

Memory and Aesthetics: Study of Musical Quotations in Ives's and Crumb's Music

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Throughout Western music history, pre-existing material has long been the aesthetic core of a new composition. Yet there has never been such an epoch as our time in which using pre-existing material, melodic quotation in particular, features so extensively in works of many of the composers. The aim of this paper is to investigate how the use of quoted tunes in a musical piece operates in an interwoven complex where time and space are of the essence. A quote is able to oscillate perpetually between one's mental worlds of the memorable past and the imaginative present when it is highlighted enough to be recognizable from its surrounding context. Upon interpreting the use of quotation in various contexts, the aesthetic object, I argue, is the shift from original to quoted music, and vice versa. And listeners can respond aesthetically to the quotation itself even without knowledge of its provenance and textual or referential content.

Keywords: aesthetics, collage, emotional response, flashback, imaginary world, memory, metaphor, musical borrowing, melodic quotation, quoted tune, real world, stream-of-consciousness, temporal level

Introduction

How is memory turned into art? For some, the process is almost spontaneous. A stroll in the meadows easily sparked the most spectacular sound picture in Ives' orchestral set. A sail across the lake soon occasioned the opening of one of the most ambitious of all Mahler's symphonic music. The ability in both to weave banalities into wonders, with the mundane—whether it be the band music in one or the street waltz in the other—being transmuted into the stuff of marvels, just recalls the famous observation in Tennessee Williams' play *The Glass Menagerie*: "In memory everything seems to happen to music."¹ Could it be a singer's voice, a familiar tune, a sonic gesture, a rhythmic pattern, or any other musical device to exert such tremendous impact on listeners? To me, the answer just lies on a catchy quote suddenly looming out of its sonic strata, however transient, however trivial.

From time to time, musical borrowing, melodic quotation in particular, has played an essential role in western music. For centuries, composers always incorporated materials from pre-existing music into their

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¹ The statement is cited from a website discussing about Williams' play in printed form.

Colin Stratford, "Introduction to the Selection: *The Glass Menagerie: A Play by Tennessee Williams*, Tennessee Williams (New York: Random House, 1945)," in *Ex Libris: Architecture + World Literature*, [online website], cited on 2018/3/29, available from <http://blogs.cornell.edu/exlibris/2014/05/15/the-glass-menagerie-by-tennessee-williams-2/>

compositions.² From the parodic masses of Dufay, through the folk adapted symphonic theme by Joseph Haydn, to the stylistic “re-compositions” by Stravinsky, borrowing as a compositional practice constantly presents itself as a challenge to the composer’s both creativity and imagination. Yet there has never been such an epoch as the 20th century in which quotations and references feature so extensively in works of numerous composers. It is in the music of both Charles Ives and George Crumb, the American native composer that one discovers, perhaps for the first time in history, some missed opportunities and unrealized potential in western music.

One of the first tasks that confront both Ives’ and Crumb’s scholars who undertake research into their music has always been to go through the labyrinth of quotations in the composers’ works. For example, Peter J. Burkholder, who identifies different sorts of quotations in Ives’ music, focuses on exploring the musical, psychological and philosophical motivations behind the borrowings. He delves into every quote to reveal its purpose, technique and effect that characterize each one. Wiley Hitchcock, another Ives’ music expertise, offers a general but succinct survey of Ives’ music in his *Ives: A Survey of the Music*, providing analyses of some important pieces and tracing the sources of the quotations. Philip Lambert applies formalistic exploration through set theory analysis to Ives’ music, revealing the pitch organization and structural coherence of his important works. In addition, Larry Starr adapts Lambert’s approach but offers analyses that relate Ives’ musical settings to the composer’s own philosophical ideas and biographical background. Furthermore, some scholars advocate research on Ives’ uses of quotations in relation to the main European musical tradition, the American patriotism and the socio-cultural background of New England in the early 20th century. Their researches, inevitably, involve comparisons to those European music masters such as Stravinsky, Mahler and Schoenberg, who are also renowned for employing borrowing techniques in their music. As such, the main findings by them are largely paid considerable attention to the development of a typology of borrowing practices, identifying them in relation to their provenance and their role in compositional technique.

While the recent Ives’ studies are observed mainly from the composer side, the Crumb’s music scholarships also seemingly show no new directions. For example, by employing the pitch-class set theory, Richard Bass, offers a formalistic analysis to explore the tonal structure and symmetries of Crumb’s piano collections, *Makrokosmos* I and II, in his paper.³ While Marcel Cobussen offers insight on how Crumb reveals his own spiritual-philosophical idea from *Black Angels*,⁴ Blair Johnston investigates how Crumb’s use of pastiche quotations in the same work links from Romantic symphonic tradition to the post-modernism from the current cultural perspective.⁵ Doubtless the above-mentioned researches take place in the domain of either the compositional and philosophical aspects of the composer, or the socio-cultural dimension to which Crumb’s works relate.

Despite the multifarious scholarly approaches, however, few of the studies view *quotation* from the receptive side of listener in terms of the aesthetic response it engenders. How does a listener experience, feel or

² Peter Burkholder, “Borrowing: Types of Borrowing,” in *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., 1 [computer music Library], cited on 2006/5/1, available from www.grovemusic.com/data/articles/music/5/529/52918.xml?section=52918.1

³ The reference comes from Bass’s paper. Richard Bass, “Sets, Scales, and Symmetries: The Pitch-Structural Basis of George Crumb’s ‘Makrokosmos’ I and II,” *Music Theory Spectrum*, vol. 13, no. 1 (Spring 1991), pp. 1-20.

⁴ The reference comes from Cobussen’s paper. Marcel Cobussen, “Music and Spirituality: 13 Meditations around George Crumb’s *Black Angels*,” *The New Centennial Review*, vol.7, no.1 (Spring 2007), pp. 181-211.

⁵ Blair Johnston, “Between Romanticism and Modernism and Postmodernism: George Crumb’s *Black Angels*,” *A Journal of the Society for Music Theory*, vol.18, no.2 (June 2012), pp. 1-14.

respond when facing the network of quotations in Ives' music? In what way do listeners respond to these quotations in relation to their own socio-cultural surroundings? Referring to the functions of music, Tia DeNora remarks that music "is not merely a 'meaningful' or 'communicative' medium. It does much more than convey signification through non-verbal means. At the level of daily life, music.....may influence how people compose their bodies, how they conduct themselves, how they experience the passage of time, how they feel—in terms of energy and emotion—about themselves, about others, and about situations" (Tia, 2000, pp. 16-17). Hence, music in general, and quotations in particular, can be read as a force of social life, a medium of social relation, a technology of self, or a device of social ordering (Tia, 2000, p. 7). Furthermore, if music, just as what Nora has claimed, consists of an interlacing of experience (feeling, action) and the materials that are accessed as the referents for experience and its metaphoric and temporal parameters (p. 67), it may thus be seen to serve as an operating platform for the temporal structure of one's memorable past, as well as one's emotional responses to it.

My present paper exhibits a way of listening of quotations by offering a critical survey of Charles Ives' and George Crumb's works. Musical quotations, as I argue, can and ought to be read and understood in terms of metaphor, especially the metaphor in terms of memory. Regarding metaphor, just as Lakoff claims, "*metaphor* permits an understanding of one kind of experience in terms of another, creating coherences by virtue of imposing gestalts that are structured by natural dimensions of experience" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 235). From this sense, metaphor is not only a matter of imaginative rationality, but also aesthetic experience. Such metaphor which is rooted from our daily surroundings and our unique cultural experiences, especially that of sound, is able to conceptualize our cognitive minds, inducing our sensual emotions that disperse all dimensions of our imaginations of the memorable past crisscrossing in the domain of the newly created "realities".

Analysis, therefore, is no mere counting of quotes or characterization them in terms of compositional techniques. It, rather, evokes the totality of the sonic world of a specific time, place and event, operating in every dimension of both listeners' psychological and aesthetical states. Be it a tune, a rhythmic pattern or a specific sonority, a reference to a style or genre, a quotation is a tangible link between the sonic and cultural reality of the past and those of the present, as well as a metaphorical representation in one's own imagined world of memory. By applying borrowing concepts commonly employed in the other forms of art, such as paintings or literature, my survey offers an intertextual reading of the quoted tunes in Ives' works, inaugurating a new perspective on the related issue.

Quotation As Metaphoric Concept

The important role of metaphor in shaping our thinking and affecting our daily lives have been discussed by Lakoff and Johnson in *Metaphors We Live By*. Regarding metaphor, Lakoff claims: "The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 5). Metaphor is not a mere rhetorical device in linguistics. It is in fact the one that governs not only our actions and activities, but also our thinking processes and ways of understanding. We always search for personal metaphors to highlight and cohere our own pasts, our present activities, as well as our dreams, hopes, and goals. A large part of understanding is a quest for appropriate personal metaphors that make sense to us. It involves unending negotiation and renegotiation of the meaning of our past experiences. As a result, the process of understanding can lead to a continual development of new stories, as well as a re-creation of new realities in minds. Since

metaphors can exist in a person's conceptual system, therefore, in this paper, all metaphors created for understanding of musical quotation are to be understood as metaphorical concepts.

