

Music and architecture: time and/or space?

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It is a challenging task to think architecture and music together, given that they seem to be at opposite ends of the spectrum of arts. An attempt is nevertheless made to uncover what they have in common as arts, and simultaneously to distinguish between them by scrutinizing their distinctiveness. To this end, attention is given, in turn, to Schopenhauer's thought on the matter, as well as to that of Hegel and Adorno, before turning to Derrida's complex notion of *différance*, which seems to suggest that one should be able to distinguish persuasively between these two arts even as one articulates the conditions of possibility of both along the countervailing axes of the 'movement' of *différance*, namely what Derrida terms 'spacing' and 'temporalizing'. In conclusion, Harries's conception of a performance model of architecture yields a surprising consonance with musical performance, understood in terms of *différance*.

Keywords: architecture, music, *différance*, spacing, temporalizing, Schopenhauer, Hegel, Adorno, Derrida, Harries

Musiek en argitektuur: tyd en/of ruimte?

Dit is 'n uitdaging om argitektuur en musiek saam te dink, aangesien hulle skynbaar aan teenoorgestelde kante van die spectrum van die kunste verkeer. 'n Poging word desnietemin hier aangewend om te bepaal wat hulle met mekaar gemeen het en terselfdertyd tussen hulle te onderskei. Hiermee in gedagte word Schopenhauer, Hegel en Adorno se gedagtes in hierdie verband ondersoek, voordat daar aan Derrida se komplekse idee van *différance* aandag gegee word. Hiervolgens kom dit voor asof daar oortuigend tussen musiek en argitektuur behoort te kan onderskei word, al is dit die geval dat albei se moontlikheidsvoorwaardes langs die uiteenlopende 'asse' van die 'beweging' van *différance* geartikuleer word, naamlik die van 'spasiëring' en 'temporalisering'. Ter afsluiting word 'n verrassende aanklank tussen Harries se opvatting van 'n 'uitvoeringsmodel' van argitektuur en musiekuitvoering ontdek aan die hand van *différance*.

Slutelwoorde: argitektuur, musiek, *différance*, spasiëring, temporalisering, Schopenhauer, Hegel, Adorno, Derrida, Harries

Isn't it strange to bring architecture and music together? Aren't they at opposite sides of the artistic spectrum? Architecture: cast in hard materials ranging from concrete to brick, wood, stone, steel and marble; music: the most ephemeral of the arts, exemplifying human temporality itself, where the present musical sound lasts only a moment before it slips into the past, and the notes to come, or the future music, is anticipated even as the present fades into silence. But one should not forget that the 'unity' of past, present and future in human life differs from a musical performance, as well as from an architectural work, in so far as one cannot foretell the future, whereas the 'future' progression of a musical performance, once heard (and to the trained ear, even when not heard before), can be anticipated, just as every note can be repeated. The *da capo* convention in music testifies to this. The closest that human life can approximate it is in moral terms as conceived by Nietzsche (1984: 251-252, 332-333; see also Olivier 2007: 78-79) with his doctrine of the eternal recurrence, which exhorts one to live in such a way that one would want to repeat every moment of one's life for all eternity, without changing one iota about it. Only in this way can we make our peace with time's irrevocable passage, and with our own mortality. Perhaps music's repeatability is consonant with Nietzsche's moral imperative.

What about architecture, which was described as 'frozen music' by Goethe (see below), an allusion, no doubt, to the analogy between the formal musical relations between notes and the equally formal relations between spatial volumes in architecture? In this regard it is worth noting that, on the website for RTÉ Radio 1, there is a thought-provoking reference to an earlier broadcast-series (<http://www.rte.ie/radio1/frozenmusic/>):

In this new series for autumn on RTÉ Radio 1, Ellen Cranitch talks to six Irish architects who are also musicians. Taking Goethe's famous quote, 'Architecture is frozen music', as a starting point, she explores the relationship between the art of architecture and the science of music.¹

Damon Albarn, from *Blur*, and Justine Frischmann, lead singer with *Elastica*, both trained as architects prior to their careers in music; Daniel Libeskind, who is designing the monument for the site of the World Trade Centre, and who submitted a proposal for the re-development of Carlisle Pier in Dún Laoghaire, trained to be a concert violinist; Simon Crowe, drummer with the *Boomtown Rats*, was an architect, while Iannis Xenakis, the renowned Greek composer, was an architect who worked with Le Corbusier before devoting himself full time to composing.

