that would justify them in ways that do not already presuppose acceptance of the theory in question. All the theorist can do in such circumstances is give a description of his experience of particular pieces of music. He must then hope that the reader will find a sufficiently strong echo in this of his own experience to engender acceptance of the terms used to describe the experience, even where these involve invoking notions of a fictive construct such as a persona. As we have seen, this opens up the possibility of two groups of people, each of which subscribes to a theory of musical expressiveness ('pro-' and 'anti-' the idea of a persona, respectively), and each of which finds their theory to be validated by their particular way of experiencing music.⁵

Accounts falling into the first two categories prompt us to ask whether there is, in fact, a more inclusive and economical account available. On the other hand, accounts in the third category can be ruled out – at least insofar as we are explicitly concerned with expressiveness as it relates to the critical appreciation of music as something valued aesthetically for being, amongst other things, expressive. This suggests that the most promising possibilities would seem to lie either in locating a hitherto unexplored basis for an account, or in seeking to defuse the standoff that exists between advocates and opponents of the persona theory. In the remainder of this chapter, I will explore both of these possibilities.

As far as the standoff between advocates and opponents of the persona theory is concerned, there seems to be a straightforward choice. One possibility is that grounds can, after all, be found for invoking the notion of a persona. In that case a more full-blooded, complex arousalist account of our responses will seem more plausible, given the kind of intentional object that music can then be thought of as furnishing (i.e. as the fictive human behavioural expression of a persona to whom we can attach psychological

virtue of the fact that it seems to rule out any form of normative constrainability in principle: at least, it does so given a Wittgensteinian understanding of the publicly constituted character of shared forms of normative understanding. Hence it conflicts with the fact that we do appear to possess a significant degree of agreement about which expressive descriptions are appropriate to particular cases of music and which are not.

⁵ This is a problem not only for persona theorists, but also for Scruton's theory.

and behavioural predicates). The other possibility is that such grounds cannot be found. In that case only a narrowed range of emotional responses to music can be thought of as relevant to its appreciation.

One theorist who claims to have surmounted this issue is Ridley (forthcoming), who argues that what separates advocates and opponents of the persona theory is, at bottom, a disagreement about the role played in our expressive ascriptions by references to the *bearer* of the expressive qualities in question. Do we, he asks, in principle ascribe expressive qualities to something because we first construe the object of our attention as a suitable bearer of such qualities (i.e. a person, human form, etc.)? Or do we construe the object of our attention as a suitable bearer of such qualities just because we have already perceived the qualities themselves? If the latter is correct, then we can also predicate these qualities of an object independently of any further, imaginative construal of it as a more typical kind of bearer of those same qualities. This in turn would imply that there is no necessity for construing expressive music in terms of a persona to make sense of the fact that we hear it as expressive at all. Conversely, if the former position holds, then we cannot do so, so such a necessity is, after all, implied (ibid: 3-4).

Ridley rejects the terms of this disagreement. He argues that it is illusory to think that there might be a way of construing this relation that would be correct *in principle*, for music *in general*. He points out that both advocates and opponents of the persona theory share a willingness to invoke highly general facts about the cultural background to our experience of music as a basis for claiming the appropriateness of one or other of these ways of understanding the relation between expressive qualities and the bearer of those qualities. In so doing, they neglect to say anything specific about what it is that is, in fact, the bearer of those qualities. This, according to Ridley, takes the debate about personae in music into an area of vague speculation. This is similar to the vagueness encountered when a similar discussion is had about the relation between expressive qualities and the construal of the bearer of those qualities, when what is discussed is as far removed from the central cases of human concern as, for example, a willow tree. In such cases, Ridley claims, there is simply no general principle that can be invoked for deciding what counts as the right basis for discerning and attributing expressive qualities to a bearer (That is, there is no clear basis for determining whether or not this need involve a prior construal of the bearer itself in anthropomorphic terms). This, for Ridley, is because there is no principled explanation of what it means to perceive something like a *tree* as having expressive qualities of the sort centrally

associated with human behaviour (whether construed as expression or merely as expressive appearance). His conclusion is that both advocates and opponents, in seeking to make general claims about musical expressiveness in this regard, end up in a similar situation. This is because an entirely *general* conception of music as a cultural phenomena brings us no closer than does the example of the willow tree to a sense of what it means to experience music as expressive in terms that connect up with how we experience behaviour as expressive (ibid: 10-11).

Ridley surely has a point here. Nevertheless, the value of his alternative proposal for continuing the discussion about how our experiences of musical expressiveness could be construed as relevant to appreciation is less clear. He claims that ‘any prospect of philosophical progress in this area [now] depends precisely upon... an engagement that pays proper critical attention to the character of particular pieces of music’ (ibid: 11). He contrasts his experience of two pieces of music. One of these he finds to be such that it does not benefit at all from being heard as expressive with reference to a persona (even though it *can* be heard in this way). The other, in his judgement, does do so and, indeed, therefore *must* be heard in this way to be fully appreciated. Disregarding certain other possible explanations for these differences – the examples are chosen to exclude these other possible factors – he finds that in the case of this pair of works a clear explanation for the difference is available. It is to be found in the fact that while expressiveness is fairly incidental to the value of the former work, it figures centrally in the aesthetic value of the latter, so that the fuller experience afforded by hearing the music with reference to a persona is naturally more relevant in this case. Ridley takes this as exemplifying the need to address the character of individual musical works before, rather than in the light of, embarking on any attempt at a general theoretical account of how expressiveness works in music (ibid: 11-14).

This seems reasonable. However, in invoking his own experience of listening to these works, Ridley is still obliged in each case to point to certain uncontroversial features of the music to lend credibility to his claims.⁶ This is because he still has to convince *us* that he is not offering a merely anecdotal record of his own listening experiences, but is instead pointing to the kind of differences that we, too, should expect to encounter as significant in *our* various musical experiences as well. The implication is that his (and our) critical claims about actual experiences of particular works are still

⁶ That is, features uncontroversial to both of the existing camps – i.e. those who would deny the relevance of the persona in both cases, and those who would insist on it in both cases.

normatively constrainable in the kind of way that permits them to figure in critical discussion of any value the music has in virtue of its expressive qualities. This must still be so even if they are held to stand prior to any general theoretical explication of the nature of those qualities.⁷

This suggests that there are, after all, more basic features of music, or at least features shared by certain types of music, or certain recurrent phenomena in music, to which we can point in order to lend normative credibility to claims about the nature of our experience of musical expressiveness as it occurs in particular musical encounters. In that case, it is surely incumbent upon the theorist to try to spell out what these might be. If this is correct, then the starting point for an investigation of musical expressiveness may not be so much particular musical works, but rather *particular kinds of musical phenomenon* that we encounter across different works and, indeed, across different kinds of work – and even in music that does not take the form of a work at all.⁸

In the remainder of this dissertation I will explore some ways in which this kind of approach to the problem of musical expressiveness – one that might be more precisely characterised as ‘piecemeal’ than ‘particularist’ – might yield significant results for our understanding of how a wide range of musical phenomena come to be heard and appreciated as expressive.⁹

My account will be ‘piecemeal’ in three respects. Firstly, it is my intention throughout to only focus on certain aspects of music: namely, those that involve some form of succession of continuously sustained definite pitches of the kind typically found

⁷ Otherwise he could not claim to have made any significant advance in the standoff, since he would be open to the accusation of just asserting that this is how we ought to experience this or that particular piece of music on the basis of the fact that this is how *he* happens to experience it. This would reproduce the stipulative aspect of the theories he criticises, only with reference to claims about particular works rather than music in general.

⁸ Not to embrace this conclusion would be to assume that the only alternative to a completely generalised understanding of musical expressiveness is a completely particularised perspective on individual instances of it. This would conflict with the ideal of normative constrainability, thus suggesting that not just some but all of our attempts to reach agreement about the value of expressive music are futile. Since we exist in a culture where such attempts play a significant role, this is surely only attractive as a position of last resort.

⁹ What I understand by the term ‘piecemeal’ here could be more fully spelt out by comparing the role that models of particular aspects of music or forms of music making should play in our understanding of music in general to the role that language games play in the later Wittgenstein’s approach to investigating language. However, there is insufficient space here to elaborate the implications of adopting this approach to aesthetic issues. Briefly, then, I intend my account of our experience of certain aspects of music to serve as what Wittgenstein calls a ‘perspicuous representation’ (*Übersicht*) (Wittgenstein 1953: §122). This is something designed to throw into relief particular recurrent features of music – both those that fit with the model and those that do not – without implying that we have gained access to a unified perspective on the totality of our musical experience.

in melody. Hence the account does not claim to shed light on the expressive qualities of individual harmonies, of purely rhythmic aspects of music, or of any other aspects of music that do not involve this phenomenon.¹⁰ Secondly, I will re-examine the issue of expressive *vocal* music's relationship to the human voice, in the light of the thought that the more general background concept of music that normally provides the context for understanding this should itself be interpreted in a different way. Thirdly, I will relate these specific aspects or areas of music to a consideration of what it means to hear and appreciate it as performed by human beings in ways that constitute an expressive interpretation of the music.

My overall aim here is twofold: to first resolve some important outstanding objections to both resemblance-based and persona-based accounts, and to then arrive at an alternative basis for defusing the standoff between advocates and opponents of the persona theory. The objections I have in mind here are those raised by Budd (1985a: 148-9 and 1995: 131). These are aimed at theories that claim that we hear music as expressive with reference to the human voice (as we encounter it outside of music), either in virtue of resemblances to ordinary vocal utterances or because we imagine that the music is itself an instance of such utterances, or is analogous to them. Since reference to the voice arguably plays an essential role in the most plausible versions of both persona-based accounts and the resemblance-based accounts that opponents of the persona theory tend to advocate, the credibility of both sides is undermined if the objections are not defused.¹¹

In defusing such objections, it should become clear that the grounds have been established not only for rehabilitating a certain account of musical expressiveness, as this applies to vocally performed music, but also for invoking facts about the *performance* of expressive music as relevant to our appreciation of its *expressive* character. This latter point is important for two reasons. Firstly, I will argue that it allows for the account of musical expressiveness developed specifically in connection

¹⁰ My view is that individual harmonies are intrinsically expressive, and engage our responses as such, along the lines proposed by Radford: i.e. in the same way as colours are (see Chapter Three). On the other hand, I take pure rhythm to be expressive through strong arousal, and as such at odds with the notion of aesthetic relevance. I do not seek to defend these claims here. This is not only because of lack of space, but also because these features of music are usually embedded in the kinds of richer musical context which I do seek to address here.

¹¹ In Chapter One I argued, with reference to Ridley's account of the resemblance theory, that vocal melisma should be viewed as more central to such an account than dynamic melisma. In Chapter Four I argued that a persona account that treats 'expression in music' as entirely *sui generis* ceases to be genuinely explanatory: such an account must therefore contain some reference to existing forms of expression, e.g. vocal utterance.

with vocal music to be extended to cover non-vocal music. Secondly, in the conclusion to this study, I will argue that it provides a basis for resolving the standoff between proponents and opponents of the persona theory.

For purposes of clarity, the remainder of this chapter will be divided into four sections. In the first I examine the basis for the objections that are sometimes made to the idea that we hear music with reference either to the human voice or to how it is performed. These objections mainly appeal to the intuition that music is a quintessentially non-representational art, so this itself calls for examination. In the next I argue that such intuitions need not conflict with theories of musical expressiveness that invoke an extra-musical understanding of the human voice as an expressive medium. (This is because there is a level of description embedded in our experience of music at which the phenomenon of voice as it appears in expressive vocal music, and the phenomenon of voice as it appears in expressive human behaviour, are ineliminably connected in that they are, logically speaking, one and the same.) In the third section I then argue that an appreciation of music as performed in ways that constitute an expressive interpretation requires us to invoke this same level of description as an essential component of our understanding and appreciation of the music as a whole. (This is supposed to further undermine the claim that intuitions about music's abstract character preclude us from hearing music in general with reference to the voice. The point here is to try to show that if that were so, then the same intuitions would also preclude hearing and appreciating music as expressively interpreted in the way that we do.) In the final section, I argue that the ineliminable logical connection linking our experience of expressive aspects of vocal music to the idea of the human voice as an extra-musical phenomenon should in fact be understood in the following way: as a connection between the music and the actual human voices *literally* manifested through the music in virtue of their role in its execution. (This is supposed to provide part of the grounds for extending the account of musical expressiveness to include not just vocal music but instrumental music as well. It also provides the starting point for a reconsideration of the standoff connected with the persona theory, and this is the subject of the ensuing conclusion.)¹² The key point of my approach is that it seeks to give more

¹² Although the account does not claim to be relevant to music that is not, in fact, performed by human beings, many of the points raised might well be extendable to cover such music, simply by arguing that we hear such music *as if* it were performed. Indeed, if the performed character of a widespread body of music does turn out to ground many aspects of our experience of it as expressive, this would support the idea that other music is also heard and appreciated as expressive in this way, in at least some respects.

specific consideration to *what* it is (in music) that we experience and construe as expressive, or as being heard as if it were expressive behaviour – i.e. *what* it is that we take to be the actual bearer of expressive qualities in music – at the level of our most basic and literal encounters with it. My central claim is that such encounters already involve a characterisation of that bearer as something that is less remote from central cases of human behavioural expression than is normally assumed to be the case.

(i) The Non-Representational Character of Music

It is often held that what is distinctive about music is that it tends, more than any other art form, to be non-representational or abstract in character. This thought can then be used as a basis for claiming that it is inappropriate to think that we hear some or all expressive music with reference to the extra-musical idea of a human voice, or with reference to facts about its being performed by human beings, since this conflicts with the inseparability requirement. My aim is to argue that even if the intuition is correct, it lacks such implications.¹³ In my view, vocally executed expressive music constitutes a kind of case whose particular characteristics mean that no such conflict exists. My argument will be based on a consideration of the differences between the kinds of vocalising we encounter in music and those which we encounter in everyday human utterances. It will concentrate on the relations between musical singing and the more basic forms of vocalising that it presupposes on the one hand, and speech and non-verbal extra-musical utterance on the other.