It is, however, nothing new for one to understand music in terms of metaphor in music history. For example, in *Cours complet d'harmonie et de composition musicale* (1803-05) by Jerome-Joseph Momigny in the early 19th century, there are extensive analyses of movements by Mozart and Haydn with alternating technical descriptions by narrative or dramatic readings. From Powers' account on Momigny's writing of Haydn's first movement of symphony No.103, it is clear to see that Momigny's understanding of the music was no doubt governed by the metaphorical concepts he made. In fact, Powers states, "Momigny's reading of Haydn Symphony 103 / I,the movement is read as a scene in the countryside, with a storm, villagers taking refuge in a temple, elders and grown men, women trembling for their children, and so on, with occasional fragments of text supplied to musical motives to enliven the narrative" (Powers, 1995, pp. 5-44). From Powers' descriptions, such as storm, temple, elders, men, women, used by Momigny are related to a pictorial images consisting of the weather, temple and people, which are important metaphors to structure the reader Momigny's own imaginative thinking. But it was not a unique privilege for Momigny to read music with metaphors, many other contemporary philosophers and music critics did so in the 19th century, such as Hanslick's use of personification to conceptualize his idea on music as a living form (Bonds, 2003, p. 366), which could animate beauty from the projection of sound. In addition, Schopenhauer's view on music as a representation of human's will (p. 361), the Berlin critic Heinrich Hermann's description on Beethoven's symphony No. 3 *Eroica* as an almost Shakespearean world of magic, and the Russian critic Oulibicheff Marx's review on the same work as a military "drama" for delineating a victory of a hero fighting for the human freedom in an imagined battle, all these musical understandings of a composition link to what has been called metaphoric perception (Sipe, 1998, pp. 54-62). Even in the recent musicological scholarship, Susan McClary, for instance, also explains the western tonal system and the musical phenomenon of Beethoven's symphony no. 9 in D minor in a metaphoric view of "sexual intercourse" (McClary, 2002, pp. 53-79). Therefore, music, melodic quotation in particular, can be understood in terms of metaphor. Such understanding is capable of creating a new way of listening, which is capable of offering different perspectives for one to muse, to recall, and to seek what happened and what was there. Quotation, as we shall see, can be listened metaphorically as one's recollection of the past.

Quotation As Memory

In my discussion, memory is not placed in the sphere of psychology, cognitive or medical sciences, but aesthetics. Susanne Langer regards memory as "a special kind of experience, because it is composed of selected impressions, physical strains, expectations, and minute, undeveloped reactions" (Langer, 1953, p. 263). Memory sifts all these interrelated materials and seems to represent them in the form of moving images within a multidimensional series of events. Sometimes these mental events occur in a logical order, but very often they do not. To Langer, recollection is a personal way to reconstruct aesthetically and emotionally the past in terms of the present. However, like shards of an ancient relic, a glimpse of the fleeting images of memory is enough to evoke an aesthetic response, transporting one's mind into another world of the remote past of a particular milieu, even without capacity for one to thoroughly recognize it. It is this process I hear in musical quotation. Since much quoted material in twentieth-century music is stylistically diverse and cross-culturally referential, a collage

assemblage of quotes, even just a glimpse of their appearance, is able to elicit, however fleetingly, a feeling of a distant past and create in the listeners an imaginary "space" of a particular milieu and style in a particular temporal state.

Our sense of the past is derived from memories mixed with extraneous elements, assumptions and speculations, which makes life seem like a chain of unrelated events rather than as a single progressive movement. In music that features quotations, our sense of the past is derived from recognizing the appearance of pre-existing music which, too, appears as an extraneous element, a sudden concept or leisurely speculation. In such music, time is essentially represented as a chain of more or less related musical events rather than the metrical count of the metronome. A quote grants us access to the imagined world of the recollected past and, when highlighted enough to be recognizable as such, stands in contrast to the real world of the present as expressed by the surrounding music. Upon interpreting the use of pre-existing music, the aesthetic object, as I will argue, is the shift from original to quoted music, and vice versa. The clash of evoked styles or genres produced by a quote as well as the quote's baggage of associations provides a clue as to the content of this imaginary "world". This is why listeners can respond aesthetically to a quotation even without knowledge of its exact provenance and textual or referential content.

Furthermore, the mere appearance of a quote can also signify the impression of a temporal shift. This perspective brings us to the ideas of Karol Berger, regarding Beethoven's manipulation of thematic materials in the recapitulation of a piece and how it affects the aesthetic state of the listeners (Berger, 1999, pp. 17-28). Berger's premise is based on the assumption that music represents two ontological levels, one real (the present time) and the other imagined or remembered (the past time). When music deviates from its normal orbit without following normal practice through, for example, an unexpected interpolation of materials heard before, the effect may be that the listener's "mind wanders off from its present concerns into a imaginary recollected world that can tear itself away from this other world only with effort" (Berger, 1999, p. 21). To Berger, the aesthetic object falls on the vacillation between these two metaphorical levels of the mental world. This intuition is key to understanding the unexplainable and unexpected miss or return of the thematic material in the recapitulation section in many of Beethoven's pieces. Although Berger carries out detailed score analysis, his focus is the impact that such gestures can exert upon the receptive side of a listener. If materials heard in the beginning of a piece and reoccurring in later sections of the same piece have the power to create a shift in the listeners' mental world, then the question becomes: is Beethoven "quoting" himself? And if so, can a quoted pre-existing tune appearing in a new composition exert a similar impact to the listeners? In the following exploration, I will attempt to show in what ways these questions may be answered in the affirmative.

Ives' Imaginary World

*I think there must be a place in the soul all made of tunes, of tunes of long ago,
I hear the organ on the Main Street corner,
Aunt Sarah humming Gospels.
Summer evenings,
The village cornet band, playing in the square,
The Town's Red, White and Blue,
All Red, White and Blue.
Now! Hear the songs!*

*I know not what are the words.
But they sing in my soul of the things our Fathers loved.*⁶

Charles Ives

The above poem, *The "Things" Our Father Loved*, was written in 1917. Its subject matter is overwhelmingly retrospective: memories of a childhood life in a small country town in late nineteenth-century New England, a place full of memorable "Victorian" aura.⁷ The poem simply presents readers with a complex and paradoxical view of memory, and of its psychological role, yielding a multi-layered but integrated aesthetic experience. It begins with a memorable contemplation of the protagonist, displayed in the form of the first person, "I". While "I" am still immersing in the moment of "I think," a series of "long ago" fragmented tunes of diverse styles and characters, such as the organ's sound, Aunt Sarah's gospels, and the cornet band's street music, flow in an intensely lyrical but rather spontaneously within the mind of the protagonist "I". The text thus embraces a cinematic scene-shifting quality, as well as a mental state of stream-of-consciousness of the protagonist, which both evoke the process of recollection in the reader. It has the modern theatrical effect of sporadic mental "pictures" coming in and out of focus. The "camera" does not remain fixed on its subject; the image vacillates and begins to cloud over almost as soon as it is visualized. The subtle shift of such "visual" images on different ontological levels shows a concatenation of life's events, centering on the singing tunes and the scenes from a boyhood past. Nevertheless, all of these different events of life are only loosely juxtaposed in the protagonist's mind.

As the disjunctions continue, the events proceed towards greater fragmentation and surface disunity, until the climatic call: "Now! Hear the song!", ironically followed by the following weakening disclaimer: "I know not what are the words." In this sense, the words of the old tunes are meaningless. The only significance is the existence of these old tunes in the here and now, which is the present moment, and their action upon the processes and subjects of one's memories. The past is alive in the present. The values of these memories are concluded in the final statement: "But they sing in my soul of the things our Fathers loved." The protagonist's (my) memorable "things" from the distant past—might be reclaimed through the process of recollection in the present moment, despite that these "things" are no longer expressed in their original shape and meaning.

The aforementioned and analyzed poem was set to music with the same title, *The "Things" Our Father Loved*. The song was one of the works of American composer Charles Ives' collection album *114 Songs* published privately in 1922.⁸ Throughout his entire creative career, Ives composed more than two hundred songs, most of which present shards of the same themes: sentimental, humorous, ruminative and powerful reminiscences. It is no wonder that this aspect of Ives' art brings us closer to his emotional and aesthetical cores.

The life of many of Ives' songs began as "songs without words" that are suggested by a music written for purely instrumental pieces in a chamber ensemble, with one instrument taking the vocal part. The diverse range

⁶ The Poem and song are set by Charles Ives himself. The extant evidence shows that they are derived from a lost score-sketch of about 1905. See Charles E. Ives, *Memos*, ed. John Kirkpatrick (New York: W. W. Norton, 1972), p. 170.