The fact that so many architects are also very accomplished musicians raises questions as to whether the two arts occupy the same territory in the brain² or if the non-tangible nature of music appeals particularly to the architect whose very business is to create structures for us to touch and see and live in? [sic].

What interests me here, however, is primarily neither the artistic nor the scientific status of these two arts, but rather the curious phenomenon, that arts ostensibly so far apart regarding their specific medium – temporally organized musical sound in the case of the one, and concrete, spatially modulated materials in that of the other (which, moreover, provides living-space) – can be perceived as having something significant in common (whatever that ‘something’ may be). In Schopenhauer’s classification of the arts the common element is quite simply what he terms the ‘will’ – according to him the fundamental (irrational) ‘reality’ underlying everything in the universe, from inorganic phenomena to organic ones. Among the arts the only one that is the ‘immediate’ embodiment of the world-will, is music, according to Schopenhauer, the other arts being ‘weak objectifications’ of the will in the guise of some or other Idea. Apropos of architecture, he remarks (1969: 214):

...if we consider *architecture* merely as a fine art and apart from its provision for useful purposes, in which it serves the will and not pure knowledge, and thus is no longer art in our sense, we can assign it no purpose other than that of bringing to clearer perceptiveness some of those Ideas that are the lowest grades of the will’s objectivity. Such Ideas are gravity, cohesion, rigidity, hardness, those universal qualities of stone, those first, simplest, and dullest visibilities of the will, the fundamental bass-notes of nature; and along with these, light, which is in many respects their opposite. Even at this low stage of the will’s objectivity, we see its inner nature revealing itself in discord; for, properly speaking, the conflict between gravity and rigidity is the sole aesthetic material of architecture; its problem is to make this conflict appear with perfect distinctness in many different ways. It solves this problem by depriving these indestructible forces of the shortest path to their satisfaction, and keeping them in suspense through a circuitous path; the conflict is thus prolonged, and the inexhaustible efforts of the two forces become visible in many different ways.

One should note the musical metaphor that Schopenhauer uses here to characterize architecture as ‘the fundamental bass-notes of nature’, keeping in mind that a metaphor is most striking and successful if it forms a transfer point between phenomena that are different, yet comparable in an analogous or parallel manner. In this case architecture and music are clearly different, but simultaneously comparable (as also in Goethe’s ‘frozen music’ metaphor, referred to earlier). At this stage I would suggest that Goethe’s and Schopenhauer’s metaphors, which bring music and architecture together, represent responses to what one cannot resist, namely the (perhaps intuitive) awareness that what architecture is in spatial terms, is paralleled by music in temporal terms. Hence the thought that architecture is ‘frozen’ music – what happens if music is ‘frozen’? It is deprived of its temporal succession of notes, which cannot itself happen in time, as the music would cease to exist if this is attempted. Music stands or falls by temporal succession of musical sounds. It is instructive to take note of Schopenhauer’s account of music at this point (1969: 256-57):

It [music] stands quite apart from all the others [arts]. In it we do not recognize the copy, the repetition, of any Idea of the inner nature of the world... The (Platonic) Ideas are the adequate objectification of the will. To stimulate the knowledge of these by depicting individual things... is the aim of all the other arts... Hence all of them objectify the will only indirectly, in other words, by means of the Ideas... music is by no means like the other arts, namely a copy of the Ideas, but a *copy of the will itself*, the objectivity of which are the Ideas.