It is normally assumed – and, in a sense, surely rightly – that our most basic *musically* significant experience is of a series of sounding forms and their properties that we attend to for their own sake. We are not interested in the sound that a violinist produces in the context of an encounter with a piece of music being performed *because* this sound happens to be the sound produced by a certain kind of observable movement of the player's body, or *because* it is the sound that a particular human construction, called a violin, happens to make when stroked or plucked in certain ways. (In either case, a more exhaustive perceptual experience of the event or object would be available through other means.) Evidently, what we are interested in – even when we attend to music in the context of a live (or recorded) musical performance – is something that

¹³ The idea that experiencing music as pure or abstract is more central to an understanding of how we appreciate music in general than other ways of experiencing it is challenged by Ridley (2004). However, for the sake of argument I will accept that idea here.

pertains essentially to our encounter with the sounds themselves (and any higher-order phenomena that supervene on them). It is an experience that is defined exclusively by what our encounter with these audible phenomena makes available to us.

For this reason, it is not surprising that many theorists have embraced the idea that pure music tends by its very nature in the direction of an *abstract* art, in a sense comparable to that more commonly invoked when talking about abstract as distinct from representational painting. One way of characterising this tendency is by pointing to music's distinctive character as an art of *sound*. For example, as Walton points out, there are good reasons for thinking that, as a sound-based art, music lends itself more readily to functioning in this way than visual media:

I suspect that... the fact that in music abstraction is so often considered normal and representation requires justification, while in painting the reverse is true, has something to do with two significant disanalogies between vision and hearing: In the first place, vision is more effective than hearing as a means of identifying particulars, as a source of *de re* rather than mere *de dicto* knowledge... Secondly, sounds are thought of as standing apart from their sources more easily than sights are, as objects of perception on their own, independent of the bells or trains or speech which might be heard by means of them. A sight is nearly always the sight *of* something, in our experience; a sound can just be a sound. (Walton 1988: 352)

A second aspect to Walton's characterisation of the abstractness of music seeks to show that even when it is representational it is so in a way that is more inherently abstract than is the case with visual art. He claims that in hearing music as representing other things we do not make believe that this hearing is also specifically a *hearing* of what is represented, whereas in the case of visual representation, we do always imagine that our experience of what is represented is a specifically *visual* one (ibid: 358-9).

Another theorist who also seeks to spell out what might be involved in hearing and appreciating music as an abstract art is Budd, who, while admitting that music is not *necessarily* always non-representational, nevertheless sees it as being distinguished by the poverty of its representational capacities. For this reason and others,¹⁴ he finds it illuminating to consider what it might mean to hear and appreciate music from a perspective that treats it as an essentially abstract art form. He begins by considering the

¹⁴ Notably the prevalence in the Western art music tradition of the idea of 'absolute music' as the highest or purest form of expressive achievement in music.

idea of abstraction in art generally, which he holds can be understood in both a stricter and a looser sense:

In its most exclusive sense a work of art is abstract to the extent that it 'represents' nothing, or makes no reference to anything, outside itself: it introduces nothing from the world external to it as its subject; it is 'about' nothing other than itself or what it contains; in consequence, its appreciation does not require that its experience should be informed by concepts whose primary application is to the outside world in the way that the experience of literature, drama, sculpture and representational painting is so informed. (Budd 1995: 127)

According to Budd,

[M]usic is at heart abstract in this strong sense. For the core of musical understanding – of hearing music with understanding – is the experience of what I shall call the intramusical meaning of a musical work, that is, the work's audible musical structure, the musically significant relations... that obtain between the sounds and silences that compose the work... [M]usic is fundamentally abstract in the sense that, whatever other kinds of 'meaning' it may have – semantic, representational, expressive – it has them only in virtue of its intramusical meaning... This purely musical meaning is a meaning that the work has in abstraction from any meaning that accrues to it in virtue of a relation in which it stands to anything else... (ibid: 127-8).

Yet, as Budd admits, such a strong notion of music's abstractness threatens to rule out *any* acknowledgement of its expressive characteristics, and thus to trivialise its artistic significance. He therefore endorses a looser definition of music's abstractness along the following lines:

I propose to regard music as 'abstract' in so far as its appreciation requires neither the grasp of any thought-content of its constituent sounds (as with verbal music) nor any awareness of any extra-musical (or otherwise perceptible) state of affairs or object that its constituent sounds stand to in a similar relation to that in which a picture stands to the visible state of affairs it depicts or a sculpture to what it is a sculpture of... When we listen to music we do not understand it as language... and the experience of music we are interested in is one in which we do not hear it as a representation of the perceptible world outside of music. (ibid: 128-9)

Like Walton, Budd also seeks to clarify our sense of music's abstractness by arguing that even when it *is* representational, it is capable of being so in a way that is distinct from anything that visual art is capable of. His claim is that there is a (relatively formal) sense in which music that is representational can nevertheless be fully grasped, in terms of its musical structure, without reference to its representational content, whereas no equivalent possibility exists in relation to our grasp of the pictorial structure of visual art forms when they are being employed representationally (ibid: 130-1).

For Budd, these considerations suffice to show that the persona theory of musical expressiveness is incompatible with a conception of music as abstract, and for him this apparently counts as evidence against the idea that such a theory could be accepted as an essential part of any basic or minimal theory of musical expressiveness (such as is proposed, for example, by Levinson):

If instrumental music is thought of as being expressive of emotion in virtue of the fact that it is designed to sound like a human voice expressing that emotion, and if it is intended that it should be heard *as resembling* such a voice, or *as if it were* such a voice; or if expressive music is intended to be heard as a *sui generis* bodily means of direct sound production; then in that respect, even though the idea of emotion is imported into the experience of the music, the music is not to be heard as abstract. For the idea of emotion is introduced only through the conception of an audible event in the 'external world', namely a human voice or 'voice', that the music 'represents'. (ibid: 132)

Given that Budd offers no separate account of how we would experience *vocal* music as expressive, in the absence of any accompanying verbal or dramatic context (as in vocalise), we may reasonably assume that his reference to instrumental music is intended to encompass all forms of 'pure' or 'absolute' music. Yet this surely constitutes a potential omission. It assumes that nothing more needs to be said, as far as the idea that we hear music as expressive by hearing it with reference to the human voice is concerned, to do justice to those cases where, independently of any verbal or dramatic context (of the sort provided in word-settings or opera), we are *in fact* encountering a human voice. (And this is the case whenever the music is vocally executed by the human beings performing it.)

Budd's position seems to imply that identifying the expressive characteristics of the music with the expressive characteristics of the actual voice(s) we hear would, in

such circumstances, still be at odds with a conception of music as, in some core sense, abstract. The motivation for this would be his insistence that ‘the idea of emotion is introduced only through the conception of an audible event in the “external world”, namely a human voice or “voice”, that the music “represents”’. Yet in the case just mentioned treating the experience of the music as one that involves a representational content seems counter-intuitive. This is because what is characterised as the content of the representation is what we would literally experience the music as being anyway, were it to be the case that in attending to it as an abstract art we were permitted to let this experience be informed by our awareness of the *actual* conditions under which it was brought into existence (i.e. human vocal performing). This raises an important question. Let us suppose that the need to make sense of our appreciation of music as expressively interpreted in performance requires us to attend to music in ways that are informed by our knowledge of how it is actually produced (in the world). Let us also suppose that this occurs in such a way that such an appreciation (and therefore the knowledge it requires) is deemed relevant in principle to our experience and appreciation of the music *itself*. In such circumstances, is it still reasonable to think that hearing vocal music as expressive through hearing it with reference to the idea of a voice must involve hearing it as a *representation* in music of the voice, rather than just hearing it as what it is? Although the hypothetical conditions that form the basis for this question have yet to be shown to apply to our actual encounters with music, it seems that the answer must surely be no, unless other reasons can be adduced for not deeming such knowledge relevant.

One such reason might lie in the thought that our experience of an artwork is only legitimately informed by contextual considerations when the latter correspond to conditions that have to be fulfilled for the work to possess the experientiable form that it has.¹⁵ If this were to exclude the fact of vocal music being vocally executed in performance, then we would have no aesthetically relevant way of hearing such music as manifesting a voice, apart from hearing it as representing one. However, as we shall see, there are good reasons to reject this conclusion. Moreover, these same reasons can also lend weight to an account of music’s expressiveness that makes use of the idea that our appreciation can legitimately be informed by extra-musical facts connected with the music’s being humanly performed. (At least, this will be so insofar as such facts pertain

¹⁵ This would be a minimal empiricist constraint on aesthetic appreciation, along the lines proposed by Levinson (1996a: 15) and already mentioned in the Introduction to this study.

to aspects of the music's performance that play a role in determining its audibly expressive character.¹⁶⁾

When we think of music as existing or occurring primarily in the form of sounding structures whose form is composed in advance of their realisation, it is tempting to think that facts about how it is performed are bound to be irrelevant to our appreciation of what we actually hear. Such structures do not provide any immediate trace of the actions involved in creating the composed work. It is easy to forget – especially if we take Western art music as our model – that all aspects of the final audible form of music are not, normally, in fact determined at the compositional stage (at least where the music in question has been created with the idea of its future realisation through performance in mind¹⁷⁾). Yet those aspects that *are* only determined at the stage of performance do provide an immediate trace of the human actions involved in their creation.¹⁸ Where this is so, it can be argued that a full appreciation of the sounding forms of the resulting music cannot be had independently of any contextual awareness of those actions: i.e. the actions of the performer(s) through which the music was, in fact, brought into existence.

In this respect, it is useful to compare music to painting. It is especially instructive to note that in discussions of the status of painting as an art form whose products can, to some degree, be mechanically reproduced, arguments about the extent to which our experience and appreciation ought to be informed by an awareness of the actual history of the process through which the painting was brought into existence play a central role. A good example of this is provided by Levinson's argument, *contra* Currie (1989), that we should continue to think of painting as an art form in which the

¹⁶ Sometimes we seem to use the term 'performance' to refer just to those audible aspects of the music itself that we take to have been determined by its manner of execution, and sometimes to refer to the fact of its actually being executed in some way or other. For the purposes of this study, the question of which of these uses is more appropriate will be treated as a matter for aesthetics rather than ontology: as concerning what we take to be relevant to appreciation, and so as not answerable merely by giving a precise formulation of what we take to be there. Either way, it is separate from the issue of what constitutes an *event* of musical performance, and how such an event stands in relation to entities such as musical works (i.e. what sort of thing it is a performance *of*, and whether that thing is identified in turn with a type of act (Currie 1989) or performance (D. Davies 2004)). By 'performance' I just wish to denote the *general* practice of realising music as sound through concurrent human activities or 'playing'. Hence I also pass over discussions of what constitutes an artistically legitimate event of musical performance (e.g. Godlovitch 1993, 1998).

¹⁷ There are, of course, cases where it is not clear to what extent this is the case, e.g. Bach's *Art of Fugue* – a great, but singularly inexpressive, piece of music!

¹⁸ This stage need not be regarded as confined to what is determined during the course of an actual, formal and/or public *event* of performance: the same logic will apply to aspects of the music determined in the course of a rehearsal or a practice session. In Western classical music the aspects in question tend to consist mainly of nuances of articulation, timing, dynamics, intonation and tone colour.

original version of a painted work enjoys a special significance over and above even the most perfect mechanised copy imaginable,¹⁹ on the grounds that

...part of our interest in certain forms of visual art is a dialectic between how such works were actually made, how they appear to have been made, and their directly observable features. With paintings in particular, the expressiveness and specific aesthetic import of the markings constituting the surface is gauged in light of knowledge of how those marks came to be there, what sort of actions they actually resulted from, set against a background assessment of the possible ways such a surface can come to be so marked. It is this dialectic, and the complex experience that it underlies, which is upset by the substitution of an object that is observably equivalent to the original but has not been produced in the same manner – even though by hypothesis it appears, on the surface, to have been. (Levinson 1996d: 143).

The more fundamental point at issue here concerns whether or not there is, in fact, an important sense in which certain kinds of art can be thought of as more fully appreciated when experienced in the light of the actual human actions that have physically brought them into existence. The idea that exact reproductions could be seen as undermining this highlights the fact that it is a real issue for the appreciation of certain forms of art (though clearly not for all). In that case, Budd's account seems to require us to treat audible aspects of music that do carry the immediate traces of the actions involved in realising them as only experiencable with reference to these actions in ways that are at odds with its typical and distinctive character as an abstract art. But this is controversial precisely because it demotes to a secondary status what at least some theorists are likely to be convinced – if only on the basis of the analogy with painting – is the basis for a full and proper appreciation of music that is, in fact, performed. So Budd's core conception of music would then imply that the kind of experience some would regard as offering the basis for the fullest appreciation of *performed* music is at odds with our most central or basic way of appreciating music generally. This would suggest that listeners are forced, when confronted with such music, to choose between a proper appreciation of it as music and as performed music.

¹⁹ An analogous debate in music might revolve around the imaginary case of a form of recording that made it possible to have an experience sonically identical to that which one would have had if one were actually physically present at a particular musical performance. But this need not be imagined, as in some cases the possibility exists – notably with the piano – of hearing an exact and literal reproduction of a performance. This is accomplished by digitally registering actual physical events within the playing mechanism of the instrument itself as MIDI information, and then reproducing the events themselves.

Yet there is no evidence that listeners are obliged to make such a choice. Hence, if Budd's conception of music as abstract were to be embraced, it would have to be in a form that did not entail anything like this.

Another motivation for Budd's implicit position might be his straightforward insistence that in hearing music as expressive at all, we are not required to have in mind the idea of a voice, however indefinite this idea may be (Budd 1985a: 148-9). As we have already seen, this invites the response from the persona theorist that one need not have such an idea *consciously* in mind for it to inform one's way of listening to music. Indeed, nowhere is this more true than where what is encountered *is* an instance of the human voice – since the music is, in fact, vocally performed. In such a case we need not have the idea consciously present in our minds for it to inform our experience, because it is present anyway, and by default, simply as a true fact about the music itself.