⁷ David Metzger believes that Charles Ives' childhood connected with a halcyon nineteenth-century small town America, which was a place permeated with "Victorian" ambience. It is this Victorian view of childhood that nurtured Ives' notion of childhood innocence and gave inspiration to many of his nostalgic poems and songs. See David Metzger, *Quotation and Cultural Meaning*, pp. 16-21.

⁸ According to Ives' own marking, the song was written in 1917. See *114 Songs*, p. 91.

of styles and approaches in Ives' text-setting is amazing, ranging from simple, sentimental ballads to complex and arduous philosophical discourses, sometimes encompassing the most dissonant and virtuosic piano parts, and at other times with accompaniment pared down to an almost minimalist phrase-repetition. Even those composed in a superficially conventional or "clear" tonal idiom usually contains harmonic, rhythmic or accentual surprises somewhere. Setting songs in such a way reflected a fact that the so-called Romantic lied vocabulary was eventually inadequate for Ives to express his inventiveness and countless poetic feelings.

Ives' *The "Things" Our Fathers Loved* is a song particularly built up with only melodic quotations. It consists of a series of six diverse styles of American pop and folk tune fragments, including *My Old Kentucky Home*, *On the Bank of Wabash*, *Nettleton*, *The Battle Cry of Freedom*, and *The Sweet Bye and Bye*.⁹ In Ivesian studies, this song is regarded as a crucial statement about what Ives' life, his aesthetics and emotions are about. For example, Wiley Hitchcock, regarded this song as a "household song", an important compositional genre reflecting Ives' view of the American vernacular tradition and stands at the core of his lyric artistic contributions.¹⁰ Larry Starr, another scholar of Ivesian studies, regarded *The "Things" Our Father Loved* as Ives' "mental journey" piece, the kind of song that deals with memory as a process. Memory, induced by the past quoted tunes, was a suitable tool for forging a meaningfully active life. Ives' thought journey, whether inspired by memory or by pure imagination, bears the same relationship to his conceptual life as the physical journeys.¹¹ Thus, *The "Things" Our Father Loved* demonstrates how successfully Ives could transform a complicated concept of human reality into artworks that are not only true to his vision but which, through their aesthetic originality and richness, reveal, enhance, and intensify that vision.

David Metzger once remarked that a song containing mere quotations might carry a different meaning. The song *The "Things" Our Father Loved* could be Ives' personal statement, inviting listeners to mediate and to rediscover the composer's nostalgic restlessness and unfulfilled sense of childhood loss. According to Metzger, ".....quotation becomes the means by which the composer participated in that cultural scene. Through the gesture, he could represent the figure of the lost child and the growing gap between past and present in which that figure was caught" (Metzger, 2003, p. 16). However, this song could also be taken as the redemption of Ives' childhood loss. Larry Starr agrees with this view by warning against the common "widespread misconception of Ives as a nostalgic composer" (Starr, 1992, p. 52). He further pointed out that Ives' songs are not nostalgic in nature. Burkholder supported Starr's view and concluded that: ".....this is not an exercise in nostalgia for the songs and scenes of the past" (Burkholder, 1995, p. 311). Undoubtedly, for these scholars, Ives was not mourning the past through quotations. On the contrary, he did prize the past as a trove of values that need to be, and can be, reclaimed in the present (Burkholder, 1995, p. 311). All the quoted tunes in this song, including *My Old Kentucky Home*, are the "things" that represent the values that the composer cherished—the natural beauty of his homeland, the religious faith, the patriotism, the collective feeling and the hope for a future reunion with those whom he loved, in Heaven if not on earth. As such, whether it is Starr, Metzger, or Burkholder, they view Ives'

⁹ Burkholder identifies the quoted tunes of this song for reference. See Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes*, pp. 306-307.

¹⁰ Other songs such as *Old Home Day*, *The Circus Band*, *Down East* and so forth all belong to this genre. See Wiley H. Hitchcock, *Ives: A Survey of the Music* (London: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 13.

¹¹ Larry Starr has considered that *The Things Our Father Loved* and *Tom Sails Away* are two significant pieces of showing Ives' "mental journey". See Larry Starr, *A Union of Diversities: Style in the Music of Charles Ives* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1992), p. 57.

quotations only through the perspective of their referential and cultural meanings. However, the aesthetic object of quotation, as I have explained, largely falls on the shift between the quote and the original music of contrasted style. Ives' *The "Things" Our Father Loved* is a fabulous example of this.

A Way of Listening I

Despite being somewhat simplistic, the barely audible C major piano notes, which are quite common as the first chord in many songs, subtly sets off the protagonist's (the poem's "I") mental journey at the very beginning of the song *The "Things" Our Father Loved* (see Example (1)). It is a privileged moment for contemplation. No introduction is set for the song except the C major chord, whose role serves not only to prepare the listener for the singer's weak, nearly murmured utterance, but also to signal the performer to stage, and the listeners to experience. This short prologue is somewhat anticipatory, seemingly to call for the audience's attention to discover what is to come next. The music, in this sense, is an adventure—it advances, it arrives. What will come after the opening C major sonority? It is a three-note quoted figure, signaling the words "I think," and is confirmed by the piano C major triad once again (see Example (1)).¹² The music is so calm, despite being a little mundane, that nothing seems amiss. This is a moment of contemplation for the protagonist in the singer's poetic world. After that, the melodic tune begins to wander within its normal terrain of C major.

In the first glimpse, everything seems to be all right. As the music proceeds, it gradually turns out to be another familiar quoted tune along with the singer's words "must be a place in the soul". This quoted tune is taken from Stephen Foster's *My Old Kentucky Home*, which is a popular folk song permeated by intense native moods, and it is transposed in C (see Example (2)). But something seems to be going wrong with the piano at this point: instead of moving in the normal C tonal area, the pianist echoes the previous three-note figure "I think" in the new tonal area of E and then A (mm. 2-3), perhaps indicating to the listener that the protagonist's mind is gradually submerging into a long deep recollection gradually. However, the left-hand chords are still in C, just as the voice is. It is a transitory moment of a tonal shift where the original C tonal area is gradually dissolving. Nevertheless, something even more stunning lies ahead.

The whispering voice of "all made of tune" in measure 3 strengthens the deviance by shifting to the new, distant tonal terrains of F and F# at the end of the first vocal phrase. Instead of the expected notes of D and C if the voice continues to move along its F tonal area, the last two notes of the phrase are suddenly chromatically altered a half step higher to D# and C# in measure 4 (see Example (1)).

The abrupt and unexpected tonal distortion is confirmed once again in measure 5 with the words "of tunes of long ago". The music now becomes sharply shrill and agitated as if it belongs to an alien world. True, the quoted fragment is intentionally and skillfully distorted or highlighted, in order to demand listeners' clear recognition of its existence. As the words "of tune" repeat, the protagonist of the poetic world, now represented by the singer, moves from the present state (F tonal region) to another distant past of the remembered world as his/her singing voice reaches the words "long ago". The temporal shift is short. The protagonist has now shifted his/her memory after the first moment of "thinking". Just within a fleeting moment, Foster's melodic quote has already gone through at least three tonal regions, the C, F and then F#. Accompanying the sudden tonal shift are the harmonies

¹² The opening few notes have been identified as a fragment from Dan Emmett's *Dixie*. See Burkholder, *Tunes*, p. 306.

on the piano. They are also changed from the first measure's C and F major triads in C major area to the fourth measure's unrelated chromatic chords, creating a temporary tonal loss to the passage (see Example (1)).

Example (1) The Beginning Phrase of *The "Things" Our Father Loved*

Present moment of the real world Shifts to a distinct past recollected world

The musical score for Example (1) is presented in two systems. The first system features a vocal line in 4/4 time, marked 'Slowly and Sustained' and 'p'. The lyrics are 'I think there must be a place in the soul all'. A box highlights the first measure of the vocal line. The piano accompaniment is marked 'pp'. The second system continues the vocal line with lyrics 'made of tune of - tunes of long a - go I'. Circled notes in both systems indicate a tonal shift from the present moment to a distinct past recollected world. Arrows point from the descriptive text above to these circled notes.

Example (2) *My Old Kentucky Home* (the first phrase)

The musical notation for Example (2) shows the first phrase of 'My Old Kentucky Home' in 4/4 time. The melody is written on a single staff. The lyrics are 'The sun shines bright in my old Kent - tu - ky home'.