Schopenhauer seems to have in mind something similar to my earlier suggestion, that there is an analogous relation between architecture and music, except that he affirms such an analogy

between music and all the other arts, including architecture (1969: 257-258): ‘...as it is the same will that objectifies itself both in the Ideas and in music, though in quite a different way in each, there must be, not indeed an absolutely direct likeness, but yet a parallel, an analogy, between music and the Ideas...’ What this analogy amounts to for him, becomes more intelligible in light of his remarks on the ‘conflictual’ character of music (as instantiated by Beethoven’s music; Schopenhauer 1966: 450), and at the same time establishes the analogy with architecture more clearly when it is recalled that (in the earlier quotation) he puts *conflict* at the very heart of architecture: ‘...the conflict between gravity and rigidity is the sole aesthetic material of architecture...’

And yet, despite his insight into the analogy between music and the other arts, the closest that Schopenhauer’s metaphysical philosophy of music seems to come to grasping the distinctively temporal character of music (in contrast to architecture’s spatial being), is where he refers to ‘repetition signs’ and to the *Da capo* in music, of which he observes approvingly (1969: 264): ‘...to comprehend it fully, we must hear it twice’. Repetition implicates time, which here appears to be inseparable from music, whether Schopenhauer intended to make the connection or not. I shall return to this question of time.

Before Schopenhauer, Hegel had associated architecture primarily (but not exclusively) with what he termed ‘symbolic art’, and music with one of the ‘romantic’ arts, the others being painting and poetry (Copleston 1965: 275-279). Art represents the lowest stage of the dialectical-historical unfolding of what he calls ‘absolute spirit’, followed by religion (or ‘pictorial thinking’) and eventually philosophy, where spirit comes to full self-knowledge. Art itself traverses three stages, namely symbolic art, classical art, and romantic art. It is not surprising that, as idealist metaphysical thinker, Hegel also places architecture, as Schopenhauer (who is not easily classified as an idealist) does, at the foot of the hierarchy of arts and artistic development, but ranks poetry higher than music, because it is the most ‘subjective’ of the romantic arts, and eventually makes way for religion and then philosophy as the more advanced historical bearers of spirit. Nevertheless, in music, as in painting and poetry, for Hegel, ‘spirit’ is too strong for sensuous material to contain in a condition of equilibrium, as in Classical Greek art (where spirit and sensuous material are in perfect harmony and balance), or, at a lower level of development, for spirit to be dominated by matter. According to Hegel, symbolic architecture, for example that of ancient Egypt, exemplifies such preponderance of matter over spirit; hence the enigmatic quality of such architecture, where one can never be sure what, precisely, is signified by architectural works where ‘spiritual’ content is dimly suggested but not clearly made manifest, as in classical (Greek) sculpture, or in romantic music and poetry, where the sensuous material can hardly ‘contain’ the spiritual content.

It is clear that, for Hegel as eminently historical thinker³, history – or time – cannot be separated from any of the arts, not even from architecture, as is evident in romantic architecture such as medieval Gothic church buildings, where one gets the impression that, in Copleston’s words (1965: 279), ‘...the divine transcends the sphere of finitude and of matter’, or as Hegel himself puts it (quoted in Copleston 1965: 279), ‘the romantic character of Christian churches consists in the way in which they arise out of the soil and soar into the heights’. In both of these quotations history, or time, is implicated – in the first one through the use of the word ‘finitude’, and in the second through the phrase ‘out of the soil’. In the first, ‘finitude’ denotes not merely spatial limits, but also (especially, even) limited time, which these architectural works attempt to surpass metaphorically in terms of the design of the buildings. The second, via the word ‘soil’, suggests a rootedness in mundane space, but also in the domain of history and temporality, as far as soil or the earth is subject to the cycles and ravages of time.