Another possible reason for insisting that hearing vocal music as vocal is no different from hearing it as *representing* a voice could be located in a claim about what it means to hear traces of acts of performance in the music itself. It is natural to think that hearing musical phenomena with reference to the actions that produce them really means hearing them as the sound of the *physical* behaviour involved in executing those actions. After all, it is the *physical* aspect of the actions being performed that leaves its immediate trace in the sounding character of the music itself, regardless of whether it corresponds to the intended consequences of the action or not.²⁰ But there is no reason for taking this purely *physical* behaviour as *essentially* manifested through its sounding form, so that the relation between sounds and events in the wider world that informs our appreciation is in no sense *necessary* to an individuation of the sounds themselves, or any higher-order musical phenomena that supervene on these sounds.²¹ This makes clear that what is needed is an alternative characterisation of the behaviour that would

²⁰ If this were not the case, then errors in performance would not be seen as having consequences for our musical experience, as we would simply hear through them to what we take to have been intended by the performer and ignore the rest. We would then lack any basis for criticising such performances on account of those errors. Of course, certain aspects of the physical behaviour may not count as intended for another reason, which is that even the most specific intentional characterisation of it as corresponding to an action falls short of the absolute specificity of its physical instantiation. But it is a feature of art that this absolute specificity can also enter into our experience as a potentially significant characteristic.

²¹ This would be the case regardless of whether the sounds are conceived as properties of those events, or as the definitive manifestations of separate events of sounding caused by those events. (Which of these conceptions is correct as far as the ontology of sound(s) is concerned is currently a disputed matter.) In the former case they would be treated as accidental properties, in the latter case as corresponding to causally connected events, so in neither case would the relation between the sounds and events of which they might be said to be the sounds be understood to be anything other than one of contingent dependency.

furnish such reasons, but the two obvious ways in which this might be done can readily be shown to be of no use in this context.

In order to see this, it is necessary to acknowledge an additional objection put forward by Budd. This is also aimed not just at theories of musical expressiveness that seek to explain the latter by pointing to resemblances between music and everyday expressive vocal utterance, but also at versions of the persona theory that claim that we hear music *as if* it were a form of such utterances or analogous to these. The objection is that the *stylised* character of vocalising as it typically occurs in music that we value for its expressiveness is essentially different from the ordinary vocalising that we find expressive in life, and is appreciated partly in virtue of this contrast (Budd 1985a: 148-9). This seems to rule out either of the two alternative ways of characterising the behaviour of the performer that might be invoked as a basis for asserting an ineliminable connection between the music and its execution.

On the one hand, there is the fact that *the voice itself*, at least to the extent that it is a public phenomenon, is something that by its very nature we hear, so that logically speaking the very act of attending to vocal sounds means that we are, in effect, also attending to the definitive manifestation of an actual human voice. But the fact that these particular vocal sounds have a stylised character specific to music can be invoked as grounds for asserting that, as far as our understanding and appreciation of the *music* is concerned, it is irrelevant that the human voice can also be manifested in other, *non-musical* contexts. That is, it is irrelevant that it can also take the form of vocal utterances of other sorts, which we find expressive for reasons unrelated to music, but which furnish our sense of the expressive significance of the voice as a human attribute.

On the other hand, there is the fact that we can and do hear the immediate trace of the *actions* involved in musical vocalising in the audible form of the music itself. Such traces are the audible manifestation of musical actions that are themselves *defined* by their *audible* musical results. This means that hearing the audible trace of such an action is logically identical to hearing the defining manifestation of the action. (The audible trace corresponds here to the defining manifestation of the criteria through which we determine what sort of action has been performed – and, indeed, that an action has been performed at all.) But once again the contrast pointed out by Budd between the specifically musical actions involving the stylised use of the voice and the wider range of verbal and non-verbal vocal utterances in virtue of which the voice takes on expressive significance for us in life can be invoked against this. This then makes

clear that all that follows is that we are committed to hearing vocal music as vocally executed in a specifically *musical* way. The problem is that this tells us nothing about why specifically musical forms of vocalising should be seen as essentially connected to our more wide-ranging non-musical encounters with the voice. Yet it is still the latter that are supposed to provide the basis for making sense of how vocal music itself, in being heard as what it literally is, could possess a comparable expressive significance to that which the voice has outside of music.

This suggests that we will have to look further to find an ineliminable connection between vocal music and its vocal execution of the sort that would provide a counterexample to Budd's implicit claim – that to hear even vocal music with reference to the idea of a voice is to hear it as representing a voice. The problem which we have just observed, in connection with both the concept of voice in music, and the concept of vocal action in music, can be spelled out in more formal terms by making use of certain technical notions employed in some theories of human action.

According to the latter, understanding some particular human behaviour as an action of some sort implies that, at the very least, a certain minimum of determinate context be in place – and be publicly perceivable. This must be so before we can grasp that the behaviour in question is, in fact, necessary for some goal to be realised, and thus constitutes an action at all. Such a minimally necessary context would typically include a minimal determination of the agent and their surroundings (their 'world'), and of any attributes essential to the performance of the action in question. Because these are taken to be implicit in the understanding of the action per se, their relation to the latter can be expressed by borrowing the notion of 'tautology' from logic (Meloe 1983: 13-29).²²

The idea here is that aesthetic appreciation imposes a constraint on our experience with similar implications. The formal analysis of some action requires that we state the minimally necessary conditions in which it is intelligible as such, where these already imply a characterisation of the agent and their surroundings. Likewise, the

²² Using this term is meant to indicate that it is the action itself that is the fundamental point of reference: that a human action constitutes an irreducible phenomenon rather than something construed interpretatively from some set of more basic facts. Identifying an action itself already implies a certain determination of the overall context or world in which it counts as an action, and this already contains a certain determination of the agent, the immediate context of performance, etc. Hence the characterisation of the latter is simply a tautologous duplication of what is stated or implied in a description of the action itself. This reflects the sort of anti-empiricist line of thinking about human engagements and understanding to be found in the later Wittgenstein (and in Heidegger). I am indebted to Carl Erik Kühl for discussions in which he helped me to understand the role that this and related concepts can play in the formal analysis of practical actions.

inseparability requirement demands that *if* we appreciate music with reference to the voice, we do so in a way that entails hearing the music as a manifestation of the human voice, or of the activity of human vocalising, only insofar as this is ‘tautologically’ implied by the music itself.²³ In other words, the concept of voice (or vocal activity) corresponding to an experience of voice (or vocal activity) in music will only be relevant to appreciation in certain respects. These will be limited to those absolutely necessary for us to understand that the music in question was, in fact, vocally executed by a human being – i.e. a *vocalist* – in such a way that it came to possess the particular audible, musically significant qualities that it actually has. The challenge, then, will be to show that such a ‘tautologically’ defined encounter with a human voice, or with human vocalising, can shed light on music’s expressive character. To do so it must constitute an ineliminable connection to the voice, but as something which we recognise as expressively significant in virtue of its role in our everyday, extra-musical lives.

Lack of space prevents a full analysis of the implications of applying the concept of ‘tautological’ understanding to musical performance. However, the basic point is to think of our encounters with human beings in the context of music making as similar in important respects to our encounters with them in the context of situations where we understand them first and foremost as practical agents. The idea is that in both cases a kind of public *situation* exists, which defines basic and essential limits on what kind of minimal level of shared understanding of the world must be possessed by us and them, if we are to make sense of their behaviour as fulfilling a certain role in *that* situation. In the case of actions, this role is that of practical agent. In the case of music making, it is that of musical performer/interpreter. Just as we do not have to know everything about another human being’s perspective on the world to make sense of much of their everyday practical behaviour, as practical action, we do not need to know everything about them to make sense of their activities as musical performers in the aesthetically defined context of particular occasions of music making. However, in both cases there are many things that we *do* need to know – many forms of understanding that we *do* need to share, along with the experiences, responses, and values that give sense to these forms of understanding themselves. These are sufficient to give sense to the thought that what we are encountering through (or, more precisely, *as*) music making is, in fact,

²³ A stronger version of this idea might take it as implying that we construe music essentially as a form of action, to be understood along the lines of other actions, and that hearing music in a manner constrained in this way just *is* hearing it as what a formal analysis of it as action would take it to be. However, this version of the idea is not necessary for it to play the role required here.

another human being, and this then has implications – to be explored in due course – for our appreciation of the music’s expressive characteristics.²⁴

Of course, for this to contribute to establishing the aesthetic relevance of certain aspects of musical expressiveness, this performance *situation* must itself be considered an ineliminable feature of our encounter with the music itself. But this is surely right, just because there is, typically, an implicit understanding that music has been composed *with a view to* its being performed in certain ways and not others, and by human beings who themselves must possess a certain more or less determinate perspective on the world – one that, *by definition*, should also therefore contain within it the possibility of this tautological understanding. At the same time, this minimal understanding need only reflect *as determinate* a perspective as is necessary to make sense of the particular musical phenomenon in question, so it need not imply any overarching requirement to possess the more overarching kinds of cultivated background understanding invoked by Callen and Levinson. (If the musical phenomenon in question is relatively primitive, then only a primitive understanding of music is implied, but that is still sufficient to bring with it a sense of the performer as possessing certain primitive abilities, dispositions, etc, that distinguish them, albeit in a primitive way, as *human*. By contrast, Callen’s and Levinson’s accounts require the full sophistication of their respective models of musical listening to be brought to bear on all expressive music as a basis for either a *generalised* imaginative construal of it as the fictive expression of a persona (Levinson), or for experiencing *any* particular instances as fully expressive (Callen).)

(ii) Expressive Voice in Music

In my view, the abovementioned challenge can be met through giving more careful consideration to what is involved in hearing *vocal* music as a manifestation of the voice. In particular, I propose to focus on cases where both the music itself and the musical vocalising it manifests, and the extra-musical vocalising that the latter is identified with, are all explicitly understood from the outset as *expressive*. What is important to note in connection with expressive music in respect of the first two of these elements is that it is typically also heard as expressively performed. On the other hand, what is typical of our extra-musical encounters with the voice as expressive is that it tends towards a

²⁴ For an eloquent defence of the extent to which basic concepts informing our aesthetic appreciation of art necessarily reflect broader shared perspectives on the world, see Tanner (1968).

particular kind of expressive vocalising – at least when associated with utterances that are expressively heightened or emphatically expressive. This distinctive vocalising, I will argue, is identical to what we hear tautologically manifested in vocal music when we hear it as expressively performed.

There are several interconnected issues that need to be addressed here. One of these concerns how, exactly, such an activity might be understood to be present in music. This requires consideration of the way in which the voice typically figures there: in song. Another concerns the precise way in which such an activity could at the same time be understood as related to expressively heightened or emphatic utterances outside of music. A third concerns the relevance of such an activity being present in music to our appreciation of the music itself (i.e. its purely musical structures, and the more specifically musical activities on which these depend). As far as this last case is concerned, I intend to argue that we can also be brought to see the relevance of this activity to the appreciation of wider aspects of the music by considering the experience of music as expressively interpreted in performance.

I will start with the first of these issues. Because the activity of vocalising required for the execution of expressively performed vocal music is only fully apparent in music itself, it is natural to equate this activity with singing. It is then natural to seek an explanation of this activity's expressive qualities through examining the contrast between the particular forms of vocal activity typical of song on the one hand, and of speech on the other. In such a context, the idea sketched above may take the form of the familiar thought that song has its origins in a kind of expressively heightened speech, and derives its expressive character from this fact. This may indeed be close to the truth. Nevertheless, in itself it tells us little or nothing about *why* we might be justified in deeming the expressive character that music may have (in virtue of such a connection) relevant to our appreciation of it as music. Some kind of more detailed analysis is evidently called for here.

Indeed, the relationship between song and speech is not uncomplicated. For example, in an article addressing this topic, Sparshott states that

In speaking we humans use a built-in sound-producing apparatus that causes the breath to vibrate, emitting an intermittent and variable stream of sound that we can call 'vowel'. This vowel stream can be differentiated into different vowel sounds... it can be varied by length, pitch, loudness, and sound quality; and it is punctuated and interrupted

by consonants and silences... In singing, these speech variations are overlaid and largely superseded by a different system of changes, which follows its own rules; the vowel stream takes on a different character, more precisely pitched, so that it is *intoned* [my italics] rather than spoken, and these precise pitches, basically conceived as conscious modifications from a monotone, are defined by a fixed system of mutual relations (intervals). (Sparshott 1997: 200)

Sparshott emphasises the fact that the system of changes in singing 'is separate from and inherently independent of the communication functions that determine the vowel variations in speech, no matter how the systems may interact' (ibid). Yet as he himself points out, this leaves unanswered the question of why such an alternative system developed at all. As he observes:

Singing is a fundamental use of a part of our built-in psychophysical apparatus, the voice mechanism. If the basic use of that mechanism is speech, why should it be susceptible of modification in a different way, proving to have possibilities that speech does not exploit? How is it that humans can tune their voices? For this to be possible, our voices must have been tunable to begin with. But why? (ibid: 201)

His response is to make use of Aristotle's distinction between 'voice' (*phōnē*) and 'language' (*logos*). For Aristotle, these represent two radically distinct forms of communication that humans possess:²⁵

Voice, which is common to all social animals, is a direct audible manifestation of psychophysical states and attitudes, including feelings... In animals other than humans, these are purely mechanical indicators of the condition of their utterer... and other organisms respond to them no less automatically. Language, in contrast... formulates and combines concepts, expressing ideas... Neither the utterance... nor the response to it is immediate and automatic. Voice is bound to the immediate motivation and occasion of its utterance in a way that linguistic utterance is not... The heart of Aristotle's exposition in its context is that humans are social animals as well as citizens. We show and share our feelings as well as discussing our thoughts. Our communicative repertoire must accordingly comprise voice as well as language (ibid: 202)

²⁵ The source for these ideas is the opening of Aristotle's *Politics*.