The sudden tonal shift in the last two notes of the quoted tune may be viewed as an intentional, yet lawful, distortion. This "distorted" tune raises its prominence and intensifies its demand for listeners' attention. The effect is similar to a cinematic flashback, a privileged moment in unfolding, juxtaposing different moments of temporal reference. In its classic form, a flashback is introduced when the image in the present dissolves to an image in the past, understood either as a story being told or as a subjective memory (Turim, 1989, p. 1). It can also be an important source of connotations. By presenting the past in an unexpected way, flashbacks abruptly offer new meanings associated with any particular person, place or object in the past. The flashback process often invites musing and memory, and therefore, induces a new aesthetic experience to audiences at that particular moment. In order to allow a flashback to be easily recognized, it may appear in the form of voice-over narration,

or filmic punctuations such as dissolves, or even changes in image qualities such as color to black and white, or changes in elements of mise-en-scene such as costumes indicating an earlier time period or in non-diegetic music (Turim, 1989, p. 16). Thus, if a flashback concerns a representation of a past memory intervening within the present flow of film narrative in reality, why then does an intentionally distorted quotation in music not do the same?

The quoted fragments in *The Things Our Fathers Loved* are akin to a cinematic flashback. But this chain of out-of-tune fragments, effectively a series of flashbacks, may exert an even greater impact on listeners. The effect is that, as it recalls "the past", it establishes a shift to a newly imagined world away from the real world of the present. For example, when the protagonist starts singing "I think there must be a place in the.....," the tune is clearly selected in C major key. However, the key is then changed immediately to F major key for the words "soul all made.....". The mostly distorted fragment is then followed in the last three notes of this phrase. It is a fragment of F# major key, singing the words "made of tunes". The sonic flashback process in the first phrase is gradual, just like visual images slowly dissolving in a flashback of a film. The stable home key of C major dissolves slowly to the far-off land of F# major at the end of the phrase. Not only does the vocal part display the flashback effect, the piano also strengthens such an effect by means of the out-of-tune motives echoing in the right-hand part.

After the first phrase's irritating outburst from the distorted quotes, the protagonist (singer) returns to a pious, slightly meditative state and continues to sing another two successive quoted fragments from Paul Dresser's *On the Bank of the Wabash* in G and the Gospel tune *Nettleton* in pentatonic collection. These folk tunes, supported by the piano's slow arpeggiation with less dissonant harmonies, are kept in a comparably stable tonal region (mm. 6-9), just as if nothing had happened. It seems that a comparable stable world, which is similar to the stable C major beginning in different levels, has returned. The protagonist has awakened from his/her deep memory back into the present real moment. But something has happened. The restless tonal shifts in the voice and piano parts wrench the discourse to different ontological levels, enticing listeners towards a rich aesthetic experience.

In fact, a mind can oscillate between various levels, the real and the imaginary or remembered worlds of different times and spaces. This "world," of course, is metaphorical. But how is the "world" created in the music? While the pianist and the singer are performing this song, they are impersonating the poem's character, "I" at the present moment. At the same time, the music leads the listeners to immerse themselves into the present moment and share the imaginary world with this "I". Karol Berger once stated that a performer playing on the stage is similar to a "real musical actor impersonating an imaginary character who reveals his mind to an audience by means of music of gestures and speech" (Berger, 1999, p. 18). This can also happen to those who are listening to the performance or a recording. During the listening process, the listeners are invited to engage with the imagined world along with the performer(s), that is the person(s) in the music. The performer is essentially an actor whose persona (mask) is the dramatic character. In role, a performer's real self is meant to be invisible and inaudible behind the character played. Indeed, the Latin word persona means "mask". In the case of *The "Things" Our Father Loved*, the persona of the voice and the pianist are the character of the protagonist "I" in the poem.

Example (3) The Real Face of Ives

Dissonant harmonies enhance a temporal shift

Newly composed two-note gesture: reveals the real face of Ives in the moment of forgetting

After the voice sings “I” with the “normal” note C at the end of measure 4, the protagonist of “I” seems to return to the present reality from his/her past memorable past world. In measure 6, the far-off organ’s majestic sound and Aunt Sarah’s serene humming are heard.¹³ These spiritual hymn tunes, which are extracted from “On the Banks of Wabash,” and “Nettleton,” are displayed in the comparably stable area of G and then the F tonal region. The piano’s harmonies, albeit much freer, continue to echo some melodic notes of the quotes in the same tonal level (see Example (3)). At this moment, the protagonist has remained in the real world of the present, revealing his/her religious and devout sentiments to the listeners. While everything seems to be going all right, a “mistake” suddenly occurs in measure 10. And more compelling moments lie ahead.

Surely, something goes “wrong” in measure 10. Instead of continuing the melody with quoted tunes as usual, the singer suddenly sings something strange: a newly composed two-note figure, C#—B, falling hastily from a temporary high peak to the low F#—E. But what is more stunning is that this two-note melodic figure, which is quite tonal in a sense (like a melody moving in la—sol—re—do), is disrupted by a series of unrelated and highly chromatic harmonies in the piano accompaniment. The music is no longer in its previous “normal” tonal region of F major in measure 8 (see Example (3)). Instead, it is a distorted sound of extreme shrillness instilling into the music a strong sense of alienation. Such an effect easily makes listeners feel weighty and ponderous, anxious and puzzled. No sooner does the protagonist finish singing the words “summer evenings” than, within a very short

¹³ Refer to the text of mm. 6-9 of the song.

moment, it comes back to another new quoted folk tune (*The Battle Cry of Freedom*) moving in the “normal” F major area again. Both this new quotation and the former newly composed two-note figure are connected with the same bass note F, as if two passages are one entirety without anything intruding (see Example (3)). However, the two-note figure does break the continuity of the protagonist’s previous serene, rather stable state of mind of folk-spirit memories. In this moment, the temporary harmonic dissonance has generated sufficient energy to enforce a shift in a listener’s mind to a new imaginary world. Similar to that of the distorted *My Old Kentucky Home* tune, which has been successful in enhancing such an effect of temporal shift for the listeners, the distorted harmony here will no doubt have the same effect. But instead of shifting to an imagined world of a remembered past by way of the pre-existing tune, this new shrill sonority brings listeners remaining in the present real world to different levels.

The effect of the “mistake” (newly composed figure) in measure 10 and its “correction” (back to the quoted tune) afterward are equivalent to an actor slipping and revealing for a moment his own face behind the mask, the face of a real, fallible man. Since the poem’s “I,” which is impersonated by the voice and pianist, is the subject of this song, the shift in this moment, albeit only for a few notes, can be viewed as a brief vertiginous moment, in which it is possible to catch a glimpse of the real face of the poem’s subject. However, who is the real face behind this protagonist’s mask? It is not the protagonist, nor the performers, but the composer Ives himself. He is well represented by the unadulterated comfort of a two-note tonal figure, which characterizes the free and serene surface, just like a mild breeze in “summer evenings,” although restless and agitated inside. Before there is time to reflect that this composer “Ives” is no less apparent than the poem’s protagonist himself/herself, he/she disappears quickly into the impersonated character again.

In fact, the shift of the imagined world of the protagonist “I” from the imaginary to the equally real world and back in measure 9 is somewhat unusual. Throughout the song, this is the only moment, albeit a glimpse, in which the real face of the composer, Ives, is revealed. That is to say the poem’s protagonist at this moment is lost in his mental journey. If the present is alive through the past’s memorable tunes in an imaginary world, this oscillation between the imaginary and real world, perhaps, will disclose about the protagonist’s temporary forgetting, more than his/her recollection. It is because composing something new has disturbed the usual practice of quoting at this very moment. It seems suggesting that memory sometimes is so poignant and distracting that an act of forgetting is the only way out. This reminds us what Nietzsche has articulated—a practice of “active forgetfulness” (Casey, 2000, pp. 2-3). Nietzsche once stated: “Even a happy life is possible without remembrance, as the beast [animal] show; but life in any true sense is absolutely impossible without forgetfulness” (Nietzsche, 1957, p. 62). If everything recurs without ending, we would prefer to avoid remembering anything and would just let everything happen once, just only once. This is because it would be a strenuous burden for one to recall what has been happened an infinite number of times (Casey, 2000, p. 3). Similarly, Milan Kundera also put the matter into consideration, that:

If every second of our lives recurs an infinite number of times, we are nailed to eternity as Jesus Christ was nailed to the cross. It is a terrifying prospect. In the world of eternal return the weight of unbearable responsibility lies heavy on every move we make. That is why Nietzsche called the idea of eternal return the heaviest of burdens. If eternal return is the heaviest of burdens, then our lives could stand out against it in all their splendid lightness (Kundera, 1985, p. 5).

It may be true that the eternal return could be the heaviest burden. Our “splendid lightness” is fostered by forgetting, an active forgetting of that which becomes unbearably heavy when remembered (Casey, 2000, p. 3).

If Nietzsche and Kundera are both correct, relief from the heaviest of the intolerable burdens of infinite remembering (continuous appearance of the quoted tunes from the past) will depend on this few seconds' newly written gesture, C#—B and F#—E. To the audience and to the poem's "I," this is a so-called splendid moment of lightness, as well as a splendid moment of forgetting. To listeners, what they perceive is that a mind that has wandered off from its present concerns into an imaginary recollected world could only be "forced" or persuaded to return to the here and now by a moment of forgetting, even if only for a fleeting moment. However, in this song, apart from the shift from an imaginary to a real "world" of the present in measure 10, temporal shift from one imaginary recollected world into another one, and of the momentarily wandering mind of the personage from one level to the other, is much more frequent.