However, the philosopher whose work testifies unambiguously to his insight into the inalienable temporal character of music – especially as model for cognition – is Theodor Adorno, while, in contrast, his friend and colleague, Walter Benjamin, turned to a primarily spatial model for this purpose, namely surrealist art (which resembles architecture in this respect; Buck-Morss 1979: 122-127). In Adorno's own words (quoted in Buck-Morss 1979: 43):

Music is, as temporal art, bound by its very medium to the form of succession, and therewith as irreversible as time. Once it commences, it is obliged to go further, to become something new, to develop itself.

According to Adorno, then, music consists of 'the temporal succession of articulated sounds that are more than mere sound' (quoted in Buck-Morss 1979: 134). As Susan Buck-Morss (1979: 134) further points out, for Adorno it differs from the juxtaposed images of surrealist art (favoured by Benjamin) as far as the latter 'condenses' material and allows 'contradictory elements' to converge spatially, while music 'unravels' the material and 'articulates' such elements by arranging and extending them in time. What intrigued Benjamin about surrealist art is the way in which the everyday objects depicted by it 'exactly' as they exist in social reality, assume new meaning when juxtaposed in unlikely or 'conflicting' configurations (Buck-Morss 1979: 125) – a feature of surrealist art that Adorno criticized precisely because it is 'static' (Buck-Morss 1979: 130). Instead of such a state of affairs, which (for Adorno) mimics the ideologically frozen relations of bourgeois society, he favoured music as exemplary practice, given the analogy between music's temporal unfolding and the similar articulation, in time, of philosophical language, both of which have to be interpreted, albeit in different ways – in philosophy through understanding the conceptual side of language, and in music by 'making' it, that is, through mimesis (Buck-Morss 1979: 134).

As far as the theme of this paper goes, one may gather from these differences between Adorno and Benjamin that there seems to be something irreconcilable between an art form that exists in the medium or realm of time, and one for which space is indispensable for its existence. But, as already apparent from Hegel's conception of architecture, it may be an 'artificial' separation of two realms that cannot, strictly, be separated, even if they can be distinguished. This much is already implicit in Adorno's conception of the transient nature of music. In this regard, Buck-Morss observes of Adorno's acute historical awareness (1979: 43):

Music, which has often been called the most abstract of the arts, is in the historical sense the most concrete. For no art is more integrally related to the dimension of time. The composition is itself history: the sense of each transient note both determines and is determined by that which has been and that which will come. Musical sound unfolds in a continuous, transitory present.

But there is another sense in which music is related – in fact, subject to – time, notably in the sense of the effects of history, for Adorno. No musical composition (and, one may add, performance) could be divorced from the historical situation of its provenance – what appeared revolutionary about Beethoven in his era, seems familiar from a later historical perspective, for example. In other words, the 'laws of composition' are not timeless or a-historical, but subject to history like everything else.⁴ 'Musical forms could die', says Buck-Morss. This is precisely where the distance between music as time-oriented art, and architecture as primarily spatially constituted art, emerges, for – as implied by the historical transience of musical forms or genres – all art may be said to be subject to historical ephemerality in this sense, including architecture.

To be sure, there is a sense in which architecture – at least a certain kind of architecture, such as 'classical' architecture, or modern architecture which displays a love of 'placeless' (spatial) geometrical properties – may be seen as resisting this historical transience, or what Karsten Harries (1997: 228-233) calls the 'terror of time'. What I would like to propose here, however, is that, no matter how strenuously one might try to maintain a distance between architecture and

music by associating the one with space and the other with time, on the one hand, or reconcile them by arguing that both are equally subject to the ravages of time and history, on the other, the fact that both arts are ineluctably subject to interpretation, means that not only space, in the case of architecture, or time, where music is concerned, is integral to their respective modes of being, but that neither can escape the web of space and time to any degree at all. Or, to be more precise, neither can elude the effects of ‘spacing’ and ‘temporalizing’. This much is apparent in light of the meaning of what Jacques Derrida (1973: 129-160) has called *differance* (or what I prefer to write as *différance*⁵) in an essay by that name (and elsewhere in his extensive literary-philosophical *oeuvre*).