As Sparshott is quick to notice, in suggesting that both aspects of communication are part of our essential nature, and that the distinctive kinds of vocalising they entail are therefore equally fundamental, this may tempt us to certain premature conclusions. It is tempting to say 'that singing corresponds to voice as talking corresponds to language'. Or we might say, as many commentators on musical expressiveness have, 'that song brings to the fore the expression of feeling in a voiced musical utterance, whereas in talking the language component is dominant' (ibid). But as Sparshott points out, this line of thinking is problematic, because 'it suggests that singing, in its closeness to animal cries, is natural, whereas talking, because languages are artifactual systems, is artificial' (ibid).

For Sparshott this goes against the intuition that it is speech that is relatively informal, while singing is, typically, a more highly formalised activity. However, this conflict is defused when we recall that speech is infected with the consciously grammatical character of written language, while '[i]n a song or songlike utterance, the resources of voice can be used unselfconsciously to add an expressive dimension to a meaning spontaneously recognised in an uttered text'. As he states, '[t]he formal practice of singing is a rhetorical use of something that may, once the practice becomes second nature, be put to informal and spontaneous use' (ibid).

Even so, he admits that song itself, 'though it uses the sound-producing apparatus of (animal) voice, is not itself a manifestation of voice. It is basically a self-conscious practice even though it can be spontaneously used' (ibid: 203). This is why 'singing differs from voice itself in respect of its ability to expand the range of sound variations employed, in its ability to be substituted for by instruments, and in its ability to allow vocal sounds to be subsumed in a specifically musical kind of structure, tune, or melody' (ibid). Above all it is, as he says, the fact that song is something that invariably occurs as a specific form of a wider and more basic set of practices that we think of as *music* – many of which are more oriented towards the more abstract aspects of composed musical structures than the immediacy of vocal utterance – that separates it from 'voice' in the Aristotelian sense. To clarify this, Sparshott considers two forms of vocalising that share the distinctive features that link musical singing to 'voice', but which nevertheless fall short of exemplifying song itself, at least as encountered in music. Firstly he imagines a primitive form of vocalising in which a tone is consistently sustained but its pitch varied at random:

A sort of singing, a variably pitched but unmethodical vocalising, may be a spontaneous use of what Aristotle called voice, cut free of its psychological necessities and no doubt from any special personal or social connotations. But that is not quite what we call singing, any more than flinging the limbs around is quite what we think of as dancing. It is to be distinguished from spontaneous vocalizing in song, which uses the tuned singing voice and the determined relationship of one's own internalized musical practice, just as people unselfconsciously engaged in talk spontaneously shape the vowel stream according to the rules of the language they are talking – rules that have become second nature to them. (ibid: 204)

Secondly, he points out that '[e]ven musically formed vocalizing is not quite what we mean by singing in a fuller sense' (ibid). This is not merely for the obvious reason that song typically involves words, but also because 'the inherently musical structure to which voiced sounds themselves are subjected is itself perceived to be language-like. Like Aristotle's 'language', it is articulated, using discrete elements, subject to conscious composition and manipulation' (ibid).²⁶ This second feature which musical singing must possess makes it clear that song also presupposes the 'language'-derived character which Sparshott attributes to music generally:

[i]n music, analogously... spontaneous utterance in singing and systematic musical composition each has its own priority. Continuous vocal modulation without preformation must be in some sense primary, because it utters the inherent variability, the continuum on which digital systems of modulation are superimposed; but in another sense composed music is prior, because it alone manifests the realized form of music as an art capable of generating a repertory of determinate objects of experience recoverably inscribed. If such an art did not exist, to call unformed vocalization 'music' would be meaningless. (ibid: 205)

Nevertheless, while Sparshott succeeds here in expressing the different senses in which these aspects of music are prior to each other, he has not exactly comprehended the significance of this. It is a condition of the possibility of hearing the sounding relations that make up music's melodic and harmonic structures that there first be a continuous vocal sustaining of the more primitive sort which he has described (or its

²⁶ Sparshott rightly points out that music's 'language'-like character is separated from real speech by the important fact that, unlike the latter, its structural articulations do not reflect the needs of communication but engage our interest in themselves (ibid: 204).

instrumental equivalent). But it is *not* a condition of the possibility of our experience of *this* activity as a manifestation of voice that we hear it in the context of *music* – i.e. hear it as a foundation for musically articulated structures of the sort constituted from tonal relations.²⁷ From the point of view of music as a phenomenon that includes both aspects, these may indeed be seen as presupposing one another, and therefore be characterised as genuinely interdependent. But from the point of view of how music's pitched-based structures and its vocally sustained character (or its instrumental equivalent) are related to each other *independently of their contribution to music as an overarching unity*, there is no interdependency. Music's pitched-based structures presuppose an ability to continuously sustain sounds in the primitive manner described by Sparshott, but not vice versa.²⁸

Many theorists (Callen, Scruton, Levinson, etc.) hold that a fully-fledged background concept of music simply must inform any account of musical expressiveness. However, it may be more reasonable to think that the relevance of such a concept to the problem should itself be treated as an open issue. That is, it should be regarded as something to be settled in the light of the implications of what works as an optimum account of one or more aspects of musical expressiveness itself, rather than as a condition against which the success of such accounts should be judged. What this means is that if the concept of musical expressiveness is not taken as presupposing a fully determinate background conception of music, then the expressiveness of a particular passage of music will still be capable in principle of counting as an ineliminable feature of 'the music', so that an account of that particular kind of expressivity may still be said to meet the inseparability requirement after all. However, this will only be so under a level of description (of 'the music') that may fall short of that at which a full characterisation of the music – one reflecting the full range of background conditions informing our experience – could be made. This is entirely consistent with the 'piecemeal' approach adopted here. Just as there is no reason to assume that *all* aspects of music lend themselves to a single mode of characterisation

²⁷ Sparshott admits that 'There is indeed such a thing as a premusical use of the singing voice, dronings and ululations, that would count as song in a society without musical practices, if such a society existed' (ibid 206).

²⁸ This aspect to the relationship – i.e. the aspect which I have just claimed is intelligible without reference to any uniform overall concept of 'music' – is also undercharacterised by Sparshott, since harmonic and melodic forms require not only an intoning that continuously sustains a tone that is in principle *variable* as to its pitch but, more specifically, an intoning that can be perceived as having a stable *identity* in respect of its pitch (as 'a tone', not merely as 'tone'). The significance of this additional qualification will, I hope, become apparent in due course.

(i.e. one possessing a uniform set of grounds) as expressive, there is no reason to assume that *all* elements of the understanding of music that we have to possess to appreciate it as ‘music’ need be in play for us to perceive those particular aspects in virtue of which, principally, it is experienced and appreciated as *expressive*. The point is that to the extent that they are not required to be in play, it follows that they cannot sensibly be invoked as constraints on a theory of musical expressiveness.²⁹

In spite of this difference of approach, Sparshott’s analysis of our experience of musical singing, with its description of how these two quite different modes of vocal communication and expression both inform our experience of music, is still highly informative. In particular, it provides a perspective from which to understand the processes of adaptation and transformation that the kinds of vocalising typically associated with (Aristotelian) ‘voice’ are subjected to in a musical context, and which bring it into contact with those other forms of vocal activity more typically associated with (Aristotelian) ‘language’:

Given that ‘language’ and ‘voice’ represent two different systematic uses of the vocal organs, what happens to voice when it becomes modulated in music? First, it is modulated as to the arrangement of its formal properties, in accordance with the dimensions of musical structure and form. And second, it is modulated in ways developed from the meaningful variations in speech inflections that belong to language. The meanings of speech inflection are retained to the extent that they are recognized, but are supplemented by autonomous variations of the same general sort... as well as by variations developed within the formal system of music... (ibid: 209n)

Here, it seems, Sparshott is willing to consider the sense in which a musical activity like singing might usefully be thought of as constituted from a number of different processes. Each of these can be conceived as occurring on a discrete level in the sense that it presupposes the previous one but is not presupposed by it. Moreover, each distances the musical activity a step further from its origins in extra-musical vocalising

²⁹ My position is that we should not just assume that music is an internally unified phenomenon in the ‘strong’ sense that would require, as a condition for grasping any one aspect of it fully, that all other features necessarily true of it be acknowledged as part of a single structure of interdependency. To *assume* rather than *discover* that this is so is, to paraphrase Wittgenstein, to be misled by the surface grammar of our concepts, which lead us to think of music, language, etc. as types of entity, rather than as loose constellations of partially overlapping practices. Moreover, if musical expressiveness turns out to be better accounted for when this assumption is not admitted, this fact can itself be regarded as a stage on the way to *discovering* that the assumption was false.

(‘voice’). At the same time, each requires us to invoke a richer, more specific understanding of the overall ‘musical’ context as the background against which it can fulfil certain formal musical functions.³⁰

However, Sparshott does not seem to think that there might be any more basic forms of departure from everyday expressive vocalising, presupposed by both of the two levels he finds musically interesting, but which might themselves be of sufficient musical interest to shed light on its character as an expressive art form. This is not surprising, given his view that the imposition of harmonic and melodic forms (corresponding to the first of his two levels, i.e. where the music ‘is modulated as to the arrangement of its formal properties, in accordance with the dimensions of musical structure and form’) only itself presupposes an intoning that continuously sustains a tone that is in principle variable as to its pitch. As we have observed, however, it in fact presupposes something more than this. It presupposes an intoning that can be perceived as having, or producing, a stable *identity* in respect of its pitch (as ‘a tone’, not merely as ‘tone’). This means that even Sparshott’s first level of modification in fact presupposes something more specific than he himself admits, that can nevertheless still be imagined independently of any formal musical system. It presupposes a kind of intoning that sustains pitches of definite identity, whose duration is also therefore required to be marked by clearly defined transitions to other pitches, but without reference to any system of functional relationships linking these pitches.

This is less arbitrary than the ‘ululations and dronings’ that Sparshott himself considers potential candidates for the more primitive vocalising that might be seen as an antecedent of musical singing. The point is that for him these evidently imply no more than random variability in pitch. Yet the possibility just proposed is a more accurate description of the kind of basic vocalising activity presupposed by (vocally executed) music’s formal structures, and, moreover, is also easily recognisable in music, just because it is familiar to us from ordinary life, where it is approximated to by a variety of forms of *emphatically expressive* spoken utterance. These utterances achieve a sense of heightened expressivity through departing from the ordinary patterns of expressively

³⁰ What Sparshott is in effect proposing is that we think of music and music making in the sort of terms more familiar to action theorists – as a series of descriptions of the same underlying event, *embedded* within one another in a particular order (Anscombe 1957: §26). (Whether these should, in fact, be thought of as descriptions, or as defining the events themselves, is a matter that lies beyond the scope of this study.) I also benefited here from reading parts of an unpublished manuscript by Carl Erik Kuhl, entitled *Musical Forms of Engagement*, in which a similar approach is pursued more systematically but without reference to any possible implications for issues pertaining to musical expressiveness.

inflected speech. They move in the direction of a kind of intoning in which individual word-syllables are brought into approximate correspondence with more or less definite changes in pitch. These then come to be heard as a particular kind of series of events: a succession of *tones* of much the same kind as we encounter in music.

This tendency in speech is perhaps most apparent when formalised into styles of oratorical delivery: e.g. in religious sermons, certain kinds of theatrical declamation, judicial pronouncements, etc. Yet it also pervades daily speech, which constantly fluctuates in the degree to which it exhibits this kind of intonational device. We may then reflect on why such a tendency is associated with heightened forms of expressive significance. It is hard to resist the conclusion that it is because it takes the inflectional characteristics of spoken language in the direction of a closer resemblance to the form which they have when we try to communicate verbally or non-verbally while undergoing extreme states of emotion.

Of course, this brings us into the territory of the not unfamiliar idea that expressive music resembles aspects of human utterance that are specific to impassioned speech. The point of invoking such an idea is to defuse an objection raised by Budd (and Hanslick before him). This is that if music *were* expressive because it resembled speech per se, then it would be more expressive the more it resembled speech, whereas the opposite is the case, as the example of recitative demonstrates. Yet as Sharpe says,

It is not true to say *tout court* that recitative [*recitative secco*] most closely imitates the human voice; it most closely imitates human speech when the speaker is in no way impassioned. It does not imitate the voice of somebody who is moved... Not all human speech is expressive in the way music is; nor is all music expressive; it is oratory which cultivates the expressive possibilities of the human voice, and it is that sub species of rhetoric, elocution, which categorizes the ways we use the voice for expressive purposes... [P]hilosophers forget... the innumerable ways in which intonation affects the impact of what is said, inviting us to take it as teasing, as unserious, as a witticism, as an expression of invitation or anger, as cajoling, as inviting, as encouraging, or whatever. It is this wide range of oratorical devices, so very, very important in human communication, which music mimics. (Sharpe 2000: 79)

However, whatever the merits of this idea, Sharpe is surely wrong in thinking that this means that our sense of music's expressive significance is ultimately derived from a perceived connection to the formal art of oratory, in the same way as, for him,

certain musical forms are. That would imply either that expressivity in music is determined by oratorical rules whose character is conventionally determined (and with primary reference to something other than music), or that music reflects some more basic feature of unformalised but impassioned speech, but only because it also reflects such oratorical rules. In the former case, the account would fall foul of the demand to make sense of the immediacy (and intensity) of music's expressive character, which even in its most basic forms seems to go well beyond what we might associate with stylised forms of spoken utterance. In the latter case, we are still owed an account of *why* it is that we hear music as expressive with reference to oratorical conventions that in turn derive their significance from ordinary impassioned speech, and not directly from the latter, so not much has really been explained at all. (Sharpe does not need to distinguish between these two possibilities, because he is evidently willing to rest with the implication that expressive features of impassioned everyday speech just are themselves reflections of oratorical principles. This gets him off the hook as far as the dilemma just mentioned is concerned, but only at the cost of introducing an absurdly contentious theory about the extent to which the prescriptive rules governing formal expressive speech also determine everyday expressive norms.)