Example (4) An Imagined World of Street Parade

The quoted tune associated with a high-spirited street performance

11 faster and with more emphasis

Swinging bass in march style

From measure 11 onward, the previous devout meditation has again given way to an impulsive spirited outcry in the domain of the previous F tonal region again. The song, at this instant, turns to a new, energetic section of extremely contrasting styles. The imaginary world created here is a scene of street performance in the small town with the patriotic folk song, *The Battle Cry of Freedom*. The propelling block chord accompaniment in the right hand and the swing-like skipping bass in the left hand seems to raise courageously the spirit of the listeners higher and higher (Example (4)). The effect is no longer the halcyon remembrance or pious meditation, but rather a change to patriotic bravery. The protagonist has, in this very moment, attained a new chapter of "reality".

The passage conveys a particularly high-spirited vignette when march-like music steps restlessly towards the climax of the song. The sonic memory flashing in the protagonist's mind is an exciting scene of a colorful procession-like street performance with balloons and flags crackling in the wind. The listeners now hear the highest dynamic of the piano chords, contrasting with the inexorable chromatic descending low bass from D to Fb to reinforce the voice singing, "all red, white and blue" (see Example (5)). The descending bass works just like a conduit. It carries the high spirit to the climatic D note in both the voice and the left hand piano parts. This climatic moment is further highlighted by the text singing "Now!" True, the music arrives at the zenith when the poem's "I" attains his/her ideal "liberty". To the protagonist, all memorable past is alive in "Now," which is a particular moment made of all of his/her memorable past tunes!

Example (5) The Climatic Moment and the Sonic Flashbacks

Climatic moment on D note! Previous varied figures (inverted) echo in the piano in different keys—creating sonic flashbacks

14
All Red, White and Blue - Now! Hear the
piu accel.
ff

16
songs! I - know not what are the

18
words. etc.
etc.
etc.

Lasting no more than a few seconds, a gently quoted folk tune, *In the Sweet Bye and Bye*, with the words “hear the songs,” furtively emerges from the boisterous energetic reverberation (example 5). Now the singer turns to the listeners and signifies them to pay attention to the tune, not the words, at this decisive moment. Indeed, every quoted tune in this song serves as the core of the aesthetic object of the listeners to which particular attention is rewarded. While the running semiquaver arpeggiated gesture still continues its rapid chromatic motion, a familiar figure (figure in m. 2), however varied and inverted, reinforces the calling in of the right-hand piano (mm. 16-18).

While the quoted tune singing “I know” is kept in the tonal area of G, the returned inverted figure in the accompaniment stealthily shifts to C, and then E, exactly as the pianist did in measures 1 and 2. As these familiar

sonic flashbacks re-occur, the protagonist gradually begins to immerse into his/her memorable world again, seemingly bringing the listeners along with him/her on this contemplative journey. Then the voice reaches the final statement of this song “But they sing”. If the music keeps going in this “normal” way, the protagonist will end his/her memorable journey in such a calm, meditative serenity.

Example (6) The “Things” Our Father Loved

The image shows a musical score for a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in treble clef and the piano accompaniment is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The score is marked with a tempo change to 'p much slower' and includes dynamic markings such as 'pp', 'rit', and 'ppp'. Annotations with arrows point to specific musical features: 'Shifts to a remote "world" by a sudden tonal distortion' points to a change in the vocal line's pitch, and 'Unresolved Dominant ninth suspends in the open air' points to a chord in the piano accompaniment. The lyrics 'soul of the things our Fath - ers loved' are written below the vocal line.

However, similar to that of the musical setting in measure 5, a tonally distorted statement (out-of-tune effect) is used to conclude the entire song with the words “of the things our Fathers loved” in the guise of the quoted tune *Sweet Bye and Bye*. The sonic flashback, again, is created by the last two notes of the quoted tune being lifted abruptly a half step higher, from the tonal area G to G#, which evokes an especially remote aspect of the imaginary past (see Example (6)). The voice is unavoidably transformed to a highly dissonant, rather uncomfortable, out-of-tune sound. And this nearly silent ending moment with the dynamic marking *ppp*, leaves an unresolved dissonant G# dominant ninth chord in the piano suspending softly in the open air. Without being resolved, it seems to embrace listeners forever in this newly arrived imagined world of the distant past. The effect of the present train of thought and action of the protagonist are interrupted to make room for recollection of a past moment. His/her thoughts just oscillate between the two temporal levels of imagined “world” so remarkably contrasted such that a great and dramatic aesthetic response in the audiences may be aroused.

In short, the lied “*The Things*” *Our Fathers Loved* is unequivocally a song of quotations. As we have seen, it is structured in a collage-like assemblage of sonic woven fabric. Paralleling the setting of the text, all quoted fragments in the song flow rather freely in the same manner unrestricted by a rigorous framework, expressing an intensely sonic stream-of-consciousness.¹⁴ Robert Humphrey once said that the stream-of-consciousness is a “prespeech levels. . . . it involves no communicative basis as does the speech level (whether spoken or written)”

¹⁴ According to the *Collins Cobuild Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, stream of consciousness is defined as: If you describe what someone writes or says as a stream of consciousness, you mean that it expresses their thoughts as they occur, rather than in a structured way. William James, an American psychologist, has published the renowned notion about “The Stream of Consciousness” in the monograph, *Psychology*, in the early twentieth-century. It is he coined the term. He points out that within each personal consciousness states are always changing, metaphorically speaking, flowing as a river or stream. See William James, *Psychology* (London: Macmillan and Co, Ltd., 1920), pp. 151-75.

(Humphrey, 1954, pp. 4-5). Thus, Humphrey's so-called "prespeech" level of consciousness is the level that may not be censored, rationally controlled, or logically ordered. The exploration of the quotations of this song is meant to explore such consciousness level, revealing protagonist's psychic state that evokes the aesthetical responses of the listeners.

Since the music of *The "Things" of Our Father Loved* is variously set according to the text without repetition, the song's structural design should also be set in a particular way that it suits to express the protagonist's subtle change of different psychological states and emotions in the poetic world. Peter Burkholder calls this special structural design as "cumulative form". From 1902 onward, according to Burkholder, Ives tended to employ a setting to structure his music in a way that it did not rely on large-scale repetition, nor development and recapitulation of the main theme.¹⁵ In the many of Ives' works composed in cumulative form, the main theme is presented, usually not at the beginning of the song as in a traditional form, but near the end, and is preceded, not followed, by its development. The pre-existing tunes in the cumulative section, whether they are varied or paraphrased, are always juxtaposed in a collage as the principal theme and move continually forward to the conclusive statement of itself at the end of the piece. Thus, the cumulative form is a form that emphasizes an ongoing process more than just a stable framework. It provides an appropriate setting for a song tending to spontaneously display a collage of memorable, yet unrelated sonic shards, flowing within a "stream" of the composer's consciousness, instead of in a pre-designed rigid structure. From this sense, the aesthetics of the cumulative form can be thought of as a private photo-album, or a painting holding of many smaller paintings, in which the album/painting contains and preserves a number of valued and memorable images. In the case of Ives' songs, Ives is the collector while we, the listeners, are the viewers, as well as the appreciators. The overall structure aims to bring a listener an aesthetic delight, just as *Archduke Leopold Wilhelm in His Private Picture Gallery* (1582-1649) evoked an experience of the Renaissance painter David Teniers the Younger on viewing the paintings (Berger, 1972, pp. 84-85). (see Example (7))

The design of the oil painting *Archduke Leopold Wilhelm in His Private Picture Gallery* is comparatively simple, straightforward. The Archduke patron, Leopold Wilhelm, is standing at the lower right-hand corner of his private gallery. Every space of the gallery displays and is permeated with paintings of Wilhelm's entire collection. Teniers's intention seems to let those paintings embrace Wilhelm. It is as though the collector lives in a house built of paintings. What is the significance of a house built with pictures? These paintings show the patron a variety of views: sights of what he may possess, sites indeed. To possess a picture of this kind can demonstrate the patron's self-esteem, wealth, fame, taste, and philanthropy. However, to the viewer, these references or quotes thanks to the painting might exert a different kind of certain emotional impact. When one appreciates such paintings, one notes not only the private memory embedded behind each individual painting, but also the whole value bestowed upon the entire collection. In this regard, it is not necessary for the viewer to identify every painting; instead, it is the aesthetic experience invited by the numerous individual works as a whole that is more important. Similarly, the cumulative form is somewhat like a sonic framework for holding the whole collection of many different quotes, from which an overall emotion, such as a sense of possession, or a sense of loss, or a

¹⁵ The "cumulative" setting or form is used by Peter Burkholder to describe Ives' unique musical structure and design in some of his works. See Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes*, pp. 137-38.

cherished and shared connection with family is also elicited in the mind of the listeners. And the aesthetic experience of Ives' cumulative setting in *The "Things" Our Father Loved* operates in a similar way.