Différance is inescapable in the world of meaning and non-meaning, sense and non-sense; in fact, something either has meaning or ‘sense’, or it does not make any sense (which would, paradoxically, be its ‘meaning’), by virtue of the operation of *differance*, which is the condition of the possibility of meaning as well as of its impossibility (as something ‘pure’). This is just another way of saying that, for anything – this sentence, the appearance of a tree, a building, a mountain, or the sound of a song – to ‘make sense’, or, on the other hand, to seem completely ‘senseless’, *something* has to be presupposed. This ‘something’ is *différance*, except that it is not a ‘thing’. One might describe it as a ‘process’, except that this would make it susceptible to categorization, while it is ‘itself’ the condition of categorization ‘itself’. This is why Derrida (1973: 153) can claim that ‘*differance* is not’, for to ‘be’, it has to be somehow discernible in the field of being, which it is not. Just how difficult it is to talk sensibly about something as elusive as *différance*, is evident where Derrida (1973: 137) says:

Within a conceptual system and in terms of classical requirements, *differance* could be said to designate the productive and primordial constituting causality, the process of scission and division whose differings and differences would be the constituted products or effects.

However, he goes on to point out (1973: 137) that, while this approach would approximate the ‘active core of differing’, the ending, ‘-ance’ of *différance* reminds one that, like ‘resonance’ (in contradistinction from ‘the act of resonating’), it is ‘undecided between active and passive’, and ‘speaks of an operation which is not an operation’. Derrida’s coining of this neologism, *différance*, which is neither active nor passive, neither a word nor a concept, can thus be seen as an attempt to allude to an ineffable – or ‘effanineffable’, sayable and unsayable at the same time, to follow John Caputo (1993: 78) – ‘abyssal ground’ which must always be presupposed when one is confronted with all manner of meaning and non-meaning across the oscillating spectrum of symbols, signs and codes comprising the human world.

One may wonder how something as elusive or enigmatic as *différance* could possibly cast light on the mode(s) of being of architecture and music. To exacerbate the puzzle, consider this: *Différance* is what makes the difference between architecture and music possible, but simultaneously what draws them into an intimate embrace of similarity. Previously I claimed that neither can evade the necessity of interpretation, or more precisely, interpretability. The reason for this is that, as phenomena in space and time, they display certain features which one may call, metaphorically speaking, a kind of ‘textuality’, by which I don’t mean that they are subsets of literary texts at all – they are distinct from the latter, from each other, and yet are also similar to anything that can be interpreted at all, which means pretty much everything in the human universe of spatiotemporality.

Différance works in a number of ways simultaneously. First, it allows anything – a building by Corbusier, a symphony by Beethoven, a novel by Toni Morrison – to be subject to an indefinite number of interpretations, that is, to difference, or to put it in philosophical terms, to *différance* as ‘spacing’ (Derrida 1973: 136). In concrete terms, different people understand Morrison’s novels differently, for instance, at more or less the same time. If this were the only

manner that *différance* functions, however, every signifier, every morpheme, phoneme, sense datum, idea, concept or theory would be in a state of absolutely incessant flux, to such a degree that no one would be able to recognize their own name, or their own house, or car, or wife, partner or husband from one hour to the next. But we do, which implies that something about them must somehow ‘stay the same’, even as we recognize that all these things, or people, are also subject to change. It is a paradox, to be sure.