It is surely music's resemblance to ordinary expressively heightened speech, as something prior to its overtly formal, oratorical equivalent, that is genuinely explanatory here. This is because it makes more sense of the idea that deliberate expressive emphasis in speech, whether formalised into oratory or not, works by converging with the intonational patterns, and the semi-intoned character, of utterances that in the *first* instance take on this character just because they are behavioural expressions. That is, they take on this character because they are expressions of a person's (actually felt) heightened emotional states, and the typical context for these is ordinary, informal speech.

It seems natural to assume that the features of music in virtue of which it resembles such spontaneous behaviour would have to be ones that only enter into music at a level corresponding to Sparshott's second stage in the modification process to which 'voice' (as primitive, involuntary expressive utterance) is subjected, as a condition of its insertion into musical practices.³¹ But that would imply that

³¹ This is because it is at this second stage that higher-level resemblances to the inflectional patterns of *speech* are permitted to inform the formal repertoire of melodic, rhythmic and articulatory shapes

resemblances to impassioned utterance at this second level already presuppose a more basic first-level characterisation of musical vocalising as something formalised with reference to purely musical criteria. In that case such vocalising must surely have been stripped of any characteristics that would justify perceiving it as directly connected to involuntary forms of impassioned utterance. If that were so, then perceiving such a connection at the second level would require one to forget that this first level had already brought about a fundamental distancing of expressive musical vocalising from its nearest extra-musical equivalent. This would clearly take us no nearer to an understanding of the relationship between expressive music and the voice than existing theories. Like the latter, we would have to claim that we experience music as expressive either because of a partial and essentially contingent resemblance to actual heightened vocal expression, or (as in imagination-based theories) because we imagine that what we are hearing is not in fact distanced from actual heightened vocal expression in the way that it really is. Nevertheless, this objection to an account that links expressive music directly to spontaneously impassioned utterance can, I think, be overcome.

(iii) Expressive Interpretation in Musical Performance

To see this, we must first remind ourselves that beneath Sparshott's first level of modification of 'voice' as a mode of involuntary expressive communication lies another distinctive feature of musical vocalising. As has just been argued, this, taken by itself, actually corresponds more closely than Sparshott's first or second levels of specifically musical vocalising to the intonational character of expressively heightened speech. It is a bare intoning that sustains a definite pitch through inflections that form a sequence of distinct, pitched tonal events, yet without subsuming these inflections or tonal phenomena into a formal musical structure of any sort.

It might seem unlikely that a comparison between expressive melodic music and this kind of intoning could shed significant light on the expressivity of music. This activity – even if embedded within more specific forms of music making – only directly corresponds to heightened forms of involuntary verbal expression (and thus to 'voice' in its original manifestation) at a very primitive level of description of music. That is, it only does so at a level that has yet to reflect the specifically musical character which it

constructed out of the formal system of music itself (i.e. the formal system already in place, corresponding to Sparshott's first stage, to which 'voice' is assumed to have already been adapted).

takes on as a result of Sparshott's first and second stages of modification and incorporation of 'voice' into musical practices. This means that it cannot possibly tell us anything about how music comes to be expressive when it functions at these more defined levels. But of course it is exactly at these levels that almost anything that we would recognise as musically interesting occurs.

However, this ignores a crucial feature of music that is performed *and* expressive, and which, in virtue of the conjunction of these two features, is also performed expressively. To say that it is performed expressively is to say that it is performed in a way that is aimed at achieving an expressive *interpretation* – something that further particularises its expressive character in a way that will enhance its overall value as expressive music.³² Such an interpretation, insofar as it unfolds as something more specific than a mere realisation of a predefined musical phenomenon (e.g. a work or extemporised genre), constitutes a further level of determination of the music itself. It therefore provides a further level at which 'voice' is modified or adapted in order to serve the aesthetic purposes of musical practices. But this level does not consist of additional formalisations of 'voice'. This is because it does not demand that 'voice' be adapted to fit with an additional set of formal distinctions, pertaining either to the structure of the music or to ways in which such structures can be arranged so that they resemble the inflectional patterns of speech. Instead, it introduces a set of *nuances*, pertaining to various aspects of the music, that are not part of the *formal* structure of the music at all. These are principally heard and appreciated in the light of the subtle ways in which they affect our perception of these formal structures – i.e. *as* nuances (or, more precisely, as *nuancings* of a musical structure that in virtue of these, has a *nuanced* character corresponding to what we mean by an 'interpretation'). Nevertheless, they are not constituted through imposing any further formalisation on the basic activity corresponding to 'voice'. Indeed, they can only be seen as taking what remains of this phenomenon in music *back* in the direction of a *closer* relationship to its original, unformalised and pre-musical character: its character as pure 'intoning' of the kind already described. Moreover, it is this character that we have found to constitute the most promising point of correspondence between musical vocalising and expressively heightened utterances in life: the sort of link between music and central cases of

³² A more precise and technical understanding of the sense in which a musical performance constitutes an interpretation, and how this relates to other uses of the term, is given by Levinson (1993), but the details of this are not required to make sense of the arguments put forward here.

behavioural expression that would explain how musical expressiveness can be aesthetically relevant even when this is in part a reflection of its capacity to elicit powerful responses from us.³³

These nuances are applied in the context of performance as elements of an interpretation of the existing formal structures of a particular piece of music (or musical genre). This means that they are only properly appreciated as such when heard as musically (and expressively) appropriate qualifications to this structure – rather than as accidental deviations from a formal ideal corresponding to the structure itself. Hence our experience of the structures themselves is suffused with the more specific expressive characterisations stemming from these forms of expressive nuancing. In this respect it is also relevant to note that the musical structures are themselves normally created in the knowledge that they will only take on their final, audibly expressive form in the context of such an interpretation. This means that in practice we do not generally find it aesthetically interesting to contemplate what expressive character they would have when played with no expressive nuancing at all.

The expressive characterisation that a musical structure receives in the context of an interpretative performance must, therefore, always be heard against the background of the musical practices that have to be in place for the structure to be in place. Hence it must always be heard against the background of those aspects of music making corresponding to Sparshott's first and second levels at which 'voice' becomes adapted to specifically musical practices. Yet as was just observed, it is not just another formal element of such structures. Therefore it must at the same time be heard *directly* with reference to the primitive form of vocal intoning that these structures presuppose and which represents the most direct point of contact between expressive vocalising in music and expressively heightened speech. Such an experience, then, could not be said to be a necessary part of our encounter with the individual structural phenomena introduced at the first and second stages of adaptation of 'voice' into music in themselves. Nevertheless it can still be seen as illuminating our overall experience of the music as an expressively interpreted musical phenomenon – a phenomenon in which these particular structures also ultimately have their place.

³³ The fact that these nuances tend to be focussed on precisely those aspects of music that can manifest in sound the immediate trace of the actions of the performer (such as dynamics, timbre, articulation and intonation) is also significant for the use that I intend to make of this idea, as we shall see in due course.

This seems to provide a basis for thinking that it is possible to hear music as expressive, in a manner relevant to our appreciation of it, in virtue of hearing it as vocally *executed* in an expressive way. We hear its specifically musical structures as subsumed into an overall expressive phenomenon – a further level of expressive determination of the music – corresponding to an interpretation. In doing so we attend to the ways in which its specifically musical structures are expressively *nuanced*, where this means hearing it with reference to a primitive form of vocal activity – a pre-musical expressive vocal intoning – that is prior to these specifically musical structures, but which shares their sustained, pitched character. This activity is embedded in (or presupposed by) vocal musical structures themselves, yet it is also typical of – in the sense of being tended towards by – heightened forms of expressive speech and utterance in life.

There is a clear logical connection here between our experience of voice in and out of music, which consists in the fact that at a certain level of description these two phenomena turn out to be one and the same. However, as we have seen, the relevance of this to musical appreciation – to our appreciation of the music as a whole – depends on an understanding of what it means to hear music as expressively interpreted in performance. This implies that a vindication of the idea that we can hear expressive music with reference to the voice without compromising intuitions about music's non-representational character must acknowledge the essential role played by our experience of it as expressively performed.

(iv) Voice in Vocal and Instrumental Music

The preceding analysis suggests that hearing and aesthetically appreciating *vocal* music as expressive with reference to the idea of a voice requires us to hear it as expressively interpreted. This means hearing it as humanly performed, and in a way that itself makes reference to the idea of voice – of vocal intoning. Yet where does this leave instrumental music? One possibility is that in order to hear instrumental music in similar terms we hear its performance as *resembling* vocal performance, or *make-believe* that it is a vocal performance. However, this invites the accusation that what we are suggesting is just that we *represent* the music as being vocally performed, when it is not. Someone sympathetic to Budd's strictures might then claim that we have failed to show, after all, that instrumental music can be heard as expressive with reference to the voice in non-

representational terms. Since most 'pure' music is, in fact, instrumental, the account of musical expressiveness sketched above would then seem worthless.

However, the account given of how we can hear vocal music as expressive with reference to the voice by hearing it as expressively performed has certain implications that may help us to overcome this difficulty. Such music is immune to the objection that it involves hearing the music as a representation of vocalising, since this would imply that we first bracket out from our experience the fact that it is vocally executed and then imaginatively reintroduce this same fact as one *represented* by the music itself, which is absurd.³⁴ But this in turn implies something else, which is that in hearing such music as expressive with reference to the voice we are relating it not so much to the *idea* of a voice, but to the actual human voice(s) engaged in the act of executing it. We are hearing it as expressive with reference to its actual vocal performance.³⁵

At first glance, this would seem to rule out even more strongly any extension of the proposed account to cover instrumental music as well. If the appreciation of expressive music as something non-representational makes ineliminable reference to the fact that it is *literally* vocally executed, how could this also hold for instrumental music, for which no such fact can literally be said to hold true?

Of course, it is well known that instrumental performers go out of their way to imitate specific characteristics of singing (such as portamento, vibrato, characteristic forms of dynamic and colouristic shading, etc.). Moreover they do this above all at moments when the music is supposed to be heard with its expressive character to the fore. In so doing they also put us in mind of the vocal intoning that underlies singing. (Many of the characteristics of song just mentioned *are* also characteristics of vocal intoning itself.) Yet this would seem to imply no more than that part of what instrumental performers do is to cultivate certain perceivable resemblances between their playing and expressive vocalising. Whether or not this is put forward as grounds for claiming that we make-believe that what we are hearing, or what the performer is doing, *is* vocalising, it is still possible to claim that this amounts to a representational form of listening – albeit one internalised to become a part of the performance practices

³⁴ To characterise *this* as representation would surely be to rob the concept of its significance. It would be like supposing that we can *see* objects as mere sense data and then *imagine* that they are the objects they really are, even though it is a fact that before doing this we have already *seen* that they are those objects.

³⁵ I will argue in due course that this thought has important implications for our understanding of the standoff connected with the persona theory.

themselves. We are still hearing the music with reference to something not literally or ineliminably present: human vocalising.

On the other hand many of the physical processes involved in expressively heightened vocal intoning (and in musical singing) are also literally present in the physical processes involved in playing (melodic) instruments. Sustaining pitched tones on a wind instrument requires essentially the same kinds of controlled muscular exertion, in order to maintain a continuous exhalation of breath and to control the level of tension of various vibrating membranes over which air must pass. (Although pitch is determined partly by other factors, tone colour, register and intonation still mostly depend on muscular control of embouchure.) Bowed stringed instruments involve a continuous maintaining of pressure through muscular exertion (the weight and movement of the bow arm) combined with a way of regulating the tension of the vibrating string that involves applying physical pressure – though in this case the tension is regulated by positioning (of the stopping point) rather than by the degree of pressure itself. Such instruments enhance our technical control of the processes of sound production through partially or wholly substituting mechanisms external to the body for those involved in vocal tone production itself. In this way (a part of) the physical process of playing is brought into a realm where it is susceptible to more systematic control.

At its most extreme, such processes may be almost entirely mechanised at the level of how individual tones are produced and sustained. Yet even here similar processes to those just described are typically recovered at higher-order musical levels, for example in the way entire musical phrases are expressively shaped and articulated. This is best exemplified by the piano, where forms of playing activity required to connect together a *series* of discrete tones (that, individually, are in many respects mechanically produced) become the locus for translating different kinds of physical movement and exertion literally present in the performer's playing into audible expressive qualities.

These physical processes of controlled muscular exertion are evidently not sufficient in themselves to define something as vocal. To say that they were would be to actually categorise instrumental performing as nothing more than an artificially extended form of vocal performing – as we might say that speaking through a loudspeaker is, still, essentially, speaking. Clearly an important part of what makes instrumental music interesting and significant for us is the fact that even when it closely

resembles vocal music, it is something distinct and different.³⁶ On the other hand, we have noted that what links vocal music to an understanding of the extra-musical expressive significance of the human voice is not, in fact, singing as a distinctively musical form of vocalising. Instead, it is a primitive intoning that is nevertheless brought to bear on the overall structure of the music in the act of expressive interpretation – as nuancing. In a sense, then, what is responsible for conferring aesthetic relevance on our experience of vocally performed music as expressive is something that lies at a certain distance from vocal performing (i.e. singing) itself. It is something more basic, something embedded *in* musical vocalising, just as it is embedded *in* expressively heightened speech (as an extreme towards which the latter tends, just inasmuch as it is expressively heightened). It then seems natural to take this logic one step further, and say that what defines this intoning as expressive is just the fact that we hear it as a sounding manifestation of these particular muscular processes of sustained exertion – irrespective of whether or not the sounding manifestation depends on the activation of the particular parts of the human body associated with the voice. According to this view, then, what is expressive is the audible experience of these distinctive muscular exertions, which is embedded in our experience of vocal intoning, just as the latter is in turn embedded in both vocally executed music and expressively heightened human utterance. Given what has just been said about the audible presence of such exertions in instrumental playing, it seems clear that what is essentially significant about the connection between musical vocalising and expressively heightened utterance is also independently present in such playing.³⁷

An important point here is that nowhere are these physical processes more in evidence in instrumental playing than in moments of heightened expressive interpretative nuancing. This is because it is these nuances, more than any other aspect of the music, that lend themselves to being heard as exhibiting immediate traces of the physical activities of movement and exertion involved in the performance of the music.