Example (7) *Archduke Leopold Wilhelm in His Private Picture Gallery*¹⁶



Throughout the song of *The "Things" Our Father Loved*, each characteristic sound of quoted fragment represents an act of recall. A chain of quotes may function as a chain of retrospective moments that invite searches for specific scenes. The initial folk clue diffused from Dan Emmett and Stephen Foster, for instance, aims to transport listeners to an imagined world of indigenous milieu, an innocent and even childlike time. Compared with the other samples of different styles in the same song, it effects a particularly strong moment of shift between two distinct levels, from one imagined or remembered worlds to the other, and back to the reality. Thus *The "Things" of Our Father Loved* constitutes a complex and paradoxical view oscillating between different metaphorical "worlds," which produces an integrated aesthetic experience for the listeners.

In order to exert sufficient emphasis on the quotation so as to clearly differentiate it from the surrounding context, contemporary music composers often highlight or even exaggerate the quoted materials in various ways. For example, quotes are displayed in contrasting harmonic idioms from the original music, or distorted with sharp dissonances, or disguised by creating out-of-tune sounds to dramatize such shifts. These devices often lead to an extreme prominence of the quotation, which is sufficient to isolate itself from the original context, letting it to be recognizable and capable of exerting a compelling effect on listeners. In the case of *The "Things" of Our Father Loved*, Ives uses quotes with stable tonality to represent the real, present world. However, when the tune is "distorted" by a sudden but fleeting tonal shift, the out-of-tune effect could be viewed as a sonic flashback transporting the listeners' mind to a different emotional level, perhaps unexpectedly bittersweet, of the imagined world linking to the far-off nostalgic past.

It is worth noticing that the quotations of this song are used to exhibit the real world in the present, though, as commonly understood, it is not unreasonable to regard pre-existing tunes as a display of the memorable past. In *The "Things" of Our Father Loved*, instead of writing a totally new melody, Ives chooses to use a concatenation

¹⁶ The picture is cited from the internet. David Teniers the Younger, "Archduke Leopold Wilhelm in His Picture Gallery," in *Wikipedia*, [Free Encyclopedia], cited on 2018-3-29, available from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Archduke_Leopold_Wilhelm_in_his_Painting_Gallery_in_Brussels

of various folk tunes as the main theme. It seems that he wants to allow such past (pre-existing) daily “things” to be engaged in the current moment, as if the distant past were still active in the present. And, of course, modern performance “proves” this. As such, the memorable “world” created by the music, as well as the text of the poem, is all “present,” even though the quoted tunes are borrowed from the past.

Larry Starr once supported Ives' particular interest in the “present” (Starr, 1992, p. 68). He once stated that this is not “the present of a particular time, place, person, or culture, rather it is an always extant and ever-changing artistic present: the current intellectual, emotional, and spiritual condition of creator, performer, listener—in short, humanity” (Starr, 1992, p. 68). To Ives, what memory can do is to inspire one to continually renew and reinvent oneself in accordance with what one has most valued and achieved in one's past. Hence, Ives' present reality is represented by those historic quotes offered in comparatively stable tonality in this song.

Moreover, Ives' own written poem also gives a clue to his particular view of activating the “past” into the present.¹⁷ The most significant references which Ives employs are not for the things themselves, but for the time makers of such content. It is no accident that Ives preferred using the “present” form to delineate his remembered subject matters. Indeed, Ives' song texts and programs are almost always written in the present form. This shows that Ives viewed the remembered past as a direct experience of the present. His songs, such as *Memories*, *The Circus Band*, and the like, or other instrumental works, such as *Central Park in the Dark*, were also written in this way as if they were happening in the present. Thus, in *The “Things” of Our Father Loved*, the here-and-now is the moment of the protagonist's greatest “liberty”,¹⁸ in which all things of value in the past which his father loved could continue to be possessed in the poetic world by their expression in present time.

Whether the remembered world of the past is an experience of mourning for the nostalgic loss, or to acclaim the past, or to preserve a value of childhood, or any other reason does not really matter. What is most important is that the memorable series of quotes flowing throughout the entire song is a perception of a total sonic memory of the protagonist “I” which, while denying interconnectedness, continuity, and at the same time, confers to every moment to reveal the character of complicity and mystery. And the sudden intrusion of the newly written two-note gesture just suggests a moment of “splendid” forgetting. The temporary wandering-off into different mental realms, whether it is real or imaginary, is perhaps a momentary glimpse of the real face of Ives, in which the protagonist (singer) can find relief, albeit transitory, from the intolerable burden of endless remembering. Therefore, in *The “Things” Our Father Loved*, for each particular time interval, the listeners are always invited to engage with the performers' impersonated characters, sharing his/her imagined world of the poem's “I” in the distant past with that of the present, bringing them a full sense of aesthetic delight in each discrete moment.

Crumb's Imaginary World

While Ives uses tonal shifts to highlight the quoted tunes in *The “Things” Our Father Loved*, the living American composer, George Crumb (b. 1929), employs a different device to stretch the quotation he used in *Night Spell I* beyond its original musical surface. The piano solo, *Night Spell I*, the sixth piece in *Makrokosmos* (1972-73) is a set of two-volume set of twenty-four short pieces for amplified piano and an exemplar of this musical genre. *Makrokosmos* has been proven to be the hallmark compositions of the twentieth-century piano

¹⁷ Refer to the text of the song.

¹⁸ The subtitle of this song is “and the greatest of these was Liberty”.

music. Among the most mesmerizing of Crumb's departures from the keyboard in the piano solos are the vocal parts in this collection. A pianist, not a singer, is required to sing, whistle and moan, which, for some, is a feat in itself. In some cases, the soloist even has to do the somewhat "strange" actions and produce certain "extra-musical" sounds while playing on both the keys and the strings inside the piano.

This kind of unusual practice reminds us of the pianist Glenn Gould, who was constantly strongly criticized for his highly eccentric postures, his departure from a composer's tempo indications, and his habit of singing during the performance (Kostelantetz & Darby, 1966, p. 53). To Gould, the so-called "eccentric" body gestures were probably an "authentic" way to interpret a piece. Similarly, to Crumb, the outcomes of applying such "extended" techniques could also be a bold compositional experiment. Not only could such techniques produce an explosive inventiveness of timbres but also they could stretch the imagination of the performer, testing his/her keyboard playing skills to go beyond the realm of "certainty" and "security", and beyond that which is concrete and comfortable. Indeed, such compositional experiments can be traced back to the American composer John Cage, who was well-known for his use of prepared piano to produce new and unpredictable sonorities in many of his piano works. Crumb's substantial employment of these "extra-musical" sounds and body gestures in many of his works could be viewed as a way of creating an interwoven juncture of different temporal and spatial "worlds" which are capable of evoking rich aesthetic responses to the listeners, rather than a mere search for new timbres and a sense of freshness to satisfy his desire for creativity.

The concluding section of *Night Spell I*, for example, requires the pianist to play on the keys while simultaneously plucking the strings of the piano, and whistling a traditional quoted tune. Techniques are no longer limited to the tone control of the fingers, but, include also the shape of the lips and breath control as well as phrasing inside the piano. The use of extraordinary techniques in this work may exemplify Crumb's mature and personal style of composition, which has gone beyond some of his earlier works, such as *Sonata for Solo Violoncello* (1955), or *Variazioni* (1959) (Piersall, 2005, pp. 38-39). They are artistic means of supplying recurring haunting images, extending piano idioms, and providing explosive timbral innovations.

From Crumb's own writings, all pieces in *Makrokosmos* Book I and II (1972-73) are expression of his admiration for two great collections of twentieth-century piano music, Bela Bartok's six books of *Mikrokosmos* and Claude Debussy's two books of 24 preludes; and the "spiritual impulse" behind it is akin to the darker side of Chopin, and even to the child-like fantasy of early Schumann (Crumb, 2005, p. 306-307). Although human's crying voices have already been employed as extra-sounds in the fourth (Crucifixus) and the fifth (The Phantom Gondolier) pieces of Crumb's first piano collection, it is in *Night Spell I*, the sixth piece, that *human whistle* is employed for the first time as a kind of man-made "instrumental" tune that sings effectively to the listeners of a haunting image from an alien "world".¹⁹

Night Spell I is structured in mosaic form, a term borrowed from the architectural design meaning that various small musical sections, even tiny gestural fragments, are integrated together to frame the total structure. It is one of the most favorite musical forms used by many contemporary composers. The difference between the mosaic form and the conventional through-composed form in Romantic lied is that the former does not emphasize structural entirety but on juxtaposing a series of unrelated sonic fragments. Crumb's choice of using

¹⁹ The instrumentation of each piece in *Makrokosmos* refers to Crumb's own written program note. See Crumb, "Chronological Works," p. 307.

such design enables his *Night Spell I* to work like a sonic spectacular display with a series of musical events, creating an extraordinary expectancy in the listeners.