The reason for this simultaneous, but countervailing, ‘effect’ of *différance* is, firstly, that its ‘spacing’ is accompanied by a concomitant ‘temporalizing’, or to put it differently, by *différance* as *deferral* (Derrida 1973: 136). Again in more concrete terms, at different times, the same person may interpret Morrison’s novels differently – their ‘meaning’ is indefinitely ‘deferred’, because of the working of *différance* as a kind of ‘detour’, ‘delay’ or ‘reserve’, which implies that, as a fabric of differences which is subject to the force of time or history, the novel can, and does, sustain multiple interpretations at different times. Needless to emphasize, this goes for the interpretation of musical and architectural works as well.

But something is seriously missing, in light of what I have said earlier about the recognizability of anything despite its being subject to *différance* as deferral as well as difference. This is because there are two senses in which *différance* makes both difference and deferral of meaning possible – the one is an ‘economic’ sense (‘restricted economy’), and the other is an ‘aneconomic’ sense (‘general economy’). ‘Economic’ here qualifies something according to the law or logic of investment and return, such as a gift presented to someone in the hope that he or she would ‘return’ the favour one day, while the ‘logic of aneconomy’ induces entropy or loss, and excess or proliferation at the same time – a ‘too much’ and a ‘loss without return’ evident in an anonymous, overwhelming gift that one can hardly register *as* a gift.

Différance as spacing in an ‘economic’ sense is therefore what must be presupposed in the ‘positive’ identification of an entity or event in contradistinction to others – for example a building by Libeskind as opposed to one by Philip Johnson, or a joyous occasion as opposed to a disastrous one. An act of interpretation is therefore ‘economic’ as far as something is appropriated as *not* being subject to an entropic difference-from-itself.

Différance as spacing in an ‘aneconomic’ sense, on the other hand, releases the virus that destroys identity of all kinds, producing difference as well as sameness within difference, seducing the colours of the spectrum into leaking into one another. Where the mist of such difference descends, everything tends to lose its distinctive character, becoming a metonymic part of an amorphous mass.

Along similar, but non-identical lines, *différance* as ‘temporalizing’ – where circuitous deferral of meaning, and not meaning-differences, is at stake – assumes either an economic or an aneconomic aspect. The former allows the recognition of something with an ‘enduring’ identity along a temporal or historical trajectory, while the latter enables one to track the changes that this something (thing, object, idea, event, person) is subject to. In an extreme sense, economic temporalizing appears to yield a self-same, self-identical object subsisting through time, where a meaning appears to be recouped subsequent to its initial ‘investment’. At the opposite extreme, aneconomic temporalizing tends to exacerbate the ‘endless sliding of the signifier’ along the symbolic chain.

In light of the above it should be apparent that the tendency, to associate Derrida’s neologism, *différance*, one-sidedly with entropic decay of meaning at the level of both difference and deferral, is plainly absurd⁶ – *différance* ‘names’ that which, by itself, is ineffable, because only its effects are evident in *both* the relative ‘stability’ (spacing and temporalizing in an economic sense) as well as the ‘instability’ (spacing and temporalizing in an aneconomic sense) of meaning.

Neither of these ‘operations’ of *différance* occurs by itself; they ‘function’ simultaneously, in countervailing as well as mutually reinforcing manner. The following excerpt from Derrida’s famous (or infamous, among his detractors) essay entitled *Différance* (see note 5) captures succinctly some of the aspects of this strange non-concept (non-concept, because it is precisely that which makes conceptuality possible) which I have elaborated on above (Derrida 1973: 129-130):

The verb ‘to differ’ [*différer*] seems to differ from itself. On the one hand, it indicates difference as distinction, inequality, or discernibility; on the other, it expresses the interposition of delay, the interval of a *spacing* and *temporalizing* that puts off until ‘later’ what is presently denied, the possible that is presently impossible. Sometimes the *different* and sometimes the *deferred* correspond [in French] to the verb ‘to differ’...

In the one case ‘to differ’ signifies non-identity; in the other case it signifies the order of the *same*. Yet there must be a common, although entirely differant [*différente*] root within the sphere that relates the two movements of differing to one another. We provisionally give the name *différance* to this *sameness* which is not *identical*: by the silent writing of its *a*, it has the desired advantage of referring to differing, *both* as spacing/temporalizing and as the movement that structures every dissociation.