³⁶ The very fact that we are *struck* by how closely instrumental music can resemble song and speech in moments of heightened expressive characterisation indicates that we do not simply hear all instrumental music as a form of vocal music. Hence there must be some more specific grounds for relating the one to the other during these moments.

³⁷ One reason to take this idea seriously would be the fact that the kinds of exertion we find expressive seem to recur across different sense-modalities, albeit at an extremely primitive level of differentiation. For example, clenching one's own fist, seeing someone tighten their facial muscles into a sustained grimace, and holding a note at the upper end of the vocal compass all seem to manifest the same quality of sustained exertion – a continuous straining – and to be expressive of something similar in virtue of this. If this is so, then it should also be the case for different manifestations of the same kind of exertion within the same sense-modality, as with vocal and non-vocal sound-production.

In effect, the particular character of these movements and exertions is directly manifested in the dynamic character – the sense of tension and relaxation, of movement and repose – of the music itself. (It seems quite possible that we also ascribe the more specific expressive qualities that *audible* traces of the movements and exertions of the performers take on in a musical context to the movements and exertions *themselves*. That is, we conceive of even these qualities as intrinsic features of the performer's movements and exertions, rather than as tied to their audible manifestation.³⁸)

Of course our perception of dynamic shades of character in the music as a whole (and therefore in moments of interpretative nuancing as well) reflects more than just our sense of the audible manifestation of traces of the activity of performing itself. It also reflects structural processes going on in the music that are independent of its performance. The dynamic shades of character corresponding to the immediate traces of performing are themselves expressively coloured by other expressive characteristics of these structural processes (such as may pertain to rhythm or colouristic qualities of tone, texture and harmony). In short, there is a merging and overlapping of different kinds of experience here that makes it impossible to differentiate between dynamic and expressive qualities pertaining to the expressive performing of music and those pertaining to the musical structures themselves.

Nowhere is this more the case than for performers themselves: it seems impossible to divorce our experience of physically producing music of a certain expressive character ourselves from our experience of the expressive character of the resulting music (and vice versa). Moreover, psychological research suggests that the experience of others listening to our performance is also informed by an awareness of what it is like to perform the music. As one researcher states:

The ebb and flow of apparent movement and tension/relaxation that listeners experience in music come in part from an identification with the physical means of musical production – whether or not we have direct experience of the actual instruments involved. (Clarke 2002: 66)

³⁸ This point allows us to acknowledge that many of the more specific expressive characteristics of instrumental music do reflect its particular audible manifestation, and hence the fact that it is instrumentally rather than vocally produced. This is important because we do *also* hear many audible characteristics of instrumental music as *resembling* vocal ones. No doubt we often *also* hear it as expressive in virtue of these resemblances. It could be claimed that we hear such music in a representational way, but the claim is robbed of its force in the present context, as there is a more basic underlying connection already in place linking instrumental music to our everyday experience of the voice as expressive, and thus to the central point of reference for our experience of vocal music itself as expressive.

It is certainly true that many structural features of music correspond in themselves to nothing in our way of *performing* the music, even vocally, and thus cannot themselves be heard literally as being involved in the interpretative nuancing of more basic musical structures. Nevertheless, as we have seen, there is an important sense in which an expressive interpretation of music is heard as a characterisation of the music as a whole, so that the nuances introduced by performers are heard as bearing on all aspects and levels of musical structure insofar as these have an expressive aspect: the latter are not *nuances*, but they are part of what *is nuanced*. And as has just been noted, this is backed up by the phenomenological character of our actual experience, in which dynamic qualities associated with different aspects of music or levels of musical experience interact, along with the expressive qualities that they can be heard as possessing.

If this analysis is correct, then in hearing music as expressive we are hearing it, in important respects, as a manifestation of the actual physical processes involved in its performance. These processes can only be considered aesthetically relevant insofar as they are tautologically implied by our experience of the sounding qualities of the music. They are therefore consistent with the inseparability requirement. At the same time, there is no reason to think they should not be consistent with the normative constrainability requirement. This is because they figure in the account given here only insofar as they correspond to the minimal understanding a performer must possess to be capable *in principle* of giving a satisfactory expressive interpretation of some particular expressive musical phenomenon, and it is claimed that the listener must also possess this same understanding to appreciate that interpretation, where doing the latter is, in turn, indispensable to his or her overall appreciation of the music for its expressive character. (This understanding, by its very nature, is normative.)

However, it is important to note that the sounding qualities of the music include not just *expressive* characteristics, of the sort which, as we have seen, are also experienced as characteristics of the actual processes involved in the music's execution. They also include the various patterns of consistency typically exhibited by an interpretative performance in the course of its unfolding – patterns that reveal a sensitivity to structure, to the music's directed quality, and to structural connections

emerging even at the level of interpretation itself. As with the music's expressive qualities, it is impossible to divorce these other more *purposive* characteristics from our sense of the physical processes revealed through the music and to hear them merely as qualities of the resulting sounds. These qualities come to pervade our sense of the purposive character of the music making itself and, indeed, define the latter. But this conjunction of qualities of expressiveness and purposiveness, ascribed to a common set of physical processes that, though musically manifested, also *actually* occur in the world, as the activity of musical performing, in themselves constitute something distinctively human. Hence to hear music this way is to hear it, albeit in a quite non-specific way, as *humanly* performed – as expressively interpreted *by someone*. In that case, there is a sense in which our aesthetically relevant experience of expressive music furnishes an encounter with the actual human beings whose presence is physically manifested, albeit only in a 'tautological' sense, in their performing itself.³⁹

Interpreting the account in these terms suggests a resolution to another outstanding difficulty faced by some versions of the resemblance theory (Davies) and, potentially, by some versions of the persona theory (Callen). These needed to appeal to the sense of purposiveness exhibited alongside music's expressive properties as a basis for asserting that music resembles the conjunction of these two kinds of feature typical of actual human behaviour. But this was found to be problematic. Expressiveness was, in these accounts, actually predicated of the music itself, as something having no aesthetically relevant connection to anything beyond the immediately experiencable sounding forms of the music (e.g. the behaviour of the performers). However, purposiveness, in order to count as a manifestation of human agency (i.e. as *purposeful* – as exhibiting actual *purposes*), was predicated of the music in virtue of its being a human artefact, i.e. in terms that made reference, albeit in a highly non-specific way, to its actual origins in the world of *actual* human beings, their intentions and actions. This gave rise to a significant disanalogy with the central case of our experience of human behaviour, where the conjunction of expressive behaviour and action is such that both expressive predicates and ascriptions of intention pertain to the psychological life (and behaviour) of an actual person, and thus are genuinely convergent. The proposed

³⁹ This idea requires far more elaboration than is possible within the restricted space available here. However, I will say something more about what it amounts to in the Conclusion to this study. For another formulation of the idea that our construal of what we are doing when performing expressive music can make reference to more than just what we are *giving rise to* musically, but in a way that is nevertheless only meaningful insofar as it relates essentially to the latter, see Wittgenstein (1953: IIvi, p.182e).

account clearly resolves this problem, as both purposive and expressive qualities are predicated of the same actual human behaviour, taken as both expressive and as actual purposeful human action, and thus also of a single human presence.⁴⁰

What it means to ascribe expressive predicates to an actual human being, albeit of a minimally defined sort, in the context of an appreciation of music, is something I will examine in due course. It will suffice for the moment to say that I do not intend it to imply a return to anything like the Romantic ‘transmission’ theory of expression, whereby actually felt states of this person are understood to be expressed through music, with the latter construed as a form of behavioural expression on the part of the composer, performer, or both. Even so, the idea that we hear music as manifesting an actual human presence might be seized upon as evidence of the implausibility of the account of musical expressiveness proposed here, for other reasons. It might be argued, for example, that it conflicts with some more general aspects of our experience of the performing arts. That this is not so can be shown through a comparison with the case of non-narrative, non-representational dance.

In dance, similar issues connected with the status of the medium as a performed art are more overtly in evidence, given that we actually *see* human performers performing on stage. Hence the broader aesthetic implications of the arguments just put forward for the nature of the expressiveness of the medium may be more clearly graspable. Indeed, here we see the full absurdity of disallowing the actual human presence manifested in an artistic performance from informing our sense of what is aesthetically relevant to our appreciation of the art form in question. For to suggest that we do not experience dance with reference to such a presence is to imply that our experience of human beings moving expressively, but in stylised ways, is in the first instance construed as no more than expressive patterns of movement and shape. It implies that these are, in fact, further removed from the central case of actual human behavioural expression than is an entirely literal construal of what we are encountering, as what it in fact *is* – namely, an actual living human form.⁴¹

⁴⁰ These actions are just those that correspond to the activity of giving an expressive interpretation in performance. The actions in question are of a specifically musical sort, so, as was suggested earlier, they too stand in a logical relationship of ineliminability to the music itself. Although this relationship was not adequate to explain the relevance of hearing music as expressive in specifically vocal terms, it does therefore have a role to play in the overall account.

⁴¹ Some theorists (e.g. Khatchadourian 1978) argue that dance is, essentially, an art in which shapes and movements are presented for their own sake, and just happen to be presented using human bodies.

The absurdity of this is further emphasised when we consider the case of narrative and/or representational forms of dance (and non-narrative forms where these are understood as involving a fictive persona). In such cases we would be required to first bracket out of our experience the fact that these are movements and shapes that pertain to the body of an actual human being. Then, when the context requires us to do so, we would have to imagine that these same movements and shapes pertain to the body of some *other*, fictive human being, corresponding to a character in a story, or to our sense of a persona implied by the expressive sequence of movements and spatial configurations themselves.

By contrast, if the account given here is correct, all that is required is that we identify the actual human being, non-specifically ('tautologically') manifested in the performance but manifested all the same, with the fictive character or implied persona. The same point surely applies to music that situates itself alongside verbal utterances or dramatic representations – as in song or opera. It is absurd to think that we bracket out the presence of the singer as a human being, and then introduce a fictional human presence, which we associate only with some sort of disembodied and disowned voice, and not also with something more. For it is *already* evident to us that this voice belongs to a human presence, and is itself a human attribute whose audible characteristics also *belong to* that presence. And it is obvious from this that certain audible features of the music as performed, insofar as they are pervaded with these same characteristics, must also be ascribable to the human being whose presence is manifested in the music as an expressively performed phenomenon.

Conclusion

We are now in a position to reconsider the standoff between supporters and opponents of the persona theory. I will argue that the account just given of how we can hear music as expressive with reference to the voice makes an alternative response to this problem available. That account implies that in many cases hearing music as expressive requires us to accept the relevance to appreciation of the fact that, when performed, it manifests an actual human presence – albeit one only specified in a minimally necessary (‘tautological’) way. I hope to show that our encounter with this actual human presence in music can shed light on those features of our experience which have led theorists to claim that we make-believe that we are encountering the behaviour of a fictive persona in music. Moreover, I hope to show that it can do so in a way that avoids the points of contention leading to the standoff with opponents of the persona theory. The main challenge is to demonstrate that this human presence can do the same explanatory work as the notion of a persona – in terms of legitimising the range and intensity of our expressive perceptions and emotional responses – without resorting to the notion of make-believe, but also, crucially, without implying a version of the Romantic transmission theory of expression. The latter point is important because it is tempting to think that the only way to make *full* sense of any expressive characteristics of music is to find a basis for claiming that we experience them as actual behavioural expressions, just as the persona theory seeks to do. But attempting this with reference to the actual, musically manifested presence of the performer would mean construing the performer’s behaviour, insofar as this is audibly manifested as expressive, as an actual instance of behavioural expression. Because the performer is a real person rather than an imaginary persona, this would entail the Romantic transmission theory of expression. To avoid this we must therefore show that another way exists in which the actual behaviour of the performer, insofar as it is audibly manifested in music and experienced as expressive, could be invoked to fulfil this explanatory role.¹

The alternative response to the standoff begins from the fact that, given the model of how we hear music expressively with reference to the voice (and/or its typical

¹ In the preceding chapter I argued that it makes sense to think that we can hear music as expressive with reference to the voice in an aesthetically relevant way, because there is a sense in which what we hear just *is* the kind of behaviour tended towards by expressively heightened verbal utterances. I hope to show here that this need not imply that such behaviour must also be construed (literally or imaginatively) as an instance of actual behavioural expression.

patterns of audible muscular exertion), we are committed from the outset to hearing a human presence in music. What I hope to make clear is that because this presence is given as a literal fact about what we encounter when we experience expressively performed music, it is prior to any more specific characterisation of the music in respect of its expressive character. That is, it is given independently of whether we find it aesthetically appropriate to hear the music as mere sound that happens to exhibit certain expressive properties or to imaginatively construe it as a person's behavioural expression of their inner life. If that is correct, then we are aware of the presence of the performer as a fact about the music which informs (and aesthetically legitimises) our experience of it as expressive, rather than as a feature generated by a particular, critically appropriate construal of what it means for this or that *piece* of music, or *style* or *genre*, to be expressive.² This is because in hearing music as expressive in *this* way we are, in fact, simply hearing it as what it is: human behaviour audibly manifested, or musical performing and the music that results from it.

The implication of this is that it makes more sense to say of such a behavioural manifestation of a human presence that it *is* expressive in a sense of 'is' (or '*being* expressive') that is not specified in the way that distinguishes the positions of proponents and opponents of the persona theory from one another. It is not specified as the 'is' of a contingent relation between something and some expressive properties it just happens to have. Yet neither is it specified as the logical, constitutive relation that behavioural expressions stand in with respect to their expressive properties when the latter are encountered in contexts where they are reveal actual episodes of emotion. I will argue that this represents a more coherent characterisation of our experience of expressive music than is furnished by the notion of a make-believe persona. Then I will argue that it can do the same kind of work as the persona theory in terms of explaining the aesthetic relevance of our experience of music as expressive.