A Way of Listening II

The music begins with a lonely pizzicato E sound in the left hand, softly vibrating from the dampened string inside the piano. The sound is so weak that it is not strong enough to pervade the audio space, and, is barely sufficient to articulate the impending coming of a three-note gesture, F—C—G, moving downward in fourth in the piano (see Example (8)). Without a clear sense of direction due to its equal intervallic motion, the three-note gesture strolls slowly to remind the listeners of the piece's verbal reference: poised expectancy. The present moment is submerging into an extreme serenity and stillness, seemingly to freeze the movement of nocturnal time, just as the programmatic title suggests. As the repeated gestures are occasionally interrupted by the lonely plucked E sound in the left hand, the expectancy of the listener grows even greater. This plucked E, instead of being viewed as an articulating point, may also be taken as a foreign and unfriendly intrusion from an alien world, for not only the detached sounds, but also the E notes themselves are in no way related to the piano's three-note gestural motion. What comes next is even more surprising.

After the three-note gesture of F—C—G is repeated for four times, a new four-note motive of plucked strings playing inside the piano appears, as if the music has arrived at the conclusion of its first journey (example 8). This new timbral motive G#—F#—B—C# may be heard as an incomplete pentatonic melody in B with D# missing. Although both melodic figures belong to the same motivic cell and share very similar intervallic contents,²⁰ the outcome of sonorities is quite different. The comparatively "tonal" four-note motive possesses a much clearer sense of direction and shape than the previous gesture of intervallic fourth. The effect is somewhat like a shift from one sonic world to another, as the listeners exit abruptly from their present concerns into another imaginary world.

The opening passage, albeit short, is important in at least two ways. Firstly, it creates a surprise for the listeners within a rather short span of time. Instead of allowing the three-note gesture to go continually the so-called "normal" path of "wandering to nowhere", the four-note pentatonic motive, potentially viewed as an expansion of the previous motivic cell, appears on the spur of the moment. It also put on a new outlook of a fresh timbre (plucked sounds from the strings inside the piano), and a melodious character (pentatonic). Secondly, when this opening passage recurs in the second main section, it serves as an effective conduit to lead the music to the conclusive climax, where the quoted tune permeated with folk spirit appears for the first time.

²⁰ In Set Theory, the motivic figure [F-C-G] belongs to the pitch-class set [027] whereas the motivic figure [G#-F#-B-C#] belongs to the pitch-class set [0257]. Hence the motivic set [F-C-G] is the subset of the motivic set [G#-F#-B-C#], sharing similar intervallic contents with each other.

Example (8) Wandering off from the Reality to the Imaginary World

Wandering three-note gesture—motion of fourth in the right hand piano part

Pentatonic 4-note motive of plucked strings inside the piano

Poised, expectantly ♩ = 50

On the Keys (*legatiss.*) **PPP**

PPP **PPP** **PPP**

pizz. (f.t.) *pizz. (f.t.)* *fz* *fz* *fz* *fz*

PP *P.J. sempre* *poco* *mart. (f.t.)* *fz* *trill* *mp*

dampen string (one inch from end) *mart. 2 finger trill on string (f.t.)* *touch string at center after string is plucked*

Lonely pizzicato E inside the piano

Example (9) Nightbird's Warbling—The Pianist's Whistle

[NIGHTBIRD'S SONG]

Human Whistling

ff **ff** **mp**

(Incisive, clear)

(approx. pitch area)

pp *ma distinto* *a rapid tremolo on strings with all fingers (f.t.)*

etc.

As the night journey continues, the pianist returns from the imaginary pentatonic world to the present state of “wandering to nowhere”. Separated by a preceding moment of three-second silence, this return to the present moment is somewhat conspicuous. In fact, silence is functionally important in mosaic structure. For musical rest does not only make clear the separation of each sonic block, but it can also signify to the listeners an imminent change in the music. Something lie ahead is even more unexpected. Soon some eccentric sounds suddenly vibrate in the air. What the pianist does is a series of spontaneous knockings and striking on the metal frame inside the piano soundboard with his/her hands and thumbs. Such percussive sounds, though, different from the previous four-note motive plucked inside the piano, have the similar purposeless nature and wandering characters. The shards of broken striking sounds serve to enhance such a state, despite their acoustic weakness. Again, the listeners are immersed in an indefinite, directionless moment until a clear, incisive artificial “instrumental” sound, the “true” music, flows in like an echo from an unknown distant world.

In this particular moment, the pianist plays a rapid tremolo on the piano strings with all of his/her fingers and strikes on the soundboard of the piano with his/her hands, in addition to whistling a tuneless gesture—an oscillation of G# and D#—into the piano insides (see Example (9)). The echoed whistle sounds are somewhat like a native wind instrument, such as the bagpipe or musette. This sudden intrusion of a new timbral sound surprises the listeners, who are stunned by the pianist's staged actions as they experience its effects.

As the resonance of the whistle bounces off the piano strings, the overall sonority becomes increasingly pervasive. The human whistle, labeled as “nightbird's song” in the score, seems to project forward and fills up the audio space. The music now finishes its second wandering journey and begins to embark into a new realm. The sudden shift can be sensed in two ways, the real and the imagined sense. In the real sense, the striking sound first resonates from a single source. Then it is followed by the human whistle reverberating from the piano strings, as if it is coming from a far-off distance, spreading gradually towards the listeners. In the imagined sense, the effect is similar to that of an actor simultaneously impersonating two different characters of distinctively different qualities and behaviors on stage. What the pianist reveals to the audiences is a mind of an imaginary world of another space and time (nightbird-warbling whistle), oscillating with the present world of discursiveness (piano striking noise) at this particular moment. As such, the music of Crumb's “night spell” may be seen as two different ontological realms being enhanced by the oscillations of two different sonic layers in contrasting styles, which are distinguishable in terms of the diverse timbres, characterized sonority, and different sounding agents.

On the one hand, the whistling of the pianist can be regarded as one isolated spatial layer characterized by rapidly repeated gestures of one single note with embellishments; or an alternation of two notes within an intervallic fifth, or in other intervals suspending in an extreme high register. On the other hand, the sound played by the pianist with the piano can be regarded as another sonic layer. It is made by knocking the metal cross beams, scraping a tremolo on the strings inside the piano, or playing with normal fingering on the keys. And these two distinct sonic layers alternate with each other throughout the passage.

After the first warbling of the “nightbird's song” (G#—D# alternations), the whistle changes to a new single-note repeated pattern moving from F to B and then C# in a distinctively high tessitura, and ends on an agitated tremolo of G and F. But the new whistling gesture does not persist long. The piano sound comes back again in the form of a quick arpeggiation, used in fact to bring an imitation of the previous single-note whistle by playing G# and F on the piano. It then ends on the piano tremolo of G and D—another imitation of the preceding whistling gesture. In this regard, the interactions between the human whistle and the piano sound help constitute a complex spatial and temporal juncture in this passage. The piano imitation of the nightbird whistle is an expression of an act of recall, bringing the foregoing whistling gesture alive in the creation of the piano sound in the present moment.

Besides the timbres and the different sounding mediums, the musical rests here constitute significant devices in articulating the oscillation of the two separate sonic layers. Throughout the entire work, a silence of three-seconds is always inserted between each successive sonic event. For example, the piano's imitation of the nightbird whistle is followed by a three-second rest enabling a new expectancy in the listeners. What comes next is, again, the short and noisy percussive sound by knocking on the piano frames and soundboard. Similar to its debut, the knocking sound at this point is used to articulate a rather long passage of the high-pitched single-note repeated pattern (“nightbird” human whistle), which warbles on different notes in a very loud dynamic. In this

“nightbird” passage, Crumb seems to make such shifts from one ontological level to another, and from the sonic world of piano sonority to another imaginary world of human whistle and back. This is a favorite technique of Crumb. At this moment, the sonic scenario is somewhat analogous to the pianist's (protagonist's) temporary lost of direction and wandering off into a foreign world in search of a destination, but it is abruptly ushered back to the present world (the piano).

Soon, the music completes the first main section, arriving at the middle point of the entire journey. In order to maintain a sense of structural coherence, the second section is articulated by the almost complete return of the opening wandering passage to the three-note gesture, F—C—G, moving in an intervallic fourth, and the succeeding pentatonic four-note motive of G#—F#—B—C# (an expansion of the three-note motivic cell) plucked inside the piano strings. To the listeners, the audio effect of the second section opening is quite familiar. Just as the musical journey is expected to end in its “normal” way—by repeating the previous warbling whistle and piano knocking passage—something completely stunning happens. Instead of the expected forthcoming whistling of the “nightbird” song, a folkloric inspired fragment, *Will There Be Any Stars in My Crown*,²¹ is whistled by the pianist in an extreme high-pitched register of Db, or C# area (enharmonic keys), which is just a semitone higher than the pentatonic counter-melody in C of the right-hand piano (example 10). Here, the quotation appears for the first and the only time in the entire work. Compared with the noises of piano knocking, this pentatonic folk quotation sounds more tonal and stable, dispersing an aura of serenity and calmness. Its appearance could be taken as the conclusive statement after a series of concatenated musical events and the point of resolution after several dissonant sonorities.