I have elaborated on Derrida’s eponymous non-concept, *différance*, not only because it is a decidedly difficult ‘non-word’ (non-word, because it names that which makes words possible in the first place, but also ruins them in so far as the signification of their word-character is never unproblematically clear-cut), but also because it enables one to distinguish between music and architecture through the differentiating-assimilating grid of *différance*.

Belonging as they do, to the family of the arts, music and architecture are the ‘same’ (similar) but not identical. They are the ‘same’ insofar as musical and architectural works both comprise signifying totalities which are susceptible to understanding, but are nevertheless distinct or non-identical, given that architecture is constituted by relations of mass (lightness or heaviness), height, depth, light and dark, divergent material textuality (wood as opposed to marble, concrete, brick or steel), while music, in its turn, comes into being in the intangible field of tonalities and atonalities, harmonies, melodies, dissonance, vibrations and rhythms – all of which are ‘effects’ of *différance*.

These ‘effects’ span the entire panoply of architectural and musical qualities that differentiate between different genres and styles of both music and architecture, as well as those particular qualities that give each musical and architectural work its singular, yet generically or stylistically comparable character. One could go even further and show that each time-and-place-bound, unrepeatably performance of a sonata, a symphony, a song, a violin concerto, a choral work, lends itself to critical appraisal ‘because of’ the effects of *différance*.

A knowledgeable critic could demonstrate persuasively why a specific performance of Gershwin’s folk opera, *Porgy and Bess*, is superior to another, by focusing on the requisite pathos in the singing – for example in ‘I loves you Porgy’ – in contrast to its lack or exaggeration in another performance of the operatic drama. Or think of another Gershwin composition – his inimitable *Rhapsody in Blue*, and ask yourself why it is ‘in blue’? What musical key or sustained tonality justifies such a name? And even if someone hears it performed for the first time, and does not know what this piece of ‘classical jazz’ is called, would such a person not be likely to discern the tonal melancholy, even in an intuitive manner? It is for the same reason that Bob Dylan’s haunting song, ‘One more cup of coffee for the road’, stirs the listener’s psyche with its unmistakable ‘blues’ tonality – and I am referring to the musical qualities of the song, not its lyrics (which, strictly speaking, as decipherable language, does not belong to the ‘music’, except insofar as they are sung). Without the differences and similarities that are the perceptual correlates of *différance*’s spacing and temporalizing, no discernment of identifiable, stirring, exciting, admirable (or, for that matter, deplorable) musical attributes and qualities is conceivable.

Similarly, although one does not think of architectural works as compositions to be ‘performed’, as musical compositions are, it is not an altogether nonsensical criterion for evaluating the ‘success’ of certain kinds of architecture, as Karsten Harries has suggested. A dwelling, for example, would succeed as an architectural ‘score’ to the degree that it lends itself to different ‘performances’ by different inhabitants. As such, it (Harries 1980: 43): ‘...is not to be performed only once, but again and again, as furniture is moved, as rooms are painted and repainted, walls torn down and added’. Harries’s insistence (43), that both the ‘communal and the temporal dimensions of dwelling’ have to be accommodated in such a house, displays a surprising affinity with the functioning of *différance*, notably the economic and aneconomic aspects of spacing and temporalizing (discussed earlier), where he explains, firstly, that the difference between one’s needs as an individual and as a member of a community has to find expression in the difference between the outside and the inside of the house, as well as between the respective designs of the lounge, study, dining room/kitchen, bathroom and the bedrooms – essentially a remark that bears on the spatial modulation of the building. But the inescapable temporality of architecture is also evident in an observation which implicates the simultaneous need for stability and for change on the part of those who live in a house. Such houses, Harries claims (1980: 43), ‘...grant the reliability of place and allow for continuing appropriation’.