² However, the degree of specificity with which it does so may depend on the latter. Also, it may be worth stressing that while it is the case that what makes this an *ineliminable* fact about the music is the role it is required to play in informing our experience of the music as *expressively* interpreted, we do not construe the expressive nuances of such an interpretation as nuances in the first instance simply *because* they are expressive, so that we then construe them as features of the music's performance just to make sense of this. (That could lead us to construe many musical features as nuances that have no necessary connection with the music's expressive interpretation, just because they are expressive). Rather, in the first instance we construe certain expressive features of the music as nuances because they are identical to features of how the music is executed, in respect of their aesthetically relevant properties, so that from a perspective that *only* takes account of the latter they are one and the same.

As far as the first of these points is concerned, we need only consider what is implied by the non-representational and non-referential character of pure music, as this relates to what is proposed in the context of the persona theory. The latter proposes that we make-believe that we are encountering a human presence in music. This presence is manifested in an ineliminably musical way, rather than as an extra-musical fact about the music whose ineliminability stems from its ‘tautological’ relation to the music (as expressive and therefore also, typically, expressively interpreted in performance). In other words, the persona theory establishes the ineliminability of the experience of the persona by making this a wholly intra-musical experience. The behaviour that expresses the states of that persona, and the world in which such behaviour is taken to unfold and in which the persona is taken to be present, are regarded as occurring or existing ‘in’ the music. Yet the non-representational and non-referential character of pure music entails that to encounter such behaviour ‘in’ music would be to encounter it in a context where it would be impossible *in principle* to differentiate instances of actual behavioural expression from mere expressive appearances. We can see this when we realise that if such music *were* imagined to be a persona, it would have to be a persona existing and behaving in a world indistinguishable from the persona itself. This would mean that because such music would be identified with both the behaviour of the persona *and* the world in which that behaviour occurred, no wider context for the behaviour would exist. The behaviour would therefore be experienced as the sort of behaviour that is only identifiable as such in terms of public criteria of a purely physiognomic sort.³ (By ‘purely physiognomic’ I mean criteria corresponding to no more than the physical appearance of a person or their bodily behaviour: no facts about how this relates to a wider context could be invoked.) This is, of course, just how behaviour would have to be identified if it were taken to be an expression of nothing more than objectless states. Indeed, given Hanslick’s point about the absence of intentional objects of emotion in music we might expect an account of expressiveness in pure music to take just this form. However, the idea of a world in which people’s behaviour expressed *only* their objectless states – which is what such a world would have to be like in the case of music, for the persona theorist – is incomprehensible to us. This stems from the fact that the Wittgensteinian requirement that behaviour be understood as expression with reference to public criteria reflects a realisation that an account of what it means to

³ In Wittgenstein’s sense of ‘criteria’.

identify something as a behavioural expression must be logically consistent with the possibility of *discovering* that certain episodes of human behaviour are expressions and others are not. But as with discovering that certain sounds are meaningful (as language) while others are not, this discovery by its very nature calls for more than merely physiognomic criteria. This is because any such purely physiognomic criteria could always occur as accidental features of a person's appearance. It is only the patterns of correlation *between* such physiognomic characteristics and wider facts about the world that lead us to discover in the first place that in some cases they are forms of human expression (or language), and not just accidental changes in how we appear.⁴

It might be argued against this that much music lends itself to being heard as composed of two elements, unfolding together, one of which is invested with more distinctively human attributes and/or expressive qualities, the other not, as might be thought to be the case with a melody and its accompaniment. Yet it is just as easy to imagine that an accompaniment is the expressive background *within* a person's behaviour (analogous to the body language accompanying speech or song) as it is to imagine that it is the unfolding of other events in the world separate from that behaviour. It is true that music can suggest the occurrence of an event followed by a response, as when a sudden harmonic change precipitates a dramatic change of expressive quality in the melody immediately afterwards. This might tempt us to say that in hearing an event as a response we are construing or imagining it as being 'about' the event that preceded it. But the point surely remains that in pure music there is no clearly meaningful sense in which one of these occurrences can be said to be 'about' the other, in the sense of taking the other as its intentional object.

Given the above considerations, it should be clear that pure music furnishes a more specific and unusual context than is often admitted. It is a context in which the very question of whether experiencing expressive qualities in music implies a persona whose behavioural *expression* is the music, or just a set of expressive qualities directly predicable of the music itself, loses all significance. Our choice of answer to this question ceases to entail any difference in how the account relates to central cases. Moreover, as we have seen, invoking the notion of a persona in relation to music

⁴ For a consideration of the issues connected with purely physiognomic criteria of behavioural expression, see Rhys-Jones (1983). Wittgenstein does not rule out such criteria altogether, but it seems clear that he regards such cases as significantly less intelligible. Since what is ultimately at stake *here*, as highlighted by Kivy's critique of arousalism, is the *intelligibility* of our responses, which itself hinges on the intelligibility of what we are responding to, such criteria can still be regarded as remote from the sort of central cases relevant here.

requires us to imagine music to be a world in which the notion of behavioural expression itself – as something publicly discoverable – would be incomprehensible. Yet it also explicitly claims that the music is heard as behavioural expression of this sort. Hence the account is internally incoherent.

If we apply this same analysis of the implications of how we might construe pure music in expressive terms to the scenario offered by the alternative account proposed here, we can see that a different set of possibilities ensue. To be sure, the same point about the irrelevance of the distinction between hearing music as behavioural expression and as self-contained expressive qualities applies here. In this case, given the musically manifested presence of the performer as a prior fact about the music, the distinction at issue will take a different form. It now concerns whether we hear the performer's behaviour as expressive in virtue of its being an actual behavioural expression on his part, or as exhibiting audibly expressive characteristics that, though *literally* predicated of his actual behaviour, are nevertheless only accidental qualities of how that behaviour happens to appear (like Davies' emotion-characteristics in appearances).

Once again, we may note that the concept of pure music entails that this very distinction loses sense for us in the context of a consideration limited to those facts ineliminably connected to the music itself. However, in this case the reasons are somewhat different. It is not that the music is required to be heard as both an episode of behaviour in a (purely musical) world and as the defining manifestation of that world itself, as was the case with the theory just considered. Instead, it is that music is heard with reference to extra-musical facts about what is literally involved in its being humanly executed, but these facts are required to stand in a 'tautological' relation to the music itself. That is, they must furnish no more than the minimally necessary context required to make sense of the fact that, typically, we attend to expressive music in the way that we in fact do. (In this case the relevant facts are that we hear it as something expressively interpreted, where, as we have seen, this implies hearing it as manifesting certain aspects of the extra-musical events and processes involved in its execution by human beings.) So we encounter music *as* actual human behaviour (by performers), but of a kind defined only in those respects that have an essential bearing on our appreciation of the music (as expressively interpreted in performance). There is no reason to think that these respects could furnish the kind of contextual conditions that would allow us to distinguish cases of behavioural expression from cases of behaviour

that just happens to be expressive.⁵ This, however, reflects the limitations on what kind of facts about performance can be invoked as relevant to an understanding of music as being humanly performed in expressive ways. It does not reflect a conception of an intra-musical world in which human behaviour is conceived as occurring, but where the behaviour and the world are, in fact, conceived as co-extensive – the conception that I have argued is incomprehensible, at least as it relates to the concept of behavioural expression. It should be clear from this that while the model proposed suggests that the distinction between behavioural expression and accidental expressive qualities of behaviour is one that cannot be made in this context, this is not because the concept of behavioural expression is itself made to seem problematic (as with the persona theory). Instead, it just happens to be the case that the facts aesthetically relevant to music do not extend far enough out into extra-musical reality⁶ to make available the kind of criteria that would allow us to identify cases of actual behavioural expression in practice. Hence the thought that in encountering the expressive behaviour of a performer manifested in music we are encountering something that might *also* turn out to be behavioural expression is not precluded.⁷

I hope to show that this has important implications for the second stage in my alternative response to the standoff between supporters and critics of the persona theory. This concerns the question of whether an encounter with actual expressive human behaviour not specifically understood as behavioural expression can do the explanatory work that behavioural expression of a fictive persona is meant to do, in relation to musical expressiveness.

The proposed account suggests that pure music is heard as something human, behavioural and expressive, but in a relatively non-specific sense that stands prior to the distinction between expressive human appearances and actual human behavioural expression. But the problem is that what this describes is something that still seems

⁵ From the point of view of the central case, which is that of actual behavioural expression, the category of behaviour that *just happens* to be expressive must include all cases that are not expressive because they are cases of behavioural expression itself: hence it must also include cases that are expressive because they are intended to be expressive, e.g. in order to serve artistic purposes.

⁶ Or, more precisely, do not do so in a sufficiently determinate way

⁷ This allows my account to leave open the possibility that where it is aesthetically appropriate (for reasons specific to individual musical works) to *imagine* that the expressive behaviour that *could* in fact be behavioural expression actually *is* behavioural expression, we can do so without generating the internal incoherence which affects the persona theory. This makes my account consistent with Ridley's 'particularist' approach as discussed in the previous chapter.

utterly remote from the central cases of reidentifiable behavioural expressions that we encounter in life and which must form the basis for our concept of human expressiveness itself. Yet as we have seen throughout this study, it is these central cases that must be brought to bear on our experience of music if its expressive character, and our responses to the latter, are to be illuminated in a meaningful way.

One point we may note, however, is that many of our everyday encounters with other human beings also often occur in contexts in which, due to contingent factors, the criteria are lacking that would support the distinction between actual expression and mere appearances. Yet these cases do nevertheless carry the possibility of being actual expression, and it seems that where this is so we are inclined to respond to them as significant. Even so, it is not clear how useful this thought is, especially if our aim is, in part, to lend support to a form of complex arousalism that would illuminate the range and extent of our expressive perceptions and responses. As we have seen, this would require us to show that music can furnish suitable objects for empathetic and sympathetic responses – that it is an appropriate intentional object for these responses – so that they are legitimised along with the more subtle expressive perceptions they make possible. What is important is that this promises to shed light on how music can be expressive of at least some higher-order emotions (such as imply a more or less defined intentional object).⁸ The idea is that listeners perceive expressive qualities of the music as expressive of these more specific states as a consequence of first responding sympathetically with higher-order emotions to more basic expressive features of the music (that constitute appropriate intentional objects for *these*), and then, as a consequence of this, adopting an empathetically informed perspective on their experience of the music's expressive qualities. In such circumstances it becomes natural to ascribe similar or related higher-order emotion-characteristics to the music itself.

With the persona theory problems arise because of the fact that the features of music that entail the indistinguishability of an expressive persona from its world (as manifested 'in' music) also imply that in such a world only objectless states could be expressed. This conflicts with the idea that we come to hear music as expressive of higher-order emotions, since these are, precisely, emotions that are object-directed, and so imply a world that can be distinguished from the behavioural manifestations of our responses to it. However, with the alternative approach proposed here, the problem

⁸ This is important because it is exactly what simple (strong and weak) arousalist accounts were all found to be incapable of doing. (See Chapter Two.)

takes on a slightly different form. As we have seen, the existence of such a world as something distinct from our behavioural expressions is not ruled out at all. (Indeed, it is perfectly in evidence in the facts pertaining to musical performing itself). Instead, the difficulty lies in the fact that our sympathetic and empathetical responses to human behaviour themselves seem to imply an understanding of it as expression. As we have seen, this understanding is ruled out as anything more than a possibility, because it would imply that we take the performer's actual behaviour as behavioural expression, and therefore as actually revealing his felt states. This would then constitute a return to the Romantic transmission theory of expression.

What is required, then, is a way of making sense of higher-order emotion-characteristics in music. This needs to show that when we encounter similar characteristics in human behaviour in real life we may respond sympathetically (and empathetically), without having to think of the states conveyed by such characteristics as actually *felt* by the person in question. Moreover, this must be so even when these states take on the more specific character associated with higher-order emotions.⁹

The first point to note here is that we do often encounter others in circumstances in which we lack the information that may be required to identify their actual emotional states. Nowhere is this more so than with higher-order emotions, for which such information typically includes facts relevant to the identification of their likely intentional objects – facts that are often not given as part of the immediate context of an encounter with another person. Yet in such cases we still experience behaviour as suggestive of such states: as expressive of particular higher-order emotions. More importantly, it seems that we also possess a primitive inclination in such instances to take the expressive behaviour as a significant feature of the *person*. At least, we do not, until further evidence forces us to do so, regard it as a purely accidental feature of how their behaviour appears. For example, I look through a train window into another train and see somebody who appears nostalgic, or irritated, about *something*. But I do not know, or cannot see, *what* they might be experiencing that could be an appropriate object of such feelings. I may meet the person later and discover this, but I could equally discover that the appearance of irritation was due to a nervous condition, or the

⁹ Failing this, we would have to accept that the literal behavioural presence of the performer could only account for our experience of the music as expressive of objectless states. But our experience of the music as expressive of higher-order emotions would still then require an empathetical perspective grounded in sympathetic responses to these states, and these sympathetic responses would require us to make-believe that there is a fictive persona whose objectless feelings are behaviourally expressed in the music.

look of nostalgia caused by an injection of anaesthetic at the dentist. What is significant is that once apprised of the latter I no longer see them as irritated or nostalgic at all. The possibility of undergoing this change in aspect-perception is one that such cases share with those where I construe behaviour as actual expression, but find out later that my grounds for doing so were faulty or deceptive, but it is not shared by cases where I see the behaviour as accidentally expressive from the start.