Besides the pentatonic human whistling, another pentatonic sonority occurs in the left hand piano part. As the right-hand piano plays the pentatonic counter-melody in C under the marking, “serene, hauntingly; echoing like and Appalachian valley acoustic,” in a slow tempo, a “new” three-note motive, B (supported by A# bass)—F#—C# in B, returns to the left-hand accompaniment (see Example (10)). This seemingly new three-note motive may, to an extent, remind the listeners of the opening three-note wandering gesture of F—C—G.

In fact, the motive, B (on A# bass)—F#—C#, is an exact transposition in tritone, apart from the opening motive cell (F—C—G). This unexpected return to the previous wandering sonority is embraced by the harmonic resonance of the extremely low F minor chord, and also in tritone apart, playing at a soft dynamic from the background (Example (10)). As we have discussed before, the opening passage of the first main section is significant. It not only gives the work a structural coherence but also provides an inkling of the coming of the quoted folk tune *Will There Be Any Stars in My Crown*. Thus, it is not until this final conclusive passage that the wandering three-note gesture and the pentatonic four-note motive have reached their co-destination. As the whistling of scattered quoted fragments goes on, the music in the piano gradually fades out, leaving a few notes from the whistle resonating in the air until the full *tacet* (silence) moment comes.

²¹ Crumb references the source of the folk melody quoted in the score, just like citation in writing.

Example (10) Distinct Sonic Layers Form a Spatial-Temporal Complex

Counter-melody in pentatonic C

The quoted folk tune in Db (C#)

Serene, hauntingly; echoing [like an Appalachian valley acoustic]

"Will There Be Any Stars In My Crown?"

whistle

p languidly as from a far

pizz sempre (fl.)

ppp

pppp

ppp

ppp

ppp

ppp

Pl, PIII, sempre

ppp

F minor chord

The new pentatonic motive in B subsides to the harmonic background

The most significant feature of the whole “night journey” is the different sonic layers in the final climatic passage. The formation of this sonic collage is even more complex than in the previous section. It constitutes an interwoven juncture of various sonic materials of the transposed three-note wandering gesture in B, the counter-melody of Appalachian echo in C, the static support by the minor triad in F, and the quoted folk fragment in C# (enharmonic Db). These layers are distinctly separated in a way that the upper three parts are set in a semitonal clash of B, C and C# areas, whereas the lower piano F minor chord clashes a dissonant tritone apart from the transposed three-note motive in B. To the listeners, the overall effect could be an amazing spatial-temporal shift, since the interpolation of the unexpected quoted fragment in the form of whistling has the effect of a recollection of a past, and, albeit fleeting, it seems to present a state of mind that has abandoned the present concerns (music created by piano) and suddenly wanders off into an imaginary recollected world of diverse aura (whistling sound of the quoted tune) in the climactic moment, evoking in the listeners’ rich aesthetic sensation that has not been experienced before (see Example (10)).

Nevertheless, the tonal contrast of the quoted folk fragment in the C# (Db) area could remind us of Ives’ use of a similar technique in dealing with the quoted materials. Unlike Ives’ technique of tonal distortion, Crumb highlights the quote by placing it in the form of whistling (a different sounding medium) in an extremely high register, superimposing it over different sonic layers of remote key areas. The quoted folk tune helps create a sharp dissonance of the minor second with the C pentatonic counter-melody of the right-hand piano and the uncomfortable tritone with the lowest registral F minor chord in the left-hand accompaniment. Thus, the tonal

areas, the registers and the timbres of the musical materials do not only emphasize the quote away from its original musical context, making it recognizable, but also divide the texture into four distinct sonic layers and tempos. It is this sonic layering complex that makes Crumb's use of quotation different from that of Ives in at least two ways.

Firstly, while Ives' tonal shift is articulated by the juxtaposition of two different key areas linearly, Crumb simply lets several distinctive tonal areas co-exist simultaneously. As we have discussed before, Crumb's complexity of sonic layers in various key areas is largely made up of a collage of different musical events consisting of the quoted tune, the right-hand piano's pentatonic counter-melody in C, the transposed three-note gesture in B in the left-hand piano, and the sustaining F minor chord in the bass. Secondly, Crumb sets these four distinct layers moving simultaneously each in their own style and tempo. For example, while the F minor chord is placed in the extremely low register in an almost inactive state, the newly composed Appalachian echo in the right-hand piano melody just moves in a rather lively regular way.

In short, the music of *Night Spell I* is set in alternation between different sonic layers of the piano sounds and the human whistles. Such alternations are similar to the oscillations stirred up in the mind of the protagonist (pianist) between different temporal levels of the present, as well as the recollected past of an imagined world. In the first main section, this alternation is promoted in great contrast by materials of diverse styles, timbres and eccentric sounding bodies in great contrast. In the final climatic moment, the sonic scenario is a collage of different temporal and spatial streams moving concurrently in one particular instant. Since the quoted folk tune is highlighted by using remote key area and human whistling in registral extremity, it is powerful enough to saturate the listeners with dramatic effects.

Therefore, when listening to a piece of music and its quoted tunes, the overall effect can be that the present train of one's thought can suddenly deviate to another, perhaps a foreign world, under the aegis of the exaggerated extended performing techniques, (e.g. plucking strings or knocking the piano frame) and the newly created timbre (human whistle) contrasting with the piano sounds in distinctive musical styles. This is why a quoted fragment in a composition can become the main aesthetic objects of listeners, rather than just painting the text or conveying meaning from its provenance.

Conclusion

Throughout the Western music history, abundant examples have shown that pre-existing material, particularly melodic quotation, can be an important aesthetic core of a new work. Not only can pre-existing material induce rich aesthetic responses in listeners, but it can also help shape and change listeners' aesthetic value across time. Although pre-existing materials in music of Romantic period sometimes appear as a programmatic reference to capture the attention of the listeners, they rarely manifest themselves in different harmonic languages from that of the original piece, or in the form of stylistic or generic fragments breaking through the texture of a piece in such a way as to suggest an alternative "world". In fact, the difference between the nineteenth-century Schumann's quoting from Beethoven or Crumb's quoting from the eighteenth-century J. S. Bach is that Schumann just integrates the quoted tune and the original music in the same harmonic idiom, allowing them to remain in the same "world", whereas Crumb clashes the quoted fragments with the original music by different harmonic idioms, allowing them to remain independently in their own realms. It is not until the

turn of the twentieth-century that composers begin to take the aesthetic potential to a new level by exploiting the ability of pre-existing materials to evoke a multiplicity of states and/or worlds. In this regard, the quote is often displayed in an entirely out of the harmonic context of the surrounding and is technically “self-exaggerated”, as if it comes from an alien terrain.

The above two case studies that I presented have shed some light on the effect of a quotation, especially when this sounds, as it were, “out of context”. When this happens, the shift from one musical context to another can, alone, represent a psychological shift. Such moments of distraction probably may bring into existence two distinct ontological levels—the real and the imagined or remembered world on the part of an implicit protagonist. I have pointed out that contemporary composers’ preoccupation with this aesthetic possibility is particularly intense when the quoted materials are highlighted and exaggerated in different ways so as to make them easily be recognized.

In order to dramatize the shift from one temporal state to another, the quoted material is placed in such a way as to create, when compared to the surrounding music an extreme, jarring even, stylistic contrast. There is, in principle, no need for one to be familiar with the quote’s provenance or referential meaning in order to obtain aesthetic pleasure from it. Its harmonic language, style, genre, or a little sense of its traditional associations are the clues to our understanding of the content at every moment, provided that we are able to recognize the quoted material as such (i.e., as pre-existing and as having been willfully placed in the context of a new composition). As the aforementioned analyses have illustrated, transformation and recontextualisation stand at the core of our aesthetic delight. In some cases, it is simply the key of the quoted tune that has been distorted. Yet in other cases merely distorting the key is not enough. Composers freely “exaggerate” those salient features of a quote that they regard as attractive, as important, as defining of the pre-existing materials they are reworking.

As our postmodern society becomes more and more socio-culturally diverse, quotation, perhaps, may further invite a different approach and reception. This study stops short at the onset of such a shift in approach. But I have no doubt that as the simultaneity of different kinds of music becomes the defining feature of our urban soundscape, the study of quotation, too, will have to acknowledge that quoted material should no longer be understood as “pre-existing” but rather as “floating” in the culture at large. If anything, the need for such a shift in methodology will only reinforce the status of this area of study as symptomatic of current social and cultural trends, and thus, becoming central to the enterprise of musicology as a whole.

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