It should not be difficult to see that the temporal needs (a sense of relative stability as well as of the potential of a house for change or modification) on the part of the inhabitants of a house would necessarily have to be embodied, on the one hand, in the spatial qualities of the house (such as monumentality, a sense of height, or of shelter – imparted by overhanging eaves, for example), and on the other, in the characteristics of its constitutive materials. The different qualities of wood, brick, glass, ceramic tiles or steel (Harries 1997: 229; see also Olivier 1998b: 48), either register the passage of time (as in the case of wood, red brick and ceramic tiles) or resist the ‘terror of time’ referred to earlier (as in the case of glass and stainless steel), in this way imparting a specific, qualitatively varying sense of time to those who live in the house concerned.

These aspects of architecture – not only house architecture, but all kinds – are therefore no less susceptible to the ‘operation’ of *différance* than musical performances or, for that matter, complex meanings articulated in literary works. And, as I have tried to show, while musical and architectural works are *similar* insofar as their properties, characteristics, qualities and significance are inconceivable, except as being the effects of *différance*, they are *not identical*, either as art-forms or where individual artworks and performances are concerned, courtesy of *différance*. In fact, the relation between architecture and music is, in my judgment, best understood in terms of the complex interplay of spacing and temporalizing, the concrete manifestations of which we know as (performed) music and spatiotemporally existing architecture.

Notes

1. One may wonder why the above passage includes the description ‘...the relationship between the *art* of architecture and the *science* of music’ [my italics; B.O.]. Surely, both could be called either an ‘art’ or, for that matter, a ‘science’? As far as a certain ‘creativity’ is undeniably involved in both (no matter how such ‘creativity’ is accounted for), they may be described as arts, and given the equally undeniable operation of a kind of ‘knowledge’ in both, they could be described as ‘sciences’.
2. The question concerning the ‘territory’ of the brain occupied by the ‘two arts’ implicates the neurological distinction between the distinct functions of the right and the left hemispheres of the human brain, respectively, according to which both music and architecture can be linked with either hemisphere – with the left brain in terms of the abstract mathematical relations that come into play with musical composition as well as with architectural design, and with the right brain when it comes to the concrete quality of

musical sounds and of architecturally modulated spaces for living (Shlain 1998; Olivier 2008). Hence, it seems fair to infer that they share a cortico-neurological domain of provenance.

3. See in this regard my essay on Hegel's thesis of the 'death of art' (Olivier 1998), where I focus on the dialectical-historical exigencies of Hegel's philosophy of spirit (*Geist*), which require that spirit pass through various stages in its development from self-alienation in nature and objecthood via intermediate stages until it finds its fulfillment in philosophy as self-knowing, and correlative with that, the ethical society (*sittliche Gesellschaft*). One of the stages in question is that of art as the highest embodiment of spirit at that time, which has to yield to the exigency of yet higher embodiments, namely religion and philosophy (as a science). As I try to show there, this does not mean the disappearance of art, however, but only its transformation into a different kind of art, namely a critical art.
4. See in this regard my essay, 'Beyond music minus memory?' (Olivier 1998a), where I

elaborate on Adorno and Kundera's contention that the kind of music that displays no historical 'memory' constitutes a kind of aberration in the singular history of modern music in western culture – or, to put it differently, that what Adorno unabashedly calls 'great music', may well turn out to have been the historical exception to the rule, given that what predominates today is – in Kundera's words – 'music minus memory'.

5. I have here made use of the English translation (of Derrida's essay, *Différance*) in which the translator, David Allison (Derrida 1973), spells the (non-) word as follows: *Differance*, and not *Différance*, as in the French. In another translation of the essay, *Différance* (Derrida 1982), Alan Bass has preferred to retain the French spelling throughout. I have here used Allison's translation, although I prefer (and have mostly used) the French spelling, namely *différance*.
6. See, for example, Butler (2002: 19).

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