It is tempting to treat this phenomenon as running parallel to our sense of a person's behaviour as actual expression, but in a manner essentially disconnected from the latter. We might say that any significance it holds for us is 'purely aesthetic': something to be valued without reference to any wider sense of how expressiveness relates to behavioural expression or to human life in general.¹⁰ But this is surely to commit a similar error to Davies.¹¹ The latter assumes that because expressive qualities can be exhibited by objects with no mental life, they must, when encountered as qualities of human behaviour not readily identifiable as actual behavioural expressions, be identifiable instead as purely accidental features of how behaviour appears. That is, they must count as having no meaningful connection to the fact that they are predicated about something that is still the manifestation of a human being's presence (as though this lack of connection were the 'default' state that our perception must automatically fall back onto). But that is not in fact how we encounter such qualities in the context of a person's behaviour or appearance. We do not *first* construe expressive qualities as things that just happen to occur in the same time and place as someone's behaviour or appearance. Nor do we continue to see them in this way until additional facts lead us to infer that they are part *of* behaviour, *because* they are cases of actual expression.¹² To

¹⁰ This move is sometimes made for cases where human 'expressions' are represented in pictorial form as directed towards a hidden and unspecified object taken to lie beyond the pictorial frame. However, this is not directly analogous to the phenomenon under discussion here. A pictorial representation leaves it open to the viewer to imagine a suitable intentional object, but in real-life encounters this would be absurd as we are aware of the possibility that a particular intentional object may in fact exist that would illuminate the person's behaviour as an expression of a higher-order emotion.

¹¹ See Chapter One.

¹² To fall into this assumption is like falling into the empiricist assumption that we first see an object's various properties as self-contained occurrences corresponding to different kinds of sense-data, and only move beyond this to a perception of them as properties of the object itself when other information licenses us to do so. But as Wittgenstein's remarks on aspect-perception demonstrate, this is not how perception ordinarily works. Typically we only come across the object and its essential properties in some definite context or other, and relative to this context they are experienced as interdependent from the outset. As Wittgenstein points out, the same logic applies to human expression and linguistic meaning, since they both possess a physiognomic character which means that their significance is immediately perceivable in behaviour, even when they reflect a wider context than just this behaviour. To not take note of this is to mischaracterise human expression itself – the central case with reference to which accounts of expressiveness in music are supposed to be operating.

see such qualities in a person's appearance or behaviour is to already have in mind that they are part of our encounter with that person's behaviour and, if Wittgenstein is right, therefore also part of our encounter with that *person*. This is so even if the role that they play in such an encounter is subject to further determination, and cannot yet be characterised as being or not being a case of behavioural expression. (Hence such cases do not exist *alongside* cases of behavioural expression, but at a level of determination or description *prior to* that at which the disjunction between actual expression and mere appearance becomes meaningful.)¹³

This point is born out by another potentially relevant aspect of our encounters with others. A person who strikes us as dignified or resigned on account of their overall bearing may do so with a consistency that belies the thought that they would have to concurrently *feel* anything corresponding to what is conveyed by their behaviour. Yet we still think of, and respond to, such a person as *being* dignified or resigned. We attribute these emotional characteristics to them more in the manner of character traits than as occurrent emotional states – as capturing something about the general character of how they are emotionally disposed towards the world. Yet they still possess the same *kind* of implications that ascriptions of psychological predicates have in the context of actual behavioural expression itself: namely, implications for how we should behave toward them, how we would expect them to behave, etc. The nature of such cases is such that what is ascribed cannot be thought of as a *felt* state of any kind. Yet such ascriptions do elicit many of the same responses from us that we would have if we construed the person in question as feeling what their behaviour conveys. Moreover, like the cases discussed above, but *unlike* mere expressive accidents, our experience of expressiveness in such cases is largely undermined when we discover the expressive features in question to be accidental, in the sense of having been caused by factors unrelated to the psychological life of the person in question. (We simply stop experiencing the behaviour in question as expressive in that particular respect, and look

¹³ To say that they are part of a person's *appearance*, as opposed to a part of their *behaviour*, in such a context, would therefore have to mean something quite different from what is meant if we think of their 'appearance' as capturing *just* those facts about how a person strikes us that are only accidentally connected to their actual life. Instead, we should have to invoke 'appearance' as an essential feature in its own right of the person himself. We might define this as 'appearance' in the sense of 'appearance-of-X', where X and its appearance are understood to be logically inseparable, so that it makes sense to think of X as something ineliminably defined for us in part *by* its appearance or, to put the same point another way, to think of X's appearance as being a function – logically speaking – of how X itself *is*. For a detailed and original study of this concept of appearance, see Kühl (2000).

past it to other aspects of their appearance that are still psychologically interesting for us).

These considerations and examples may provide evidence for thinking that we can respond sympathetically and empathetically to expressive qualities of human behaviour without being committed to taking the latter as instances of actual behavioural expression. But to what extent do they resolve the second issue connected with the alternative response proposed here to the standoff between proponents and opponents of the persona theory? The aim was to explain how we could come to hear higher-order emotion characteristics in music in an aesthetically relevant way – along the lines suggested by complex arousalism with its notions of sympathetic and empathetical response – through making use of the idea that the music is heard as manifesting the actual behaviour of performers. The challenge was to do this without making reference to the Romantic transmission theory of expression. If our responses to music are understood along the lines of the examples just mentioned, then the transmission theory has indeed been avoided, but how far have such responses been made intelligible?

The initial requirement was that an account of musical expressiveness establish a meaningful connection to central cases of behavioural expression, not just to expressive human behaviour more generally. One of the defining features of behavioural expression is that it involves the conviction (and experience) of expressive qualities of behaviour as revealing concurrent episodes of felt emotion in a person. Yet this feature is absent from the everyday encounters with expressive behaviour that need to be invoked to make our responses intelligible in the context of the alternative approach proposed here. On the other hand we have seen that our experience in such cases does possess other significant characteristics that are present in our experience of behavioural expression but not in that of accidental expressive appearances. Moreover, the *prima facie* significance that we attach to this kind of experience shares important features with that which we ascribe to encounters with actual behavioural expression. In both cases the experience can have implications for how we behave towards the person in question, or for how we expect them to behave. Indeed, the very fact that we respond sympathetically and empathetically in such cases, as we do in cases of actual behavioural expression, must also count as strong evidence of a connection here.

I suspect that the extent to which one is convinced by this account will depend on what aspects of one's experience of expressive music one is most inclined to focus

on. For someone who believes that music is most richly and meaningfully experienced as expressive when it is heard and appreciated with reference to its being expressively performed by human beings, the account proposed here seems to have much to recommend it. In particular, it seems to do justice to an intuition that is deeply felt, but which nevertheless may not be felt by everyone. This is the intuition that a great part of music's singular emotional vividness stems from our experience of it as realised in performance through human actions whose concurrent unfolding itself imparts expressivity to the music at a fundamental level, and in a uniquely intense way. That this is so, even compared to other arts of 'live' performance, may be due to the unusual extent to which music is a purely temporal art,¹⁴ or to the fact that in its pure form it lacks representational or referential content such as might distract us from the contemplation of its intrinsic characteristics and what is directly and literally manifested through these (in respect of the actions of performers). Either way, an important aspect of this experience seems to be our sense that what we are encountering in a musical performance is not just sounds, or expressive sounds, but sounds issuing from and manifesting the behaviour of one or more immediately present human beings. To hear music as expressively performed and interpreted is not just to hear musical sounds as an intentionally created artefact created and left to exist in its own right – though to be sure music can be heard in this way. It is – according to the intuition being expressed here – to hear it as somehow actually offering us an autonomous mode of access to those persons whose presence in the world is exhibited through their performance of it. This mode of access has significance for us in its own right, over and above our everyday non-musical encounters with people, even though it generally excludes the concept of behavioural expression of concurrently felt emotions. Moreover, because it is music and the conditions 'tautologically' implied by our hearing it as expressively interpreted that constitute this mode of access, this significance can be ascribed to the music itself, at least insofar as it is appreciated as expressive.

¹⁴ For a discussion of this, see Levinson and Alperson (1991: 439-49). These authors stop short of endorsing traditional arguments for the importance of music as a uniquely temporal art, as given by Hegel, Schopenhauer or Langer. However, their various criteria for defining the extent to which an art form is temporal still suggest that music occupies an unusually high place in the order of 'temporalness'. They also identify improvisational performing as a special category in which 'we appreciate the work as the production-of-the-object-in-time in relatively spontaneous creation' (ibid: 445) (see also Alperson 1984: 23). This will be significant in the present context – at least for those who hold that expressive interpretation in performance becomes more artistically valuable if its creation involves some element of spontaneously improvised nuancing and/or spontaneous response to the actions of one's fellow performers.

Because this account implies that in witnessing a performance of a musical work by X I am encountering X, it also implies that I am encountering actual personal qualities of X. It seems to me that the idea that we in part value a performance for the personal qualities of the performer that it reveals is entirely consistent with our ordinary critical talk about artistic performances. This can take the form of noting how a performance reflects character traits of the performer that are judged to offer a more or less appropriate frame for our overall experience of the music as expressive. What is striking is that we do not limit our discussion of such traits to those *practical* abilities that a performer must possess to be capable of bringing about the interpretative performance in question. We also consider the psychological traits that they must possess. With the latter, the fact that these ‘frame’ our experience of the music in ways that contribute to its value as a particular expressive interpretation is partly connected with our sense of the intrinsic value of these human qualities. It is no coincidence that we praise performances and performers for their wisdom, maturity, etc. but not also for their foolishness, immaturity, etc.

Nevertheless, the intuition that motivates these considerations may not be shared by everyone. I doubt that it is shared by those who do not also find music to be most rewardingly expressive when heard with reference to its expressive interpretation in live performance. The fact that musical genres and sub-cultures exist in which this aspect of music is not present at all (or is replaced by technological simulations) makes it likely that there are, at least now, a significant number of people who fall into this category. For these people the account given here may seem less persuasive.¹⁵

There is one final objection to my account of certain forms of musical expressiveness, and to the ensuing approach to the standoff regarding the persona theory, that remains to be addressed. The objection is that the account implies that the conditions admitted as relevant to our aesthetic appreciation of music are different, depending on whether it is heard and appreciated with essential reference to its expressiveness or not. The claim is that the account proposes an understanding of how music is constituted that is specific to expressive music, and even to music that is experienced as expressive in a specific way: as expressively heightened vocalising or one of its instrumental equivalents. This might seem an unnecessary complication of our

¹⁵ Obviously the extent to which one is troubled by this will depend on how much value one places on the kinds of music associated with those particular genres and subcultures.

understanding of expressive music, and to constitute grounds for rejecting the account as uneconomical and insufficiently inclusive.

I have already argued that we should not assume, ahead of our inquiries into specific phenomena such as expressiveness, that music is something that demands a single overarching characterisation – one that must always be invoked in its entirety as an essential background to our understanding of those more specific phenomena. But apart from this, I think that such objections are clearly outweighed by a positive feature of this account that has yet to be mentioned, and which further differentiates it from the other accounts considered in this study. To see this, it is necessary to call to mind an objection levelled against both resemblance and persona theories that is rarely if ever addressed by advocates of either approach. This is that any account that appeals to resemblances to extra-musical phenomena (such as the voice), or to the thought that we construe music as a manifestation of such phenomena, puts itself in a position from which it is impossible to make sense of why we value music for being expressive (Budd 1985a: 144).¹⁶ This is because it can only do so by giving us an account of why we should prefer to experience this phenomenon and its associated expressive character in its indirectly manifested musical form rather than simply as it is when we encounter it directly in the extra-musical world. But any such explanation will inevitably run counter to the whole thrust of such an approach, which is to see our experience of expressiveness in music as deriving its intelligibility *from* our experience of expressiveness in human behaviour or human behavioural expression. Hence whatever qualities music is valued for when it is valued for being expressive will, by definition, be more fully or purely instantiated in everyday behaviour itself. The normal response to this is, as we have seen, to claim that such an explanation is not an essential requirement for an account of musical expressiveness itself. This is because such an account need only explain how musical expressiveness might figure as one element in our appreciation of music, rather than as the sole basis for our valuing of it (Walton 1988: 359n). But this is to offer no more than a promissory note, as far as explaining why we actually value expressive music for itself is concerned. It suggests that an account of musical expressiveness is adequate so long as it does not preclude the

¹⁶ The failure of either position to address this makes it tempting to think that we should reject ‘externalist’ approaches that link musical expressiveness to either behavioural expression or expressive appearances, in favour of an ‘internalist’ approach linking it directly to our introspectively felt experience of our emotions instead. This point became clear as a result of discussions with Krzysztof Guczalski.

possibility of figuring in some more complex account of this fact, but does not take us closer to actually offering such an account itself.

By contrast, the account proposed here is able to resolve this more fundamental aspect of the issue of musical expressiveness as well. It suggests that in encountering music that is expressive we are, typically, encountering something that it is natural for us to construe as a manifestation – of a kind *unique* to music – of features that, outside of music, are nevertheless also typical and distinctive of expressively heightened forms of human utterance. It suggests that what is unique to the manifestation of these features in expressive music is that they occur as *essential* and *defining* characteristics of music (at least where it is expressive). By contrast, it suggests that outside of music their occurrence is subject to a range of contingent factors that bear on the kind of behaviour and behavioural appearances that human beings exhibit. They define the direction of a significant tendency within human behaviour (characteristic of expressively heightened utterances), but the actualisation of that tendency still depends on a range of other factors that may or may not inhibit it. One might say that in expressive music expressively heightened utterances are encountered as genuinely self-contained phenomena – as *essences*. By contrast, in life they are encountered as moments of expressive heightening whose occurrence is only contingently connected to the underlying expressive character of the utterances themselves. (This is because such utterances possess a more basic expressive character: they need not necessarily be expressively heightened to have the form that they have.)

If this is so, then it is only in music that expressively heightened utterances are presented or exhibited as an entirely distinct phenomenon. This itself commands our interest, leading us to value music that is expressive *for* being expressive, in a way that explains why it is *music* that we principally choose to value in this way, and not those other phenomena with reference to which we hear it as expressive. The reasons why such a fact should command our interest and count as grounds for valuing music may well be multifarious. However, the most obvious is surely the thought that, in exhibiting heightened forms of human expressiveness as self-contained phenomena, it facilitates a more broad-minded construal of the constitution of our world. It encourages us to think of that world as *essentially* constituted from, amongst other things, phenomena of this same sort: namely, those that reflect the sort of quintessentially *human* qualities exemplified in both emotionally heightened behavioural expression and other forms of heightened human expressiveness.

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